

DETERMINED TO BECOME A SOLDIER, YASHKA FLEES FROM JEALOUS HUSBAND

Walking at Night and Sleeping During the Day She Spent a Week Traveling to Yakutsk, the Nearest Town

Maria Botchkareva Brings Her Gripping Narrative to the Point Where She Is About to Embark on the Great Adventure

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THIS STARTS THE STORY

In the summer of 1917 the world was thrilled by the announcement of the formation by Maria Botchkareva of a woman's fighting unit in the Russian army. It was known as the Battalion of Death. With this announcement an obscure Russian peasant girl entered the international hall of fame. This is her story told by herself. The first installments told of her early childhood. She married unhappily, leaves her husband who beats her and later contracts a civil marriage with a man who befriended her. He is sent to Siberia for aiding a political plot and she accompanies him. They are prosperous for a time at Yakutsk, their first place of exile, but a treacherous Governor has them sent further north.

AND HERE IT CONTINUES

AT THE end of about three months we obtained permission to visit Yakutsk for the purpose of collecting the money due to us for the butcher-shop, but the man to whom we entrusted the business now denied owing us any money, claiming to have paid fully at the time of our exile to Amga. There was a violent quarrel, but no money. As I delivered the store to him on faith, we could not substantiate our claims and oust him from his possession of the premises. There was nothing to be done but return with empty hands, with the burden of the debts we had acquired at Amga weighing heavily on our shoulders. There was the dreary prospect of toil before me, of hard and continuous toiling, to pay what we owed.

One summer day a new party of exiles arrived at Amga. One of them was a young fellow of about twenty. Yashka took a liking to him and proposed that he remain in our house to help me along. Knowing of Yashka's jealousy, I objected.

"Yashka," I argued, "what are you doing? You know how jealous you become when you find one of the colony in the house, and now you want me to keep this youngster here, with you away most of the time. You are just creating trouble for me. I don't want him. I need no help. Please don't burden me with him."

"Marusia," Yashka replied, tenderly, "I swear that I won't be jealous any more. I won't dare. Forgive me for all the pain I have caused you."

Yashka's words did not entirely pacify me, but he overruled my objections, promising to be reasonable in the future. The same afternoon a Yakut called for him, and they left together to go to a gambling place. The young man remained with me. Nothing occurred the first day or two. Then, one night, I was awakened by the young man.

It was about 1 o'clock in the morning. Prince Gutemurov was returning home from an evening with a friend, and saw me put the young man out into the night. The latter, however, harbored a deep feeling of vengeance against me. He resolved to await Yashka's return on the road outside the village, and tell him a false version of the story!

"A fine wife is yours," he addressed Yashka, derisively, as soon as the latter appeared.

"What happened?" questioned Yashka excitedly. The young man lied to him. Yashka only had sufficient self-control to thunder the question: "Swear, are you telling the truth?" The young man answered: "Of course it's the truth."

When Yashka appeared on the threshold I observed immediately with horror that he was in a ferocious mood, suppressing a storm. That made him the more dangerous. He spoke slowly, coining his words deliberately, words which struck terror to my soul.

"You are a faithless woman! You always have been faithless, deceiving me continually, but you are caught now, and you won't escape. It's fortunate that Dmitri is a decent young fellow and repelled your advances. You can say your last prayers, you base creature."

While speaking thus Yashka proceeded in a cold, business-like, purposeful manner to make a noose to hang me. It was this calm about Yashka's actions, speaking his terrible earnestness, that made shivers run over me.

"Yashka, I am innocent, Yashka," I sobbed, throwing myself at his feet and kissing them. "I swear that I am innocent," he cried. "Have mercy! think what you are doing! I tell you I am innocent!"

Yashka went on with his preparations, undisturbed. He attached the rope to a hook on the ceiling and tested the noose. "Yashka, come to your senses," I implored, hugging his legs.

He pushed me aside, placed a stool under the rope and ordered me, in a terrifying voice, to stand up on it. "Now, say your last prayers," he repeated.

