

The Daredevil

By Maria Thompson Davies

Author of "The Melting of Molly"

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SYNOPSIS

Roberta, an orphan, half French, half American, starting for America to stay with an uncle, meets Count de Lasselles crossing to secure mules for France.

By a mistake, Roberta's uncle believes she is a nephew. Knowing him to be a woman later, Roberta adopts man's attire.

Her uncle, General Carruthers, informs his supposed nephew that he needs his knowledge of French to straighten out a deal for providing mules for France. The governor's honor is involved in the mule deal.

Roberta pledges her aid and is introduced to Governor Faulkner and to his private secretary, Buzz Clendenning.

Mrs. Jeff Whitworth is deep in the mule scheme with her husband and endeavoring to get the governor's signature to the transaction.

The governor gives a dinner to Roberta, who has been made private secretary pro tem. She matches her wits against Mrs. Whitworth.

Roberta examines specifications of the proposed deal. Mrs. Whitworth tries to pump Roberta and makes love to her.

Roberta accompanies the governor to the state prison, where he wishes to see a murderer. The latter attacks the governor, and Roberta deflects the blow.

Roberta discovers that the murderer has killed his man in defending a woman. She secures a statement from the woman.

CHAPTER XI.

"Behold, I am a Spy."

WHEN I awakened the next morning, because of that dancing, behold, it was 10 of the clock and 11 there to before I arrived in a very great hurry with much plinkness of cheeks in the office of the Gouverneur Faulkner at the capitol of the state of Harpeth.

"Good morning, Robert," he said to me with a laugh as he came and stood close beside me. That Roberta, marquise of Gres and Bye, will blush within me when that beloved gouverneur comes very close beside her, in a way that is an embarrassment to Robert Carruthers, his secretary. "And now tell me what that said to that stupid Mary Brown that made her see the light?" he asked me, with his fine eyes looking into mine with a great interest and something of admiration.

"I asked of her if she would not throw herself before that beloved good Timms if a knife was aimed at his heart, and she perceived from that question that she must give to me the paper. A heart that has felt a great tragedy draw near a beloved one can speak without words to another who sees also a beloved in danger. Is it that you slept in ease, my Gouverneur Faulkner, after you had received that paper? It grieved me that you should sit at work while I was at dancing. I answered to him as I drew nearer and laid my hand with timidity upon the sleeve of his coat.

"Heavens, boy! Do they grow many like you in France?" was the answer that the great Gouverneur Faulkner made to me as he looked down into



"Is it that you slept in ease?"

the adoration of my eyes raised to his, with a question that was of deep bewilderment.

"France has grown many young and fine men who—who die, my Gouverneur Faulkner for her in the trenches, where I must soon go," I answered him, with my head drawn to its entire height in the likeness of the old marquis of Gres and Flanders.

"When you go into the trenches of France, youngster, the state of Harpeth will have a governor on leave in the same trench," answered me that Gouverneur Faulkner, with a very gentle hand laid on the sleeve of my coat above the bandages of my wound and a glow of the star in his eyes. "Brothers by bloodshed, Marquis of Gres and Bye."

"Roberta, marquise of Gres and Bye, how will you even gain the refuge of your petticoats and get away from those lies of dishonor if you are to be so pursued by"—I was asking of myself when my uncle, the General Robert, opened the door and said:

"Better see this pardon delegation now, governor. That other matter is going to go to the deuce as fast as it

can if we don't scotch it. Robert, get those letters on your desk into United States as quickly as possible. That French deluge is upon us. Come back as soon as you can." With which I was dismissed into my own small anteroom.

And what did I find in those letters? As I sat and held in my hand these papers, in which were two long messages, the one written in a very poor English and the other in a very elegant French, the woman Roberta, marquise of Gres and Bye, trembled with fear of a discovery of her woman's estate, while that daredevil Robert Carruthers raged within and also turned with a deadly hatred and distrust of the greatest gentleman that le bon Dieu had ever given to him to know. It was as I say and for this reason: In the letters were announcements of the arrival of the Lieutenant Count Edouard de Bourdon on that Tuesday which the Madam Whitworth had mentioned. They were written with great ceremony by my uncle, the General Robert Carruthers, as secretary of the state of Harpeth, to give to him that information to be conveyed to his excellency the Gouverneur Faulkner, in due form, though he already had that information.

