

SWEET REVENGE

By Captain F. A. MITCHEL
Author of "Chattanooga," "Chickamauga," etc.
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CHAPTER VI
AN AMATEUR SOCIETY.

I HAVE seen men disarmed in various ways, by argument, fear, force, but never have I seen one so quickly vanquished as he who was about to take him away to execution. His intended act was most unwarranted, and had he been induced to refrain by logical arguments I should not have been surprised. But Jaqueline knew nothing of logic or the merits of the case. She used no plea; she conquered by a look.

"What a queer man!"

"Who?"

"The captain's smile broadened.

"Queerest man I ever saw. What do you want to take him away for? Don't you know he's wounded, and we just got him fixed up?"

"You don't mean it?" He spoke as deferentially as if the information were really a surprise to him.

"Don't want ever to see him again? What a funny thing you must be! Suppose I'd say I wanted never to see you again?"

"You'd break my heart."

All this was not to the liking of the captain's companion. "Well, captain," he put in, "what you got ter do? Goin' ter let him lay 'till he's cooled by the family?"

"You hush!" cried Jaqueline, with suddenly flashing eyes. The man started back. Possibly he was unused to such quick transitions. "You can't take him away till he's got a large piece of his blood on his hands. Just think of that!"

and more animated, keeping time by putting her foot on the floor. I glanced at the captain. He was looking at her admiringly; the charm enhanced at hearing a soldier sing dear to every Confederate soldier given with so much spirit by such an attractive creature. Suddenly the music stopped.

"Don't you like music?" asked Jaqueline of the captain. "I do love it."

"I like it when warbled by such attractive lips," replied the officer.

Then the banjoist without played a Spanish dance. Jaqueline's body began to vibrate; but, though alive in every limb, she did not dance. There was something tantalizing in a promised treat that was not realized.

"Dance!" cried the captain, an expectant look in his handsome eyes.

"Shall I?"

"Do, please," I put in.

As a bird that had been soaring slowly in its expected course, Jaqueline passed from comparative rest to motion. In another moment she was moving about the hall with improvised steps, as though dancing waltz to a paradoxical expression, her normal condition of rest. She floated, drooped, rose, rested, keeping time with her head, her arms, her whole body. For a while I was so delighted that I forgot all except the dance, and when I looked at her again, she was in a different position.

"You certainly don't want to commit a gross blunder, captain," I remarked. "You can at least give me some sort of trial."

"Reckon I can refer the matter to headquarters," he replied, fixing his eyes on Jaqueline.

It was a delicate case that balanced life and death in a scale and often required only a feather's weight to turn it. It had been turned for the time and turned effectually. The guards were ordered back, and the captain sauntered away with my accuser, who expatiated as they passed out of the house on to the gallery. Pulling a cigar out of his pocket, Captain Beaumont sat down in a rocking chair and began to smoke as tranquilly as if nothing had happened, listening composedly to the ruffian who was trying to get him to shoot me. But Beaumont was now as difficult to move, as imperturbable, as he had been before, and Jaqueline, as last, went away disappointed. He gave me a malignant glance before going, which said plainly, "I'll fix you yet."

The captain continued sitting where he was, his head resting on the back of the chair, looking dreamily up at the waving branches of a large tree set against the blue sky. Supper was ready, and Jaqueline, taking a rose, went out and, fixing it in a buttonhole of his coat, led him into the dining room. Before passing out of sight she turned and gave me a meaning glance, accompanied by a wry face at her companion. As the captain's back was turned it was safe for me to indulge in a smile. Indeed, I fear I could hardly have refrained had his face been toward me. This little Jaqueline was certainly unique.

While they were at supper I was deliberating upon the situation. It was evident that my old enemies had either stumbled upon me or had learned of my presence in north Alabama and were bent on my destruction. It was a desperate case. I was an officer in the Union army, within the enemy's lines, in citizen's dress and in that enemy's hands. I was wounded by men who would not scruple to use any means to get me in their power. If I did not escape from the Confederates, I should be murdered.

