

The Girl and the Bill

By Bannister Merwin

ILLUSTRATIONS BY RAY WALTERS



CHAPTER X

"Find the American."

As Orme laid the table cover flat back to its normal position and turned to get himself into a comfortable attitude his hand touched something soft and yielding. For a moment he was startled, but the sound of a throaty purr and the realization that his hand was resting on fur soon told him that his companion in hiding was a cat.

He wondered whether the Japanese liked cats. From what little he knew of Japanese character it did not seem to him consistent that they should care for animals. Yet here was a peaceful tabby.

In order to accommodate himself to his close quarters, Orme had to double his legs back, resting on his thigh and supporting the upper part of his body with one hand. The cat settled down against his knees.

The light filtered redly through the table cover. To his satisfaction he found a small hole, evidently a burn made by some careless smoker. Through this aperture he could look out. His range of vision included the greater part of the room, excepting the side on which the table stood. He could see the window and several chairs, as well as the door into the adjoining room, but the door into the hall was out of view at his right.

While he was looking about, a man came from the next room. Doubtless it was Arima; at least Orme recognized the Japanese who had overcome him in the porter's office at the Pere Marquette the night before. He stepped into the room with a little smile on his brown face. Seating himself in a chair, he fixed his heels in the rungs and clasped his hands about his knees. He was waiting.

The black eyes rested on the table. To Orme they seemed to be boring through the cover that concealed him, and he hardly dared to breathe, but the Asiatic appeared to observe nothing unusual. Orme wondered at those eyes. He had often said of the Chinese and Japanese that he did not trust them for the reason that a Caucasian could never tell what they were thinking about. The racial difference in thought processes he found disconcerting.

A bell rang. Arima went to the door, out of view, and opened it. Orme could hear persons mounting the stairs, and presently the voice of Arima said, "Come in," and the visitors entered the room.

Pausing near the door for a moment, they exchanged a few whispered sentences. Then one of them walked over toward the window. Orme repressed an exclamation for the figure that came into view was the figure of Portol-dapper, assertive.

He was dressed as on the night before, and his precious high hat was hugged close to his shoulder. His eyes roved with an exaggerated assumption of innocent cunning. Presently he threw over his shoulder a rapid sentence in a foreign tongue. It sounded like Spanish, and Orme inferred that it was a dialect of Portuguese.

The answer came from an oily tongue; the voice was Alcatraz's. "What were the South Americans doing here? It was only a few hours since the Japanese had set on Alcatraz, yet here he was in a stronghold of the enemy—and expected! Had the astute diplomat fallen into a trap?" Arima was standing, not far from Portol. His face was expressionless. Looking from Alcatraz to Portol and back again, he said in English: "The most honorable gentleman will soon be here."

"That is right," said Alcatraz suavely. "Mention no names."

Arima nodded slightly. The silence grew intense. Orme was relieved when it was broken by another ring of the bell and Arima slipped to the door. Alcatraz moved over beside Portol and whispered a few words, scarcely moving his lips. His face looked yellow by daylight, and the eyes behind the gold spectacles were heavy-lidded and almost closed. Orme inferred that the night had been sleepless for Alcatraz.

These observations were interrupted by the entrance of the newcomer. He paused at the threshold, evidently to salute, for Portol and Alcatraz bowed low. Then quick steps crossed the floor and into view came a nervous Japanese, but undoubtedly a man of great dignity. His manner of sharp authority would be hard to dispute, for it was supported by a personality that seemed to be stronger than Alcatraz's. Who he was Orme could not guess, but that he was somebody of importance it was easy to see.

The stranger bowed again and addressed himself to Alcatraz. The conversation was carried on in French.

"It is well that you communicated with me, sir," he said, "we were working at cross-purposes when, in reality, our interests were identical."

Alcatraz bowed. "I came to that conclusion late last night," he said. "I do not deny that it would have pleased me to carry the affair through by myself."

"Yes, your position would then have been stronger." The Japanese smiled faintly.

"But," continued Alcatraz, with a slight grimace, "the activity of your men made that impossible. I have no lieutenants such as yours." He shot an ugly gleam at Portol, whose sudden assumption of feigned humility was in strange contrast to his usual self-assurance.

"As we hold the documents"—the Japanese spoke with great distinctness—"you will necessarily admit our advantage. That means, you will understand, a smaller commission on the next contract."

Alcatraz twisted his face into the semblance of a smile. "Not too small, or we cannot undertake the work," he said.

"No, not too small," the stranger agreed calmly, "but smaller than the last. You must not forget that there are others who would gladly do the same work."

