

Like Demons

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A play by Maggie Lou Rader

“I am naturally fond of adventure, a little ambitious, and a good deal romantic - but patriotism was the true secret of my success.”

— Emma Edmonds (Private Franklin Thompson)

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CHARACTERS

The story of the Civil War belongs to all Americans, because we all had a role. Women and people of color fought, spied, and died for what they believed in. Even though history books tell one story, that doesn't mean they should dictate the narrative. History belongs to everyone; so we dig deeper.

Emma Edmonds (Private Franklin Thompson)- The last child of immigrants on a dirt farm. As strong in her mind as she is in her body. Smart, cool, daring, brave. Driven by love of friendship and country. Preferably played by a woman of color.

Mom- Emma's mother. First generation Irish immigrant. Strong, rough, and worn.

Peddler- A Peddler, a spy, a soldier with many secrets.

Mrs. Hawkins- Secretary of the Hawkins Bible Company.

Willie J.- A damn delightful soul.

Private Damon Stewart- A naive young man with a good heart.

Mrs. B.- A badass lady who takes no shit. Says what she means, and means what she says.

Lieutenant James Reid- A Scottish man and childhood friend of Emma's. Suffers from "Soldier's Heart."

Martha- A washerwoman for the Union Army.

Nellie- A woman who holds her fury inside, until she doesn't.

July- An insanely intelligent man with a great sense of humor who was born into slavery. Driven by honor, love and a hope for a more righteous world.

Meriday- A delightful soul born into slavery.

Mack- The son of July and his wife, Sower.

Ensemble: Confederate Soldier, Doctor, Woman on Train, Colonel Cameron, Captain Griffin

SCENE I

Lights up on barren earth. A woman stands, stuck. The year is 1861. Maybe we hear a bit of "Bonnie George Campbell" underscoring our opening moments.

EMMA:

I live here. Always have. It's my home. No going back; there's no before. Just endless loops of here. No forward either. Just stuck here on this patch of broken, barren earth. I live here. I always have. On this land smelling of swine. And anger. Always anger. And still, somehow, hope. There is hope. Crisp. Light and swift, dancing above the earth and the stink and slop. Sometimes, I can find it, reach it... and when those moments come, God hope smells sweet.

MOM

Emmie?

EMMA:

Not now though.

MOM

EMMIE!?

EMMA:

Right now I smell fear-

MOM

Emma, stop 'yer wandering off!

EMMA:

Sadness and suffocation-

MOM:

Get your ass back here right now!

EMMA:

Stagnant; sharp.

MOM:

I SAID NOW!

EMMA:

I'm here Mama!

MOM:

Emmie, don't you show that temper to me girl. Jesus, if I told you once I've told 'ya a hundred times, you gotta come when I call 'ya.

EMMA:

You call a lot.

MOM:

Got a lot to tell 'ya. Jesus, still got a lot to tell 'ya. But looks like I'm not gonna git to.

(MOM takes out a roll of money)

EMMA:

Where did that come from?

MOM:

It don't matter where it come from girl. Just take it and go.

EMMA:

Where am I going?

MOM:

It don't matter, just git. He's coming for ya.

EMMA:

Mama, slow down, who's coming?

MOM:

Who do ya think? Carver. Yer daddy and him just done the deal in town. He's on his way here now.

EMMA:

Is Daddy crazy?!

MOM:

Not crazy. Just mean and drunk.

EMMA:

I am not marrying John Carver, Mama. He's older than Daddy.

MOM:

I know honey, but-

EMMA:

He smells like death!

MOM:

That's not-

EMMA:

I'm not a hog; Daddy can't *sell* me!

MOM:

He can and he done did girl. And getting angry at me ain't gonna help ya. Look, that man's got money. And I don't know if you've noticed but we ain't got penny one.

EMMA:

That's quite a few pennies you're holding right now Mama.

MOM:

But they the last ones we got. So take 'em and go. Ain't much time girl.

EMMA:

But Mama, I can't go. What about the farm? You can't turn that ground by yourself. And what about James? I can't just leave without telling him where I'm going.

