

BRIDE OF BATTLE

A Romance of the
AMERICAN ARMY
Fighting on the Battlefields of
FRANCE



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WALLACE FINDS HIMSELF THE VICTIM OF SOME UNSEEN AND SINISTER FORCE.

Synopsis.—Lieut. Mark Wallace, U. S. A., is wounded at the battle of Santiago. While wandering alone in the jungle he comes across a dead man in a hut outside of which a little girl is playing. When he is rescued he takes the girl to the hospital and announces his intention of adopting her. His commanding officer, Major Howard, tells him that the dead man was Hampton, a traitor, who sold department secrets to an international gang in Washington and was detected by himself and Kellerman, an officer in the same office. Howard pleads to be allowed to send the child home to his wife and they agree that she shall never know her father's shame. Several years later Wallace visits Eleanor at a young ladies' boarding school. She gives him a pleasant shock by declaring that when she is eighteen she intends to marry him. More years pass and Wallace remains in the West. At the outbreak of the European war Colonel Howard calls Wallace to a staff post in Washington. He finds Eleanor there, also Kellerman, in whom he discerns an antagonist. For years a strange man has haunted Eleanor's footsteps, following but never accosting her. One night Wallace sees the man and follows him to a gambling house kept by a Mrs. Kenson. Here the strange man is attacked by Kellerman. Wallace rescues him and takes him to his own apartment. In the night the man, who gave his name as Hartley, disappears.

CHAPTER VII.

On the way to the war department the following morning he was puzzling over the affair, Kellerman's presence in Mrs. Kenson's house, and Kellerman's possible connection with Hartley, who watched Eleanor.

He could not arrive at any but the most fantastic solutions.

Kellerman welcomed him with his usual suavity. They carried up the papers from the safe; then Kellerman called Mark into his own office.

"About last night, Wallace," he began. "Of course you acted all right, as you understood the situation, but there was a good deal that you did not understand. That man you took home to your rooms is a sort of international stool pigeon, if I can coin the phrase. Quite despicable—the one-time gentleman who has lost his honor; and dangerous, because he knows things that nobody would credit him with knowing. I suppose you wonder what I was doing in Mrs. Kenson's place?"

"Not at all, Major Kellerman." "My dear Wallace," said Kellerman, laying a hand on Mark's shoulder. "I want to give you a piece of advice. This is quite apart from our work here. I don't think your qualities are adapted to headquarters work. Go back to your battalion—or, rather, take advantage of your friends in Washington to secure a good post"—he emphasized the adjective—"in regimental work."

And as Mark looked at him in stupefaction, Kellerman added coolly:

"I am not speaking officially, my dear Wallace. Take the suggestion as a friendly one. If I can make it a little clearer to you, your presence in Washington is inconvenient to me for personal reasons. I think you will appreciate the reasons—the reason, rather."

The man's insolence was maddening. Mark's impulse was to dash his fists into his face. But discipline told.

Mark saluted stiffly and went away. He sat down at his desk, fuming. Of course Kellerman had referred to Eleanor; and it suddenly occurred to Mark that Kellerman might have made a good deal of headway during his absence.

Mark and Colonel Howard occupied a small room at the end of the corridor; the clerks' room was without; between the two, accessible from each, was Kellerman's office, which communicated, in turn, with the Brigadier's.

Colonel Howard came in after a while, and they went over their plans together. They were engaged on a complicated piece of work, involving tonnage and computations of cubic feet of space for cargoes. There had been an error somewhere, and Mark was trying hard to discover it when the Brigadier came in in his usual irascible manner.

"How long will that job take, Howard?" he asked.

"Wallace will have it finished by noon, sir," answered the Colonel.

The Brigadier waved Mark to his seat impatiently. "Bring it right in to me as soon as you have the figures, please," he said. "I'll wait for it. Sure you can be through by noon?"

"I'm sure, sir," answered Mark, who was hot on the trail of the error.

The Brigadier withdrew, taking the Colonel with him for a conference. Mark worked steadily. The omission was found, the computations were balancing. A clerk knocked at the door.

"What is it?" asked Mark impatiently.

"A man to see you, sir. He says his name's Hartley. Shall I show him in?"

"Good Lord, no! I'll see him in the waiting room," answered Mark.

He locked the office door, went

through the clerks' room and into the anteroom. Hartley was standing beside the window. He looked up sheepishly as Mark entered.

"Well?" asked Mark crisply.

Hartley grinned. "I didn't take the cups or the picture, Captain Wallace," he said.

