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"Yes, but let that suffice. You would regret it if I should confide anything more to you. Yet from this brief interview I have learned to trust you sufficiently to place my life in your keeping."

"She thought a moment. A faint shudder passed over her. 'I don't tell your mother what you have discovered?' asked Mark anxiously. 'Not for worlds.' 'You suspect?' He paused and looked at her inquiringly. 'Yes, yes. Don't say any more. Don't breathe another word. Only go away from here as soon as possible.' 'I shall go tomorrow morning. I shall always hold you in grateful remembrance. You are a splendid—a lovely woman. I owe you—' 'Yes, yes; go—go early.' 'She rose and went into the house. In a few minutes a colored boy came out and told Mark that he would show him to his room. As Mark had been there before, he knew this meant that he was expected to retire for the night. As he went by the parlor he glanced in. The mother sat by a lamp on a 'center table' reading. Miss Fain's face was also bent over a book. It was white as the margin of the page she pretended to read."

CHAPTER V. GLORIOUS PERFDY.

When Mark went down stairs the next morning, followed by Jakey, they were invited into the breakfast room. Laura Fain was there, but her mother was not. Mark looked at Laura, but she avoided his gaze. He asked after her mother. 'Mamma scarcely ever gets up to breakfast,' she said as she poured out a substitute for coffee. During the meal she said but little, and that was only on commonplace subjects. She seemed to have more on her mind than the soldier who was taking his life in his hands, and studiously avoided looking at him at all. Jakey ate heartily. Mark noticed him eating with his knife and otherwise displaying his humble origin, while he was himself eating like a gentleman. He thought that it was lucky Mrs. Fain was not at the table. After breakfast Mark followed his hostess through a door opening into a sitting room on the opposite side of the hall from the parlor. 'Miss Fain,' he said, 'I know too well the station of your family and southern customs not to accept as a gift the hospitality you have afforded. I can only express my indebtedness, and the hope that some day the war may be over and I can come down here and show my gratitude for something of far more moment to me than a night's lodging.' He paused, and then added: 'May I ask a question? Are you a Union or a Confederate girl?' 'Confederate,' Mark looked at her uneasily. 'I inferred from what you said last night that you will not betray me.' 'I will not.' 'But you think you ought to.' 'I do.'

Mark stood gazing at her. She was looking out of the window with a troubled expression. 'Miss Fain,' he said, 'you may be doing wrong; you may be doing right. At any rate you are acting the part of a woman, and this act makes you in my eyes the loveliest woman that lives.' The words were scarcely spoken when the muscles of the girl's face contracted into an expression of horror. Mark could not understand why his speech had so affected her. The natural uncertainty of his position impelled him to look about him for the cause. Glancing out of the front window he saw an officer in gray uniform on horseback in the act of reaching down to open the gate. A slender, with long black hair, mustache and goatee and a fine black eye. He looked, as he came riding up the roadway, the impersonation of the southern gentleman. Before he had dismounted Mark and Jakey were on their way to the barn. Laura Fain opened the front door just as the officer was coming up the steps. 'Why, Cameron!' she exclaimed, 'how did you get away? I thought you told me you were to be officer of the guard today.'

'I persuaded my friend the adjutant to detail another man.' 'Was there a special reason?' 'Certainly. I positively couldn't stand it another day not to see you. Besides we are momentarily expecting orders to cross to this side of the river.' 'But you will be nearer to us then, won't you?' 'I am afraid not. Once on this side we'll not stop nearer than Dallas or Poe's. We may join Colonel Forrest near Sparta, or wherever he may be, doubtless somewhere in the enemy's rear. He seldom troubles the Yankees in front. But you are not listening, my darling, and you are pale. You are not ill?' 'Certainly not.' 'You are sorry that I came?' 'Why, Cameron, what do you mean? You know I always want you to come.'

