

A DUEL TO THE DEATH.

(An Incident of Washington Territory)

By O. P. Tennant.

"Well, sah," said the Colonel, stretching himself at the foot of a giant redwood, "I don't know what I should tell, unless it be that the sight of that dark key reminds me of the most tragic event I saw during four years' hard service.

"A certain captain, I will not mention his name, fell in love with the daughter of a wealthy planter who has known to entertain strong Union sentiment.

"Instead of returning his love, the young lady requited him only with scorn, and openly encouraged the attentions of a Yankee lieutenant, more than half believed to be a spy.

"The rebel captain had sworn vengeance on his more successful rival. One evening word was brought by a trusty scout that the Yankee, unattended, had called at Major Tillot's. Through the Federal lines, it did not take long for a hardy band of 'night-riders' to reach the spot.

"The fates were propitious. The lieutenant and his Dulcinea were walking in the garden. Not so much as the rustle of a leaf disturbed the silence, as strong hands tore them apart. The Yankee was securely bound; then the captain addressed the lady:

"Now I have the advantage. Promise me that you will be my wife and I will set him at liberty; refuse and here, in your own garden, he shall be shot like a dog." Ere she could reply, the Yankee interposed, saying:

"No, Martia, do not promise such a thing; I know 'Guerilla Dick' well. He never kept faith with friend or foe. He says he's going to shoot me, but I don't believe it. If he promised me my liberty, I should not credit that, either. So pay no attention to him."

"Exasperated beyond control by the Yankee's taunts, the rebel captain swore he would shoot the spy on the spot. Accordingly he was bound to a tree; the men ranged up in line, and the order given to fire. The captain meanwhile held Miss Tillot, who had fainted when she realized that he was in earnest and intended to shoot her Yankee lover. At the word, a dozen rifles cracked and the spy fell to the ground without a moan. At the same instant the tramp of horses, coming at a racing pace was heard. We did not wish for company just then, so decided to vacate the premises.

"I was standing less than 20 paces from the prisoner and could swear he did not move or stir after he was lashed to the tree, yet, as I passed the body to gain the road, I saw, not the soldier in Federal blue, but a big, burly wench lying dead on the ground, shot instead of the Yankee spy. I do not know how it happened; but this I do know, of fifteen men engaged in that affair, I only am alive to tell the story."

"Yes," said Kid Kellogg, his gray eyes fairly blinding, "and if my revolver don't miscarry or my knife lose its edge, I shall never hear you tell it but once more."

"You will never hear him tell it again."

The voice was so deep and stern that all present stared in amazement at the speaker. It was our negro cook, as fine a specimen of human ebony as one

could wish to see, now so transformed we scarcely recognized him. His face recently of jet black, was of an ashen-gray color; his lips, usually tightly closed, were now drawn back, revealing teeth of purest ivory, while his eyes glowed fire-red with passion and hate.

"You will never hear him tell it again," he repeated; but I will tell you how it happened.

"That old wench was my mother; she saw you come and sent me after the Union soldiers; I did not find them as soon as I expected, and you, Dick Raymond, 'Guerilla Dick,' thinking to carry Martia Tillot to your stronghold in the swamp, decided to shoot her Yankee lover then, as you did not dare meet him in fair combat. While your men were taking their places and you was struggling with Miss Tillot, my mother crept behind the prisoner, cut his bonds, urged him away, and took his place; and she, my mother, the only daughter of a Zenobian king, fell pierced with bullets, a victim to your cowardly hate.

"I found the soldiers, but they arrived too late; you were gone. Your cowardice was stronger than your love, however, for you dared not double-weight your horse, so you did not take Martia Tillot with you.

"Lieutenant Haven and Miss Martia were married the next day, and she came north to remain with his people till the war was over.

"I was a strapping fellow of fifteen; I enlisted and served till the close of the war. Then Colonel Haven, lieutenant no more, gave me a good home and sent me to school until I had obtained a good education; then I took to hunting those who were left of my mother's murderers; you are the last; you are a dead shot. Here are revolvers or knives; take your choice."

The colonel chose revolvers. I paced off 20 paces; Kellogg clapped his hands three times. There were two flashes, two reports which blended as one, and 'Black Frank' had avenged his mother.

A moment the negro stood firm. Then we saw him reel and sprang to assist him, but he was past all human aid.

Two graves, foot to foot, each where the occupants fell, each with a rusty navy-six as a headboard, tell the story: a duel to the death.

WRITE THIS DOWN

In a book of memory: there is no such thing as a harmless cough. Every cough is a warning of confidence that goes from bad to worse unless it is remedied right away. Opium-laden medicine is a delusion. Allen's Lung Balm cures the worst of colds. It clears the bronchial passages, so that the lungs get plenty of air. Why not get a bottle today?

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