"Yes, but at best they cannot get the terms we get."

"Possibly. That is a matter still to be determined. Meantime we have assumed that our interests in this document are identical. Let us test it."

"One word first," said Alcatraz. "I take it that, if our interests are sympathetic with yours, we may count on your protection?"

"Most assuredly."



It Now Remained to Find Something to Take the Place of the Abstracted Documents.

stranger joined him. They talked in an undertone for several minutes, Alcatraz gesturing volubly, the stranger nodding now and then, and interjecting a few brief words.

What was going on was more than ever a mystery to Orme. The stranger's reference to "the next contract" strengthened the surmise that the documents in the envelope were connected with a South American trade concession. Alcatraz had plainly concluded that his interests and those of the Japanese were identical. He must have communicated with the strange Japanese the first thing in the morning. That would account for his failure to call at the Pere Marquette at ten o'clock. Learning that the bill had been taken from Orme, and that the coveted documents were in the possession of the Japanese, he had no object in keeping his appointment. As for Portol, he had become a figure of minor importance.

But Orme did not let these questions long engage him, for he had made a discovery. Where his head bumped against the table, the board above him—solid, as he had supposed—reticulated strangely. At the moment he could not investigate, but as soon as the cat had satisfied the suspicions of Portol, and Alcatraz and the stranger had retired to their corner, he twisted his head back and examined the wood above him.

The table had a drawer. From the room outside this drawer was concealed by the cloth cover, and Orme had not suspected its existence. Now, the table was cheaply made. The drawer was shallow and narrow, and it was held in position, under the table, by an open framework of wood. When it was pushed in, it was stopped at the right place by two cleats; there was no solid strip to prevent its being pushed in too far.

Orme put his hand to the back of the drawer. There was a space between it and the table-top. Cautiously he pushed his hand through the opening. His fingers touched a flat object—a pad of paper, or—the thought made his heart beat—a large, thick envelope. Could Arima have used the drawer as a hiding place?

Slowly he got the edge of the object between his first and second fingers and drew it a little way toward the back of the drawer. A moment later he had it under his eyes.

Yes, it was a long envelope of heavy linen, and there were bulky papers within. The gummed flap was toward him. He was interested to note that, important though the documents seemed to be, the envelope was not sealed with wax.

He remembered that the girl had said: her father's name was written on the address side. He had only to turn it over to learn who she was. In the circumstances such an act might be justified. But she had not wished him to know—and he would even now respect her wish and keep his own promise to her first.

His first thought was to slip the envelope into his pocket, but it occurred to him in time that, if it did indeed contain the documents concerning which Alcatraz and the stranger were disputing, it would be sought and missed long before he could escape from the room. So, taking a pencil from his pocket, he inserted it under the corner of the flap and slowly worked the flap free. The strength of the linen prevented any tearing.

marvelous power of concentration on subtle issues that had enabled him to play so brilliantly the role of international under-dog. At last he smiled and spoke.

"Find the American," he said. Suddenly there was a knock at the door. Arima looked at his master, who nodded indifferently and said: "Yes, see who it is. It can do no harm now."

Orme heard the door open. What startled him first was the action of Portol, who stepped back to the wall, his jaw dropping, his face a picture of consternation and fright. Alcatraz and the stranger showed amazement.

For a moment they stood thus in silence, and then from the door came a clear voice: "What? You here, Mr. Alcatraz? And the Japanese minister?"

Orme almost sprang from his hiding place. The voice was the voice of the girl!

OLD THEORY IS EXPLODED

Women Do Not Want Masterful Husbands Who Will Beat Them Now and Then.

When it comes to a question of disposition, says Robert Haven Schaffer, in his series of marriage articles now running in Success Magazine, 85 per cent of the girls in the business world, stenographers, clerks, and so on, would like their husbands easy-going rather than masterful, as compared with 75 per cent in the factories.

Readers of the first article in this series were perhaps surprised to find nobody demanding in his future husband what seems to many one of the indispensable qualifications for marriage happiness: that is the capacity for comradeship. Not one factory girl mentioned this quality and only a very few girls of business. One bookkeeper in St. Louis added as an after-thought:

"He must treat me as a companion; not as a doll baby." A railroad cashier, a good-looking enough fellow, if I'd a' know him anywhere else, I might a' took him when he asked me.

"Thank goodness I was up there with him all day long and I had a chance to find out. That's the way to learn a man. If some of those girls that get married could stay all day with a man for while, every day in the week, there wouldn't be so many mismates.