She led the way into the sitting room, from which Mark had disappeared but a minute before—a minute is a long while sometimes. Mrs. Fain entered and received the guest most graciously. Captain Cameron Fitz Hugh was a young Virginian, a graduate of the University of Virginia law school, the son of wealthy parents, whose acres and negroes were numbered by thousands. He had known the Fains before the war, Mrs. Fain having been born and reared in the Old Dominion. During the visit of Laura to his people, shortly before the breaking out of hostilities, he had fallen in love with her, had proposed and was accepted. Both families being agreeable, the two were engaged to be married. 'This is an unexpected pleasure, captain,' said Mrs. Fain. 'I did not suppose I could get away today.'

'Everything is unexpected in these times. We never know who is coming to us. Last night I slept uneasily for fear that we harbored a guerrilla in the house.'

'How is that?' asked Captain Fitz Hugh. 'Where are the strangers, Laura?' 'I think they are gone, mamma.' 'A countryman and his little brother,' said Mrs. Fain to the captain. 'Laura thought him quite a gentleman for one so poorly dressed.'

'But I changed my mind, mamma,' said Laura quickly. 'And what was the occasion of so sudden a bouleversement?' asked the captain. 'Why—why, when we were sitting on the veranda after you went in, mamma—'

'Sitting on the veranda with a countryman?' exclaimed the lover. 'Well, yes; mamma said to invite him up. But I was going to say—'

Laura's inventive powers had gained time to act by the interruption—'I found that he was only an ignorant farmer after all, for I asked him how far the moon was, and he said he reckoned it was a hundred million miles.'

'That doesn't prove anything,' Fitz Hugh remarked. 'I don't believe there's an officer in my regiment knows that. But it becomes us to be very careful. The commanding general has made it known unofficially through his staff officers that he is especially desirous of concealing his intentions. One spy penetrating for even a day at Chattanooga might frustrate all his plans. If the enemy knew that we are concentrating there, and how weak we are there at present, he would or at least he should come down with a large force and drive us south.'

A troubled expression crossed Laura's face. 'Indeed!' said Mrs. Fain. 'I was not aware of that. Suppose the young man was a spy.'

'Cameron,' said Laura. 'I wish you wouldn't talk so to mamma. She will be suspicious of every poor beggar that asks a crust. The man's name was Slack. There are plenty of Slacks among the poor whites about here. I have a sick family of that name on my hands now not a mile up the road.'

'Has the fellow gone?' asked Fitz Hugh. 'I think I would better see him.' 'Gone! of course he's gone,' said Laura, with a heaving bosom. 'Where did he say he was going?' 'To Chattanooga,' said Mrs. Fain. 'I'll mount and follow him. I can easily overtake him on horseback.'

'Nonsense,' said Laura, with a pout; 'you have kept away from me for a week, and now you are going as soon as you've come.'

'But, my darling, would you have me—'

'I would have you stay where you are and—'

Mrs. Fain, seeing that some cooling was coming, wisely withdrew. 'And what, sweetheart?' 'Tell me what I love to hear,' she said softly. 'I've told you that so often you should certainly be tired of it by this time.'

Fitz Hugh looked inquiringly into her face as he smoothed back her hair. He

was used to these requests to repeat his assurances of affection, but there was a nervous something about his fiancée this morning that puzzled him. His back was toward the window, while she was facing it. Suddenly she clasped her arms tightly around him. 'Now go if you can!' she said, affecting a playful tone. 'Why, Laura, what does this mean?' he asked, astonished. 'You don't love me,' she whined. 'Love you, pet! You know I do.' 'Then why do you act so?' 'Act how?' 'You never come any more but you want to go right away.'

'But, sweetheart!—a half dozen kisses for exclamation points—'I only intend being gone a little while.' 'If you once start out to follow somebody you don't know anything about you'll be gone all day, and then you'll be ordered away, and maybe I'll never see you any more.'

Never was a lover more charmed at such evidence of woman's affection, and never had this lover less cause to be charmed at the evidence of his hold upon Laura Fain. Had Captain Fitz Hugh seen what Laura Fain saw from the moment she put her arms around him and held his back to the window—Mark and Jakey going down the walk to the gate—he would have exclaimed: 'Oh, woman, thy name is perfidy!' 'Oh, woman,' the departing soldier would have responded, 'thy name is indeed perfidy, but how glorious thy perfidy!'