"Well, what about it? What can I do for you?"

"Why, I—I wanted to tell you as much, Captain Wallace. I've sunk low, but not to theft. Only I didn't feel I could stay."

"Good Lord, man, is that all you have come to tell me?"

"Well, you see—there was something else, but—" stammered Hartley.

"Out with it, then!"

"I wanted to thank you for what you did for me, and—"

The man seemed to be trying to spin out the interview for some indefinite purpose. Mark turned on his heel. His temper was not of the best just then, and Hartley was the last man in the world whom he wanted to see.

"All right," he answered. "Steer clear of that woman—of Mrs. Kenson, Hartley. It's evident that she doesn't reciprocate your feelings, or whatever they are, and she seems to have some dangerous friends about her."

He relented suddenly, and, going forward, clapped the man on the shoulder.

"I guess you've had your troubles, Hartley," he said. "But pull yourself together, man."

The sheepish, unmanly mask dropped from Hartley's face. He caught Mark's hand impulsively.

"I'm a cur, Captain Wallace!" he cried. "I—I—"

"That's all right, Hartley. But, by the way, who told you my name?"

"Captain Wallace, don't ask me that! Go back! Never mind me! Go back into your office at once!" cried Hartley.

He broke past Mark with a sudden, spasmodic movement, gained the door, and ran down the corridor. Mark looked after him in stupefaction. Hartley had not been drunk, and his presence there had seemed purposeless. Suddenly, with an intuition of danger, he hurried through the clerks' office, unlocked his door, and entered.

The room was filled with a furious gust of wind. The mobilization papers were whirling on his desk in front of the open window.

The circular fan, which had been distributing a gentle breeze impartially from side to side, now poured its current of air immediately upon Mark's desk. The rotary movement had been stopped, and it had been set to maximum speed.

And this was not the small fan customarily in use in the little office, but a large one from the clerks' room.

When Mark had left to interview Hartley, he had seen Kellerman at work through the glass door that connected their two offices. Now Kellerman's desk was vacant.

Mark slammed down the window; there were two locks, and Mark and Kellerman had each a key. Nobody could have entered.

But Mark was positive that Kellerman had set the fan. It stood on a shelf against the partition. Looking up, Mark saw that there was a tiny hole immediately behind it, large enough to permit an inserted wire to push back the lever that controlled the rotary apparatus. Yet this might have been nothing but a wormhole in the wood framework of the door.

With a gasp of rage Mark hastily stopped the fan and ran back to his desk. He began collecting the papers. They had blown hither and thither; some had fallen behind the desk, some on the radiator. The floor was littered with them.

Had any gone out of the window?

There should have been two hundred and nine. There was nothing to do but count them. Mark began, but his fingers trembled so that he could hardly turn the pages.

In the very middle of this task the door clicked; the Brigadier and Colonel Howard entered.

"Well, Wallace, finished, I hope?" asked the Brigadier with the cordiality of one who has been refreshed by a good dinner. "Let me see!"

Mark turned the leaves nervously, while the Brigadier and Howard stood silently beside him.

He reached the end. He had counted exactly two hundred. That might have been an error. But the paper was not there.

He looked up to see the Brigadier peering into his face with an extraordinary expression. He heard himself stammering, fumbling for words; he stopped.

Colonel Howard sprang forward and caught him by the shoulder. "Wallace, my dear fellow, pull yourself together!" he was pleading. "What's that you're saying? Blown out of the window? It's the heat, sir. He's been overdoing it!"

"Very possibly," said the Brigadier caustically. "Pray have a look, then, Howard. Take your time."

Mark was searching again. He stopped as they came to the last paper, which was now the two hundred and third.

"It's no use, Colonel Howard," he cried. "It has gone out of the window. I was called out. When I came back the fan was turned on my desk and the papers were blowing about the room. Somebody—perhaps the mechanism slipped. I don't know. I'm tired—my God, how tired I am!"

The Colonel was pushing him into a chair. He heard the storming voice of the Brigadier a long distance away. Howard was expostulating. They were going through the papers again. A clerk had been called in. Mark heard something about searching the streets. Somebody was telephoning. And, above all, he was conscious of Kellerman in the next room, long before he opened the glass door and entered.

He was alone, and struggling back into the realization of his situation. Kellerman's threat and his refusal to

consider it, the visit of Hartley, began to link themselves into the chain of the devilish conspiracy. He rose unsteadily to his feet, wiping the sweat from his forehead. Colonel Howard was coming through the open doorway from Kellerman's room.