Presently Jaqueline and the captain came out from the supper room. Jaqueline in advance, the captain's eyes fixed on the pretty figure before him. Jaqueline was very graceful, very dainty. Her every motion was charming. She was so light on her feet that she seemed scarcely to touch the ground. Though she walked, she danced, while she danced with her body, her lips wearing a perpetual smile. Once she took two or three steps, turning half around—a mere suspicion of a dance, a delicious, tantalizing bit, like a sip of rare wine.

"I'd like to meet you in a ballroom," remarked the captain languidly.

"Why so?"

"You'd dance beautifully. You'd make a charming partner."

"I can sing."

"Can you?"

"Yes, and play. One day I was playing Gering's banjo behind the barn. Papa called, 'Yo' Gering, stop that infernal twanging! Wasn't it funny?' She laughed. The captain laughed. I laughed. There was something very catching about the little music that neither of us could resist.

She drew an armchair close beside the sofa on which I was lying and insisted on the captain seating himself in it. He demurred, but Miss Jack would have it so, and the man who half an hour before had ordered me out to be shot was sitting by me as though we were the most intimate friends. Jaqueline seated herself in a rocker directly in view of both myself and the captain and, rocking vigorously all the while, chattered like a magpie. The captain settled himself within his comfortable seat, asked permission to smoke and, finding that he had but one cigar, insisted on my smoking it. Of course I refused, but he was too intimately well bred to smoke it himself without another for me. Miss Jack solved the problem by standing before him with a lighted match till he was forced to yield.

Then from without came the jingle of a banjo. Jaqueline caught the sound and stood listening, her head poised on one side, her eyes sparkling as though forgetful of everything save the music.

"That's 'The Bonny Blue Flag,'" she exclaimed, and she hummed the words in a sweet though by no means strong voice. As she went on she sang rather than hummed, becoming more



She began to dance lightly about the hall, thought myself to look at the captain. It was easy to see that the thrall Jaqueline had been weaving about him was complete.

"Jaqueline!"

Miss Pinkley had entered the hall and stood looking at her several minutes. Jaqueline stopped as suddenly as if she had been moved by electricity and the current had been turned off.

"I'm astonished at you," said the lady. "You've made the acquaintance of these gentlemen, as though dancing waltz to get him to shoot me. But Beaumont was now as difficult to move, as imperturbable, as he had been before, and Jaqueline, as last, went away disappointed. He gave me a malignant glance before going, which said plainly, 'I'll fix you yet.'"

"Do you think so?" queried Jaqueline triumphantly. "I'd love to dance on the stage."

"Jaqueline!" again cried Miss Pinkley. "What's the harm, auntie? I'm not on the stage."

"Yes, but you want to be. To think of a Rutland on the stage! You'd be mawfitted to death."

She passed up stairs, and Jaqueline began again to rattle on in her singular way. Suddenly it struck her that she wanted Gering's banjo, and, calling Cynthia, she sent her for it. Then, after testing the strings, she began to play and sing. The music was light, but sweet, being composed chiefly of those unique negro melodies born under the slave system as delicate plants sometimes spring up among poisonous weeds.

"Without warning she put the banjo down and began to talk again, skipping from one subject to another, astonishing us by her confidences, sometimes asking questions, but seldom waiting for an answer. Presently I spoke of my stay with the Stanfords."

"The Stanfords?" she cried. "Do you know 'em?"

"Yes. Do you?"

"Ought to; they're my cousins. Did you see Minerva?"

"No. What do you mean?"

"Her real name is Helen. We called her Minerva at school. I went to school with her two years. She's older than I, though."

"I have met Miss Helen Stanforth."

"If you refer to the young lady we met today," the captain remarked, "she's a very beautiful and high bred woman, much like our Georgia beauties."

"She knows everything," said Jaqueline; "theology, geology, biology, psychology. And more of 'em."

"That's quite enough," I admitted.

"Oh, yes. Buck and I became quite friendly."

"Friendly? Buck was born to be hated."

"What makes you think that?"

