

# MY LADY OF THE SOUTH



## A Fiftieth Anniversary War Story

By RANDALL PARRISH

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### CHAPTER XXI.

#### THE CONFESSION.

I SAT down facing the table where Judge Dunn died, and in the silence my mind insensibly began to review those swiftly recurring events of the past few days. It seemed to me I had lived years since first coming to this house—years full of violence, death, danger and excitement. And how greatly was I indebted to Donald and to Jean! I wondered if she would confess to him now the story of our relationship. It must have cost her much to make that open avowal before Dunn and his men; she was driven to it by hope of saving my life. It would be harder yet to confess the truth to Donald. I had gone no farther in my thought when he came in.

"I am picking up the ends of a rather tangled skein, King," he said easily. "But little by little it is straightening out."

We waited, perhaps, five minutes in silence, Donald seemingly buried in thought. The lieutenant came in with a distinct swagger, his sword clattering against the door, as he stiffly came to attention. Donald smiled, gazing at him quietly.

"Kindly take that chair, Lieutenant Dunn," he said, "and I will detain you for only a moment. Is it true, as I have always been led to believe, that your mother died twelve years ago?"

The man's face changed instantly, his hands gripping the arms of the chair.

"My mother! Why—why do you ask that?"

"Because Lucille said something yesterday which aroused my suspicion. I have just returned from Bartonsville. The records of the asylum show she was taken away from there, un cured, by your father. Is this true?"

"Yes," the voice scarcely audible. "Did she die later?"

"No."

"Where has she been kept concealed all these years?"

Dunn wet his lips, his hands trembled.

"In the west attic," he admitted at last. "It—it was fitted up and she has been confined there ever since. It has been our family secret."

However much Donald may have sympathized, his face expressed nothing, and he went coldly on with his questioning.

"Your mother is not now in the west attic. The men who have met their death in this house have been attacked by a woman. Did you know this?"

Dunn rose to his feet, trembling.

"Not until a short time ago, Colonel Donald. I feared it might prove to be my mother. What—what can I do?"

"Go with us in search," and Donald stood erect.

Dunn hesitated, glancing questioningly toward me.

"Is it necessary to have this man with us?" he asked.

"I see no reason why he should not be. He already knows the circumstances and, besides, is a gentleman to be trusted. It may require the three of us to handle her safely, and I greatly prefer King to any of the men outside."

other tragedy.

Donald descended first, after lighting the lantern and throwing the illumination well down the shaft. I followed, with Dunn loitering in the rear. We grouped together at the foot of the ladder, all alike dreading the possibilities of the dark passage. Donald advanced a step or two, holding the lantern high so as to throw the rays of light forward. There we saw revealed an outstretched hand. We were used to death—death by violence—but this discovery in that place, our nerves already strained to the utmost, came like a shock. It was a ghastly sight, that one white hand showing there in the ray of light. Dunn gave utterance to a single cry of horror, but Donald and I pressed forward silently, determined to know the truth. A dozen steps and we stood beside the body, able at a glance to comprehend the whole story.

Daniels, in his old campaign jacket, his hat beside him, his seamed, rugged face upturned, lay dead at our feet, a knife wound in his throat. Just before, with head slightly upturned on a protuberance of rock, lay a woman, her slender figure draped in a faded red wrapper, her gray, straggling locks half concealing her face. Between them was the knife, a thin blade, deadly pointed.

The stupefaction of horror gripped us as we stood staring down at the sight. For a moment no one of us grasped the full meaning of this closing tragedy. Then Donald knelt and touched the bodies.

"Both dead," he said soberly and looked up at us. "No doubt Daniels died first from the knife wound, but he must have reached her in the struggle, hurling her down with him. As she fell her head struck the rock and the knife dropped from her hand."

Tenderly he pressed back the gray hair, revealing the woman's face. Death had softened its expression, giving a younger look, yet even now it retained the appearance of suffering. A throb of pity came to me as I looked. "I remember her now," Donald said gravely. "But how the years have changed her! Calvert, she was your mother."

For answer Dunn dropped upon his knees and bowed his head over the motionless body.

We bore the bodies out by the way



of the cabin entrance, taking them both into the main house. Dunn remained with his mother, thoroughly broken down by this revelation, and Lucille joined him. Donald himself, forgetful of the feud, went to Maria

with the news of her husband's death and brought her and the eldest boy back with him to sit beside the body. There remained nothing for me to do, and, depressed and lonely, I returned to the deserted library and waited.