"They make into a fool my revered uncle, the General Robert Carruthers, who would keep his state and the gouverneur of that state from dishonor!" I exclaimed to myself in my rage. "And this woman thinks to play with the life of French soldiers as she has with that same Gouverneur Faulkner, does she? No; there is Roberta, marquise of Gres and Bye, who is a soldier of her republic by appointment from the great capitaine, the Count de Lasselles, to both watch and further the interests of France, whom she must meet in combat first!"

"I will do as you bid me, my Gouverneur Faulkner, in all things, and I will be much helped by both my excellent Buzz and the beautiful Madam Whitworth," I made answer to the question and command given to me by the Gouverneur Faulkner, and as I mentioned the name of that lady I lowered my eyes to the floor and waited for my dismissal. I did not want to look into his eyes, for I did not know even then if I might not find that Madam Whitworth there. I only knew that, whatever she did or was to him, his honor was inviolable.

"Well, get to it all," commanded my uncle, the General Robert. "Get vouchers for what you spend and pay with state department checks. Don't blow in a fortune, you young spendthrift, you, but also remember that the state of Harpeth is one of the richest in America and knows how to show France real hospitality."

"That state of Harpeth has shown that hospitality to one humble youth of France, my Uncle Robert, who has a great gratitude," I made answer to him as I laid my cheek upon the sleeve of his coat, which was of a cut in the best style for gentlemen of his age. Try as hard as Robert Carruthers will, he cannot force that Roberta, marquise of Gres and Bye, at all times to refrain from a caress to the uncle whom she so greatly loves.

"Clear out, sir! Depart!" was the response I got to that caress. But always that wicked Roberta, marquise of Gres and Bye, finds in the face of her relative something that assures her that she can so venture at a later time. And as I turned away from that coldness on the part of my august relative I found a glow of warmth for my reviving in the eyes of my beautiful Gouverneur Faulkner, who held out his hand to me as I started to the door for that departure commanded me.

"Blood brothers never doubt each other, Robert," he said to me as with one hand he grasped my right hand and laid the other on my arm above my bandage over the wound Timms had given to me, which was now almost entirely healed. With the quickness of lightning I laid my cheek against the sleeve of his coat in exactly the caress I had given to my uncle, the General Robert, and then did depart with an equal rapidity.

"Can you beat him, Bill?" I heard my uncle, the General Robert, demand as I closed the door.

"Impossible!" was the answer I thought was returned.

And from that audience chamber I went quickly and alone in my good cherry to Twin Oaks, was admitted by Bonbon, whom I instructed not in any way to allow that I be interrupted, ascended to my own apartment and seated myself in a large chair before the glowing ashes of a small fire of fragrant chip twigs, which kind Madam Kizzie had had lighted against what she called a "May chill" during my toilet of the morning. Above me from the mantelshelf that Grandmamma Carruthers looked down with her great and noble smile, while the flame in her eyes seemed to answer that in my soul as I communed with myself.

"What is it that you will now do, Roberta, marquise of Gres and Bye?" I asked of myself, with a slight shaking of my knees in their chervil trousers. "It is hardly possible that you will escape from revealing your woman's estate to this Frenchman of your own class. Here all mistakes of a man's estate are forgiven you and laid to the fact of your being an alien, but that Lieutenant Count de Bourdon will ask questions of you and perhaps has a knowledge of your relatives and friends—indeed, must have. Also already that wicked Madam Whitworth entertains suspicions of you. What is it that you will do?"

And after I had asked myself for a second time that question I sat and looked into the eyes of that Grandmamma Carruthers for many long moments and had an argument with myself. Then I answered to her as I rose to my feet so that my eyes came more nearly on a level with hers:

"No, Madam Ancestress, born of her whom not an Indian or a fierce bear

"Vive la France and the state of Harpeth! Behold! I am a spy!" I answered him as I drew myself to my greatest height and gave the salute which his old soldiers give to him at



"Vive la France and the state of Harpeth!"

that raising of the banner of the cause that he had lost in his youth.

