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A STORY OF LOVE AND WAR.

->> BY MARY J. HOLMES.

Author of "Lena Rivers," "Edna Browning," "Tempest and Sunshine," Etc., Etc.

ppeared at the extreme end of the all, wondering who she was, and why a mere visitor should take so much inwidow, though the deep mourning dress told of recent bereavement. Still, Aunie Graham was a different personage, he knew; and thus perplexed. Tom, in-stead of resting, commenced his toilet for dinner, determining, as soon as it was completed, to go, down and have

treachery to the Federal Flag, Jimmie paced the parlor below until he could wait no longer, and knowin

sounds which came from the chamber above that Tom was not trying to sleep, he finally ran up the stairs, and, knocking at the chamber door, was soon closeted with Tom. It was an awkward business to speak of the past, but Jimmie plunged into it at once, stat-irg some reasons which had led him to abjure his own Government, expressing his contrition for having done so and ending by saying he hoped Tom, if possible, would forget that he ever had rebel brother. It had taken Tom a long time to

ecover from the shock of meeting his brother in the Virginia woods, and knowing he was a traitor to his country, but the same generous feeling which led him to refrain from any allusion to that meeting in the messages sent to l-is mother and sister from his Richmond prison, now prompted him to treat with kind forbearance the brother whom he had loved and grieved over since the days of his mischievous boyhood,
"I should have found it very hard to

forgive you if you had stayed in the Southern army," he said, "but as it is we will never mention the subject

Jimmie knew, by the warm pressure of Tom's hand, that he was forgiven, and with a burden lifted from his mind he was about leaving the room, when fom, with a preliminary cough, said: "By the way, Jimmie, who has Rose got here,-what visitor, I mean?" and Tom tried to look vastly indifferent as he buttoned his vest and hung across it the chain made from Mary's hair. But the ruse did not succeed. Jimmie knew he had seen Annie, and with a sudden uprising of something undefined he answered in apparent surprise: "Visitor! what visitor! He must have

come to-day, then. Where did you see him?"
"I saw her in here." Fom replied,

laughingly rejoined

"A pretty place for her in your quar-Pray what was she like?" "Some like Mary, as she used to be when I first knew her,-a little body d in black.' "With large, handsome blue eyes?"

terrupted Jimmie, while Tom, without ispecting that his brother's object was ascertain how closely he had observthe figure in black, replied: "Yes, very handsome, dreamy eyes."

"And pale brown curls?" was the asing Jimmie's next query, to which fom quickly responded: "Curls, no. The hair was braided in

wide plats and twisted around the head, falling low in the neck." 2 was it?" Jimmie continued, with imperturbable "Indeed it was," Tom said, scraping

his thumb nail with his penknife "White as snow, or looked so from the contrast with her dress. Who is she?" "One question more,—had she big feet or little, slippers or boots?" and this time Jimmie's voice betrayed him. Tom knew he was being teased, and ursting into a laugh, he answered:

"I confess to having observed her iosely, but not enough so to tell the size of her slipper. Come now, who is till 11.30 in the evening. Special sale she? Some lady you spirited away from Secessiondom? Tell me,—you know you've nothing to fear from steady old

For an instant the eyes of the two brothers met, with a curious expression in each. Both were conscious of some-thing they were trying to conceal, while a feeling akin to a pang shot through Jimmie's heart as he thought how much more worthy of Annie Graham's respect was steady old Tom than a rollicking young scapegrace like

"From your rather minute description, I think you must have stumbled upon the Widow Graham," he said. "Rose word of brotherly advice, let me say that if you wish to raise Rose to the seventh heaven you have only to praise her protege. We, that is the widow and do not get on very well, for she is a staunch patriot, and until this morning, I verily believe she looked on me as a kind of monster. She's a perfect little Puritan, too, and if she stays here long will make a straight-laced Methodist of Rose, under the garb of an Episcopalian of course, as she is the

strictest kind of a churchwoman.' "I shall not esteem her less for that," Tom said, and in rather a perturbed state of mind, as far as the Widow Graham was concerned, he went with Jimmie to the parior, half hoping his other had mischievously misled him and that the stranger would prove, after all, to be some visitor from Boston

But the first object he saw on entering the parlor was the dainty figure in the third finger of the hand raised to adjust the heavy curtain glittered the wedding-ring. Tom knew now that Jimmie had not deceived him, and with a feeling of disappointment he addres-

Jimmie, with some playful allusion t their having met before, but saying to her then nothing of George, for, rem tering his own feelings when Mary a mere visitor, should not be a died, he knew that Annie would not Annie Graham; but this could not be a thank him, a stranger, to bring up sad memories of the past by talking of her husband. Still, in his manner toward her there was something which told how he pitied and sympathized with her, and Annie, grateful always for the smallest kindness, threw off her air of quiet reserve and talked with him freethe mystery unravelled.

