THE

Princess Virginia

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CHAPTER FOUR

So she had gone on her knees to him after all—or almost. She was glad her mother did not know, and she hoped that he did not feel the pulsing of the blood in her fingers as he took her hand and lifted her to her feet. There was shame in this tempest that swept through her veins because he did not share it, for to her, though this meeting was an epoch, to him it was no more than a trivial incident. She would have keyed his emotions to hers if she could, but since she had had years of preparation, he a single moment, perhaps she might have been consoled for the disparity could she have read his eyes. They said, if she had known, "Is the sky raining goddesses today?"

Now, what were to be her first words to him? Dimly she felt that if she were to profit by this wonderful chance to know the man and not the emperor—this chance which might be lost in a few moments unless her wit befriended her—those words should be beyond the common. She should be able to marshal her sentences as a general marshals his battalions, with a plan of campaign for each.

A spirit monitor—a matchmaking monitor—whispered these wise advices in her ear, yet she was powerless to profit by them. Like a schoolgirl about to be examined for a scholarship, knowing that all the future might depend upon an hour of the present, the dire need to be resourceful, to be brilliant, left her dumb.

How many times had she not thought of her first conversation with Leopold of Rhaetia, planning the first words, the first looks, which must make him know that she was different from any other girl he had ever met! Yet here she stood, speechless, epigrams turning tail and racing away from her like a troop of playful colts refusing to be caught.

And so it was the emperor who spoke before Virginia's savoir faire came back.

"I hope you're not hurt?" asked the chamois hunter in the patois dear to the heart of Rhaetian mountain folk.

She had been glad before, now she was thankful, that she had spent many weeks and months in loving study of the tongue which was Leopold's. It was not the metier of a chamois hunter to speak English, though the emperor was said to know the language well, and she rejoiced in her ability to answer the chamois hunter as he would be answered, keeping up the play.

"I am hurt only in the pride that comes before a fall," she replied, forcing a laugh. "Thank you many times for saving me."

"I feared that I frightened you and made you lose your footing," the chamois hunter answered.

"I think, on the contrary, if it hadn't been for you I should have lost my life," said Virginia. "There should be a sign put up on that tempting plateau, 'All Except Suicides Beware.'"

"The necessity never occurred to us, my mates and me," returned the man in the gray coat passemoiled with green. "Until you came, gna' fraulein, no tourist that I know of has found it tempting."

Virginia's eyes lit with a sudden spark. The spirit monitor—that matchmaking monitor—came back and dared her to a frolic, such a frolic, she thought, as no girl on earth had ever had or would have after her. And she could show this grave soldier-hero of hers something new in life—something quite new—which it would not harm him to know. Then, let come what would out of this adventure, at worst she should always have an Olympian episode to remember.

"Until I came?" she caught up his words, standing carefully on the spot where he had placed her. "But I am no tourist. I am an explorer."

He lifted level, dark eyebrows, smiling faintly, and when he smiled half his austerity was gone.

So beautiful a girl as this need not rise beyond agreeable commonplaces of mind and speech to please a man. Indeed, this particular chamois hunter expected no more than good looks, a good heart and a nice manner from women. Yet this beauty bade fair, it seemed, to hold surprises in reserve.

"I have brought down noble game today," he said to himself, and aloud: "I know the Schneehorn well and love it well. Still I can't see what rewards it has for the explorer—unless, gna' fraulein, you are a climber or a geologist."

"I'm neither, yet I think I have seen something, a most rare thing, I've wanted all my life to see."

The young man's face confessed curiosity. "Indeed! A rare thing that lives here on the mountain?"

"I am not sure if it lives here. I should like to find out," replied the girl.

"Might one inquire the name of this rare thing?" asked the chamois hunter. "Perhaps if I knew it might turn out that I could help you in the search. But, first, if you'd let me lead you to the plateau, where I think you were going. Here your head might still grow a little giddy, and it's not well to keep you standing, gna' fraulein, on such a spot. You've passed all the worst now. The rest is easy."

