

# MY LADY OF THE SOUTH



## A Fiftieth Anniversary War Story

By RANDALL PARRISH

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### CHAPTER III.

#### AN UNEXPECTED ATTACK.

NOT far beyond the corner which I judged marked the limits of the Denslow plantation the road dipped sharply over a rocky bank and descended into the narrow valley of the creek. This appeared to me a spot well fitted for an ambush, and I came to a halt, leaning against a stunted tree, listening anxiously. Overhead not so much as a single star was visible, and as I glanced uneasily behind no gleam of light shone forth from any window of the great house. I was upon the very edge of the battlefield, well within the Confederate lines.

I must have distinguished the approach of that orderly's horse's hoofs fully a mile away, first the faint ring of steel on an exposed stone and then a little later the dull thud of a steady center. I must act quickly, mercilessly, or there would certainly be firing, the spread of alarm.

What followed was strain, confusion, struggle. I had him by the jacket collar, dragging him to earth, and we went down together, clenching desperately. His revolvers were in the saddle holsters, and we fought it out with bare hands. I recall blows struck, the fierce wrestling, a smooth oath, a grappling at the throat, the rolling over and over, our limbs twisted together, and then my throat being hit until he lay prone and helpless. There was a derringer in his inner jacket pocket. Wrenching it forth, I pressed the round muzzle against his forehead.

Using little enough ceremony, I stripped him of jacket and trousers, flinging down in return beside his prostrate body my own fragments of uniform. As I hastily donned the garments thus feloniously appropriated, my fingers chanced to touch the braided insignia of rank on the jacket collar.

"Who are you, an orderly?"

"No, a lieutenant of cavalry."

A flash of light came to me; I had waylaid the speeding bridegroom.

"Oh, indeed," I said, the surprise of discovery rendering me careless. "Then I suppose you must be Calvert Dunn?"

"I am."

"Of Johnston's staff, I believe, but what regiment?"

"The Tenth Georgia. But who are you? What do you mean by this attack? How do you happen to know my name?"

I took ample time to consider my answer, buttoning the tight fitting jacket to the throat; then said coldly:

"I hardly suppose it will do any harm for you to know, as I propose tying you up safely and leaving you here out of sight and sound. Have your pickets been withdrawn from the road leading east?"

He remained silent until I pressed the tip of the deringer against his cheek.

"Yes, blame you; I wouldn't tell, but I believe you know it already. What I want to know is who you are?"

"I am a Yankee artilleryman, who was left for dead on the field yonder. I have been hiding on the Denslow plantation, waiting for night to afford me opportunity for escape beyond your lines. While secreted there I overheard enough of a conversation to learn your name as well as your purpose. But I was not in hiding here expecting to intercept you, for Colonel Denslow has feared that, owing to the sudden movement of the army, you would be unable to escape from your staff duties long enough to keep your engagement. He expected, however, the arrival of an orderly at any moment, ordering his immediate return to his regiment."

"Do you mean to tell me that you know what our plans of operation are?"

"I know enough of them, at least, to make me particularly anxious to get away. Now stop that, lieutenant—not another word! Doubtless you know what this deringer contains. I will

assuredly use it if necessary, and it feels to me like a hair trigger. Put out your hands—no, hold them close together—so."

The utter uselessness of resistance was very plain, and I greatly disliked gagging him; yet at any moment the orderly might ride past.

I led the horse slowly forward and must have advanced a hundred feet or more, scarcely making a rustling in the short grass under foot, when a horse neighed shrilly to our right. Instantly a dim figure rose up.

"Who am I?" It was the voice of the negro, startled, trembling, yet loud with alarm. "Massa George, Massa George, sah!"

His words awoke within me a sudden hope. Possibly amid that intense darkness I might pass muster, for long enough at least to gain some advantage—perhaps even to escape without being compelled to do him bodily injury. It must be either that or else an instant struggle which could only



WE FOUGHT IT OUT WITH BARE HANDS.

add to my danger, no matter how it terminated. I was very nearly Dunn's size, for his uniform fitted me as though made to my measure, and I was sufficiently versed in local conditions for all immediate requirements of such a masquerade.

