

"CRAZY BET"

THE STORY OF ELIZABETH VAN LEW

by

Bert Morgan

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INT. SCENE — DESCRIPTION

The year is 1869. Elizabeth Van Lew is seated in the hallway at the White House awaiting a meeting with President U.S. Grant. She is nervous, as she watches busy people walking back and forth in the hallway in front of her. Elizabeth is nicely dressed and smiles at the people as they walk by. A well dressed man walks up to her. She looks at him with anticipation. He smiles and speaks.

WHITE HOUSE AID
MISS VAN LEW, PRESIDENT GRANT WILL SEE YOU
KNOW. PLEASE FOLLOW ME.

ELIZABETH

THANK YOU SIR

SHOT — DESCRIPTION

They walk a few doors down the hall. The aid opens the door and invites her in. Elizabeth enters the room. It is a small sitting room. She is alone and sits in a chair in the center of the room. She glances around the room, studying the many paintings and furnishings. Suddenly a door opens from a hallway along side of the room. President Grant enters and walks toward Elizabeth. He smiles, offers his hand to Elizabeth, and speaks.

PRESIDENT GRANT
Miss Van Lew, welcome to the White
House.

SHOT — DESCRIPTION

Elizabeth stands to receive him. Grant takes her hand and holds it for a moment and says.

PRESIDENT GRANT
I've been looking forward to this visit
for some time now. Please sit down (He
pauses for a few seconds) You look
nervous, is anything wrong?

ELIZABETH

No Mr. President. I've never been at the White House before. It's a little daunting. I see this magnificent house has seen the devastation of this awful war. (she shakes her head back and forth). It's very sad. I admit though, there was a little apprehension when I received your gracious invitation.

PRESIDENT GRANT

No need to be nervous Miss Van Lew. Can I offer you some tea? The tea, here at the White House, is quite good.

ELIZABETH

That would be lovely, thank you Mr. President.

SHOT - DESCRIPTION

Grant walks to the hallway entrance to the room and speaks to the aid that escorted Miss Van Lew to the sitting room. He orders some tea. You hear a quiet conversation and then the door closes. Grant returns to Elizabeth's side and sits in the chair beside her.

PRESIDENT GRANT

Tell me, Miss Van Lew, really, how have you been. I haven't seen you for some time.

SHOT - DESCRIPTION

The tea arrives while they are talking and Grant nods a thank you to the aid. Elizabeth, with a deep sigh, looks up at Grant with a frown and speaks while Grant pours the tea for both of them.

ELIZABETH

Mr. President, where ever I go, no one will walk with my mother and I. They seem to shun us. Instead of speaking to us, all we get, is a quick nod. It's very depressing. It gets worse as the days go on.

PRESIDENT GRANT

I understand, and I know what you are going through. During these past years, the anguish of war time has taken it's toll on all of us. I pray (Grant leans toward her and takes Miss van Lew's hand) this will all subside soon.

SHOT - DESCRIPTION

Miss van Lew has tears welling up in her eyes. Grant stands and offers her his handkerchief. He walks to the window and looks out.

PRESIDENT GRANT

It certainly looks like a beautiful day is upon us.(Grant turns and looks at Miss Van Lew) Miss Van Lew,(She is wiping her eyes and looks up toward Grant) several years have passed since we first met. What you have done for your country will never be forgotten. Your compassion for your fellow citizens, and dedication in preserving human rights, is absolutely outstanding.(Grant walks closer to Miss Van Lew) The Union owes you so much. You saved lives and your determination to make right what you saw wrong is commendable. This President will not let your work go unnoticed.

ELIZABETH

Thank you, thank you Mr. President.
Your words inspire me to continue those
efforts.

PRESIDENT GRANT

I also have been informed those efforts
have burdened you financially.

ELIZABETH

You're right sir, it has been a burden
on me financially but, I do not regret
my activities during that God awful
war. I consider the money well spent
and if I had it to do it over, I would
not hesitate.

PRESIDENT GRANT

As I stated earlier, your efforts did
not go unnoticed. Because of your ac-
tions to preserve this Union, I am
granting your request to be appointed
Postmistress of Richmond Virginia. If
you still wish this position it will
become effective immediately. I have
spoken to my advisers and we agree,
this is the least we can do to show our
gratitude.

ELIZABETH

Oh thank you Mr. President. I must con-
fess, you have brightened my day. I
can't thank you enough.

PRESIDENT GRANT

You are very welcome and it's my pleas-
ure to help you and your family.

SHOT — DESCRIPTION

Elizabeth and Grant stand up and begin walking to the entry door to the sitting room. Grant opens the door for Elizabeth and they walk out into the hallway outside the room. Grant stops and turns to Elizabeth.

PRESIDENT GRANT

Please walk with me for a while Miss Elizabeth. I would like to show you the new gardens outside. We have flowers in bloom and many more to come. I sometimes walk out here, it clears my mind of all the governments business.

SHOT — DESCRIPTION

The two of them walk out into the garden area. Elizabeth takes the President's arm and they continue into the garden. Both are having a quiet conversation and enjoying the rest of the visit. Grant is showing Miss Van Lew several of the prize flowers now in bloom. He picks one of the roses and gives it to Elizabeth. She smiles and holds it up to her nose to smell it's scent.

SHOT — DESCRIPTION

The scene now changes and it is the spring of 1861. Townspeople in downtown Richmond Virginia are walking looking in the windows of shops now displaying beautiful spring fashions of the time. Entire families are out from the desolation of the winter. What snow had fallen now is melted and indeed, a fine spring day is upon the citizens of Richmond.

All are enjoying this fine weather. Elizabeth and her mother are also. However, the two women sense something is not quite right.

They walk arm in arm and greet the townsfolk with a friendly hello but, in return, they receive just a glance and a simple nod, just to be polite. Even early on the two women, living in one of the nicest and biggest homes in the area on top of Church Hill, do not even deserve a simple, "Hello." Some even point and stare.

NARRATOR — AS THIS SCENE CONTINUES

To understand the feelings that are apparently present in the town of Richmond regarding the Van Lew's, one has to understand that Richmond was a very "southern" town. The towns people were suspicious of the Van Lew's. Elizabeth was a daughter of a prominent business man, educated in Pennsylvania and was thought of as a "freak of Richmond" due to her beliefs. She was against slavery and hated war. At this time in the history of Richmond, those attitudes were considered to be fanatical

AS THIS SCENE CONTINUES ELIZABETH NARRATES HER FEELINGS

Following the firing at Fort Sumter, the Convention yet was still, but firm; There was no life in it, so little did the national outrage move it though the populace were jubilant. The Rebel flag was raised above the Capitol, and there was a great ado and some military display, with music, on the square. There was also held these what was termed as "Intimidation Convention," which was determined to carry the State out of the Union at all hazards. The loyal men under the State Convention intimidated, went over to secession. One gentleman, who signed the ordinance of Secession, told me he thought if he had not done so, the streets of Richmond would have run red with blood.

