

BOB MURRAY'S MISSION

And How a Girl Tried to Prevent It

By E. A. MITCHEL

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A girl nineteen or twenty years old stood one afternoon on the veranda of a house in Tennessee, shading her eyes from the sun, looking off on the lower ground in the distance. She was watching a group of horsemen, endeavoring to determine whether they belonged to what were then the Confederate states or to the Federal army. There were about thirty of them, and riding a trifle ahead, half a dozen next while the rest followed at a distance of about thirty paces. They carried no flag by which the side on which they fought might be recognized, but instead of the dust colored appearance of Confederates they wore of a darkish blue, indicating that they were the Federal blue. Had the girl been more familiar with soldiers she would have recognized them for a general, his staff and his escort.

They came on up the road till they were in the ground till they reached the house where their leader drew rein, and seeing the girl on the veranda, said: "Could we get some supper here?"

Alice Claybourne, like most of the young people of the south, had been captivated by the spirit of rebellion and her hatred for the invaders of her beloved south was intense. But it must be said to the credit of the southern women, strong as was their animosity against the Union soldiers, they had the good sense to give what they had to eat to their enemies whenever it was applied for. Alice said that she would ask her mother and went inside while the soldiers remained in their saddles. She soon returned to say that there was very little to eat in the house, but they could have what there was.

The general and his staff dismounted, gave their horses to the care of the slaves and went up on the veranda. The escort went into camp in the yard. Among the officers was a lieutenant twenty-two years old, who was stepped up to the porch where Alice stood looking forbiddingly at the party, gave her one of those pleasant smiles that rest so becomingly on the face of certain persons. Bob Murray in the uniform of a lieutenant and said to camp was in his element. He was handsome, reckless and impetuous. He amount of fatigue could rattle his good nature, and that winning smile of his was ever present. Alice Claybourne secretly surrendered to it, though outwardly she steeled herself against it. Her coldly turned away and went into the house.

The general and his staff took up their headquarters in the house, the general occupying the parlor on the ground floor adjoining Alice's own room. Having partaken of the scant supper furnished him and his staff, he retired to the apartment and, calling his chief of staff, entered into consultation with him. Between the parlor and Alice's room was a door, and Alice could hear their voices, though not what they said. But by standing on a chair and listening at a transom she could hear every word.

After a prolonged dialogue the general called the orderly standing at his door and directed him to order Lieutenant Murray to report to him at once. Murray entered, and the general said to him:

"Lieutenant, we have another bit of secret service work for you tonight. Are you ready for it?"

"Always ready for anything you order, general."

"Well, I have learned during the day that John Morgan has swooped around our camp and is making a list for the wagon train, loaded with supplies for our troops in northern Alabama, and will doubtless reach it before tomorrow noon. I wish a man to ride through tonight and order the cavalry at Shelbyville to re-encircle the train guard. There are so many scattered Confederates and disloyal citizens between here and there that I doubt if a courier can get through except in mufti, and I would suggest that you dress yourself as a country lad and work your way in that disguise."

"Yes, general."

After some conversation as to route, time of starting, etc., Murray left his commander to make his preparations for the journey. He well understood the danger, for, since he bore written information and a written order, while in disguise, if captured, he was sure to be hanged for a spy. But he had scouted both in uniform and in disguise and had become somewhat accustomed to the risk. About 7 o'clock, dressed in a butternut suit, he mounted a horse on which a sheepskin had been strapped to the saddle and started down the road.

At the same time Alice Claybourne stepped from the ban in the rear of the house and, striking a lone running parallel with the road, started in the same direction as the young officer. Half a mile from the starting point the lane joined the main road, and Alice found herself just far enough behind Murray not to attract his attention.

It was the middle of June, and the sun had not yet set. As the young man rode farther from the house Alice gradually drew up to him. Ere long, seeing her horse's head behind the screen that hid him, he turned

ed with that anxiety natural to one liable to be followed and attacked. Seeing a girl coming and recognizing the one he had just left, he drew rein. But instead of the smile he usually wore there was a frown. He suspected at once that she was bent on interfering with his mission. But when he turned to her again all vestige of displeasure had vanished.