"It's all right, Joe; my horse went lame back yonder, and the night is so dark I didn't even know I was here yet. What is the matter with the house that you don't show any light?"

"Fore de Lord, Massa Calvert, dat was such a good joke on you. 'Cause de Yankees done took all de oil. It ain't Massa Calvert, Massa George, an', s'mars you'r alive, he was goin' right by de house, if I hadn't a stopped him—nobody even knowed he was yere yet."

Young Denslow, the dim outline of his face that of a mere stripling, held out his hand.

"Glad you succeeded in making it, Calvert. We were becoming afraid you might not get away owing to the sudden advance of the troops. Is it true we have started on a movement by the flank?"

"Yes, that report is all true enough." I replied striving to hold my voice as low as possible, as I could recall no marked peculiarity in the tones of my late antagonist to imitate; "the aids are riding in every direction with orders for a forced march. I went in and saw General Johnston as soon as I first heard the rumor, and explained to him exactly the situation here. The old man was very sympathetic, and as he had already met Jean, he ar-

raigned to send me out in this direction with his orders, and gave me a furlough of twenty-four hours in which to attend to my own affairs. I am to be in Minessville at the expiration of that time, no matter what it may cost in horseflesh."

"What about the Tenth Georgia?"

"They take up the march at midnight, guarding Coyne's battery."

"Then that means a hard ride for both dad and me, with little enough time to spare. But dismount, Calvert, and come up to the house."

In the excitement of swiftly succeeding events I had entirely forgotten that particular errand which had brought Lieutenant Dunn to this neighborhood. Here was a most awkward predicament, indeed—the prearranged hurried wedding between him and that young, sweet faced girl, with the gray blue eyes. The pleasant memory of her came before me instantly, with its delicate southern accent, the pathetic pleading of her girlish expression, the carelessly ruffled hair, the indignant tone with which she had spoken of her coming lover.

There appeared to me no path leading out from this labyrinth now, but through the killing of some one; yet every manly instinct within me revolted against cold blooded murder. I was a soldier, but never an assassin. And surely there was yet an opportunity for escape—the very lateness of the hour, the urgent requirement for haste on the part of all concerned, the possibility that the necessary papers had not been procured, the girl's strong opposition to the ceremony.

We were at the steps, and I could perceive the outlines of two black figures rising up to greet me. It was the deep voice of the elder Denslow which spoke, his outstretched hand warmly grasping mine.

"The last minute, Calvert, my boy, the last minute. So we are to march at midnight, you say? Well, we can make it with hard riding, and I can go now with a relieved heart, knowing Jean will be well looked after while we are away. Come up, my boy. The thieving Yanks have not left us a light about the house, nor very much of anything else. However, we can get along in the dark. I reckon the parson knows his lines without a book. Chaplain Mordant, you must be acquainted with Lieutenant Dunn, as you are both stationed at headquarters?"

"I have seen him occasionally, although, as you may recall, he is but newly assigned."

"True; only your second week of staff duty, isn't it, Calvert? Jean daughter?"

A swift hope thrilled through me that she might have already fled or have hidden herself within the darkened house. The hospitable colored had half forced me back into a vacant chair and remained facing me, standing shoulder to shoulder with his son on the upper step. The chaplain remained seated close upon my left. All about us was latticework thickly covered with trailing vines. The only way of escape would be by flinging both father and son headlong to the walk below, or perhaps a sudden dash back into the unknown interior.

I neither saw nor heard her as she came forward. When she answered her slight figure suddenly appeared standing between her father and the chaplain, a mere indistinct outline, yet so womanly as to send a sudden thrill to my heart.

"Very well, father, I am here to keep my word with Lieutenant Dunn."

It had come. The urgent necessity for instant action, for immediate decision was upon me, and I failed. I saw the chaplain rise deliberately to his feet, and I struggled up also, fiercely gripping the back of my chair, half tempted to use it as a weapon with which to sweep the steps before me clear. Yet I hesitated, swayed by doubt, influenced by many emotions. What was right? What was best? What ought I to do? Would even the license of war exonerate me? The opportunity for an easy escape lay clear before me; merely a few brief words spoken in the darkness, the silent acting of a simple part, the riding away together, the others departing unsuspectingly to their several commands, the leaving of the uninjured girl within easy reach of Fairview, which could not be far distant, then the spur, the river, and Rosecrans.