CHAPTER VI. IN THE ENEMY'S LINES.



Mark handed the wild whiskered ferryman the crisp ten dollar note.

'Jakey,' said Mark as they passed behind trees that hid them from the house. 'I don't like that officer coming to the Fain plantation just at this time. There'll surely be some mention of us, and it is possible he may want to have a look at us. You know, Jakey, we're only poor modest people, and don't want to be stared at.'

'We ain't got our store clothes on, and don't want ter make no acquaintances,' Jakey observed solemnly. Mark had noticed Laura Fain's agitation when she caught sight of the officer at the gate, and knew there was good reason for it. He did not fear that she would betray him intentionally, but that she might lead to do so from her very anxiety to keep his secret.

'The first chance we get, Jakey, we'll take to the woods. We told them we were going to Chattanooga, and if this officer takes it into his aristocratic head to escort us with true southern politeness a part of the way he'll expect to find us on the Chattanooga pike.'

'N' wouldn't be perlitte fo' ter git in his way.'

They had gone but a trifling distance when they came to a creek flowing—as a wayfarer they met told them—through Moccasin gap. The road crossed it by something between a hedge and a culvert. Mark led the way from the road up the creek and began to climb the hills, on which there was sufficient growth of timber to afford concealment. For an hour he trudged along with Jakey beside him. He tried to get the boy to give him his hand to help him along, but Jakey demurred indignantly and kept his sturdy little legs so well at work that he never once fell behind his companion.

At last they came to a hut occupied by an old negro. 'Good morning, uncle!' said Mark. 'Mornen, sah.'

'Hev 'y seen anything of a colored boy 'bout eighteen years old go by hyar this mornen?'

'No, sah.'

'He's my boy Sam, and I'm a-huntin' him. He run away last night. He'll git a hundred ef I ketch him.'

'I ain't saw him, sah, 'n I tell yo' what, marst'r, ef I had saw him I wouldn't inform yo' ob de fac.'

'That's the way with you niggers, since the Yankees turned your heads. But it won't last long. Our boys'll drive 'em so fur no'th pretty soon that you darkeys'll hev to stoprunn away.'

'Now don' yo' believe dat so sarten.'

'Do you really believe the Yanks can whip us?'

'De Lo'd nes sent 'em to tote his colored people out o' bondage.'

Mark was satisfied with this preliminary examination that he could trust the old man.

'Uncle, I'm no secesh. I'm a Union man. I want to stay with you today and travel tonight. Keep me all day, and I'll go away as soon as it is dark.'

'Fo' de Lo'd. I knowed yo' wa'n't no south'n man all de time.'

'How?'

'Yo' ain't got de south'n man's way o' talken. Yo' no't do hit well'n enuf, yo' cain't fool me.'

'Well, will you keep us?'

'Reckon I will.'

'What's your name?'

'Randolph's my name, sah. Jefferson Randolph. My marst'r said he gib me a mighty big name, but hit didn't do no good. Dey always call me notten but Jeff.'

'You're as well off as the president of the Confederacy in that respect,' said Mark. 'I guess we'll go inside.'

'Yes, go in dar. Keep dark.' Mark and Jakey waited for the day to pass, and as they had no means of amusing themselves it passed very slowly. Jakey played about the creek for a while, but both were glad when the darkness came and they could get away. Before setting out on his expedition Mark had carefully studied a map of the region, preferring to fix it in his mind than to carry it about his person. Upon leaving Jefferson Randolph's hut he made direct for the Tennessee river. Once there, he knew from his remembrance of the map that he was not far from Chattanooga, and that between him and that place was Moccasin point, formed by a bend, or rather loop, in the river, the point putting out southward for more than two miles, with a distance of nearly a mile across its neck. But he knew the ground was high on the east shore of the peninsula, and he did not know the proper place to strike inland and cut off the distance around the river's margin. There was no one near to inform him, so he kept on by the river.