I was still a prisoner, and I wondered what Donald intended to do with me. Without doubt he understood by now my connection with Jean, and he might not feel so lenient toward me. Where was Jean? Could she be avoiding me, ashamed of her avowal and fearful lest I should have taken her hasty words seriously? Donald might have courted the girl—it was better we should never meet again.

The whole thing came to me in a dash. Donald had reason to fear Dunn and not me. My marriage to Jean Denslow was a service which he was willing to repay. Previous to my appearance the love between these two was hopeless, the girl's father favoring Dunn's suit and forcing her to immediate marriage. I had blocked that by pure accident. Delay was inevitable, for the form of a divorce would have to be gone through with before Dunn could again claim her. All this was to the advantage of Donald. His only immediate desire would be to get rid of me, leaving him in possession of the field. It was not pleasant to think about—to realize that the girl was being played with in this manner and that I was utterly helpless. If she cared for me the situation would be different, but my love was of no service while her heart belonged to another. Played with? Beyond question she was part of the play, acting her role at Donald's dictation, as anxious as he was that I should disappear from the stage.

I had reached this gloomy conclusion when the man himself came in, closing the door behind him and crossing the room to stand with his back toward me looking out of the window. Finally he turned and looked at me, his own face in the shadow.

"King," he said gravely, "as a Confederate officer it is no doubt my duty to hold you as a prisoner of war. I suppose that when Dunn recovers from his present shock and his old nature returns he will make some sort of report of this matter and endeavor to get me into trouble. The fellow dislikes you cordially, and from all I hear, with good reason. However, what he thinks doesn't affect me, and I am going to give you a horse and safe passage into your own lines—you and your wild Irishman."

"I thank you very much, Colonel Donald," rising to my feet and speaking rather stiffly.

"Not at all, lieutenant. I believe I owe you my life, but that counts even less with me than Jean's desire. I have promised your release to her."

I could say nothing, and he went on gravely:

"I have just been given the details of what occurred at Denslow's plantation and your connection with the affair. It makes a very peculiar story. I had heard it hinted at before, but had no reason to suppose you the man. May I ask, do you propose taking advantage of this situation in any way? My own relations with Jean give me the right to ask this."

"I am aware of that, Colonel Donald, and will answer frankly. I mean to make every amende in my power. I respect and admire Miss Denslow sincerely and will never stand in the way of her happiness. I pledge you my word to this and ask your confidence."

"You certainly have that, King," he said heartily. "I feel that I can trust you both. This is an occasion when the blue and the gray can clasp hands," and he held out his own. "Your horses are at the steps, and the more promptly you get away the better. It may be we shall never meet again, but I wish your remembrance of me to be a kindly one."

"It could not be otherwise."

We passed out into the hall together, and the light rested on his handsome, genial face. It was indeed easy to understand how she had learned to love him. Words seemed to choke me—I was about to leave behind all my inspiration and hope. At the foot of the stairs he stopped, his hand pressing my arm.

"Jean wishes to speak with you before you go," he said calmly. "She is in the parlor."

Then he turned and walked away, leaving me standing there alone facing the closed door. The blood surged to my face; I could feel the trembling of my fingers as they grasped the knob. I had not expected, not even hoping for this. She was standing waiting me in the center of a room full of sunshine—a slender, white robed figure, with smiling lips and smiling eyes.

"I asked Colonel Donald to have you come to me before your departure," she said firmly, "so there might be no misunderstanding between us."

"You refer to the words spoken yesterday, Miss Denslow?" and it seemed to me an icy hand gripped my heart.

"There was no misunderstanding, I assure you. I realize that what you said was merely to save life, spoken on the spur of the moment."

Her eyes fell, the blood flooding her cheeks.

"It was not that I meant, Lieutenant King; it was something very different. I have not really deceived you, but I have permitted you to deceive yourself. I thought I could let you go away without any explanation, but I—I find I cannot, and Colonel Donald thinks I had better confess the truth."

"I hope you also think so."

"Yes, I—I believe I do, only I hardly know how to begin—how to make it all clear. When you told me once that you cared for me I said that I loved Colonel Donald. Do you remember that?"

"Yes," eagerly. "Was it not true?"

It was true, but—not in the way you thought. Listen to me. I wish to tell you a little—just a little—about my own life; then you will understand."

"She paused with eyes cast down, her bosom heaving.

