

### XVIII

#### THE SPIRIT OF '76 AND THE SHADOW OF '61

ONE night, in the following April, there was a great dance in Lexington. Next day the news of Sumter came. Chad pleaded to be let off from the dance, but the Major would not hear of it. It was a fancy-dress ball, and the Major had a pet purpose of his own that he wanted gratified, and Chad had promised to aid him. That fancy was that Chad should go in regimentals, as the stern, old soldier on the wall, of whom the Major swore the boy was the "spit and image." The Major himself helped Chad dress in wig, peruke, stock, breeches, boots, spurs, cocked hat, sword, and all. And then he led the boy down into the parlor, where Miss Lucy was waiting for them, and stood him up on one side of the portrait. To please the old fellow, Chad laughingly struck the attitude of the pictured soldier, and the Major cried:

"What'd I tell you, Lucy!" Then he advanced and made a low bow.

"General Buford," he said, "General Washington's compliments, and will General Buford plant

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the flag on that hill where the left wing of the British is entrenched."

"Hush, Cal," said Miss Lucy, laughing.

"General Buford's compliments to General Washington. General Buford will plant that flag on *any* hill that *any* enemy holds against it."

The lad's face paled as the words, by some curious impulse, sprang to his lips, but the unsuspecting Major saw no lurking significance in his manner, nor in what he said, and then there was a rumble of carriage wheels at the door.

The winter had sped swiftly. Chad had done his work in college only fairly well, for Margaret had been a disturbing factor. The girl was an impenetrable mystery to him, for the past between them was not only wiped clean—it seemed quite gone. Once only had he dared to open his lips about the old days, and the girl's flushed silence made a like mistake forever impossible. He came and went at the Deans' as he pleased. Always they were kind, courteous, hospitable—no more, no less, unvaryingly. During the Christmas holidays he and Margaret had had a foolish quarrel, and it was then that Chad took his little fling at his little world—a fling that was foolish, but harmful, chiefly in that it took his time and his mind and his energy from his work. He not only neglected his studies, but he fell in with the wild young bucks of the town, learned to play cards, took more wine



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than was good for him sometimes, was on the verge of several duels, and night after night raced home in his buggy against the coming dawn. Though Miss Lucy looked worried, the indulgent old Major made no protest. Indeed he was rather pleased. Chad was sowing his wild oats—it was in the blood, and the mood would pass. It did pass, naturally enough, on the very day that the breach between him and Margaret was partly healed; and the heart of Caleb Hazel, whom Chad, for months, had not dared to face, was made glad when the boy came back to him remorseful and repentant—the old Chad once more.

They were late in getting to the dance. Every window in the old Hunt home was brilliant with light. Chinese lanterns swung in the big yard. The scent of early spring flowers smote the fresh night air. Music and the murmur of nimble feet and happy laughter swept out the wide-open doors past which white figures flitted swiftly. Scarcely anybody knew Chad in his regimentals, and the Major, with the delight of a boy, led him around, gravely presenting him as General Buford here and there. Indeed, the lad made a noble figure with his superb height and bearing, and he wore sword and spurs as though born to them. Margaret was dancing with Richard Hunt when she saw his eyes searching for her through the room, and she gave him a radiant smile that almost stunned him. She

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had been haughty and distant when he went to her to plead forgiveness: she had been too hard, and Margaret, too, was repentant.

"Why, who's that?" asked Richard Hunt. "Oh, yes," he added, getting his answer from Margaret's face. "Bless me, but he's fine—the very spirit of '76. I must have him in the Rifles."

"Will you make him a lieutenant?" asked Margaret.

"Why, yes, I will," said Mr. Hunt, decisively. "I'll resign myself in his favor, if it pleases you."

"Oh, no, no—no one could fill your place."

"Well, he can, I fear—and here he comes to do it. I'll have to retreat some time, and I suppose I'd as well begin now." And the gallant gentleman bowed to Chad.