"Sit down, Wallace," he said gravely. "I've been talking to the Brigadier, or, rather, he has been talking to me. You must consider yourself under arrest in your quarters. Now, how did this damned thing happen?"

Mark explained as lamely as one who had heard excuses of all kinds from soldiers brought before him for various offenses during his term of service, and waved them aside.

"You know what this means, Wallace?" asked the Colonel in a kindly, serious tone.

"New plans."

"Yes, but to you?"

"I guess so, Colonel Howard. And I'd like to hurry it through. Of course I shall wait it over. I'll go home now, and—"

"Stop!" Colonel Howard's challenge had a triumphant ring to it. He placed his hands on Mark's shoulders and swung him round, looking straight into his eyes. "Thank God for that, Mark!" he cried. "I fought the Brigadier over you, and I'll fight him to the end of time. I told him it was a damned lie. I'll swear to it."

"What do you mean, sir?"

"That you are a frequenter of gambling houses, Wallace. That's the story that they have been putting over on him. You know whom I mean by 'they.' Washington's swimming with that crooked gang, and that story—well, they managed to start that in circulation and saw that it reached the Brigadier's ears. He heard that you were in a fight outside Mrs. Kenson's place in the small hours this morning. Mark! I'll see you through this."

Impulsively the kindly old man started toward the door. He had almost

reached it when Wallace found his tongue.

"Stop!"

The Colonel halted, one hand still outstretched toward the door. "Eh, my boy?" he asked.

"One moment, sir! I cannot let you go to the Brigadier. I have never been inside a gambling house in my life, but I was outside Mrs. Kenson's place last night."

A sudden feebleness seemed to come over the Colonel.

"Tell me about it, Wallace. Tell me why you went there. You know her, then? Don't you know that she's—"

"I know nothing about her, sir. I merely ask you not to go to the Brigadier. I shall proceed to my quarters."

"You understand there will be a court-martial?"

"Naturally, sir."

"The war department hasn't much superfluous time on its hands to wash its dirty linen. We want to get ahead. We want to forget this. I think if you will send in your resignation—"

"You shall have it tonight, sir."

CHAPTER VIII.

Mark rushed to the street and found himself face to face with Eleanor.

She was coming out of a store, and going, evidently, toward the cab which was waiting against the street curb. They almost ran into each other.

Mark lifted his hat mechanically, and thought she was about to pass, but suddenly she took him by the arm, and looked at him earnestly, extreme concern upon her face.

"What's the matter, Uncle Mark?" she asked. "You're ill—you're looking frightfully ill."

"Well, it's a pretty hot day," said Mark.

"Yes, but you can stand heat, Uncle Mark. You don't look fit to be around. How long have you been ill, and have you been working all the time, and why didn't you send for me?"

"I'm not ill, Eleanor," said Mark, trying to smile.

"Then why haven't you been to see us? Have you forgotten our talk that night? What's the reason? Tell me!"

"Your father keeps our noses to the grindstone, Eleanor."

"That isn't true, and please don't play with me as if I were a child, Captain Wallace. Come, get into this cab at once! I am going to take you home and have Mrs. Howard look after you at once. Oh, you are laughing!"

It was rather a grim jest to Mark, but it occurred to him that it would help to alienate Eleanor. She drew away from him and looked at him with those keen, scrutinizing eyes that had in some measure discouraged him at the Misses Harpers' school.

"Uncle Mark," she pleaded, "do tell me why you are acting so horribly when I am only thinking of you. It's just the way you acted that other night until we got to understand each other. And tell me why you haven't come to us."

"Well, Eleanor, the truth is," said Mark, "the work at the office has just about taken it all out of me. And then, in my position, of course there are visits that I must pay."

"Of course," said Eleanor ironically. "Go on, Uncle Mark. I shall see through you presently."

"But I have been meaning to visit you soon. Only, you know, I am not in any sense your guardian now, and so, Eleanor, if you want me to be frank, it is a little unreasonable of you to put forward my duties in that respect when I have no compensations."

She started. "You mean that you didn't want to come?" she asked.

"I did want to. But I have so many duties—"

"Thank you. That's quite enough, Captain Wallace. My conduct in intruding on such a busy man has been quite inexcusable. Good day, Captain Wallace!"

She made a mocking little bow and went toward her cab. She stopped and looked back. The brief anger was ended. But Mark was already free from that intolerable interview and stumbling homeward.

He let himself in, wrote out his resignation, and mailed it.