She gave him her hand, pleasing herself by fancying the act a kind of allegory, as she let him lead her to safe and pleasant places on a higher, sunnier level.

"Perhaps the rare thing grows here," the chamois hunter went on, looking about the green plateau with a new interest.

"I think not," Virginia answered, shaking her head. "It would thrive better nearer the mountain top in a more hidden place than this. It does not love tourists."

"Nor do I, in truth," smiled the chamois hunter.

"You took me for one."

"Pardon, gna' fraulein—not the kind of tourist we both mean."

"Thank you."

"But you have not said if I might help you in your search. This is a wild region for a young lady to be exploring in alone."

"I feel sure," responded the princess graciously, "that if you really would you could help me as well as any one in Rhaetia."

"You are kind indeed to say so, though I don't know how I have deserved the compliment."

"Did it sound like a compliment? Well, leave it so. I meant because you are at home in these high altitudes, and the rare thing I speak of is a plant that grows in high places. It is said to be found only in Rhaetian mountains, though I have never heard of any one who has been able to track it down."

"Is it our pink Rhaetian edelweiss, of which we are so proud? Because if it is and you will trust me I know exactly where to take you to find it. With my help you could climb there from here in a few moments."

She shook her head again, smiling inscrutably. "Thank you, it's not the pink edelweiss. The scientific, the esoteric name I've promised that I'll tell to no one, but the common people in my native country who have heard of it would call the plant edelmann."

"You have already seen it on the mountain, but not growing?"

"Some chamois hunter, like yourself, had dropped it perhaps, not knowing what its value was. It's a great deal to have had one glimpse—worth running into danger for."

"Perhaps, gna' fraulein, you don't realize to the full the danger you did run. No chance was worth it, believe me."

"You, a chamois hunter, say that?"

"But I'm a man. You are a woman, and women should keep to beaten paths and safety."

The princess laughed. "I shouldn't wonder," said she, "if that's a Rhaetian theory, a Rhaetian man's theory. I've heard your emperor holds it."

"Who told you that, gna' fraulein?" He gave her a sharp glance, but her gray eyes looked innocent of guile and were therefore at their most dangerous.

"Oh, many people have told me. Cats may look at kings, and the most insignificant persons may talk of emperors. I've heard many things of yours."

"Good things or bad?"

"No doubt such things as he truly deserves. Now, can you guess which? But perhaps I would tell you without your guessing if I were not so very, very hungry." She glanced at the pocket of his coat, from which protruded a generous hunch of black bread and ham, thrust in probably at the instant when she had called for help. "I can't help seeing that you have your luncheon with you. Do you want it all"—she carefully ignored the contents of her rucksack, which she could not well have forgotten—"or would you share it?"

The chamois hunter looked surprised, though not displeased; but, then, this was his first experience of a feminine explorer, and he quickly rose to the occasion.

"There is more, much more bread and bacon, where this came from," he replied. "Will you be graciously pleased to accept something of our best?"

"If you please, then I, too, shall be pleased," she said. Guiltily she remembered Miss Portman, but the dear Letitia could not be considered now. If she were alarmed, she should be well consoled later.

"I and some friends of mine have a—a sort of hut round the corner from this plateau and a short distance on," announced the chamois hunter, with a gesture that gave the direction. "No woman has ever been our guest, but I invite you to visit it and lunch there, or, if you prefer, remain here and in a few minutes I will bring such food as we can offer. At best it's not much to boast of. We chamois hunters are poor men, living roughly."

The princess smiled, imprisoning each new thought of mischief which flew into her mind like a trapped bird. "I've heard you're rich in hospitality," she said. "I'll go with you to your hut, for it will be a chance to prove the saying."

The eyes of the hunter—dark, brilliant and keen as the eagle's to which she compared him—pierced hers. "You have no fear?" he asked. "You are a young girl, alone, save for me, in a desolate place. For all you know, my mates and I may be a band of brigands."