MOM:

You can, and James is gonna be just fine without you. I swear to Heaven I never did understand what you saw in that Scottish gobshite. It ain't proper.

EMMA:

Mama! There ain't nothing improper about it. He's-

MOM:

I'm just saying-

EMMA:

He's my oldest friend and the only one who-

MOM:

There ain't time Emmie!

EMMA:

You never did understand why-

MOM:

EMMIE!

You gotta go now. I'll tell James... I'll tell him you got a job in the city. *(beat)* I'll tell him..
You're ok. *(beat)* Maybe I'm not such a bad mama after all.

(MAMA hands EMMA the money)

EMMA:

Maybe you're not such a bad mama after all.

MOM:

I didn't see 'ya. And I sure didn't see 'ya take my kitchen money. And I especially didn't see 'ya heading east. Stay safe Emmie.

EMMA:

You too Mama.

MOM:

And Emmie, could I not see you write me a letter every once in a while? Letting me know you're alright.

EMMA:

Yes, Mama.

MOM:

Emmie, 'ya do know I love 'ya, don't 'ya?

EMMA:

I know, Mama.

(MAMA leaves)

EMMA:

All this time trying to go forward. Turns out I just needed to go east.

(EMMA follows the smell of hope, leading her to civilization)

Dear Mama, the smell of hope gets stronger with every step I take. I follow it, track it. Let it lead. I trust it, wandering with blind hope it won't lead me astray.

(Throughout EMMA's next words, we find her winding through trees, lights getting brighter as she finds a bigger world. EMMA's narration is never heard by the world around her, and everyone else moves on with their lives, carrying babies, drinking with friends, cleaning pistols. The world is itching. War is coming.)

The lights get brighter. The smell gets sweeter, stronger with every wind and turn. People fill the world, every nook and cranny, women in strange clothes, colors as bright as the rainbow.

PEDDLER:

READ ALL ABOUT IT! ALL EYES ON WASHINGTON!

EMMA:

I'm on a train. The world moves fast within the cars and even faster outside them. People dart in all directions, trying to catch something ahead, just out of reach. Something wonderful, worth the chase.

WOMAN:

(Chasing a child) Come back here young lady!

EMMA:

Hope is taking form. It looks like mothers, children, wide streets, lines of trees, leaves, iron fences. It sounds like laughter and a train picking up steam. It smells like freshly made bread and a strong cup of coffee. It fills my senses wholly and completely, like a wave. Bringing me here, where the smell is the sweetest. Hope lives in Baltimore.

(The hustle and bustle of the city keep EMMA swirling. Steam. Chatter. Music. Her world spinning.)

PEDDLER:

READ ABOUT IT HERE FIRST! LINCOLN INAUGURATED AS TENSIONS RISE! ALL EYES TURN TO VIRGINIA!

EMMA:

Please tell James I'm getting by. I'm alright. I hope he is too.

SCENE 2

MRS. HAWKINS:

Thank you for coming Mrs.-

EMMA:

Miss

MRS. HAWKINS:

Of course. Edmondson.

EMMA:

Edmonds.

MRS. HAWKINS:

Of course. Thank you for coming in but we don't currently have any openings.

EMMA:

The sign in your window says you're hiring.

MRS. HAWKINS:

Yes, that's for a salesman position.

EMMA:

Then I'm here to apply for the salesman position.

MRS. HAWKINS:

The salesman position?

EMMA:

That's what I said, the salesman position.

MRS. HAWKINS:

Well, I apologize Mrs.-

EMMA:

It's miss.

MRS. HAWKINS:

Sure. Miss Edmondson-

EMMA:

Edmonds. Miss Emma Edmonds-

MRS. HAWKINS:

Sure. Mr. Hawkins is looking to go in a different direction for the sales *man* job.

EMMA:

But the sign didn't-

MRS. HAWKINS:

Also, anyone applying for the salesman job must be fully literate-

EMMA:

Of course, but-

MRS. HAWKINS:

Able to read-

EMMA:

Yes and-

MRS. HAWKINS:

AND write.

