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# A Flight From Death

A Story of the French Revolution.

By JAMES BRAINARD

Truth is so much stranger than fiction that perhaps it is better to state that the main incident of this story actually happened just as it is recorded.

The French revolution had reached that stage commonly designated the reign of terror. Every day the doors of the Conciergerie prison opened to det out a number of human beings not to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." as was enunciated shortly liefore by the American colonists in their Declaration of Independence, but to suffer death on the guillotine. At first the victims were confined to those who stood for tyranny. The king, the queen, the nobility, royalty and its supporters lost their heads. Then the different factions that had brought about the revolution began to fight for power, and the conservatives were guillotined by the radicals. After this whoever desired to get rid of one he wished to remove had but to inform upon him as an enemy of France, and the accused would join the "innumerable caravan" passing under the yoke of the guillo-

tine to his long home It was not always an enemy that was to be got rid of. Sometimes it was a friend. That friend might possess something that at his death would fall

into the hands of the informer. There lived in Paris at that time a young couple, Henri and Marie Chateaubrun, who were devoted to each other. Henri, when the struggle against oppression began, took a deep interest n it, advocating the reforms that were proposed. He and a friend of his. Antoine Boyer, became somewhat prominent as leaders in that quarter of the city in which they lived. Boyer, who was a bachelor, came often to the Chateaubruns to consult with his friend upon the course to be adopted by them in public affairs. Mme. Chateaubrun took a lively interest in the early efforts of the revolutionists to make France a constitutional monarchy and was usually present at the confer-

ences of her husband and his friend. During these meetings Boyer conceived a passion for Mme. Chateaubrun. For a time he struggled against it, not even acknowledging to himself that he loved his friend's wife. But the time came when he knew that life for him

was not worth living without her. As the revolution proceeded the two friends and coworkers found themselves on different paths. Chateaubrun continued a conservative, while Boyer joined the ranks of the bloodthirsty Jacobins. The latter did not give up his visits to the Chateaubruns. Indeed, he was not able to keep away from the young wife of his friend. Since neither she nor her husband suspected his love

he was always welcome. And now, the revolution having swept beyond the conservatives, those who had hoped for beneficent results to France, who had worked for the beginning of a better regime, found themselves in the position of enemies to their country. In attempting to stay the flow of blood they incurred the enmity of those who were shedding it. Then it was that Mme. Chateaubrun began to fear for the safety of her husband. She urged him to retire from any further participation in public affairs, to go to a small estate he owned in the country. But, dangerous as it was to continue a contest with the leaders of the mob, Chateaubrun was Simcoe's Favorite Shopping Place too much of a man to cease to defend what he considered the best interests

of his country. Fiercer and flercer grew the mob. requiring of their leaders more and larger drafts of blood. Mme. Chateaubrun begged her husband to leave Paris. He sent for his friend Boyer, now one of the Jacobin leaders, and asked him what he had better do. Boyer said he would take the matter under advisement and let him know his conclusions. The day after this interview there was a knock at Chateaubrun's door. and when it was opened a party of sol. diers entered and informed Chateaubrun that he was under arrest by order of the convention. In spite of his linging wife he was dragged away

and lodged in the Conciergerie. He demanded-all arrested persons brought against him. He received no reply till he was brought up for the semblance of a trial he was given, then knew that there was not a word of truth in the charge, but its very absurdity told him that it was a pretext rather than an accusation, and he lost

hope at once. convicted on various pretexts. They the guillotine on the same day. All Jacobin in another faction, and Boyer were imprisoned in the Conciergerie, met his death by the guillotine be had which was the depot of supplies, so to intended for Chateauhrun. speak, for the terrible engine of death. The day before the execution Mme. building where records pertaining to Chateauhrun went to Boyer and begged the revolution were kept. He showed him to save her husband. He told her an order to the keeper to permit him that to show favor to one convicted by to examine certain volumes containing the mob's tribunal would be to endan- the names of informers during the revger his own head. She was astonished olution. A volume was laid on a table that he considered the risk in the case before him. Turning to the letter "C." From Boyer the wife west to the Can man was Chateauhrun.

dergerie to tell her husband of the failure of her mission and to hid him goodly. She was taken from the prison and carried bome in a swoon.

The next morning a number of carts

were backed up to the door of the Conciergerie, and a soldier in the prison called the names of twenty-one men who were to go forth to execution. Among them was Henri Chateaubrun. They all walked out to the carts, some of them dragging themselves, some erect, all of them showing in their pale and haggard features the mark of death. Standing in the carts, they were driven toward the Seine and crossed it by a bridge entering the Place de la Revolution, since called the Place de la Concorde. There stood the guillotine with persons to work it ready to lop off twenty-one heads, and there stood a crowd, kept back by soldiers. to witness the grewsome sight. The carts stopped beside the machine. and the victims descended.

And now began a work that even an implement so well adapted to the purpose found it difficult to perform. Each one of the prisoners, hatless and with his hands tied behind his back, in turn stepped up to it, was laid upon it, strapped to it; the knife fell, his head rolled into the basket, and his body was removed to make room for the next victim. Fifteen of the twentyone had been executed when the guillotine refused to work. Whether the knife got wedged in the grooves or whether the machinery that raised the ax or that which detached it after it had been raised got out of order doesn't matter. Something had gone wrong, and those in charge of the executions were unable to fix it.

