

# BRIDE OF BATTLE

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

VICTOR ROUSSEAU

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"But I seem at least to have the acuity of amusing you," he continued. "Dear Uncle Mark!" said Eleanor, laughing with tears in her eyes. She



Now I Know You Are My Real Uncle Mark.

hid her hand on his shoulder. "Now know you are my real Uncle Mark after all," she said.

"Why?" he asked, in astonishment. "That's just like you, Uncle Mark. It's you—it's the real 'you' I've always remembered."

"You seem to remember my character very well, Eleanor," said Mark, trying not to relent, and having an uncomfortable feeling that she was an adept at hoodwinking.

"Well, you know, you paid me a fair long visit at the Misses Harpers' school, Uncle Mark."

"You were nothing but a schoolgirl then."

"Schoolgirls can judge character as well as grown-ups."

"And so you think you know me, and you're not altogether disappointed?" asked Mark, smiling at last.

"I'm not disappointed in you at all, you aren't in me. Dear Uncle Mark, people don't really change—never! Only they learn to adapt themselves to their environments. You are just the same as ever—just the quiet, sensitive, chivalrous Uncle Mark I've always dreamed of."

"Well," said Mark, "I see that there are hopes that I shall regain the little girl whom I've always thought about, of course, I ought to have reflected that your environment has been very different from the one I could have given you."

"I wish I'd been with you, Uncle Mark," she answered impulsively. "Why didn't you keep me when you had our chance, if you wanted me? Oh, dear Uncle Mark, that was so like you, too—giving up to others. And never sent me that photograph?" "I've never had one taken since, Eleanor."

"But I've got you yourself now," said the girl. "So you mustn't give me any more, no matter who seems to have a better claim on me. Will you promise me that?"

Mark knew now for certain that he had found his own. "I promise," he answered.

"Because, you know, I've been very happy with Colonel and Mrs. Howard, but this isn't the best and biggest part of me that you see here. If I could have had my way I'd rather have been living a more useful life somewhere—somewhere where I hadn't quite so many things that I want. Colonel Howard gives me everything he thinks want. But—you see, Uncle Mark, something is missing. You remember what we talked over—about my being a regimental mascot?"

Mark nodded, watching her face closely.

"Well, all that's over and gone. There isn't any regiment now, anyway. All the old people have gone out. And we were three years in San Francisco, you know. And—Oh, Uncle Mark, I wish we could have those days again, when I used to dream about my other—and—and—"

"I know, my dear," said Mark. "I've always secretly hoped that I could know, some day. But I've almost stopped hoping, except for one thing that I've never told anybody, you remember what I said to you about a man watching me?"

"He doesn't watch you now, Eleanor!" She nodded. "He has come back."

"What are we going to do, Keller- man?" he asked.

Kellerman pursed out his lips. "Well, Colonel, you know us much about it as any of us," he answered. "There's always been two of us present night and



You Know as Much About It As We Do.

morning when the papers were transferred. I'll vouch for you, Wallace will, I presume, vouch for me, and you, I presume, will vouch for Wallace."

The sinister look on his face affected Mark more disagreeably than ever. Mark felt nettled, though the words had been fair.

"If there's been a leak," he said "It seems to me it's up to the Brigadier to discover it. It's outside; it isn't our business to locate it. We're doing our part—what more can we do?"

"Come along and tell the Brigadier that," suggested Howard.

Mark, nothing loath, accompanied him to the General's room. But the Brigadier was more furious than Howard.

"I don't know how it happened, Colonel, and I don't care!" he cried, thumping the table. "No great harm has been done so far, and of course none of the departmental clerks can be suspected. But it's got to stop, and we've got to find out how it originated."

It was on that night that Mark felt at the end of his powers.

It was early, he had dined and was sitting disconsolately in his apartment; nothing seemed of any value to him at that moment, and his thoughts were ranging round their eternal subject. Had it been necessary that he should have treated Mrs. Howard and Eleanor boorishly, to protect himself?

He put on his hat and went out, meaning to pay them a visit, or, at least, to walk toward their house while making his decision. He had not decided by the time he reached Massachusetts Avenue, and as he stopped in doubt, he saw a man across the road, staring up at the house.

Of a sudden Eleanor's story recurred to his mind with vivid force. The man was obviously watching the house, and he meant to stay there.

But, as Mark started toward him, the man seemed to take fear, and scampered away. Something in his gait brought back to Mark's mind the recollection of the man whom he had seen outside the Misses Harpers' school.

And he began to follow him. It was a role that he had never played before, but justified, in his mind, by the necessity of discovering the fellow's identity. Without any very clear intention in his mind how he was to accomplish this, Mark made his way after the solitary figure, keeping well behind it.

It soon became clear that the man, although he looked like a tramp, had a definite objective. Mark pursued him toward Pennsylvania Avenue, until he discovered that he was nearing the least desirable part of Washington, whose location, so near the residence of the chief executive, has always been the wonder and scandal of visitors.

He was in one of those streets that start bravely in the city and debouch into the low-lying land in that intermediate and hardly reclaimed region bordering the Potomac. The houses here were old, many appearing vacant and tumble-down, and for the most part standing each in a little garden.