"Will you pardon me, Miss Margaret? My mother is calling me."

"You must have keen ears," said Margaret; "your mother is upstairs."

"Yes; but she wants me. Everybody wants me, but——" he bowed again with an imperturbable smile and went his way.

Margaret looked demurely into Chad's eager eyes.

"And how is the spirit of '76?"

"The spirit of '76 is unchanged."

"Oh, yes, he is; I scarcely knew him."



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"But he's unchanged; he never will change."

Margaret dropped her eyes and Chad looked around.

"I wish we could get out of here."

"We can," said Margaret, demurely.

"We will!" said Chad, and he made for a door, outside which lanterns were swinging in the wind. Margaret caught up some flimsy garment and wound it about her pretty round throat—they call it a "fascinator" in the South.

Chad looked down at her.

"I wish you could see yourself; I wish I could tell you how you look."

"I have," said Margaret, "every time I passed a mirror. And other people have told me. Mr. Hunt did. He didn't seem to have much trouble."

"I wish I had his tongue."

"If you had, and nothing else, you wouldn't have me"—Chad started as the little witch paused a second, drawling—"leaving my friends and this jolly dance to go out into a freezing yard and talk to an aged Colonial who doesn't appreciate his modern blessings. The next thing you'll be wanting, I suppose—will be——"

"You, Margaret; you—you!"

It had come at last and Margaret hardly knew the choked voice that interrupted her. She had turned her back to him to sit down. She paused a

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moment, standing. Her eyes closed; a slight tremor ran through her, and she sank with her face in her hands. Chad stood silent, trembling. Voices murmured about them, but like the music in the house, they seemed strangely far away. The stirring of the wind made the sudden damp on his forehead icy-cold. Margaret's hands slowly left her face, which had changed as by a miracle. Every trace of coquetry was gone. It was the face of a woman who knew her own heart, and had the sweet frankness to speak it, that was lifted now to Chad.

"I'm so glad you are what you are, Chad; but had you been otherwise—that would have made no difference to me. You believe that, don't you, Chad? They might not have let me marry you, but I should have cared, just the same. They may not now, but that, too, will make no difference." She turned her eyes from his for an instant, as though she were looking far backward. "Ever since that day," she said, slowly, "when I heard you say, 'Tell the little gurl I didn't mean nothin' callin' her a little gal.'"—there was a low, delicious gurgle in the throat as she tried to imitate his odd speech, and then her eyes suddenly filled with tears, but she brushed them away, smiling brightly. "Ever since then, Chad——" she stopped—a shadow fell across the door of the little summer house.



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"Here I am, Mr. Hunt," she said, lightly; "is this your dance?" She rose and was gone. "Thank you, Mr. Buford," she called back, sweetly.

For a moment Chad stood where he was, quite dazed—so quickly, so unexpectedly had the crisis come. The blood had rushed to his face and flooded him with triumphant happiness. A terrible doubt chilled him as quickly. Had he heard aright—could he have misunderstood her? Had the dream of years really come true? What was it she had said? He stumbled around in the half darkness, wondering. Was this another phase of her unceasing coquetry? How quickly her tone had changed when Richard Hunt's shadow came. At that moment, he neither could nor would have changed a hair had some genie dropped them both in the midst of the crowded ball-room. He turned swiftly toward the dancers. He must see, know—now!

The dance was a quadrille and the figure was "Grand right and left." Margaret had met Richard Hunt opposite, half-way, when Chad reached the door and was curtsying to him with a radiant smile. Again the boy's doubts beat him fiercely; and then Margaret turned her head, as though she knew he must be standing there. Her face grew so suddenly serious and her eyes softened with such swift tenderness when they met his, that a wave of guilty shame swept through him. And

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when she came around to him and passed, she leaned from the circle toward him, merry and mock-reproachful:

"You mustn't look at me like that," she whispered, and Hunt, close at hand, saw, guessed and smiled. Chad turned quickly away again.

