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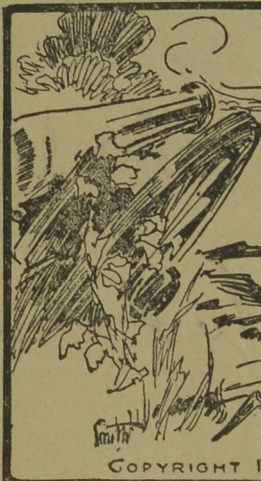
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SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTER I—Mrs. Varney, wife of a Confederate general, has lost one son and has another dying from wounds. She reluctantly gives her consent for Wilfred, the youngest, to join the army if his father consents. The federals are making their last assault in an effort to capture Richmond.

CHAPTER II—Edith Varney secures from President Davis a commission for Capt. Thorne, who is just recovering from wounds, as chief of the telegraph at Richmond.

CHAPTER III—Capt. Thorne tells Edith he has been ordered away. She declares he must not go and tells him of the commission from the president. He is strangely agitated and declares he cannot accept.

CHAPTER IV—Thorne decides to escape while Edith leaves the room to get the commission, but is prevented by the arrival of Caroline Mitford, Wilfred's sweetheart.

CHAPTER V—Mr. Arrelsford of the Confederate secret service, a rejected suitor of Edith's, detects Jonas, Mrs. Varney's butler, carrying a note from a prisoner in Libby prison. Arrelsford suspects it is intended for Thorne. The note reads: "Attack tonight. Plan 3. Use Telegraph."

CHAPTER VI—Edith is indignant when Arrelsford tells her of his suspicions regarding Thorne. He declares the latter is Lewis Dumont of the Federal secret service and that his brother Henry is a prisoner in Libby. Edith refuses to believe and suggests that Thorne be confronted with the prisoner as a test.

CHAPTER VII—Edith detains Thorne while the prisoner is sent for. An order comes from General Varney for Wilfred to report to the front at once.

CHAPTER VIII—Edith is forced to carry out her part in the test of Thorne. She gives him the message taken from Jonas, which he reads without betraying himself. He suspects that he is being watched.

CHAPTER IX—The prisoner is thrust into the room alone with Thorne, who recognizes him as his elder brother, Henry Dumont. They put up a fake fight. Henry implores his brother to shoot him in the leg. Thorne refuses and Henry accidentally kills himself. Arrelsford rushes into the room with the guard. Thorne nonchalantly says: "Corporal, here is your prisoner, we had a fight and I shot him."

CHAPTER X—Caroline goes to the war department telegraph office to send a message.

CHAPTER XI—Arrelsford refuses to let Caroline's message go through. It is a telegram to Wilfred simply asking forgiveness, but Arrelsford suspects a double meaning. He and Edith secrete themselves to watch Thorne, whose arrival Arrelsford expects.

CHAPTER XII—Thorne takes charge of the telegraph office and after satisfying himself that he is alone attempts to send a message, but is interrupted by the arrival of a messenger from the secretary of war with a dispatch.

CHAPTER XIII—Arrelsford and Edith see Thorne alter the secretary's dispatch. Thorne is shot in the wrist by Arrelsford when he attempts to send it. Arrelsford calls the guard, and when they appear Thorne turns the tables by ordering the arrest of Arrelsford.

CHAPTER XIV—The removal of Arrelsford is stopped by the arrival of General Randolph. Thorne again begins sending the dispatch. Arrelsford protests, declaring Thorne is sending a forced order to weaken the lines of defense. Randolph demands upon what authority Thorne has assumed command of the telegraph office. Miss Varney appears.

CHAPTER XV—She produces Thorne's commission as major in command of the government telegraph. She, having seen enough to convince her he is a real hero, him not to send the forced order. After she leaves he tears it up.

CHAPTER XVI—Thorne plans to escape from Richmond.

(Continued.)

"Neither the one nor the other, sir," said Mrs. Varney, who was not in the least afraid of Mr. Arrelsford or his soldiers, "until I know your business with her."

"My business—a few questions—I've got a few questions to ask her. Listen to that noise out yonder? Do you hear those guns and the troops passing by? Now, you know what 'Attack tonight, Plan 3,' means."

"Is that the attack?" asked Mrs. Varney.

"That's the attack. They are breaking through our lines at Cemetery Hill. That was the place indicated by 'Plan 3.' We are rushing to the front all the reserves we have, to the last man and boy, but they may not get there in time."

"What, may I ask, has my daughter to do with it?"

"Do with it? She did it!" asserted Arrelsford bitterly.