EMMA:

I know what literate means.

MRS. HAWKINS:

So I'm sure that's-

EMMA:

I CAN READ..

MRS. HAWKINS:

(beat) Oh.

EMMA:

And write.

MRS. HAWKINS:

Oh! Ha! Well that's neat.

EMMA:

We agree on something. Literacy *is* neat.

MRS. HAWKINS:

But Mr. Hawkins is still looking for-

EMMA:

For what?

MRS. HAWKINS:

Well a man. Mr. Hawkins only hires men as salesmen.

EMMA:

Pardon me Miss...

MRS. HAWKINS:

Mrs.

EMMA:

Of course. Mrs.?

MRS. HAWKINS:

Hawkins.

EMMA:

Somehow not surprising. Mrs. Hawkins, I appreciate your concern and I understand this may be a bit... unorthodox-

MRS. HAWKINS:

Oh! What a big word!

EMMA:

Yes, it means unconventional.

MRS. HAWKINS:

Ha! You're so... *(so proud she found the right word for her new friend)* neat.

EMMA:

Yes, all things considered, I'd like to apply for the salesman position.

MRS. HAWKINS:

Yes, well, in spite of being so incredibly-

EMMA:

Neat?

MRS. HAWKINS:

Exactly! My job is to honor Mr. Hawkins wishes, so unfortunately, I don't think-

EMMA:

I understand, Mrs. Hawkins. Truly. Thank you for your time.

MRS. HAWKINS:

Of course. You are something.

EMMA:

Thank you for your time and I hope, for your sake, Mrs. Hawkins, that Mr. Hawkins never realizes how unqualified you are, according to his own standards.

(the offices rolls away and we find EMMA on the street)

PEDDLER:

SHOTS FIRED ON FORT SUMTER! WAR HAS BEGUN!

(People run to grab papers, shoving EMMA out of the way, reading and celebrating during next narration. Mob leaves papers, and a hat)

EMMA:

Dear Mama, what an amazing time to be alive! The world is on edge and every day, tensions rising. Jobs are plentiful, but not more me-

PEDDLER:

VIRGINIA SECEDES!

EMMA:

But please don't worry Mama.

PEDDLER:

VIRGINIA SECEDES!

EMMA:

Though it's tough for a woman by herself-

PEDDLER:

IN A NARROW VOTE, VIRGINIA SECEDES!

EMMA:

And war is the theme of every tongue-

(EMMA picks up hat, there's an idea!)

PEDDLER:

VIRGINIA JOINS THE REBELS!

EMMA:

Times change and stretch, pulling from you what was once safely in your grasp. Hope can change, but that doesn't mean it goes away. It's still here, assuring me I'll be alright. And Mama, for the first time in my life, I know I'm right where I'm supposed to be.

PEDDLER:

LINCOLN CALLS FOR 75,000 MEN TO SQUASH THIS TREASONOUS REBELLION! \$10 A WEEK FOR ABLE BODIED MEN TO JOIN THE CAUSE AND BE A HERO FOR THE UNION! PASS A PHYSICAL AND JOIN THE RANKS AS A UNION SOLDIER!

SCENE 3

(MEN talking to each other, sitting on a bench, waiting to be seen. EMMA, now in men's apparel, finds herself in the middle of them. She's a bit anxious. WILLIE is playing a harmonica, it's a damn delight.)

WILLIE:

Nervous?

EMMA:

Nervous? No. I'm fine. Not- no. I'm not nervous.

If you say so.

WILLIE:

Why would I be nervous?

EMMA:

I can think of a few reasons.

WILLIE:

Do I seem nervous?

EMMA:

No.

WILLIE:

Are you lying?

EMMA:

Oh yeah. I'm Willie J. And also nervous.

WILLIE:

Thompson. Franklin Thompson.

EMMA:

Thompson. Franklin Thompson. My Ma's name was Thompson. Got folks in Illinois?

WILLIE:

No. Indiana.

