



Maynard held the boy against his breast while he gave way to convulsive sobs such as are unusual in a man and only come when some mental struggle under an intense grief is relaxed and suffering permitted to get control. Neither spoke. Jakey's presence reminded Maynard the more keenly of those he loved. His mind had been upon his wife and child. Jakey's coming brought also Souri's image and the trials and triumphs which he and Jakey and Souri had once passed together, and trials and triumphs borne in company with hearts. Of all who loved him only Jakey was there, and on him alone could he rely for comfort.

At last Jakey withdrew himself from his friend's embrace. He had permitted him to indulge his grief for a few minutes, and this he considered quite long enough.

"General," he began. He had always called his chief "general," contending that he was a general since he commanded a brigade.

"No more of that, Jakey. I am only Maynard now—Mark Maynard. Mark is a good enough name for me."

"Waal, that don't make no differ. You uns got th' same body 'n arms 'n legs 'n all that. Hev 'y done th' fust thing fo' ter do?"

"What's that, Jakey?"

"Call 'em, Maynard."

"Jakey, I can't."

"Reckon she'll hev ter know it some time."

"There's going to be a battle. No court can keep me from shouldering a musket or yielding a saber. I'll go into the fight that's coming and never come out of it. Then she'll not need to know it."

"What makes 'y think there's goin' ter be a fight?"

"I would not have the intentions of a soldier if I did not."

"Y' hain't General Rosey."

"Nor do I need to be General Rosey to divine what's coming. Do you suppose I know any more about war with eagles on my shoulders than in a private's uniform? If there were some superior being to look into the heads of the men composing this army and read just the rank in accordance with fitness, many a star would leave the shoulder where it now rests, to alight on that of some obscure private."

"Waal, ef we fight 'em, won't we whip 'em?"

Jakey noticed that, with the change of his friend's mind from his grief to war, there was an immediate improvement from the terrible depression upon him. He asked the question for the purpose of keeping Maynard's attention fixed for a time on war rather than for information.

"Whip 'em? Why, Jakey, we're scattered all over creation." He dipped his finger in a tin cup full of water and began to draw a rude map on the top of an extemporized table, consisting of a square board nailed on a stake driven in the ground.

"Here's the Chickamauga flowing between these two ridges, Missionary and the Pigeon mountains, from south to north into the Tennessee. Crittendon's corps is here at Lee and Gordon's mill. Thomas' corps has just passed through Stevens' gap down here, ten or a dozen miles from Crittendon, while McCook's is at Alpine, 20 miles away from Thomas. We are off here near Reed's bridge, the tip of the left wing, 40 miles from McCook, the tip of the right wing."

"Bragg is here at Lafayette, on the east side of the Pigeon mountains, and opposite our center at Crawfish Springs, where he can strike any one of our corps separately. He can ride up on to the Pigeon mountains, and looking down on the valley of the Chickamauga, see just where we are located. I was up there myself the other day with a reconnoitering party and came upon one of his scouts looking at us very much as one would survey a battery of fat turkeys before Christmas."

He paused and seemed lost in some attendant problem. Presently he added absently:

"All I'd be afraid of would be delay."

"What'd 'y mean by that?" asked Jakey.

Maynard started. "I was thinking that I was on the other side," he said. "You see, Jakey, in a military point of view the beauty of the situation is all with the Confederates."

"How?"

"They can cut us up in detail."

"Wh'd 'y do of 'y war him uns?"

"If I'd drive a wedge right in here between Thomas' and Crittendon's corps, I'd destroy first one and then the other. After that I'd eat my rations and have plenty of time to take care of McCook's, which is too far away even to hear the guns."

"Thot'ud be hunky," said Jakey, pretending to catch his friend's enthusiasm. "Ety 'twasn't 't'other way 'n 'y was 'em as they got 'y uns. Mobbe 'y uns was in command of our army 'y thought do some'n fo' ter change th' situation."

"Yes, what'd 'y do?"

"That's a poser, Jakey."

Maynard studied his improvised map for awhile without speaking, as if it were a chessboard. At last he said:

"General Rosecrans, I learn, has ordered his scattered columns concentrated at Crawfish Springs, the center of his line. Perhaps this is as good a plan as any, at least if Bragg gives him time enough to close up. To me two plans seem to be open. One is to demonstrate along the Chickamauga, principally with cavalry, while"

"What's demonstrate?" interrupted the listener.

"Make 'em faint, a fuss; pretend to have a big force and only have a little one. I would leave the campfires burning at night, to make them think I was still there, and draw my army away to Mission ridge. Moving backward on converging lines."

"What's them?"

"Lines coming to a focus"—

"What's a focus?"

"Confound it, Jakey, we'll be attacked and whipped before I can make you understand. Those roads you see come together at Chattanooga. From Chattanooga, if necessary, the army could be crossed."

"I thought we uns was a-follerin' them uns!" observed Jakey, surprised at the turn the campaign had taken.

"Jakey, did you ever hear of the man who held his adversary down by placing his nose between that adversary's teeth?"

