

# SWEET REVENGE

BY  
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Author of "Chattanooga," "Chickamauga," Etc.  
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We four who were armed with carbines knelt behind the rocks, I to the extreme left, Helen next, then Buck behind the stone we had moved to fill the gap, with Glinger bringing up the right end of the line. I was an excellent shot—I had long been considered one of the best in Tennessee—and it turned out that Helen was not bad. Glinger was not shot at all. I selected the man in advance for my special object, designated the second for Helen and gave Buck the third. They were to fire after me in the order named. Glinger was to fire at any who might be left standing. Jack had only a revolver, and I directed her to keep back. She was trembling, and in order to strengthen her by concentrating her mind on



I shot my man through the heart, some duty I told her to be ready to hand us the ammunition after the first volley.

The guerrillas came on, every man holding a carbine. When they had covered a third of the distance, I saw that Buck was about to fire out of turn, and I was obliged to speak to him somewhat sharply. I think the advancing men heard me, for they stopped and consulted. The captain, standing below, called to them to go on, and separating so as to leave a dozen yards between each man, skirmish fashion, they started again, watching eagerly for a sign of something to fire at. As they were all abreast, my order for firing would not serve. I gave another.

"I'll take the left man, Miss Stanforth the center, Buck the right."

There was no response. All were too intent on the work before us to speak. I permitted the men to come within a hundred yards, when, taking deliberate aim with the rest, I shot my man through the heart. In another moment the center man dropped. Buck, who was excited, fired wild and missed altogether. Glinger lost his head completely and did not fire at all. As Glinger's courage deserted him Jack's came to her all of a sudden.

"Why don't you shoot, Glinger?" she cried, with flashing eyes. Snatching his gun and aiming it at the remaining man, who was rapidly getting down the declivity, she sent him the rest of the way with a limp. Two men were put out of the fight and the third disabled.

"By golly," cried Buck, "we licked 'em, didn't we?"

I thought it best not to discourage him by telling him that this was only a preliminary skirmish, but asked Jack for the ammunition, and we all reloaded.

The wounded man went back to the captain, who appeared greatly agitated over the result. He was evidently surprised at the reception of his searching party. The men who had joined to the flanks, hearing the firing, rejoined their leader, and two men who had been in the rear came forward.

Heaven preserve us! The captain has started up the slope at the head of a storming party of eight men.

I was appalled. We had but four guns and after firing a volley must reload before firing another. We could not expect to disable more than four men at the first fire; then the remaining four would be upon us before we could reload. In quick tones I gave the order:

"Full load. I'll fire."

With that I let drive and dropped a man. Then, throwing down my gun, I took Helen's and dropped another. Buck handed me his, and I dropped a third.

"By Jiminy!" cried Buck, exposing his head to see better. "Ain't you a bully shot?" Ping! went a bullet within an inch of his ear, and he ducked.

CHAPTER XIII.  
BELEAGUERED.

STRANGE that men will never learn the terrible advantage of a force posted on an impregnable position, protected by breastworks and able to pour shot down a steep hill at an enemy. Two men, two girls and a boy had defeated the guerrillas and sent them back to their camp. I did not fear another attack. What I dreaded was starvation. Indeed, I could see plainly that our enemies were preparing to carry out the

starvation plan. Several of them went in different directions, doubtless for food. One of them passed quite within range.

"I'm goin' to plunk that one," said Buck.

I caught his arm, and gave him a reproval which for a while at least caused him to remember that I was in command.

"I wish they'd attack us again," said the irresponsible boy. "I could 'a' hit that doggone 'butter' if some'n hadn't joggled my arm."

"There had been nothing to joggle the boy's arm, but I thought it best to let him keep up his pride—it would make him more servicable—so I said nothing."

"I aimed right at the middle of his breast," continued Buck, "but just then he jumped over a stone, an' I missed him."

"I thought some one joggled your arm?"

"Some one did. Glinger, yo' consarned old nigger, what'd yo' go joggle me for? Just as I was goin' to plunk him?"

"I didn't joggle yo', Mars' Buck."

"Way if you, Hel'n?"

"No."