"Most dery, pestiferous little imp yo' ever saw! Doesn't stop at anything."

"Here flashes of a strong nature. When he grows up, he'll control it and be all the stronger for it."

"Think so? If he was black and I owned him, I'd have him whipped every day."

A colored woman came in and told the captain that Miss Pinkley presented her compliments, and a room was ready for him whenever he chose to occupy it. She also informed him that I could have a room.

"Captain," I said, "I have no reason to get away from you. Indeed, I wouldn't leave your guardianship just now for a plantation. The man who has accused me is in league with others who are interested in getting me out of the way. Now, if you'll permit me to go to bed without a guard I'll give you my word of honor not to leave this house till after the watch has been resumed tomorrow."

"Now, captain," put in Jaqueline before the officer could reply, "let the poor man go to bed."

"You're right," he asked, looking at her with an expression half admiring, half comic.

"For my sake, for yo' sake, for everybody's sake."

She went up in front of him and, putting her little oval face within a few inches of his, brought her snapping eyes to bear on him and stood waiting for his decision.

"With a reason I must let yo' have yo' way. Ye're too pretty to quid with."

She clasped her hands. "I knew it! Loveliest man I ever met! Too sweet for anything!"

The captain smiled that pleasant, indolent smile of his, looking at me at the same time, as much as to say, "What a deliciously odd creature!" while Jaqueline disappeared as suddenly as an actress who had finished her part. Gering came in with a decenter and glasses, which he placed on the table. The captain sat down before the wine and invited me to join him.

"Miss Rutland is certainly a dainty little thing," he said as he took the stopper from the decanter and filled our glasses.

"She certainly is."

"Most charming creature I ever saw."

"What a soubrette she would make!"

"Ravishing! Fill yo' glass, sir. Ravishing. Do yo' know, I never saw mo' graceful dancing on the stage?"

"Nor I."

"And what a sweet little voice!"

"The notes of a bird."

By this time I had made up my mind that it would be impossible to get the captain on any other subject than Jaqueline, and he talked of her the rest of the evening—indeed, till he had finished the decanter. I could not but be amused at the transition Jaqueline had wrought in his treatment of me. It occurred to me to test his good nature still further.

"Captain," I remarked, "I'm caught away from home with a thin pocket-book. Could you let me have a hundred dollars till I can get to where there is a bank?"

"Certainly, sir, with pleasure. No trouble at all. And, pulling out a thick roll of Confederate bills, he tossed them over to me."

"I said, pushing back the bills to me, 'I don't need money. I only wanted to see if it were possible for a man to order another out to be shot in the afternoon and do him a favor in the evening.'"

"My dear sir," he replied, "permit me to apologize for my hasty action. I give yo' the word of a Georgia gentleman that had not that delightful creature interposed I should now deeply regret the execution of my order."

"You mean my execution?"

"A very good health, sir, and that of the little lady."

The decanter was empty. Gering, the major domo, appeared, assisted the captain up stairs to one of the main chambers in the center of the house. Jaqueline conducted me through a hall to a wing and ushered me into the apartment intended for me.

CHAPTER VII.
MISADVENTURE.

WHAT faded splendor! All the furniture was mahogany—the bed, a huge four poster, canopied; the bureau high and with brass handles to its drawers; the chairs straight backed; from the center of the ceiling hung a chandelier of glass pendant. All this antique magnificence was lighted by the single tallow dip which also glinted upon the honest face of Gering.

"I hope yo' berry comfiable, sah," said Gering, setting down the candle and turning to depart.

"No doubt of it. Wait a bit. I want you to tell me to whom this plantation belongs."

"Cunnel Rutland, sah."

"Been in this family long?"

"A 'countand years, sah."

"What?"

"Don't know nothin' 'bout countin'. Spec' it's been in de family mighty long time. Cunnel Rutland, he mighty fine gent'man, sah; Cunnel Rutland, he own ten hundred thousand acres—"

"How many?"

