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BILLY WHISKERS

By FRANCES MONTGOMERY

Billy had just reached the aeroplane in time to see his master and the aviator rise from the ground and fly back toward the Allies' trenches.

The soldiers saw Billy standing there, but thought nothing of it, as they thought he belonged to their own herd. Seeing that they were paying no attention to him, he slunk off, but when once out of sight of them he ran for dear life toward his own army. By going—a roundabout way and swimming a river he could get safely home without the danger of crossing No-Man's-Land, so he decided to do this. And about noon he arrived at Headquarters, just a little behind his master, who was mounting the stairs to the General's office when Billy got there.

Billy hurried on, for he wanted to hear what the General said when his master gave him the maps and plans he so badly wanted, and he arrived at the door just in time to hear the General say: "Strongheart! You? Back so soon and uninjured at that! How did you ever manage it?"

Then Billy had the supreme pleasure of hearing himself praised to the skies, the General being told that his master could never have gotten the plans in the world if he had not been for the aid Billy had given him.

"That goat shall have a gold medal!" declared the General. "But where did you leave him?"

"On the enemy's soil. I could not take him with me in the aeroplane. It was so small. But I do not think they will harm him, as they saw him do nothing and they will probably think he belongs to their own herd."

"I certainly hope so!" said the General. "I would hate to have a goat like that killed."

"You can't wish that no harm will come to him any more than I do, General, for that goat has certainly been a mascot to me. And this is not the first time he has saved me from certain death. If he ever comes back I shall guard him with my life and take care of him as long as I live, whether in battle or out."

"I thought I heard some one knock," said the General. "Wonder where my orderly is. Oh, I remember; I sent him with important dispatches!"

Gets a Surprise
"I'll see," said Billy's master, and went to the door and flung it open. He nearly fell over with surprise when he saw Billy standing outside.

"Of all that is wonderful! How in the world did you manage to get here so soon? You must have come in an airplane too. But no!" turning to the General, "he is soaking wet. He swam the river. That is how he came!"

"Billy, you brave old fellow, come in! You must be hungry. I'll have something brought to you immediately," said the General, patting Billy's head. "But what is the roll of blue paper he keeps in his mouth and won't let go?"

"I'll see what it is," offered Billy's master, and, taking hold of one end of the roll, he said: "Don't you want me to take care of this for you, Billy, while you eat?"

Billy let go at once and baaed, as much as to say "All right!" Then he went and lay down in one corner of the room. Billy's master laid the roll of paper on the table beside him while he showed the General the plans he had taken from Von Luxembourg. The General glanced them over carefully but quickly and said: "Captain Strongheart, you have done wonders in getting these plans. They describe in detail the lay-out of their trenches and fortifications, but they do not tell where those trenches and fortifications are to be built. Where is the map that goes with them?"

"Map?" repeated Strongheart in perplexity. "Isn't it with the plans? I thought I got every paper that was on that table, for I took everything in sight. This is most disappointing, for now the plans are no good and my trip was for nothing!"

Another Surprise
"Baa!" said Billy, getting up and walking to the table, where he pushed the roll of blue paper over to his master's elbow.

"What is it you want, Billy?" asked the master.

And again Billy nosed the blue roll against him.

"It seems to want you to have that paper for some reason or other," remarked the General. "Better look at it to satisfy him."

So Captain Strongheart picked up the roll and began to undo it slowly. Presently his eye caught sight of the white lines and numbers. His eyes bulged out with surprise, and tremblingly he spread it out before him.

"General, look here! Look here! Gaze at this map! It is the missing one that we want, and is the key to all their works. Billy must have seen me picking up the papers and, seeing that this one was left behind, he picked it up and brought it along. Such a clever goat is beyond belief!"

"For this you shall have a gold collar as well as a medal," declared the General. "Now, thanks to you, Billy, we have the enemy in the hollow of our hand."

The General rang for his orderly and said: "Bring food, water and a bed of straw for this goat. He is too valuable to be let out of my sight. I shall keep him here all night."

So Billy, after eating and drinking all the good things that were brought to him, lay down in the corner and went fast asleep, while the General and Captain Strongheart perfected plans for capturing the enemy when they attempted to build their new trenches.

More Excitement
When Billy awoke the next morning after his trip to the German trenches he found Captain Strongheart just bidding adieu to the General, and he caught from the words that he was going on another secret mission, to deliver some important secret papers and maps to another General a long way off on the South-eastern battle front.