"Somebody did, or I'd 'a' hit him, sho'!"

If ever a party needed breakfast, it was ours. Helen mumbled the little parcel of provisions. I directed her to serve a half ration, or, rather, half of what there was and save the rest. She did so, handing me my portion, which I declined, but she argued that it was important for all that I should keep up my strength and finally prevailed on me to eat my share. Jacqueline and Buck ate theirs ravenously. Each of us went to where the water was dripping from the cleft and caught the drops in our mouths. Buck, when he had finished his breakfast, like Oliver Twist, asked for more. It made my heart ache to refuse him, but there was no alternative.

One danger was dwarfed by the greater perils that surrounded us, yet it was no less important. My wound was liable to put me hors de combat at any moment. Fortunately until my dash from the guerrilla camp I had not been subject to any physical strain, and by that time it had healed sufficiently to prevent its opening. At any rate, it gave me no trouble. The first thing Helen asked after a lull in the fighting was about this wound. She insisted on dressing it for me, and I permitted her to do so. She would around it a fresh bandage torn from my shirt sleeve and was pinning it when, looking up at me, she said:

"You're not the first one of our men I've assisted with bandages."

Her remark cut me like a knife. It was plain that she was making this effort, incurring this danger, believing me to be a Confederate.

"I can't understand all these troubles that surround you," she went on. "Why not explain?"

"You know I'm charged with being in league with the Yankees."

"Yes, but your accusers are robbers and murderers. If I thought that—She broke off with a frown and turned away."

"The guerrillas built a fire and, after cooking and eating breakfast, loitered about, some chatting, some playing cards, while others devoted themselves to their wounded companions, making them as comfortable as possible on beds of boughs covered with blankets. I took advantage of their inaction to learn how Buck had succeeded in delivering his message to the scout he was to meet at Huntsville. As I could not question him before the others without giving up my secret, I drew him into the cleft behind us."

"Buck, did you find the man I sent you to meet at Huntsville?"

"Reckon I did."

"Tell me about it."

"All right. As soon as I got into town I went right to the square and stopped in front of the hotel. I hitched my pony to a post an' went inside. A man in the office said, 'Sonny, what'd yo' want?' an' I said, 'I'm joinin' up in the gallery.' an' he said, 'What fo'?' an' I said, 'Fo' to see the town.' Then I went up stairs an' waited till I heard



"He stood lookin' at me kind o' queer, the clock struck an' counted thir'een."

"Not 13, Buck. Clocks don't strike 13."

"Well, don't yo' see, that clock at Huntsville is a different kind. It

struck either thir'een or sixteen, I couldn't tell which."

"Never mind the clock. You're inventin' all this. Go on."

"Well, just as the clock struck a man he came out on to the gallery. He had the doggoned eyes I ever saw—just like the wolf in 'Red Riding Hood.' At first he didn't take any notice of me, but 'koin' 'a' he was bothered 'cause I was thar an' he expected somebody. Then he watched me with those sharp eyes o' his'n, an' at last he said kind o' gruff, 'Tis a fine day, boy, an' I said, 'What was it I was to say?'"

"Reckon yo're weather wise, stranger."

"Oh, yes, I know, but I couldn't remember 'actly, an' I said, 'I reckon yo're weather beaten, stranger.' He stood lookin' at me kind o' queer, an' I heard him a-gruntin' some'n like, 'Guess I am bent somehow or 'nuther.' Then he asked me some'n 'bout whether it was a-rainin' at the time of the—what was that one?"

"The massacre."

"Oh, yes, I know. An' I said—that was it I said?"

"Black as night."

"That's it; only I fo'got an' said, 'Black as a doggone nigger,' an' he said, 'What's the—'"

"Word."

"What's the word? An' I took the spithall out o' my mouth an' handed it to him. He took it an' read it mighty quick. Then he looked at me an' said, 'I'll be goddam'd if that ain't the lightest messenger to carry such a big message I ever saw in my life! Like attackin' a fortification with a howitzer."

"What did he do then?"

"I don't want 't tell that."

"Why not?"

"Well, he must 'a' thought I was a baby."

"Come, out with it."

