

policemen would have to tell the story. I appeal to your generosity, your friendship; yes, even your protestation of love."

"And you will not accompany me?"
"Assuredly not."
"What will you do? I must know, Mademoiselle; I cannot desert you to any uncertainty."

"But I have told you already. Oh! why waste all this time! I will go to friends who will conceal me until it is safe for me to leave Chicago—friends, whom the police will never suspect of harboring me. The place I mean is not far away."

"And I am never to see you again? or hear from you? You are willing to drop thus completely out of my life?"

The long lashes drooped over her eyes, her face turned away.
"I—I have no expectation of anything else," she said finally, "although it would be pleasant to be assured you had met with no accident."

I caught her hand again.
"You will give me an address?"
I exclaimed eagerly, "some place where a letter will surely reach you?"

She laughed, lifting her face again to the light.

"Why, of course, I will do that. How persistent you are; one would almost believe you actually in earnest. Care of Miss Sadler, the 'Press,' will reach me safely. Now that I have paid the price, will you go?"

"Yes; you leave me no choice. Do I part with you here?"

"No, we will go together to the corner three blocks south. There is an all-night drug store there where I can phone for a cab. Then you can take a car going directly past where your monoplane is. Let us go."

We walked in the glare of light down the graveled driveway, leaving the silenced motor behind, securely concealed by the shadow of the high wall. Late as the hour was, in the still night, we advanced without thought of any immediate danger. Indeed the occurrence of the past few hours was more like a dream than a reality to our minds. The very swiftness of events had left us dazed; my own thoughts were more concerned with her than with our pursuers, near as they might be.

Once she asked:
"Do you suppose Brandt will go there to-night?"

"Where? to the hangar?"
"Yes; it would be disastrous if they arrived there first."

I shrugged my shoulders.
"The fortunes of war, Mademoiselle," I replied rather indifferently, "but I imagine they will seek for me at the hotel first. An attempt to get away by air would scarcely occur to any of them as possible."

"I presume not," she agreed softly.
"That is why it may succeed, but— but somehow the very thought frightens me."

We came out upon the street, rounding the corner post of stone, and confronted a policeman, who stepped forth from the shadow, with a gesture of his night-stick, in command to halt.

CHAPTER XV.

HIGH SPEED FORWARD.

The fellow stared suspiciously into our faces, and I felt the girl's fingers clasp my arm as if in signal for me to restrain myself. The scrutiny was over in a moment, neither of us stirring, waiting for his first word to disclose whether or not he knew we were wanted by his superiors. My own brain was a blur; I could think of no way to reasonably explain our presence there at such an hour. That the policeman was also puzzled was evident by the expression on his face. Our appearance was not that of night prowlers, of street waifs.

"What's ther two ov'yer doing, dodgin' round here in ther dark?" he questioned stilly. "I never saw nuthin' ov yer till just now. Come now, what's it mane?"

His eyes were upon me, but it was the woman who, with quick wit, answered:

"That is all right, officer," and she opened her small hand-bag, and extracted a card. "This will explain."

He took it rather doubtfully, and held it up to the light, studying out the letters slowly.

"It's it a raporter ye are! So thet's it; OI've heard ov female raporters many a toime, but yez th' first specimen thet iver floated my way. Th' 'Press' was it ye workin' on? Not much av a papper ter my onk'. An' th' other wan was he a raporter too?"

She nodded pleasantly, but I could feel her form trembling with excitement.
"What's th' matter with th' man then? Sure has he lost his voice?"

She drew a quick breath, still holding tight to my arm.
"He is a German, connected with the 'Zeitung'; he speaks English very imperfectly."

The officer's eyes swept our faces, as though not entirely satisfied with this explanation, yet one thing was clear, we were unrecognized; he had received no orders regarding our arrest.

"What was the two av yez doing out here at this toime o' night?"

"Interviewing the German Ambassador. He is spending the night at the Senator's home in the park, and we were sent out to talk with him. That is why this gentleman accompanied me, because he speaks the language. It is late, officer, and we are in a hurry to get in our copy. Can you tell me where the nearest public phone station is?"

He jerked his thumb back over his shoulder, returning the menacing night-stick to his belt.

"It's two blocks thet way, Miss," more courtesy in his tones, "where yer see the red light. OI'm th'v' station."

We started off together, and I caught the questioning flash of her eyes. The same thought, and fear was in both our minds. We had walked a block, the officer slightly in advance, before she spoke again.

"How often do you report to your station?"

"'Bout ivery hoir; OI'm a bit late this toime, ivy a plain drunk ter take home, over on Prairie Avenue."

"You receive instructions then, I suppose?"

"Plenty o' 'em, Miss," and he shot back a glance at her that closed the conversation, "the sargint gives up information with grate freedom."

The situation was a ticklish one. Her eyes were grave and thoughtful in the gleam of the street lights, but I could venture no suggestion because of the strangeness of the locality. One or two daring plans for evading the officer flashed through my mind, but I could not venture putting either into operation without first consulting my lady. This was a case for her quick, feminine wit, rather than my bungling methods. Yet that we both feared the same thing was apparent.

The officer had not communicated with his station for an hour. We had not been absent from the house that length of time. If an alarm had been made; if we were wanted, the information would be given him at once, as soon as he pulled the box, and reported. That he would instantly recognize us as being the parties sought was beyond question. The description Brandt could furnish of us both would be conclusive and accurate. The dull-est cop on the force could not mistake our identity. Besides it was clear this fellow was not entirely satisfied even now as to the truth of the story Miss Probyn had told—the extreme lateness of the hour, our sudden appearance on foot, was calculated to arouse suspicion. In all probability he would not entirely lose sight of us until more thoroughly convinced. Violence was impossible, as he was evidently a powerful fellow, well armed, and besides we were approaching a street car line, and a corner, where, even at this early hour, men were awake and stirring.