"What!" exclaimed Mrs. Varney, in a great outburst of indignation. "How dare you!"

"We had him in a trap, under arrest, the telegraph under guard, when she brought in that commission. We would have shot him in a moment, but they took me prisoner and let him go."

"Impossible!" whispered Mrs. Varney. "You don't mean—"

"Yes, she did. She put the game in his hands. He got control of the wires and the dispatch went through. As soon as I could get to headquarters I explained, and they saw the trick. They rushed the guard back, but the scoundrel had got away. Foray was gone, too, and Allison knew nothing about it, but we're after him, and if she knows where he is, he turned as if to leave the room and ascend the stairs, 'I will get it out of her.'"

"You don't suppose that my daughter would—?" began Mrs. Varney.

"I suppose everything."

"I will not believe it," persisted the mother.

"We can't wait for what you believe," said Arrelsford roughly, this time taking a step toward the door.

Mrs. Varney caught him by the arm.

"Let me speak to her," she pleaded.

"No, I will see her myself."

But Miss Mitford, who had been the indirect cause of so much trouble, once more interposed. She had listened to him with scarcely less surprise than that developing in Mrs. Varney's breast. She took a malicious joy in thwarting the secret service agent. She barred the way, her slight figure in the door, with arms extended.

"Where is your order for this?" she asked.

Arrelsford stared at her in surprise.

"Get out of my way," he said curtly; "I have a word or two to say to you after I have been upstairs."

"Show me your order," persisted the girl, who made not the slightest attempt to give way.

"It's department business and I don't require an order."

"You are mistaken about that," said Caroline with astonishing resourcefulness. "This is a private house, it isn't the telegraph office or the secret service department. If you want to go upstairs or see anybody against their will, you will have to bring an order. I don't know much, but I know enough for that."

Arrelsford turned to Mrs. Varney.

"Am I to understand, madam," he began, "that you refuse—"

But before Mrs. Varney could answer, the soldiers Arrelsford had brought with him gave way before the advent of a sergeant and another party of men. The sergeant advanced directly to Mrs. Varney, touched his cap to her, and began:

"Are you the lady that lives here, ma'am?"

"Yes, I am Mrs. Varney."

"I have an order from General Randolph's office to search this house for—"

"Just in time," said Arrelsford, stepping toward the sergeant; "I will go through the house with you."

"Can't go through on this order," said the sergeant shortly.

"You were sent here to—?" began Mrs. Varney.

"Yes; sorry to trouble you, ma'am, but we'll have to be quick about it. If we don't find him here we've got to follow him down Franklin street; he's over this way somewhere."

"Who are you? What do you want?"

"Man named Thorne, captain of artillery," answered the sergeant; "that's what he went by, at least. Here, two of you this way! That room in there and the back of the house. Two of you outside, pointing to the windows. 'Cut off those windows. The rest upstairs.'"

The men rapidly dispersed, obeying the commands of the sergeant, and began a thorough search of the house.

Caroline Mitford preceded them up the stairs to Edith's room. Arrelsford, after a moment's hesitation, stepped toward the door and went out, followed by his men.

"Get Out of My Way," He Said Curtly.

lowed by his men. Without a word of acknowledgment or even a bow to Mrs. Varney, he and his men presently left the house. As he did so, two of the sergeant's men re-entered the room, shoving old Jonas roughly before them. The man's livery was torn and dirty, his head was bound up, and he showed signs of the rough handling he had undergone.

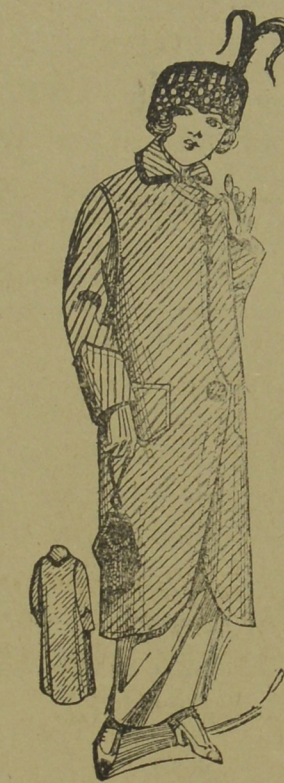
"Where did you get that?" asked the sergeant contemptuously.

"He was locked in a closet, sir."

"What were you doing in there?" He turned to the old negro. "If you don't answer me, we will shoot the life out of you." He raised his revolver threateningly. "Belongs to you, I reckon," he said to Mrs. Varney.

(To Be Continued.)

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