"Where are you going in that butternut suit?" she asked.

"On military duty, of course. And where may you be going?"

"I'm going with you."

"What for?"

"I know your mission. I overheard the general giving it to you. I am going with you to prevent its accomplishment."

"I like you for that," he said, his smile returning. "You are a true and brave southern girl."

"A true, not a brave one."

"Have you a lot of nerve?"

"I don't know. My nerve has never been put to the test. Why do you ask that?"

"Because to defeat me you will have to do that which would be hard for most people to do."

"What?"

"You will have to inform Confederates that I am a Federal soldier in disguise carrying important dispatches through a country supposed to be in Confederate hands; in other words, that I am a spy. When you have told them that they will put a rope around my neck, throw the end over the limb of a tree and I shall hang there a dead man."

The girl shuddered. She sat on her horse, revolving something in her mind. She had come to prevent Murray from carrying out his purpose, and, although she was not minded to be the cause of his hanging, she was not ready to let him go through. The young man, too, had his problem to solve. Had his enemy been a man the result would have depended on the life of either one or the other, but a girl—this was an entirely different matter.

"I'll ride on a little way with you," she said.

They rode on slowly till they came to a wooden trough beside the road into which water ran from a pipe, while a tin cup stood on a post. The girl's horse, seeing the water, turned to drink, the man's horse following.

"I would like a drink myself," said Alice, and she was preparing to dismount when Murray threw himself from his horse and, stepping up to the trough, reached for the cup, then bent over to fill it. In doing so he exposed his right hip, at which was slung a revolver. Alice bent down and before she was aware of what she was doing she had the weapon in her possession. He turned, and as he did so heard a click. When he faced her he was looking at the muzzle of his own pistol.

"Then was two weapons between these two young people—the revolver in the hands of the girl, while on the lips of the man that good natured, winning smile. She summoned all the severity of which she was capable to show him that she was in earnest and having him at her mercy was disposed to sacrifice him if necessary to what she considered the good of her country.

"Well," said Murray, "it is hands up?"

"Give me the paper you carry."

"I'll not give you that, but I'll give you something in place of it."

"What?"

"A kiss."

She summoned all her will power to look terrible. "Give me that paper or I'll fire," she said.

He stood back a few paces, took off his woolen hat, folded his arms and said:

"Put it into the center of my forehead."

Alice hit her lip. She would cherish a faint hope that he would yield. But there he stood with head uncovered, arms folded, handsome even in his butternut clothes, a breeze stirring the hair over his forehead, while on his lips remained still a trace of that imperturbable smile. She played her part so well that he was not sure but that she might bring herself to sacrifice him to her cause.

Alice, having nerved herself for the unaimed contest, was determined not to give it up without a desperate struggle. She had no experience with a pistol, but determined to put a ball sufficiently close to Murray's head to scare him—if he were to be scared at all.

"Give me the paper," she said. "At three I fire."

"Don't waste your breath counting," he replied. "Fire at once."

"One."

"Before I die I have but one word to say to you. You are ravishing."

"Two."

"And I love you."

Alice's bosom was heaving with conflicting emotions, a desire to strike a blow for her cause and the more natural one of a newly born love. She was endeavoring to mask her feelings behind the muzzle of a cocked revolver, but her resolution had from the first been sapped by her feminine nature. And now it had suddenly crumbled at the words "I love you."

Murray said that the victory was his. His smile deepened, and his eyes repeated what his lips had spoken. He advanced slowly toward her. The point of her revolver sank to her side; he encircled her waist with his arm; her head sank; their lips met.

When darkness came Alice Claybourne rode back to her home, and Robert Murray rode forth on his mission.

But he returned in safety and remained long enough to cover a rebel with a Union girl, though the change was not complete till after the war had ended.



A POPULAR NOMINATION.
Dr. Louis K. Mezger Named for Supervisor of the Seventh Ward.

Dr. Mezger is the Democratic candidate for supervisor in the Seventh Ward in the coming election. It is a case of the office seeking the man. A clean, capable business man was needed as a candidate and the party leaders decided that Dr. Mezger was the logical man for the place.

