LUCILLE LOVE, The Girl of Mystery

By the "MASTER PEN"

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(Synopsis of preceding chapters.)

While students together at West Point, and in love with the same girl, Sumpter Love proves Hugo Loubeque a thief, and Loubeque is dishonorably discharged. Love wins the girl. The enmity thus begun finds outlet in later years at Manila, when a butler thief in the employ of Loubeque, now an international spy, steals valuable papers from the Government safe of General Love. Loubeque sails with them on the steamship Empress, and General Love accuses Lieut. Gibson, his aide and the sweetheart of his daughter Lucille, of the crime. Loubeque sends a wireless message cleverly insinuating that General Love had sold the papers to a foreign power. To save the honor of the man she loved and to erase the stigma from her father's name, Lucille prevails upon Harley, a government aviator, to take her out to the ship, in his aeroplane. To foil Lucille, Loubeque destroys the wireless apparatus on the Empress and is hurt in the resulting explosion. In her search for the papers, Lucille becomes his nurse, and when the ship takes fire, secures them. The vessel is burned to the water's edge and Lucille drifts to a strange island on the oar of a crushed lifeboat. Lucille is rescued by friendly savages. She is given an amulet for curing the chief's daughter, and it proved potent against the machinations of Hugo Loubeque, who, likewise cast on the island, plans to get the papers. He burns Lucille's hut, but she escapes with the precious papers. He sends a decoy message asking her to come to the home of a neighboring chief, whose wife is ill and in need of nursing. On the way there she falls into a covered pit, dug by Loubeque across her path. Her guide, an old crone, takes the papers from Lucille, and gives them to Loubeque, who goes with them to the jungle. His guide and servant steals them, but is killed by a lion, and Lucille, who had trailed them three days, recovers them from the body. Lucille meets a strange cave-dwelling people, is attacked by monkeys, escapes in a canoe and is carried into an underground whirlpool. She is rescued by Captain Wetherell and taken aboard his yacht. There she meets Loubeque, who is also picked up by the yacht, which is carrying contraband arms to Chinese rebels. When warships pursue, Wetherell seizes the papers and puts Lucile and Loubeque to sea in an open boat, because they know too much of his plans. Their water gives out and Lucille nearly dies before they reach China in safety. Hugo, after nursing Lucille back to life, goes after Wetherell to get the papers back, and captures him. Lucille follows Loubeque, aboard a liner, and shadows him.

CHAPTER XXV.

A Pretty Stowaway.

THE yawning side of the great vessel stood open before Lucille, the coolie stevedores trundling their great loads of merchandise across the wharf and disappearing within, as though swallowed up forever. Dim, shadowy outlines peered out at her, hoarse voices lifted in command or profanity, the roar of boxes tumbling from the insecure positions in which they had been placed.

Like an inferno it was, minus the fire. Lucille was suddenly made conscious of the fact that she was very weak, that she had narrowly escaped death from privation and fever, that she had shot the woman who attempted her life, that she was a fugitive in this town, that, when the ransacking of the house in which she had been so ill was finished the wounded woman would be discovered and search made for her assailant. Nervously she fingered the ruby necklace about her throat, trying to think of some way another of the precious stones might be made to work its magic influence. She could buy a passage with it, could bribe many aboard the boat, but she must not be seen by Hugo Loubeque. Too often had he caught her in the same place with him working to thwart him for the man to show any mercy. Tender though he had been while she was ill, she knew from his grim tone, from the expression of relief upon his face when he discovered the papers were not upon her person, that he would hesitate at nothing to injure her did she continue her attacks. No, she must work secretly, in the dark always.

But work she must and would. Fiercely she fastened her little teeth in her lower lip. Hugo Loubeque had the precious papers in his possession else he would never have smiled so serenely to himself as he boarded the boat. She had his diary and how she obtained possession of it and from whom she had no idea, but it could not be used against him now. There would come a time when it would prove of the utmost value, but not now. What could she do?

