

THE RED STORM Or the Days of Daniel Boone

BY JOEL ROBINSON

CHAPTER VI.

Allan Norwood had moved silently away and walked along the bank of the river. As he was proceeding slowly, looking for some indications of an Indian trail, Vesuvius ran by him with his nose to the ground and did not stop until he had gone quite down to the water's edge; he then seemed at fault, swam into the water and barked.

Attracted by his conduct, Allan carefully approached the spot. Upon making a critical examination of the rocks and shrubbery, he perceived that they had been bent down and trodden upon and immediately concluded that a light boat or canoe had been drawn up there and launched again. The young man quick in his decisions and deeply earnest in whatever enterprise he engaged in, spoke kindly and encouragingly to the dog and proceeded down the river at a more rapid pace. Vesuvius looked after him a moment, as if doubtful in which direction his duty lay, and then followed, keeping close to the water's edge.

The singular request of Le Bland, to have the whole affair of the pursuit of the Indians and the recovery of Rosalthe committed exclusively to his hands, had not been without its influence upon Allan. It had aroused all his energies and caused him to feel justly indignant that the Frenchman's assurance should extend so far. In consequence of this feeling and the impression which Miss Alston's beauty had made upon him, he resolved to make every effort in his power to unravel the mystery that now hung over the fate of the maiden.

He moved on like one in a dream. Rosalthe was in danger, it is true; but had not fortune so ordered it that he should be her deliverer? Had he not read of such things a hundred times in books? He was young, strong and daring; he would discover her, in a position of great danger, and save her, after achieving unheard of exploits.

Daniel Boone, Simon Kenton or Joel Logston would have reasoned rather differently and seen things in another light, unquestionably; but they could not have drawn more vivid pictures than did Allan.

When the mind is occupied with great and hopeful subjects, time flies quickly; and an hour with Allan was such a mere fragment that it passed unnoticed; although during that period he had walked several miles through a tract of country so delightful that it called up the idea of another Eden, planted upon Kentucky river. Allan stopped, and leaning upon his rifle, contemplated the beauty of the scene. A low, warning growl from Vesuvius caused him to turn his eyes in another direction. An Indian was standing beneath the spreading branches of a patriarchal oak. Allan's first impulse was to cock his rifle; but the Indian calmly pointed to his own, which was reclining against the tree within his reach, and the young man felt assured that his intentions were not hostile. The red man was the first to speak.

"Son of the paleface, fear not. Had Otter-Lifter intended you harm, you would have ceased to live already; for his eye has been on you for a long time," said the Indian, in very good English.

"I feel that the words of the red man are true," replied Allan, adopting the style of speaking characteristic of the Indian races.

"Whence came you, and where do you go?" asked Otter-Lifter.

"I am from Boonesborough," said Allan. "One of our young maidens has disappeared from the fort."

"The paleface is hunting for her?"

"Yes."

"And you suppose that some of my people have stolen her away?"

"That was my thought," replied Allan.

Otter-Lifter looked searchingly at the young hunter, and said:

"Men who have red skins can tell truth as well as those who have white. If one of your maidens has been carried away by any of our people, it is something unknown to me."

Allan could not help being struck with the noble bearing of the Cherokee. He had heard him spoken of by Captain Boone as one who condemned and despised the cruelties of his race, and he felt that he had good reason to congratulate himself that he had fallen in with a chief so celebrated for his love of justice and humanity.

Otter-Lifter was a remarkable man. He had raised himself to renown as a warrior without ever having killed women or children or prisoners. His friend, his word and his rifle were all he cared for. He said the Great Spirit, when he made all the rest of the animals, created man to kill and eat them, lest they should consume all the grass; that to keep men from being proud he suffered them to die aso, or to kill one another and make food for worms; that life and death were two warriors always fighting, with which the Great Spirit amused himself.

"You are in danger here," added Otter-Lifter. "Return to the big wigwam or you will perish at the hands of my warriors. Go, paleface, go in peace, and tell your people that there is one among the red nations that loves mercy."

"You speak like a great chief," said Allan; "but how can I go back without the maiden? Her friends are sad; all hearts are heavy at the great fort."

"Otter-Lifter has spoken. He knows nothing of the paleface maiden. Is it

not enough?" replied the Cherokee with dignity.

"It is possible that some of your warriors have carried her away without your knowledge," returned Allan.