He then placed the noose around my neck and jerked the stool from under my feet. In an instant it tightened about my throat; I wanted to cry out but could not; the pressure against the crown of my head was so terrific that it seemed about to crack



The market place, Tomsk, where Marie Botchkareva enlisted as soldier in the Russian army

open. Then I lost consciousness. As the noose was tightening around my neck Yashka came to himself and hastened to loosen it. I dropped, lifeless, to the floor. In response to his calls for help several politicians, among whom were a couple of medical students, came running to the house. They made every effort to revive me, succeeding only after long and persistent exercises. When I opened my eyes, the whole colony was at my bedside. Pressed for an explanation of his inhuman act, Yashka told of Dmitri's story.

Then Prince Gutemurov revealed what he had seen the previous night, on his way home. Yashka was overwhelmed. He fell on his knees and begged his forgiveness, cursing Dmitri and promising to make short work of him. But Yashka could not find him. Dmitri learned of the disclosure and disappeared forever from Amga.

Soon afterward, another incident occurred which further embittered my life with Yashka. In his absence Vasilii, a political, came and told me that the authorities were in receipt of an order to arrest and send him to Irkutsk to be tried on a new charge, which carried with it the death sentence. It was a regular practice of the Czar's government to recall exiles for second trials on some additional bit of evidence.

Vasilii asked that I lend him our horse, Matchik, to help him escape. Knowing how attached Yashka was to the horse, I refused Vasilii's request. But he persisted in imploring me, claiming that Prince Gutemurov had seen the order for the arrest, and that the sheriff was already on his tracks.

"But how could the horse be returned?" I asked Vasilii, touched by his continuous pleading. He replied that he would leave it with a certain Yakut friend of ours, some hundred versts away, and I finally yielded, although not without misgivings. As soon as he left with Matchik my anxiety grew into alarm. I hurried to Prince Gutemurov to verify Vasilii's story. How thunderstruck I was upon learning from the Prince that he knew of no order to arrest Vasilii, and that he had even not seen him. It was clear that I had been swindled and that I would never see the horse again.

"My God!" I thought, "what will happen upon Yashka's return and his discovery that Matchik is gone?" The specter of death rose up before me, the impression of my recent escape from hanging still fresh in my mind. I was all tremble in anticipation of Yashka, with the feeling of an entrapped animal seeking to escape. But there seemed to be no opening.

It was August, 1914. The rumblings of the great collision were just reaching the remote Siberian provinces. The order for mobilization came, and there was a great stirrings in the death-bound Arctic settlements, as if suddenly a new life had been infused into that land of monotony. Upon the heels of the call to arms came the Czar's manifesto, abolishing the scourge of our national life—vodka—and with it a gigantic wave of popular enthusiasm, sweeping the steppes, valleys and forests of vast Russia, from Petrograd and Moscow across the Ural mountains and the Siberian tundras and taiga, to the borders of China, and the Pacific coast.

There was something holy about the nation's response. Old men, who had fought in the Crimean War, in the Turkish campaign of 1877-78, and the Russo-Japanese War, declared

that they never saw such exaltation of spirit. It was an elevating, glowing, unforgettable moment in one's life. My soul was wraped, and I had a dim realization of a new world coming to life, a purged world, a happier and godlier one.

And when Vasilii robbed me of our horse, and the dread of Yashka's frenzy had seized me, intensified by my inability to find an escape, the thought, "WAR!" suddenly flashed into my mind.

"Go to war to help save my country!" a voice within me called. To leave Yashka for my personal comfort and safety was almost unthinkable. But to leave him for the field of unselfish sacrifice, that was a different matter. And the thought of going to war penetrated deeper and deeper into my whole being, giving me no rest.

When Yashka returned, Prince Gutemurov and several other friends were in the house ready to defend me. He had already learned from the natives, on his way home, that Vasilii had escaped on our horse. It seemed impossible to him that I could have given his favorite horse to anybody without his permission, and he therefore suspected me of an intrigue with Vasilii, whom I had dispatched to make preparations for an elopement. He made a violent scene, throwing himself upon me savagely, showering blows. My friends tore him away, which only infuriated him the more. This inability to give vent to his rage made him act like one demented.

His temper was clearly becoming a menace, for which a remedy was needed. A physician came to Amga only once a month. As Yashka considered himself in good health, there could be no question of suggesting to him that he consult the physician. It was, therefore, agreed among my friends that Prince Gutemurov should take a walk about the village with the doctor when he arrived, pass by our house as if by accident, and for me to greet them with an invitation to come in for tea. Everything went smoothly. The physician was introduced to Yashka and immediately remarked upon his pale appearance and his inflamed eyes.