The rattle of muskets brought her out of the fit of abstraction into which she had fallen. She shrank away in the shadow of a bale of silk, screwing herself into as small a space as possible, her breath coming fast as she saw the officer who commanded the squad of soldiers march up the gang plank, just as the captain descended to inquire what his business was. Then the tall figure of Hugo Loubeque appeared beside the pair, offering to translate the soldier's words.

Lucille watched his face in abject terror, studying the swift change of expression on it, the somber lowering of the lashes, the knitting of the brows, the outcropping of his jaw as he listened to the man's hurried jibberish.

"What's it all about?" impatiently demanded the captain, as the spy turned toward him.

"He is hunting an American girl I left ill in the town. It appears she shot and wounded her nurse and bound a Chinese soldier, taking his clothes and making her escape."

"Well, there's no such person aboard," gruffly retorted the officer of the ship. "Is that enough for him."

Again Loubeque turned to the soldier but the man shook his head vehemently.

"He must search the vessel. Those are his orders," interpreted the spy, then, "you really can't blame him, Captain. The girl is a desperate character and if her kind were allowed to run amuck this way there's no telling where it all would end."

The officer nodded consent, adding grimly that he would stand for anything that did not entail delaying the boat's sailing on schedule.

As the eavesdropping girl watched the soldiers march the gangplank and disappear in different parts of the boat according to the instructions given them by their superior, her heart thudded so violently against her ribs she wondered that it did not break through. What a fortunate thing that her weakness had not allowed her to follow her first instinct of following the spy aboard the boat! And what a blessing that he did not know she was so close at hand! She could see from his words that he would not delay his own departure to assist her, that once more his motive of revenge was all-dominant in his nature, that tenderness for the daughter of the woman he loved would never again interfere with the carrying out of his plans. And the ferocious expressions upon these soldiers, the eagerness with which they went about their task of searching for a mite of a girl just off a sick bed!

Surely, some power greater than that of even the international spy was looking over and defending her! She bowed her head in mute gratitude, humbled in recounting the perils she had undergone in the carrying out of her purpose and giving the glory to the hand that, all unseen, was leading her. It impressed her more than ever with the justice of her fight, the fact that an outraged Nature-God would not allow a human being to conquer the best that was in a man and a woman to satisfy a base revenge.

She was roused from the mood by a flurried clamor aboard the boat. The coolies were working madly now, while upon the deck she saw signs of activity that told her the ship was about to get under way. Under the lashing tongue of a boss, five stevedores were rushing toward the bales behind which she was concealed. Lucille knew the time had come for her to act, without any further figuring.

In two swift, cat-like leaps she had reached the yawning side of the boat. For just a second she hesitated before the terrible blackness that met her eyes there, a blackness accentuated by the frowning cargo, twisting and writhing in more weird shapes than she had imagined possible for anything to do. Then, with a little shrug, she stepped inside, darting about between piles of merchandise, leaping further and further away from the voices that reached but dimly to her now, hiding away at every slightest sound.

Came the violent chugging of the engines, the quaking of every part of the great ocean leviathan, lesser sounds from above, the terrible creaking of the cargo as the vibrations straightened it into place. Then Lucille was suddenly aware that they were under way, that she was alone here in the bowels of the boat, more alone than she had ever been in the heart of the jungle, alone for how many days she dared not think.

Terrors beset her on every side. Rats scampered about, their paws making a dreadful scraping sound like sandpaper being run over a smooth surface of boarding. Times she would feel their tiny feet upon her own, the squeals of terror that went up as they rushed on their way, it seemed to tell her of this strange intruder to their fellows. The impulse to rush to the deck above was almost overwhelming. She could feel her brain reeling, reeling with the horrors of such a loneliness as this.

But always, when her courage had fairly ebbed, would come another picture. It was as though her horror-popping eye-balls had forced poignantly home to her the vision of Manila, of her father, grieving himself to death at her absence, at the shipwreck; her sweetheart, imprisoned, with every hand turned against him, with the girl he loved away, perhaps another who disbelieved in his innocence—

Always would that thought bring her fighting spirit back. Her sweetheart was a prisoner and probably the angry General would not condescend to tell him any news of her. What more likely that the secrety that he had lost her love was tormenting him quite as much as the charge of stealing and selling the papers. But she must bring them back, she must clear him. There was nothing else for her to do, no other part of her life could possibly mean so much as saving the honor of the man she loved.