"He took me up an' give me a kiss, rubbin' my face with that hairy beard o' his'n."

"Then what?"

"He went down stairs in a hurry, an' I didn't see him any mo'."

"Good for you! Have you kept it all a secret?"

"Haven't said a word to any one."

"That's right. You've done me a great favor, and one good turn deserves another. I'm going to tell you how to cure yourself of that habit of using useless adjectives. If you ever get out of this, get a notebook and pencil, and every time you use one of them note it down. This will show you how often you offend, and at last you will break yourself of a very bad habit."

"I'll do that, by golly!"

At noon we were again tantalized at seeing the guerrillas eating their dinner.

"I wonder what they got," said Buck. "I reckon it's nothin' but fat pork, anyway. Who wants to eat fat pork?"

"I wish I could get my clutches on the captain," said Jack. "I'd make him give me some."

"De Lord 'I feed his chil'n," remarked Glinger. "Didn't he send de ravens to Eljah?"

"Not in these mountains," put in Buck. "Ravens couldn't find anything up here to feed anybody with."

"Reckon dat mus' 'a' been in a land flowin' wid' milk an' honey," supplemented Glinger.

"Yo' ole fool," retorted Buck. "How could a raven carry milk?"

"Don't be so smart, Buck," said Jack. "A raven could take the handle of a tin bucket in its mouth and fly with it, couldn't he?"

Then Jack and Buck fell to vying with each other which could invent the most remarkable fabrications about the wherewithal to satisfy their hunger.

"I see a darky comin'," said Jack, "with a white apron and cap and a tray on his head covered with good things to eat."

"That's nothin'," said Buck. "I see a roasted goose waddlin' up the hill with the stavin' tumblin' out of a hole in his breast."

"You little fibber, you don't see any such thing. I'll tell you what I see. I see a big table down there among the guerrillas covered with smoking beef and chicken and lamb with mint sauce running all over it and peas and asparagus. Come, let's go and get some."

than a man's body. I crawled into the crevice and by using hands and feet mounted to the summit. I stood enchanted by the splendid view. Northward and eastward the Cumberland mountains reared their heads, a succession of wooded crests; westward the fair plain of middle Tennessee; southward Confederate territory cut off from us by war and setting aflame the imagination as to what was taking place in the newborn nation. An undulating horizon divided the black earth from the scarlet sky left by the setting sun.

Scrambling over the uneven ground, climbing rocks, fighting my way through thickets, I explored every promise of outlet. I returned to the mouth of the crevice, intending to rejoin my companions. I heard some one chambering up and, looking down, saw Helen Stanforth. Giving her my hand, I helped her to level ground.

"You and I," I said, "should not be absent from the front at the same time."

"Tell me," she said, fixing her eyes on me intently, "what I want to know. I have led Jacqueline, Buck and Glinger into this trap in an attempt to save you. The least I can expect is your confidence. Who are you?"

Our lives depended on absolute devotion to each other. If I should tell her that I was a southern man holding a commission in the Yankee army, that I had sent information north to enable a Union general to capture the region about her home, I should sap our main element of strength. On the other hand, I was accepting all this devotion under false pretenses. The thought was maddening. Had she not been looking at me with her big honest eyes I believe I should have shed tears of anguish.

"Miss Stanforth—Helen," I said, "who and what I am can be of no moment now with death staring us in the face. You and I have a mutual purpose—to save those who have been led into this peril. There is no time for explanations. I beg of you to banish for the time this secret and think only of the work before us."

She turned her eyes out to the far distant horizon, but did not see it, intent on her own thoughts. Then, looking again at me, she said, with a burst of impulse:

"To know that you are unworthy would kill me."

I bowed my head to escape her gaze. When I looked again, she had turned and was entering the crevice.

Having failed to find an outlet in our rear, we had no choice but to face our enemies. I cast my eyes over the only route open to a night surprise. On our right, not far below, was the bare face of a rock 20 feet high, around which was no path. To the left another rock projected in such fashion that while an enemy climbed over it his silhouette would appear against the sky. Noticing an abundance of firewood

scattered about, I resolved to build a bonfire, with a view to lighting up our enemies should they attempt to steal upon us in the night. As soon as it was dark enough I sent Buck and Glinger out to gather wood and, selecting a flat rock midway between those on the flanks, scooped together some light, dry stuff for kindling and as fast as the wood was brought me put it on. When all was ready, we returned to our fortress.

