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THOMAS LORING,

EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

THE CONSTITUTION AND THE UNION OF THE STATES—THEY "MUST BE PRESERVED."

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THE INDIAN'S REVENGE;

OR, THE DOOM OF THE AGGRESSOR.

A TALE OF 1776.

BY JOSEPH L. MATTHIAS.

CHAPTER I.

"No! my free soul disdains to turn; the spark
Of Liberty hath kindled in my breast.
And never will I quench at earth-born man's
Behest a flame that Heaven commanded first
To glow; though on his frowning brow sat thunder,
I'd meet my tyrant and defy the bolt!"

Bride of Abydos.

It was a clear, beautiful morning in the
summer of 1776. The bright rays of Phoebus
were rapidly dissolving the glittering diamonds of
dew that sparkled in resplendent magnificence,
clothing hill and vale in a glorious robe of golden
light. Not a cloud appeared in the whole cir-
cumference of the horizon's vast expanse, to dim
the deep, ethereal blue. Not a sound came up-
on the air, save the delightful notes of nature's
sweet choristers, whose music, from the adjacent
trees, was wafted to the enraptured senses on
light breezes, redolent with increase from the
perfumed flowers. The clear waters of the mas-
tastic Delaware rolled on in silent grandeur,
occasionally interrupted by the passage of some
tiny bark, that glittered for a while upon its
polished surface, and then was lost in the distance.
It was a glorious scene—a spectacle of splendor!
A scene well calculated to call forth the poet's
brilliant conception:

"Breathes there a man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land?"

Upon a high eminence, that rose above a long
continuous range of hills, on that part of the
New Jersey coast, designated as Red Bank—
gazing upon the enchanting beauties of the bright
moon, stood a youth of noble and commanding
figure, whose animated features glowed with en-
thusiasm as he pointed out the glories of the sur-
rounding scenery, to a young and beautiful fe-
male, who gracefully reclined upon his arm, and
whose dark eyes sparkled with delight as she
listened to the eloquent tones of her companion.
"Walter," said the fair girl, "thou wilt not act
impudently—thou wilt do nothing rash!"
"Nay, Ida," replied the youth, "fear not for
me. The glorious cause of our Liberty is too
closely woven with the fibres of thy Walter's
heart, to tempt him to commit an act pernicious
to our righteous cause."

"I know it, Walter; full well I know it. But
still—"

"Come, Ida, give to the winds these melancholy
musing, which are but as the idle phantasies
of some midnight dream, whose shadowy sub-
stance flits before thy too creative imagination,
and fancy takes the form of stern reality."

"Well, Walter, I will patiently await thy re-
turn. But twice has Col. Osborne crossed my
path. What his intentions are—"

"What, Osborne?" interrupted the youth, the
indignant blood mounting to his brow, "that pan-
der! If the villain dares to offer you an insult,
Ida, I'd tear him limb from limb."

"Nay, calm thyself, Walter; perhaps he means
not harm."

"Ah! my fair Ida," replied Walter, "you know
not what a fiend in human form this Osborne is.
If it be possible, avoid him."

"It will do so, Walter," said Ida.

"I is well, my girl. Soon, I hope, these Eng-
lish tyrants shall be driven from our land, and
peace and content once more become its in-
mates."

"Heaven grant it," fervently exclaimed the
fair girl.

"Come, Ida, however reluctant, I am com-
pelled to leave this splendid view. The sun has
already mounted high in yon glorious east, and
bids me tarry not. If it be possible, I will re-
turn to-night."

"God speed thee, Walter!" said Ida, and the
lovers retreated from the commanding position
they had occupied, and were soon lost to view
amid the forest foliage.

Walter Carlton was the only son of an aristo-
cratic old gentleman who resided at Gloucester,
and who had endeavored by every possible means,
to inculcate the infatuated principles of which he
was possessed into the mind of his son. Openly,
and in no measured terms, he denounced the
course pursued by the young advocates of free-
dom, and bitter were the invectives that he lan-
guaged forth upon the devoted Walter, when he per-
ceived that all his efforts proved unavailing, and
that his frail arguments in the cause of British
tyranny had no effect upon his noble-minded son;
his oft repeated threat to disinher him was also
disregarded. In truth, the more the old gen-
tleman railed, the firmer became Walter in his
resolution to oppose all oppression. Matters stood
in this very unenviable position, when his father
suddenly died, and Walter was left to pursue the
 dictates of his own conscience, which soon led
him to take an active part in his country's quar-
rels.

