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CHAD CAPTURES AN OLD FRIEND

MEANWHILE Morgan was coming on—led by the two videttes in gray—Daniel Dean and Rebel Jerry Dillon—coming on to meet Kirby Smith in Lexington after that general had led the Bluegrass into the Confederate fold. They were taking short cuts through the hills now, and Rebel Jerry was guide, for he had joined Morgan for that purpose. Jerry had long been notorious along the border. He never gave quarter on his expeditions for personal vengeance, and it was said that not even he knew how many men he had killed. Every Morgan's man had heard of him, and was anxious to see him; and see him they did, though they never heard him open his lips except in answer to a question. To Dan he seemed to take a strange fancy right away, but he was as voiceless as the grave, except for an occasional oath, when bush-whackers of Daws Dillon's ilk would pop at the advance guard—sometimes from a rock directly overhead, for chase was useless. It took a roundabout climb of one hundred yards to get to the top of that rock, so there was nothing for videttes and guards to do but pop back, which

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they did to no purpose. On the third day, however, after a skirmish in which Dan had charged with a little more dare-deviltry than usual, the big Dillon ripped out an oath of protest. An hour later he spoke again:

"I got a brother on t'other side."

Dan started. "Why, so have I," he said. "What's your brother with?"

"Wolford's cavalry."

"That's curious. So was mine—for a while. He's with Grant now." The boy turned his head away suddenly.

"I might meet him, if he were with Wolford now," he said, half to himself, but Jerry heard him and smiled viciously.

"Well, that's what I'm goin' with you fellers fer—to meet mine."

"What!" said Dan, puzzled.

"We've been lookin' fer each other sence the war broke out. I reckon he went on t'other side to keep me from killin' him."

Dan shrank away from the giant with horror; but next day the mountaineer saved the boy's life in a fight in which Dan's chum—gallant little Tom Morgan—lost his; and that night, as Dan lay sleepless and crying in his blanket, Jerry Dillon came in from guard-duty and lay down by him.

"I'm goin' to take keer o' you."

"I don't need you," said Dan, gruffly, and

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Rebel Jerry grunted, turned over on his side and went to sleep. Night and day thereafter he was by the boy's side.

A thrill ran through the entire command when the column struck the first Bluegrass turnpike, and a cheer rang from front to rear. Near Midway, a little Bluegrass town some fifteen miles from Lexington, a halt was called, and another deafening cheer arose in the extreme rear and came forward like a rushing wind, as a coal-black horse galloped the length of the column—its rider, hat in hand, bowing with a proud smile to the flattering storm—for the idolatry of the man and his men was mutual—with the erect grace of an Indian, the air of a courtier, and the bearing of a soldier in every line of the six feet and more of his tireless frame. No man who ever saw John Morgan on horseback but had the picture stamped forever on his brain, as no man who ever saw that coal-black horse ever forgot Black Bess. Behind him came his staff, and behind them came a wizened little man, whose nickname was "Lightning"—telegraph operator for Morgan's Men. There was need of Lightning now, so Morgan sent him on into town with Dan and Jerry Dillon, while he and Richard Hunt followed leisurely.

The three troopers found the station operator seated on the platform—pipe in mouth, and enjoying himself hugely. He looked lazily at them.

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"Call up Lexington," said Lightning, sharply.

"Go to hell!" said the operator, and then he nearly toppled from his chair. Lightning, with a vicious gesture, had swung a pistol on him.

"Here—here!" he gasped, "what'd you mean?"

"Call up Lexington," repeated Lightning. The operator seated himself.

"What do you want in Lexington?" he growled.

"Ask the time of day?" The operator stared, but the instrument clicked.

"What's your name?" asked Lightning.

"Woolums."

"Well, Woolums, you're a 'plug.' I wanted to see how you handled the key. Yes, Woolums, you're a plug."

Then Lightning seated himself, and Woolums' mouth flew open—Lightning copied his style with such exactness. Again the instrument clicked and Lightning listened, smiling:

"Will there be any danger coming to Midway?" asked a railroad conductor in Lexington. Lightning answered, grinning:

"None. Come right on. No sign of rebels here." Again a click from Lexington.

