

Fredrick brings JOHN WASHINGTON, Washington's 18-year-old younger brother, into the room.

FREDRICK

Master Custis, John Washington is here to see you.

DANIEL CUSTIS

John, what brings you to the white house this eve?

MARTHA CUSTIS

John Washington, what a surprise.
Do join us. Won't you?

JOHN

Good eve Mr. and Mrs. Custis. I just received the most interesting letter from my brother, and I was eager to share it with you.

John reaches into his pocket and pulls out a letter from George Washington.

WILLIAM HUNTER

I am pleased to make your acquaintance and even more pleased that ye have news of your brother.

JOHN

How do ye do, sir. I am very familiar with your articles. (To the Custis's) I apologize. I did not intend to disturb your gathering, Mr. and Mrs. Custis. I will come another time when ye are not entertaining.

DINWIDDIE

Indeed, it would be most desirable if we can glean even more knowledge of the incident from your letter, Mr. Washington.

JOHN (reluctantly)

Well, I suppose it would be reasonable to read the letter. It is especially good news concerning my brother's first battle.

LORD FAIRFAX

Well then, get to it son.

JOHN

(Reads from the letter)

"I fortunately escaped without a wound..."

(Continues after being interrupted)

"...though the right wing where I stood was exposed to, and received all the enemy's fire, and we were in the area in which the man was killed and the rest wounded I can with truth assure, I heard bullets whistle by me and believe me there was something charming in the sound."