Restless and impatient to know just Isaac Simms and the condition of the what his brother thought of his late Richmond prisoners generally.

"She was going round after dinner to call on Isaac," she incidentally said, whereupon Tom rejoined that wishing to know how Isaac bore the journey and the excitement, he had intended going there himself, and would, with her permission, time his visit to suit her convenience, and so accompany her. Instantly Jimmie's black eyes flashed upon Annie a look of enquiry, which brought the bright color to her cheeks, for she knew he was thinking of the night when she had refused his escort, and she felt her present position a ra-ther embarrassing one. Still the cir-cumstances were entirely different. There was a reason why Tom should call on Widow Simms, while with Jimmie there was none, and, bowing to Captain Carleton, she replied that "she tresumed Mrs. Simms would be glad of an opportunity to thank him for his kindness to Isaac, and that, though not in the least afraid to go alone, she had no objection to showing him the way." "What! going off the first night, and they are coming to serenade you, too? You must not go. Tom. Shall he mo-

ess, clearly to comprehend what Tom was saying to Annie. "It will look as if you did not appre ciate the people's attention," Mrs. Careten replied, while Jimmie vehemently notested against the impropriety of

ther?" cried Rose, who at first had

been too busy with her duties as host-

yield, thinking the while that a walk to the Widow Simms's might possibly afford him quite as much satisfaction as staying at home for a serenade.

"I always surrender to the majority," he said, playfully, while Jimmie's spirits rose perceptibly, and Annie had never before seen him so witty or gay since he came home from Washington as he was during the dinner. It was joy at his brother's return,

she thought, never suspecting that Tom's decision had anything to do with it, and Jimmie hardly knew himself hat it had. He only felt relieved that Tom was not to receive a favor which had once been denied to himself, and glad also that Annie was to spend the evening with them. But in this he was mistaken. There was no necessity for Annie's deferring her visit. The serenade was not for her, and with that nice sense of propriety which prompted her to shrink from anything like intrusion, she felt that on this first night of their reunion, the Carleton family would rather be alone. This rule would apply also to Mrs. Simms, but Annie knew she was always welcome to the widow, and wishing to see the boy who had led her husband from the battlefield, she went to her room, and throwing on her cloak and hood stole silently down stairs just as Jimmie was crossing the hall. He guessed where she was going, and coming quickly to her side, said:

"I supposed you had given up that call, but if you persist in going, it must not be alone, this night of all others, when the streets are likely to be full of men and boys. You accepted my brother's escort, you cannot, of course, refuse mine," and seizing his hat from the hall stand he led her out upon the steps and placed her arm in his with an air of so much authority that Annie

had no word to offer in remonstrance It was not a very comfortable walk to either party, or a very sociable one either, but ere it was ended Annie had reason to be glad that she was not alone, for, as Jimmie had predicted, the streets were full of men and boys, following the band up to the Mather mansion, and as they met group after group of the noisy throng, Annie timidly drew closer to her companion, who pressed more tightly the arm trembling

in his own. "I am glad you came with me," she said, when at last the friendly gleam of the widow's candle appeared in view. "but if you please I think you had better not go in to-night. You are so much a stranger to the family, and Mrs. Simme's boys have just returned. John will see me safely home, and I'll excuse you now. You must feel anxious to rejoin your brother."

But Jimmie was not to be disposed of so easily. He had no intention of enterin the house, but he should wait outside, he said, until Annie's visit was over. Annie had no alternative save submission, and, parting from Jimmie at the gate, she hurried up the walk, and was soon bending over the couch of the sick boy, whose eyes beamed the welcome his pale lips could scarcely speak. How many questions she had to ask him, and how much he had to tell her of the day when her husband received his fatal wound! Altogether it was a sad interview, and Annie's eyes were nearly blistered with the hot tears she shed while listening to Isaac's touching account of George ere the woods were gained, and Tom Carleton generously gave up his sent to the bleeding man, thereby becoming himself a prisoner Much, foo, was said in praise of Tom. and Annie felt that she could not do too much for one who had shown himself