"Then they shall carry her back," said the Cherokee grimly. "I would find live in peace with the palefaces, although they are driving us from our lands and destroying our glorious hunting grounds."

"There is," returned Allan, after a pause, "a Frenchman at the big wigwam, who talks, it is said, of making large purchases of land. Do you know him?"

"My white brother is inquisitive; he speaks of that which does not concern him. What cares Otter-Lifter about the Frenchman's schemes? If he is treating for lands, is the chief of the Cherokee a woman that he should tell all he knows to every one that asks him?"

"I meant no offense," said Allan. "It was only yesterday that the Frenchman had a talk with the missing maiden, and he used language that I liked not."

"He is called among my people Shoiska, which means Smooth-Tongue," replied the Indian, with a disdainful smile. And without another word walked swiftly away. Norwood gazed after him a moment, and then turned to retrace his steps to the fort. He had accomplished about two-thirds of the distance, when, feeling somewhat fatigued, he sat down to rest a moment.

Suddenly Vesuvius started up and sniffed the air and at the same time Allan caught a glimpse of a human figure moving hurriedly among the trees. He immediately concealed himself behind a log as well as he could, and putting his hand on the neck of his canine companion, kept him still.

The figure approached and proved to be that of a white man. Allan was about to rise from his place of concealment when another party appeared and caused him to forego his purpose. The second comer was an Indian, and the two advanced to within a few paces of her.

"Where is Smooth-Tongue?" asked the Indian, rather indifferently.

"Hasn't come. I've been waiting a long time," replied the white man.

The white man was Silas Girty, an individual well known to the settlers of Kentucky. He was a faithless, treacherous fellow, celebrated for nothing save being friendly to the Indians, and inciting them to acts of aggression and cruelty. He led many of the attacks that were made upon Boonesborough and Harrodsburg. His companion was a chief of the Miamis, called the Little-Turtle, a character also mentioned in the annals of frontier warfare.

"Are the Miamis ready to make an attack?" asked Girty.

"The bold Miamis are ready; they are always ready when the warwhoop sounds along the border," said Little-Turtle.

"I have seen the Wyandots—they are ready also. Why should there be any more delay about the matter? For my part, I don't see no use in it; every hour that goes by without being improved is an hour lost. People will say that we make war like women and not like men."

"The chief of the Miamis is ready to lead his warriors to battle. Let the Wyandots come on, and we will level the big wigwam with the dust."

"You talk well; you are a wise chief; but the Frenchman comes not according to his appointment."

Girty and Little-Turtle waited a short time longer, and then walked from the spot. Allan arose hastily from his place of concealment, and returned to the fort without loss of time.

CHAPTER VII.

When Norwood reached the fort he found Daniel Boone, Simon Kenton and Joel Logston ready to go in search of the missing maiden. Le Bland stood near, with brow overcast and sullen. He gave Allan one of his peculiar looks as he joined them.

"Imprudent young man! why did you leave us?" exclaimed Boone.

"I would see you alone, sir," said Allan.

"This way, then," replied the pioneer. "Now I will hear you."

Allan without further delay proceeded to relate circumstantially all that he had heard.

"A white man and an Indian," repeated Boone, thoughtfully. "I have it," he added. "The first was Silas Girty—a man, to use a scriptural phrase, 'full of subtlety and mischief.'"

"The Indian was of small stature, and chief of the Miamis," said Allan.

"He is called Little-Turtle, and is a dangerous fellow. They spoke of an attack, did they?"

Norwood replied in the affirmative, stating as much of the conversation as he could remember.

"The Frenchman referred to was no doubt our amiable friend yonder," continued the pioneer, looking toward Le Bland. "I have long suspected him of playing a double game like this. Leave him to me; say nothing of this matter, and we will see what can be done. He had an appointment with Girty and the Miami chief, no doubt, but did not think it prudent to go. I'm much obliged to you, Mr. Norwood; you have rendered an important service to me, and to all the settlers. You have commenced nobly the life of a pioneer."

"But what do you think of Otter-Lifter? Can his word be relied on?" asked Allan.

"It is my opinion that it can. If he has assured you that he knows nothing of Miss Alston, I am, for one, inclined to believe him," said Boone.

"What, then, can be accomplished? In what direction shall we look for the young lady?" continued Allan earnestly.

"Those are difficult questions. If a number of us leave the fort in search of Rosalthe, that very moment will probably be the signal for an attack by our enemies," replied Boone.