A few men are better known to everybody in the northeast section and better liked. The Doctor has a bluff, hearty manner that makes friends wherever he goes.

Dr. Mezger was born in Rochester July 2, 1867, received his education in the public schools and the Free Academy. Later he attended the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, of which he is a graduate and also Rush Medical College, Chicago. He then went to Europe and took a post graduate course at the University of Medicine at Berlin.

Dr. Mezger has been a practicing physician in this city for over ten years. He has served as house physician at St. Mary's Hospital in this city, at the State Insane Hospital at Independence, Iowa, and was for a time superintendent of the Marine Hospital at San Diego, Cal. He stands high in the ranks of local physicians.

Dr. Mezger has always been prominent in fraternal circles. Too many professional men are inclined to slight their political duties. Dr. Mezger is one of the exceptions. He takes a keen interest in things political and believes that politics should be cleaner if the best men in all parts took an active part therein.

Lots of voters, irrespective of party, will vote for Dr. Mezger for supervisor of the Seventh Ward, on account of the general esteem in which he is held.

Geneseo.

The forty-hour devotion which commenced at St. Mary's Church after the 11 o'clock Mass last Sunday morning and closed Wednesday evening was well attended. Instructive sermons were delivered by the following priests: Rev. Dr. A. E. Breen of St. Morris, Sunday evening; Rev. Michael J. Kreig of Livonia, Monday evening; Rev. Patrick McArdle of Scottsville, Tuesday evening. The pastor, Rev. A. Hughes, was assisted by the following priests besides those mentioned above: Rev. Michael C. Wall of Danville, Rev. Geo. J. Eisler of Caledonia, Rev. Simon FitzSimons of Lima, Rev. Walter B. McCarthy of Sonoma, Rev. Wm. H. Darcey and Rev. Salvatore Colonna of Avon.

A retreat for Italians will be given at St. Raphael's Church, Pittard, on Saturday evening (tonight) and Sunday evening at 7 o'clock.

The 54th Regiment Band Orchestra of Rochester has been engaged to furnish music for the harvest ball and festival to be given at Emerald Hall next Wednesday evening, October 18th.

A reunion of the class of '95 of Troy Seminary was held at St. Mary's rectory in this village on Wednesday afternoon. Rev. A. A. Hughes was a member of that class and entertained the following classmates: Rev. John F. Galvin of Albany, Rev. John J. Lynch of Schenectady, and Rev. Ambrose M. Dwyer of Binghamton. The following priests were also present: Rev. John P. Brophy and Rev. John O'Brien of Rochester, Rev. P. A. Neville of East Bloomfield, Rev. Dr. A. E. Breen of St. Morris, Rev. Michael C. Wall of Danville, Rev. Geo. J. Eisler of Caledonia, Rev. Patrick McArdle of Scottsville, Rev. Michael J. Kreig of Livonia, Rev. Walter B. McCarthy of Sonoma. The occasion was a very enjoyable one for those present.

Temple Theater.

The second week of the winter season of vaudeville will open at the Temple Theater Monday afternoon, and it is the expectation of the management that the theater will see the same enormous crowds of the current week as the show appeared on paper to be even stronger. Its comedy features than the show just brought to a close. The management has booked as its headline feature for the coming week the Bell family instrumentalists, some ten in number, appearing in an act defying description, glorious in color and riotous in its expression of popular music.

For those who take delight in strong athletic manhood the act of the Four Bards will appeal with tremendous force, as the management believes that in this act the glory of the American athlete stands out in strong contrast to the athletes of other countries.

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Harry Lauder at the Shubert Theater.

That the stage really sets the styles in gowns, instead of simply following the lead of society, is declared by Grace George, who will be seen at this theater Thursday, October 10th, in Gladys Hamilton's play, "Just to Get Married."

"That women of the stage, especially those who have leading positions, make popular the prevailing fashion is a certainty," said Miss George. "The leading actress who goes to a fashionable modiste is looked upon with great favor because there is the very greatest value in having her gown exhibited nightly to an audience largely composed of women."

At the Shubert next Thursday evening, October 19th, for one performance only.