I could not distinguish a feature of her averted face, but a vibrant breath of air blew a strand of soft hair against my cheek. Could I sacrifice her, even for such a cause? Suddenly, as if it were the whisper of the devil in my ear, came the controlling thought—she despises the man Dunn; she is being driven into this marriage against her will. Possibly this very fraud on my part will best serve her, will eventually result in her final happiness. We would be together merely for an hour or two hours. Then she would be left safe in the care of friends, comprehending the deceit, angry with me no doubt, yet nothing the worse for the adventure. It might even be that the marriage contracted under such peculiar circumstances would not be held as legal, while if it was a divorce could be most easily obtained on the ground of fraud.

"You will join right hands."

How soft and small her hand was! How cold to the touch, and how it trembled beneath the clasp of my fingers! Once the drawing voice appeared to ask me something, repeating the question somewhat sharply before I could force my dry lips into the few necessary words of response. Then I heard her distinctly say, "I do," yet with an effort, as though the utterance nearly choked her. The very sound of these two words as she thus spoke them, filled with utter hopelessness, shocked me even then,

and I loosened my clasp, permitting her hand to drop as I stared toward her. The hot blood rushed to my head, every nerve tingling. I would not be guilty of this cowardly thing! I would fight them all first!

"And now I pronounce you husband and wife; whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder."

It was already too late! Too late! The evil was done, the act consummated. In darkness, in masquerade, pretending to be another, I stood there



I HEARD HER DISTINCTLY SAY "I DO."

and married Jean Denslow. I do not comprehend now how I met the outstretched hands of congratulations, what inane words I mumbled. I was conscious merely of regret, humiliation, intense shame. She never spoke, but I heard her sob chokingly as she hid her face on her father's shoulder. George had disappeared, but I could hear the sound of horses being led forward over the grass below.

"Well, goodby, little girl." It was the colonel's voice. "The ride isn't a long one, and you can scarcely understand how greatly it will relieve me to know that you are safe in the care of friends."

I remember assisting the girl into the saddle, slipping her little foot into the stirrup. All at once I apprehended the sweet charm of her young womanhood, coupled with an odd feeling of personal interest. I had never even spoken to her; she had never even spoken to me—yet she was my wife. Some way the thought thrilled me as if I had received an electric shock. Jean Denslow was already actually mine; I could claim her by law; she bore my name—why, she didn't even know what my name was.

To my immense relief she drew rein sharply to the right, and we headed eastward. It was like riding blindfolded, so black was all ahead, with what appeared to be thick forest on either side. At a steady stride we rode onward through the gloom in silence, an embarrassing constraint upon us both. Again and again I glanced toward her, my lips opening for speech, yet unable to utter the first syllable. I had in my heart the fear of a coward.

I wanted her to respect my motives, to understand what it was which had driven me into such an act of deceit. Not even justified in my own mind, I yet dreamed I might possibly justify myself in some small degree before her. Once, as if the constrained silence had become unbearable, she ventured a commonplace remark upon the black stillness of the night, to which I must have replied stily enough, for both immediately relapsed into silence; the only sound was made by our horses' hoofs now pounding along a road grown hard and rocky as we steadily rose into higher altitudes. In the narrow bed of a stream we drew rein to permit the animals to drink thirstily.

"I rather expected to encounter pickets along the road," I began, staring about into the night. "Have they been withdrawn?"

I imagined she glanced toward me as if in surprise at my words or rendered suspicious by the sound of my voice.

"All pickets in this direction were recalled last night, when General Huston returned to his brigade," she replied indifferently.

"Then we are already between the lines?"

"Neither army has ever been east on this slope of the mountains, so far as I know."

"Haven't I heard there was a ford at Coulter's?"

"Just below the landing, yes; but it is narrow and never safe when the water is at all high. Why, we crossed it together only last summer on our way to Franklyn."

"To be sure, so we did. I have passed through so much since then that I have grown forgetful."