"Baedeker doesn't mention the existence of brigands in these days among the Rhaetian Alps," replied Virginia, with quaint dryness. "I've always found him trustworthy. Besides, I've great faith in the chivalry of Rhaetian men, and if you knew how hungry I am you wouldn't keep me waiting for talk of brigands. Bread and butter are far more to the point."

"Even search for the rare edelmann may wait?"

"Yes; the edelmann may wait—on me." The last two words she dared but to whisper.

"You must pardon my going first," said the man with the bare brown knees. "The way is too narrow for politeness."

"Yet I wish that the peasants at home had such courteous manners as yours," Virginia patronized him prettily. "You Rhaetians need not go to court, I see, for lessons in behavior."

"The mountains teach us something, maybe."

"Something of their greatness, which we should all do well to learn. But have you never lived in a town?"

"A man of my sort exists in a town; he lives in the mountains." With this diplomatic response the tall figure swung round a corner formed by a bowlder of rock, and Virginia gave a little cry of surprise. The hut of which the chamois hunter had spoken was revealed by the turn, and it was of an unexpected and striking description. Instead of the humble erection of stones and wood which she had counted on, the rocky side of the mountain itself had been coaxed to give her sons a shelter.

A doorway and large square openings for windows had been cut in the red veined, purplish brown porphyry, while a heavy slab of oak and wooden frames filled full of glittering bottle glass protected such rooms as might have been hollowed out within from storm or cold.

Even had Virginia been ignorant of her host's identity she would have been wise enough to guess that here was no semmhutte, or ordinary abode of common peasants who hunt the chamois for a precarious livelihood. The work of hewing out in the solid rock a habitation such as this must have cost more than most Rhaetian chamois hunters would save in many a year. But her wisdom also counseled her to express no further surprise after her first exclamation.

"My mates are away for the time, though they may come back by and by," the man explained, holding the heavy oaken door that she might pass into the room within, and, though she was not invited to further exploration, she was able to see by the several doorways cut in the rock walls that this was not the sole accommodation the strange house could boast.

On the rock floor rugs of deer and chamois skin were spread. In a rack of oak ornamented with splendid antlers and studded with the sharp pointed horns of the chamois were suspended guns of modern make and brightly polished, formidable hunting knives. The table in the center of the room had been carved with admirable skill, and the half dozen chairs were oddly fashioned of stags' antlers shaped to hold fur cushioned wooden seats. A carved dresser of black oak held a store of the coarse blue, red and green china made by peasants in the valley below, through which Virginia had driven yesterday, and these bright colored dishes were eked out with platters and great tankards of old pewter, while in the deep fireplace a gypsy kettle swung over a bed of fragrant pine wood embers.

"This is a delightful place—fit for a king or even for an emperor," said Virginia when the bare kneed chamois hunter had offered her a chair near the fire and crossed the room to open the closed cupboard under the dresser shelves.

He was stooping as she spoke, but at her last words looked around over his shoulder.

"We mountain men aren't afraid of a little work—when it's for our own comfort," he replied, "and most of the things you see here are homemade during the long winters."

"Then you are all very clever indeed. But this place is interesting. Tell me, has the emperor ever been your guest here? I've read—let me see, could it have been in the guidebook or in some paper?—that he comes occasionally to this northern range of mountains."

"Oh, yes; the emperor has been at our hut several times. He's good enough to approve it," the host answered calmly, laying a loaf of black bread, a fine seeded cheese and a knuckle of ham on the table. He then glanced at his guest, expecting her to come forward, but she sat still on her throne of antlers, her small feet in their sensible mountain boots daintily crossed under the short tweed skirt.

"I hear he also is a good chamois hunter," she carelessly went on. "But that perhaps is only the flattery which makes the atmosphere of royalty. No doubt you, for instance, could really give him many points in chamois hunting."

The young man smiled. "The emperor's not a bad shot."

"For an amateur. But you're a professional. I wager now that you would not for the world change places with the emperor."

