

**T. C. Harbaugh**

*The squaw spy;  
or the rangers  
of the lava-beds*

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# CHAPTER I

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LAVA-BED KIT.

“Where’s McKay?”

“Still absent with his Warm Springers. I do not expect him before midnight.”

“And Artena?”

“Dead or alive, she is somewhere among the Indians. She promised to be here against sunset, and see, that hour is with us now.”

The first speaker glanced toward the west, and remained silent for a minute.

The handsome military man at his side quietly adjusted his field-glass, which he brought to bear upon a dark ridge against the horizon.

“General, this has been a bloody day,” said the rough borderman, venturing to disturb the officer in the midst of his observations. “We’ve lost as good boys as ever lived.”

Down came the field-glass, and General Gillem sighed as he turned to his companion.

“A disastrous day for us truly, Kit,” he said. “No nobler fellows than Thomas, Howe and Wright. Now shall the war be pushed with vigor. This day’s massacre has heated my blood till it tingles through my veins. The fiends expect no quarter, as none they give. By Heavens, none they shall have! If we could but get the master-spirit of this war—the Napoleon of these red Arabs.”

“Captain Jack, General?”

“Captain Jack or Mouseh, as his people call him. I want to see the murderer of Canby swing. But, why does not Artena come?”

“Perhaps she has got in trouble,” said the Oregonian. “If so—there! somebody is coming now.”

General Gillem raised his field-glass, but could distinguish nothing, for the shadows of night were gathering and the smoke of savage fires hung heavily over the ground where so many brave soldiers had lately fallen before three score of Modoc rifles.

“I heard hoofs,” said the ranger. “Tis Artena at last, General.”

As he uttered the last words, the dark figure of a horse came in view and presently the animal halted before the twain.

Gillem started forward.

“Artena!” he cried, recognizing the womanish figure seated on the Indian saddle.

“White war-man good; he wait for Artena,” said the woman. “But who with him?”

“Kit, Artena,” said the ranger quickly, starting forward. “I’ve been here since the bloody fight of this morning.”

Artena bent forward eagerly.

“Kit in fight?” she asked anxiously.

“Yes; Kit South never throws away a chance to draw trigger on a Modoc.”

“Did Kit see Indian with cavalry hat on?” asked the squaw. “He have white feather in cap.”

“I think I did get a glimpse of such a devil,” answered the Oregonian. “In fact, I know I did, girl—but why do you ask?”

“That Indian Baltimore Bob.”

Kit South started.

“Talk to the General now, Artena,” he said, a moment later. “Tell him the news, and when you have done, I want a few words with you.”

Then Gillem put numerous questions to the Modoc girl, from whom he learned much concerning the present whereabouts of the Modoc chief, and something about his plans for future operations.

It was the night of the 26th April 1873—a day long to be remembered in the annals of Indian warfare.

For upon the morning of that eventful day, a reconnoitering party under command of the gallant Captain Evan Thomas, of Battery H, Fourth Artillery, left General Gillem’s camp and proceeded in the direction of the Modoc stronghold. The little command reached the foot of the high bluffs south of the lava-bed stronghold without molestation, and were preparing to feel their way further, when the Modocs opened upon them a severe fire under cover of the basaltic rocks.

The history of that brief and bloody engagement is too well known to be recounted here.

Armed with Spencer carbines and breech-loading muskets, and sheltered by the rocks, the red rebels dropped such men as Thomas, Howe, and Wright, and, in the end, inflicted a signal defeat upon the troops.

Donald McKay and his Warm Spring Indians, of whom much hereafter, participated in the engagement; but remained among the rocks hunting, at the same time, for additional scalps and information.

“Artena,” said Gillem, after conversing some time with the spy, “I trust that you will not run your head into danger. We can not afford to lose you.”

“Artena watch out,” said the girl, with a smile. “She no fool squaw. Modocs no think she look for white war-man. She tell Jack all ‘bout soldiers,” and there was a merry twinkle in the black eyes that looked down upon the bearded son of Mars.

“Now, Kit, you may talk to Artena,” said the soldier. “But do not keep her here too long, as no doubt she is hungry; so, when you are through, bring her to my quarters.”