Day and night—night and day—there was no difference between the two in this black hole. Seconds were as days and hours became as fractions of seconds according to the trend in which her thoughts lay. There was no diversion save trying to send her fancy flying back to the army post. Oftentimes, the scurrying rats weighted her mind with such terror that she was unable to do that.

It seemed to her that they must be near the end of their journey, judging by the torments she had been through, when a swaying light directly over her head made her dart hastily back and strive to hide behind a looming bale. The exclamation of surprised incredulity which sounded in her ears told that she had been discovered. In an instinctive effort to hide, she struck against a bale that had partially dislodged itself, and sent it thundering against a second stack. In a moment the hold was filling with a pandemonium such as might have accompanied the most violent earthquake. The hold was filled with tumbling boxes and bales, toppling, reeling, thrashing, thundering in every direction. Lucille flung up her hands to her ears to shut out the sound, darting toward the face she now saw plainly above her, a face that framed popping eyes and widened lips, a face that had paled through the heavy coat of tan, as she could see from the lantern's light.

Swiftly she leaped upon a box that had formed the foundation for a pyramid. As though by instinct the sailor flung the lantern from him and reached down his hands. Lucille felt his fingers clutching at her wrists. Once he missed her. She shuddered as a louder crash than any that had gone before came to the right of her. A second time the man's arms swung out and his hands closed about her own.

She felt the strain upon his muscles, the mighty heaving groan that issued from his lips. Then slowly, so slowly it seemed she would never succeed in getting through that trap, she was lifted up, up to the deck where she lay panting and breathless, the man beside her fairly whistling from the exertion of once more breathing freely.

As he squatted there, staring at her, his eyes now whimsical with amusement, a little laugh of relief trilled from her throat. She reached out her hand and allowed it to rest, quite simply, in his great paw. He stared at the tiny hand, resting like the white petal of a rose upon the brown earth, then slowly a smile spread over his weatherbeaten face as he scanned the silken suit in which she was arrayed. Lucille saw that she had made a friend already and immediately pressed her advantage.

"Nobody must know you found me there," she began hurriedly, then, as he started to protest, "no, no. Please listen—"

Again the sailor shook his head, a troubled expression in his eyes. Lucille knew that she had lost and, instead of pleading, took the next best course that seemed open to her.

"Then, if you must, bring the captain to me instead of parading me before everyone. I would not ask you this but I have an enemy aboard and—Oh," she broke off impatiently as, still, he remained dubious, "there is no chance for escape now that I am discovered. It will do no harm to let me wait here. I can—" she closed her lips quickly, as the hint of a gleam of avarice showed in the man's eyes. After a second's thought he nodded briefly and moved hurriedly away.

Lucille had no time for regret at her discovery. She had felt all along that it was inevitable but had refrained till now from figuring on what explanation she could make in such event. That expression, the swift change on the sailor's face, as he thought her on the point of mentioning money verified her instinctive knowledge that she must keep her ownership of the magnificent ruby necklace secret. She knew that the best of men would be tempted by such a king's ransom as the marvelous jewels represented. Likewise she felt it would be unwise, under any circumstances to entrust anyone with the knowledge that she possessed the international spy's diary. So long as she alone knew where it was, just so long was there a certainty of Loubeque's being kept in the dark. She had fought alone till now and she must continue to fight alone. Any help she might be able to pick up along the way would be more than welcome, but the riches she carried with her might turn the sympathetic friend to a weak girl into an unscrupulous enemy. This much she had concluded when the Captain stomped heavily across to her, followed by the sailor, his face frowning blackly, but with a curious twinkle in his eyes the girl was quick to discern.