How the chamois hunter laughed at this and showed his white teeth! There were those in the towns he scorned who would have been astonished at his light hearted mirth.

"Change places with the emperor! Not unless I were obliged, gna' fraulein—not now, at all events," with a complimentary bow and glance.

"Thank you. You're quite a courtier. And that reminds me of another thing they say of him in my country. The story is that he dislikes the society of women. But perhaps it is that he doesn't understand them."

"It is possible, lady. But I never heard that they were so difficult of comprehension."

"Ah, that shows how little you chamois hunters have had time to learn. Why, we can't even understand ourselves or know what we're most likely to do next, and yet—a very odd thing—we have no difficulty in reading one another and knowing all each other's weaknesses."

"That would seem to say that a man should get a woman to choose his wife for him."

"I'm not so sure it would be wise, yet your emperor, we hear, will let the chancellor choose his."

"Ah, were you told this also in your country?"

"Yes, for the gossip is that she's an English princess. Now, what's the good of being a powerful emperor if he can't even pick out a wife to please his own taste?"

"I know nothing about such high matters, gna' fraulein, but I fancied that royal folk took wives to please their people rather than themselves. It's their duty to marry, you know. And if the lady be of royal blood, virtuous, of the right religion, not too sharp tempered and pleasant to look at, why, those are the principal things to consider, I should suppose."

"So should I not suppose if I were a man and emperor. I should want the pleasure of falling in love."

"Safer not, gna' fraulein. He might fall in love with the wrong woman." And the chamois hunter looked with half shamed intentness into his guest's sweet eyes.

She blushed under his gaze and was so conscious of the hot color that she retorted at random. "I doubt if he could fall in love. A man who would let his chancellor choose for him—he can have no warm blood in his veins."

"There I think you wrong him, lady," the answer came quickly. "The emperor is—a man. But it may be he has found other interests in his life more important than woman."

"Bringing down chamois, for instance. You would sympathize there."

"Chamois give good sport. They're hard to find—harder still to hit when you have found them."

"So are the best types of women—those who, like the chamois and the plant I spoke of, live only in high places. Oh, for the sake of my sex I do hope that some day your emperor will change his mind—that a woman will make him change it!"

"Perhaps a woman has already."

Virginia grew pale. Was she too late, or was this a concealed compliment which the chamois hunter did not guess she had the clew to find? She could not answer. The silence between the two became electrical, and the young man broke it at last with some slight signs of confusion.

"It's a pity," said he, "that our emperor can't hear you. He might be converted to your views."

"Or he might clap me into prison for lèze majesty."

"He wouldn't do that, gna' fraulein, if he's anything like me."

"Anything you like! Why, now you put me in mind of it, he's not unlike you—in appearance, I mean, judging by his portraits."

"You have seen his portraits?"

"Yes, I've seen some. I really think you must be a little like him, only browner and taller perhaps. Yet I'm glad that you're a chamois hunter and not an emperor—almost as glad as you can be."

"Will you tell me why, lady?"

"Oh, for one reason, because I couldn't possibly ask him, if he were here in your place, what I'm going to ask of you. You've very kindly laid the bread and ham ready, but you forgot to cut them."

"A thousand pardons. Our talk has set my wits woolgathering. My mind

"A draft of our Rhaetian beer will do you more good than anything."

should have been on my manners instead of on such faroff things as emperors and their love affairs."

He began hewing at the big loaf as if it were an enemy to be conquered. And there were few in Rhaetia who had ever seen those dark eyes so bright.

"I like ham and bread cut thin, please," said the princess. "There; that's better. I'll sit here if you'll bring the things to me, for I find that I'm tired, and you are very kind."

"A draft of our Rhaetian beer will do you more good than anything," suggested the hunter, taking up the plate of bread and ham he had tried hard to cut according to her taste, placing it in her lap and going back to draw a tankard of foaming amber liquid from a quaint hogshead in a corner.

But Virginia waved the froth crowned pewter away with a smile and a pretty gesture. "My head has already proved not strong enough for your mountains. I'm sure it isn't strong enough for your beer. Have you some nice cold water?"

