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Secret Service

Being the happenings of a night in Richmond in the spring of '65 The Play by William Gillette By Cyrus Townsend Brady Illustrations by Edgar Best Smith Copyright 1912 by Dodd, Mead & Company

But Arrelsford, who chafed at thus being left out of the game, now stepped over and took up the burden of the conversation before the sergeant could reply. "We have done everything according to regulation, sir," he said, saluting in a rather cavalier manner. He did not like General Randolph. If it had not been for his interference, the affair would have been settled long ago, and he still cherished a grudge against the latter for having arrested a man so important as the trusted agent of the secret service.



"I Say That Dispatch Was Not Sent," He Roared.

now, and the court has ordered him shot. "Oh, indeed. And what were the charges?" "Conspiracy against our government and the success of our arms, by sending a false and misleading dispatch containing forged orders, was the particular specification." "Well," said General Randolph, "I regret that the court has been misled."

"What!" cried Arrelsford, in great surprise. "The testimony was very plain." "Yes, indeed, sir," interposed the sergeant. "Nevertheless," returned the general, "the man is not guilty of that charge. The dispatch was not sent."

Now Edith Varney had scarcely moved: She had expected nothing, she had hoped for nothing from the advent of the general. At best it would mean only a little delay. The verdict was just, the sentence was adequate, and the punishment must and would be carried out. She had listened, scarcely apprehending, busy with her own thoughts, but at this remarkable statement by General Randolph she was suddenly quickened into life. A low exclamation broke from her lips. A hope, not that his life might be saved, but that it might be less shameful to love him, came into her heart. Wilfred stepped forward also.

The terse statement of the general had caused a great deal of excitement and commotion in the room. Only Thorne preserved his calmness. He was glad that Edith Varney had learned this, and he was more glad that she had learned it from the lips of the enemy, but it would make no difference in his fate. He was not guilty of that particular charge, but there were dozens of other charges for which they could try him, the punishment of any one of which was death. Besides, he was a spy caught in the Confederate lines, wearing a uniform not his own. It was enough that the woman should learn that he had not taken advantage of her action; at least she could not reproach herself with that.

to Edith Varney's face, in which he saw the light of a great illumination was shining. "No, sir," he repeated; "I was just about to send it by his orders, when he countermanded it and tore up the dispatch." "And what dispatch was it?" "It was one signed by the secretary of war, sir, removing Marston's division from Cemetery Hill." "You hear, gentlemen," said the general, and, not giving them time to answer, he turned again to Foray. "What were Captain Thorne's words at the time?" "He said he refused to act under that commission, and crumpled it up and threw it away."

"That will do, lieutenant," said General Randolph triumphantly. He turned to Arrelsford again. "If you are not satisfied, Mr. Arrelsford, I beg to inform you that we have a dispatch from General Chesney at the front, in which he says that no orders were received from here. He got an uncompleted dispatch, but could not make anything out of it. Marston's division was not withdrawn from Cemetery Hill, and our position was not weakened in any way. The attack there has failed." There was a low murmur of astonishment from the group of men in the room. Edith Varney did one significant thing. She made two steps in Thorne's direction. That young man did not dare to trust himself to look at her. "It is quite plain," continued the general, "that the court has been acting under an error. The president of the Confederacy is, therefore, compelled to disapprove the finding, and it is set aside. He happened to be with the secretary when the finding came in."

Arrelsford made one last desperate effort. "General Randolph," he said, and, to him justice, he did not lack courage, "this was put in my hands, and—" "I take it out of your hands," he said curtly. "Report back to the war office, or the secret service office, with my compliments, and—" "But there are other charges upon which he could be tried," persisted Arrelsford. "He is a spy anyway, and—" "I believe I gave you your orders, Mr. Arrelsford," interrupted the general, with suspicious politeness. "But hadn't I better wait and see—"

"By God, sir," thundered Randolph, "do I have to explain my orders to the whole secret service of the Confederacy? Don't wait to see anything. Go at once, or I will have you escorted by a file of soldiers." Arrelsford would have defied the general if there had been the least use in the world in doing it, but the game was clearly up for the present. He would try to arrange to have Thorne re-arrested and tried as a spy later. Now he could do nothing. He walked out of the room, pride enabling him to keep up a brave front, but with disappointment and resentment raging in his heart. He did not realize that his power over Thorne had been withdrawn. In the great game that they had played, he had lost at all points. They all watched him go, not a single one in the room with sympathy, or even pity.

