

expected, and then he became delirious. He talked and laughed and rattled away with his jokes, — he was noted for his dry humor, — and occasionally he paused to take breath and groan. And all that the resourceful Mrs. Kilpatrick and the courageous Flora could do was to sit and gaze at each other and wipe their overflowing eyes with trembling hands.

Plato was sent to the village, nine miles away, for the family doctor, but he returned with a note from that fat and amiable old gentleman, saying that he had just been informed that the entire Federal army was marching to surround the village, and, as for him, he proposed to stay and defend his family. This news went to Aunt Candace, the plantation nurse, in short order. Plato was her son, and he felt called on to tell her about it.

Aunt Candace made no comment whatever. She knocked the ashes out of her pipe, leaned it in a corner of the fireplace, tightened up her head handkerchief, and waddled off to the big house. Plato knew by the way his mammy looked that there would be a fuss, and he hung back, pretending that he had some business at the horse lot.