"General Ward orders General Finnell of Frankfort to move his forces. General Ward will move toward Georgetown, to which Morgan with eighteen hundred men is marching."

Lightning caught his breath—this was Mor-

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gan's force and his intention exactly. He answered:

"Morgan with upward of two thousand men has taken the road to Frankfort. This is reliable." Ten minutes later, Lightning chuckled.

"Ward orders Finnell to recall his regiment to Frankfort."

Half an hour later another idea struck Lightning. He clicked as though telegraphing from Frankfort:

"Our pickets just driven in. Great excitement. Force of enemy must be two thousand."

Then Lightning laughed. "I've fooled 'em," said Lightning.

There was turmoil in Lexington. The streets thundered with the tramp of cavalry going to catch Morgan. Daylight came and nothing was done—nothing known. The afternoon waned, and still Ward fretted at head-quarters, while his impatient staff sat on the piazza talking, speculating, wondering where the wily raider was. Leaning on the campus-fence near by were Chadwick Buford and Harry Dean.

It had been a sad day for those two. The mutual tolerance that prevailed among their friends in the beginning of the war had given way to intense bitterness now. There was no thrill for them in the flags fluttering a welcome to them from the windows of loyalists, for under those

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flags old friends passed them in the street with no sign of recognition, but a sullen, averted face, or a stare of open contempt. Elizabeth Morgan had met them, and turned her head when Harry raised his cap, though Chad saw tears spring to her eyes as she passed. Sad as it was for him, Chad knew what the silent torture in Harry's heart must be, for Harry could not bring himself, that day, even to visit his own home. And now Morgan was coming, and they might soon be in a death-fight, Harry with his own blood-brother and both with boyhood friends.

"God grant that you two may never meet!"

That cry from General Dean was beating ceaselessly through Harry's brain now, and he brought one hand down on the fence, hardly noticing the drop of blood that oozed from the force of the blow.

"Oh, I wish I could get away from here!"

"I shall the first chance that comes," said Chad, and he lifted his head sharply, staring down the street. A phaeton was coming slowly toward them and in it were a negro servant and a girl in white. Harry was leaning over the fence with his back toward the street, and Chad, the blood rushing to his face, looked in silence, for the negro was Snowball and the girl was Margaret. He saw her start and flush when she saw him, her hands giving a little convulsive clutch at the reins;

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but she came on, looking straight ahead. Chad's hand went unconsciously to his cap, and when Harry rose, puzzled to see him bareheaded, the phaeton stopped, and there was a half-broken cry:

"Harry!"

Cap still in hand, Chad strode away as the brother, with an answering cry, sprang toward her.

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When he came back, an hour later, at dusk, Harry was seated on the portico, and the long silence between them was broken at last.

"She—they oughtn't to come to town at a time like this," said Chad, roughly.

"I told her that," said Harry, "but it was useless. She will come and go just as she pleases."

Harry rose and leaned for a moment against one of the big pillars, and then he turned impulsively, and put one hand lightly on the other's shoulder.

"I'm sorry, old man," he said, gently.

A pair of heels clicked suddenly together on the grass before them, and an orderly stood at salute.

"General Ward's compliments, and will Lieutenant Buford and Lieutenant Dean report to him at once?"

The two exchanged a swift glance, and the faces of both grew grave with sudden apprehension.

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Inside, the General looked worried, and his manner was rather sharp.

"Do you know General Dean?" he asked, looking at Harry.

"He is my father, sir."

The General wheeled in his chair.

"What!" he exclaimed. "Well—um—I suppose one of you will be enough. You can go."

When the door closed behind Harry, he looked at Chad.

"There are two rebels at General Dean's house to-night," he said, quietly. "One of them, I am told—why, he must be that boy's brother," and again the General mused; then he added, sharply:

"Take six good men out there right away and capture them. And watch out for Daws Dillon and his band of cut-throats. I am told he is in this region. I've sent a company after him. But you capture the two at General Dean's."

"Yes, sir," said Chad, turning quickly, but the General had seen the lad's face grow pale.

