



Never a word spoke Miss Bagga. She sat bolt upright in her buggy, regarding the boy fixedly as Bobby Lee triangulated onward.

CHAPTER VII OLD FRIENDS MEET. It was the middle of August before the different columns of the Army of the Cumberland began to cross the mountains between it and Chattanooga.

CHAPTER VIII JAKEY ENTERS THE ARMY. The two wayfarers started in the direction the cavalry had taken, but after going a short distance Colonel Maynard reined in his horse.

CHAPTER IX RECKON THEM UNS HEZ GOT IT BAD. "Did you speak to her?" "I asked her if I'd give her love ter Rats when I see her."

CHAPTER X THE ARMY OF THE CUMBERLAND WAS NOW ADVANCING BY EVERY POSSIBLE ROUTE TOWARD CHATTANOOGA. One of the routes taken by the Union army lay through the Sequatchie valley and directly past the Slacks' little farm.

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remembered his dignity as former volunteer aid-de-camp, and straightening up pulled his hat down over the back of his head and tried to look military.

"Do ye know me, me boy?" asked Ratigan. "Does I know one o' them signal lights on th' mounting?"

"Well, me lad," pursued the corporal, laughing, "who am I?" "Rats."

"I see ye have a good memory. Rats. It's quare ye should have remembered that." And the corporal chuckled good naturedly.

"Upon me word!" ejaculated the corporal, evidently much interested. "Reckon she war in a hurry 'bout some'n 'n didn't want ter stop 'n talk

"Waal, when we uns met her?" "Oh, Jakey, please don't say we uns," interrupted Souri.

"Waal, when we met her outen th' reach o' you uns (Souri gave a despairing look, but said nothing) she talked peart nuff, 'n she skowed me, too, but when she passed me on th' road 't'other day no'th o' th' Union army she only stared at me through her goggles 'n didn't say nothin' nohow."

"Reckon she war in a hurry 'bout some'n 'n didn't want ter stop 'n talk

"Did you speak to her?" "I asked her if I'd give her love ter Rats when I see her."

Corporal Ratigan's Irish good nature triumphed over his desire to reach down and give the boy a cuff. Jakey's countenance was solemn, as usual, and did not break into a smile in response to the corporal's embarrassed laugh.

He opened the gate, and Ratigan rode into the yard, followed by his troopers. They refreshed themselves from a gourd which hung in the wellhouse; and then, filling their canteens, they rode away.

But Souri and Jakey were destined soon to meet one who was of far more consequence to both than Corporal Ratigan. The next morning while Souri was setting the house to rights she heard the beating of innumerable horses' hoofs.

Before the head of the column had reached the house the whole Black family were standing in the yard gaping. Two regiments passed, though each seemed like an army, for cavalry occupies three or four times the space of infantry.

"Aha, little brother, we meet again." But there were others to engage the speaker's attention. Dropping the boy to the ground, he dismounted and was soon warmly shaking all by the hand.

"Yer Mark Malone, I reckon," said Farmer Slack, "though y' don't look much like the common sojer ez kem long hyar a year ago 'n changed yer uniform fo' our Henry's store clothes."

"Not Mark Malone—that was a fictitious name—but Mark Maynard. No, I'm not a private any longer. I command this brigade. And it's a splendid body of men. I'm proud of it."

"Hain't I improved?" asked Jakey. "Improved? Certainly. Have you conquered your old habit of answering people with questions?"

"Did I lick Johnny? Oh, yes," suddenly recollecting himself. "I purty nigh got over that."

"So I perceive," said the colonel, smiling. "You're a perfect paragon at expressing yourself."

"Won't yer come in 'n set down?" asked Mrs. Slack. "Not now. I am going to meet my wife, whom I have not seen for nearly a year. I expect to find her at her mother's plantation near Chattanooga. You remember how she hid me when my neck was in a halter on that very plantation; how I came north in disguise with her; how I came here one night, where I had left my horse and uniform, and dashed away to the Union lines; how she followed me, and we were married by a chaplain. Well, I've never seen her since a week after our marriage. Old Pap is famous for not allowing women in camp, and he made no exception in Mrs. Maynard's case except for one week's honeymoon in recognition of service rendered the cause."

"And yer wife's gone back onto the plantation?" said Mrs. Slack. "She has. You see, in June a recruit entered our family quarters in the shape of a ten pounder boy. Before that happened Mrs. Maynard went through the lines to join her mother, Mrs. Fain. As the youngster is not old enough to report to his father since his enlistment, I suppose his father will have to report to him."

"I reckon Mrs. Maynard'll be right glad to see you," remarked Souri feelingly. "I shall certainly be right glad to see her. And that must account for my leaving you so soon. I owe you all a great deal in this household, and now that our forces occupy the country, if you require anything, let me know it. What can I do for you?"

