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# PLAYING A PART

A Story of the War Between the States

By F. A. MITCHEL

When the war between the states opened we were a contented family living on our plantation not far from Nashville, on the south side of the Cumberland river. I was then a girl of twenty and had been at a boarding school in Ohio. Our circle consisted of father, mother, my two brothers, Clarence and Arthur, myself and Clarice.

When I say that Clarice was a slave it may appear remarkable that I should speak of her as one of our family circle. In the first place, she had no little negro blood in her veins that no one would have known from her appearance that she had any at all. Her skin was fair; her hair was light; with a tinge of red in it; her eyes were dark.

The occupation of Nashville by the Federal troops in the spring of 1862 was different from that of any other of our cities. It was at the beginning of the struggle, and most of the southern people believed that when the Yankees came down upon us they would come with fire and sword. The consequence was that when it was known they were advancing upon us from Bowling Green, Ky., and coming up the Cumberland river our people began to make preparations for flight. The night before the evacuation of the city every luxury in the way of eatables and drinkables was consumed. In every house where there were such luxuries were parties feasting and drinking. On that night there was a singular mixture in Nashville of terror, sacrifice and conviviality.

The next morning the mayor crossed the Cumberland and surrendered the city to the Federal commander advancing from Bowling Green. We had packed all our valuables—we had no transport for the heavier articles—and went to a plantation of my mother's brother some twenty miles to the southward. Having been at school in the north, I knew something of the northern people and did not believe that we should all be put to the sword. I wished to remain in the house, believing that my presence there would be a protection. But mother would not hear of such a thing. She said the house might be burned to the ground rather than that I should expose myself to a lot of vandals.

We had got well started on our journey when some one asked, "Where is Clarice?" I supposed she was in another conveyance than mine, but she was not. She had done what I had wished to do—remained in the house. We had gone too far on our journey to turn back, so it was decided by mother, who was director general of our helms—my father and brothers being away in the army under General Albert Sidney Johnston—that if Clarice insisted on being murdered it could not be helped. So we pursued our journey to my uncle's plantation.

I was very much chagrined that Clarice had taken the risk—if indeed there were any risk in what she had done—that I proposed to take myself. I did not for a moment believe that she would remain at home for the purpose of falling into the hands of the Yankees in order to get her freedom, for she could have had it for the asking at any time. I felt sure that she had remained to do what she could for the preservation of the place. After a few days, not hearing that those few persons who had avoided the coming of the enemy had been put to the sword, I determined to go back and see what the condition of our abandoned home. So without saying anything to mother or any one else I told one of the servants to saddle my horse, and I started up the road for our plantation.

A few miles' ride brought me to the Federal pickets, and on stating that I wished to return to my home I was permitted to pass. I found the yard occupied with tents and sentinels peering about the house. I was riding up to the front porch and saw Clarice come running down the steps and toward me. I drew rein, thinking she might wish to see me alone, and she did. I was surprised to see her in one of my best dresses and wearing some of my ornaments.

"Don't come any farther till I tell you," she said. "The house has been taken for the headquarters of one of the generals. I thought that if I made him believe I was one of the family and not a servant it would help me to induce him to protect the place. He is doing everything I ask him. He even stopped the men from using the furnaces for fires. But your coming to go to break me all up. What shall we do?"

I thought a few moments before replying. Should I turn back and leave her to play her game? I preferred to remain.

"I tell you what we'll do, Clarice. You know I'm very dark skinned. I can pass for an octroon. I'll be maid and leave you to go on playing mistress."

Clarice tried to think of some other way out of it, but failed, and I, dismounting, led my horse around to the barn, while Clarice went back into the house. When I had taken off the saddle and bridle I joined her. While passing through the hall I met a young officer, who looked at me with every

surprise. I surmised that he took me for a lady, so I said:

"Have you seen my mistress? I'm looking for her."

"Your mistress?"

"Yes, my mistress. I didn't know that she was going to stay here alone or I wouldn't have gone away. I've come back to take care of her."

"Miss Clayton went up to her room a moment ago. I think you'll find her there."

Trin changed war was turned into a stage on which was enacted a comedy. Clarice and I being the principal women actors and Captain Harding, the officer I had met in the hall, the leading gentleman. While we convinced him that Clarice was white and I had negro blood in my veins, that she was mistress and I was maid, it was impossible for her to show the effects of an education she had not received, and I could not help showing both my breeding and education. I called her Missy Alice, and she called me Clarice. I obeyed her slightest nod, and she carried her part as mistress extremely well—that is, before others. When we were alone we were to each other what we had always been.