"It is very strange down here—they may be his best friends," he thought, and, being a kind-hearted man, he reached out his hand toward a bell to summon Chad back, and drew it in again.

"I cannot help that; but that boy must have good stuff in him."

Harry was waiting for him outside. He knew

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that Dan would go home if it was possible, and what Chad's mission must be.

"Don't hurt him, Chad."

"You don't have to ask that," answered Chad, sadly.

So Chad's old enemy, Daws Dillon, was abroad. There was a big man with the boy at the Deans', General Ward had said, but Chad little guessed that it was another old acquaintance, Rebel Jerry Dillon, who, at that hour, was having his supper brought out to the stable to him, saying that he would sleep there, take care of the horses, and keep on the look-out for Yankees. Jerome Conners's hand must be in this, Chad thought, for he never for a moment doubted that the overseer had brought the news to General Ward. He was playing a fine game of loyalty to both sides, that overseer, and Chad grimly made up his mind that, from one side or the other, his day would come. And this was the fortune of war—to be trotting, at the head of six men, on such a mission, along a road that, at every turn, on every little hill, and almost in every fence-corner, was stored with happy memories for him; to force entrance as an enemy under a roof that had showered courtesy and kindness down on him like rain, that in all the world was most sacred to him; to bring death to an old playmate, the brother of the woman

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whom he loved, or capture, which might mean a worse death in a loathsome prison. He thought of that dawn when he drove home after the dance at the Hunts' with the old Major asleep at his side and his heart almost bursting with high hope and happiness, and he ran his hand over his eyes to brush the memory away. He must think only of his duty now, and that duty was plain.

Across the fields they went in a noiseless walk, and leaving their horses in the woods, under the care of one soldier, slipped into the yard. Two men were posted at the rear of the house, one was stationed at each end of the long porch to command the windows on either side, and, with a sergeant at his elbow, Chad climbed the long steps noiselessly and knocked at the front door. In a moment it was thrown open by a woman, and the light fell full in Chad's face.

"You—you—you!" said a voice that shook with mingled terror and contempt, and Margaret shrank back, step by step. Hearing her, Mrs. Dean hurried into the hallway. Her face paled when she saw the Federal uniform in her doorway, but her chin rose haughtily, and her voice was steady and most courteous:

"What can we do for you?" she asked, and she, too, recognized Chad, and her face grew stern as she waited for him to answer.

"Mrs. Dean," he said, half choking, "word

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has come to head-quarters that two Confederate soldiers are spending the night here, and I have been ordered to search the house for them. My men have surrounded it, but if you will give me your word that they are not here, not a man shall cross your threshold—not even myself.”

Without a word Mrs. Dean stood aside.

“I am sorry,” said Chad, motioning to the Sergeant to follow him. As he passed the door of the drawing-room, he saw, under the lamp, a pipe with ashes strewn about its bowl. Chad pointed to it.

“Spare me, Mrs. Dean.” But the two women stood with clinched hands, silent. Dan had flashed into the kitchen, and was about to leap from the window when he saw the gleam of a rifle-barrel, not ten feet away. He would be potted like a rat if he sprang out there, and he dashed noiselessly up the back stairs, as Chad started up the front stairway toward the garret, where he had passed many a happy hour playing with Margaret and Harry and the boy whom he was after as an enemy, now. The door was open at the first landing, and the creak of the stairs under Dan’s feet, heard plainly, stopped. The Sergeant, pistol in hand, started to push past his superior.

“Keep back,” said Chad, sternly, and as he drew his pistol, a terrified whisper rose from below.

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“Don’t, don’t!” And then Dan, with hands up, stepped into sight.

“I’ll spare you,” he said, quietly. “Not a word, mother. They’ve got me. You can tell him there is no one else in the house, though.”

Mrs. Dean’s eyes filled with tears, and a sob broke from Margaret.

“There is no one else,” she said, and Chad bowed. “In the house,” she added, proudly, scorning the subterfuge.

“Search the barn,” said Chad, “quick!” The Sergeant ran down the steps.

“I reckon you are a little too late, my friend,” said Dan. “Why, bless me, it’s my old friend Chad—and a lieutenant! I congratulate you,” he added, but he did not offer to shake hands.