But how light a fire? There was not a match in the party. Indeed the only means of ignition we possessed was a percussion cap. I sacrificed two cartridges and poured the powder they contained into a bit of paper, intending to explode it with percussion powder.

Night attacks always occur just before dawn, and I felt confident that we should hear from the guerrillas, if at all, between 2 and 3 o'clock in the morning. At 1 I awoke the command and issued our remaining ration. It was eaten ravenously, and when the last morsel had been consumed I told all to be ready at the slightest sound. I was going down to the unlighted fire, and in case they heard me hammering the percussion powder they would know I had heard the enemy approaching. Then, taking Jack's revolver, I sallied forth.

I passed down to my firewood, inspected it to see that it was all right, then went on farther, crawling on my stomach and listening. Nothing what in the darkness I supposed to be a log. I resolved to crawl up behind it for concealment. On reaching it I rubbed my hand and looked down into the face of a dead man. It was the body of one of the guerrillas we had shot during the day. This unmeaning object, unnumbered at dead of night, startled me. There were the classic signs, the sunken cheeks, the open mouth, while the eyes were staring up at the heavens as if they were wondering hidden from the living. I drew back, a consciousness of the horrors that awaited us struck me like a gust of cold wind. Perhaps be-



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fore morning Helen Stanforth or Jacqueline or little Buck or all of us would be lying stiff and stark like that dead guerrilla.

Then a greater strength, a daring, a cunning never before felt welled within me. I crawled on till I came so near the guerrilla camp that I could have thrown a stone into it. They had no fire, and this in itself was suspicious. I thought I heard a voice, but it was doubtless some animal or a bird giving a note of warning to its mate. I listened, but could hear nothing which I knew to be human. At last I sat down on a rock and began what to me seemed an endless vigil.

It was perhaps an hour after that I heard unmistakable sounds of the guerrillas. I could see nothing, though I could hear voices, and voices at that time of night meant mischief. Darting back to my wood, I set the paper of gunpowder on the rock under the dry grass, keeping a little in reserve, and got a stone ready to use for a hammer, then listened for a sign of advance. I had not long to wait. A man must have stumbled. At any rate, I heard something which convinced me the enemy was coming, and, laying on my percussion powder, I raised the stone and brought it down.

Horror of horrors! The grass was blown away without being kindled. The last chance was gone! It was dark as pitch; not even a ray of moonlight to protect us against the coming outposts.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD.  
BUFFALO & ALLEGANY VALLEY DIVISION.  
Low Grade Division.  
In Effect May 26, 1901. [Eastern Standard Time.

STATIONS.	EASTWARD.									
	No. 108	No. 103	No. 101	No. 105	No. 107	A. M.	A. M.	P. M.	P. M.	P. M.
Pittsburg	6:15	9:00	1:30	5:05	8:05					
Butler	6:28	9:15	1:45	5:20	8:20					
Allegany	6:40	9:25	2:00	5:35	8:35					
Brookville	6:55	9:40	2:15	5:50	8:50					
Brookville	7:10	9:55	2:30	6:05	9:05					
Brookville	7:25	10:10	2:45	6:20	9:20					
Brookville	7:40	10:25	3:00	6:35	9:35					
Brookville	7:55	10:40	3:15	6:50	9:50					
Brookville	8:10	10:55	3:30	7:05	10:05					
Brookville	8:25	11:10	3:45	7:20	10:20					
Brookville	8:40	11:25	4:00	7:35	10:35					
Brookville	8:55	11:40	4:15	7:50	10:50					
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Brookville	11:55	2:40	7:15	10:50	1:50					
Brookville	12:10	2:55	7:30	11:05	2:05					
Brookville	12:25	3:10	7:45	11:20	2:20					
Brookville	12:40	3:25	8:00	11:35	2:35					
Brookville	12:55	3:40	8:15							