"So here is where I have some more excitement and probably have

a chance to save his life again," thought Billy to himself.

The General stood up and while shaking hands and saying good-by he patted Captain Strongheart on the shoulder, wished him Godspeed and a safe return. And just as the Captain was about to leave he said: "Don't be over-reckless with your life, as you generally are. You are too reliable a man for us to lose, especially now while it is all we can do to hold the Germans in check. If there is any little thing I can do for you, just say so, and I will gladly do it or see that it is done."

"Thank you, General, very much. There is one thing I should like to ask you to have done for me, and that is to see Billy over there and look after him and not allowed outside of camp until my return. For I am afraid he will try to follow me as he did on my last trip. And this journey will be too long for him to take."

"Certainly I will see to him, and I will appoint one man to look after him and see that he is fed and well taken care of. Never fear, on your return you will find him right here and in good shape."

"And should I never return —"

"Tut, tut! Don't put it in words! You will. But if by any ill luck you should not, I will keep him as my own."

"Thank you very much. My mind is relieved, for I could not bear to leave him behind and feel he was running loose with no one to care for him. He has looked after me too faithfully for me to go off without giving him a thought."

"It is a credit to your goodheartedness that you look after him. And I admire you for it. Godspeed—and a safe return!"

"May the Heavenly Father guard and protect you also, General, while I am away."

He Butts Door
As Captain Strongheart walked toward the door Billy jumped up and ran after him. Hearing him coming, the Captain shut the door quickly, so Billy could not follow him. Of course Billy knew why he did it, so without a moment's hesitation he butted down the door and went clattering down the steps.

Hearing a ripping, tearing, smashing sound behind him, the Captain turned to look, just in time to see Billy coming through the middle panel of the door, with splinters of wood flying in all directions around him.

"That goat beats the Dutch! The General has tried to keep him in the room, and Billy has butted down the door. I never saw such devotion in an animal in my life. I shall have to have him tied up or he will follow me in spite of all they can do."

"Billy, you naughty fellow, to beat down the door of the General's office! Don't you know you can't always follow me? And this is one of the times you must stay behind. Do you hear me? You must! For I am going a long, long way from here, first on horseback, then by train, then by boat, and last by walking. And if you followed me you would give me away to the enemy. This is a secret mission, and I shall disguise myself many times, but if you were always with me, what good would my disguise do? None! So I tell you you must not come unless you want to see me captured and shot. Sorry to leave you behind, but I must. I'll tell you how you can help me. You stay here like a good goat and protect my sweetheart for me."

By this time the General had reached the foot of the stairs and was holding his sides with laughter instead of being angry about the broken door.

Praises Billy
"Tell you what, Strongheart, that goat is the kind of a friend to have. He believes in sticking around and performing his duties as a mascot. ...ever in my life saw such quick thought and action. You shut the door. He knew it meant losing sight of you. So without a second's thought he up and butts the door down, going through with a second butt. Give you my word, I never saw a better job! Here, Hawkins," called the General to an orderly who was passing, "take this goat over to the stable where the horses are and put him in a box stall with lots of straw and food and water in it. And see that the sides of the stall are so high that he cannot jump over."

Hawkins saluted by touching his cap, then he walked over to Billy and took hold of his beard to lead him away.

Think of it! Touched his sacred beard! Besides the indignity of being led by his beard! Never would Billy submit to anything like that. The consequence was that Hawkins had scarcely touched him when he found himself sprawling on the sidewalk at the General's feet.

The General and the Captain helped the man to his feet and he went limping off, holding both hands over his stomach where Billy had butted him.

"I see I shall have to shut him up myself," said the Captain.

"I think you will unless we wish to have the regiment incapacitated. For I see he is going to resent being shut up."

[Well, we shall have to wait till Tuesday to see if Billy will get to go with his master or not.]

A REAL FAN
It had been an exciting game, a tie in the twelfth inning, but the home team finally had won. A group of home-bound commuters on the 8:25 were discussing the game heatedly, when suddenly one sprang to his feet with the exclamation, "Great Scott!"

"What's up?" somebody asked. "Lost your watch?"

"Watch be hanged!" cried the passenger. "I've left my wife asleep in the grandstand, and she's got my return ticket!"

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