The MARSHAL

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SYNOPSIS.

Francois Beaupre, a peasant babe of three years, after an amusing incident in which Marshal Ney figures, is made a Chevalier of France by the Emperor Napoleon, who prophesied that the boy might one day be a marshal of France under another Bonaparte. At the age of ten Francois visits General Baron Gaspard Gourgaud, who with Alixe, his seven-year-old daughter, lives at the Chateau. A soldier of the Empire under Napoleon he fires the boy's imagination with stories of his campaigns. The general offers Francois a home at the Chateau. The boy refuses to leave his parents, but in the end becomes a copyist for the general and learns of the friendship between the general and Marquis Zappi, who campaigned with the general under Napoleon. Marquis Zappi and his son, Pietro, arrive at the Chateau. The general agrees to care for the Marquis' son while the former goes to America. The Marquis before leaving for America asked Francois to be a friend of his son. The boy solemnly promises. Francois goes to the Chateau to live. Marquis Zappi dies leaving Pietro as a ward of the general. Alixe, Pietro and Francois meet a strange boy who proves to be Prince Louis Napoleon. Francois saves his life. The general discovers Francois loves Alixe, and extracts a promise from him that he will not interfere between the girl and Pietro. Francois goes to Italy as secretary to Pietro. Queen Hortense plans the escape of her son Louis Napoleon by disguising him and Marquis Zappi as her lackeys. Francois takes Marquis Zappi's place, who is ill, in the escape of Hortense and Louis. Dressed as Louis's brother Francois lures the Austrians from the hotel allowing the prince and his mother to escape. Francois is a prisoner of the Austrians for five years in the castle owned by Pietro in Italy. He discovers in his guard one of Pietro's old family servants, and through him sends word to his friends of his plight. The general, Alixe and Pietro hear from Francois and plan his rescue. Francois as a guest of the Austrian governor of the castle prison inspects the interior of the wine cellar of the Zappis. Francois receives a note from Pietro explaining in detail how to escape from his prison. Alixe awaits him on horseback and leads him to his friends on board the American sailing vessel, the "Lovely Lucy." Francois, as a guest of Harry Hampton, on the "Lovely Lucy," goes to America to manage Pietro's estate in Virginia. Francois wins the respect and admiration of the aristocratic southerners.

CHAPTER XXI.

Hero Worship.

It had come about that Lucy Hampton was a scholar of Francois. The colonel, lamenting on a day that there were no capable teachers of French in the neighborhood, that Lucy's schoolgirl command of the language was fast disappearing, and an accomplishment so vital to a lady was likely soon to be lost—this saga of regret being sung by the colonel at the dinner-table, Francois had offered to teach mademoiselle his mother tongue. And the colonel had accepted the offer.

"If you are not too busy, Chevalier. And I suppose your—ah—accent—is entirely good? One can not be too careful, you know. At least we shall not quarrel about the terms, for whatever money you think right to ask I shall be ready to pay," and the colonel felt himself a man of the world and extremely generous.

"Father!" Lucy cried quickly.

Francois' eyes were on his plate but they swept up with their wide brown gaze full on the colonel's face. "I am not too busy, Monsieur the Colonel. As for my accent—I am a peasant, as Monsieur knows, but yet I am instructed. I was for years at Saint-Cyr, the great military school of France. I believe my accent is right. As for money"—a quick motion, all French, spoke a whole sentence. "If Monsieur insists on that—that must finish it. To me it would be impossible to take money for the pleasure of teaching mademoiselle." He flashed at Lucy a smile all gentleness, and Lucy's eyes, waiting for that smile, met his shyly.

The colonel blustered a bit, but the lessons were arranged as Francois wished, twice a week throughout the winter he rode over from Carnifax to give them. And little by little he came to know the small mistress of the manor as few had known her. People thought Lucy Hampton too serious and staid for a young girl; no one realized that, her mother being dead and her father such as he was, the clear-headed little person had begun at ten or twelve years old to know that she must make her own decisions, and many of her father's also. At fourteen she had taken the keys and the responsibilities of the house, and now, at sixteen, she was in reality the head of the whole great plantation. The colonel, who would have been most indignant to be told so, leaned on her in every detail, and it was she who planned and decided and often executed the government of the little kingdom.