In early life, Walter had ever been the asso-

ciate, as well as the youthful protector, of Ida,
the fair daughter of Isaiah Preston, a gentleman
esteemed alike as a philanthropist, and as one of
the most zealous advocates in the cause of Ameri-
can independence. Ida was, indeed, a beautiful
creature—a being whom the poet might deem a
model for his brightest imagery. The black,
flashing eye, and the snowy brow, the glossy
ringlets and the perfect symmetry of form—all
were charming—but these were

—poor possessions.

When compared to her still lovelier mind."

The bright star of intellectuality beamed from
her animated countenance, and spoke of a soul
within that admitted no contaminating influence
to thwart its loftiness of purpose. Long had
her young and pure affections been bestowed upon
the noble Walter, whose ingenuous nature
gloried in the trust, and the fair Ida proved the
shrine that prompted many an heroic deed.—
They were admired and esteemed by their youth-
ful friends, and the blessings of the aged follow-
ed them.

On the morning with which our tale commen-
ces, Walter was compelled to start for Philadel-
phia on very urgent and important business—
intending, however, to return the same evening.
He was the more anxious that this should be the
case, as some strange and gloomy forebodings
had taken possession of Ida's mind, that trouble
was brooding over them. Walter endeavored to
dispel them as idle fancies, but his generous ef-
forts proved unsuccessful. He accompanied her
from their delightful morning recreation, to with-
in a short distance of her parent's house, and
then with an affectionate farewell, they parted.

As Ida approached her home, she encountered
her father at the door, who was about leaving on
a visit to a friend, about two miles distant. Ida
would have entreated her father to remain at
home that day; but then she thought that per-
haps her fears were only imaginary, and finally
he departed, and she was left alone, saving the
presence of an aged porter, called "old Phillip."
She entered the house, and with a heavy heart
sat down to ruminate.

It was by repeated acts of aggression on the
part of some British and Hessian soldiers, who
had quartered in the vicinity of Red Bank, that
the long smouldering flame of liberty was on the
eve of bursting into a broad blaze, and hurling
defiance to this arbitrary power. These soldiers
were commanded by a Col. Osborne, a man who
was despised and contemned by the whole neigh-
borhood, as being an unprincipled wretch, who
hesitated at no obstacle that would lead to the
gratification of his licentious and degrading pas-
sions. He was an object of detestation to all,
alike for his petty acts of tyranny and his mid-
night marauding depredations. Not a family was
there within several miles but had been subject
to his unwelcome presence. His acts had be-
come intolerable, and a spirit of resentment was
evidently manifesting itself among the indignant
peasantry. This was the man whom Ida Pre-
ston secretly feared, for the look that he cast upon
her, as she met him the day previous, had sent
a thrill of horror to her very soul.

Slowly and tediously passed the hours of that
day to Ida. At length the shades of night be-
gan to gather over the earth, but neither Walter
nor her father had yet returned. Ida bade the
old porter to make the usual preparations for
closing the house for the night, with a fa-
vorite volume, she endeavored to disperse her
melancholy thoughts.

About two hours after dark, Col. Osborne, ac-
companied by eight of his confederates in crime,
halted before the residence of Isaiah Preston.—
Osborne commanded, in an imperative tone, one
of his minions to knock for admittance, which
he did so clamorously as to rouse the old porter,
who tottered to the door, as fast as his advanced
age would admit. On opening the door, he started
back at the ferocious appearance of the men
who stood without.

"Come, come, old dotard!" shouted Osborne,
"do you intend to keep us waiting here all night?
Come, stir thy lazy pace, and tell your master
we would spend the night with him."

"Your pardon, gentlemen," quietly remarked
the old man, "but Mr. Preston is from home."

"Well, carry our compliments to the old lady,
and say the same to her," continued Osborne.

"Mrs. Preston, gentlemen, is deceased. There
are no inmates of the house, at present, save the
daughter Ida, and your servant, and I would beg
of you not to disturb the young and timid girl.
Farther to the south, beyond the great oak, you
will find comfortable quarters for the night."

"Why, thou croaking old drone, wouldst di-
tate to us. Swing loose the bars from off thy
fastened gates, that our steed may enter, and look
to it that they fare well, or woe to thy gray
hairs."

"It cannot be, gentlemen—"

"Out upon thee, villain. Jerome, dismount
and burst that stubborn gate. The old fool would
parley with us till day-break."

The man did as he was bid, and the next in-
stant the old oak gate swung from its hinges with
a tremendous crash, and the whole troop galloped
into the yard.