EMMA:

Ah, close enough Thompson Franklin Thompson. See, I spent some time in Indiana. Yeah! Scaped a tornado there once, big as it was loud. Lost a leg to that storm! Fence post came flying and *pfft!* took it right out from under me.

WILLIE:

Really?

EMMA:

WILLIE:

Oh yeah! Punch my leg. See if it ain't solid oak.

EMMA:

Punch your..?

WILLIE:

Sure! Won't feel a thing.

EMMA:

That seems-

WILLIE:

Nah, it's fine.

EMMA:

I don't think-

WILLIE:

Just punch it!

(EMMA punches his leg, WILLIE screams and is obviously in pain, the other soldiers jump in shock)

WILLIE:

AHHHH!!!

EMMA:

AAAHHHH!!

WILLIE:

What did you go and do that for?

EMMA:

You said-!

WILLIE:

Are you crazy? I was lying!

EMMA:

Your leg is real?

WILLIE:

As the day is long!

EMMA:

You didn't lose it in a tornado?

WILLIE:

Never even been to Indiana!

EMMA:

Did I hurt you?

WILLIE:

(drops the pain act) Nah, you punch like my sister.

EMMA:

Why would you do that?

WILLIE:

What?

EMMA:

What? All of it. The leg, the storm, the screaming, why would you do that to someone?

WILLIE:

Not nervous anymore, are you?

EMMA:

(beat) I guess I'm not.

WILLIE:

You're welcome.

EMMA:

I didn't thank you.

WILLIE:

Yeah, I noticed that. Someone should have a stern talk with your mother.

EMMA:

My mother-

WILLIE:

About your manners young lad. Practically a beast. Surprised they let you into company refined as myself.

EMMA:

Are you like this all the time?

WILLIE:

Exhausting isn't it?

EMMA:

Truly.

WILLIE:

Eh, you'll get used to it. And no need for nerves. You'll make a fine soldier Thompson Franklin Thompson.

EMMA:

Why do you say that?

WILLIE:

You do everything you're told, no questions asked. And you don't punch like my sister.

EMMA:

Alright.

WILLIE:

You punch like my mother.

(EMMA punches him in the arm)

WILLIE:

Hey! Now THAT had a bit of my brother in it!

EMMA:

I assume that was a compliment.

WILLIE:

I mean, he's only 6 but-

(EMMA punches him repeatedly, WILLIE dies with laughter)

WILLIE:

Uncle! Uncle! Uncle!

EMMA:

Had enough?

WILLIE:

Nah, you just punched like my Uncle.

EMMA:

What's he like?

WILLIE:

No idea. S'been dead since I was 3.

(EMMA takes his harmonica, licks it, and rubs it in the ground, hands it back to him)

WILLIE:

Now that was uncalled for. I know this a time of war, but that was just savage.

EMMA:

Willie J?

WILLIE:

Yes Thompson Franklin Thompson?

EMMA:

You're insufferable.

WILLIE:

Well that's the nicest thing anyone ever said to me.

EMMA:

You're joking.

WILLIE:

Sure.

(A voice from within)

DOCTOR VOICE:

Thompson, Franklin! Report for your physical.

(EMMA starts up to walk out)

WILLIE:

DON'T. Ask him. About the boyle. Real sensitive about it.

EMMA:

Why would I... *(gives up)*..?

WILLIE:

Give him hell in there!

(EMMA goes to get her physical. WILLIE turns to the man on the other side of him)

WILLIE:

(Indicating EMMA) Biggest pecker this side of the Potomac. Swear to God.

(The line of men fades away)

SCENE 4

EMMA:

Dear Mama, I made it through. It's amazing how little a doctor cares about inspecting a young recruit's body when 75,000 more are needed. All he asked me was-

(DOCTOR comes on and asks EMMA the question as if we're seeing a glimpse into the scene)

DOCTOR:

Can you lift 50 pounds?

EMMA:

That I can sir.

DOCTOR:

Are you over 5 foot 3?

EMMA:

(slowly gets on tiptoes) Seems that way, sir

DOCTOR:

Are you prone to sickness of the body or mind?