"My birth took place fifteen miles east of here on Clear creek, in the mountains. Long before then my family had become involved in a feud that has cost many lives. My father was not of a nature to keep this up, but was compelled to defend himself, and for some years the other side was in the ascendant and used its power remorselessly. When I was but a child our home was burned to the ground and my mother, with me in her arms, driven to the mountains. My father was away at the time, and the exposure of the night cost my mother's life."

I could see the tears in her eyes at the memory, yet she continued speaking.

"It seemed as if this loss of his wife temporarily crazed my father. It seemed to change his entire disposition, and he lived only for revenge and to drive the other faction from this region. For the time he appeared to lose all interest in me and passed his days and nights in the mountains with the few he could gather to his cause. I was taken to the home of an aunt, my mother's sister. I must have been a lovable child, for I won her affection and that of her husband. They insisted upon adopting me as their own, and as my real father had no home, no ambition other than revenge, he consented, and I became legally Jean Denslow. No girl could have had a happier life than mine or greater kindness and care. But it is true I love Colonel Donald, for he is my father."

It seemed to me I could not speak. The words rushing to my lips choked me. What could all this mean, this confession, this acknowledgment? In confusion, in eagerness, I succeeded in blurting out:

"But Dunn? You were engaged to Dunn?"

"Yes," her eyes uplifting to mine. "It was the wish of my foster father, and then I knew no better."

"But now? Since then you have learned your mistake? You do not love him?"

"You forget. I am a married woman."

I sprang forward, clasping her hands, a sudden confidence mastering me.

"Jean, tell me the truth—all the truth! What is it your heart says?"

Shall I ever forget what I read in the depths of those blue gray eyes or those words in which she answered me?

"I love my husband."

THE END.

### Basket Ball Last Night.

From Saturday's Daily.

Principal of the High school, Prof. Oscar Larson departed for Elmwood last evening on No. 33 via Louisville and Weeping Water with eight members of the basketball team. Two games were to be played before the boys return to Plattsmouth, last night the Elmwood team was to be played and to-night the Nebraska City team.

The members of the team going on this tour were: Evan Noble, Conrad Schlater, Glen Edwards, Don Arried, Elmer Frans, Ralph Larson, Lester Dalton and Major Arries.

News was received in this city this morning to the effect that the Elmwood athletes won the contest last night by a close margin, the score being Plattsmouth 28, Elmwood 32.

### Doty Wins at Union.

Quite an interesting wrestling match took place in Union Thursday evening between F. E. Doty, of Weeping Water, and "Busk Vallery, from near Mynard. Doty was to throw Vallery twice in thirty minutes. The contest resulted in Doty winning the first fall in 11 minutes and the second one in 7 minutes. There was a very fair attendance, all of whom were among the most enthusiastic admirers of the great game. Doty had a contest on for Avoca tonight, but the severe weather will prevent him from getting there and the same will be postponed.

### Farm Sells Well.

George Gilmore sold his 80 acre farm, three and one half miles north-east of town to Tom Wiles for \$15,000. This is one of the very best 80's in the county and the price of \$187.50 per acre indicates it. The farm adjoins Mr. Wiles and anything adjoining a Wiles farm is in danger of being annexed at the rate of one to two farms per year. The Davis Bros., T. L. and F. J. made the sale.—Weeping Water Republican.

### Does Artistic Work.

Miss Marie Kaufmann has on exhibition in the window of Weyrich & Hadrabek specimens of her artistic skill in pen drawing. There are two as fine pictures on display there as one would see in many days travel. One in pen drawing and the other Automatic Shade Pen Lettering. Miss Kaufmann takes pupils for instruction in the art, see her.

- JUST RECEIVED FROM NEW YORK A -  
**SUPPLY of LINENS**  
 consisting of  
 Dress Linens  
 Sheer Handkerchief Linens  
 Waist Linens  
 Round Thread Linens for hand embroidering  
 Plain Satin Damask  
 Brown Dress Linens  
 Linen Sheeting  
 White Goods of all kinds  
 Nainsook Dimities India Linens  
 Linweaves and Longcloths

**ZUCKWEILER & LUTZ**

### ADMINISTRATOR'S PUBLIC SALE

The undersigned, Administrators of the estate of the late Andrew E. Taylor, will sell at Public Auction, on the farm, one mile east and one-half mile south of

**UNION, NEBRASKA,**  
 on  
**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6, 1912,**

Commencing at 9 O'Clock A. M., the following described personal property, to-wit:

- Horses and Mules.**  
 One span of mules, 3 and 4 years old, weight 2,600.  
 One span of mares, in foal, bay and black, weight 2,700.  
 One span gray mares, in foal, weight 2,500.  
 One gray gelding, coming 4 years old, weight 1,300.  
 One bay mare, coming 4 years old, weight 1,050.  
 One bay mare, coming 3 years old.  
 One bay mare, coming 4 years old.  
 One bay gelding, coming 3 years old.  
 One roan mare, in foal, coming 3 years old.  
 One gray mare, in foal, 8 years old.  
 Three gray mares, in foal, weight 1,200 each.  
 One black mare, in foal, weight 1,300.  
 One bay mare, in foal, weight 1,200.  
 One bay driving mare, weight 950.  
 One sorrel mare, in foal, coming 5 years old, weight 1,350.  
 One mule coming 3 years old.  
 Ten mules coming 2 years old, extra good ones.  
 Five mules coming 1 year old, extra good ones.  
 One Jack "Missouri King," coming 5 years old, 15 hands high.  
 One Jack, "Orphan Boy," coming 4 years old, 15 1/2 hands high.  
 One black stallion, "Lord Byron," coming 10 years old, weight 1,900.

- Cattle and Hogs.**  
 Four good milch cows.  
 Two heifers, 2 years old, fresh soon.  
 Two spring calves.  
 One Durham bull, coming 2 years old, eligible to register.  
 About 50 head of hogs, weighing from 50 to 150 pounds each.

- Farm Implements.**  
 One Mitchell farm wagon, three and one-quarter inch.  
 One farm wagon, 3-inch.

- One truck wagon.  
 One set iron truck wheels.  
 One bob-sled.  
 One 8-horse power and 4-hole sheller.  
 Four sets of work harness.  
 Two sets buggy harness, one bran new.  
 One man's saddle, a good one.  
 One boy's saddle, a good one.  
 One set single buggy harness.  
 One 3-section harrow.  
 One 2-section harrow.  
 One "New Ohio" land roller.  
 One spring wagon.  
 One 6-hole corn sheller.  
 One new "Lawson" gasoline engine, 12-horse power.  
 One 2-row cultivator.  
 One riding cultivator.  
 Four walking cultivators.  
 One 16-inch walking plow.  
 One separate lister and drill.  
 One disc shovel plow.  
 One single shovel plow.  
 One "Janesville" disc, 16x16.  
 One "Deering" mowing machine.  
 One "Great Western," 70-bushel manure spreader.  
 One "Sandwich" hay loader.  
 One corn drill.  
 One "Monitor" press drill, double disc.  
 One 2-row riding lister.  
 One "Avery" corn planter, with attachments.  
 One corn elevator.  
 One "McCormick" corn binder.  
 One cream separator.  
 One 12-inch "Emerson" gang plow.  
 One 14-inch "LaCrosse" gang plow.  
 Many other articles too numerous to mention.

**TERMS:**  
 All sums of \$10 or less, cash. Sums over \$10, one year's time if desired, purchaser to give approved note, bearing 8 per cent interest. All property must be settled for, either by cash or note, before being removed from the premises.

**Lunch Will Be Served on the Grounds at Noon!**  
 W. L. TAYLOR,  
 C. H. TAYLOR,  
 Administrators.

Robert Wilkinson, Auctioneer.  
 John R. Pierson, Clerk.

**Change of Dates.**  
 On account of the snow drifts Frank Anderson, the Veteran Horseman will not be able to make Elmwood, Manley, Louisville, Murray and Plattsmouth on the dates as advertised but will be in Elmwood March the 11th, Manley the 12th, Louisville the 13th, Murray the 15th and Plattsmouth on the 16th.

As long as these bargains last we've got to keep talking about them.

Suits and Overcoats, worth \$15 to \$16.50 now ..... **\$10**

Suits and Overcoats, worth \$18, \$20 and \$22.50, now ..... **\$14**

Suits and Overcoats, worth \$25, \$27.50 and \$30, now ..... **\$18**

As soon as you're ready to select your Spring things to wear we'll be glad to see you and show you. Suits for men and young men; new weaves, new models; new colors and patterns. New fresh ideas in Manhattan shirt patterns. New shapes in John B. Stetson hats; new Heid caps.

**Falter & Thierolf**  
 THE GIVING CLOTHIERS

St. 8th Hats Manhattan Shirts