Chad had thought of the barn too late. Snowball had seen the men creeping through the yard, had warned Jerry Dillon, and Jerry had slipped the horses into the woodland, and had crept back to learn what was going on.

“I will wait for you out here,” said Chad. “Take your time.”

“Thank you,” said Dan.

He came out in a moment and Mrs. Dean and Margaret followed him. At a gesture from the Sergeant, a soldier stationed himself on each side of Dan, and, as Chad turned, he took off his cap

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again. His face was very pale and his voice almost broke:

"You will believe, Mrs. Dean," he said, "that this was something I *had* to do."

Mrs. Dean bent her head slightly.

"Certainly, mother," said Dan. "Don't blame Lieutenant Chad. Morgan will have Lexington in a few days and then I'll be free again. Maybe I'll have Lieutenant Chad a prisoner—no telling!"

Chad smiled faintly, and then, with a flush, he spoke again—warning Mrs. Dean, in the kindest way, that, henceforth, her house would be under suspicion, and telling her of the severe measures that had been inaugurated against rebel sympathizers.

"Such sympathizers have to take oath of allegiance and give bonds to keep it."

"If they don't?"

"Arrest and imprisonment."

"And if they give the oath and violate it?"

"The penalty is death, Mrs. Dean."

"And if they aid their friends?"

"They are to be dealt with according to military law."

"Anything else?"

"If loyal citizens are hurt or damaged by guerillas, disloyal citizens of the locality must make compensation."

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"Is it true that a Confederate sympathizer will be shot down if on the streets of Lexington?"

"There was such an order, Mrs. Dean."

"And if a loyal citizen is killed by one of these so-called guerillas, for whose acts nobody is responsible, prisoners of war are to be shot in retaliation?"

"Mother!" cried Margaret.

"No, Mrs. Dean—not prisoners of war—guerillas."

"And when will you begin war on women?"

"Never, I hope." His hesitancy brought a scorn into the searching eyes of his pale questioner that Chad could not face, and without daring even to look at Margaret he turned away.

Such retaliatory measures made startling news to Dan. He grew very grave while he listened, but as he followed Chad he chatted and laughed and joked with his captors. Morgan would have Lexington in three days. He was really glad to get a chance to fill his belly with Yankee grub. It hadn't been full more than two or three times in six months.

All the time he was watching for Jerry Dillon, who, he knew, would not leave him if there was the least chance of getting him out of the Yankee's clutches. He did not have to wait long. Two men had gone to get the horses, and as Dan stepped through the yard-gate with his captors,

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two figures rose out of the ground. One came with head bent like a battering-ram. He heard Snowball's head strike a stomach on one side of him, and with an astonished groan the man went down. He saw the man on his other side drop from some crashing blow, and he saw Chad trying to draw his pistol. His own fist shot out, catching Chad on the point of the chin. At the same instant there was a shot and the Sergeant dropped.

"Come on, boy!" said a hoarse voice, and then he was speeding away after the gigantic figure of Jerry Dillon through the thick darkness, while a harmless volley of shots sped after them. At the edge of the woods they dropped. Jerry Dillon had his hand over his mouth to keep from laughing aloud.

"The hosses ain't fer away," he said. "Oh, Lawd!"

"Did you kill him?"

"I reckon not," whispered Jerry. "I shot him on the wrong side. I'm al'ays a-fergittin' which side a man's heart's on."

"What became of Snowball?"

"He run jes' as soon as he butted the feller on his right. He said he'd git *one*, but I didn't know what he was doin' when I seed him start like a sheep. Listen!"

There was a tumult at the house—moving lights, excited cries, and a great hurrying. Black

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Rufus was the first to appear with a lantern, and when he held it high as the fence, Chad saw Margaret in the light, her hands clinched and her eyes burning.

"Have you killed him?" she asked, quietly but fiercely. "You nearly did once before. Have you succeeded this time?" Then she saw the Sergeant writhing on the ground, his right forearm hugging his breast, and her hands relaxed and her face changed.

"Did Dan do that? Did Dan do that?"

"Dan was unarmed," said Chad, quietly.