"Oh, there wasn't nothin' really wrong with him, only when his line o' talk played out there wasn't anything more to say. We'd sit up there silent as crows. Say, maybe I wasn't glad when I got a transfer. If we'd been married now, it wouldn't have been so easy to get a transfer."

From the Farewell Address. Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. Let it simply be asked where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation deserts the oaths which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.—George Washington.

Generous Official. To illustrate the attention to duty on the part of officials and their sense of justice, this story was told by a well-known writer: "Last summer I spent several months in a nearby place with my family, and was driven back to New York by the mosquitoes in October. The tax officers, regardless of the fact that I was only a summer guest, sent me a \$10,000 personal tax bill; I took the first opportunity to call at the office to protest. The affable official asked me: 'What is your business?' 'German newspaper man and poet,' I said. Then he put heavy lines across the face of the tax bill, and with a look which betokened his goodness of heart handed me 50 cents."

To Dissolve the Union of stomach, liver and kidney troubles and cure biliousness and malaria, take Electric Bitters. Guaranteed, 50 cents. McBride & Will Drug Company.

Flower Garden With P's. Did you ever think what a beautiful and long-flowering garden one might have with just the P's? Sweet peas, poppies, pansies, petunias, phlox, geraniums. With no more flowering plants than these one may have flowers every day from June 'till frost, all of them being easy to grow and continuous producers of brilliant flowers.

Your complexion is well as your temper is rendered miserable by a disordered liver. By taking Chamberlain's Stomach and Liver Tablets you can improve both. Sold by all dealers.

Get Rid of Lice. Lice on animals sap away their vitality and hence rob you of money. It is cheaper to invest \$10 or \$20 in a dipping vat and all than to lose many times as much from the ravages of lice. A good way to kill lice on dogs is to rub crude oil on points where they will rub against it. Wrap the post with rough burlap and saturate the burlap with oil.

Plowman Pleds His Weary Way.

To turn a single acre of ground with a 12-inch plow requires 8 1/2 miles of heavy furrow travel, a writer in the World's Work says. In plowing one square mile of land the solitary plowman and his horses must walk 6,250 miles. It would be easier (and the distance is less) to walk around the earth at the equator (if there were no ocean) than to follow a plow turning a prairie of five square miles. To equal our national tale of plowing—the work of myriads of teams, each using force sufficient to move seven tons over a good stone road—it would take an army of 4,560 plowmen to travel as far as from the earth to the moon and back again. For the world's yearly labor of this kind it would send about 50,000 men on that same 500,000-mile journey.

A Wary Chap. There is a Milwaukee man who has been prosperous in business, and whose note is worth something with in reason that he is willing to write it for. Not so long ago he received a check from the United States government for ten dollars to his firm. He took it to the postoffice to have it cashed.

The clerk said he could cash it if the man would "indorse" it. "Oh, no, you don't," the man answered. "I promised my partner when I went into business with him that I would never indorse any paper in the firm's name."

"Well, then, just write the name of the firm across the back; that will answer the purpose," the wily clerk persuaded.

"Sure, I'll do that," he said.

MERCHANT HAS PROPER IDEA

Doesn't Like the Way Big City Stores Are Run and Tells Why.

The summer visitor in a small seaport town was amazed and amused at the assortment of merchandise displayed in the little store at the head of the wharf.

The showcase was devoted to an assortment of candy at one end and a lot of cigars and tobacco at the other end, and no barrier between. Next to

"Harry" said the traveling man's wife. "I have a letter from a friend in New York. He says that your customers here? The drummer said no."

"Then you don't know anybody in that town?"

"Not intimately. Of course I know everybody there by sight."

"Why, how can that be?"

"They all come down to the railway station when the five o'clock afternoon passenger train stops to let the overland express go by."—Youth's Companion.

What Can City Boys Do?

City boys get no chance at all in the trades. The argument of the unions is that they are being constantly subjected to the pressure from the country, where the boys learn the trades and then come to the city. But what are our city boys to do? Shall they all grow up to be cigarette-smoking clerks and loafers? I would like to see some practical use made of the manual training facilities in the schools for which the city has put out so much money. Teach the boys in the schools the useful trades. We can't all be clerks or bookkeepers or lecturers. Some must work.—Ladies'

Protecting the Men. "All women of whatever age, rank, profession or degree, whether virgins, maids or widows, that shall from after the passing of this act impose upon or betray into matrimony any of His Majesty's male subjects by license, pawns, cosmetics, washes, artificial teeth, false hair, Spanish wool, iron stays, hoops, high-heeled shoes or bolstered hips, shall incur the penalty of the laws now in force against witchcraft, sorcery and such like misdemeanors, and that the marriage, upon conviction, shall stand null and void."—An act of Parliament in the reign of Charles II.