SHOT — DESCRIPTION — Still strolling down the street

As Elizabeth and her mother pass by a small group of women standing on a walkway, they over hear the women talking.

WOMEN IN GROUP OF THREE

We shall have war now, if Lincoln is not a coward.

NARRATOR

The months pass, May and June are periods of unrest for the citizens of Richmond. War is in the making. July brought the preparation of the first battle at Manassas. Elizabeth and her mother saw a parade of Confederate troops marching past one evening and a sickness came over them thinking how many soldiers would not come home after that and what of their families with the grief they will have to bare. There was a deathly quiet in the Van Lew household that night and Elizabeth now conceived her next step to make something right from this madness.

SHOT — DESCRIPTION

Later that night Elizabeth is seen sitting at her bedside table writing in her diary. A small candle is providing light in a quiet room. Miss Van Lew narrates her diary as she writes.

Slave power crushes freedom of speech and of opinion. Slave power degrades labor. Slave power is arrogant, is jealous and intrusive, is cruel, is despotic, not only over the slave but over the community, the state. (She pauses a moment to get her thoughts, dips her pen in the ink well and continues). I am a silent sorrowing spectator of the rise and spread of the secession mania. Our people are in a palpable state of war. Today, I spoke to a woman and she said, "Do you think the state will go out today? For if it does not, I cannot stand it any longer. God help us, these are sorry days." (With that, she closes her diary, sighs, leans over and blows out the candle and then the room goes dark.)

SHOT — DESCRIPTION

The next day arrives. Elizabeth is seated in a rocking chair on her back porch overlooking her back yard and gardens. Her mother comes from the kitchen and joins her on the porch. It's a sunny day with the birds chirping and a slight breeze is rustling the trees. Elizabeth has a gloomy look on her face.

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER

Good morning Lizzy. Did you sleep well?

ELIZABETH

(With a frown on her face she turns toward her mother.) I hardly slept at all. I laid awake for hours. I am truly saddened with what took place in town yesterday.

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER

You look absolutely terrible. My dear, do you want to talk about it?

ELIZABETH

Do you remember when we reached the edge of town and stopped to talk with the two women? We were asked to sew shirts for the soldiers and we declined? (Her mother shakes her head to answer yes) The women gave us both a terrible look. It made me feel guilty, but I just cannot do what they asked. I further noticed

people with whom we know look the other way when we pass. They must be suspicious of how we feel about this impending war. I feel we are losing our friends, one by one. From the time I knew right from wrong, it was my sad privilege to differ in many things from my opinions and principles of my locality. I am uncompromising, ready to resent what seemed wrong, quick and passionate, but not bad tempered or vicious...This has made me sad with earnest.

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER

Lizzy, you have to come to terms with this. Our friends differ a lot from our beliefs. We are in a terrible time in our history. War is on our doorstep. Yes, please come to terms with this and do it quietly, it's getting dangerous for both of us.

ELIZABETH

Mother, I know (In an angry voice) You also know I cannot turn my back on my convictions.

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER

Lizzie...You do remember the personal threats on our safety, don't you? (Elizabeth pauses, turns her head from her mother, still angry, sighs and turns back to her mother)

ELIZABETH

You're right mother, we do have to start using some restraint of our activities. Ever since we freed our slaves, we have come under suspicion.(She pauses a moment) Tomorrow, I am going to Libby Prison.

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER

(Still angry, stomps her foot) No! Lizzie you can't! This is what we've been talking about.)

ELIZABETH

Mother, I have heard stories of mistreatment of the prisoners kept there and suffering by the Confederate Guards. I must at least try to provide them with some comfort.(Both are now quiet for a moment and they pause to think about what was said)

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER

(Mother is calm now and quietly asks.)

Do you want me to go with you?

ELIZABETH

No Mother...I can do this alone. I will offer my assistance carrying for the sick and injured. They can't find something wrong with that.(Her mother looks troubled about this announcement)
Mother, I know... I'll be careful.(They both sit quietly and look out into the garden.)

SHOT — DESCRIPTION

While Miss Lizzie and her mother are still on the porch contemplating their heated conversation, a Negro servant is preparing breakfast. Mary Elizabeth was once a slave but now an employee. She wipes her hands on her apron and makes her way to the back porch, a short distance from the kitchen. She opens the back door to the porch and greets the two of them.

MARY ELIZABETH

What a beautiful morning...You two have to stop arguing. I can hear you both from the kitchen.(With that, both turn to Mary Elizabeth and manage a smile of good morning.) What would you like for breakfast?

SHOT — DESCRIPTION

The next morning comes. Elizabeth is up early and is making her way to Libby Prison. As she arrives she finds it to be a gloomy place. She is met at the entrance door by a Confederate Guard. Libby Prison used to be a warehouse and converted to a make shift prison for Union prisoners. She is stopped at the entrance door.

PRISON GUARD

Madam, may I help you?

ELIZABETH

I wish to see Lt. Todd, please.

PRISON GUARD

Yes, Ma'am follow me. (Lt. Todd is the half brother of Mrs. Abraham Lincoln. The guard escorts her inside. Cry's and yelling can be heard, and as prisons are, smells are not pleasant. They both go down a short hallway and arrive at Lt. Todd's office. The guard knocks on the door, opens it and says.) Lt. Todd, there is a women wishing to see you.

LT. TODD

Show her in, thank you.(Elizabeth enters, turns and nods a thank you to the guard. She approaches Todd's desk. He has his back to her and busy with mounds of paper work. Lt. Todd quickly spins his chair around and angrily speaks to Elizabeth.) Madam, what is your business here! I'm extremely busy and I can't talk with you long.

ELIZABETH

Lt. Todd, my name is Elizabeth Van Lew, and I am requesting permission to nurse the prisoners. I understand that some are in need of care and I can provide that.

LT. TODD

(Angrily responds) Nurse the prisoner? I know several people who would rather shoot the lot of them. And, you wish to nurse them! Madam, the answer is No!

ELIZABETH

But, sir, I...

LT. TODD

The answer is no! I'm busy and I am asking you to leave, now! Guard, show this women out, thank you.

SHOT — DESCRIPTION

Lt. Todd turns around and resumes his paper work. Elizabeth, looking disappointed and a bit angry, leaves Todd's office. Once outside, she pauses in thought and then, she remembers and says to herself, "Yes, Secretary of the Treasury Christopher Memminger, yes, Memminger." She walks down the road and makes her way to Memminger's office.

Memminger is alone in his office and rummaging through some books on his book shelf. Miss Lizzie approaches his office door and knocks. Memminger answers the door opens it and with a surprise on his face, greets Miss Lizzie.