"Now, sergeant," said the general, as they heard the heavy hall door close; "I want to speak to the prisoner." "Order arms!" cried the sergeant. "Parade rest!" As the squad assumed these positions in obedience to his commands, the sergeant continued, "Fall out, the prisoner." Thorne stepped forward one pace from the ranks, and saluted the general. He kept his eyes fixed upon that gentleman, and it was only the throbbing of his heart that made him aware that Edith Varney was by his side. She bent her head toward him; he felt her warm breath against his cheek as she whispered: "Oh! Why didn't you tell me? I thought you sent it, I thought you—"

"Miss Varney!" exclaimed the general in surprise. But Edith threw maidenly reserve to the winds. The suddenness of the revelation overwhelmed her. "There is nothing against him, General Randolph, now; is there? He didn't send it. There's nothing to try him for!" she said. General Randolph smiled grimly at her. "You are very much mistaken, Miss Varney," he answered. "The fact of his being caught in our lines without his proper uniform is enough to hang him in ten minutes."

Edith caught her heart with her hand with a sharp exclamation, but General Randolph turned to speak to the prisoner. "Captain Thorne," he said, "or Lewis Dumont, if that is your name; the president is fully informed regarding the circumstances of your case, and I need not say that we look upon you as a cursed dangerous character. There isn't any doubt whatever that you ought to be shot right now, but, considering the damned peculiarity of your behavior, and that you refused to send out that dispatch when you might have done so, we've decided to keep you out of mischief some other way. You will be held a prisoner of war."

Captain Thorne was almost too dazed to realize the purport of the decree. He mechanically saluted, and from his lips broke a murmured: "Thank you, sir." The general looked at him severely, and then, seeing Edith Varney, turned away and engaged in conversation with his staff. His intention was obvious, and Edith immediately embraced the opportunity. "Oh!" she said; "that isn't nearly so bad as death," and before them all she stretched out her hand to him. "No," queried Thorne in a low voice. "No," she said, forcing herself to

look at him. "After a while perhaps—some time—" "Oh!" said Thorne. "Some time? If it's some time, that's enough." Mrs. Varney, having succeeded in getting Howard quiet and composed, had been in the room since the advent of General Randolph. "Mamma," said Edith, "won't you speak to him, too?" Mrs. Varney approached him, but Wilfred was quicker. "I would like to shake hands with you," he said, with boyish enthusiasm.

"What, again?" said Thorne, smiling. "All right," he stretched out his hand. "Go ahead." "And so would I," said Caroline, following the lead of her boy lover. "Everything will be all right. They will give you a parole, and—" "A parole!" said Caroline. "Goodness gracious, they will give you hundreds of them, I am sure." But General Randolph turned once more. "One moment, please," said the officer. As he came forward, the others fell back. Only Edith Varney kept her place close by Thorne's side. "There is only one reason on earth why the president has set aside a certain verdict of death. You held up that false order and made a turn in our favor. You are not to be tried as a spy, but held as a prisoner of war. We expect you to make that turn complete and enter our service."

"Never," replied Thorne instantly. "That's impossible, sir." "You can give us your answer later," said the general. "You have it now." "You will be kept in close confinement until you come to our terms," continued the older officer. "You make me a prisoner for life, then."

"You will see it in another light before many days, and it wouldn't surprise me if Miss Varney had something to do with a change in your views." "You are mistaken, General Randolph," quickly interposed Edith. "I think he is perfectly right." "Oh, very well," said the general, smiling a little. "We will see what a little prison life will do. Sergeant?" "Yes, sir."

"I have turned the prisoner over to Major Whitfield. He requests you to take the prisoner to his office, where he'll take charge of him." "Very good, sir," answered the sergeant. "What is it?" whispered Thorne to Edith. "Love and goodbye?" "No," answered the girl; "only the first." She stopped and looked at him, her face flushed, her heart throbbing, her eyes shining gloriously. "And that every day, every hour, every minute, until we meet again." "Thank God," whispered Thorne. "Until we meet again." "Attention!" cried the sergeant. "Carry arms! Left face! Fall in, the prisoner! Forward—march!"

AFTERWORD. And so the great adventure is over, the story is told, and the play is played. It is hard to tell who lost and who won. It made little difference in the end that Marston's division had not been withdrawn, and that the attack on Cemetery Hill had failed. It made little difference in the end that Arrelsford had been thwarted in his attempts to wreak his vengeance upon Thorne. It made little difference in the end that Thorne refused to enter the service of the Confederacy, preferring imprisonment for life. For the days of the Confederacy were numbered. It was even then tottering on the verge of its grave, in spite of the brave front it kept up.