"Mother," called the girl, as though she had not heard him, "send someone to help. Bring him to the house," she added, turning. As no movement was made, she turned again.

"Bring him up to the house," she said, imperiously, and when the hesitating soldiers stooped to pick up the wounded man, she saw the streak of blood running down Chad's chin and she stared open-eyed. She made one step toward him, and then she shrank back out of the light.

"Oh!" she said. "Are you wounded, too? Oh!"

"No!" said Chad, grimly. "Dan didn't do that"—pointing to the Sergeant—"he did this—with his fist. It's the second time Dan has done this. Easy, men," he added, with low-voiced authority.

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Mrs. Dean was holding the door open.

"No," said Chad, quickly. "That wicker lounge will do. He will be cooler on the porch." Then he stooped, and loosening the Sergeant's blouse and shirt examined the wound.

"It's only through the shoulder, Lieutenant," said the man, faintly. But it was under the shoulder, and Chad turned.

"Jake," he said, sharply, "go back and bring a surgeon—and an officer to relieve me. I think he can be moved in the morning, Mrs. Dean. With your permission I will wait here until the Surgeon comes. Please don't disturb yourself further"—Margaret had appeared at the door, with some bandages that she and her mother had been making for Confederates and behind her a servant followed with towels and a pail of water—"I am sorry to trespass."

"Did the bullet pass through?" asked Mrs. Dean, simply.

"No, Mrs. Dean," said Chad.

Margaret turned indoors. Without another word, her mother knelt above the wounded man, cut the shirt away, staunched the trickling blood, and deftly bound the wound with lint and bandages, while Chad stood, helplessly watching her.

"I am sorry," he said again, when she rose, "sorry——"

"It is nothing," said Mrs. Dean, quietly. "If

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you need anything, you will let me know. I shall be waiting inside."

She turned and a few moments later Chad saw Margaret's white figure swiftly climb the stairs—but the light still burned in the noiseless room below.

Meanwhile Dan and Jerry Dillon were far across the fields on their way to rejoin Morgan. When they were ten miles away, Dan, who was leading, turned.

"Jerry, that Lieutenant was an old friend of mine. General Morgan used to say he was the best scout in the Union Army. He comes from your part of the country, and his name is Chad Buford. Ever heard of him?"

"I've knowed him sence he was a chunk of a boy, but I don't rickollect ever hearin' his last name afore. I nuver knowed he had any."

"Well, I heard him call one of his men Jake—and he looked exactly like you." The giant pulled in his horse.

"I'm goin' back."

"No, you aren't," said Dan; "not now—it's too late. That's why I didn't tell you before." Then he added, angrily: "You are a savage and you ought to be ashamed of yourself harboring such hatred against your own blood-brother."

Dan was perhaps the only one of Morgan's Men

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who would have dared to talk that way to the man, and Jerry Dillon took it only in sullen silence.

A mile farther they struck a pike, and, as they swept along, a brilliant light glared into the sky ahead of them, and they pulled in. A house was in flames on the edge of a woodland, and by its light they could see a body of men dash out of the woods and across the field on horseback, and another body dash after them in pursuit—the pursuers firing and the pursued sending back defiant yells. Daws Dillon was at his work again, and the Yankees were after him.

Long after midnight Chad reported the loss of his prisoner. He was much chagrined—for failure was rare with him—and his jaw and teeth ached from the blow Dan had given him, but in his heart he was glad that the boy had got away. When he went to his tent, Harry was awake and waiting for him.

"It's I who have escaped," he said; "escaped again. Four times now we have been in the same fight. Somehow fate seems to be pointing always one way—always one way. Why, night after night, I dream that either he or I—" Harry's voice trembled—he stopped short, and, leaning forward, stared out the door of his tent. A group of figures had halted in front of the Colonel's tent opposite, and a voice called, sharply:

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"Two prisoners, sir. We captured 'em with Daws Dillon. They are guerillas, sir."

"It's a lie, Colonel," said an easy voice, that brought both Chad and Harry to their feet, and plain in the moonlight both saw Daniel Dean, pale but cool, and near him, Rebel Jerry Dillon—both with their hands bound behind them.