"What ails you?" he asked Yashka. "You seem to have fever. Let me examine you."

The result of the examination was the advice to Yashka to go to a hospital for treatment, which he, of course, ridiculed. Privately, the doctor informed Prince Gutemurov that Yashka's nerves had broken down and that he was dangerous to live with, as he might kill me for some trivial cause. The physician urged that I leave him at once. But I hesitated. Another quarrel, however, was not long in coming. Yashka actually made another attempt to kill me, but was stopped by our comrades. The cup was full. I decided to escape.

me. My country called me. And an irresistible force from within pulled me. . . . I only awaited the opportunity when Yashka would be gone for several days. It arrived one September day. Some Yakuts called for Yashka. As soon as he left I cut off my hair, dressed in men's clothes and provided myself with two loaves of bread. I had no money to speak of, as I took no one of the colony into my confidence.

It was evening when I stealthily hurried out of Amga and took the road to Yakutsk. There were two hundred versts of it before me. I ran at such a pace that night, as I could not expect to travel in the daytime without being recognized, that I covered, by dawn, fifty versts.

Several times I had met Yakuts, and answered their greetings in their native dialect, with which I had grown familiar. In the dark they must have taken me for a Yakut. Otherwise, the journey was uneventful. The road was dry, the weather calm, and only the stars lit my way, my fast-beating heart echoing my footsteps.

When day broke I stopped beside a limpid stream and feasted on bread and cold water. I then made a bed of twigs in a hole by the road, lay down, covered myself with branches and went to sleep for the day. I awoke when evening came, offered my prayers to God, dined on some more bread and water, and resumed my journey. It took me six nights of walking to arrive at Yakutsk, living only on bread and water, and sleeping in hidden nooks by the road during the day.

There was a new Governor in Yakutsk. Baron Kraft had gone to Western Europe to join his wife at some health resort, was stranded there after the outbreak of the war, and later died a prisoner in the hands of the enemy. The new Governor received me well, and granted my request to be sent home, to Tomsk, at the expense of the government. He even offered me a convey for protection.

My escape was a success, but my heart would not rejoice. The image of Yashka, stricken with grief, frantically searching for me, calling to me, rose before my eyes, and demanded an account from my conscience. Was it right, was it just, to leave poor Yashka all alone in forlorn Amga? Had I not vowed to remain eternally faithful to him? Was it not my bounden duty to stand by him to the end? Should I not return to him, then, and give up this wild fancy of going to war?

I vacillated. Was it not true, on the other hand, that Yashka had become a professional gambler? Was not life with him a perilous adventure? Devotion to Yashka, a voice within me spoke, did not mean perishing with him, but an effort to save him. Indeed, to get Yashka out of that wilderness was an idea which suddenly gripped my imagination. And how could I ever expect to find a better opportunity to do so than by distinguishing myself in war and then petitioning the Czar in his behalf?

So there I was again in the magic circle of war. I asked an acquaintance to write a letter for me to Yashka. Apologizing for my unusual departure, I informed him that I was going to Tomsk to enlist as a soldier, leave for the front and win distinction for bravery, then petition the Czar to pardon him, so as to enable us to resume our peaceful life in Stretinsk.

It was a plan with which Destiny, that held no more peace for me, played havoc. The war was to continue as many years as I had expected it to last months, shrouding Russia in darkness, sowing revolution, bearing thunder and lightning in its wings, spreading famine and chaos and seeds of a new world order. In those stormy years Yashka was to retreat to the far background of my life, then vanish altogether. But my heart was all with him that autumn day of 1914 when I turned my eyes toward the bleak North for the last time, as I boarded the barge that was to carry me to Irkutsk, from there to Tomsk, and thence to war.

(CONTINUED TOMORROW)

RUSSIANS BATTLE FOR UNION

Forty Million Striving for Strong Republic, Says Sazonoff

Paris, March 2.—(By A. P.)—Forty million Russians in organized governments are now co-operating in a movement for a reunited Russia. These Russians are working and fighting, dying by hundreds and even by thousands daily, in an effort to save Russia from complete destruction, and all this being done without a thought of political ambition," said Sergius Sazonoff, Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Denikine government, who also is the representative in Paris of the Omsk government. In an interview today, continuing he said: "In addition to the Russians fighting Bolshevism through and outside the government there are also hundreds of thousands of Russians within the Bolsheviks battling daily against the efforts to defeat a reunited Russia."