It was late at night when they reached a point where the river took a slight turn to the east, and about a mile from the quick bend around Moccasin point. Mark was anxious to enter Chattanooga either late at night or soon after daylight, hoping to meet few people, that his entrance might not be noticed. He cast his eye about for some means of crossing the river. Noticing a skiff moored just below a hut, he surmised that the skiff belonged to some one living in the hut. Going to the door he knocked.

'Who's thar?'

'Do you own the skiff on the river below hyar?'

'Waal, supposen I does?'

'I want to cross.'

'What d' y want ter do thar fur at this time o' night?'

'Father dyen. Just got word a spell ago.'

'What'll y' give ter get over?'

'Five dollars.'

'What kind o' shinplasters?'

'Greenbacks.'

'Whar d' y' git 'em?'

'From some people ez got 'em traden with the Yankee sojers at Battle Creek.'

'All right, be stranger, but it's a sight o' bad times ter be called ter a man's door at night. You uns go down ter the river 'n I'll cover y' with my gun tel I know yer all right.'

'I won't mind a small thing like that ef yo'll put me 'n my leetle brother across.'

Mark and his companion went down to the river. Pretty soon a wild looking man, with a beard growing straight out from his face like the spokes of a cart wheel, came cautiously down, proceeding them with a shotgun as he covered.

'Got a pass, stranger?'

'No.'

'Reckon they won't let y' land when y' get over thar.'

'These army fellers are like a rat trap,' said Mark; 'they ain't so particular as to goen in; it's the goen out they don't like. But y' better try to strike a point on the river whar thar ain't no guard.'

'Fur how much?'

'An extra five.'

'Greenback?'

'You ain't very patriotic. Won't y' take Confederate bills?'

'Not when I can get green uns.'

'Y' ain't a Union man, are y?'

'No. But I know a valyble thing when I sees it.'

The night would have been very dark had it not been for the moon behind the clouds. As it was, the boat could only be seen from the shore when they drew too near. They pulled up the river west of Moccasin point, keeping near the east bank. They could see campfires of guards on the other shore. Once, getting too near a river picket, they were seen and challenged.

'Who goes thar?'

'Oh, none o' your business!' said Mark jokingly.

'Pull in hyar or I'll make it some o' my business.'

'Oh, now, see hyar! We can't stop every five minutes to please a guard. How do you know but we're on army business?'

'Well, pull in hyar and show your papers.'

Meanwhile the ferryman was keeping the oars moving gently, and the boat turned at an angle with the current, which was taking the boat toward the east shore. 'Now pull away hearty,' whispered Mark, and the boat shot out of sight of the picket in a twinkling. A bullet whistled over their heads, but wide of the mark.

'Golly!' exclaimed Jakey. 'What a purty tune it sings!'

They were now off Moccasin point, and Mark began to look for a landing place. Just above he noticed a campfire, and above this was a place where the bank was low, with overhanging trees. Mark directed the ferryman to pull for these trees. He slipped a handkerchief in one of the rowlocks—the only one used in turning the boat into shore—so as to muffle the oar. The coast seemed to be clear for a landing, but as they drew near they proceeded cautiously and listened for the slightest sound. The boat's nose touched without noise, and Mark and Jakey got out. Mark handed the wild whiskered ferryman the crisp ten dollar note, which he clinched eagerly. 'Yer purty well ter do, stranger, consider yer close.'

'Didn't y' hyar what I said to the guard 'bout business for the army?'

'Yas.'

'Waal, don't say nothen 'bout it. Th' Confederate service payed ez it goes.'

The ferryman cared little whom he pulled if he could make ten dollars in one night, and dipping his oars in the water rowed away from the shore. Mark turned to look about him. His first move was to get under the trees. From there he proceeded inland for a short distance, looking for something. 'Ah, here it is!' he said presently. 'Now I know where I am.'

He had struck the Nashville and Chattanooga railroad, which runs close to the river bank for about a mile near where

he landed. He knew he was about two miles from the town. 'Now, Jakey,' he said, 'we'll bivouac right here. As soon as it is light we must set out. Are you sleepy?'

'Am I? Reckon I am!'

CHAPTER VII. THE CAMPS AT CHATTANOOGA.