"You young daredevil, you, I'm a great mind to break every bone in your body, as I have said before," he said to me, but I could see a smile of pride making a lightning of the gloom in his countenance over the trouble of his affairs of state. "You keep away from"—

"Robert," was the interruption made by my great beloved Gouverneur Faulkner, "upon you will fall the task of making the plans for the entertainment of this countryman of yours. The general and I will be too busy getting ready to meet them on their own grounds to give any time to that. Remember, they will have to be shown the best grazing land in the valley in motorcars. When they are done sizing us up we'll be ready for them. The count and his secretaries will, of course, be entertained at the Mansion, and you can make arrangements at the hotel for the rest of the suite. Also will you please instruct my servants how to make them comfortable, and, Robert, will you confer with Mrs. Whitworth, who, as the wife of the treasurer of the state of Harpeth, while neither the general nor I has a wife, must be considered as the official social representative of the state as to what form the official entertainments must take?"

And as he asked that question of me my Gouverneur Faulkner did not so much as glance at my uncle, the General Robert, who gave an exclamation of contempt in his throat as he began a reading of the two papers which I had handed to him.

"Also I suppose this means I must give up all hope of services from that fly-up-the-creek Clendenning," he grumbled as he read.

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I Sat and Looked into the Eyes of that Grandmamma.

could frighten away from her duty of protection to those of her affections, I will not flee. I will stay here by the side of my uncle, the General Robert, and my great chief, that Gouverneur Faulkner, to fight for their honor and to protect France from robbery. Then, if I be discovered and can do no more for them, I will go from their presence quickly in the night and be lost in the tranches of France before I am detained. And, if it be that I am not discovered before all is made well concerning those mules for transportation of food to the soldiers of France, then I will still go away to the battlefields of France before it is discovered by all who have given affection to Robert Carruthers that he is a—He. I will leave love for me and for France in all of these kind hearts, which will comfort me when I fight for the republic or live for her during long years. I grieve exceedingly, but I go!

I feel a certainty that if I should continue to be an American man for all of the days I may live, to that threescore and ten age, I would never be able to gain in any way even a small portion of what my fine Mr. Buzz Clendenning calls "hustle." I went at his side for the three days which intervened between the news of the arrival of that Lieutenant Count de Bourdon and that actual arrival, in what seemed to me to be the pace of a very fleet horse or even as the flight of a bird. And as fast as we went from the arrangement of one detail of entertainment to another the beautiful Madam Whitworth went with us, with her eyes of the flower blue very bright with a great excitement. I was glad that in all matters it was necessary that my fine Buzz also consult with her, and thus I was not exposed to any of her wickedness alone.

And in my own heart was also a great excitement, for it seemed to me that I was fighting a great battle for France all alone. All day I could see that that Mr. Jefferson Whitworth and the other men of wealth who with him were seeking to be robbers to my country were first in consultation with themselves and then with my uncle, the General Robert, and also the Gouverneur Faulkner. Would their powerful wickedness prevail and be able to force a signing of that paper on the gouverneur? Was that in their

power? I asked myself, and in my ignorance I did not know an answer and had no person to demand one from. There was no ease of heart to me when the days went by, and I was so at work with my Buzz that I had no time for words from my Gouverneur Faulkner or glance from those eyes of the dawn star. I could only murmur to myself:

"Vive la France and Harpeth America!"

(To Be Continued.)

ANGORA CAT JOINS THE DIET SQUAD

M. D. Knutson's Pet Feline Lives Two Weeks Without Food or Drink, Locked in Basement.

(From Thursday's Daily.)

An Angora cat is in the class with camels and other dry specie, in the belief of M. D. Knutson. Some weeks ago a pet angora cat was missing from the Knutson household. It was thought that the cat was either stolen or poisoned. It was just about the time that the Knutson family was moving into their new home in Bend View. Mr. Knutson conducted a diligent search, advertised, and scoured the community.