All this lay on the slender shoulders of Lucy Hampton, and besides all this she had begun in very childhood to hold up the hands and do the thinking of an incompetent father. It was not wonderful that she was graver and slower to frolic than other girls of sixteen. Her conscientious young brain was full of care, and light-heartedness of youth had never had a chance to grow in that crowded place. Her cousin had come to live with them only the year before, when his mother had died, his father being dead long ago; and Lucy knew quite well that her father had planned that the two should marry and unite the broad acres of the Hamptons.

But the young longing for romance which was in her in spite of the choking sober business of her life, rebelled at this. She would not give herself as well as all her thought and effort for Roanoke. She wanted to love somebody, and be loved for herself as other girls were; she would not marry Harry because he and her father considered it a good arrangement. So strongly had this determination seized her that, looking entirely down that way of thought, she failed to see that Harry might not be classed with the colonel in his view of the plan. She failed to see that if she had not been heiress to Roanoke House, or to anything at all, Harry Hampton would still have been in love with his cousin Lucy. For Harry saw how the young life had been pressed into a service too hard for it almost from babyhood; Harry saw how unselfish she was and trustworthy; how broad-minded and warm-hearted; how she would like to be care free and irresponsible like other girls of her age, only that the colonel and the estate were always there, always demanding her time and her attention. He could do little to help her as yet, but he longed to lift the weight and carry it with her, not away from her, for the fairy of a person was not the sort to lean on others or to be happy without her share of the burden. Yet, Harry thought, "If I might only help her, and make it all a delight instead of a labor!"

But Lucy, going about her busy days, never guessed this. She thought of Harry as the boy whom she had grown up with, to be cared for tenderly always because of his misfortune, to be helped and planned for and loved indeed, because he was lame and her cousin, and because he was a dear boy and her best friend. But as the hero of her own romance to come, she refused to think of him at all. More firmly she refused such an idea, of course, because her father had hinted that it would complete both Harry's and his happiness.

Francois, with quick insight, saw as much as this, and was anxious for the boy who had been his warm and steady friend. What he did not see was that Luck was fitting his own personality into that empty notch of her imagination where an altar stood and a candle burned, ready for the image that was to come above them. That never entered his mind, for in his mind Alixe was the only woman living to be considered in such a relation. And, in spite of the seigneur, in spite of Pietro, in spite of his wholehearted giving up of her, there was a happy obstinate corner in the depths of his soul which yet whispered against all reason that it might be that Alixe loved him, that it might be, for unheard-of things happened every day, it might be yet that—with all honor, with all happiness to those others whom he loved—he might some day be free to love her. So that as he grew to care for and understand Lucy Hampton more and more, no faintest dream of caring for her as he did for Alixe came ever into his mind.

On an evening when winter was wearing away to cold spring, Francois waited in the dining-room of Roanoke House for his scholar. The room had a sweet and stately beauty, a graceful stiffness like the manners of the women who first lived in it, a hundred

Lucy Stood in the Doorway.

years before. The carved white woodwork over the doors was yellowed to ivory; the mantelpiece, brought from France in 1732, framed in its fluted pillars, its garlands and chiseled nymphs and shepherds, as if under protest, the rollicking orange of the fire. Over a mahogany sofa, covered with slippery horsehair, hung a portrait of the first lady of the manor and Francois, sitting soldierly erect in a straight chair, smiled as his gaze fell on it—it was so like yet so unlike a face which he knew. There was the delicate oval chin and straight nose, and fair, loose hair. But the portrait was staid and serious, while Lucy's face, as this man had seen it, had kindly eyes and a mouth smiling always. He shook his head in gentle amusement at the grave dignity of the picture.

"But no, Madame—you are not so charming as your granddaughter," he said, addressing it aloud.

And then he stepped across the room to the fire, and held his hands to it and stared into it. The clock ticked firmly, the logs fell apart with soft sliding sounds, and he stared down at them—his thoughts far away—a look came into his eyes as if they concentrated on something beyond the range of sight, the characteristic look of Francois, the old look of a dreamer, of a seer of visions.

