

“I told you it was luck,” commented Clopton.

“Shucks! don’t tell me. Luck ’s like lightnin’. She never hits twice in the same place.”

Kilpatrick sank back in the gully and gave himself up to ruminating. He leaned on his elbows and pulled up little tufts of grass and weeds growing here and there. Lieutenant Clopton, looking across towards the poplar, suddenly reached for the sharpshooter’s rifle, but Kilpatrick placed his hand on it jealously.

“Give me the gun. Yonder ’s a Yank in full view.”

Kilpatrick, still holding his rifle, raised himself and looked.

“Why, he ’s hanging out a flag of truce,” said Clopton. “What does the fellow mean?”

“It ’s a message,” said Kilpatrick, “an’ here ’s the answer.” With that he raised his rifle, dropped it gently in the palm of his left hand, and fired.

“You saw the hankcher jump, did n’t you?” he exclaimed. “Well, that lets us out. That ’s my Mickey. He wants tobacco, and I want coffee an’ tea. Come, watch me swap him out of his eye teeth.”