The horses lifted their heads, their wet nostrils dripping, and we rode up the opposite bank, noting a star or two peeping shyly out from among the ragged clouds.

(To Be Continued.)

Miss Agnes Foster of Omaha came down from the metropolis yesterday and visited her parents, C. Foster and wife, over night, returning to Omaha on the fast mail today.

## LOCAL NEWS

From Thursday's Daily

Mike Tritsch of Louisville was a Plattsmouth visitor today.

Judge H. D. Travis returned from Papillion last evening, where he has been holding court.

Mr. and Mrs. R. E. Foster and little daughter came up from Union Sunday evening and spent Christmas at the Larson home.

Miss Fern Long, of Lincoln, is in the city, having come to her former home to spend Christmas with old time friends.

C. J. Balser and wife, who have been visiting John Jess and family over Christmas, departed for their home this afternoon.

John S. Vallery of Mynard was a visitor in the city today and took time to call at this office and renew his allegiance to the Old Reliable for another year.

W. J. Wolfe and wife and babe arrived last evening on No. 2 from Sheridan, Wyo., and will visit Mr. Wolf's parents, Adam Wolf and wife, for a time.

George Spangler and wife, of Lincoln, came down Saturday evening on No. 2 to spend Christmas with Mrs. Henry Spangler and daughter.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Johnson and son, Walker, from near Weeping Water, drove up Sunday to take Christmas dinner under the parental roof at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Johnson.

Jesse McVey, who has been visiting old-time friends and relatives in Illinois, Fort Jefferson, Ohio, and other states for several months, came in a few days ago and will remain for some time.

Miss Helen Clark arrived from Lincoln today and will visit Plattsmouth friends a few days. She is attending a young ladies' seminary in Illinois, and went to Lincoln to visit her parents, Byron Clark and wife, over the Christmas holidays.

Dr. T. J. Todd and wife and son of Wahoo arrived Saturday to spend the Christmas season with Mrs. Todd's parents, Henry Mauzy and wife. The doctor left for his home Tuesday afternoon, his wife and son remaining for a longer visit.

Mrs. Anna Goos and two daughters Mrs. Marousek and Mrs. Peter Mumm, Mrs. John Jess and Mrs. Joseph Fetzer, departed for Omaha on the early train today to attend the funeral of Mrs. Goos' niece, Miss Minnie Goos, who died at her home in Omaha a few days ago.

C. F. Whitacker and wife of Craig, Neb., arrived in the city last Saturday evening to spend Christmas at the home of Mr. and Mrs. O. C. Hudson. Clarence, as everybody in Plattsmouth knew him a few years ago, is doing nicely in Craig, where he is engaged in the harness business.

Lewis Lambert and wife of Alberta, Canada, who, with Mrs. Lambert's parents, J. T. King and wife, ate Christmas dinner with C. H. Rist and wife, eight miles west of Plattsmouth, today went to Glenwood to visit with Mr. and Mrs. King for a few days. Mr. Lambert and wife expect to return to Alberta in March.

H. Ruffner of Columbus came Saturday to spend Christmas with his parents, P. E. Ruffner and wife. Horace is now located at Columbus, Neb., and is well pleased with his situation, and thinks much of the Y. M. C. A. organization of that city, which owns its own building, a fine two-story structure made of brick.

From Friday's Daily.

Al Nickles was called to Omaha on business this afternoon.

Fred Patterson, county surveyor, was called to Omaha this afternoon on county business.

Andy Seybert, from near Columbus, was looking after some business matters in the city today.

Mrs. W. H. Seybert of Cedar Creek was a Plattsmouth visitor today, having come down on No. 4.

Mrs. Philip Albert of Cedar Creek arrived today on No. 4 to spend the day with Plattsmouth friends.

George Sayles went to Cedar Creek on No. 29 this morning, where he was called on business for the day.

Mrs. Meyers of Louisville came in on No. 4 this morning to visit her daughter, Mrs. A. B. Hoover, for a time.

Roy Cole drove in from the farm yesterday afternoon and made a flying trip to Omaha on business, returning on No. 2.