The young man laughed and shrugged his shoulders. "Our water here is fit only for the outside of the body," he explained. "To us that's no great deprivation, as we're all true Rhaetians for our beer. But now on your account I'm sorry."

"Perhaps you have some milk?" suggested Virginia. "I love milk. And I could scarcely count the cows, they were so many, as I came up the mountain from Alleheiligen."

"It's true there are plenty of cows about," replied her host, "and I could easily catch one. But if I fetch the beast here can you milk it?"

"Dear me, no! Surely you, a great strong man, would never stand by and let a weak girl do that? Oh, I almost wish I hadn't thought of the milk if I'm not to have it. I long for it so much!"

"You shall have the milk, lady," returned the chamois hunter. "I"—

"How good you are!" exclaimed the princess. "It will be more than nice of you. But—I don't want you to think that I'm giving you all this trouble for nothing. Here's something just to show that I appreciate it and to remember me by."

She would not look up, though she longed to see what expression the dark face wore, but kept her eyes upon her hand, from which she slowly withdrew a ring. It fitted tightly, for she had had it made years ago, before her slender fingers had finished growing. When at last she had pulled off the jeweled circlet of gold she held it up temptingly.

"What I have done and anything I may yet do is a pleasure," said the hunter. "But, after all, you have learned little of Rhaetia if you think that we mountain men ever take payment from those to whom we've been able to show hospitality."

"Ah, but I'm not talking of payment," pleaded the princess. "I wish only to be sure that you mayn't forget the first woman who, you tell me, has ever entered this door."

The young man looked at the door, not at the girl. "It is impossible that I should forget," said he, almost stiffly.

"Still, it will hurt me if you refuse my ring," went on Virginia. "Please at least come and see what it's like."

He obeyed, and as she still held up the ring he took it from her that he might examine it more closely.

"The crest of Rhaetia!" he exclaimed as his eyes fell upon a shield of black and green enamel set with small but exceedingly brilliant white diamonds. "How curious! I've been wondering that you should speak our language so well"—

"It's not curious at all really, but very simple," said Virginia. "Now," with a faint tremor in her voice "press the spring on the left side of the shield, and when you've seen what's underneath I think you'll feel that you can't loyally refuse to accept my little offering."

The bronze forefinger found a pin's point protuberance of gold, and, pressing sharply, the shield flew up to reveal a tiny but exquisitely painted miniature of Leopold I. of Rhaetia.

The chamois hunter stared at it and did not speak, but the blood came up to his brown forehead.

"You're surprised?" asked Virginia.

"I am surprised, because I'd been led to suppose that you thought poorly of our emperor."

"Poorly! Now, what could have given you that impression?"

"Why, you made fun of his opinion of women."

"Who am I, pray, to 'make fun' of an emperor's opinion, even in a matter he would consider so unimportant? On the contrary, I confess that I, like most other girls I know, am deeply interested in your great Leopold if only because I—we—would be charitably minded and teach him better. As for the ring, they sell things more or less of this sort in several of the Rhaetian cities I've passed through on my way here. Didn't you know that?"

"No, lady, I have never seen one like it."

"And, as for my knowledge of Rhaetian, I've always been interested in the study of languages. Languages are fascinating to conquer, and then the literature of your country is so splendid one must be able to read it at first hand. Now, you'll have to say 'Yes' to the ring, won't you, and keep it for your emperor's sake, if not for mine?"

"May I not keep it for yours as well?"

"Yes, if you please. And—about the milk?"

The chamois hunter caught up a gaudy jug and without further words went out. When he had gone the princess rose, and, taking the knife he had used to cut the bread and ham, she kissed the handle on the place where his fingers had grasped it. "You're a very silly girl, Virginia, my dear," she said. "But, oh, how you do love him! How he is worth loving, and—what a glorious hour you're having!"