EMMA:

Not yet, sir. *(DOCTOR exits)* Seemed as long as I could shoot a rebel, he wouldn't have cared if I'd been a blind ape while doing it. Despite the constant fear of discovery, I'm feeling more at ease every day. Soldiers sleep fully clothed and luckily, no one thinks much of a shy young Indiana farm boy maintaining some modesty when nature calls.

(We see EMMA narrating while weaving and participating in scenes of drills, training, roughhousing, eating, becoming a cohort. War is exciting before it starts.)

We've been training for weeks Mama. Marching drills before breakfast, shooting drills after lunch, evenings of comradery around the campfire. We may turn into decent soldiers after all. Assignments come in waves and I've been placed where I feel I can do the most good, a field nurse. I'll be on the front lines, participating in all the excitement of battle. I'm training under the wife of our chaplain, Mrs. B. You'd like her Mama.

(We see MRS. B. and a SOLDIER cross with supplies. We'll see characters cross EMMA's world as she mentions them.)

I've met a few women who, through sheer will and relentless insistence, have landed positions as nurses for the Union. Usually, they are not allowed to be stationed beside their husbands; however-

MRS. B:

You tell Lieutenant Brown I don't care where he graduated, or who his daddy is, or how much gold lies on his shoulders. I'll supply my hospital the way I see fit, and if he takes umbrage with my management, you can go get him to tell me so himself.

EMMA:

What she lacks in decorum-

MRS. B:

Was I unclear? I said GO!

EMMA:

She makes up for in opinions.

MRS. B:

Frank. Report to the tents in 10 with canteens. Sun is strong today.

EMMA:

Yes'm. Willie J is here.

WILLIE:

Thompson Franklin Thompson, is that you?

EMMA:

You don't recognize me, Willie J?

WILLIE:

I do now. Just never thought I'd forget a face that ugly.

EMMA:

Insufferable as ever, thank Heaven. I was fortunate enough to become bunk mates with Damon Stewart, who I befriended back in Baltimore.

STEWART:

Will you make it back from the hospital tents in time for supper Frank?

EMMA:

If Mrs. B. allows; save me some if not.

STEWART:

I'll do my best for you Frank.

EMMA:

My sense of duty is strong as battle must be nigh. But Mama, there's loneliness inside this persona I've created. There will always remain a secret between me and even my closest of comrades. I long for your touch, the smell of your kitchen on Sunday mornings. And I know you don't understand, but Mama, I miss the openness of my time with the friend who will forever remain dearest to my heart. Next time you see him Mama, please give my love to-

(JAMES, a man with a boyish grin but sternness in his stature passes EMMA's line of sight, and takes stand in prominence. The soldiers stand at attention.)

JAMES!

JAMES:

Soldiers! At ease. Allow me to introduce myself. I'm Lieutenant James Reid, 2nd Indiana Cavalry.

EMMA:

James is here Mama. But he's not the boy I once knew-

JAMES:

I've arrived today with important news from General McClellan himself.

EMMA:

He's grown. Solemn. Stoic.

JAMES:

But first, I must say, I've been astounded by the quality of man within your ranks.

WILLIE:

Just don't smell us after dinner; be serving beans tonight!

(MRS. B whacks him in the back of the head.)

JAMES:

Who is that man?

MRS. B.:

That's Private Willie Jack, sir!

JAMES:

Private Willie Jack, that's... likely sound advice. Anyway, I'm sure you're all eager to know, tomorrow, tomorrow we march on Bull Run! *(cheer)* Cheer now, rest tonight. Because men, the Rebels won't die easy, and though we feel like Gods-

WILLIE:

And smell like dogs!

(MRS. B whacks him in the back of the head.)

JAMES:

Speak for yourself Private Willie Jack. We are mere men, flesh and bone.

(He notices EMMA, just a moment of recognition)

EMMA:

He saw me Mama, he looked right at me. Shit!

JAMES:

Look after each other, trust your training, and tonight, tonight, rest easy in the knowledge that you're fighting for justice, the good of the Union, and the preservation of the United States of America. Put your trust in God... and keep your powder dry!