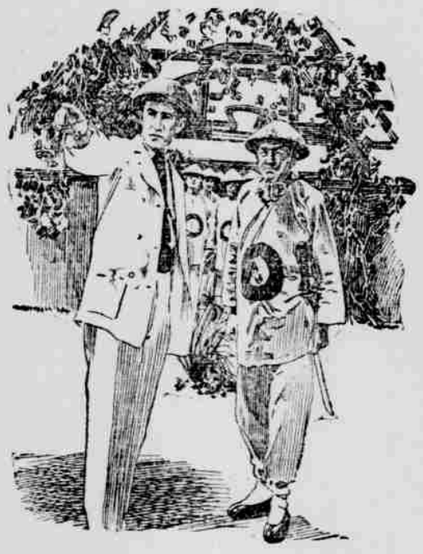
"And so the young lady with murderous tendencies was aboard my boat all along," he beamed ominously, then, before she had opportunity to interrupt. "Of course you understand that I must put you in irons and turn you over to the authorities in San Francisco."

Some impulse impelled her, an impulse to put on a manner altogether at variance with her nature. She drew herself saucily erect, meeting his eyes with laughter lurking in her own.

"Of course you don't intend doing any such thing," she retorted boldly. "I was sick and the woman they left to nurse me sneaked in the room late at night and tried to stab me. I saw her slip out and was suspicious of her, so I slipped behind the door and grabbed the man's gun when he put it on a chair. Anybody would have done exactly the same thing and I know, anyway, that you would never turn an American girl over to those horrible Chinamen."

The captain's frown disappeared at the flashing tempest of this little spitfire who confronted and faced him down, while mirth faded before a natural embarrassment. He scratched the back of his head dubiously.

"Well, I guess that's about true," he ad-



Loubeque Ordered the Officer to Search the Ship for Lucille.

mitted finally. "But why didn't you come to me in the first place; why didn't you want to come to me when you were caught; what do you expect is to be done with you?"

"I didn't come to you because the man who acted as interpreter is an enemy of mine who would do anything on earth to be rid of me—I mean Hugo Loubeque, the one who spoke with the Chinese officer when they searched the boat. They frightened me so I crept into the hold. I don't want him to know I am on board—he mustn't know." She looked up into his face with such confidence in her big, melting eyes that the embarrassed man fidgetted more nervously than ever.

"I can pay for my passage when we land," she added quickly. "So there need be no worry about that."

"Relatives, oh!" The captain heaved a sigh of relief and Lucille allowed his impression to pass in silence. "But I have no cabin vacant, young lady."

"Couldn't I do some work, be a cabin boy or something like that," she suggested vaguely, as the ship's master threw back his head and gave vent to such laughter that tears rolled down his weather beaten cheeks.

"That's a good one," he roared. "By George, I believe that would straighten the whole mess out and make me the master of the first boat that has had a cabin boy since the old sailing days. Young man," he added with mock gravity, "I'll take you to my cabin now, where your enemy will have no chance of seeing you. The steward will be the only one in our secret. He can outfit you and pass his instructions regarding your duties at night."

Lucille clasped her hands delightedly, her eyes twin stars of delight at the perfect working out of her difficulties. She did not care that the captain mocked her regarding Loubeque's enmity, that he evidently thought her a foolish, tom-boy of a girl, adventure-bent and addle-pated. Working at night there could be but scant chance for Loubeque's recognizing her, if he retained his secretive habits, and it was usually at night time that he paced the deck and left his cabin alone. No position could more adequately have given her an opportunity to search the man's cabin for the stolen documents and papers.

The thought of it fairly took away her breath, was still all-dominant in her mind while she listened to the steward's instructions, after he had heard the story from the captain. She saw immediately that her position aboard was little more than a jest of the ship's master, for she had little to do save a bit of dusting about the saloons, keeping the main cabin in order, re-arranging the smoking saloon after it was vacated by passengers and, in the event of storms keeping the captain on the bridge for protracted stretches, fetching him hot tea. She laughed with him at her position, was still laughing when she showed herself before him in a natty white duck suit, which made her slender fragility more apparent and more appealing than ever. She noticed the tender, half-pitying expression that always rested behind the twinkle in his laughing eyes when he regarded her, noticed it and—for beneath her fair exterior she was probably as desperate a woman with as desperate, all-absorbing a mission as any woman living—determined to play upon it continually.

