

The CZAR'S SPY

The Mystery of a Silent Love
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CHAPTER XVII—Continued.

"In sheer desperation I went to the ministry of the interior and sought an interview with the baron, who, when I told him of the disaster, appeared greatly concerned, and went at once to the police department to make inquiry. Next day, however, he came to me with the news that the charge against my mother had been proved by a statement of the woman Shiproff herself, and that she had already started on her long journey to Siberia—she had been exiled to one of those dreaded Arctic settlements beyond Yakutsk, a place where it is almost eternal winter, and where the conditions of life are such that half the convicts are insane. The baron, however, declared that, as my father's friend, it was his duty to act as guardian to me, and that as my father had been English I ought to be put to an English school. Therefore, with his self-assumed title of uncle, he took me to Chichester. For years I remained there, until one day he came suddenly and fetched me away, taking me over to Helmsingfors—for the czar had now appointed him governor-general to Finland. There, for the first time, he introduced me to his son, Michael, a pimply-faced lieutenant of cavalry, and said in a most decisive manner that I must marry him. I naturally refused to marry a man of whom I knew so little, whereupon, finding me obdurate, he quickly altered his tactics and became kindness itself, saying that as I was young he would allow me a year in which to make up my mind.

"A week later, while living in the palace at Helmsingfors, I overheard a conversation between the governor-general and his son, which revealed to me a staggering truth that I had never suspected. It was Oberg himself who had denounced my mother to the minister of the interior, and had made those cruel, baseless charges against her! Then I discerned the reason. She being exiled, her fortune, as well as that of my father, came to me. The reason they were scheming for Michael to marry me was in order to obtain control of my money, and then, after the necessary legal formalities, I should, on a trumped-up charge of conspiracy, share the same fate as my mother had done."

"The infernal scoundrel!" I ejaculated, when I read her words while from Jack, who had been looking over my shoulder, escaped a fierce and forcible vow of vengeance.

"The baron took me with him to Petersburg when he went on official business, and we remained there nearly a month," the narrative went on. "While there I received a secret message from 'The Red Priest,' the unseen and unknown power of nihilism, who has for so many years baffled the police. I went to see him, and he revealed to me how Oberg had contrived to have my mother banished upon a false charge. He warned me against the man who had pretended to be my father's friend, and also told me that he had known my father intimately, and that if I got into any further difficulty I was to communicate with him and he would assist me. Oberg took me back to Helmsingfors a few months later, and in summer we went to England. He was a marvellously clever diplomatist. His tactics he could change at will. When I was at school he was rough and brutal in his manner towards me, as he was to all; but now he seemed to be endeavoring to inspire my confidence by treating me with kindly regard and pleasant affability.

"In London, at Claridge's, we met my old schoolfellow Muriel and her father—a friend of Oberg's—and in response to their invitation went for a cruise on their yacht, the Iris, from Southampton. Our party was a very pleasant one, and included Woodroffe and Chater, while our cruise across the Bay of Biscay and along the Portuguese coast proved most delightful. One night, while we were lying outside Lisbon, Woodroffe and Chater, together with Olinio, went ashore, and when they returned in the early hours of the morning they awoke me by crossing the deck above my head. Then I heard someone outside my cabin door working as though with a screwdriver, unscrewing a screw from the woodwork. This aroused my interest, and next day I made a minute examination of the paneling, where, in one part, I found two small brass screws that had evidently been recently removed. Therefore I succeeded in getting hold of a screwdriver from the carpenter's shop, and next night, when everyone was asleep, I crept out and unscrewed the panel, when to my surprise I saw that the secret cavity behind was filled with beautiful jewelry, diamond collars, tiaras, necklets, fine pearls, emeralds and turquoises, all thrown in indiscriminately.

"I replaced the panel and kept careful watch. At Marseilles, where we called, more jewelry and a heavy bagful of plate was brought aboard and secreted behind another panel. Then I knew that the men were thieves. 'Well, one hot summer's night we

were lying off Naples, and as it was a grand festa ashore and there was to be a gala performance at the theater, Leithcourt took a box and the whole party were rowed ashore. The crew were also given shore-leave for the evening, but as the great heat had upset me I declined to accompany the theater party and remained on board with one sailor named Wilson to constitute the watch. We had anchored about half a mile from land, and earlier in the evening the baron had gone ashore to send telegrams to Russia and had not returned.

