

Chapter One

Edward wheeled and swung his musket 'round behind him. The butt of the discharged weapon caught the Wyandot warrior square against his neck, dropping him instantly. The warrior attempted to cry out but the sound was more of a bark. Edward's feet slipped in the sand, as he frantically climbed to the small crest of the rise. He flung the barrel forward, caught the stock in mid-air and wished his blow had landed just eight inches higher. A cracked skull was better than bruised windpipe and would have assured one less pursuer.

Sarah was descending the same rise, running toward the water's edge. Edward had no plan but to put as much distance as was possible between them and the chaos, the violence, the hell unfolding behind them. The shrieks were now rising above, both in intensity and frequency, the sporadic shots offered in reply. He must at least see Sarah to some degree of safety, before he returned to the fight.

Edward called, "Run, Sarah! To the water, don't stop!" He sensed she needed no urging and called more to assure her of his presence, still behind her, if she had even comprehended the threat to both of them, arising no more than just seconds ago. He thought she nodded, but then realized she detected a new danger, rushing toward them from their left, just at the edge of their peripheral vision. Sarah ran faster yet, while Edward, now just over the crest, felt the dune fall away beneath him, breaking his stride, causing him nonetheless to increase his speed by way of more of a lunge than a sprint. He cautioned himself to stay in control, as his feet sank in the sand. A loss of footing would in these next few moments surely prove fatal.

Black Partridge, a young Potawatomi of some status within his nation, was almost upon Sarah, while focusing upon Edward. She was confused and slowed. Edward knew she was in that instant weighing her trust for an individual childhood friend, against her learned distrust for native warriors in general in these troubled times. She thought, "Surely, would this be my end; at the hand of a former playmate?"

Edward reached for a pistol tucked in his sash. Black Partridge angled off straight toward him, leaving him no time to cock the hammer. Still, Edward held out his left arm, dropped his musket from his right and just as he began to draw the hammer back, Black Partridge caught the pistol against the shaft of his tomahawk, spun his arm and caused the pistol to fall from Edward's hand. Black Partridge slammed into his chest with the full momentum of a heavier, larger frame and Edward went sprawling back against the sand. His thought, even before slamming down hard on his back as he heard Sarah scream, was that of shame for the loss of his Sarah to a savage.

As he raised his head, not really wanting to witness what he was helpless to prevent, he saw in his enemy's eyes no aggression, but concern. Sarah was near panic and was flailing about and he could tell instantly that if Black Partridge had wanted to do her harm, she would have by now been in far worse shape. Edward called, "Sarah, no! Do not resist!"

Chapter One

Edward Morris turned and swung his musket behind him. The butt of the discharged weapon caught the Wyandot Indian warrior in the neck and dropped him instantly. The warrior's only sound was an attempt at a cry which came out as a bark. Edward frantically climbed to the crest of the small rise, his feet slipping in the sand. He flung the musket barrel forward and caught the stock in mid-air, wishing the blow he had just landed had been eight inches higher. A cracked skull was better than a bruised windpipe and would have assured one less pursuer.

Sarah was descending the far side of the same rise, running toward the water's edge. Edward had no plan other than to put as much distance as was possible between themselves and the hell of chaos and violence unfolding behind them. The shrieks of the Indians were now rising, both in intensity and frequency, above the sporadic shots being offered in reply. He must at least see Sarah to some degree of safety, before he returned to the fight.

Edward called, "Run, Sarah! To the water, don't stop!" He sensed she needed no urging and called more to assure her of his presence, still behind her. He thought she nodded, then realized she was indicating a new danger, rushing toward them from their left, just at the edge of his peripheral vision. Sarah ran faster yet, Edward, now just over the crest of the dune, felt the sand give away beneath him, breaking his stride, nonetheless his speed increased but as more of a lunge than a sprint. He struggled to stay in control, his feet sinking in the sand. A loss of footing would in these next few moments surely prove fatal.

A Potawatomi warrior was almost upon Sarah and Edward noted that instead of running faster, she contrarily slowed, her erratic strides showing fear. . . or confusion. The Indian focused his attention on Edward, and Edward recognized him, and the cause of Sarah's hesitation. It was Black Partridge, a young warrior of some status within his nation, Edward realized Sarah was in that instant weighing her trust for an individual childhood friend against her instinct to run. He imagined her thinking, Surely, would this be my end; at the hand of a former playmate?

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Comment [A1]: These changes keep your POV consistent with Edward. I deleted distrust. . .troubled times because it trivializes the very real danger they are presently in (and lessens reader tension)

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