That very evening she found the suite occupied by the international spy. True to the habit she had observed in him aboard the Empress, Hugo Loubeque showed himself at night, not long after the middle watch, his tall form smothered in a long ulster, the upturned collar of which concealed most of his features from sight. But, as Lucille instinctively crouched away before the grim figure of her enemy, she noticed the bull-dog grip with which he held the cigar between his teeth, its glowing end revealing the flame in his deep set eyes. She knew the tension under which he labored was probably due to the disquieting news he had received at the last moment regarding her escape from the sick bed upon which he left her. But, despite her fear, she cautiously followed him when he returned to his stateroom, marking the exact location so that she should not be mistaken.

Every night at exactly the same time he came out upon the deck and, for two nights Lucille tried to bolster up her courage sufficiently to enter the stateroom, but always the sound of that ominous, steady step on the deck dissuaded her. On the fourth night she felt herself trembling with sub-conscious knowledge that tonight was to be the time when she made her attempt. Consciously, she was positive she could not force herself to do it but something from within impelled her feet in the opposite direction from that taken by the spy. At the door of the stateroom she halted. Loubeque was moving toward her, silent, imperturbable, grim, a fearsome figure. Two bells sounded. Lucille watched the spy. His habits were remarkably regular in their very irregularity. For another bell he would not return to his stateroom. She glanced up at the sky, more to force her eyes away from that dark, solitary figure than for any other reason.

The stars were under a cloud of moisture, and her heart lay heavy within her. Then slowly one great star marched forth, tarried a moment. Came a rush across the heavens, a rush of light so abrupt and dazzling as to make it seem as though a host of altar boys had rushed across the dark aisles touching their tapers to the candles there and leaving every nook and cranny of the cathedral light as day. To the girl it gave a thrill of confidence. Again she looked at the lonesome, solitary man. He was alone and she—she—the very stars themselves were with her.

Without thought, without the slightest sensation of fear she turned the knob and entered, closing the door softly and pausing to look about her, trembling now she had taken the daring step, but fired with determination. It would be a simple place to search, the furniture being scanty and Loubeque traveling without much luggage.

Swiftly she worked, turning everything upside down and carefully laying all signs of her search afterwards. Her fear of being caught had completely faded before the urge of finding the papers. From place to place, careful as any French detective, thorough and keen as though she had been a thief all her life, Lucille worked. As she went through the last of the spy's personal belongings, a little sob of disappointment and chagrin broke from the very heart of her and halted at her lips. For a hand was rattling the knob, turning it slowly, slowly. It was as though the man toyed with her, played with her as a cruel cat plays with the mouse it has caught. The door opened and Hugo Loubeque was framed in the doorway, the cigar clenched between his teeth glowing and subsiding, showing a grim smile upon his features, a smile the shadows made but more saturnine.

"Ah!" he murmured silkily, "I thought I could not be mistaken in our little steward! But why, my dear child, did you wait so long to pay a visit to such an old acquaintance? Why such disregard for the ordinary amount of friendship?"

Lucille crouched away from him, more frightened at his playful tone than she would have been of angered rage. Musically sweet, from without came the toll of time. Three bells!

CHAPTER XXVI.

Lucille Finds a Friend.

SLOWLY, without removing the cigar from his mouth, he moved toward her, the hateful smile still upon his lips. He seated himself and studied her carefully, speculatively.

"Lucille," he said slowly, "I saw you on the deck, saw you go into the hold, saw you when the captain came to you, have watched you all the time. Do you know why I did not give you away? It was because I wanted to know exactly where you were all the time, because I wanted the feel of my finger upon you. I have waited for this moment. You recall what I told you in the open boat. It is no quarter from now on. You have no chance to regain the papers but until I have used them to the limit they will not be destroyed, nor will you have opportunity to place your hands upon them. I want to show you the futility of combating me. I have wanted to do that for a long time. Now, I see it is useless. If you escape—and I cannot imagine it impossible—I shall have no mercy hereafter. I will know that you are only safe when you are dead." He rose and motioned to the chair, an ominousness in word and gesture which compelled obedience. Fascinated, panic-stricken, she obeyed, while from his pocket he drew a long loop of fine cord which he bound about her wrists and ankles, then strapped her securely in the chair. He stood off a moment, regarding his handiwork, then moved toward the door. "You see I have been prepared for the visit," he murmured. "I will just be a little while, so don't be worried—this time."