A Fat Reducer. Before starting to starve or drug off your extra layers of fat try the effect of this simple exercise, which is a great reducer of adipose tissue.

Standing with knees close together, rise on the tips of the toes, and, at the same time, elevate the chest and force down the palms of the hands as if pushing hard on a board. Bend the hands up slightly so the muscular strain comes on the fleshy part of the hand close to the wrist.

Do this whenever you happen to think of it during the day, and you will soon notice a decided difference in your flesh, particularly in a prominent abdomen.

Dangerous Surgery. In the abdominal region is prevented by the use of Dr. King's New Life Pills, the painless purifiers. 25c. McBride & Will Drug Co.

Classified Advertisements

One cent a word each insertion—No ad received for less than 15 cents.

WANTED.

Wanted—Slightly used, in good repair, Old or Smith-Premier typewriter. Must be cheap. Address G. N. R., care T-R.

Wanted—Plain sewing, by day or at home. Mrs. I. E. Dunder, phone 271 Green.

Wanted—Southern Minnesota farm lands. Must be bargain; want to deal direct with owners; give all particulars, legal description and location. Address Box X, Appleton, Iowa.

Wanted—We want immediately women to peel tomatoes and men to husk corn. We prefer Marshalltown people rather than to bring from outside. Good wages can be made at both jobs. Western Grocer Company Mills, canning department.

Pearls Wanted—Send by registered mail. If my offer is not satisfactory, will return. Lathrop Produce Company, Belmont, Iowa.

Wanted—Leave your wants at the Marshalltown Employment Agency. Phone 783.

Wanted—Let your wants be known. Carl's Employment Agency. Phone 950.

HELP WANTED—MALE. Wanted—A bright young man for office work. Salary \$50 or better. Carl's Employment Agency.

Wanted—A young man for store. Steady place, chance for promotion. Carl's Employment Agency.

Wanted—Men to learn barber trade. Practice furnished by free work, careful instructions by experts. Few weeks completes. Tools given, board secured. Experience in shops before completing. Catalog Chicago, Ill.

Wanted—Practical tinner for job and shop work. Abbott & Son.

Wanted—A good all round man at country work. Write or phone J. C. Koontz, Marshalltown.

Wanted—Barber at once; must be a first class workman, no boozers need apply. Ernest A. Franklin, Traer, Iowa.

HELP WANTED—FEMALE. Wanted—Girl for general housework. No washing, 202 South Fourth avenue, or phone 588 red.

Wanted—Good dining girl. Henry Sundell, North Center street.

Wanted—Housekeeper in family of three, in town. Perry Oviatt, Belmont, Iowa.

Wanted—Girls at Palace laundry.

Wanted—Middle-aged women for general work, \$25 per month. Phone or write J. C. Koontz, county farm, Marshalltown.

Wanted—Good experienced dressmaker of good character in connection with millinery store. References required. Address P. O. Box 134, Union, Iowa.

For Sale or Trade—Relinquishment on a homestead. Clarence Fober, Stout, Iowa.

For Sale—Waste feed at canning factory. A No. 1 feed for dairy stock or hogs. Western Grocery Mills canning department.

For Sale—On easy payments, bar fixtures—new and second hand billiard and pool tables, billiard and bowling supplies. We lead in cheap prices. The Brunswick-Balke-Collender Company, Marshalltown, Iowa.

LIVESTOCK—HORSES, ETC. For Sale—Four cows. Sarah Ford, Rural No. 6.

FOR SALE—CITY PROPERTY. For Sale—House and lot at 308 North Fifth street.

For Sale—309 West Railroad street 5-room house and barn. Will sell cheap. C. Hollingsworth, 196 East Main street.

For Sale—Stock of groceries and china in large double block; best location in city; rear driveways and hitching place. Cement basement. Business \$35,000 to \$40,000 per year. Only a cash proposition considered. D. S. Good Grocery Company.

For Sale—Blacksmith shop, good five-room house, four lots, situated at \$4 per month. Other business included as reason for selling. B. E. Dawson, Green Mountain, Iowa.

For Sale—Good business building and living rooms, paved street, best location, price \$3,500; about six blocks east of court house on East Main street, Marshalltown, Iowa. Address J-7, care T-R.

IOWA LANDS. For Sale—128.81 acres of land. S. R. Piper, LeGrand, Iowa.