"No."

"Well, that's the way we're holding our enemy, but your remark leads to the other side of the problem. Desperate diseases require desperate remedies. If I were a general, I'd never be on the defensive if I could help it, cost what it might. It sets a man to wondering what his enemy is going to do, instead of doing something himself. Now, our southernmost column might be pushed out here"—putting his finger on the line denoting the Georgia Central railroad—"to cut the Confederates' avenue for supplies. Bragg might turn and crush it, but he can do that now. The trouble is, Jakey, we need troops for quick marches; flying columns to move without camp equipage. Such a column down there could strike, retreat, strike at another point, and so confuse an enemy that he wouldn't know what was to happen next."

Jakey was too young to understand the phases of the war problem in which Maynard's mind had become engrossed to the obliteration of his trial, disgrace, wife, child, friends, comrades, everything but the game that charmed him. But Jakey's mind was as much on his friend as his friend's was on the problem.

Jakey considered himself bound in honor to report to Mrs. Maynard her husband's condition, not only on account of his promise made her on the evening of his departure for the front, but because he had a vague information of a certain exigency where only women can "do some'n," and he knew that "the general" required his wife's attention. Mounting Tom, he set off toward Ross-ville, remembering by the water map that the right hand road led there.

It was about 11 o'clock at night when he reached Ross-ville. He determined to rest there a few hours, and making for a cavalry camp got on the "left side" of a sergeant and turned in with his natural associates, the soldiers. Jakey asked the guard to wake him at 2 o'clock, at which time, after a bite furnished by his friend, the sergeant, and a feed for Tom, he set off toward Chattanooga. At daylight he crossed the Tennessee river and was soon on his way across the neck of Moocassin point toward his destination.

As Jakey approached the plantation it occurred to him for the first time that the information he bore was not pleasant for him to give to any one, especially a woman, and that woman "the general's" wife.

"Reckon she uns'll be skeered when she sees me," he muttered to himself. "I don't like this business now. Wonder I didn't think of 't' bofo. Wish they wor some un'er ter tell her. Mobbe I'll see Souri first. Ef I do, I'll let her tell."

But Jakey was not so lucky. He reached the plantation just before breakfast time, and as Laura Maynard cast a glance from her chamber window she saw him ride up to the veranda. She remembered well the promise she had extracted from Jakey and knew in a moment that he was the bearer of some bad news. Putting her hand on her heart to stop its thumping, she ran down stairs and out on to the veranda. The boy dismounted and came up the steps.

"Oh, Jakey, what is it?"

Now, Jakey had his own method of carrying his points, and whether or no they were original or ingenious he carried them. Sometimes his parrying was very clumsy. It was so now. He must gain time at all hazards.

"What air what?"

"There's something happened to the colonel. I know it. Tell me the worst."

"Waal, now, Mrs. Maynard, 't'he general he hain't dead nohow."

"Thank heaven he lives! Is he ill or wounded? Is he wounded mortal? Or is his illness dangerous? Will he recover? Oh, tell me, tell me!"

"Which un' of them air questions shall I answer fust?"

Souri came out on to the veranda, and seeing Jakey took him into her arms.

"What are you doing here, Jakey?" she asked.

"Reckon I air a-standin on ter th' gallery jest now."

"Mark is ill, wounded, heaven knows what!" exclaimed Laura. "He won't tell me. She clasped her hands and trembled."

"Jakey, don't give 'a. Maynard pain by keeping her in suspense. Tell her."

But Souri dreaded to have her friend hear bad news as well as Jakey dreaded to give it.

"Waal," said Jakey, cornered, "th' general, he air d—d obstinate."

"Obstinate?"

"Yes."

"What do you mean, Jakey?" asked Souri encouragingly.

"Waal, th' general he reckons thot' he ain't no big fight, 'n he's goin' fo' ter git hisself killed."

"Heavens!" exclaimed Laura. "What does it all mean?"

"Means Miss Baggs."

"Miss Baggs?" the wife, bristling. "So it's something about her."

"It's all 'bout her."

"Tell me what you mean this instant," said Laura, with flashing eyes. By this time Jakey had got to a point where he could begin to tell his story. He did so after the following fashion:

"Miss Baggs she wor ketchin' takin' th' telegraphs off 'n th' wires 'n turned over ter th' general. The general he wanted ter turn her over ter headquarters, but they was too smart for him."

necessary for him to make the connecting link in person between his friend and his friend's wife. So he turned the conversation on lines of retreat.

"Now, suppose," he said, "just suppose I was busted right here, how'd I git away?"

"That would depend on the condition of things. If I were to get away safely, you, you'd never get away safely. I'd never stop till I had driven you into the Tennessee river."

"How could I get that from here?"

"This part of your army where we are now could only fall back on Ross-ville. There the flanks would be better protected for a stand. You could go from Ross-ville to Chattanooga by this road" (pointing to it on the map). "If you about be successful in keeping your enemy far enough from you and long enough, you might cross the river and save your army. You might perhaps stay there if not too reduced in numbers and if you could keep your line of supply open."