MEMMINGER

Well, well, Miss Van Lew, please, please come in and have a seat. (Memminger sits in his office chair behind his desk and Elizabeth, in a chair in front of the desk.) Miss Van Lew, what can I do for you, oh yes, how is your mother doing?

ELIZABETH

My mother is doing just fine, thank you for asking. Mr. Memminger, I am begging you, please give me permission to visit the prisoners at Libby Prison. I just want to give them some comfort. Some are injured and sick and need some tender care. I would also like to be able to nurse them if possible.

MEMMINGER

Oh Miss Van Lew... (With an angry look) I cannot think of such a thing, such a set and such a class, they could not be worthy or fit for a lady to visit, no, no, I don't think so. (Shaking his head, no.)

ELIZABETH

Yes sir, I understand. (Pauses a moment) Mr. memminger, I once heard you speak at the Convention in Peace Time. Your speech was beautiful on the subject of religion.

MEMMINGER

(Memminger smiles) Did you like it?

ELIZABETH

Yes, I did, very much. If you remember, I said, "That love was the fulfilling of the law, and if we wished our cause to succeed, we must begin with charity to the thankless, the unworthy". (Elizabeth watches as Memminger reached for a piece of paper and quietly wrote on it. In about a minute or so, he finished what he was writing and handed it to Elizabeth.)

MEMMINGER

Here Miss Van Lew, take this letter of introduction to General John Winder. You have my approval to visit Libby Prison.

SHOT — DESCRIPTION

Elizabeth has finished the day by using her ingenuity and tact to acquire the letter of introduction she needed to influence Lt. Todd at Libby Prison. She continues home with a smile on her face to plan another day.

Elizabeth arrives home. Her mother is in the kitchen cooking dinner. Elizabeth walks quietly toward her mother. Her mother turns to greet her and see's a very large grin on Lizzie's face as she begins to giggle like a school girl.

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER

Well, Lizzie, what have you done...(Lizzie smiles and without comment, hands her the letter. Her mother quietly reads it and puts on a smile of encouragement.) Oh my! Well, now it starts, doesn't it. Are you sure you still want to do this.

ELIZABETH

Oh mother, I am so sure of this that I can now fulfill my desire and try to do something positive for a change.

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER

Lizzie, we have to talk. We have to make sure this task at Libby Prison is properly planned and carried out safely.(Mother dries her hands from work in the kitchen and both make their way to the sitting room to continue their conversation.)

NARRATOR

(Both women are seated in chairs in the sitting room and are having a conversation as the narrator speaks.)

From that moment on, Elizabeth and her mother, begin the mission to help the Union prisoners at Libby Prison. They will gather clothes, medical supplies, bedding, and books to the prison for prisoner benefit. A great deal of the supplies will be bought at the Van Lew's expense. This activity, done by the Van Lew's, will start the public scrutiny of these activities and suspi-

cions will mass among the citizens of Richmond. Knowledge of the Van Lew's activity also reaches the Union. (Two Union Command Officers are sitting by a campfire and thoughts of Miss Lizzie have reached even there.)

UNION OFFICER

I have to tell you this, by her attractive manners and full use of money, she has gained control of the Rebel prison. I can tell you true, she will have to be monitored by our Union Secret Service Agents. She can become a great asset to our Country.

NARRATOR

(Background showing the streets of Richmond. Shop owners are coming to work early and opening their shops. A news paper boy is delivering newspapers. One shop owner reads the following account in a front page story about the Van Lew's.)

The newspapers finally caught on and so it came, an article about the Van Lew's. It went something like this, "Two ladies, a mother and daughter, living on Church Hill, have lately attracted public notice by their assiduous attractions to the Yankee prisoners. Every true women in this community has been busy making articles for our troops, and administering to the sick. These two have been spending their opulent means in aiding and giving comfort to the miscreants who have been invading our sacred soil, bent on rapine and murder out upon all pretext to humanity. The course of these two females, in providing them with delicacies, bringing them books, stationary and paper, cannot but be regarded as an evidence of sympathy amounting to an endorsement of the course and conduct of these Northern vandals."

Well..Did the Van Lew's take the hint? They did not, and expanded their activities starting with, Miss Lizzie's first trip to Libby Prison to do exactly what the newspaper account claimed. (Miss Lizzie and her mother are approaching Libby Prison, loaded with supplies for the prisoners.)

SHOT - DESCRIPTION

Outside Libby Prison, Elizabeth and her mother are approaching the front entrance to the prison. The prison guard is watching the two come near.

PRISON GUARD

(Sarcastically sounding) You again...What is your business now?

ELIZABETH

We are here to visit Lt. Todd. We have refreshments that he will certainly appreciate.

PRISON GUARD

If you must. Let me see if he can see you, stay here please. (The guard leaves the ladies and disappears inside the prison.)

ELIZABETH

Mother, he is going just love this fresh buttermilk and gingerbread. This will be a fine introduction. I do hope it works to our advantage, I'm eager to reach the prisoners. I know they will be very glad to see us. (The guard returns.)

PRISON GUARD

Ladies, this way please. (Both are escorted inside.)

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER

(Whispering, as they walk inside) Lizzie, be careful, be nice to Lt. Todd. He is the only hurdle in here, so far.

ELIZABETH

Mother!... (She whispered) I know, ...don't worry, I know what I'm doing. (Lt. Todd is coming down the hall from his office, and greets them in the hallway.)

LT. TODD

Well, well, Miss Van Lew. What brings you here, and who is this lovely lady with you today.

ELIZABETH

Lt. Todd, may I present my mother, Mrs. Van Lew.

LT. TODD

It's a pleasure I'm sure. (In a disappointed tone.) Welcome to this miserable place. The guard said you have something for me?

ELIZABETH

Why yes, I have something for you, some buttermilk and freshly baked gingerbread.

LT. TODD

Wonderful, my favorite, gingerbread. Miss Van Lew, I'm aware of the pass you received from General Winder. I do not approve, but, nevertheless, you have my permission to see the Yankee prisoners, and to render humanitarian assistance to these men and nothing more. Do we have an understanding?

ELIZABETH

Thank you, Lt. Todd, you have my word.

SHOT – DESCRIPTION

Elizabeth hands the gift to Todd and he leads them to one of the cell entrances further down the hall. Elizabeth and her mother enter the prisoner area. It's filthy, smells bad, and worse yet, there is many men who are obviously sick. Both women start the interaction with the prisoners. Elizabeth in one area, and her mother in another. They make their way to several prisoners who seem to be the most needy. They are having very inconspicuous conversations among the men in different holding areas. Both women worked similarly as they interact with the prisoners. It would appear from a guard's point of view, that they were truly rendering humanitarian aid to the prisoners. All the time, they were arranging how military information would be obtained and how it would be retrieved from the prisoners. Many of the prisoners were surprised that the Van Lew's would be the vehicle to get important military intelligence to the appropriate Union agents in the North. In a short time the two ladies finish their introductions to the prisoners and are ready to leave. They seek out Lt. Todd. Elizabeth and her mother reach the exit to the holding area and there waiting, is Lt. Todd.