It will be easier to imagine than to describe
the variety of conflicting emotions that filled the
bosom of the gentle Ida, at this extraordinary pro-
ceeding. She had stood at the end of the long
hall during the conversation between the old por-
ter and Osborne, and when the order was given
to burst open the gate, she sank into a seat, over-
come by the violence of her feelings.

She was suddenly roused from her reverie by
the hurried voice of old Phillip.

"Miss Ida! what is to be done?"

"Heaven only knows Phillip. Call in the
dogs; they may afford us some protection."

The old man opened a side door, and gave a low
call, when two large dogs bounded into the room,
and crouched down beside Ida.

"Miss Ida had better retire to Master's private
room," said Phillip.

"And what does old Phillip intend doing?" in-
quired Ida.

"To remain here, and provide for these intrud-
ers the best fare the house will afford. As yet,
they have offered me no violence, and perhaps all
may yet end well."

"Hark!" interrupted Ida, "they are approach-
ing the house!"

"It is so!" said the old man.

"You fear not?" inquired Ida.

"No!" he replied; "but it were well if Walter
Carlton were here."

A slight blush mantled the features of the fair
girl, as she earnestly responded—

"Would to God that Walter were here!"

Ida darted through an open door, followed by
the faithful and watchful dogs. She arrived at
her father's private room, at the farther end of
the building; she entered, turned the key within
the lock, and sat down to await the result of this
outrageous intrusion.

As Ida left the room, the same instant Osborne
and his companions entered. One of the soldiers
caught a glimpse of her retreating figure, and in-
sisted on following her, swearing that she should
be a participant in their repeat. But old Phillip
stepped firmly before him, and, in a resolute tone,
bade him desist.

"Never mind the girl," said Osborne; "let the
old fellow stir about, and get us wherewithal to
appease our appetites."

"Aye, aye," responded the others, "give us
something to eat and drink first, and the girl af-
ter!"

"If ye be men," added old Phillip, excited,
"you will not seek to insult a defenceless female.
To what accommodations the house affords, ye
are welcome; but while this old man has strength
to wield an axe, the daughter of Isaiah Preston
shall never be injured!" And the old man's eyes
flashed defiance upon the ruffians, as they stood
in awe before him.

"Come," resumed Osborne, "cease your preach-
ing, old moralist, and the girl shall not be har-
med."

"Enough!" said the old man; and in a few
moments the dining table was laden with all an
epicure could wish—but still these satellites of
English tyranny were not content. One reche-
rently clamored for champagne, another Madeira,
and others were for malt liquors. At last,
one seized a tankard, that stood upon the table,
and insisted on going into the cellar, and as he
expressed it, "choosing for himself." Old Phil-
lip made a feeble resistance, but he soon perceived
that it was useless; and, as his principal ob-
ject was the protection of his young mistress, he
quietly led the way into the vault. Then, after
first drinking to satiety, the soldier returned la-
den with every variety of liquor which was to be
found in the cellar.

Old Phillip followed him back to the room,
and occupied a position in which he might have
a full opportunity of witnessing their proceedings.
Loud and boisterous now became the festive
board, the fumes of the wine began to scatter
their wandering senses, and the demon of intem-
perance held his sway. A song was called for,
and given by one of the soldiers, and old Phillip
listened to this minion of British arrogance, as he
lauded tyranny and oppression, until his blood
rose in a ferment of indignation. At this instant,
one called out—

"Let's have the lass!" And four of them
sprang simultaneously to the door.

Old Phillip had anticipated this, and, in a mo-
ment, stood a barrier to the further progress.

"Give way, old man, or by my soul thou diest!"
exclaimed the foremost of the ruffians.

"Off, hireling!" shouted the old man, as he
seized an axe, "or I'll cleave thee from head to
foot!"

"Dost threaten, rebel!" he exclaimed, and he
made toward old Phillip with his bayonet.

Quick as thought, the old man swung the axe
above his head, and cleft the villain in the brain.
Loud were the execrations that followed, as sword
after sword were thrust through the body of the
aged veteran, and he fell lifeless across the thresh-
old of the door.

There was a pause—but the sight of blood
raised the demon within their souls, and they
were madly rushing forward, as Isaiah Preston
dashed through an open window from the garden,
followed by an aged Indian, and stood confront-
ing them.

"Down with the rebels!" cried one of the
gang.

"Aye, aye! down with them!" echoed the oth-
ers; and in an instant Mr. Preston and his fol-
lower found themselves surrounded with mad-
men, thirsting for blood.

They made a brave resistance, but the odds
were fearful. Mr. Preston fought, until two of
their number were stretched in death before him,
when he was beaten down. He fell, and the last
words that came from his lips were, "Ida! God
protect thee!"