'Cap,' he said, 'I be'n thinken I'd like ter jine the army.'

At the first sign of dawn Mark awakened his companion, who was sleeping so soundly that it required a good shake to rouse him. Jakey sat up and rubbed his eyes with his fists while Mark looked about him. He could see down the river for half a mile, where he noticed bluffs to the water's edge, and thought it was lucky he had not been forced to land there. Beyond were the Raccoon mountains, while close to the southwest Look-out mountain towered above him.

After Jakey had completed his fist toilet—the only toilet either made—Mark led off on the railroad ties to Chattanooga. The railroad soon left the river bank, and they proceeded in a northeasterly direction, striking the town from the south.

A great many tents were pitched at the pressed along, and Mark judged at once that there was a large force concentrated there. He was tempted to turn and retrace his steps, for he knew already what he was sent to discover, but to get out was more difficult than to get in, and he was not willing to risk an attempt in the daytime, so he entered the town in which citizen and soldier were alike asleep, and without meeting a soul walked about till he came to a hotel called the Crutchfield house. As he approached the door opened, and a negro boy with a broom in his hand stood in the opening.

'Can I get a room?' asked Mark.

'No, sah, not till de proplektor wakes up.'

'My little brother is tired; he must go to sleep at once.'

The boy's eyes opened wide at a dollar bill slipped in his hand. Without a word he took a key from the rack above a desk in the office, and in a few minutes both travelers were safely lodged, with no one but the negro having seen them enter the town or the house.

'So far, so good,' said Mark. 'Now comes the real racket. By this time tomorrow morning I shall be either safe across the river again, or I wouldn't give a Confederate bond for my life.'

After a few hours' sleep he rose, and calling Jakey they made a toilet and went down to breakfast. Mark had purposely neglected to write his name on the register, and hoped that the landlord would not notice the omission. But he did, and the guest entered his name as Mark Slack, Jasper, Tenn.

After breakfast he took Jakey and strolled around the town, making purchases. He thought it prudent to get some of his greenbacks changed for Confederate bills. He followed the suggestion Jakey had made at setting out and bought some calico and tobacco and the squirrel gun Jakey had modestly suggested for himself. Mark was not unwilling to have the gun with them, as he thought it might possibly be of service in case he should get hunted and cornered; but in that event he counted very little on any means of defense except flight or deception.

Mark was astonished at the number of officers and soldiers he saw in the streets. He found a new general in command, of whom he had not heard as a prominent leader, Braxton Bragg. He made a circuit of the town and an estimate of the troops, but this was of little value, for upon the arrival of trains regiment after regiment marched into camp. Mark stood on the sidewalk holding Jakey by the hand, looking at the Confederates tramping along under the stars and bars, their bands, when they had any, which was rare, playing discordantly 'Dixie' or 'The Bonny Blue Flag.'

'What regiment air that 'ar?' asked Mark of a soldier standing beside him puffing at a rank cigar.

'Eighth Tennessee.'

'What they all come from?'

'Tupelo. Come from thar m' self a spell ago.'

'Whar y' goen?'

'Only old Bragg knows, and he won't tell. Reckon we're goen no'th to Knoxville ter foller th' two brigades ez went up a spell ago.'

'What troops air all these hyar and them ez is comen?'

'Waal, thar's Cheatham's and Withers' divisions, and I reckon Anderson's. I saw General Polk terday, 'n they say Hardee's hyar. I'm in th' Twenty-fourth Tennessee m' self, and thar's Cheatham's. Lay's cavalry brigade is hyar. Thar's all the cavalry I knows on.'

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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'Now go if you can!' she said. 'Come, quick!' she said, seizing his arm. 'No, no! Mamma! She doesn't know. Oh, what shall we do?'

Mark took her by the hand and spoke to her coolly, but quickly. 'Call Jakey for me, and we will both go down stairs and from there to the barn. You can then go out without meeting this officer, for he is doubtless coming in. There is no special danger. We shall meet plenty of soldiers before we return.'

She flew out of the room to find Jakey. While she was gone Mark watched the approaching horseman. He was a fine specimen of a southern man—tall and