"De biggest plantation in all Alabama, sah. Cunnel Rutland be de biggest—"

"Wait a bit, Gering. Who is Miss Pinkley?"

"Miss Pinkley, she mighty fine lady, sah. Miss Pinkley, she—"

"What relation is she to Colonel Rutland?"

"Miss Pinkley, she was Miss Rutland's sistah, sah. Miss Pinkley, she—"

"Where is Mrs. Rutland?"

"Miss Rutland, she's dead."

"Who is Miss Jaqueline?"

"Miss Jack, she's de first young lady in de count, sah. When Miss Jack go to de planters' balls an de city balls in Huntsville, she take all de young men away from de udder young ladies an make 'em all 'nuff to eat her up."

"She is Colonel Rutland's daughter, I suppose?"

"Yes, sah. Missy Jack de apple ob Cunnel Rutland's eye, sah. Cunnel Rutland 'dout care nuffen 'bout nobody but Missy Jack."

"How about you colored people?"

"'Tis dat, sah."

"Do you like Miss Jaqueline?"

"Like Missy Jack! Reckon de culled people ob Missy Jack like de angel ob—"

"Isn't she just a bit hot tempered?"

"Reckon Missy Jack is hot tempered, sah. Missy Jack, she got de hottest temper in de whole count. Missy Jack, she—"

"Hold on; explain why you all love Miss Jack when she has a hot temper and speaks to you sharply."

"Laws a massy, she don't mean nuffen. Missy Jack, she scold wid de firebrand in de eye, but she won't let nobody else scold. Yo' ought to see dat body else scold. Yo' ought to see dat gal when Mars' Bingham—Mars' Bingham, he de oberseer—Mars' Bingham whip de niggers. One day Mars' Bingham, he whip me. I yelled lak a killed nigger. Missy Jack, she run out wid her hair a-flyin an her eyes a-shinin, an she tak' de whip out o' Mars' Bingham's han', an—golly Moses, how she lay it on dat oberseer!"

"Did he take it kindly?"

"He couldn't do nuffen. Ef he tech Missy Jack, Cunnel Rutland shoot him. Cunnel Rutland, he got de biggest temper, 'cept Missy Jack—ain't nobody got temper lak Missy Jack!"

"Any more Rutlands?"

"No, sah. Ain't dat 'nuff—all dem mighty fine people?"

"Quite enough. Now you may go, Gering."

Gering departed with a frown that I should have called for more such people as the Rutlands and somewhat disappointed, I fancied, at not being able to impress me with the magnitude of the family temper. I closed the door behind him and locked it.

"John Brandestrom," I said, looking at the dim reflection of my body in one of the great mirrors, "had it not been for that little girl down stairs your being would now be no more real than that image. Never have you had so close a call, and you'll never have another so close without being the last. But you've no time to waste. Your situation will be more critical with the rising sun than it is this minute. Something must be done."

I went to a window. It was at the end of the building. My room was on the second story of the house, at no

great height from the ground. I turned from the window to another facing the rear. They were all open, for the weather was warm and sultry. At this second window was something which attracted my attention at once—a tree growing so near that I could easily step into its branches and descend to the ground.

"Thank heaven, here is an avenue of escape!"

But my pledge.

It is questionable if these moral heroes who prefer death to dishonor would choose the former if the alternative were presented as it was to me. Death in the form it assumed me certainly looked very ugly. If I kept my word and remained till morning, my identity was sure to come out. If fortune enabled me to conceal it, if the captain permitted me to go my way, I was sure to fall into the hands of my enemies. By leaving in the night I could give both the slip and by morning be far away or so disguised that I should not be recognized if found. I might possibly reach the Union lines. I had never before broken a pledge, but I had never before seen certain death staring me in the face. In the ordinary affairs of life, I reasoned, one should have a high standard, but in a matter of life or death— Besides, who ever heard of one carrying information by ever stopping at a lie or the violation of a pledge?