That happy dawn—going home! The Major drowsed and fell asleep. The first coming light, the first cool breath that was stealing over the awakening fields, the first spring leaves with their weight of dew, were not more fresh and pure than the love that was in the boy's heart. He held his right hand in his left, as though he were imprisoning there the memory of the last little clasp that she had given it. He looked at the Major, and he wondered how anybody on earth, at that hour, could be asleep. He thought of the wasted days of the past few months; the silly, foolish life he had led, and thanked God that, in the memory of them, there was not one sting of shame. How he would work for her now! Little guessing how proud she already was, he swore to himself how proud she should be of him some day. He wondered where she was, and what she was doing. She could not be asleep, and he must have cried aloud could he have known—could he have heard her on her knees at her bedside, whispering his name for the first time in her prayers; could he have seen her, a little later, at her open window,



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looking across the fields, as though her eyes must reach him through the morning dusk.

That happy dawn—for both, that happy dawn!

It was well that neither, at that hour, could see beyond the rim of his own little world. In a far Southern city another ball, that night, had been going on. Down there the air was charged with the prescience of dark trouble, but, while the music moaned to many a heart like a god in pain, there was no brooding—only a deeper flush to the cheek, a brighter sparkle to the eye, a keener wit to the tongue; to the dance, a merrier swing. And at that very hour of dawn, ladies, slippered, bare of head, and in evening gowns, were fluttering like white moths along the streets of old Charleston, and down to the Battery, where Fort Sumter lay, gray and quiet in the morning mist—to await with jest and laughter the hissing shriek of one shell that lighted the fires of a four years' hell in a happy land of God-fearing peace and God-given plenty, and the hissing shriek of another that Anderson, Kentuckian, hurled back, in heroic defence of the flag struck for the first time by other than an alien hand.

### XIX

#### THE BLUE OR THE GRAY

IN the far North, as in the far South, men had but to drift with the tide. Among the Kentuckians, the forces that moulded her sons—Davis and Lincoln—were at war in the State, as they were at war in the nation. By ties of blood, sympathies, institutions, Kentucky was bound fast to the South. Yet, ten years before, Kentuckians had demanded the gradual emancipation of the slave. That far back, they had carved a pledge on a block of Kentucky marble, which should be placed in the Washington monument, that Kentucky would be the last to give up the Union. For ten years, they had felt the shadow of the war creeping toward them. In the dark hours of that dismal year, before the dawn of final decision, the men, women, and children of Kentucky talked of little else save war, and the skeleton of war took its place in the closet or every home from the Ohio to the crest of the Cumberland. When the dawn of that decision came, Kentucky spread before the world a record of independent-mindedness, patriotism, as each side saw the word, and sacrifice that has no parallel in his-



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tory. She sent the flower of her youth—forty thousand strong—into the Confederacy; she lifted the lid of her treasury to Lincoln, and in answer to his every call, sent him a soldier, practically without a bounty and without a draft. And when the curtain fell on the last act of the great tragedy, half of her manhood was behind it—helpless from disease, wounded, or dead on the battle-field.

So, on a gentle April day, when the great news came, it came like a sword that, with one stroke, slashed the State in twain, shearing through the strongest bonds that link one man to another, whether of blood, business, politics or religion, as though they were no more than threads of wool. Nowhere in the Union was the National drama so played to the bitter end in the confines of a single State. As the nation was rent apart, so was the commonwealth; as the State, so was the county; as the county, the neighborhood; as the neighborhood, the family; and as the family, so brother and brother, father and son. In the nation the kinship was racial only. Brother knew not the face of brother. There was distance between them, antagonism, prejudice, a smouldering dislike easily fanned to flaming hatred. In Kentucky the brothers had been born in the same bed, slept in the same cradle, played under the same roof, sat side by side in the same schoolroom, and stood now on the threshold of manhood arm in arm, with mutual in-