ELIZABETH

Lt. Todd, we are finished with our visit today and thank you so much. These men are in dyer need. I plan to bring some supplies for them on my next visit. Some books, bandages, maybe baked goods, if that is all right with you.

LT. TODD

(Angrily spoken.) I suppose that will be within our agreement, I still don't approve but, so be it. Those things, and nothing more! (Frustrated, he turns to walk away and stops a short distance away, turns back and angrily speaks to the two ladies) Remember this, if you do not obey my orders, this will be the

last time we will see you and your mother in this place, understand. (The two ladies nod all right)

Elizabeth

(Angrily) Oh my, he does sound angry, well, so am I. Now I am more intent on continuing my task to make some good of this miserable war. I am more resolved then ever now.

SHOT DESCRIPTION – Background scenes depict Elizabeth and her mother coming and going from the prison. She is seen taking with people she knows who are considered to be Union sympathizers in an attempt to organized what would later become a rather large network for communication within the Union Secret Service.

NARRATOR

As it turns out, many Union prisoners have obtained information on troop movements and other military intelligence and now, have a means to exchange that information. Elizabeth now has setup contacts with Union Secret Service Agents and her mission has truly begun.

SHOT – DESCRIPTION

A few days later in the Van Lew's dinning room, Elizabeth has invited her servants to a meeting. Servants that still live at the Van Lew's house and some from in the area near the mansion arrive to gather at the dinner table. They appear curious and begin sitting at the table. All know what Miss Lizzie has been engaged in these past few days. Tea is served and Miss Lizzie stands to address them.

ELIZABETH

To all of you who are now privileged to our task at hand, I thank you from the bottom of my heart. I will do whatever I must to maintain your safety during these times to come. We shall all be ready to leave this house on a moments notice on "innocent-looking errands."Our work may have to be done quickly. If any of you wish to leave us and not continue this effort, than do so now.(She waits a moment and no one leaves. She looks around the table at all of them and speaks). I am so proud of all of you. My friends, you are my inspiration, thank you, thank you. Now, lets get to work!

SHOT — DESCRIPTION

Mean while at Libby Prison, Lt. Todd and another higher ranking officer are standing outside the main door way having a smoke after bedding down the prisoners.

LT.TODD

Major, what do you make of this Elizabeth Van Lew. What do you think she's up to?

CONFEDERATE MAJOR

I don't know. I will tell you this though, she subverts the consistency of prison rules, I'll tell you that much for sure. Lt. Todd, limit her to no talking to the prisoners when she is here next time. See if that discourages her.

LT. TODD

Good idea, thank you sir. (They continue to talk and smoke.)

NARRATOR

Lt. Todd got word to Miss Lizzie about the changes and restrictions regarding her visits at the prison. Upon her next visit to the prison, she spoke in whispers while passing out books to the prisoners, those that had been picked to exchange information. Her instructions were to have the prisoner poke tiny holes in specific areas in the text of certain books. That created a cypher of sorts. Simple you say, well maybe so, but the intelligence information still got back to Miss Lizzie even though, the Confederate guards picked the books up and gave them back to Miss Lizzie on her next visit.(Elizabeth continues to go from one Union prisoner to another. The Union prisoners would hear information about troop movements and other military intelligence. As it turns out the Confederate guards weren't that careful when talking about the war to others in their ranks and Union prisoners took advantage of the guards loose tongues. Elizabeth Van Lew understood her mission and with ingenuity, she created a technique to exchange information from Union prisoners to her and vice versa. Her negro male servant, who was also now one of her associates, dressed in dirty clothing and wearing old muddy brogans, on one occasion, was outside the Libby Prison giving the guards a hard time about access to the prison while waiting for Miss Lizzie. It was a type of distraction on his part as no one would dare touch an old "colored man" in Richmond. But, the man was also wearing brogans with hollowed out

soles in his shoes to be used to hide messages from the Union prisoners. And, few would inspect a servants basket of eggs brought in to the prison by Miss Lizzie either. Few would inspect a basket of eggs but, inside that basket was one egg hollowed out and would have a tiny hole punched in it for hiding rolled up messages from inside the prison to their agent, Miss Elizabeth Van Lew. Now was the time for Elizabeth to start making her contacts among the Union Secret Service. Information would be sneaked in and out of town by those agents connected with Miss Lizzie.

SHOT-DESCRIPTION

It is the summer of 1861. The Union has captured 15 Confederate Soldiers off the vessel "Savannah." They intended to hang them. To counter that, Jefferson Davis retaliated by having the same number of Federal soldiers taken hostage. Miss Lizzie protested and was given permission to visit those hostages bringing them food and offering comfort. The visits created an opportunity to take forbidden letters from the men. Each of these many incidents involving Miss Van Lew had increased and intensified the Confederates hatred toward her and heightened their suspicions that she was something more than just a good Samaritan.

SHOT-DESCRIPTION

It's late one night. She is sitting on her bed. Elizabeth is troubled about the towns people who just might figure things out and her real intentions. She writes in her journal. A single candle provides light in a moonlit night.

ELIZABETH

(She writes in the journal) Written only to be burnt was the fate of almost everything which would now be of value. Keeping one's house in order for Government inspection with Salisbury Prison in perspective, necessitated this. I always went to bed at night with anything dangerous on paper beside me, so as to be able to destroy it in a moment. Again the threat, the scowls, the frowns of an infuriated community, who can write of them? I have had brave men shake their fingers in my face and say terrible things. (She finishes and closes the journal, lies back on her pillow, and falls asleep.)

NARRATOR

Elizabeth is seen arriving at Confederate Presidents office, Jefferson Davis, enters, and checks in with the clerk to try to get some protection from Davis) In desperation to make her personal problems better, she contacted the office of Confederate President Jefferson Davis. As it was thought, not many spies would seek protection from the opposing government's head. Davis's secretary advised Miss Lizzie to apply through the mayors office, but, Miss Lizzie had a better idea. It turned out that Lt. Todd would be replaced and his successor, as Prison Keeper, was a Captain with a family and a housing shortage. It might be said of Miss Lizzie that, she "hid in plain sight" and in this case, that might well be true. She offered to house the young Captain and his family at her house on Church Hill. That kept things quiet for a while and the Van Lew's were left in peace.

SHOT-DESCRIPTION

After the Captain and his family got settled, Elizabeth and her mother are seated on the back porch.