Then Lucy stood in the doorway, gentle, charming from the slippered feet, locked over the instep to the shadowy locks of light hair on her forehead.

"Good evening, Monsieur. I am sorry I kept you waiting. Hannibal hurt his foot and I must find plaster and bandage for him. But you will have enough of my talking even now. Father says I talk a great deal. Do I, Monsieur?"

Francois stood regarding her, with frank admiration in every muscle of his face. He smiled, the same gentle amused smile with which he had addressed the portrait. "You never talk too much for me, Mademoiselle. It is a pleasure to me always to hear your voice," he answered in the deep tone of a Frenchman, the tone that has ever a half note of tragedy, as of some race-memory which centuries do not wipe out. "Only," he went on speaking in French, "one must not talk English. That is breaking the law, you remember, Mademoiselle."

She answered very prettily in his own tongue, in words that halted a little. "Very well, Monsieur. I will do my best." He still gazed at her smiling, without speaking. One could understand that, to a girl of more self-contained people, this open homage of manner, this affectionate gentleness, might seem to mean more than a brotherly loyalty. The girl's pulse was beating fast as she made an effort for conversation. "What were you thinking of as you looked at the fire when I came in, Monsieur? It had an air of being something pleasant. Did I not say all that beautifully?" she finished in English.

He corrected a lame verb with serious accuracy and she repeated the word, and laughed happily.

"But you haven't said yet what you were thinking about."

The large brown eyes turned on hers. "It was of my old home in France, Mademoiselle, when I was very little," he said simply. "A large fire of logs makes me think of that."

"Tell me about it," she begged with quick interest. "Will you? Was there always a fire at your house?"

"But no, Mademoiselle—not, of course, in the summer. It was of the winter time I thought, when the neighbors came, in the evening, and we sat about the hearth, sometimes twenty people, each at his different duty, and my brothers and sisters were there, and the dear grandmere, was there and—" he stopped. "Does Mademoiselle really wish to hear how it was in that old farm-house of ours, in the shadow of the Jura Mountains?"

"Indeed, Mademoiselle wishes it," she assured him. "It will be a trip to Europe. I am sure I shall speak better French for going to France for ten minutes, and being among the French people, your friends. Wait now, till I am comfortable." She turned a deep chair so that it faced him, and dropped into it. "Put a footstool for me," she ordered, as southern women order the men they care for—and the men they do not. And she settled back with her little feet on it and smiled at him. For a moment the man's brilliant gaze rested on her and the girl saw it, and thrilled to it. "Now, Monsieur, racontez-moi une histoire," she spoke softly.

Francois Beaupre's look turned from her to the fire, and the air of gazing at something far away came again. "It is a picture I see as I think of that time of my childhood," he began, as if speaking to himself. "A picture many times painted in homelike colors on my brain. Many a night in the winter I have sat, a little boy, by the side of my grandmother, at that great hearth, and have looked and have seen all the faces, have heard all the voices and the fire crackling, and the spinning-wheel whirring, even as I see them and hear them tonight.

"And from time to time one of the men, as he talked, rose up and strode across the room to the great oak table where lay always on a wooden plate a long loaf of black bread, with a knife, and always a glass and a bottle of eau-de-vie—brandy. And I remember how manly it looked to me, watching, when I saw him take the loaf under his arm and hold it, and slice off boldly a great piece of the fresh rye bread, and pour out a glass of brandy and toss it off as he ate the bread. The stories seemed to grow better after the teller had done that.

"And always I waited, even through the tale of the ghost and the fire-breathing hound, till the talk should swing round, as it did ever toward the end, to the stories of Napoleon that were fresh in men's minds in those days. It was as if I sat on needles before my bedtime came, yet I did not dare to be restless and move about for fear that my mother might send me suddenly to bed. But I always gave a sigh of content and always the grand-mere patted my head softly to hear it, when my father cleared his throat and began—"

"'There is a small thing that happened when the Emperor was marching'—and then he was launched on his tale."