"About ten o'clock I went below to try and sleep, but I had a slight attack of fever, and was unable. Therefore I redressed and sat with the light still out, gazing across the starlit bay. Presently from my port-hole I saw a shoreboat approaching, and recognized in it the baron with a well-dressed stranger. They both came on board, and the boatman, having been paid, and the baron and his friend, then pulled back to the shore. Then the baron and his friend—a dark, middle-aged, full-bearded man, evidently a person of refinement—went below to the saloon, and after a few moments called to the man Wilson who was on watch, and gave him a glass of whisky and water, which he took up on deck to drink at his leisure.

"The unusual character of my fellow-guests on board that craft was such that my suspicion was constantly on the alert, therefore curiosity tempted me to creep along and peep in at the crack of the door standing ajar. A closer view revealed the fact that the stranger was a high Russian official to whom I had once been introduced at the government palace at Helmsingfors, the Privy Councillor and Senator Paul Polovostoff. They were smoking together, and were discussing in Russian the means by which he, Polovostoff, had arranged to obtain plans of some new British fortifications at Gibraltar. From what he said, it seemed that some Russian woman, married to an Englishman, a captain in the garrison, had been impressed into the secret service against her will, but that she had, in order to save herself, promised to obtain the photographs and plans that were required. I heard the Englishman's name, and I resolved to take some steps to inform him in secret of the intentions of the Russian agent.

"Presently the two men took fresh cigars, ascended on deck, and cast themselves in the long cane chairs amidships. Still all curiosity to hear further details on the ingenious piece of espionage against my own nation, I took off my shoes and crept up to a spot where I could crouch concealed and overhear their conversation, for the Italian night was calm and still. They talked mainly about affairs in Finland, and with some of Oberg's expressions of opinion Polovostoff ventured to differ. Suddenly, while the privy councillor lay back in his chair pulling thoughtfully at his cigar, there was a bright, blood-red flash, a dull report, and a man's short, agonized cry. Startled, I leaped around the corner of the deckhouse, when, to my abject horror, I saw under the electric rays the czar's privy councillor lying sideways in his chair with part of his face blown away. Then the hideous truth in an instant became apparent. The cigar which Oberg had pressed upon him down in the saloon had exploded, and the small missile concealed inside the diabolical contrivance had passed upwards into his brain. For a moment I stood utterly stupefied, yet as I looked I saw the baron, in a paroxysm of rage, shake his fist in the dead man's face and cry with a fearful imprecation: 'You hound! You have plotted to replace me in the czar's favor. You intended to become governor-general of Finland! You knew certain facts which you intended to put before his majesty, knowing that the revelation would result in my disgrace and downfall. But, you infernal cur, you did not know that those who attempt to thwart Xavier Oberg either die by accident or go for life to Kajana or the mines!' And he spurned the body with his foot and laughed to himself as he gloated over his dastardly crime.

"I watched his rage, unable to utter a single word. I saw him, after he had searched the dead man's pockets, raise the inert body with its awful featureless face and drag it to the bulwarks. Then I rushed forward and faced him.

"In an instant he sprang at me, and I screamed. But no aid came. The man Wilson was sleeping soundly in the bows, for the whisky he had given him had been doctored," went on the narrative. "Upon his face was a fierce, murderous look such as I had never seen before. 'You!' he screamed, his dark eyes starting from their sockets as he realized that I had been a witness of his cowardly crime. 'You have spied upon me, girl!' he hissed, 'and you shall die also!' I sank upon my knees imploring him to spare me, but he only laughed at my entreaty. 'See!' he cried, 'as you saw how he enjoyed his cigar, you may as well see this!' And with an effort he raised the dead body in his arms, poised it

for a moment on the vessel's side, and then, with a hoarse laugh of triumph, heaved it into the sea. There was a splash, and then we were alone. 'And you!' he cried in a fierce voice—you who have spied upon me—you will follow! The water there will close your chatter mouth!' I shrieked, begged, and implored, but his trembling hands were upon my throat. First he dragged me to my feet, then he threw me upon my knees, and at last, with that grim brutality which characterizes him, he directed me to go and get a mop and bucket from the forecastle and remove the dark red stains from the chair and deck. This he actually forced me to do, gloating over my horror as I removed for him the traces of his cowardly crime. Then, with his hand upon my shoulder, he said: 'Girl! Recollect that you keep tonight's work secret. If not, you shall die a death more painful than that dog has died—one in which you shall experience all the tortures of the damned. Recollect, not a single word—or death! Now, go to your cabin, and never pry into my affairs again.'