The Indian was about turning to make his
escape through the window, when the villain Os-
borne came cautiously behind him, and pointing
a pistol at his head, shot him dead on the spot!

"Now, my lads, now for the girl!" exclaimed
Osborne.

He gazed around him, and found that he was
followed by three of his late companions; the
remainder lay in the deep sleep of death.

With rapid strides, he passed from room to
room, until he came to Ida's. The door was
locked. He called for admittance; no answer
came; but the quick clicking of a gun-lock came
within his ear. Again he rudely demanded admit-
tance.

"Never!" was echoed in a firm tone, from the
apartment.

Enraged at the delay, he commanded his men
to force an entrance. The order was obeyed—
the door flew open—and Ida Preston stood be-
fore them. The assailants started back, awed by
the majestic being who confronted them. The
dogs were crouching at her feet, ready, at her
summons, to spring upon the intruders. In her
hands, she held a pointed rifle, whilst indignation,
mingled with a calm, heroic firmness, played up-
on her determined countenance.

"What!" shouted the enraged Osborne, "held
at bay, and by a woman! Seize her!"

The soldiers remained motionless.

"Fiends seize ye all, for cowards!" he cried,
almost suffocating with passion.

"Soldiers!" exclaimed the heroic Ida, "if ye
fear death, beware: Advance but a step, at your
peril. Your blood be upon your own heads, for

Ida Preston never will become the prisoner of
Col. Osborne, while she breathes the breath of
life. As for thee, thou mean despoiler, thou hast
yet to learn what an American's daughter dare do,
when her honor needs protection. Nay, frown
not so darkly, for I fear not thy most impotent
fury!"

"Do you hear her, villains!" shouted the infuri-
ated Osborne, "or have ye become palsied at
sight of a vaunting woman? Advance and seize
her!"

"Perish thou first!" exclaimed Ida, as she dis-
charged the rifle at the breast of Osborne. He
had anticipated the movement, and stepped quick-
ly aside as the ball passed by him harmlessly,
and laid low one of his companions.

"Well done, my fair one!" tauntingly exclaimed
the villain.

"Seize them!" cried the undaunted girl to the
dogs, as she pointed to the soldiers.

The animals sprang from her side, and grap-
pled with the assailants.

Osborne furiously darted towards Ida. She
drew from her bosom a small poniard, and raised
on high the glittering weapon as he advanced;—
her arm descended. She missed her aim, and
Osborne exultingly caught her in his arms.

"Now, now I have thee!" exclaimed the vil-
lain, as he moved toward the door.

"Ida! Ida!" shouted a voice from the corri-
dor.

"Ha! ha! ha! Walter—Walter!" laughed
the half frantic girl, as her quick ear caught the
wellknown voice—"Here! here!"

A rattling sound came along the passage, and
the next instant Walter Carlton stood confront-
ing the villain Osborne.

Swift as the lightning's flash, Walter's trusty
sword leaped from its scabbard, and crossed that
of Osborne, who stood awaiting the youth's im-
petuosity. Thrust followed thrust in quick
succession, until Walter, by a powerful and dex-
terous movement, shattered his enemy's weapon,
and Osborne stood defenceless.

"Get thee gone, base reptile!" exclaimed Wal-
ter, in a tone of bitter contempt, for he knew not
of the horrid work of slaughter which had been
enacted in the hall.

Osborne, humbled and crest-fallen, made no
reply,—but, as he approached the door, he silent-
ly drew from his breast a pistol, levelled it at
Walter, and drew the trigger. Naught but a few
sparks were emitted therefrom, and the villain
turned and fled, followed by his two remaining
companions, who were right willing to escape
from the clutches of the faithful dogs.

"Villain!" cried Walter, in scorn. "Aha!
more of your British courage! But rouse thee,
Ida, my sweet girl; to tarry here alone is full of
peril."

"Walter!" breathed Ida, faintly, "for Heav-
en's sake, seek my father!"

"Thy father, Ida! Went he not hence on yester-
day?"

"He did, Walter, he did! But last night,
whilst Osborne and his companions were in the
midst of their revelry, old Indian John passed
your window, and I bade him seek my father,
and advise him of the threatened danger."

"Then Heaven shield him, my Ida!" exclaimed
Walter, as he quickly darted from the room.

With rapidity he passed the long corridor, nor
paused until, horror-struck, he beheld the pro-
strate and still bleeding form of old Phillip. He
lifted the old man in his arms, but life had fled.
He passed on into the room, and there, with his
huge broadsword still firmly clutched within a
death-gripe, lay the lifeless father of his beloved
Ida. Strewed around him were the inanimate
bodies of the ruffian intruders, whose lives had
paid the forfeit of their audacity. Farther on,
close under the window, lay the old Indian, whom
Osborne had shot in the act of making his es-
cape.