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terests, mutual love, mutual pride in family that made clan feeling peculiarly intense. For anti-slavery fanaticism, or honest unionism, one needed not to go to the far North; as, for imperious, hot-headed, non-interference or pure State sovereignty, one needed not to go to the far South. They were all there in the State, the county, the family—under the same roof. Along the border alone did feeling approach uniformity—the border of Kentucky hills. There unionism was free from prejudice as nowhere else on the continent save elsewhere throughout the Southern mountains. Those Southern Yankees knew nothing about the valley aristocrat, nothing about his slaves, and cared as little for one as for the other. Since '76 they had known but one flag, and one flag only, and to that flag instinctively they rallied. But that the State should be swept from border to border with horror, there was division even here: for, in the Kentucky mountains, there was, here and there, a patriarch like Joel Turner who owned slaves, and he and his sons fought for them as he and his sons would have fought for their horses, or their cattle, or their sheep.

It was the prescient horror of such a condition that had no little part in the neutral stand that Kentucky strove to maintain. She knew what war was—for every fireside was rich in memories that men and women had of kindred who had fallen on numberless battle-fields—back even to St. Clair's de-



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feat and the Raisin massacre; and though she did not fear war for its harvest of dangers and death, she did look with terror on a conflict between neighbors, friends, and brothers. So she refused troops to Lincoln; she refused them to Davis. Both pledged her immunity from invasion, and, to enforce that pledge, she raised Home Guards as she had already raised State Guards for internal protection and peace. And there—as a State—she stood: but the tragedy went on in the Kentucky home—a tragedy of peculiar intensity and pathos in one Kentucky home—the Deans'.

Harry had grown up tall, pale, studious, brooding. He had always been the pet of his Uncle Brutus—the old Lion of White Hall. Visiting the Hall, he had drunk in the poison, or consecration, as was the point of view, of abolitionism. At the first sign he was never allowed to go again. But the poison had gone deep. Whenever he could he went to hear old Brutus speak. Eagerly he heard stories of the fearless abolitionist's hand-to-hand fights with men who sought to skewer his fiery tongue. Deeply he brooded on every word that his retentive ear had caught from the old man's lips, and on the wrongs he endured in behalf of his cause and for freedom of speech.

One other hero did he place above him—the great commoner after whom he had been christened, Henry Clay Dean. He knew how Clay's

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life had been devoted to averting the coming war, and how his last days had been darkly shadowed by the belief that, when he was gone, the war must come. At times he could hear that clarion voice as it rang through the Senate with the bold challenge to his own people that paramount was his duty to the nation—subordinate his duty to his State. Who can tell what the nation owed, in Kentucky, at least, to the passionate allegiance that was broadcast through the State to Henry Clay? It was not in the boy's blood to be driven an inch, and no one tried to drive him. In his own home he was a spectre of gnawing anguish to his mother and Margaret, of unspeakable bitterness and disappointment to his father, and an impenetrable sphinx to Dan. For in Dan there was no shaking doubt. He was the spirit, incarnate, of the young, unquestioning, unthinking, generous, reckless, hot-headed, passionate South.

And Chad? The news reached Major Buford's farm at noon, and Chad went to the woods and came in at dusk, haggard and spent. Miserably now he held his tongue and tortured his brain. Purposely, he never opened his lips to Harry Dean. He tried to make known to the Major the struggle going on within him, but the iron-willed old man brushed away all argument with an impatient wave of his hand. With Margaret he talked once, and straightway the question was dropped like a living