He made a gesture for Kenton and Logston to approach, Le Bland being at that moment busily engaged with Mr. Alston.

The information which Allan had brought was briefly stated, and for a short space not a word was spoken by either party, each striving to find out by some mental process what was best to be done.

"It's my opinion," said Joel Logston, at length, "that the Frenchman had better be done for. What do you think, Kenton?"

"Watch him, and shoot him down on the first appearance of treachery," replied Kenton.

"And what is your opinion?" asked Boone, turning to Allan.

"I venture with Mr. Kenton."

"You are wrong, all of you!" exclaimed Logston. "Why not stop the mischief while there's an opportunity to do it? What satisfaction can you get when he's brought the Wyandots and the Miamis and a lot of his own kind down upon us in sufficient numbers to eat us all at two bites? What on airth will he care for your watching arter he's done jest what he wants to do? Why not put a stop to it now? Thrust him into one of the block-houses and keep him there."

"There is much reason and good sense in what you say, Joel," returned Captain Boone, thoughtfully. "You are about right, I believe, all things considered. I am sorry that anything of this kind should have happened among us, but I can see no way to avoid it now. Mr. Alston will feel deeply aggrieved, and discredit the whole story of his treachery. But what's the use to falter when duty points the way, and the lives of all are depending upon promptness of action? Kenton, you and Logston may cage Le Bland as soon as you please. Put him into the block-house and leave him to his pleasant reflections."

"It'll be the best job I've done for a twelvemonth," said Joel.

The Frenchman and Mr. Alston were conversing earnestly when the parties approached.

"There has been too much delay about this business!" exclaimed Le Bland, turning toward them.

"That's jest what I think," replied Joel, dryly, laying his great hand on the Frenchman's shoulder. "Come with us, my lad."

"What do you mean, sir?" asked Le Bland, the blood suddenly forsaking his face.

"This way," added Joel, tightening his grasp, "this way, my gentleman."

Mr. Alston looked at Captain Boone, then at Allan, and then at Kenton, every feature expressing supreme astonishment.

"I see that you are surprised, Mr. Alston, but it is necessary that this person's liberty should be curtailed, at least for the present," said Boone, calmly.

"And he may thank his stars that it's no worse than that," added Logston, dragging the Frenchman away.

"I am not only surprised, but indignant," replied Alston.

"I am sorry that you feel so about it, but I am only doing what my conscience approves," returned Boone.

"Tell me my crime. What base villain has slandered me?" cried Le Bland, struggling vainly in the hands of Logston.

"Treachery is your crime," returned Boone.

"'Tis false! You can prove nothing," retorted Le Bland. "That young fellow has a personal spite against me because I chastised his impertinence to Miss Alston no longer ago than yesterday. I dare say you can find the truth of my assertion written upon his shoulders in good round characters."

(To be continued.)

Self-Defense.

"Why in thunder did Eddie Ott's friends work so hard to get him elected to Congress."

"They wanted to send him some place where he could talk politics all he wished to and they wouldn't have to listen to him."—Cleveland Leader.

Unconscious.

"Your friend Woody left some verses with me to-day that were very amusing," said the editor.

"You don't say? I didn't think he was a humorous poet."

"Neither does he." — Philadelphia Press.

An Exception.

"So you think they're not well mated. I thought you always declared that 'matches are made in heaven.'"

"Yes, but in this case there seems to have been a mistake in delivering the goods."—Philadelphia Press.

The Cost.

Dumley—Still paying for your automobile, you say? Why, I didn't know you bought it on the installment plan.

Newman—I didn't, but I'm paying my doctor's bill that way.—Philadelphia Press.

Sarcasm.

"I have here," said the long-haired man, "a short poem I wrote on 'Niagara Falls.'"

"Well! Well!" exclaimed the editor.

"How did you manage to keep your paper dry?"—Philadelphia Press.

We pardon as long as we love.—Rocheboucauld.

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Plenty of Time.

They were discussing the canal. "I don't think," said one, "that Bigelow stayed down there long enough to learn anything about conditions." "Oh, I dunno," said another; "a man can get considerable bit up by fleas in less 'en twenty-four hours."

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The Way of It.

The Missus—Mary Ann, please explain to me how it is that I saw you kissing a young man in the kitchen last night.

The Maid—Sure, I dunno how it is, ma'am, unless yez were lookin' through the keyhole. — Cleveland Leader.

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