

letter received to day again taught her that her anticipations were not realized. he had been a faithful friend of her father, now numbered with the dead. her brother in law too had attached himself, with all the enthusiasm of youth, to the older, fully matured champion of liberty, van der werff. when he had spoken of peter to maria, it was always with expressions of the warmest admiration and love. peter had come to delft soon after her fathers death and the violent end of the young wedded pair, and when he expressed his sympathy and strove to comfort her, did so in strong, tender words, to which she could cling, as if to an anchor, in the misery of her heart. the valiant citizen of leyden came to delft more and more frequently, and was always a guest at doctor groots house. when the men were engaged in consultation, maria was permitted to fill their glasses and be present at their conferences. words flew to and fro and often seemed to her neither clear nor wise; but what van der werff said was always sensible, and a child could understand his plain, vigorous speech. he appeared to the young girl like an oak tree among swaying willows. she knew of many of his journeys, undertaken at the peril of his life, in the service of the prince and his native land, and awaited their result with a throbbing heart. more than once in those days, the thought had entered her mind that it would be delightful to be borne through life in the strong arms of this steadfast man. then he extended these arms, and she yielded to his wish as proudly and happily as a squire summoned by the king to be made a knight. she now remembered this by gone time, and every hope with which she had accompanied him to leyden rose vividly before her soul. her newly wedded husband had promised her no spring, but a pleasant summer retreat, resting themselves till night. this being come, they returned to the assault, to try, by the help of their fire balls, to destroy the pales before the wall; and while they were about it, there happened a very remarkable accident, which occasioned their victory. one of the pirates being wounded with an arrow in his back, which pierced his body through, he pulled it out boldly at the side of his breast, and winding a little cotton about it, he put it into his musket, and shot it back to the castle; but the cotton being kindled by the powder, fired two or three houses in the castle, being thatched with palm leaves, which the spaniards perceived not so soon as was necessary; for this fire meeting with a parcel of powder, blew it up, thereby causing great ruin, and no less consternation to the spaniards, who were not able to put a stop to it, not having seen it time enough. the pirates perceiving the effect of the arrow, and the misfortunes of the spaniards, were infinitely glad; and while they were busied in quenching the fire, which caused a great confusion for want of water, the pirates took this opportunity, setting fire likewise to the palisades. the fire thus seen at once in several parts about the castle, gave them great advantage against the spaniards, many breaches being made by the fire among the pales, great heaps of earth falling into the ditch. then the pirates climbing up, got over into the castle, though those spaniards, who were not busy about the fire, cast down many flaming pots full of combustible matter, and odious smells, which destroyed many of the english. the spaniards, with all their resistance, could not hinder the palisades from being burnt down before midnight. meanwhile the pirates continued in their intention of taking the castle; and though the fire was very great, they would animal kill another. it seems more natural, and fairer. they have a run for their lives, so to speak. and who did you get to kill your mouse well, i know a youngster who has a terrier. they are a perfect pair. as like as two peas, and equally keen about sport they would go twenty miles to chase a bluebottle round an attic, sooner than not hunt something. so i told him there was a mouse de trop in my rooms, and he promised to bring nipper next morning. i was going out hunting myself. the meet was early, and my man got breakfast at seven oclock for me in my own quarters; and the first thing i saw when i came out of my bedroom was the mouse sitting on the edge of my indian silver sugar basin. i knew him again by his ear. and there he sat all breakfast time, twitching his tail, and nibbling little bits of sugar, and watching me with such a pair of eyes have you ever seen a mouses eyes close upon my word, they are wonderfully beautiful, and its uncommonly difficult to hurt a creature with fine eyes. i didnt touch it, and as i was going out i looked back, and the mouse was looking after me. i was a fool