(JAMES shows us the first glimpse of his boyish smile and the army cheers.)

EMMA:

My heart longed to join in the celebration-

JAMES:

(In EMMA's direction) Private?

EMMA:

But if he were to discover me-

JAMES:

Private, wait a moment.

EMMA:

I could be charged with indecency-

JAMES:

Wait!

EMMA:

Prostitution-

JAMES:

I said stop!

EMMA:

Or worse, sent home to Daddy-

JAMES:

Stop Private, that's an order!

(Knowing no other alternative, EMMA stops, stands at attention and waits for JAMES)

EMMA:

Yes Sir!

JAMES:

I was calling to you Private, why did you run?

EMMA:

Sir, forgive me Sir. Didn't hear you calling, Sir.

JAMES:

Didn't hear me? You're the only one 'tween here and Richmond that didn't, then.

EMMA:

Sorry Sir.

JAMES:

At ease Private.

EMMA:

Did you need something, Sir?

JAMES:

Private, stop calling me sir.

EMMA:

Yes Sir. Sorry. Yes, I mean- noted Sir. Shit. Sorry ... Yes.

JAMES:

What's your name lad?

EMMA:

Private Franklin, er, Thompson, Sir.

JAMES:

Stop calling me sir; do I know you Private?

EMMA:

I don't think so, ssssLieutenant. *[I'm so proud of how smooth I am]*

JAMES:

You look familiar to me. You're not from Indiana, are you?

EMMA:

No. Well, when you say "from?"

JAMES:

Did you grow up there?

EMMA:

Oh. I did. Yes.

JAMES:

What else would "from" mean?

EMMA:

I... Don't... Know.

JAMES:

(Smiles) Where in Indiana?

EMMA:

Uh, Elkhart. Outside, Elkhart.

JAMES:

Me too! Well, for the last 10 years or so, since coming to America. Franklin you said?

EMMA:

That's right Lieutenant.

JAMES:

Franklin... I knew a John Franklin in Elkhart; don't think ever saw him with any kin. Any relation?

EMMA:

No, don't think so.

JAMES:

Good! Don't think I ever saw him sober either. Lieutenant Reed. (*Handshake*) Grew up on the north bank of the St. Jo River, few miles outside town. What's your da's name?

EMMA:

Uh, Ben.

JAMES:

Ben... Ben Franklin?

EMMA:

Yeah. (*hears it*) Oh! No. I mean, not that Ben Franklin.

JAMES:

I figured.

EMMA:

If he was, I'd be terribly old. Or him really verile.

JAMES:

Or both.

EMMA:

Sure!...

JAMES:

Well, it's nice to see a face from Elkhart, Private Thompson.

EMMA:

Yes Sir.

JAMES:

Stop that now.

(JAMES exits as the camp celebrations from the impending excitement settles into the night before the first battle)

EMMA:

That went well.

WILLIE:

Gather boys! Tis time for a song, and a prayer.

STEWART:

You a God-believing man Willie J?

WILLIE:

Well, He's believed in me this long, least I can do is return the favor.

STEWART:

Whatever you say, Willie J!

WILLIE:

Now, I'm sure you're all aware, I'm known for my humility-

STEWART:

Since when?!

WILLIE:

Well I've bragged about it enough to prove it. But as a faithful soldier of Jesus don't seem so shocked Stewart, and the Union Army, I stand in awe of the peace I feel in the arms of our Lord tonight. I join you in hands, yes, even yours Stewart, and ask our Savior to comfort and support our loved ones, lest we fall tomorrow. I ask You, our Lord to send peace to my widowed mother, if she comes to suffer more tragedy because of this noble war, and ask You for the preparedness to lay down the cross, and take up the crown, if that is Your will. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost,

ALL:

Amen.

WILLIE:

And as if my praying wasn't ugly enough to your delicate ears, allow me to continue my aural assault, with a song.