Bert Satchel of near Murray was a Plattsmouth visitor today, having been called to Plattsmouth on business.

Mrs. Mary Rickard of Ohio arrived today and will be a guest of Mrs. Henry Spangler and daughter, Miss Elizabeth, for a time.

George Born and Councilman Will were passengers to South Omaha on the morning train today, where they went to look after business matters. Mr. Born had stock on the market.

Fred Worl, Theodore Worl and E. G. Spencer of South Omaha came down on the M. P. this morning to attend the funeral of A. Worl at the Young cemetery, returning to Omaha on the fast mail.

Deputy Manspeaker left for Lincoln on the morning train today with George Lytle, where Lytle will spend the balance of the holidays and twenty days of January at the penitentiary with his friend, Doud.

L. C. W. Murray and sons, Chester, Albert and Guy, of near Murray, drove in today and Mr. Murray went to Omaha to interview Dr. Gifford regarding his eyes. His sons visited the county seat during the afternoon.

P. S. Goffman and wife of Falls City are in the city, guests of Mr. Goffman's mother, Mrs. Eliza Goffman, over the holidays. P. S. Goffman went to Omaha on the morning train today to visit his brother, Perry, at the hospital for the day.

Mrs. Ed Stamm and son, Ed, of Havelock and George Stamm and wife of Havelock, who have been guests of Mrs. Christine Reinhackle, departed for Havelock this afternoon for Mrs. Stamm's home for a visit. Louis Reinhackle of near Murray drove in to visit with George Stamm for a short time.

Mrs. A. J. Engelkeimer came in from her home last evening and spent the night at the home of her father, J. Albert, and boarded No. 15 this morning for Omaha, where she visited with her sister, Miss Emma Albert, for the day. Miss Albert's condition yesterday was slightly improved.

## HOLES IN MACARONI.

Device by Which the Hollow Strips of Dough Are Produced.

Haven't you often asked, "How do they get the holes in macaroni?" Yes, you undoubtedly have, and unless you have visited a macaroni factory you are probably still in doubt. Interesting methods are employed in bringing this food into the form in which it is placed before the public.

After the dough has been well mixed and kneaded in a powerful machine it is ready to form into macaroni, which is of a tube shape about one-fourth inch in diameter, or spaghetti, which is a solid stick shape of about one-eighth inch in diameter. This is done by forcing the dough under hydraulic pressure through a cylinder with a flat circular bronze die or mold at the bottom. The macaroni die is full of holes about one-fourth inch in diameter, and each hole has a small pin in the center of it, which is attached to one side of the hole. This pin forms the hole in the macaroni and divides the dough on one side as it starts through the hole, but before the dough reaches the end of the hole the divided side comes together and remains so, making a perfect tube. The spaghetti die contains only plain holes about one-eighth inch in diameter arranged in groups. When macaroni and spaghetti come from the presses or cylinders they are cut into certain lengths, the length depending upon whether the curing or drying is to be done on trays or by hanging over rods.

In curing or drying macaroni the length of time varies according to the process employed and to atmospheric conditions outside the factory and the standard of quality maintained. Some makers require only three days, while others take as many as six days.—Omaha Bee.

## OLD MIRACLE PLAYS

Performed in Town Squares With the Crudest Kind of Scenery.

From the beginning of the pageant in the old mystery and miracle plays of the twelfth century to the elaborate and highly artistic productions of the twentieth is indeed a far cry. Not only was the work of these early actors far below modern histrionic standards, but the stage setting, although the most complicated effects were attempted, was of the crudest. The mysteries were performed in the town squares on two story scaffolds. Saints and angels descended from above on very visible ropes. The flood and the red sea were represented by a hole dug in the square and filled with water and so small that a row-boat might only with difficulty turn around therein. Here sea voyages were made from Marseilles to Palestine with one shove of the oar. These were the properties. Irrepressible medieval imagination did the rest.

The mystery plays were dramatizations of the Bible performed by the different trade guilds of the town, each guild giving the part of the story established as its own by immemorial custom. The fishermen and prentices from all the county round thronged into York or Chester whenever a pageant was to be given. Royalty frequently graced the performances.—From the Four Seas.