For Sale or Trade—120 acres fairly improved. R. E. Graham, 1608 Summit street, phone 78 White.

For Sale—I have just listed nine farms in Iowa. I can show any size you want. J. C. Hollingsworth, 196 East Main street.

For Sale—Fine 200-acre farm, six and one-half miles east of Marshalltown, Iowa. Inquire of J. J. Brower, R. R. No. 5.

For Sale—160 acres, improved, Marquette township. Inquire J. L. Carney.

For Sale—Improved Iowa farms from \$50 to \$100 per acre. W. O. T. Olson, Riceville, Iowa.

For Sale—Iowa farm. One of the best improved 160 acre farms. Level, good, grove, fine buildings, 1/2 mile of Havelock, Iowa. D. H. Eyer, Clarion, Iowa.

For Sale—Iowa lands in Howard county, \$50 to \$90 per acre. Large list on request. Address Spaulding & O'Donnell, Elma, Iowa.

For Sale—Cheap to settle an estate, 320 acres. Best farm land in Franklin county, Iowa; improved; 1 mile from town. Inquire W. H. White, 2136 Jackson Blvd., Chicago.

For Sale—Iowa land, 240 acres good Iowa land, \$50 per acre. Owner, Mrs. E. E. Overbaugh, Renwick, Iowa.

For Sale—Cheap Good improved 160 acre farm near Havelock, Iowa. Finely improved 50 acre farm near Plover, Iowa. Best of reasons given for selling. Address A-17, care T-R.

dress J. B. Bates, Woodbury Bldg., Marshalltown, Iowa.

MINNESOTA LAND. Bumper crops in Lyon, Redwood and Murray counties. Come and let us show you the best crops of corn, wheat, oats, barley, rye and flax of any section of the west. We have a large list of fine improved farms that we are offering at from \$40 to \$60 per acre, any one of which will make the buyer a profit of at least \$10 per acre before winter. If you can't come now, write us stating what size farm you want and kind, and we will send you the descriptions of some choice bargains. Bon-nalle & Bartlett, Tracy, Minn.

COME TO KANSAS. The heart of the corn and clover belt, close to Kansas City markets. Fine homes at from \$50 to \$75 per acre. Write for booklet. Princeton Land Company, Princeton, Kan.

TO RENT. To Rent—Furnished room, 211 North First street.

To Rent—Ten-room house furnished or unfurnished, 1110 West Main street. Phone 237 Red.

To Rent—Modern 7-room cottage 913 West Church street; 6-room flat corner First and State. B. F. Cummings.

To Rent—Four good rooms for light housekeeping, 7 South Eighth street.

To Rent—Modern cottage, 305 West State. Inquire of C. C. Trine.

To Rent—House, 205 West Church street.

To Rent—Rooms for guests, or house-keeping, furnished or unfurnished, cheap, 209 North Second avenue.

To Rent—Suits office rooms, also single room. Binford block, J. A. Cook.

To Rent—Furnished rooms in modern house with every convenience, 701 West State street.

To Rent—Five-room house on south side, 1 S. Pinkie.

To Rent—Front room, furnished, strictly modern, 110 North Center street.

To Rent—Furnished room for one or two gentlemen. Modern, 202 North 21st avenue.

To Rent—My store room at feed yard, 110 East Church. Good location for grocery. G. A. Schick.

STOLEN. Stolen—Bicycle taken Monday evening from front of Meeker Laundry building. Reward will be paid for return to George Willinger.

MISCELLANEOUS. Advantages of Oregon—32-page book explaining what each of the 34 counties is adapted for, gives amount of government land open to homestead in each county; map attached, 21x28, showing new railroad and towns, including eastern and central Oregon, in different colors, issued March 1, 1916; latest map in U. S.; gives homestead and desert claim laws; how to secure 320 or 160 acres free; also general description of Oregon. Mailed 25c. Nimmo & Runey, 213 Hamilton Bldg., Portland, Ore.

Southwest Iowa is a fertile field for the man with anything to sell that has merit. It is thickly populated and prosperous. Seventy-five thousand people in southwest Iowa read the daily Nonpareil. It is the great want ad medium of this section. It is known far and wide as a producer of results. If you have land or anything else to sell or trade, get in touch with southwest Iowa thru the Nonpareil. Write for our special offer. Nonpareil, Council Bluffs, Iowa.

CUT RATE SHIPPING. Cut rates on household goods to Pacific coast and other points. Superior service at reduced rates. The Transfer Company, Minneapolis, Minn.