A great hickory log fell, rolled out toward the hearth. The carved nymphs and shepherds seemed to frown in disapproval at this irregularity, and the girl in the deep chair smiled, but the man sprang up and put the log back in place with quick efficiency. He stood silent by the tall mantelpiece, deep yet in his reverie, as the flames caught the wood again and sparkled and spluttered.

"Did any of them ever see Napoleon—those men who talked about him?" the girl asked.

The Frenchman turned a queer look on her, and did not answer.

"Did any of your family ever see him, Monsieur?" she asked again.

The alert figure stepped backward, sat down again on the gilded chair and leaned forward consideringly. Francois nodded as if to the fire. "But yes, Mademoiselle," he said, in a whisper.

"Oh, tell me!" the girl cried, all interest. "Who was it? How was it? It couldn't be"—she hesitated—"yourself! If you, whom I know so well, should have seen the Emperor!" She caught a deep breath of excitement. This was another Lucy Hampton from the serious young mistress of Roanoke House whom the country people knew. "Quickly, Monsieur, tell me if it was yourself!"

Francois turned his eyes on her. "Yes, Madamoiselle," he answered.

"You have seen Napoleon!" she said, and then, impetuously, "Tell me about it!" But, though he smiled at her with that affectionate amusement which she seemed, of all sentiments, oftenest to inspire in him, he did not answer.

"Monsieur! you will not refuse to tell me when I want to know so much!" she pleaded, and went on. "How old were you? Did he speak to you? What did he say to you?"

And the Frenchman laughed as if at a dear child who was absurd. "Mademoiselle asks many questions—which shall I answer?" he demanded, and the tone to her ear was the tone of love, and she trembled to hear it.

"Answer"—she began, and stammered and flushed, and stopped.

Francois went on, little thinking what damage he was doing with that unconscious charm of voice and look.

"It is as Mademoiselle wishes, most certainly. I will even answer Mademoiselle's two questions at once to please her. It was when I was not quite three years old, Mademoiselle, at home in the farm-house in the valley of the Jura."

"And he spoke to you, to your own self? Are you sure?"

"But yes, he spoke to me, Mademoiselle."

"What did he say?" The smile on Francois' face went out and into its place swept an intensity of feeling; he answered solemnly: "There were but few words, Mademoiselle, but they have been much to my life. They shall lead my life, if God pleases. those words shall lead it to the fate which they foretold."

"What were the words?" whispered the girl, impressed with awe.

Francois suddenly stood erect and stretched out his arm as if to hold a sword. "'Rise Chevalier Francois Beaupre, one day a Marshal of France under another Napoleon,'" he repeated dramatically. "Those were the words the Emperor said."

CHAPTER XXII.

The Story Again.

The girl, her face lifted to him, looked bewildered. "I don't understand."

The visionary eyes stared at her uncertainly. "I have never told this thing," he said in a low tone.

"Ah—but it's only me," begged the girl.

"Only you, Mademoiselle!" His voice went on as if reflecting aloud. "It is the guiding star of my life—that story; yet I may tell it"—he paused—"to 'only you.'"

Again the girl quivered, feeling the intensity, mistaking its meaning. "I should be glad if you would tell it," she spoke almost in a whisper, but Francois, floating backward on a strong tide to those old beloved days, did not notice.

"It may seem a simple affair to you, Mademoiselle—I can not tell that. It has affected my life. The way of it was this: Napoleon marched to Germany in the year 1813, and passed with his staff through our village. The house of my father was the largest in the village, and it was chosen to be, for an hour, the Emperor's headquarters, and the Emperor held a council of war, he and his generals, there. I, a child of three, was sleeping in a room which opened from the great room, and I wakened with the sound of voices, and ran in, unnoticed, for they were all bent over the table, looking at the maps and lists of the mayor—and I pulled at the sword of Marshal Ney. And the marshal, turning quickly, knocked me over. I cried out, and my grandmother ran to me, and I have often heard her tell how she peeped from the door under the shoulder of the big sentry who would not let her pass, and how she saw a young general pick me up and set me on my feet, and how all the great officers laughed when he said that the sword was in contest between Marshal Ney and me. And how, then, the young general suggested that, to settle the point amicably, the marshal should draw his sword and give me the accolade—the blow of knighting. And so, Mademoiselle, to shorten the tale, it was not the marshal, but the Emperor himself who chose to do it. He made me kneel before him, I— a baby—and he struck my shoulder the blow of the accolade, and said the words which I have told you."