"A great sensation was caused when the body was discovered. The squadron was lying off Naples about a week after the Iris had left, and while we were there the body was washed up near Sorrento. At first but little notice was taken of it, but by the marks on the dead man's linen it was discovered that he was Polovostoff, one of the highest Russian officials, who had, it was said, been warned on several occasions by the nihilists. It was, therefore, concluded that his death had been due to nihilist vengeance.

"The real reason why the baron spared my life was because, if I died, my fortune would pass to a distant cousin living at Durham. Yet his manner towards me was now most polite and pleasant—a change that I felt boded no good. He intended to obtain my money by marrying me to his son Michael, whose evil reputation as a gambler was well known in Petersburg. We traveled back to Finland in the autumn, and in the winter he took me to stay with his sister in Nisee. Yet almost daily he referred to that tragedy at Naples, and threatened me with death if ever I uttered a single word, or even admitted that I had ever seen the man who was his rival and his victim."

"Last June," commenced another paragraph, "we were in Helmsingfors,



When Everyone Was Asleep I Crept Out and Unscrewed the Panel.

when one day the baron called me suddenly and told me to prepare for a journey. We were to cross to Stockholm and thence to Hull, where the Iris was awaiting us, for Mr. Leithcourt and Muriel had invited us for a summer cruise to the Greek islands. We boarded the yacht much against my will, yet I was powerless, and dare not allege the facts that I had already established concerning our fellow-guests. Muriel and I, it seems, were taken merely in order to blind the shore-guards and customs officials as to the real nature of the vessel, which went safely out of the channel, was repainted and renamed the Lola, until her exterior presented quite a different appearance from the Iris.

"The port of Leghorn was our first place of call, and for some reason we ran purposely upon a sandbank and were towed off by Italian torpedo boats. Next evening you came on board and dined. Muriel and myself having strict orders not to show ourselves. We, however, watched you, and I saw you pick up my photograph which I had that day torn up. Then immediately after you had left Woodroffe, Chater and Mackintosh went ashore and were away a couple of hours in the middle of the night. Just before they returned the baron rapped at the door of my cabin saying that he must go ashore, and telling me to dress and accompany him. He would never allow me the luxury of a maid, fearing, I suppose, that she might learn too much. In obedience I rose and dressed, and when I went forth he told me to get my traveling cloak and dressing bag, adding that he was compelled to go north, as to continue the cruise would occupy too much time. He was due back at his official duties, he said. As soon as I had

finished packing, the three men returned to the vessel, all of them looking dark-faced and disappointed. Woodroffe whispered some words to the baron, after which I went to Muriel's cabin and wished her good-by, and we went ashore, taking the train first to Colle Salvetti, thence to Pisa, and afterwards to the beautiful old city of Siena, which I had so longed to see. One of my teeth gave me pain, and the baron, after a couple of days at the Hotel de Sienne, took me to a queer-looking little old Italian—a dentist who, he said, enjoyed an excellent reputation. I was quick to notice that the two men had met before, and as I sat in the chair and gas was given to me I saw them exchange meaningful glances. In a few moments I became insensible, but when I awoke an hour later I was astounded to feel a curious soreness in my ears. My tongue, too, seemed paralyzed, and in a few moments the awful truth dawned upon me. I had been rendered deaf and dumb!

"The baron pretended to be greatly concerned about me. It went on, 'but I quickly realized that I had been the victim of a foul and dastardly plot, and that he had conceived it, fearing lest I might speak the truth concerning the Privy Councillor Polovostoff, for of exposure he lived in constant fear. To encompass my end would be against his own interests, as he would lose my fortune, so he had silenced me lest I should reveal the terrible truth concerning both him and his associates. He was not rich, and I have reason to believe that from time to time he gave information as to persons who possessed valuable jewels, and thus shared in the plunder obtained by those on the yacht.

"From Italy we traveled on to Berlin, thence to Petersburg, and back to dreary Helmsingfors, journeying as quickly as we could, yet never allowing an opportunity of being with strangers. Both my ears and tongue were very painful, but I said nothing. He was surely a fiend in a black coat, and my only thought now was how to escape him. From the moment when that so-called dentist had ruined my hearing and deprived me of power of speech, he kept me aloof from everyone. The fear that I should reveal everything had apparently grown to haunt him, and he had conceived that terrible mode of silencing my lips. But the true depth of his villainy was not yet apparent until I was back in Finland.