There was silence for a few moments, which was broken by Mrs. Slack. "Waal, now, colonel, d'yo know I hain't had a cup o' coffee fo' nigh onto a year?"

"You shall have some as soon as I can reach my commissary. Anything

Souri frowned even at the request of her mother, and no one named any other requirement.

"Jakey," said the colonel, "you haven't forgotten how, when I went through here a year ago, I asked you to go with me on my way to Chattanooga to get information of the movements of the Confederate army?"

"Hev I forgot when I war yer aid-de-camp? Oh, no, no, I hain't forgot."

"Well, I hadn't much inducement to offer you then unless the sharing of a prison may be called an inducement. Now, if you will go along, I'll promise you the best that Mrs. Maynard can provide at the plantation. Will you go?"

"Will I? Course I will. Paw, can I hev Tom?" "Sartin, boy," and the farmer turned and went to the barn.

"Won't you need a luncheon?" asked Souri, whose hesitation was an effort to avoid the word "snack," the only name she had known for a cold bite before she went north to school.

"Oh, no," said the colonel. "We shall ride directly to the plantation. We'll get plenty to eat when we arrive."

Meanwhile Jakey had followed his father to the barn. Mrs. Slack stepped into the house to make up a bundle for the boy. Maynard and Souri sauntered aimlessly in the yard. Presently they found themselves at the wellhouse. Souri leaned over it and looked down into the well. There was something she wanted to say, but found it difficult.

"I thank you very much for what you've done for me," she said. "Why, Souri, what have I done for you compared with what you did for me?" "Didn't you find me a 'poor white' girl a year ago, and haven't you sent me to school, with Jakey, and helped me to look into a world that would have been always closed to me except for you?"

in the palms of her hands, her elbows resting on the board beside the bucket, and looking down as though seeking for something in the dark disk below.

"She completed what you began," the colonel finished for her. "It was more for her to do. 'Twasn't noth'—anything for me. You uns—you was Union, and so was I. She was Confederate."

There was a depth of feeling in Souri which threw her off her guard and made it difficult for her to adhere to her training in expressing herself.

"Souri, I am indebted to two lovely women for every breath I draw. You opened my prison doors. She who is my wife concealed me when I was hunted for my life. Let us talk no more about it. The very mention of the narrowness of my escape gives me a choking sensation about the neck."

Jakey came trotting out of the barn on Tom, the rim of his felt hat flapping up and down at each step.

The farmer followed, and Mrs. Slack came out with Jakey's bundle. Then with a handshaking all around, and a "God bless you, my little girl," from Maynard to Souri, the two started on their way, not on foot, as on their former journey, but each with a good mount.

"The one you and I took when we went to Chattanooga before."

"Ter bring back information," added Jakey proudly. "We'll take it again. It's off the main road, and we'll be less liable to be murdered for our boots."

"Reckon," said Jakey, wrinkling his brow and drawing down the corners of his mouth with an intensely deliberative expression, as though the problem having been submitted to him, it behooved him to consider it carefully.

They rode back past the house, and keeping on for about a mile turned into a byway. This they followed till they reached the Chattanooga road.

Colonel Maynard was in the most exuberant spirits. He had turned over the command of his brigade for a day or two to the colonel next in rank to himself and was on his way to join his young wife, from whom he had parted a week after his marriage. The two acted on his spirits like champagne. He laughed without having anything to laugh at; he bantered Jakey; he talked lovingly to his favorite horse, Madge. In short, Colonel Maynard appeared just what he was in years, little more than a boy.

His services as a scout had attracted the attention of the army and had led the general for whom he scouted to advance him. He had stepped from the ranks to a high position on the staff, and soon after, a cavalry regiment being badly in need of a lieutenant colonel, the colonel being inefficient and some junior officer being needed to practically command, Maynard was placed in the position. When the colonel of the regiment was got rid of, Maynard was made colonel. Soon after his command was attached to a brigade wherein he found himself the ranking regimental commander. This gave him the command of the brigade.

He entered upon his duties with misgivings. He knew he was well fitted for the duties of a scout, but doubted if he could command the respect of 3,000 men. Besides he knew there lurked within him a spirit of antagonism to conventional methods; he feared impulses that might wreck not only himself, but his brigade—perhaps a whole army. True, there was often a kind of illegitimate nobility about these impulses, but it did not render them any the less dangerous.

On hearing the news of his appointment to the command of a brigade he mounted his horse and dashed over to the headquarters of the general to whom he owed nearly all his advancement, with a view to protesting. On arriving there he stammered out reasons which had no coherence and was dismissed by the general with the remark that he was suffering from an attack of ill-timed modesty, the general adding, "You are a born soldier, Colonel Maynard, and if the war lasts long enough to give you an opportunity you will reach a higher command than that of a brigade."

(To be continued.)

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