Mark was beginning to tackle the fugitive.

or pursuit, was about fifty paces in front of him, when suddenly the man turned in at the tiny garden of an apparently deserted house and knocked at the door, which was opened almost immediately.

Mark heard a subdued scream, and then the man's voice in angry altercation.

He was talking to the woman who had opened the door. She looked about five and thirty years of age, and her face, distinctly visible against the light in the hall, was well-bred, if not attractive. She seemed one of those cosmopolitans who frequent the capital; Mark was still uncertain whether her house was one of those residences that are still occupied in this district by the original owners, or whether she was the mistress of one of those gambling establishments that flourish necessarily along the avenues of the capital alphabet.

The man seemed to be pleading with her, his gestures were growing frantic. He looked about five and forty

years of age; his face struck Mark with a certain odd familiarity, though he had never seen him closely before, and bore traces of breeding, blurred either by dissolute habits or by misfortune.

The woman answered him in tones of quick anger, and made a gesture of dismissal. The man held his ground doggedly, the voices became angrier.

"No! No, I tell you!" the woman cried. "I don't know who you are! Will you go?"

Suddenly a man came along the passage behind her, carrying a walking-cane with a heavy handle. He raised it and brought it crashing down on the other's head.

The man fell to the ground, evidently half stunned by the blow. The man with the cane raised it and brought it down again and again upon the other's head and face, in a succession of sickening crashes.

Mark ran to the garden gate. The man with the stick paused, raised his head, and looked at him. Mark recognized Kellerman. As Kellerman, in turn, recognized him, an angry sneer spread over his face.

"My dear Wallace, what the dickens are you doing here?" he demanded.

"Are you trying to kill this man?" asked Mark.

Kellerman seemed nonplussed for the moment.

"I hope I've given him his lesson," he answered. "He came here and demanded money, and nearly frightened Mrs. Kenson out of her senses. Let me present you—"

Mark looked into the keen, appraising eyes of Mrs. Kenson with dislike and disgust.

"You'd better let him go, Major Kellerman," he said. As he spoke he saw Mrs. Kenson bite her lip vindictively.

"Oh, I'll leave him to you," responded Kellerman airily. "You'll excuse me, Wallace, I'm sure, but Mrs. Kenson's auto will be here in a few moments."

Mark, hot with indignation, answered nothing, but raised the man from the ground and got him outside the gate. As he did so he heard the door of the house close softly.

The tramp was half unconscious, and muttering vaguely.

"Four years since I've seen her," he mumbled. "I didn't want money. Only the word, God knows I wouldn't have taken money from her as he said, the cur—"

"Was she your wife?" asked Mark, thinking that he saw light.

"God forbid!" ejaculated the man with convincing spontaneity. "Who are you, anyway?" he demanded, looking at him directly for the first time.

"What were you doing in that place?"

He grasped Mark by the arm. "Are you another friend of hers?" he asked. "Or didn't you know that it's the swellest gambling house in Washington?"

Mark took him by the shoulders.

"What's your name and where do you



I'm Trusting You With My Things.

live?" he asked. "I haven't time to waste on you, but I'm ready to help you if I can."

"My name? Hartley. Good enough name, isn't it? Live? I haven't lived for more than years I remember. I'm a corpse—see? I wanted to live. That's why I came here when I heard she was in Washington. Walked from New York. Why should she be here now, unless there's another poor young fool like me for her? Where the car-

case is, there are the eagles—or is it vultures?"

Mark drew the man's arm through his and led him away. Presently a cab came crawling up. He halted it and gave his address.

He took him home and played the Good Samaritan, washed his wounds,

plastered them, and gave the man a bed in his living room. Hartley had subsided into a state of frightened silence. He looked dubiously at Mark all the while he was receiving his ministrations, and would say nothing.

"Now, please understand," said Mark, "I've brought you here because you seem to me to be up against it. The door's unlocked. And I'm trusting you with my things. Those cups are silver. Hartley—I won them at West Point. That little picture is by Griffin and worth about seven hundred. That's about all, I think—but I want you to understand you're free, and I'll help you if I can."

Hartley flushed rather oddly, Mark thought, but said not a word. It was

a foolish act, he thought repeatedly before he fell asleep; but he must win the mug's confidence, if he was to learn the mystery. And he was satisfied that his interest in Eleanor's movement boded no harm to her.

In the morning, Hartley was gone, as he expected. But he had taken neither the cups nor the picture.

## 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 balanced. 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.

(To be continued)

SOUTH SENDS NEW FIGHTERS NORTH.



SEN. EDWARD J. GAY  
CONG. CARLOS BEE

Two new southern faces have made their appearance in Congress. The upper is Senator Edward J. Gay of Louisiana, who succeeds the late Robert Broussard. Lower is Carlos Bee of San Antonio, Tex., a brother-in-law of Postmaster General Burleson and of the historic military family of Bee, from South Carolina. His uncle, General Bertrand Bee gave General Jackson the nickname of "Stonewall."

## HOLY FAMILY CHURCH

(Catholic)

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Sunday High Mass at 10:30 o'clock.  
Week days Mass at 7 o'clock.  
Instructions for children Saturday at 9 A. M.

Rev. Father Francis, O. F. M.  
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