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coal. So, Chad withdrew from his fellows. The social life of the town, gayer than ever now, knew him no more. He kept up his college work, but when he was not at his books, he walked the fields, and many a moonlit midnight found him striding along a white turnpike, or sitting motionless on top of a fence along the border of some woodland, his chin in both hands, fighting his fight out in the cool stillness alone. He himself little knew the unmeant significance there was in the old Continental uniform he had worn to the dance. Even his old rifle, had he but known it, had been carried with Daniel Morgan from Virginia to Washington's aid in Cambridge. His earliest memories of war were rooted in thrilling stories of King's Mountain. He had heard old men tell of pointing deadly rifles at red-coats at New Orleans, and had absorbed their own love of Old Hickory. The school-master himself, when a mere lad, had been with Scott in Mexico. The spirit of the backwoodsman had been caught in the hills, and was alive and unchanged at that very hour. The boy was practically born in Revolutionary days, and that was why, like all mountaineers, Chad had little love of State and only love of country—was first, last and all the time, simply American. It was not reason—it was instinct. The heroes the school-master had taught him to love and some day to emulate, had fought under one flag, and, like

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them, the mountaineers never dreamed there could be another. And so the boy was an unconscious reincarnation of that old spirit, uninfluenced by temporary apostasies in the outside world, untouched absolutely by sectional prejudice or the appeal of the slave. The mountaineer had no hatred of the valley aristocrat, because he knew nothing of him, and envied no man what he was, what he had, or the life he led. So, as for slavery, that question, singularly enough, never troubled his soul. To him slaves were hewers of wood and drawers of water. The Lord had made them so, and the Bible said that it was right. That the school-master had taught Chad. He had read "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and the story made him smile. The tragedies of it he had never known and he did not believe. Slaves were sleek, well-fed, well-housed, loved and trusted, rightly inferior and happy; and no aristocrat ever moved among them with a more lordly, righteous air of authority than did this mountain lad who had known them little more than half a dozen years. Unlike the North, the boy had no prejudice, no antagonism, no jealousy, no grievance to help him in his struggle. Unlike Harry, he had no slave sympathy to stir him to the depths, no stubborn, rebellious pride to prod him on. In the days when the school-master thundered at him some speech of the Prince of Kentuckians, it was always the national thrill in the



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fiery utterance that had shaken him even then. So that unconsciously the boy was the embodiment of pure Americanism, and for that reason he and the people among whom he was born stood among the millions on either side, quite alone.

What was he fighting then—ah, what? If the bed-rock of his character was not loyalty, it was nothing. In the mountains the Turners had taken him from the Wilderness. In the Bluegrass the old Major had taken him from the hills. His very life he owed to the simple, kindly mountaineers, and what he valued more than his life he owed to the simple gentleman who had picked him up from the roadside and, almost without question, had taken him to his heart and to his home. The Turners, he knew, would fight for their slaves as they would have fought Dillon or Devil had either proposed to take from them a cow, a hog, or a sheep. For that Chad could not blame them. And the Major was going to fight, as he believed, for his liberty, his State, his country, his property, his fire-side. So in the eyes of both, Chad must be the snake who had warmed his frozen body on their hearthstones and bitten the kindly hands that had warmed him back to life. What would Melissa say? Mentally he shrank from the fire of her eyes and the scorn of her tongue when she should know. And Margaret—the thought of her brought always a voiceless groan. To her, he had let his

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doubts be known, and her white silence closed his own lips then and there. The simple fact that he had doubts was an entering wedge of coldness between them that Chad saw must force them apart; for he knew that the truth must come soon, and what would be the bitter cost of that truth. She could never see him as she saw Harry. Harry was a beloved and erring brother. Hatred of slavery had been cunningly planted in his heart by her father's own brother, upon whose head the blame for Harry's sin was set. The boy had been taunted until his own father's scorn had stirred his proud independence into stubborn resistance and intensified his resolution to do what he pleased and what he thought was right. But Chad—she would never understand him. She would never understand his love for the Government that had once abandoned her people to savages and forced her State and his to seek aid from a foreign land. In her eyes, too, he would be rending the hearts that had been tenderest to him in all the world: and that was all. Of what fate she would deal out to him he dared not think. If he lifted his hand against the South, he must strike at the heart of all he loved best, to which he owed most. If against the Union, at the heart of all that was best in himself. In him the pure spirit that gave birth to the nation was fighting for life. Ah, God! what should he do—what should he do?