The door closed behind him and Lucille stared blankly at the place where she had last seen him.

A scant quarter of an hour that to her was interminable and the spy returned, the smile still playing about the corners of his mouth, a smile that matched poorly the agate expression of his cold eyes. He untied the cords that had bound her, watching her curiously as she chafed the blood back to her hands.

"Yes," he answered her unspoken question, "you may go now. I do not care any more whether you heed my warning or not. You have chosen to continue the war. I merely wish you to know what it means to you. I have made arrangements that will look to your being cared for in San Francisco, so the end of this trip means nothing to you. As I said before, the pleasure of your company is rapidly overwhelming me. I cannot lose it any longer. Good night, Miss Lucille Love."

It was as though his mockery, his gibing tones were giant hands against her chest, pushing her through the door and upon the deck. She was scarcely conscious of how she had come there, when the stinging spume from the ocean dashed against her cheeks, bringing her out of the spell and firing her numbed consciousness with the precariousness of her situation. His threat of looking after her at the end of the voyage—his mockery—she must appeal to strong hands now, she must use strength to combat strength since he had put the combat on physical grounds.

She could not imagine how, in a free country, he could do anything. Still, she knew Hugo Loubeque and the knowledge terrified her. She decided to rely upon her woman's fragility to gain the master's sympathy. She had reached this conclusion as the astonished captain looked at her wan, miserable face when he answered her knocking.

Swiftly, the words tumbling over one another in the nerve-racking strain of trying to convince the man of the unbelievable things she had gone through at the spy's hands, she poured out her whole story. First, she read disgusted incredulity upon his face, then amazement at her inventiveness, and, slowly, under the spell of an obvious sincerity, she saw he was convinced to a large extent.

He summoned a steward and dispatched him for Loubeque, demanding an immediate answer. Evidently the spy had been waiting just some such thing for he appeared quite promptly, his face worn and harried. He started violently at seeing Lucille, then took both her hands in his own and patted them soothingly, his voice the cajoling one with which one soothes a child. The captain's stern countenance had fallen and the good man looked rather foolish as he cleared his throat.

"Mr. Loubeque," he began abruptly, "this young lady has made complaint to me that you have threatened her with death, that you have caused her a great deal of trouble and threaten to continue doing so upon this boat. Have you anything to say?"

"Certainly, I shall be more than pleased to look after her if the poor child has escaped the surveillance of her relatives. No friend could do less," the spy answered suavely, an expression of surprise in his eyes.

"I don't understand," began the captain, looking quite foolish now. "The young lady tells me she is Miss Lucille Love, daughter of General Sumpter Love of the United States Army, stationed at Manila; that you caused to be stolen from the safe in her father's office, certain papers and documents regarding government matters, and that her sweetheart was accused of selling them, and, in consequence, placed under arrest. She informs me that, through crossed wires, she overheard you admit this just before you boarded the burned liner Empress, and that she persuaded an aviator to take her aboard; that when the liner burned, she was cast upon a jungle island and—"

Loubeque threw up his hands in a gesture that seemed to combine contempt for the intelligence of the questioner and pity for the one telling the tale.

"My dear captain," he murmured reprovingly, "while I am delighted to know the young lady is safe, I must object to listening further. It is unbelievable that a passenger should be disturbed at this hour of the night to listen to any such nonsense. As you undoubtedly know, there was an army scandal at Manila a few months back in which the sweetheart of General Love's daughter was arrested. As you doubtless know the liner Empress was burned about that same time. The young woman was in Manila with her family and, being of an impressionable nature, the shocking outcome to Miss Love's romance made a deep sympathy rise in her. Her own sweetheart was aboard the Empress and—" He did not finish save to touch his hand lightly to his head.

The captain nodded, and Lucille, seeing now the maddeningly unbelievable quality of the story she had told regarding her adventures, felt hot rage fairly burning her up. She sprang at the captain, taking his coat in her hands and shaking him fiercely.