Placing my foot on the sill, I was reaching for a branch of the tree without when I suddenly stepped back into the room, sat down in a chair and buried my face in my hands. A vision of Ethel Stanforth, sweet, gentle, innocent, stood before me. As a flash of lightning will clear a murky atmosphere, my human reasoning vanished before a divine intuition. I could not break my pledge.

Then I felt to thinking. How difficult it is, after all, to look into the future! Who knows but some new outbreak may occur tomorrow? This captain is a singular man, and no one can tell what will next seize him next. Today he ordered me out to be shot; tomorrow he may send me away from my enemies with an escort to protect me. Then there is little Jaqueline. She has slipped a noose about his neck that he will not easily shake off. She may find a hiding place for me or an avenue which will eventually lead to safety. I was so pleased with the probabilities I conjured up that I got up and walked back and forth, rubbing my hands with satisfaction.

Food, stupid human food! The events fate had in store for me were nothing as my foresight had painted.

I heard the tramp of horses' hoofs coming through the gateway. Going to the front window and looking out, I saw two figures on horseback. It was too dark for me to distinguish them. Though one was very small, the other seemed to be a woman, for I could see her garments fluttering. They came

centering down the roadway to the gallery and must have dismounted, for soon I heard a knocking. Leaving the chamber, I went through the hall on tiptoe and stood at the head of the great staircase, listening. There were voices below, but I could not tell whose they were. I waited some time for more information, but those who were talking went into another part of the house, and I was obliged to return to my room unattended. I sat down again and renewed my musings—musing that were not of the pleasantest.

I had not sat long when two men passed under the window. They were talking in a low tone. The voice of one was that of a white man, the other that of a negro. The negro said something that was inaudible. Then the white man asked:

"Which wing?"

"The par."

Is not that Jacox's voice? It is. There is no mistaking that harsh growl. What can it mean? Ah, I see it all! He expects that I will elude this easy going captain, and he will spread a net for the bird before it flies. Fortunately if I had descended by the tree, I should have dropped into his embrace.

[To be Continued.]



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IN the Superior Court of the State of Washington for Thurston county.

Joseph Reder, Plaintiff.

vs.

Edmund Seymour, R. Verman Harbo and William W. Seymour, co-partners composing the firm of Seymour, Harbo and Company, their heirs, legal heirs, legal representatives and assigns; You are hereby summoned to appear within sixty days after the date of the first publication of the notice in the above entitled court, and answer the complaint of the Plaintiff, and serve a copy of your answer upon the undersigned, attorneys for defendant, at their office below stated; and in case of your failure so to do, judgment will be rendered against you according to the demand of the complaint, which has been filed with the Clerk of said court, and a record of said action is to be made in the following described land: Commencing at a point 60 feet West from the N.E. corner of Block 4, West on the North line of Block 4, 105 feet to East line of boundary street in Ayres' addition, southerly along East line 100 feet West of East line of Block 4, and North 30 feet, more or less, to point of commencement, in Olympia, Thurston county, Washington. Said street being a certain mortgage declared null and void and the defendant excluded from any interest in said real estate or lien thereon as shown on account of the map.

ISAIAH S. MACKAY, Attorney for Plaintiff.

P. O. Address, Olympia, Thurston county, Washington. Office, Suite 6, McKenny Block in said Olympia. First publication, March 6, 1903.

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NOTICE OF SETTLEMENT OF FINAL ACCOUNT.

Notice is hereby given that Henrietta L. Hall, Administratrix of the estate of Alex. T. Hall, deceased, has rendered and presented for settlement, and filed in the Superior Court of Thurston county, State of Washington, her final account as such Administratrix, and that Monday, the 20th day of April, 1903, at 10 o'clock a. m., at the Court Room of said Superior Court, in the city of Olympia, in said Thurston county, has been duly appointed by said Superior Court for the settlement of said final account, at which time and place any person interested in said estate may appear and file his exceptions in writing to the said final account, and contest the same.

Witness: Hon. G. V. Linn, Judge of the said Superior Court, and the seal of said Court attested the 21st day of April, A. D. 1903.

County Clerk and Clerk of the Superior Court. First publication, April 19, 1903.