"This air th' bridge I'd cross th' creek on, I reckon," pointing to Reed's bridge on the map.

"That's the nearest from where we are."

"Waal, general," said Jakey in a tone to indicate that the discussion of the campaign was ended, "of you uns bust me, I'll retreat that a-way."

Nothing more was said about the imaginary campaign by either. Maynard's eye was fixed on his water map, and he was lost in study. Jakey let him alone till he saw that he was drifting back to his trouble. Then he endeavored to lead him into war again. At last, seizing a favorable opportunity, the boy suggested the propriety of sending some message to his wife.

"Time enough for that after the fight," was all Maynard would say. Jakey was discouraged. He knew that if his friend lived after the fight it would not be his own fault.

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"Miss Baggs she wor ketchin' takin' th' telegraphs off 'n th' wires 'n turned over ter th' general. The general he wanted ter turn her over ter headquarters, but they was too smart for him."

They told him to try her 'n kill her." "The cruel monsters!" cried Laura. "Maybe Jakey's got it wrong? They'd not be likely to express it that way," said Souri.

"Reckon thot's 'bout it with a spy anyhow. Th' general he tried her, but when it come ter killin her he wasn't thar."

"The nobleman! It is just like him," from Laura.

"Then he found out that she was a sister of a old friend of his'n."

"Who was that?" from Laura.

"Mr. Fitz Hugh."

"Caroline Fitz Hugh?"

"Reckon."

"Who is she?" asked Souri of Laura.

"I—I never saw her. I know who she is, though."

"Then th' general he dressed hisself like a private sejoer, 'n he 'n Corporal Ratigan?"

"Corporal Ratigan?" exclaimed Souri.

"Yes, he 'n Corporal Ratigan they run her over th' lines."

"Well," from Laura, breathlessly.

"Th' general he confessed, 'n they tried him, 'n—' Jakey hesitated.

"Sentenced him ter be— Oh, Souri, help me!"

And Laura tottered against her friend.

"Do tell me what it is," gasped Laura, looking imploringly at Souri.

"I don't know. What is it, Jakey?"

"Boin dropped out'n th' service."

"And is that all?" cried Laura hysterically. "Only dropped out of the service, and for doing a noble act. Poor Mark! I know that he will consider this a terrible disgrace, but to me it is a blessing. Now I can show him how I love him, and dropping her head on Souri's shoulder she burst into a torrent of tears.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE FIRST GUN AT CHICKAMAUGA.

Mark Maynard was passing the first night after his sentence. Jakey had left him, after their discussion of the campaign, to relapse into gloom. He blew out his candle and threw himself on his camp cot. Sleep would not come. The evening of his departure days came back fantastically before him like an army of cavalry goblins in review. They had sorely got by before they turned and came cantoring back again. Thus they marched and countermarched till midnight, and still no sign of sleep. Maynard tossed and turned and pined for day. And what would it bring forth? Surely a battle could not be much longer delayed, and with a battle there would be a chance for oblivion.

Scratching a match, he reached for his watch. It was 12 o'clock. He felt that he could no longer bear these long peaked canvas walls above him. He must get out under the broader canopy. Lighting his candle, he noticed the uniform of Private Flaungan, in which he had aided the escape of Caroline Fitz Hugh. He put it on, and, throwing back the tent flaps, he stepped out into the night. The sky was covered with thin clouds, and behind which the moon shone, giving a light between darkness and moonlight. He set out toward the front. Passing out of his own immediate camp, he ascended the slope of Pea Vine ridge, which stood dark against the eastern sky. Climbing to one of its highest points, where he could overlook the Pea Vine valley, he seated himself on a rock and gazed himself over to meditation. Around him was the dark circle of the horizon, while above was the great dome. Beneath him, on the eastern slope of the ridge, were the Union outposts, beyond which slept a Confederate army. Back of him, in the valley of the Chickamauga, were the Union troops, the two armies making in all 100,000 souls.

There came a distant rumbling from points, which he could not make out. A Pea Vine valley, he seated himself on a rock and gazed himself over to meditation. Around him was the dark circle of the horizon, while above was the great dome. Beneath him, on the eastern slope of the ridge, were the Union outposts, beyond which slept a Confederate army. Back of him, in the valley of the Chickamauga, were the Union troops, the two armies making in all 100,000 souls.

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GETTING RID OF PESTS. *Recipes That Will be Welcomed by Every Anxious Housekeeper.*

There are few housekeepers who have not wakened some morning to find the house alive with ants.

Corrosive sublimate is one of the quickest poisons known, and for that reason is efficacious. The proportion should be about one part corrosive sublimate to 100 parts of water, which makes it very strong. This, used as a wash, is nearly always effective for the time being, but other measures are necessary for a complete eradication.

Ants usually appear in the pantry or cellar, and invade everything they find. Sugar, flour, etc., so affected should be sealed with plenty of hot water, to kill those already there.