“Artena no hungry,” cried the girl quickly. “Mebbe she and Kit go off to-night, again.”

“If so, for Heaven’s sake be careful, Kit South; we truly need such men as you now. If you do go out to-night, and should encounter McKay, deliver this message.”

As Gillem was speaking his hand traced a few words on a blank memorandum leaf, which he handed to the scout.

A moment later Artena and the stalwart Oregonian were alone.

“Do you think we will succeed to-night?” asked the mountaineer, eagerly.

“Yes.”

“I thought so when you looked at me not long ago. I could hardly smother my hopes when the General and I war waiting for you. I wanted to tell him that Captain Jack would be in camp to-morrow.”

“He will be there!” said the squaw spy confidently.

“It’ll be the biggest kidnapping on record,” said South. “If we get Jack, then the war won’t last long. Artena, are you

sure that the Modocs do not suspect you?"

"Is not Artena a Modoc?"

"Yes, but—"

"But what, Kit?"

"The rebels are shrewd fellows. I knew them long before the war. They may be playing with you."

"They play with fire, then," said the girl. "What news in camp?"

"The men are mad enough to eat every Modoc in the Lava-Beds. Three new fellows from Klamath came in just before Gillem and I came out here to meet you."

Artena started and caught Kit's arm.

"What they look like?" she asked.

"Like rough fellows, as they undoubtedly are."

"One tall?"

"They were all tall men."

"One young?"

"Yes, younger than the other two."

"He spy."

"A spy?" cried Kit South. "A white man has more sense than to spy about a camp that holds Donald McKay and Kit South."

"Anyhow, he spy," reiterated Artena. "Artena heard Jack say that young white man sleep in Gillem's camp to-night, and that he would soon know what soldiers going to do."

"Then I don't go till he's caught," said the scout. "Come, Artena, we'll go and put Gillem on his guard. Plenty of time for the other thing, you know."

The girl assented, and the twain deserted the spot, and moved toward the camp.



If the young man referred to was a spy in the interest of Captain Jack, his end was near at hand, for Gillem would treat him to a rope immediately after his capture.

The twain had not proceeded a dozen paces toward the camp when the figure of a man rose from behind a great rock near the spot where they had conversed.

He was clad in the well-known garb of the Oregonian, and rested a long rifle on the stone as he gained his feet.

“So you’re going to tell Gillem about the spy, eh?” he ejaculated in a sneering tone, looking after the couple. “But they’ve got to catch a man before they hang him, and Gillem won’t do neither, I’m thinking. Chris South, how I’d like to put a bullet in your back. I could get away after doing it now,” and the gun was lifted from the stone. “There’s an old grudge between us, but I’ll not settle it now. No, I want to tell you something before I take your worthless life, which will not be long.”

Then, after a pause:

“I wish I had been nearer them. I missed a good many words, but caught enough to know that Artena and the old scout has some deviltry afoot, and if that gal pokes her head into Jack’s camp ag’in, she’ll never get to pull it out any more.”

Then he picked up the rifle and moved away at a rapid pace toward the spot where the Indians were holding hellish carnival over their bloody victory of the past day.

Half an hour later Kit South and Artena returned to the conference knoll—both well-mounted.

The camp had been thoroughly searched, but no spy was found.

The two frontiersmen who had accompanied the missing man to camp, declared that they had noted nothing suspicious about him; but General Gillem was satisfied that he was a spy.

“Now for the kidnapping of Jack,” said Kit, with an air of triumph, as they moved in a westerly direction. “If he proves too much for us, Artena, do you know what’s to be done?”

The girl nodded, and laid her hand on the scout’s revolver.

“Yes, that’s it,” said South, and in the faint starlight he examined the chambers of the deadly weapon.

“I do wonder how the folks are to home?” he said in a tone scarcely above a whisper. “I haven’t heard a bit of news from the hut on Lost River for three weeks. I hope God will keep the old woman and ’Reesa safe, while I’m fighting the Modocs.”

“What that Kit say ’bout Lost River?”

It was Artena’s voice, and it startled the scout.