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER

Did the captain get settled in? You did give him the room at the far end of the house.

ELIZABETH

Yes mother, I did so. We can continue our privacy, don't worry.(Elizabeth gets up from her chair and walks toward the edge of the porch and looks up at a beautiful clear sky with stars abound.) The sky is lit to perfection. I can't remember a more beautiful night sky.(She turns and addresses her mother). Mother, I have been thinking about this for a while. I think this is the time. Lately people in town and guards at the prison have been muttering unflattering comments as I pass. Things like "crazy old women." I think I'll make some changes.

SHOT-DESCRIPTION

The next morning Elizabeth is seen walking in town. She has always been regarded as a "bit odd" by the towns people. On this day, she has lived up to her description by the towns folk. Miss Lizzie now walks along the street mumbling to herself.

Her head is turned sideways as if she is having a conversation with someone. The towns people avoided her like the plague. They pointed and stared. Some even crossed the street to the other side. Her hair is not combed and she is wearing old dirty clothes. She makes her way to Libby Prison and walks past the guards outside the entrance.

PRISON GUARD

Oh my! Look at this coming down the street. She has finally gone over the deep end now. It's "old Crazy Bet." I always knew she was bats. (The guards gave her the name "Crazy Bet" and from then on, she would be called that. As Miss Lizzie made her way home, she couldn't stop laughing at herself. She thought to herself. "Now, they will leave me alone.")

NARRATOR

Early on, after Elizabeth's father had died, she had freed her slaves. One in particular, a Miss Mary Elizabeth, now living outside Richmond. Elizabeth had financed her education in Philadelphia. She was very intelligent, and better yet, she had a photographic memory. Arrangements were made for Mary Elizabeth to join Miss Lizzie in her cause to assist the Union in sharing intelligence. Connections were set in motion and she was able to get Mary Elizabeth a job as a house keeper for Jefferson Davis. She would also be assigned to clean the Confederacy President's office. The Federals now had a spy in the Confederate Presidents household and office. All seemed to go well. Mary Elizabeth would hear conversations at meetings with high ranking military officers attending meetings with Davis, serve them tea, and clean the Presidents office, which on occasion she would find important military information left on the desk. Mary Elizabeth, with her talent of having a photographic memory, would study the information and pass it on to Miss Lizzie. They would meet at different intervals, after dark, near the Van Lew's farm.

SHOT-DESCRIPTION

In keeping with the "Crazy Bet" appearance, Miss Lizzie would dress up like an old country women driving around in her buggy. She would drive into town, and staying in character, mumble to herself just enough to scare off the towns people. She is seen stopping at different shops and visiting the proprietors to keep from standing out, would stop people she new on the street, and have a conversation, but always in character. Miss Lizzie was seeking sympathizers of her cause and developing her network of spies right under the nose of the citizens of Richmond.

TWO WOMEN ON STREET

Oh my God, look at that old bitty, stay away from her, she's nothing but trouble.(Both women hurried to cross the street away from Miss Lizzie).

NARRATOR

General Sharpe, Army Intelligence Bureau, said of the Van Lew's; "Their position,(the Van Lews)character and charities gave them a commanding influence, and many families of plain people were decided and encouraged by them to remain true to the flag, and were subsequently able during the war to receive our agents. For a long, long time, she represented all that was left of the power of the United States government in the city of Richmond."

SHOT-DESCRIPTION

Later that night, Elizabeth is behind a large tree adjacent to her property waiting for Mary Elizabeth to meet her. It is one of many meetings to exchange information. Mary Elizabeth, dressed in dark clothing, arrives in a small buggy.

MARY ELIZABETH

Hello Miss Lizzie(she exits the buggy and both ladies hug to greet each other)I have some interesting information I picked up off Mr. Davis's desk last night while he and other military officers were meeting in the next room. It involves some troop movements.(She hands a piece of paper with the information on it to Miss Lizzie. She looks at it and smiles, looking up at Mary Elizabeth and nodding approval)

ELIZABETH

Thank you, Mary Elizabeth. You've been a loyal friend and I will get this information to the right person. You better get back before someone notices. Have a safe trip back to town and we will meet again soon I'm sure.(Mary Elizabeth says her good bye's, boards the buggy, and leaves)

NARRATOR

Federal spies have started arriving in Richmond and were eager to take Miss Lizzie's orders and information. (A man is seen walking up to the Van Lew's front porch to greet Miss Lizzie who was seated in a rocking chair. The visitors would always pose as close friends or family so not to be too suspicious) Some would stay at the mansion on Church Hill. They usually came at night. In addition to the agents, Miss Lizzie's friends would also bring messages. Lady friends were known to sew messages into quilts and deliver them to Miss Lizzie as gifts, as it would appear. Several eyes were upon the Van Lew's house and extreme care was maintained by all to avoid suspicion.

SHOT-DESCRIPTION

The Union was a real threat to the Capital. You could hear the guns of battle. McClellan was getting close by 1862. Marching soldiers are seen making their way to Richmond. Miss Lizzie is sitting on her back porch writing in her journal while the sounds of battle are in the distance. She writes, "We are in hourly expectation of a battle. We have hatched eight chickens today and have a prospect of rearing and eating them under our dear young government, and so we go, mixing peace with war." Later that night, Miss Lizzie is busy in one of the bedrooms moving things around and setting things up for a guest. Elizabeth's mother enters the room.

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER

Pray tell, what are you doing?

ELIZABETH

The Union is near, I can feel it. McClellan will enter Richmond soon. I hope to invite him to visit and I hope he will stay the night, so, I am setting up a proper room for him.

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER

Oh, my dear Lizzie. You amaze me, (she pauses) I'm going to the parlor to read.

ELIZABETH

Very well mother, well, you'll see, he might be able to visit us. After I finish, some of my friends and I will take the buggy toward the sounds of battle to see what we can see. I'll be home late. (Her mother walks out of the room shaking her head in disbelief)

SHOT-DESCRIPTION

After dark Miss Lizzie and a few ladies are gathered around the buggy in preparation to go see the battle.