The proceedings were stopped, and a messenger was sent for mechanics to put the guillotine in order. This required time. Waiting is not conducive to discipline. The soldiers who were there to keep the crowd back grew lax. and by the time workmen had arrived people had elbowed their way close upon the remaining six men standing in line waiting for the repairs on the machine that was to make corpses of

"Get back!" cried the guards, shoving the crowd with the butts of their

This was repeated so often and was disobeyed so often that at last very little attention was paid to it. Chateaubrun presently found himself in the first line of spectators. Then, instead of being in the line next the guillotine, he found himself in the second. In the pushing that continued he was wedged back into the third line and at last was at the back of the crowd that was there to see his head cut off.

There was something radically wrong with the guillotine. The man fixing it hammered and pulled and pushed and screwed and unscrewed. Meanwhile the day was ended, and it was growing dark. Chateaubrun, considering the

sight of his execution not worth so long a wait, quietly walked away. The Place de la Concorde is at the beginning of the Champs Elysees. Chateauhrun, every moment expecting to be missed, concealing as well as he could his tied hands, his heart beating wildly, passed into the Champs Elysees eager to run, but forcing himself to walk leisurely. There he made his way onward in the shadow of the trees. Finally, when he had gone far enough from the scene of his intended execution, meeting a man coming to-

ward him, he said: "M'sieur, a friend of mine just now, who is a great wag, tied my hands behind my back and ran away with my hat. Kindly unloosen me."

"Certainly, m'sier; it will give me great pleasure to do so." Thanking the man who had relieved him of the last mark of being an intended guillotine victim, Chateaubrun went into a side street and was lost, The guillotine was fixed, but there were

twenty instead of twenty-one persons executed. No word of Chateaubrun's escape reached his wife during the day of execution nor the next nor the next. Indeed, it is questionable if his absence from the number of condemned was noticed by the authorities. Mme. Chateaubrun was in the condition of one stunned. Boyer called to see her and found her heartbroken. She told him she wished to die. He begged her to live for his sake, confessing the love he had long felt for her. She was too paralyzed mentally and physically to even consider what he said. Not till some time afterward did she realize that he might have had her husband

put out of his way. But within a short time a woman stopped at Mme. Chateaubrun's home and told her that her husband was alive in the Netherlands and desired made the demand-to know the charge her to come to him. He had not dared write her, fearing to implicate her as a correspondent with an emigre. Without waiting even to announce her hapwas informed that he was accused of piness to Boyer she set out for the conspiring with others to bring the place of her husband's exile, and in a heir to the throne across the border and few days he who was supposed to have establish him as king. Chateaubrun gone to his long home and the wife who had mourned him were clasped in

each other's arms Chateaubrun never had any evidence that his old friend had betrayed him except that his wife told him that There were twenty-one persons tried Boyer had declared his love for her. at the same time with Chateaubrun and He believed then that Boyer had caused his downfail. But he never met Boyer were all sentenced to be executed on again. Subsequent changes placed the

One day an old man entered the Try the ADLETS of his old friend, but Boyer maintained he found Chateaubrun. In a column resolutely that he dured not interfere. opposite the name was Boyer. The old

# Falls February

Good Friends are coming from Far and Near, to attend Fall's February Sale, knowing well they will not be disappointed. —The one Sale, always as it becomes greater becomes better. To the new comer to Norfolk and Haldimand we wish to invite you to visit Falls' February Sale, we wish to invite you to see this Store. Larger and finer than you will expect to see. To make a visit it is not necessary for you to just run through hurriedly, nor need you buy anything. If you see anything you like and care to buy, if you find it does not please you when you take it home, bring or send it back, and the money paid for it will be paid back to you without a frown or quibble. The prices are in plain figures, so a little child can buy as safely as the best judge of goods.

The Wost Important February Sale in our History, which is not just an advertising phrase, but which has the greatest amount of merchandise, and February bargains in our History

to back it up. 

This February Sale, greater Stocks than any previous year. The Linens

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Come and Participate in the Good Bargains that will beoffered. 

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#### The February Sale of White Wear

For week's Fine Night Gowns-Skirts-Corset Covers and Drawers have been pouring into Falls' Hopper for distrihution. Every garment was made with deliberation, not hurried through, there is not much more to say-All we ask is that you make a careful and minute comparison-We know what verdiet you will reader,

#### Our Annual February Sale of Carpets. Rugs, Lin leums, Draperies and

Curtains Nearly a car load of fine scotch Liuoleums in 2, 3, 31, and 4 vard widths, the choicest patterns we ever offered will be included in the sale, all our Wilton-Brussels-Velvet-Tapestry -Wool and Union C rpets and Rugs of every description are marked at February Sale Prices.

## February Sale of White and Grey Wool

Blankets, Eider and Bat Comforters Equal value will not occur again this year and very likely for several years The Wool market is all out of joint. Our Blankets, and we have a heavy stock. were bought before the war. It will be good business to buy this year's and next year's supply.

<del>^</del> A Great February Sale of China Toilet Sets, Cut Gland etc including some beautiful French and English Dinner and Tea Sets, imported before the war. The richest opportunities of the year will be offered in our China Department.

The February Sale of Dress Goods, Silks and Velveta We can promise better bargains in Black and Colored Dress Goods, and Black and Colored Silks and more of them than

The once-a-year sale of Men's and Boys' Shirts, Underwear, Sucks. Hats, Umbrellas, Collars, Ties, Gloves, Knitted

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