For ten minutes she sat alone, perhaps more. Then the door was flung open and her host flung himself in, no longer with the gay air which had sat like a cloak upon him, but hot and sulky, the jug in his hand as empty as when he had gone out.

"I have failed," he said gloomily—"I have failed, though I promised you the milk."

"Couldn't you find a cow?" asked Virginia.

"Oh, yes, I found one, more than one, and caught them too. I even forced them to stand still and grasped them by their udders, but not a drop of milk would come down. Abominable brutes! I would gladly have killed them, but that would have given you no milk."

For her life the princess could not help laughing, his air was so desperate. If only those cows could have known who he was and appreciated the honor!

"Pray, pray don't mind," she begged. "You have done more than most men could have done. After all, I'll have a glass of Rhaetian beer with you to drink your health and that of your emperor. I wonder, by the bye, if he, who prides himself on doing all things well, can milk a cow."

"If not, he should learn," said the chamois hunter viciously. "There's no knowing, it seems, when one may need the strangest accomplishments and be humiliated for lack of them."

"No, not humiliated," Virginia assured him. "It's always instructive to find out one's limitations. And you have been most good to me. See, while you were gone I ate the slice of bread and ham you cut, and never did a meal taste better. Now, you must have many things to do which I've made you leave undone. I've trespassed on you too long."

"Indeed, lady, it seems scarcely a moment since you came, and I have no work to do," the chamois hunter insisted.

"But I've a friend waiting for me on the mountain," the princess confessed. "Luckily she had her lunch and will have eaten it, and her guidebook must have kept her happy for awhile, but by this time I'm afraid she's anxious and would be coming in search of me if she dared to stir. I must go. Will you tell me by what name I shall remember my rescuer when I recall this day?"

"They named me for the emperor."

"They were wise. It suits you. Then I shall think of you as Leopold. Leopold what? But, no; don't tell me the other name. It can't be good enough to match the first, for, do you know, I admire the name of Leopold more than any other I've ever heard? So, Leopold, will you shake hands for good-by?"

The strong hand came out eagerly and pressed hers. "Thank you, gna' fraulein, but it's not goodby yet. You must let me help you back by the way you came and down the mountain."

"Will you really? I dared not ask as much for fear, in spite of your kind hospitality, you were, like your noble namesake, a hater of women."

"That's too hard a word even for an emperor, lady, while, as for me, if I ever said to myself 'No woman can be of much good to a man as a real companion' I'm ready to unsay it."

"I'm glad. Then you shall come with me and help me, and you shall help my friend, who is so good and so strongminded that perhaps she may make you think even better of our sex. If you will you shall be our guide down to Alleheiligen, where we've been staying at the inn since last night. Besides all that, if you wish to be very good you may carry our cloaks and rucksacks, which seem so heavy to us, but will be nothing for your strong shoulders."

The face of the chamois hunter changed and changed again with such amused appreciation of her demands that Virginia turned her head away lest she should laugh and thus let him guess that she held the key to the inner situation.

His willingness to become a cowherd and now a beast of burden for the foreign lady he had seen and her friend whom he had not seen was indubitably genuine. He was pleased with the adventure, if not as pleased as his initiated companion. For the next few hours the hunter was free, it seemed. He said that he had been out since early dawn and had had good luck. Later he had returned to the hut for a meal and a rest, while his friends went down to the village on business which concerned them all. As they had not come back, they were probably amusing themselves, and when he had given the ladies all the assistance in his power he would join them.

The way down was easy to Virginia, with his hand to help her when it was needed, and she had never been so happy in her twenty years. But, after all, she asked herself as they neared the place where she had left Miss Portman, what had she accomplished? What impression was she leaving? Would this radiant morning of adventure do her good or harm with Leopold when Miss Mowbray should meet him later in some conventional way through letters of introduction to court dignitaries at Kronburg?

While she wondered his voice broke into her questionings.