ELIZABETH

No ball could be exciting as our ride this evening. Only think of the bright rush of life, the hurry of death on the battlefield. (This would be a sight not many women would be able to experience, they boarded the buggy and off they went with smiles of excitement)

NARRATOR

The ladies arrived and selected a vantage location to safely witness what battle they would be able to see. The battle continued. Union forces were driven back. But, alas, McClellan never saw Miss Lizzie or the room she prepared for him. Robert E. Lee pushed hard his defenses and "Little Mac" pulled back. Disappointed, Miss Lizzie and her friends sadly returned home and with that, the Van Lews continued to have a string of bad luck. Miss Lizzie, while in town one day, rendered aid to a undernourished women she found sitting in an alley behind the general store. (Miss Lizzie approached the women and softly spoke to the women, so as not to scare her, and began a conversation. Her name was Miss McGongle. Feeling sorry for the women in need, invited her to come home with her to Church Hill. She did so and spent several months at the mansion and then turned on Miss Lizzie. Her suspicions got the best of her and finally she contacted Confederate headquarters to report her suspicions. You would think the Van Lew's would have learned their lesson, but, they continued to take in borders. One such guest was even ordered to give testimony against the Van Lew's. The guest however, declined to testify. Some people the Van Lew's were neighbors with were also, "not so loyal" and then as time went on, suspicions grew. The Confederate government assigned detectives to place the Van Lew's under surveillance

SHOT-DESCRIPTION

Sitting in Elizabeth's kitchen table late one night, she writes, " I have turned to speak to a friend and found a detective at my elbow. Strange faces could be seen peeping around the column and pillars of the back patio." To make matters worse, the court convened a grand jury on charges of trafficking in greenbacks, United States currency. Elizabeth's mother fell sick when she heard the government had warrants to arrest them. Bad as that was, Miss Lizzie heard from sources that the army was having a horse shortage and soon Miss Lizzie was going to loose her only horse. The horse was vital to her espionage activities and could not be taken. Two attempts were made to confiscate the horse. The first time, Miss Lizzie hid the horse in an out building on the property. That time, the government didn't find the horse. The government was informed that Miss Lizzie probably had hid the horse so they made another attempt. This time, Miss Lizzie, using her cunning abilities, hid the horse again. This time, she walked the horse up the stairs to the library, bedding it down with hay and feed. There they came to confiscate the horse once and for all. Of course, they found nothing of the horse. Who would have thought the animal had been put upstairs. Miss Lizzie writes in her journal after the Confederates had left, "and, he accepted his position and behaved as though he thoroughly understood matters, never stamping loud enough to be heard, nor naying. He was a good, loyal horse." Well, needless to say, it worked. They failed to find the horse and Miss Lizzie still had her transportation.

SHOT-DESCRIPTION

Townpeople were convinced that Crazy Bet was engaged in more than just hiding her horse. During this time, Union prisoners managed to escape from Libby Prison. Some turned up at the Van Lew's doorstep. Union officers from that escape came to the Van Lew's back door. They quietly knocked on the back door. Miss Lizzie was reading in the upstairs library. She looked out of the window, it was raining, and saw the officers and immediately went downstairs to let them in.

UNION OFFICER

(Excited and out of breath the officer spoke) Are you Miss Elizabeth Van Lew? (As they enter the kitchen area) We escaped from Libby Prison, and need a place to stay for a while until the coast is clear.

ELIZABETH

Yes I am, I'll help you, please come into the next room, I have a fire burning in the fireplace. You're all wet, please wait here, I'll try to find some dry clothes for the three of you. My father passed away a while back and I still have his clothes in the closet.

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER

Lizzie, who is it?

ELIZABETH

(Miss Lizzie and the three soldiers enter the living room)
 Mother, keep it quiet, please. These men are prisoners at Libby Prison and have escaped. They are going to stay here for a while, please get them something hot to drink while I find some of Father's clothes to wear. (All make their way to the warmth of the fire place. Lizzie's mother closes all the curtains and makes her way to the kitchen to make some tea).

SHOT-DESCRIPTION

The next morning comes and Miss Lizzie is busy in the kitchen. Her niece was staying the night and woke up early and while making her way down stairs, sees Miss Lizzie carrying several plates of food toward the side of the downstairs area. She continues to watch and to her surprise, witnesses her aunt go toward a wall in the sitting room, push on a panel in the wall and it opened. A bearded man makes himself visible and reaches out taking all the plates, and then the wall closes. Lizzie calmly walks back to the kitchen. It had been rumored that there was hidden passages in the house, and so there was. The Van Lew's would use these passages many times in their efforts to hide the escaped Union prisoners until they could make their way to freedom.

NARRATOR

Elizabeth Van Lew was quite the spy. Union General Sharpe reported, "Miss Van Lew helped in many prison escapes. Several escaped prisoner were able to stay at the Van Lew's mansion during their journey to freedom." The prisoners also were responsible for digging tunnels under Libby Prison to effect their escapes.

SHOT-DESCRIPTION

On a typically chilly day in February. Miss Lizzie was in town and received information from an agent who was in the area, that an "exit" was to take place soon. To her, that meant an escape from the prison. She turned around and quickly made her way to the mansion. Her work began setting up the hidden passage ways in the mansion. Not knowing how many would make it out and continued her efforts to provide for several if needed.

NARRATOR

More and more sympathizers started working with Elizabeth Van Lew and she became more organized and gunning as time went on. She obtained a cypher. She kept the key to it hidden in her watch case. It wasn't until her death many years later that the key was found in that watch case. The cypher was an exchange of information and it went something like this. Lizzie would tear the papers containing the information into two or three small pieces of paper and roll them up into balls of paper. These paper balls would be handed off to others and vice versa. If that wasn't gunning enough, she would also hide messages in the bed andirons in her bedroom. Crazy Bet's organization was constantly advancing. The chief of Federal spies once said, "they have clerks in the rebel war and Navy Department in their confidence." Lizzie's many helpers and agents were from simple towns folk, store keepers, farmers and the like. Her helpers were considered by some as "traitors to the Confederacy but, were never exposed." However, that did not discourage Miss Lizzie and her work continued and advanced. Miss Lizzie was not considered reckless but, cunning to say the least.

SHOT-DESCRIPTION

Miss Lizzie had an important message to deliver to one of her agents. The message was from Gen. Butler and needed some extra risky techniques to deliver it. The location was in a Confederate occupied building. Miss Lizzie rolled up the message for doing a "handed off" procedure. She arrived at the location and found the agent to whom the message would be handed off. She approached the agent who appeared very nervous when he saw Miss Lizzie. She handed off the message and the agent placed it in his pocket, leaned over to Lizzie and whispered to her to never do that again. Miss Lizzie found her way out of the building. The location for the hand off was the central offices of The Confederate Secret Service. The agent went back to his duties. From then on he came to her.

SHOT DESCRIPTION

It is January 1864, still continuing her efforts to flush out information for the benefit of the Union Army. (Miss Lizzie is met by a man dressed in civilian clothing, and he hands her a message while meeting with her outside of her farm during one of her missions to collect information). She received information that the Confederates had planned to move thousands of Union prisoners from Richmond to Georgia. She thought this is a great opportunity to free our Union prisoners and may even have an opportunity for the Union to actually take Richmond if the plan is correctly brought off. Elizabeth gathered a few well chosen cohorts in order to get the following cypher to Gen. Butler. It read; "It is intended to remove to Georgia very soon all the federal prisoners, butchers and bakers to go at once. They are all ready notified and selected. Quaker knows this to be true. They are building batteries on Danville Road. This from Quaker, beware of new and rash councils. This I send to you by direction of all your friends. No attempt should be made with less than 30,000 cavalry, from 10,000 to 15,000 infantry to support them... Forces probably could be called in from five to ten days; 25,000 mostly infantry to support them, Stoke's and Kemper's brigades go to North Carolina. Picket's is in or around Petersburg. Three regiments of cavalry disbanded by Lee for want of horses...