Francois sprang to his feet and stood as he repeated once more the Emperor's words. His voice shook.

"'Rise Chevalier Francois Beaupre, one day a Marshal of France under another Bonaparte,'" he cried, thrilled through with the words which he repeated.

The girl leaning forward, watched him; with a gasp she spoke. "Then—that is why you are really Chevalier Beaupre? Did the Emperor have the right to—to knight you?"

"But yes, Mademoiselle," Francois answered with decision. "I have studied the question, and I believe that the accolade—the knighting—was always a right of the monarchs of France, disused, perhaps at times, but yet held in abeyance, a right."

The glance of the brilliant eyes met hers with a frank calmness which showed that he claimed nothing which he did not feel; that this haphazard nobility had lived in his soul and grown with his growth, and come to be part of him. With a gentle humility, very winning as it sprang from his gentle pride, he went on.

"I know, Mademoiselle, that I am a peasant and that I must be content with a small place in life at the present. I know this. And even that position which I have is more than my brothers. For you must know, Mademoiselle, that the others grew up to be farmers or tradesmen." He hesitated, and then in a few words told her of General Gourgaud, the seigneur of Vicques, and how he had given the peasant boy all the opportunities which his own son could have had. And as he talked he remembered how, after his father's ruin, he had stood inside the bare, little, new cottage and watched through the window his mother standing at the gate and talking to the seigneur, who held Lisette's bridle. It seemed to him he could see the dark braided hair of La Claire, coiled around her head, and the deep point of her white neck-handkerchief as she stood with her back to him, and the big bow of the apron tied about her waist. The picture came vividly. And it opened his heart so that he talked on, and told this stranger in a strange land many things that had lain close and silent in his heart. He told her about the general's gruffness, which could not hide his goodness; and how he had come to be the child of the castle as well as of the cottage; something of Pietro also he told her; but he did not mention Alixe.

"You spoke of three children, Monsieur; who was the third?" asked Lucy.

Francois went on as if he had not heard the question. "It was a happy life, Mademoiselle," he said. "And it has been so ever since—even, for the most part, in prison. I have wondered at times if the world is all filled with such kind people as I have met, or if it is just my good luck."

Lucy Hampton had been reading aloud to her sick black mammy that day, and some of the words of the book she had read came to her, and seemed to fit. "The kingdom of God

Stretched Out His Arm as If to Hold a Sword.

is within you," she quoted softly, to Francois. Then she considered a moment.

"Monsieur, would it be impertinent for me to ask you a question—a personal question?"

"I think not, Mademoiselle," he smiled at her.

She went on, hesitating a little. "Father was talking of how Prince Louis Bonaparte served, a few years ago, with the Italian revolutionists. I wondered if—if by chance you had fought under him."

He shook his head. "I had not that happiness, Mademoiselle."

"The heir of the Bonapartes now is that Prince Louis Napoleon, is it not?" she questioned.

"Yes, Mademoiselle."

"And he made an attempt on the city of Strasburg, a few months ago, and was tried for it—and all that—father talked about it so much I could not help knowing a little about it, but I don't remember distinctly."

"But certainly, Mademoiselle. It was the prince."

"Then, haven't they just done something to him? Isn't there something people are interested in just now about that Prince Louis?"

The grave bright smile flashed out at her. "In truth, Mademoiselle, there is. The prince was shipped by his jailers on the frigate Andromede more than four months ago, for what port is unknown. One has not heard of him lately, and there are fears that he may have suffered shipwreck. But I do not fear. It is the hope of France, it is France's destiny which the Andromede carries. It will carry that great cargo safely. The young prince will yet come to his own, and I—and perhaps you, Mademoiselle—who knows?—will cry for him 'Vive l'Empereur!'"

The tone full of feeling thrilled through the girl. She flushed and stammered as she went on, but Francois, carried away by his enthusiasm, did not think of it. "If you will let me ask just one question more, Monsieur, I will promise not to ask any after."