generous and brave. Talking of om reminded her of Jimmie, stalking ntly for her, and when at last the nusic of Tom's serenade had ceased she arose to go, wishing to get away ere the band came there, as she knew they were intending to do. As John arose to accompany her, she had to say that "Jimmie Carleton was waiting for her by the gate." Instantly the sharp eyes glance which brought the hot blood to her cheek, while John and Susan ex she could not fail to understand. Poor Annie! How her heart throbbed with hinking! Could they for a moment be lieve her so heartless and cold? and, scarcely articulating her good night, she hastened out into the cold night air, feeling half tempted to re fuse outright the arm offered for her support. If she only dared tell him to leave her there alone.-leave her to flee away through the dark lonely streets to the still more lonely yard, where on George's grave she could lay herself down and die. But not thus easily could life's heavy burden be shaken off; she could not lay it down at will,and conquering the emotion which, each time she thought of John Simms's significant smile, threatened to burst out into a fierce storm of passionate sobs, she apologized for having kept Jimmie waiting so long, and taking his arm left the cottage gate just as the throng of serensders turned into that street. Jimmie knew she had been crying, and, conjecturing that she had been talking of her husband, he, too, began to speak of George, asking her many questions about him, and repeating many things he had heard in his praise from the Rockland citizens. It seemed strange that this should comfort her, but it did. The hard, bitter feeling insensibly passed away while listening, to Jimmie, and by the time the Mather mansion was reached the tears were dried on Annie's cheeks, and outwardly she was as cheerful and patient as

After that night Rose had no cause for complaint that Jimmie was rude to Annie, or Annie cool toward him, for though Annie talked to him but little. she did not forget the sympathy so delicately manifested for her, and treated him with as much respect as she awarded Tom, who grew each day more and more interested in the blackrobed figure, reminding him so much of his lost Mary. Jimmie knew he did, and watched narrowly for the time when she would know it, too; but such time did not come, for Annie had no suspicion that either of the brothers regarded her with the shadow of a feeling save that of ordinary friendship-As much of her time as possible was spent with the Widow Simms, and a great part of Isaac's visible improve-ment was owing to her gentle care and the sunshine of her presence. John's firlough had expired, and, now that he was gone, the disconsolate Susan turned to Annie for comfort, while Isaac listened daily for the sound of the little feet coming up the walk, and bringing with them so much happiness to the

lonely cottage. "I wish you'd stay home more; we miss you so much, and it's so dismal without you. Mother nods over her knitting. Tom just walks the ne reads some stiff Prebyterian book. while Jimmit thrums the piano and teases my kitten awfully," Rose said to Annie one night when the latter came in from a tour of calls, the last of which had been on Mrs. Baker, now a much happier, better woman than when we first made her acquaintance. "It's so different when you are here," Rose continued, as Annie came and sat down by her side. "Tom is a heap more entertaining, while Jimmie is not half so mischievous and provoking."

"I did not suppose my absence could affect your happiness, or I would certainly have stayed with you more," Annie replied; and Rose continued: "Well, it just does, and now that both Tom and Jimmie are going so soon, I shall need you to oversee the

things I must get ready for them."
"Captain Carleton and Jimmie going away soon!" Annie repeated in some surprise. "Where are they going? The captain's furlough has not yet expir-

"I know it," Rose continued, "but 4-8 he is perfectly well, he thinks it right to go back, and has fixed on one week from to-day. "Yes, but Jimmie. You spoke of his

leaving, too," Annie said, and Rose re joined: "Jimmie is going with Tom to join

the Federal army on the Potomac, and, as he says, retrieve, if possible, the character he lost by turning traitor

"Oh, I am so glad! and I like him so much for that!" Annie exclaimed, her white face lighting up with a sudden animation, which made it seem very beautiful to the young man just entering the door.

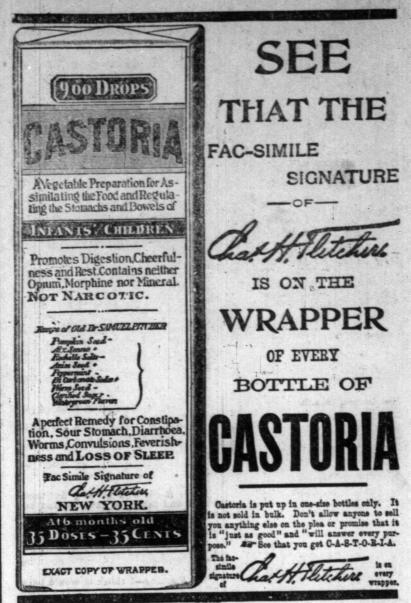
"I would brave the cannon's mouth for another look like that," was Jimmie's mental comment, as he stepped into the room, and advanced to the ladies' side. "So you are glad I am go-ing?" he said, half playfully, to Annie, who answered frankly:

"Yes, very glad."
"And won't you miss me a bit? Folks like to be missed, you know, if they are ever so bad. It makes one think better of himself, and consequently do better if he knows that his absence will cause a feeling of regret, however slight, to the friends left behind," Jimmie remarked, while in his eyes there was a peculiar expression which Annie

upon her. She would miss Jimmie, she knew, for she had become accustomed to his merry whistle, his ringing laugh, his teasing jokes at Rose's expense, and his going would leave them very lonely, and so she frankly admitted, adding that "it was not because she wished t be rid of him that, she was glad; it pleased her to see him in the path duty, even though that path led to danger and nossible death."

To be Continued.

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