(A young boy, chosen by Miss Lizzie, one of Miss Lizzie's cohorts, rides up to a large encampment of Union soldiers. He rides up to a guard and explains he needs a message from Van Lew to be delivered to Gen. Butler as soon as possible). Butler receives the message and immediately contacts the Secretary of War Stanton. Gen. Butler advises Stanton that he had received this private message from a "a lady in Richmond." The boy, who was well chosen for this mission, also passed on to Gen. Butler several other messages regarding troop movements, other military facts and privileged information given to him by the Van Lew network of agents.

NARRATOR

(A group of Union command officers were gathered outside Butler's tent discussing the messages from the Van Lew network) The opinion was, this was indeed the best time to take Richmond. This advice had come from "Quaker and Mr. Palmer," who were working together with Elizabeth. The Union War department set upon a course to launch a major operation for a surprise attack on Richmond and free the Union prisoners. (Large numbers of Union troops are preparing to march)

On the 28th of February, Gen. Judson Kilpatrick and Col. Ulric Dahlgren marched 4,000 troops from the left toward Richmond. Also from the right, thousands of Union troops were sent. The plan was to have Dahlgren approach Richmond from one direction while Kilpatrick was to cut his way in from another direction. The Union considered this plan to be one of the most brilliant plans of the war. They also expected a lot from their youngest Col. in The Union Army, Ulric Dahlgren. He was only 22 years old and the son of Rear Admiral Dahlgren. He fought in Gettysburg loosing a leg but, could still outride anyone.

SHOT-DESCRIPTION

The raid begun, on schedule, and then quickly fell apart, one obstacle after another. The Union enlisted the help of a negro guide who could not or would not find a suitable place to cross the James River necessary to approach Richmond. The citizens in Richmond were scared. Miss Van Lew reported, "every reliable man was called out. There was an awful quiet in the streets, the heavy silence was impressive, at night, you could hear the firing of the canon." Dahlgren had reached an area only five miles from the city. The resistance made the attack hopeless. And sadly, Col. Ulric Dahlgren was shot and killed. With Dahlgren's death an extremely gruesome act took place. (Several Confederate soldiers are surrounding Dahlgren's body laying in the road, his horse was walking away from the road. Two of the soldiers dismounted their horses and approached the body.

#1 CONFEDERATE SOLDIER

Billy, look at that. We got us a Yankee Col. Well, whatta ya know. (He examines the body) Wait a minute, this boy's got a wooden leg. I'm gonna take the leg (he laughs as he disengaged the leg from Dahlgren's body).

#2 CONFEDERATE SOLDIER

Move over private, I'm taken this ring (He struggles trying to remove the ring and then takes out a large bowie knife, and with a single swipe, cuts off Dahlgren's finger. The ring is taken off the finger, he wipes the blood off the knife and then puts the knife in his belt. The soldier throws the finger in the bushes along side the road). Look at this Billy, I wonder what it's worth. (With that, the soldiers went through Dahlgren's pockets and took valuables and a memorandum. They then rolled the body off the road and buried it, "like a dog," with no service or casket. At the time of the incident the soldiers did not know the contents of the memorandum but it did surface at a Richmond

newspaper. Many Union soldiers were captured in this failed raid. The Richmond newspaper published an article about the memorandum taken and they reported it said, "the Union plan was to burn and take Richmond. Orders were also indicated that they were to kill Jefferson Davis. This infuriated the citizens of Richmond. They described the Union soldiers as "assassins, barbarians and thugs, redolent of more hellish purposes than were the Goth, the Huns or Saracen. Kill them all as enemies of humanity." A journalist actually wanted to show Dahlgren's body as a display for all to see and calling it a "monument of infamy." It was to teach young men of the Confederacy to "hate" such men. As it turned out, Davis had arrangements to locate and bury Dahlgren's body in a proper coffin and grave. He was secretly placed in a cemetery with other Union soldiers, thousands of them. Word of this surfaced and Elizabeth set in motion the task to locate and rebury Dahlgren's body.

SHOT-DESCRIPTION

Miss Lizzie knew a Negro man who was "accidentally" in the burial grounds one night and marked the location of the grave of Dahlgren. He left the grave and headed to notify Miss Lizzie of it's location. A short while later that night, they met.

ELIZABETH

(The Negro man knocks on Miss Lizzie's kitchen door and she answers the door and lets the man in. The man is known to Elizabeth.) Hello, what brings you out this late?

NEGRO MAN

I have just come from the cemetery and have marked Col. Dahlgren's grave as you wished. It is easy to find, I assure you. I must go now.

ELIZABETH

Thank you sir, you have been a good friend and I will not forget this kindness you've shown tonight, and have a good night, I will see you soon (The man leaves the way he arrived).

NARRATOR

Miss Lizzie, using her ingenuity, enlisted the help from her Union friends and they graciously accepted the task to locate, and steal the body of Col. Dahlgren from that cemetery.

SHOT-DESCRIPTION

On an extremely dark night four men rode into the cemetery and located the plot in question. With shovels in hand, dug up the grave of Dahlgren. After the body was taken from the grave site, the men carefully placed the dirt where it should have been and made it look as if nothing had happened. They then rode off to take the body to Rawley's farm, a short distance away. It was a hard journey with rutted roads slowing them down, and worst yet, they had to avoid Confederate picket posts all along the road. Miss Lizzie was staying in a feed house on Rawley's farm, waiting for their arrival. When they arrived Miss Lizzie examined the body with gentle hands.

ELIZABETH

(Lizzie continued the exam and confirmed it was indeed Col. Dahlgren. She began to cry and prepared the body to be taken to a proper burial place). Mr. Rawley, I want to thank from the bottom of my heart for bringing this brave man for a proper burial. He has fought bravely and deserved better. It's too bad that those Confederate bastards that did those unspeakable things to this brave man were not on this table before me. It would give me great pleasure to put them in this very coffin.

SHOT-DESCRIPTION

She continued the preparations and placed Dahlgren in a proper metal coffin. Rawley assisted and placed the coffin back in his wagon for the journey to Orrick's farm, a short distance away. Rawley carefully covered the casket with several peach trees, ready for planting. The casket was not visible at first glance. As Rawley came upon a picket location he saw soldiers inspecting everything that passed. He panicked but kept on approaching the picket post. As he got closer, he spotted a soldier he knew. The Confederate soldier greeted Rawley and looked at the peach trees.