Dr. W. R. Owens Off for France The Rev. William Russell Owen preached his farewell sermon yesterday in the Memorial Baptist Church. Doctor Owen will leave this week for France, where he will do Y. M. C. A. work with the American expeditionary forces.

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681 spick span, brand new overcoats that ought to have been in stocks earlier in the winter—just received—now are going out at once at—

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The only reason we are selling these splendid garments at one-half their real worth, disregarding all consideration of cost, is because they ought to have been in stocks months ago, but disturbed conditions in the tailoring trade delayed them until this month of March.

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YANKEES RUN STOKEHOLDS

Sailors and Stewards Also "Americanize U. S. Ships"
Washington, March 2.—The war has resulted in the almost complete Americanization of the fireroom forces of American merchant ships. Chairman Hurley, of the shipping board, said today. Before the war 90 per cent of the men employed in the firerooms on vessels flying the American flag were aliens. Today, on vessels trading out of the Pacific ports, the percentage has exactly reversed. In Atlantic waters 80 per cent of the fireroom forces are now made up of Americans.

La Guardia to Wed "Goddess"

New York, March 2.—The engagement of Mayor F. H. La Guardia, the flying Congressman, to "The Goddess" of Almerigotti was formally announced last night at the banquet in his honor, tendered by his friends and attended by American and international dignitaries. Thea is Italian for goddess. The Congressman explained, and Thea Almerigotti is the name of his fiancée.

Pershing Jails For "Bootleggers"

Coblenz, March 2.—(By A. P.)—Sentences of six months' imprisonment and fines of 100,000 marks each have been imposed on Mathias Scheid and Jacob Ring, German wholesale liquor dealers, charged with bringing brandy into the American occupied area by misrepresentation. It was announced at Third Army headquarters.

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Strictly Fresh Eggs, doz 47c
Every egg guaranteed to be fresh, 12 fresh eggs in every dozen.
White Corn Meal lb 4 1/2c
Asco Rolled Oats pkg 8c
Best Sour Krout big can 11c
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At Our Every-Day Economy Prices
Choice Pink Salmon . . . can 12 1/2c, 20c
Fancy Red Salmon . . . can 12c
Pure Threaded Codfish . . . pkg. 8c, 12c
Fish Flakes . . . can 14c
Hake Fish (for fish cakes) . . . brick 22c
Bonita (like tuna fish) . . . can 19c
Choice Sardines . . . can 8c, 17c
Smoked Herring . . . bunch 25c
English Smoked Blotera . . . each 15c
Fancy Shrimp . . . can 16c
Pride of Farm Catsup . . . bot. 14c, 20c
Trenton Crackers . . . lb. 18c
Fresh Cracker Dust . . . lb. 13c
Victor Bread Crumbs . . . pkg. 12c
Pure Horse Radish . . . glass 9c
Best Pearl Hominy . . . lb. 4c
Fancy Spaghetti . . . can 8c, 12c
Quality Laundry Soap, 6 cakes, 25c
Fels Naptha Soap, 4 cakes, 25c
Choice Tomatoes . . can 12c, 17c
Tender Peas . . . can 14c
Our Very Best Coffee . . lb. 30c
Our Very Best Teas . . lb. 45c
Calif. Prunes . . lb. 16c, 19c, 22c
Extra Fancy Evap. Apricots, lb. 27c
Victor Bread 8c Loaf
The finest loaf of bread baked. We bake it in our own Big White Kitchens and know there's none as good as Victor—it is the equal of the best home-made you ever served.
Try a loaf of Our Famous 10c Victor Raisin Bread
Best Marrow Beans 12c lb | Best Soup Beans 10c lb | Best Lima Beans 12c lb
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Finest Quality Beef
Pot Roast 28c lb | Boneless Rolled Roast 28c lb.
Lean Soup Beef, 20c a lb.
City Dressed Pork Shoulders, lb. 32c | Little Pig Roasting Hams, lb. 32c
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Fresh Beef Liver 12c lb | Heinz's Best Krout 5c qt | Cooked Tripe 18c lb
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