“I war talking about the folks up there.”

“Kit got girl there?”

“Yes.”

“Girl with blue eyes?”

“Yes! Artena, for Heaven’s sake, what are you driving at?”

“Young bucks come to Mouseh yesterday with captives from Lost River.”

The scout instantly stopped the squaw spy’s horse, and whirled her about in the saddle until he could look squarely into her eyes.

“My God! has the tomahawk been at work in Oregon?” he exclaimed, in an undertone. “Artena, is there a girl in Jack’s stronghold with blue eyes?”

“Yes, Kit.”

“Did you talk with her?”

“Yes.”

“What did she say?”

“She say her father with war-man Canby. She no know Canby dead.”

“Great Heaven!” groaned Kit South; “it is my ‘Reesa! Artena, where was her mother?”

“The young bucks killed her!”

The scout’s head dropped upon his broad breast, and for several minutes the horses moved on in silence.

“Artena?”

The girl spy looked up.

“Who led the young bucks?”

“Couldn’t Kit guess?”

“I can now, Artena. Baltimore Bob, you shall pay for your crowning act of villainy. Girl, ‘Reesa’s got to leave the Lava-Beds.”

“Yes, but we must catch Jack first. The scout has sworn to help Artena.”

“I’m not going back on my word. We’ll kidnap the Modoc Tecumseh to-night, and then I’ll get ‘Reesa back, and settle accounts with the veriest red devil this side o’ the Rockies!”

As brave and as cunning as old Kit South was he was doomed to discover the truth of the ancient adage —“There’s many a slip ‘twixt the cup and the lip.”

# CHAPTER II.

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### JACK AND HIS CAPTIVES.

While the foregoing scenes were transpiring on the edge of our camp, other events of importance to our romance occupied the Lava-Beds, and their immediate vicinity—events destined to introduce the reader to characters who have lately carved their names on history's tablets with the tomahawk and scalping-knife.

About a fire that blazed in the center of a large cave, stood and reclined, perhaps twenty-five Indians. With several exceptions all were chiefs, and those exceptions were squaws. The men were clothed in the noble army blue, wearing cavalry hats, sabers and regulation sashes. The clothes of some of our fallen braves fitted the Indians to a nicety, and they laughed to themselves when they surveyed the garments, and thought of the massacre which their red hands had lately inflicted.

Conspicuous among the Modocs stood a tall fellow, about forty years of age. His hair was slightly tinged with gray, and there were crow's-feet on his forehead, which seldom come to a savage of his years. He wore the fringy leggings of the western tribes; but his body was robed in a close-fitting regulation coat buttoned tightly over his chest, and upon the blue shoulders glittered two gold stars—a General's insignia. His head was surmounted by a military hat, and his waist was encircled by a beautiful sword sash, from which hung a sword indicative of rank.

This man, in short, was the redoubtable Captain Jack, and the uniform he wore had once graced the manly form of a lamented warrior—General Edward Canby.

Ever and anon shouts of Indian triumph entered the cave, and caused Mouseh's companions to exchange pleasing glances; but the Modoc tiger did not deign a smile; he stood erect with brows knit, and lips glued together, as it were, by the icy glue of death.

All at once he became a living thing, for he had grown into a statue, as a young savage, clad in the full uniform of a United States artillery-man, entered the cave.

He seemed to be the person for whose arrival Jack had been watching.

"What news, Tom?" asked the chief starting forward, and as the sound of his voice, melodious for a man of his years, fell upon the ears of his co-rebels, there was a movement about the fire, and all started to their feet.

"McKay and his red foxes are near," said the young Indian. "They crawl among the rocks like lizards, and we can not hear them."

"Can you not see them?"

"Now and then," answered Shack Nasty Tom. "Tom saw one; he waited and struck; see!"

As he spoke he drew a scalp from his bosom, and flung it across the Modoc's arm.

The other chiefs crowded about the trophy.

"'Tis not McKay," said Captain Jack, in a disappointed tone, "but one of his accursed rangers is scalpless, thanks to Tom. Chiefs, here is a right arm that is dear to Mouseh,"