

BOSS

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Boss by Odette Tyler

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NUMBER _____

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BY
ODETTE TYLER

*Mrs. Elizabeth
Lee (Kirkland)
checked*

Woman's honor is nice as ermine—
will not bear a soil.—FIFTYEN.

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PREFACE.

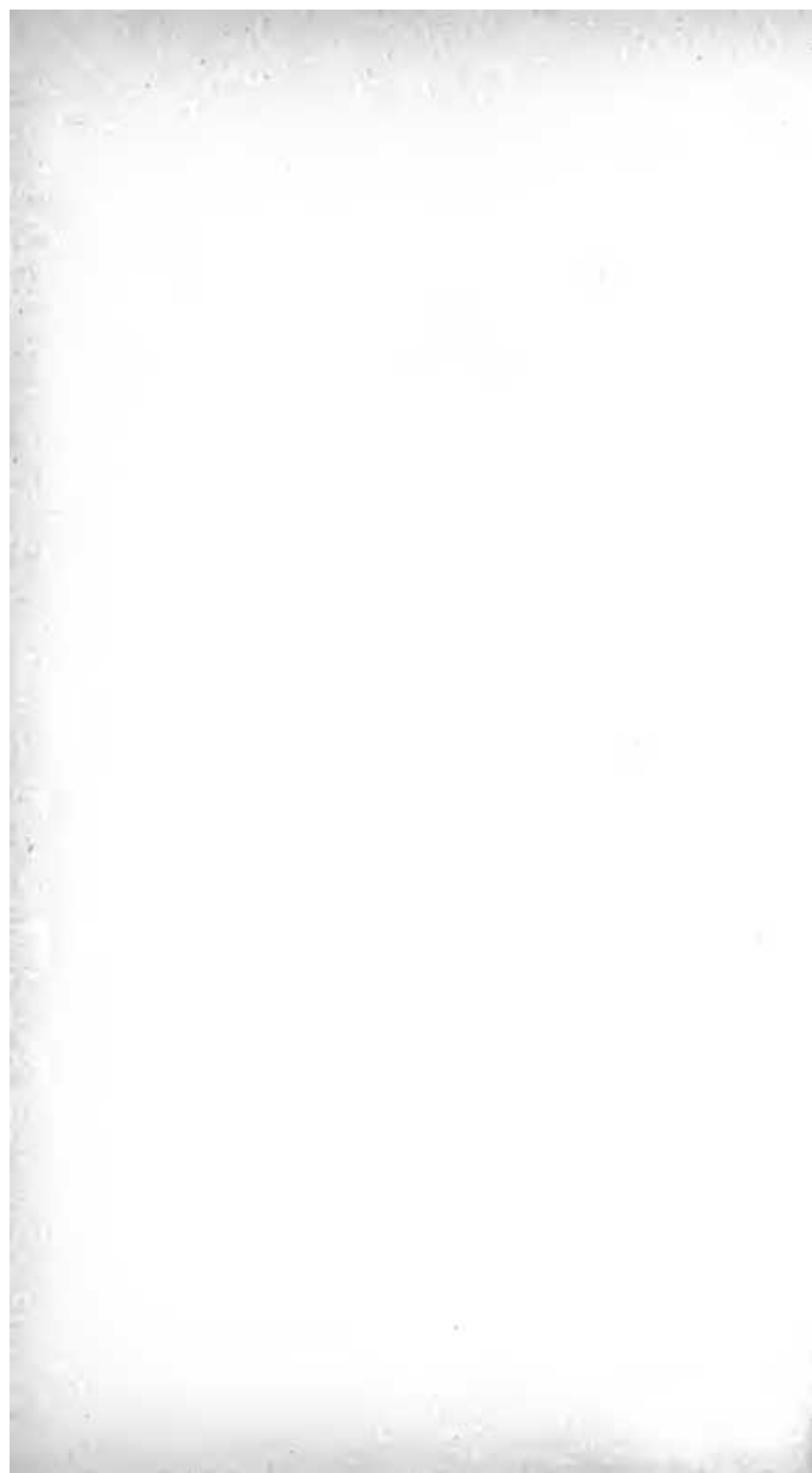
THE story of "Boss" is a photograph taken from the memory of those who were members of the household and witnesses of the events described, and is true in all essential features, except that fictitious names of persons and places are substituted in the narrative for the real ones.

I have endeavored to give the story its appropriate setting, describing the region in which the incidents transpired, interspersing them with the folk-lore, the jests, the anecdotes, and the local expressions which gave color to the daily life of the people of that neighborhood.

The sacrifices which they made on the altar of their divinity, Honor, may seem exaggerated to those removed by time and distance from the scene. They were true, nevertheless, and those who refused to worship at that shrine could not wear the badge of the "F. F. V." in the halcyon days of the Old Dominion.

ODETTE TYLER.

NEW YORK, 1895.



BOSS.

CHAPTER I.

"TIDDY BOY ! Tiddy Boy ! You dawg you ! why don' you an'ser ? Fo' Gord, I lif' yo' by yo' leg an' beat yo' brains out."

"Heah ez me."

"Ez yo' comin' ?"

"I ez."

"Tote yo' feet quicker ! Ez yo' comin' ? I jes' ax yo'—ez yo' ?"

"Heah ez me, I tell yo' ; heah ez me. Cindy, yo' ez mon'sus onreasonable nohow. How yo' specks me to clean de Cun'l's—"

"Hush yo' mouf, yo' nigger—dat's de on'ylest excuse yo' got ! De Boss want her haws Sweetbrier ; she say she ez de freshest dis mornin'. Name o' Gord, I nuver see sich a man ! She don' tole yo' las' nite she want 'er early in de mornin',

an' heah yo' ez, stanin' axin' mo' questions. O Lordy, dyah ez de Boss now ! Yo' better hump yo'sef, nigger. He ! he ! He don' run all de way to de stable wid he haid down."

"What's the joke, Mammy?" asked the Boss ; "you're scolding Uncle Rufus again."

"Gord, honey, dat ez de fust time I see dat nigger run sence de wa'. He ! he ! It sut'n'y am cu'yus how mons'us lazy dat man ez. Whew ! I laf' so, meh haid feels like it 'a' tryin' to bus'."

Mammy stood holding her sides, panting for breath. Though she still retained a large muscular frame, seventy years had furrowed her black face. A cheerful disposition and plenty of good food, however, had served to keep away many other evidences of old age. A red bandanna crowned her ebony forehead, and imparted an air of dignity to her countenance ; while her great black eyes beamed with honesty, and between her red lips could be seen two sets of white teeth. She had a "tol'rance for her 'ole man, Tiddy Boy," but she adored "Little Missy," the Boss.

"Hain't I don' brung de chile up ? Hain't