

hear Mde. Marichal and Mde. Badouillet whispering, tremblingly:

"What is she saying? What is she saying?"

But, caring little for them, I continued:

"You would have to follow along the wall, a very narrow passage, a kind of cornice that hangs over, and directly above the sleeping soldiers. If they hear the least noise, if one of them should wake up. * * *"

"And who will guide us there?"

"I."

I tell you, little one, I no longer knew myself. I acted as if in a dream. Their safety had become my only aim.

They consulted together a moment, one short moment during which Mde. Marichal did not cease to pull me by the petticoats and whisper: "You are crazy, utterly crazy."

"Thanks for your kindness, citizenness. We accept!" they said at last.

I stood aside and they entered silently, on tip-toe. There must have been ten of them and their fatigue and dilapidated condition were pitiful to see. I told my two companions to go and watch at the chapel door and not to lose a moment. Then I said:

"You see these few steps that lead to the cornice? I will ascend them. When I reach the top I will open the door between and look down into the chapel. If all is quiet I will make a sign to you. You will come up in your turn and follow me along the cornice as far as the store room. Once there—if the good God lets us reach there! you can rest. I will come and tell you when the soldiers are gone, and they are to leave at day-break. Do you quite understand?"

I mounted the steps, opened the door and looked down. Stretched out almost on top of one another, their heads upon the sacks, lay the soldiers asleep. Their black bodies seemed entangled with the white stalls of the chapel. The light sound of their breathing was all there was to be heard. Their guns were piled in the corners. A ray of moonlight, coming from a window in the side, lighted one-half of the hall, while the other half remained in darkness. Fortunately the cornice was along this side. Straight and narrow, it ran along the wall, about twenty feet above the soldiers' heads. At the other end, like a black spot in the dimness was the door of the storage room. To get there would require some few seconds. But those few seconds seemed interminably long.

At that moment, I was seized with a terrible misapprehension. The exaltation had all gone and I saw myself face to face with the horrible reality. A strong temptation held me to tell the Girondins that the passage was impossible, that the soldiers were awake and they must save themselves as quickly as possible. But then I felt ashamed, and turning toward the men, who were watching me from below, I signed to them to come up. They obeyed and soon the first was beside me. With a gesture, I told them to be silent—as if they needed to be told that! Then I started along the cornice. What a passage! I shall never forget it. I can feel myself, advancing on tip-toe, pressing the cold wall with my left hand, my right beating the empty air, fearless every moment of losing my balance or striking some chance stone, whose fall would awaken the soldiers, sleeping so near us, just below—and behind me I could feel the mute presence of these men who followed me, risking their lives with mine—holding their breath, avoiding the least false step, the eyes of each fixed on the one ahead, their whole will turned toward the little door that grew larger in proportion as we drew nearer—and it was I, I who led them.

At last, after some mortally long moments, I reached the door, I seized the key that remained in the key hole, turned it, I pushed open the door—and then I thought everything was lost.

For a long time the store room had not been used so that the door, as I opened it, squeaked plaintively and sounded all over the chapel, freezing the marrow of my bones.

"What's that?" grumbled one of the soldiers.

I felt that our last moment had come, but, happily, there was a strong wind outside and just at that moment a furious gust shook the very walls of the chapel.

"Go to sleep, you big ass! It is only the wind," answered another, and in a moment, all was quiet again.

The door was only half open, just enough to allow them to shy through. This they did, not, however, until the silence below was completely established. They followed me one after the other, skillfully, for the most part, without needing to push open the door any wider, which would certainly have been our destruction.

You cannot imagine the joy and the gratitude of these men, once they were all united in the storage room. They wept and even knelt and kissed the hem of my gown. They believed that

I had saved them. Alas! the danger was still there, menacing and terrible.

"Rest!" I said to them, "lie down here on the straw. You are comparatively safe and as soon as they have gone you, too, can depart. Rest now, sleep, and rely on me if some new danger threatens you."

I left them and went out through the half open door, taking care to leave it so. Doubtless, it would have been better to shut it tight, but that was impossible on account of the noise.

I returned like a mouse along the cornice, feeling lighter and more skillful when alone. At the end of a few seconds I was back in our little room where the two women were awaiting me anxiously.

Each received me in a different manner. Mde. Marichal severe and dry, overwhelmed me with cruel reproaches, but Mde. Badouillet, on the contrary, stood up for me and approved of what I had done. But oh! how we longed for the end of that interminable night.

(To be continued.)

A BROWN TRIP SLIP.

(Ex-Senator Arthur Brown and Mrs. Bradley had a ticket for one berth, but the conductor informed them, they could not ride upon one ticket.—Daily Paper.)

Most of you remember Mark Twain's lines beginning:

"A Pink Trip Slip for an eight-cent fare,
A Blue Trip Slip for a six-cent fare,
A Buff Trip Slip for a three-cent fare.
Punch, punch, punch with care.
Punch in the presence of the passengair."

With Mark's permission, and having in mind these two other marks, the lines might be changed as follows:

A Brown Trip Slip for a one-berth fare,
A Pil Low Slip for a lovely pair,
The nights are cold, but I do declare,
Sleep, sleep, sleep with care.
But not in the presence of the conductaire.

T. G.

Hopeful Hawkins—De leddy nex' door give me some angel cake. Couldn't you help me a little?
Mrs. Stoneheart—Sure. The doctor lives at the second door three blocks down.—Chicago Daily News.



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