MOM:

The men looked at Willie J, for what felt like the first time, for who could help but gravitate toward his light-

WILLIE:

*O for a faith that will not shrink,
Though pressed by every foe,
That will not tremble on the brink
Of any earthly woe.*

MOM:

He sang to our hearts.

WILLIE:

*That will not murmur nor complain
Beneath the chast'ning rod,
But in the hour of grief or pain
Will lean upon its God.*

Join with me boys!

*O for a faith that will not shrink,
Though pressed by every foe,
That will not tremble on the brink
Of any earthly woe.*

MOM:

The voices of camp rose joyously to Heaven.

WILLIE:

*A faith that shines more bright and clear
When tempests rage without,
That, when in danger, knows no fear,
In darkness feels no doubt.*

*O for a faith that will not shrink,
Though pressed by every foe,
That will not tremble on the brink
Of any earthly woe.*

No, no, no!
I will not tremble on the brink
Of any earthly woe.

SCENE 5

EMMA:

The next morning, before dawn, we moved forward over the green hills and hazy valleys, soft moonlight falling on long lines of shining steel. Not drum nor bugle was heard during the march, and the deep silence was only broken by the rumbling of artillery, the muffled thread of infantry, or the low hum of a thousand voices.

(Lights rise on a line of soldiers, ready for battle)

Soon, morning broke, bright and clear, bringing our two contending armies in plain sight of the other. They had faces. We'd spent weeks all too eager to meet the enemy and suddenly realized, many of us wouldn't live to relate the success or defeat of the day. Even if victory would perch upon us, many noble lives would be sacrificed ere it be obtained.

JAMES:

DON'T RELENT!

EMMA:

Mrs. B. and myself took our position on the field behind the battery.

JAMES:

NEVER FEAR!

EMMA:

She stood tall, looking as brave as possible, solemn, as if standing face to face with the angel of death.

JAMES:

AND HOLD THE LINE!

(As the battle commences, we see what EMMA describes, unfold)

EMMA:

The roar of artillery sounded. The battle had begun. What began as a low rumble began to rage with terrible fury. As James gave orders-

JAMES:

Reload!

(Whizzing bullet)

A shot came whizzing by his head. Stunning him for just a moment, he turned up the side of his head and shrugged his shoulders, just as he did as a little boy-

JAMES:

Rather close quarters!

EMMA:

Soon nothing could be heard, save the thunder of artillery, the clash of steel, and the continuous roar of musketry. There was no place of safety for miles around.

(A loud burst)

A shell burst in the midst of the battery; the first man I saw fall was a gunner in our command.

MRS. B:

FRANK!

EMMA:

I followed as fast as I could, stooping over one of the wounded, who lay upon his face in a pool of his own blood. I raised his head, and who should it be but Willie J., the tide of life was fast ebbing away.

JAMES:

CLEAR OUT MEN!

EMMA:

My hands longed to stop the bleeding of my friend but-

JAMES:

CLEAR OUT!

MRS. B:

MORE LINT AND BRANDY FRANK!

EMMA:

Orders came quickly. I rushed the seven miles to Centerville for fresh supplies. When I returned, the field was strewn with wounded, dead, and dying.

MRS. B:

Don't stay for the wounded now!

EMMA:

Mrs. B, where's-

MRS. B.:

The troops are famished with thirst and are beginning to fall back.

EMMA:

We started for a spring a mile away, the nearest source of water and the enemy knew it. (*shots*) Sharpshooters within rifle range tried to prevent us from supplying our troops with water. Blind to the danger, we filled our canteens, balls of lead falling thick and fast around us, and returned quickly to relieve the exhausted men.

MRS. B.:

Don't fall back Frank!

EMMA:

The tide of battle rolled on fiercer than before. And again, we went to work on the wounded. Colonel Cameron, came dashing along the line shouting-

CAMERON:

Come on boys! The Rebels are in full retreat!

EMMA:

The words had scarcely been uttered, (*gunshot and CAMERON goes down*) when he was pierced to the heart by a bullet.

MRS. B.:

Nothing can be done for him, lad. No time to carry off the dead.

JAMES:

Don't let up men!