CONFEDERATE SOLDIER

Who's peach trees are these? Don't I know you? Wait, I know you, Rawley isn't it? (Rawley smiles to calm his emotions. He told the soldier the trees belonged to a German who lived outside town and he was delivering them for planting. They talked briefly about the trees and after brief well chosen comments concerning the trees, the soldier let Rawley pass).

SHOT-DESCRIPTION

Rawley arrived at the Orrick farm and there, the casket was safely buried. This was to be a temporary location for Dahlgren's body. Miss Lizzie was notified the body had been successfully buried and immediately got a cypher to Gen. Butler, reporting the incident. In the mean time, Dahlgren's father, not knowing about the bodies relocation, had requested Jefferson Davis to honor his son's death and permit the casket be removed from the cemetery and sent to him for a proper soldiers burial. Davis agreed and dispatched a burial detail to dig up the remains for transferring them as requested. They opened the casket and, you guessed it, the casket was empty. Rumors surfaced and indeed questions were presented. Where did the body go to. The actual location of the body was not determined until after the war.

NARRATOR

General Butler requested a report from Elizabeth regarding Richmond's defenses. She went to town to seek out a Union agent. (She is seen walking in town on a sidewalk near some shops). She walked for some time and nothing. No one contacted her and finally, a well dressed man came from behind her walking closer and closer. He over came Elizabeth and slowed to whisper in her ear, "I'm going through tonight." He continued to slow down and Elizabeth caught up with him and as she got close to him he, again in a whisper, "I'm going through the lines tonight." Elizabeth did not speak to the man and he continued walking until he disappeared. Miss Lizzie became very suspicious of the man and had never seen this person before. To respond would be too risky, she turned around and headed home. It was a good thing because on the next day she is outside her home and a Confederate regiment was marching by and walking in a Confederate uniform was that very man whom she was about to pass information taken from him and then given to Gen. Butler. Lizzie's heart started to beat fast when she realized how close she had come to being arrested. Elizabeth thought, "Yes, that was too close for comfort."

SHOT-DESCRIPTION

The Union Army under Grants command is now marching close to Richmond. Soldiers and cavalry are marching for battle. Elizabeth and her mother are in the garden and Lizzie stops digging in the garden and stands up staring forward.

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER

Lizzie, whats the matter, are you ill, did you see something?

ELIZABETH

(She shakes her head, no) Mother, everything is coming to pass now. The war is truly at our door step and Grant will be here soon enough. I am going to set up a series of information stations, one here at the house, one at the farm and then beyond the property. This will make it possible for me to get intelligence to Grant much quicker than before. Time will be very important.

NARRATOR

Lizzie was so good at what she did that she was still able to use the network, not only to pass information to Grant, but was able to provide a fresh bouquet of flowers to be placed at Grants breakfast table. Another comment from Gen. Sharpe was made, "The greater portion", of the information passed to the generals army in 1864-65, in it's collection and in a good measure in it's transmission, we owed to the intelligence and devotion of Miss E.L. Van Lew." Through the period of the war while Miss Van Lew was actively engaged in gathering intelligence for the Union, she had close calls that could have exposed her to the confederates. In February 1865, she was again under suspicion. The Union sent an Englishman named Pole. During his stay in Richmond he contacted several Union sympathizers regarding intelligence, including Miss Van Lew. It turns out that Pole had a change of heart , rushed into the Confederate headquarters and turned in several people for spying. Union agents were arrested and Elizabeth was terrified she would be in that group of agents. Time passed and nothing happened. Elizabeth was able to continue her efforts. She was more cautious than ever now.

SHOT-DESCRIPTION

Early in April on a Sunday, Lee's army was pushed back and Union forces commanded by Gen. Grant hit hard. Richmond was in an absolute panic, buildings were on fire, and people were running for cover throughout the town. The war had definitely reached the town. Confederate forces were on the march leaving Richmond. The noise of battle was all around, explosions, gun fire, and the burning of buildings, and gunboats. The prisons were next and prisoners were taken out of Richmond. Elizabeth knew now she would have to make a stand.

Elizabeth took a large 34 star Union flag, which she had smuggled in earlier, up on the roof of the mansion. The flag was unfurled. That flag was the first Union flag to wave over Richmond in four years. A large crowd of infuriated towns people gathered a mob and approached the mansion yelling, "God damn the old devil" and "Burn her place down" Crazy Bet came off the roof and exited the house, standing proudly on her porch. She yelled back at the citizens.

ELIZABETH

I know you and you...(screaming their names, pointing at all of them) General Grant will be in town in an hour. You do one thing to my home, and all of yours will be burned before noon!(The towns people took her seriously and quietly left. Elizabeth infuriated, went back into her home, slamming the door behind her).

SHOT-DESCRIPTION

Miss Lizzie was conducting her last assignment, searching through the ashes at the Confederate Capitol. The building was in ruin do the fire. Gen. Grant also sent a special guard to accompany her. Grant knew she would be in danger and sent the guard to look after her. Later that afternoon, Gen. Grant and Miss Lizzie are seen having tea and a social conversation on the Van Lew's porch after things quieted down. Grant gives her his card. She kept his card the rest of her life.

NARRATION TO THE END

The war had ended and most of Richmond was in repair. Grant was elected President of the United States and he appointed Elizabeth Van Lew to Post Mistress of Richmond, Virginia, from 1869 to 1877. During this time, and due to Elizabeth's convictions, she was ostracized by the community in Richmond. She wrote: "No one will walk with us on the street, no one will go with us anywhere; and it grows worse and worse as the years roll on."When Grant's term as President ended, Rutherford Hayes was elected and Elizabeth was not reappointed in her position as post mistress but did secure a job in clerical work at the Post Office Department in Washington, D.C. She was later reassigned to another position by then, President Grover Cleveland. She did not continue to work and resigned. Times were tough as most of Elizabeth's wealth was gone. She had spent most of it during the war. She did get an annuity from a soldier in the Union army to thank her for her efforts and that did help but she was living in poverty.

She continued to live in her mansion with her niece and forty cats. She turned 60 and was still an activist for women's rights. She fought against taxation for women. She felt that women could not vote, so, they were enduring unconstitutional taxation without representation. Her niece passed away some years later and she spent the rest of her life living alone on Church Hill. She died in that home at age 81 on September 25, 1900. She is buried in the Van Lew family plot in Shockhoe Cemetery in Richmond. A tombstone was donated by Union soldiers whom she had helped and it was engraved as follows: "She risked everything that is dear to man, friends, fortune, comfort, health, life itself, all for the one absorbing desire of heart..that slavery might be abolished and the Union preserved. This Boulder from Capitol Hill in Boston is a tribute from Massachusetts friends."

THE END