As we drew nearer the change was very apparent. There was a newsstand on the curb, the Italian boy in

charge already busily arranging his first supply of morning papers in glare of the arc light. Behind him was an all-night drug store open for business, and two doors away a restaurant, one of its tables occupied by three men who had evidently been making a night of it. Out in front was a taxi-cab, the chauffeur nodding sleepily in one corner of his seat. Beyond a few stores exhibited lighted windows, although the doors were closed. A street car jangled past, containing a few passengers, pausing at the corner to let off a fellow in bedraggled evening dress, half sens over, and then went noisily on again. The policeman watched the belated one's uncertain progress up a side street with professional solicitude.

"Lives in the third house," he explained gravely. "He'll make it all right. Your phone is there in th' drug-store, lady. It's th' other corner for me."

He started across, but I noticed glanced back to be sure of what we were doing. There was no car in sight approaching the corner, and we could not vanish on foot in the brief time required to pull his box. Besides he merely vaguely suspicioned us, without any thought that we were actually wanted. I turned with her into the drug-store door, dimly wondering

what possible means of escape from this predicament had occurred to her. I had no scheme, no plan. The thought of that policeman approaching the box dominated my brain. Would he come rushing back to put us under arrest?

"Stay here," she murmured, without venturing to glance aside. "I'll step within, so he can feel safe. Be ready to crank that taxi, and handle the chauffeur. You understand?"

"Yes."
"It will all have to be done in a minute. Run the instant the officer turns to insert his key in the box."

She slipped away, and I stood there, every nerve strained, watching. The burly figure was plainly visible, and I could discern each movement. On the opposite curb he stopped and stared back through the gloom toward the lights. What he saw was sufficiently reassuring for she was leaning bending over the telephone book, and I was leaning carelessly against the frame of the window, apparently idly waiting for the lady to reappear. No doubt with that glance the fellow dismissed his last vague suspicion of us—to all appearance we were exactly what we had claimed to be. He turned to the box, and dragged out his key, his broad back toward the drug-store; then bent forward to fit the key into the

The Path Master

(Continued from page 6.)

picket fence and lay close, hugging his shot-gun.

"I tell you I intend to pay my taxes," cried McCloud, desperately. "Don't force me to shoot!"

The sullen rage was rising; he strove to crush it back, to think of the little path-master.

"For God's sake, go back!" he pleaded, hoarsely.

Suddenly Byram started running towards the house, and McCloud clapped his rifle to his cheek and fired. Four flashes from the road answered his shot, but Byram was down in the grass screaming, and McCloud had vanished into his house.

Charge after charge of buckshot tore through the filmy clapboards; the moonlight was brightened by pale flashes, and the timbered hills echoed the cracking shots. After a while no more shots were fired, and presently a voice broke out in the stillness:

"Be yew layin' low, or be yew dead, Dan McCloud?"

There was no answer.
"Or be yew playin' foxy possum," continued the voice, with nasal rising inflection.

Byram began to groan and crawl towards the road.

"Let him alone," he moaned; "let him alone. He's got grit, if he hain't got nothin' else."

"Air yew done for?" demanded Tansey, soberly.

"No, no," groaned Byram. "I'm jest winged. He done it, an' he was right. Didn't he say he'd pay his taxes? He's plumb right. Let him alone, or he'll come out an' murder us all!"

Byram's voice ceased; Tansey mounted the dark slope, peering among the brambles, treading carefully.

"Whar be ye, Byram?" he bawled. But it was ten minutes before he found the young man, quite dead, in the long grass.

With an oath Tansey flung up his gun and drove a charge of buckshot crashing through the front door. The

door quivered; the last echoes of the shot died out; silence followed.

Then the shattered door swung open slowly, and McCloud reeled out, still clutching his rifle. He tried to raise it; he could not, and it fell clattering. Tansey covered him with his shot-gun, cursing him fiercely. "Up with them hands o' yours!" he snarled; but McCloud only muttered and began to rock and sway in the doorway.

Tansey came up to him, shot-gun in hand. "Yew hev done fur Byram," he said; "yew air bound to set in the chair for this."

McCloud, leaning against the sill, looked at him with heavy eyes.
"It's well enough for you," he muttered; "you are only a savage; but Byram went to college—and so did I—and we are nothing but savages like you, after all—nothing but savages—"

He collapsed and slid to the ground, lying hunched up across the threshold.

"I want to see the path-master!" he cried, sharply.

A shadow fell across the shot-riddled door snow-white in the moonshine.
"She's here," said the game-warden, soberly.

But McCloud had started talking and muttering to himself.

Towards midnight the whippoorwill began a breathless calling from the garden.

McCloud opened his eyes.

"Who is that?" he asked, irritably.

"He's looney," whispered Tansey; "he gabbles to hisself."

The little path-master knelt beside him. He stared at her stonily.

"It is I," she whispered.

"Is it you, little path-master?" he said, in an altered voice. Then something came into his filmy eyes which she knew was a smile.

"I wanted to tell you," he began, "I will work out my taxes—some-where—for you—"

The path-master hid her white face in her hands. Presently the collie dog came and laid his head on her shoulder.

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