"I hope, gna' fraulein," the chamois hunter was saying, almost shyly and as if by an effort, "that you won't go away from our country thinking that we Rhaetians are so cold of heart and blood as you've seemed to fancy. We men of the mountains may be different from others you have seen, but we're not more cold. The torrent of our blood may sleep for a season under ice, but when the spring comes, as it must, and the ice melts, then the torrent gushes forth the more hotly because it has not spent its strength before."

"I shall remember your words," said the princess, "for my journal of Rhaetia. And, now, here's my poor friend. I shall have to make her a thousand excuses."

For her journal of Rhaetia! For a moment the man looked wistful, as if it were a pain to him that he would have no other place in her thoughts nor time to win it since there sat a lady in a tourist's hat and eyeglasses and the episode was practically closed. He looked, too, as if there was something he would add to his last words if he could, but Miss Portman saw the two advancing figures and shrieked a shrill cry of thanksgiving.

"Oh, I have been so dreadfully anxious!" she groaned. "What has kept you? Have you had an accident? Thank heaven you're here! I began to give up hope of ever seeing you again alive."

"Perhaps you never would if it hadn't been for the help of this good and brave new friend of mine," said Virginia, hurrying into explanations. "I got into dreadful difficulties up there. It was much worse than I thought, but Leopold"—Miss Portman started, stared with her nearsighted eyes at the tall brown man with bare knees, colored, gasped and swallowed hard after a quick glance at her princess—"Leopold happened to be near, came to my help and saved me. Wasn't it providential? Oh, I assure you, Leopold is a monarch—of chamois hunters! Give him your cloak and rucksack to carry with mine, dear Miss Manchester. He's kind enough to say that he'll guide us all the way down to Alleheiligen, and I'm glad to accept his service."

Miss Portman, a devout royalist and firm believer in the right of kings, grew crimson, her nose especially, as it invariably did at moments of strong emotion.

The emperor of Rhaetia here, caught and trapped, like Pegasus bound to the plow, and forced to carry luggage as if he were a common porter—worst of all, her insignificant, twice wretched luggage!

She would have protested if she had dared, but she did not dare and was

Miss Portman started.

obliged to see that imperial form—unmistakably imperial, it seemed to her, though masquerading in humble guise—loaded down with her rucksack and her large golf cape, with galoches in the pocket.

Crushed under the magnitude of her discovery, dazzled by the surprising brilliance of the princess' capture, stupefied by the fear of saying or doing the wrong thing and ruining her idol's bizarre triumph, poor Miss Portman staggered as Virginia helped her to her feet.

"Why, you're cramped with sitting so long," cried the princess. "Be careful. But Leopold will give you his arm. Leopold will take you down, won't you, Leopold?"

And the imperial eagle, who had hoped for better things, meekly allowed another link to his chain.

(To be Continued.)

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IN the Superior Court of the State of Washington for Thurston County.

Frank Mears, plaintiff, vs. E. E. Dale, defendant.

Under and by virtue of an execution issued out of the Superior Court of the State of Washington for Thurston county, dated on the 29th day of April, 1908, on a judgment and decree filed in said Court on the 18th day of February, 1908, in favor of the above named plaintiff and against the above named defendant for the sum of nineteen and 25-100 ($19.25) dollars and to me as Sheriff of Thurston county, directed and delivered, and by which I am commanded to make the above named amount out of the property of the above named defendant.

Therefore I have levied upon and will sell at public auction according to law the following described property, to-wit:

Lot 12 of Wyman's subdivision of block 68 of Swan's addition to the Town now City of Olympia, Washington, according to the official plat thereof now on file in the office of the Auditor of the said Thurston County.

Now, therefore, public notice is hereby given that I will sell the above described property to the highest bidder for cash according to law on the 13th day of June, 1908, at the hour of ten in the forenoon of said day at the front door of the Court House in Olympia, or so much thereof as may be necessary to raise sufficient to satisfy the above named amount together with increased costs.

Dated this 9th day of May, 1908.

T. F. CONNOLLY,
Sheriff of Thurston county, Washington.

Date of first publication, May 15, 1908. 5t

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