It was plain to me when I first met Captain Harding that he was pleased with me. A man doesn't usually take pains to conceal his admiration, and till I told him that I was a negro and a slave the captain's eyes were full of it. I thought I saw, when I gave him the information, a look of disappointment in his face, but that might have been imaginary on my part. There can scarcely arise a situation more attractive to a woman than to personate one between whom and an admirer there is a great gulf fixed. I confess I played the game with relish, though outwardly with modesty tinged with sadness—the sadness I took on when I began to feel assured that I was getting my admirer into my toils. I led him to think that it was caused by the faint of blood which separated me from him.

Had not Captain Harding's nature been of a fine texture I should have expected him to treat me for what I pretended to be. But he was as respectful to me as if I had been of the purest white blood. True, he kept a certain reserve, such as would be proper between him and a servant. He would chat with me quite freely, and when I showed an understanding that could only have been developed by education he sometimes forgave himself so far as to treat me like a lady. What I mean is that he took no advantage of my being supposedly a negro and a slave.

I was enjoying my little comedy immensely when one morning I was suddenly brought to my senses. Clarice came into my room and awakened me by crying:

"The Yankees have gone, the Lord be praised!"

"What?" I exclaimed, starting up. "There isn't a soldier on the place. They all went away at 4 o'clock this morning."

"Then and there came upon me an awakening different from that after a slumber. Captain Harding had gone! And he had gone believing me to be a negro and a slave! Had he known my true status he might return and seek me. Now this was impossible. He would never seek one tainted as I had led him to believe I was. And, as for my seeking him, no woman with womanly modesty can seek a man.

The fall was as depressing as the rise had been exhilarating. I arose from my bed and looked out through my window. Where I had been accustomed to seeing tents there was now nothing but bare ground. A month before I had exulted the coming of these Yankees; now I lamented their going. The morning was murky, and the wind was stirring the leaves to what to me was a requiem.

The army had moved to Murfreesboro, some thirty miles south of us. In a few days our household was at home again. All were happy at the vanishment of the enemy except me. I was desolate. The man I loved had gone, believing that an impassable barrier existed between him and me. There was an impassable barrier, but not such as he supposed.

One of the last battles of the war was fought near us. We were within the Federal lines, and our wounded enemies were brought to us. Seeing a stretcher set down in the yard with a man on it, I went out to learn if I could do anything for him. In his pale face I recognized Captain Harding, and when he looked up at me with his melancholy eyes I saw an involuntary start. As for me, I was both grieved at his condition and delighted that he had returned to me. I dreaded lest he should die still believing me to be what I had represented myself. I wished at once to correct the impression I had given him, but I could not. Nevertheless I did not personate a servant.

"Clarice!" I called. "Bring water! Some brandy! Quick! Captain Harding is here, badly wounded!"

A faint surprise came into the wounded man's eyes. But his condition was too low for me to enlighten him. Clarice brought the water and the brandy, and after giving him a drink I ordered her in no gentle tone to bring some of the negroes to carry the invalid into the house. When I got him there I went myself for a surgeon, brought him to the bedside and held my breath till he assured me the case was not hopeless.

All that happened nearly half a century ago. When Captain Harding returned to the north I went with him, and here I have lived ever since. I have often thought what my life would have been had I not had an opportunity to undo what I had done in leading him to suppose that I was a negro and a slave.

## THE SURGEON'S GLOVES.

He Wears Them While Operating Since He Can't Get Clean Hands.

While the surgeon's success depends to a large extent upon his hands, they are at the same time a source of the greatest danger to himself and his patient.

No process has yet been discovered which makes it certain that a surgeon's hands are free from microbes and incapable of carrying infection to a patient. This is why the good surgeon will not perform the most trivial operation without first covering his hands with properly sterilized gloves.

Prolonged scrubbing with soap and running water, followed by another thorough scrubbing in from 70 to 80 per cent alcohol, removes the outer layers of skin and bacteria and makes the surface of the hands sufficiently clean.

But there still remains the danger that many microbes which stay concealed in the tiny crevices at the base of the little hair glands, will be forced to the surface by perspiration and the use of the hands in handling instruments and make an infection of the wound possible. While practical experience shows that his danger is very slight, yet its possibility is sufficient to make it undesirable ever to operate with the bare hands.—New York American.