Three days after the events of that night, and Richmond had fallen, and presently the last of the Confederate defenders halted at Appomattox. The stars and bars were hauled down for the last time. The prisoners were released. There was a quiet wedding in the old house. Howard, happily recovering from his wounds, was present. General Varney himself gave away the bride—reluctantly, to be sure, yet he did. Wilfred took the place of the brother of Captain Thorne—to continue to call him by the name he had assumed—and acted as the best man. To whom should be given the



"I Would Like to Shake Hands With You."

coveted privilege of attending the bride to Miss Caroline Mitford! And Miss Kittridge and the few other guests, including General Randolph, saw in the younger couple indications that when a few more years had made it suitable the two who played the second part on this interesting occasion would be principals themselves. There was much opposition, of course, to the wedding of Captain

Thorne and Edith Varney, and many bitter things were said, but there was no restraining the young people. They had lived and suffered, they had almost died together. The years of peace and harmony and friendship that came to the sections at last, and the present happiness that was theirs immediately, convinced even the most obtuse that what they had done was exactly right.

THE END GETS FIRST MOTHER'S KISS

When Teacher Becomes Bride She Hears of Vow. New York, July 14.—Miss Ethel Flaxan, a public school teacher, got her first kiss from her mother on Sunday when she became the bride of Michael Solomon. There were six other children in the family, and they got all the kisses they wanted, but Ethel, who could kiss her mother, never was kissed in return, and she never knew why until she was married.

Now her mother has told her why. She said that shortly after she and her husband came to this country from Austria, twenty-five years ago, they lost their fourth child. All had died of measles. While they were grieving a candle seller asked their trouble, and when told she bade them go to the synagogue and there to give an oath never to kiss their next child until that child was married. She said if they took their vow and kept it they would be the parents of seven children and would live happily ever after. The vow was taken and kept and the family prospered and was happy except for the sorrow of Ethel, who could not understand.

PAID QUEEN TRIBUTE

Giant Crane Dropped Little Girl at Feet of Party. London, July 14.—A pretty incident occurred in the course of the royal tour of Scotland. The king and queen and Princess Mary were watching the forging of big guns at Parkhead. Presently a huge hundred-ton crane was set in motion. They expected to see a big gun come swinging along. Instead there was a little girl, dressed in white, seated on a circular platform suspended from the crane's arm, and holding in her hand a magnificent bouquet of mauve orchids. She was the daughter of one of the timekeepers.

The crane swung the child high above the royal party and then dropped her gently at the feet of the queen. Then the little girl, without a trace of nervousness, curtsied and said: "If you please, madam, all the workmen at Parkhead ask you to accept this bouquet with their love and thanks for your presence." The queen, much touched, greeted the child warmly and asked her to thank the workmen in her behalf.

"ENOCH ARDEN" IN REAL LIFE

Return of Soldier Who Was Officially Reported as Dead. London, July 14.—A tangled matrimonial tale was told during a probate case in Dublin yesterday. In 1877 a soldier named Bernard Donnelly married a Margaret Donnelly. They lived together until 1878, when Donnelly went to South Africa. In 1882 Margaret Donnelly was informed by the war office that her husband was dead. In 1885 she married Patrick Mooney, and lived with him until 1890, when Bernard Donnelly returned, and claimed her as his lawful wife. She went to live with him, and left Mooney, who also married again. Bernard Donnelly died in 1912 through a fall from a scaffold.

County Is Sued for Damage

London, July 14.—The whole taxpaying population of Ulster probably will have to pay for the damage done in that province by the militant suffragettes. Major-General Sir Hugh Montgomery, a former unionist member of parliament, has brought an action against the county of Antrim for £50,000 for the destruction of his house, Abbeylands, which was burned by the militants in March. The action is brought under a law that applies only to Ireland, and which was enacted at the time the nationalists were carrying on a militant campaign in favor of home rule. Under this a county is responsible for any damage done by mobs or persons and must also pay for any extra police protection sent in anticipation of violence. Should General Montgomery be successful in his claim the taxpayers of Antrim will have to pay an extra tax of nearly eightpence in the pound next year.

Larger Telegraph Force For Army

Berlin, July 14.—October 1st will see an increase of the "telegraphic" detachment of the German army by a new battalion. The designation of these troops, however, is now only a reminiscence, for there will henceforth be no army telegraphic service. The telegraph has been replaced by the telephone. The only disadvantage of the telephonic service—that it leaves no written record—is considered to be much more than counterbalanced by the fact that the telephonic service is faster and does not require a specially-trained staff. The general commanding will hereafter have at his disposal thirty wagons, drawn by one hundred and sixty horses, and equipped with sixty telephones and about seventy-five miles of cable and wire.

The Black Sheep

Philadelphia who was formerly a resident of a town in the north of Pennsylvania recently revisited his old home. "What became of the Hoover family?" he asked an old friend. "Oh," answered the latter. "Tom Hoover did very well. Got to be an actor out West. Bill, the other brother, is something of an artist in New York; and Mary, the sister, is doing literary work. But John never amounted to very much. It took all he could lay his hands on to support the others."

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