

Saved by The Bible

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North American

Intermediate
2 min read

It was on the day after the battle of Germantown that Warner, who wore the blue, met his hated neighbor, the Tory Dabney, near that bloody field.

By a common impulse the men fell upon each other with their knives, and Warner soon had his enemy in a position to give him the death-stroke, but Dabney began to bellow for quarter. "My brother cried for quarter at Paoli," answered the other, "and you struck him to the heart."
"I have a wife and child. Spare me for their sakes."

"My brother had a wife and two children. Perhaps you would like to beg your life of them."

Though made in mockery, this proposition was caught at so earnestly that Warner at length consented to take his adversary, firmly bound, to the house where the bereaved family was living. The widow was reading the Bible to her children, but her grief was too fresh to gather comfort from it. When Dabney was flung into the room he grovelled at her feet and begged piteously for mercy. Her face did not soften, but there was a kind of contempt in the settled sadness of her tone as she said, "It shall be as God directs. I will close this Bible, open it at chance, and when this boy shall put his finger at random on a line, by that you must live or die."

The book was opened, and the child put his finger on a line: "That man shall die."

Warner drew his knife and motioned his prisoner to the door. He was going to lead him into the wood to offer him as a sacrifice to his brother's spirit.

"No, no!" shrieked the wretch. "Give me one more chance; one more! Let the girl open the book."

The woman coldly consents, and when the book is opened for the second time she reads, "Love your enemies." There are no other words. The knife is used, but it is to cut the prisoner's bonds, and he walks away with head hung down, never more to take arms against his countrymen. And glad are they all at this, when the husband is brought home—not dead, though left among the corpses at Paoli, but alive and certain of recovery, with such nursing as his wife will give him. After tears of joy have been shed she tells him the story of the Bible judgment, and all the members of the family fall on their knees in thanksgiving that the blood of Dabney is not upon their heads.

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