In an agony of grief, Walter stood gazing up-
on this heart-rending spectacle; whilst the hot
tears rolled down his manly cheek; he dashed
the briny drops from him, and his patriotic spirit
burst forth in terrible denunciations: He rush-
ed back into the presence of Ida—his lips mov-
ed not—but his countenance told too well the
tale of horror.

"My father?" gasped Ida.

"Dead!" was the terrible response.

"The noble girl stood for a moment, as if trans-
fixed. She gave vent to no shriek—no scream
of agony or despair—no tear coursed her marble
features—but she stood mute and motionless, an
image of deep, soul-fraught misery.

"Lead me to him!" she said, in a fearful but
calm tone.

"My beloved Ida!" cried the alarmed Walter,
for he trembled lest her reason had fled.

"Walter, I would look upon my father!" she
said in the same tone.

Walter hesitatingly, led her to the chamber of
death. She stood beside her dead father! She
gazed long, steadfastly upon his rigid features,
and then turned to Walter.

"Leave me with the dead, Walter, and go rouse
the neighborhood."

The youth answered not, but left the apart-
ment. In a few moments he returned, followed
by a score of the honest peasantry.

"Friends," said Ida, as she pointed to her fa-
ther's corpse—"friends, it is the first immolation
upon the altar of Liberty. The sacrifice cries for
vengeance!"

"He shall have it!" was echoed by those a-
round her.

"Walter, be thine the guerdon!" said Ida.

"I accept it!" replied the youth.

"May God prosper thee!" she fervently ex-
claimed, as she was led unresistingly from the
room.

"Brothers!" cried Walter, when Ida had de-
parted, "Countrymen! the momentous period
has now arrived, and the long impending blow
must now be struck. Your wives and children
cry for protection—the desolating whirlwind
threatens your very hearths—the lording minions
of British tyranny have desecrated the home of
your revered neighbor—shall the foul injury go
unheeded?"

"No! no! never!" shouted the peasants.

"It is a right brave spirit that ye show," con-
tinued Walter, his countenance flushed with the

enthusiasm of the moment, "and God grant that
it remain unaltered. Here, my friends, upon
this consecrated spot—here, over these bleeding
martyrs to our sacred cause, we will unite our-
selves in an indissoluble union—never to sheathe
the sword of liberty until these usurpers be driv-
en from our soil, and the bright banners of free-
dom and independence shall wave in defiance of
despotic England!"

"Liberty for ever! We will be free!" were
the exclamations of the indignant crowd.

"Home, then, my friends, and prepare for the
conflict!" urged Walter. "To-morrow, at sun-
set, we will meet at the great oak!"

The crowd then dispersed to their respective
homes—and Walter to seek his Ida, whom he
prevalled upon to leave her parental domain, for
the residence of a near relative, on the Pennsylv-
ania side of the Delaware, where she would be
free from the dangers of the coming scenes of
strife and bloodshed.

At an early hour on the succeeding morning,
Walter conveyed Ida in a light skiff across the
river, and after seeing her safe to her transient
abode, he left her, and returned to resume his
part in his suffering country's cause.

Col. Osborne had always shown a deep and
implacable hatred towards young Walter Carl-
ton, which was by no means lessened in his re-
cent overthrow and expulsion from the house of
Mr. Preston. His subtle ingenuity soon devised
means by which he deemed to secure to himself
the fair Ida, as well as rid him of his mortal en-
emy.

The old Indian whom he had so inhumanly
murdered, was the favorite of a small tribe of
Delawares, who roamed that portion of the
country; and his villainous determination was to
fix the murder upon Walter Carlton, and thus,
while he left Ida without her lover's protection
he would also secure the friendship of the tribe.

The ensuing day he accosted Upas, the son of
the old Indian, to whom he unfolded the murder
of his father, at the same time declaring Walter
to be the perpetrator of the deed. Upas vowed
he would have the blood of his parent's murderer,
and Osborne volunteered to aid him in his object,
on condition that Upas would discover the re-
treat of Ida. Upas entered with avidity into the
scheme, and, in an hour from the interview Os-
borne stood upon the banks of the Delaware, ea-
gerly watching the progress of a canoe that put
out from a small cove, and was gliding noisily
through the rippling waters, guided by young
Upas. With a malignant smile and an exulting
pace, the villain returned to his quarters, whilst
the canoe pursued its onward course.

CHAPTER II.