As he paced his room, pondering the situation, it seemed to him that the key to the mystery lay with Hartley. Even yet he had not allowed himself to believe Kellerman a traitor. But it was essential that he should find Hartley, and insist upon a confession, both of his motives in watching the Colonel's house, and of those that had brought him to the war department.

Suddenly the telephone interrupted his meditations. A woman's voice at the other end was asking for him.

"Are you quite sure you are Captain Mark Wallace?" it inquired, when he had stated his identity.

"I am as sure as I have ever been," answered Mark.

Wallace receives a strange offer, which he indignantly rejects, and then—darkness. What happened to him is revealed in the next installment. Don't miss it.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Foul Play. Lady (who has given a tramp a plate of scraps): "You must feel the humiliation of begging for food." Tramp: "It's not that so much mum. What hurts me is that I'm depriving the pore innocent fowls of a feed."

Necessary for Friendship. There are two elements that go to the composition of friendship: Truth and Tenderness.—Emerson.

Coats for the Depths of Winter



Fur fabrics have become so handsome and rich that they associate on equal terms with real skins. They do not suffer by this close comparison. Until the present year coats made of these fabrics were set off by collar and cuffs and bands of fur, but now we find the fabrics and fur dividing honors in the body of as brilliant garments as any, except those magnificent long wraps and cloaks of costly skins that are only the privilege of the very rich. The time may come when things as they were will be reversed and the fur fabrics become a decoration for coats made of fur.

Among the really impressive coats that have been brought out for mid-winter wear, there are some very handsome models in which fur fabrics are so generously trimmed with fur that the effect is that of an all-fur garment. The picture at the head of this article portrays a coat of castor-colored plush which looks something like moleskin, but is more lustrous. It is straight hanging and has a wide girdle of the fabric, crushed about the figure below

the waistline and fastened at the front with a large buckle. The very deep border at the bottom is made of three bands of skunk fur and there is a splendid collar of this becoming fur. Ample cuffs of it give character to the roony sleeves. Although not in the same class with the highest priced all-fur coats, these combinations of furs and fabrics are not found to be inexpensive. But both plush of this kind and skunk fur are good investments. The skunk is among the most durable of furs and the plush will outwear it.

Sport-Wear Scarfs.

To replace the knitted and woven scarfs manufacturers are turning their attention to scarfs of velours materials, in bright colors, for sport wear. These are straight and have the popular pockets at the ends.

For Cushions.

The good parts of a discarded mattress may be used by cutting into squares, covering with epaume or other cloth and using as chair and window seat cushions.

Superb Plumage in Brilliant Hats



There are some hats that belong to middle life, or rather that do not belong to the youthful. They match up with the poise, and assurance in style, of matronly wearers who have cultivated the art of dressing. It is their privilege to clothe themselves with more brilliance than belongs to youth. Rich fur turbans and small hats and hats made of beautiful plumage are among those that look best on older women—youth is not the right background for them. The superb feathers from the peacock's neck and gorgeous tail, and other iridescent feathers, and those whose markings are marvels of nature's work, are used to cover shapes either quiet or spirited, for matronly wearers.

having a narrow brim draped with velvet and a very beautiful "pochontas" band that towers to a considerable height at the back, a plain turban and one with a very narrow brim. This one is covered with plain, tan-colored feathers at the side. Short, double wings are extended from the crown, at each side. The feathers that are used on these hats show bronze and vivid green—the predominant colors. They are contrasted with tan, brown, black, gray, and there are innumerable tints that shift about as the light plays on them. But no one can describe adequately the markings or colorings of a beautiful feather. They are more wonderful than flowers.

Julie Bottomley

Bands Galore.

The new all-feather hats are distinguished this season by wing and other trims that are in one with the hat. That is, the carefully placed plumage is simply extended into wing or crest or coronet that seems to grow from the hat as natural as the wings from a bird. These hats are suited to fall and winter wear. Only a few feather hats anticipate these seasons and these are all-white feather hats that often appear in August.

The group of hats shown here is typical of the styles, a collection of four of the best that the season has brought to us. They include a tricorn entirely covered with feathers, a hat

Bands, bands, bands—the new dresses have as many as a three-ringed circus. There are bands of fur on both bodices and skirts. There are bands of velours de laine—white on a black velvet skirt, for instance—of which Jenny is particularly fond. Strips of fuzzy looking angora diversify Jersey frocks, and so on da capo. Sometimes, too, there is a double bill playing; and between bands you will see introduced rows of fringes.