"I am not insane—it's the truth—every word—" she sobbed, then lifting eyes in which the clear light of sanity glowed unmistakably. "Captain, I swear to you that every word is true."

The captain turned from one to the other in the very extremity of perplexity. Finally he nodded to Loubeque that he might leave and, with a slow smile, the spy turned away.

"Young lady," he said slowly, "you will resume your duties for tonight and in the morning I will see that you are properly clothed. I will immediately send a wireless to the authorities in San Francisco and see that you are met by them at the pier. No harm can come to you from this man. You understand why I am unable to do more for you, I—"

Lucille extended her hand, grasping his firmly, and meeting the troubled eyes of the man with her own—her own eyes, in which glowed gratitude and confidence and truth. And in that handclasp the pair cemented a common union against any enemy.

CHAPTER XXVII.

At the Pier.

HUGO LOUBEQUE stood a little apart from the eager passengers gathered at the rail, watching the giant harbor of the Golden Gate creeping about them, encircling them. His eyes glowed with a somber fire, but no muscle of his face betrayed by so much as a twitch the delight with which he welcomed land after his wanderings, the perils through which he had emerged.

To these others, the sight meant home, their country, the land to which they belonged and which belonged to them. But to Loubeque it meant bitterness, gall. It meant the country that had been his but which had cast him forth, an unworthy son unfit to be its citizen. His eyes fastened morosely upon the slender, pretty slip of a girl clinging to the rail, her lips parted as she watched the deck, black with eager friends and relatives, coming closer, closer.

So close the passengers could make out faces, so close they could call greetings to those ashore, then a slow crunching as the great ship swung into her moorings. Hugo Loubeque slowly lifted the cigar from his mouth and waved it in a deliberate circle that ended with its tip pointing toward the slender girl. He caught her eyes and smiled at the expression of terror, of fear in them as he saw she had marked his gesture.

Came a crowding forward in the center of the throng upon the deck. The gangplank thrust its nose out, out, until it rested upon the dock, the narrow gangplank that was all remaining of the vast ocean distance separating these passengers from their homeland. Some of them looked about in surprise at sound of a guttural oath. They saw a tall, somber, saturnine passenger, smoking a cigar, his eyes fastened upon a squad of blue coated policemen, edging their way from the rear of the throng into the exact center. They wondered.

Lucille tripped down the gang plank. Once more the man who had uttered the oath lifted his cigar. Came a quick upheaval in the throng. The spy smiled to himself then moved toward the plank. He looked down upon the crowd of men surrounding the slip of a girl, surrounding her so closely she was hidden from sight. The policemen were fighting their way to the ship. Came a scream in a woman's voice. Loubeque bent forward, his knuckles showing a blue whiteness from the fierceness of his grip upon the liner's rail.

"Help! Help! Cap—"

The officers whirled in the direction of the girl's voice. The crowd of men jammed closer, resisting, without the appearance of resistance, the shoulders of the law. From outside the jam darted a woman, clad in deep mourning. Easily the throng of men gave way before her. Her arms were about the neck of the girl who had screamed, smothering her lips with kisses.

"My poor, dear sister!" she sobbed uncontrollably, her arms about Lucille's waist, bearing her through the crowd of men.

The captain stood at Loubeque's elbow, his face troubled. The policemen fought their way to the center of the group to find no woman there. Their leader, a sergeant, stepped toward the captain.

"You sent a wireless, sir, regarding a young woman—"

The captain turned to Loubeque, his eyes threatening.

"The girl," he demanded. "What has become of—"

Hugo Loubeque lazily pointed his cigar toward a black, high powered motor car leaping out into the city's street.

"The insane girl?" he smiled. "I believe I saw her step into that machine, Captain."

The sergeant waited curiously. Knowing there was something between the two men, scenting the atmosphere of hatred, he waited.

"No use now, sergeant," sighed Lucille's friend.

Hugo Loubeque deliberately lighted a fresh cigar then, still smiling, stepped toward the plank.

(Continued Next Week.)

See "Lucille Love" in motion pictures at Riverside Park tonight and tomorrow night.—(Adv.)