## SHOOTING THE RAPIDS.

Fests of the Arab Boys of Egypt, Who Are Expert Swimmers.

Among the most expert of swimmers are the Arab boys of Egypt. Like all other boys, they are fond of displaying their skill before strangers. This is how they shoot the rapids of the Nile.

Seating themselves astride a log of wood about six feet long and buoyant enough to support them waist high out of water, they ride it with the seat and gestures of a jockey and with hands and feet keep it straight with the line of the current.

The fall is shot with an ease and grace that do away with the sense of danger one would expect to feel at seeing a human being hurled along amid such a boll and turmoil of waters, but once at the bottom the youngsters have a hard struggle to induce their "horses" to turn out of the course.

To do this they avail themselves of the impetus acquired by the log in its shoot, and, throwing themselves full length upon it, they seem, with a sudden stroke from the left leg and arm, to drive it and themselves out of the current.

To fall in this would be dangerous even to Arab swimmers. Immediately below the ugly rocks on which the heavy stream breaks with great violence.—Exchange.

## They Were Solid.

Doubtless you have heard the story of the retired contractor who had engaged an artist to paint a portrait of his daughter. "Mind you," he said to the astonished artist, "I want none of your cheap splashish work, three good coats."

Which bonnet leads me up to the story that a teacher in one of the west side schools told me the other day about a little girl. Her parents, it seems, had been celebrating their silver wedding, and little Rosie the next morning, with commendable family pride, was boasting of the quality of the presents received.

"There was a whole set," she said, "of solid silver teaspoons." "Are you sure, Rosie," asked the teacher, "that the spoons were solid?" "Oh, yes," was the reply triumphant, "solid silver triple plate." Chicago Inter Ocean.

## Candle Power.

In computing candle power it must be remembered that as there are many different sizes of candles the rate of burning and intensity of light radiated would vary, so that the standard candle, upon which England and the United States agree, must be used. This standard candle is made of pure spermaceti, exactly conical, seven-eighths inch in diameter and of a length such that six weigh one pound, and with wick adjusted to burn 120 grains of spermaceti per hour. And the 1,000,000 candle power searchlight must emit a light equal to 1,000,000 standard candles. New York American.

## Maybe He Got It Back.

Brown and Jones were leaning on a polished counter and talking intimately. Then said Brown to Jones:

"Look here, old man, suppose you were to come around to my apartments one of these days and should walk up to my room and, receiving no answer to your knock, should come in and find my lifeless body stretched out cold across the bed. Now, in a case like that, what would you do?"

"I'll tell you," answered Jones after thinking it over. "I'd institute an immediate search for the \$5 you have owed me for two years."—Exchange.

## The New Woman.

Simon Ford, the humorist, said at a recent dinner:

"The new woman is a commanding figure. Man buckles down to her."

"Man, the conqueror, when he would win a woman in the past, brought her to the dust. Today, on the contrary, he brings the dust to her."—Chicago Record-Herald.

## Peckless Driving.

Mabel: I see Charlie has his hand in a sling. Mark: Yes, reckless driving. Mabel: Auto? Mark: No. Mabel: Horse? Mark: No, hammer.—Ljfa.

See that your children be taught not only the labors of the earth, but the loveliness of it.—John Ruskin.

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Children under 9, 15c

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IN THE COUNTY COURT STATE OF ILL. LAKE, ss. EDWARD M. TRATOR OF ALEXANDER ED, vs. FRANK A. LAING AND JOE No. 6804. IN TITION TO PAY DEBT NOTICE OF SA

By virtue of a Court of Lake Co. of record on Jun entered pursuant titition of the un Laing, Administ Alexander Laing to sell the Ben cedent to pay June Term A. I NOTICE IS H on Monday, the 1914, at 2 o'clock the hours of 10 o and 5 o'clock in day, at the East Court House in Lake County, Ill sale and sell at highest and best described Rest the Estate of ceased, or so mu necessary to pa said estate and tration, to-wit:

"That part of ter of Section 32 Range 12, East Meridian, in L described as fo incencing at the said North East tion 32, running thence East 19 thence North 42 of said quarter as said North line, the place of begin acres more or J Town of West De of Lake, in the

At least one any bid of any pu in cash and the b credit of not lea more than twelv with good perso unpaid balance mortgage or tr premises purcha delivered until sa Court.

Edward M. Administ of Alexa E. S. Gall, att

Supplemental Notice is hereby interested that th City of Highland Lake and State o dered that a sup sment be lev ciency of the c nected system of holes, flush tank