The flicker of amusement lighted his face. "Ask me a thousand, Mademoiselle."

"No, only one. Did that seigneur—that General Gourgaud—did he have any—any daughter?"

The Frenchman rose in a business-like way, the way of a teacher of language at the end of a lesson.

"One," he answered briefly in a matter-of-fact tone. And then, "Mademoiselle has talked enchantingly well this evening, but I have perhaps talked too much. I may have tired Mademoiselle. I have the honor to wish you a good evening."

His heels together, he stood in the doorway and made his bow. "Au plaisir de vous revoir," he said, and was gone.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The Prince Comes.

The glittering morning sunlight of late March flooded the eastern dining-room of Roanoke house. A fire blazed on the hearth; hot dishes steamed on the table; the girl's face, the crackling fire, the polished silver reflected from polished mahogany; the soft shod, solicitous service of a white-aproned negro; all this made the room fragrant with homeliness in spite of the fact that one could see one's breath in the air. But they were used to it—the hardy Virginians of those days of open fires and no furnaces, of many luxuries and few comforts, and in happy ignorance of world progress, they suffered cheerfully and were strong.

Colonel Henry Hampton faced a portrait of the first Hampton of Roanoke, stately with brass buttons and silver lace, set in the panels seventy-five years before. Lucy had concluded her broiled chicken and bacon and hot bread, and now as he, late for breakfast always, followed in her wake, he read the Norfolk and Portsmouth Herald with which a colored boy had that morning ridden out from Norfolk, eight miles away. It was before the time of daily papers, except in a large city or two, and this of once a week was an event; a boy was sent to Norfolk the day before its publication that the colonel might have it at the earliest moment.

"How would you like to see a live prince, Lucy?" he inquired. "The Herald states that we have one with us, not ten miles from Roanoke. Prince Louis Napoleon was landed from the Andromede, in Norfolk, only yesterday. Poor young man," he went on condescendingly, "he has no money, I understand, and here he is stranded in a strange country with his fortune to make, and no assets but a title. It's little that will help him in the states!"

Colonel Hampton glanced over to see if she were listening to his words of wisdom; he liked an attentive audience. He was enchanted with her expression. She had dropped knife and fork and, with her blue eyes stretched wide, her white teeth shining, was drinking in his sentences.

"Father! Is Prince Louis in Norfolk? How can it be? Monsieur Beaupre was talking to me about him last night, and he did not dream of his coming here. Surely he would have known if the prince were expected."

Colonel Hampton smiled sarcastically. "You will find that your father occasionally knows more than even Monsieur Beaupre, and even on French questions, I may add," he announced, from a mountain height. "But in one point you are right, my dear. The prince was not expected by any one, not even by the great Chevalier Beaupre. He was exiled from France, as you may or may not know, some four and a half months ago, on account of his attempt on Strasburg, and was sent out on the Andromede, with sealed orders. No one knew his destination until he landed, on the twenty-eighth, in Norfolk. There"—the colonel got up and walked to the fireplace and stood with his back to the blaze, and his legs far apart, masterfully. "There, my dear, I have given you a dose of history for a female mind. How are you going to amuse your little self today?"

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Dreadful.

"Mercy, child!" exclaimed Mrs. Harlem. "I never would have believed my little boy could use such language. Been playing with bad children again, haven't you?" "No'm," replied her little boy. "Teddy Bacon and I have been playing with a parrot his uncle sent him from Chicago."

Needed Every One.

Asker—Could you lend me a V?

Tellit—No, I couldn't.

Asker—Have you a friend that would lend me a V?

Tellit—No. I have not a friend to spare.—Kansas City Star.

In Dire Disgrace.

"What's the matter?"

"I'm in disgrace with my wife."

"What about?"

"She sent me down town to match some hair. I got some like the saleslady's. I thought it was prettier."—Washington Herald.

Unappreciative.

"My nephew doesn't seem to appreciate that oil field I deeded him."

"Why not?"

"He has made light of it."

Words Fail on an Occasion Like This!

"Why do you call your hen Macduff, of all names?"

"Because she lays on."

To be happy is of far less consequence to the worshipers of fashion than to appear so.—Colton.