Shortly after their moving, Mr. Knutson ordered a load of wood which was piled in the basement. The wood filled a part of the basement from the floor to the ceiling. The Angora cat sought refuge under the basement floor. The other day Mrs. Knutson was in the basement and heard the cat's cry. The Angora was without food or drink for two weeks.

SNOW BLOCKADE OVER

Prospects Now Good for Regular Train Service, Says Oliver.

(From Thursday's Daily.)

Word was received this morning by Freight and Passenger Agent H. C. Oliver that trains delayed on the Union Pacific, by heavy snows in Wyoming, are now moving at regular scheduled speed, difficulties in the way of transportation having been overcome.

With good weather indicated, prospects are excellent, he says, for regular train service.

DE ARMOND RANCH IS SOLD

(From Thursday's Daily.)

The DeArmond ranch, the one upon which Harvey, and hops in such great abundance have been raised, near Grants Pass on the Rogue river, has been sold, according to a dispatch to the Journal. The "old home" is now in the possession of W. H. Tull, of Medford, who deposited \$30,000, it is understood, for the property. The farm embraces 175 acres.

For sign painting see Edwards.—Adv.

PASSAGE OF ACT ENDS ARGUMENT

HAD THERE BEEN NO ELECTION WHATEVER, NEW COUNTY WOULD STILL BE FORMED, BY LEGISLATURE'S ACTION.

(From Friday's Daily.)

SALEM, Or., Feb. 2.—(Special.)—According to Representative Forbes and other attorneys who have given the question consideration, there is no doubt whatever that the passage of the Deschutes county bill ends for all time, litigation directed against the county's legal existence.

The bill serves a double purpose. It both validates all the steps taken in the recent formation of the new county, following the election, and also actually creates it as a legislative act. In short, had there been no election at all, say the attorneys, the passage of House Bill No. 135 would have created the new county beyond possibility of legal question.

The recent supreme court decision in the case of Rose vs. the Port of Portland, sets a precedent removing any question of the legislature's jurisdiction in the premises. That decision, in effect, declares that cities and towns are municipalities, but that counties are not, so that there is no inhibition against a legislative enactment affecting a county, as there would be against one affecting a municipality.

Should Circuit Judge Duffy sustain the demurrer entered by the attorneys for the new county, which is expected by those familiar with the legal status of the argument, the case presumably automatically would terminate. Further litigation against the new county could never get before a court, in view of the act of the legislature, it is stated.

GOVERNOR SIGNS BILL CREATING NEW COUNTY

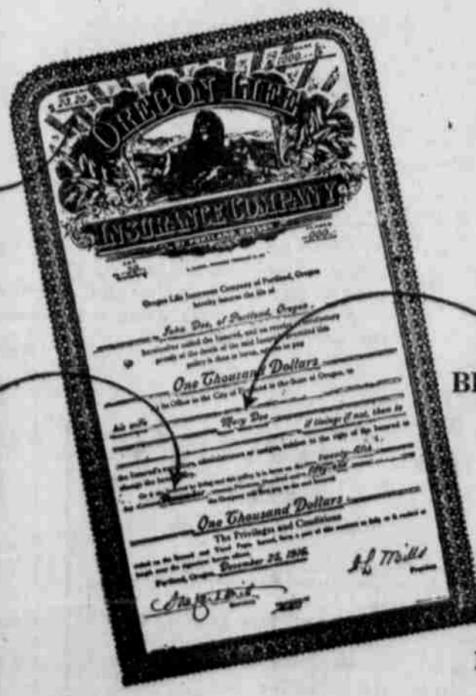
SALEM, Or., Feb. 1.—(Special.)—At 4 o'clock this afternoon, Governor Withycombe signed the bill creating Deschutes county, which was passed by the legislature yesterday. As he appended his signature, he remarked, "You Bend people seem to have a habit of getting what you go after."

Bank Adds Equipment.

(From Saturday's Daily.) The Madras State Bank, this week received a new billing machine put out by the Burroughs Adding machine company, and also a new system of bookkeeping will be installed today, of the loose leaf system, which is used in connection with the billing machine.—Madras Pioneer.

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