"On the night of our arrival he called in his son, who had traveled with us from Petersburg, and in writing again demanded that I should marry him. I wrote my reply—a firm refusal. He struck the table angrily with his fist and wrote saying that I should either marry his son or die. Then next day, while walking alone out beyond the town of Helmsingfors, as I often used to do, I was arrested upon the false charge of an attempt upon the life of Madame Vakuroff and transported, without trial, to the terrible fortress of Kajana, some of the horrors of which you have yourself experienced. The charge against me was necessary before I could be incarcerated there, but once within, it was the scheme of the governor-general to obtain my consent to the marriage by threats and by the constant terrors of the place. He even went so far as to obtain a ministerial order for my banishment to Saghalien and brought it to me to Kajana, declaring that if in one month I did not consent he should allow me to be sent to exile. While I was in Kajana he knew that his secret was safe, therefore by every means in his power he urged me to consent to the odious union.

"All the rest is known to you—how Providence directed you to me as my deliverer, and how Woodroffe followed you in secret, and pretending to be my friend, took me with him to Petersburg. He had learned of my fortune from the baron, and intended to marry me himself. But now that all is over it appears to me like some terrible dream I never believed that so much iniquity existed in the world, or that men could fight a defenseless woman with such double-dealing and cruel ingenuity. Ah! the tortures I endured in Kajana are beyond human conception. Yet surely Oberg and Woodroffe will obtain their well-merited deserts—if not in this world, then in the world to come. Are we not taught by Holy Writ to forgive our enemies? Therefore, let us forgive."

"There my silent love's strange story ended. A bald, straightforward narrative that held us all for some moments absolutely speechless—one of the strangest and most startling stories ever revealed.

She watched every expression of my countenance, and then, which I had finished reading and placed my arm tenderly about her slim waist, she raised her beautiful face to mine to receive the passionate kiss I imprinted upon those soft, full lips.

"This, of course, makes everything plain," exclaimed Jack. "Polovostoff was a very liberal minded and upright official who was greatly in the favor of the czar, and a serious rival to Oberg, whose drastic and merciless methods in Finland were not exactly approved by the emperor. The baron was well aware of this, and by ingeniously enticing him on board the Iris he succeeded by handing that small bomb concealed in a cigar—nihilist contrivance that had probably been seized by his police in Finland—in freeing himself from the rival who was destined to occupy his post."

"Yes," I said with a sigh. "The mystery is cleared up, it is true, yet my poor Elma is still the victim." And I kissed my love passionately again and again upon the lips.

THE END.

Afternoon Costume for the Informal Dance



This easy and comfortable-looking afternoon gown of taffeta with a lace bodice, might lack just the requisite crispness if it were not worn with a dashing hat that draws its inspiration from Spain. This last item in the costume is decidedly new in style and one sees this Spanish idea in evidence wherever the new millinery modes are displayed.

The hat is made of velvet over a frame having a flat brim and a soft, puffed crown. A narrow band of velvet encircles the crown at its base. Small silk-covered balls are set about the brim-edge and two sprays of flowers, in vivid-colored velvet, set in dark foliage, are applied flat to the brim. It is posed at a saucy angle on the head by means of a bandeau, which lifts it at the left side. A scarf of soft silk is draped over the bandeau and finished with a loop and two pointed ends that hang toward the back. They are weighted with the little balls set about the point.

The bodice of black lace over white chiffon is cut in kimono fashion, with sleeves extending below the elbow. The open throat is finished with

small revers of velvet, and a strap of velvet extends down the front. Little pearl buttons, set close together, and a narrow fancy braid at each side, decorate it.

The skirt is plain and gathered with a little standing ruffle about the waist line. The bottom is finished with shallow scallop bound with the taffeta. It is rather short and, altogether, the dress goes well with the very new hat which is worn to such advantage with it. This costume is an excellent one for general afternoon wear and will please those who are fond of informal dances—the devotees of the dansant.

Embroidered Dress.

A very attractive dress for a child is made in one piece. A collar and bolero effect are gained by means of embroidery work done in outline stitches and French knots. If the work is done with colored thread on white linen or fine pique, the two features stand out more prominently. A crushed girde of linen to match the color of thread used for embroidery is placed rather far below the natural waist line.

A Hat for Every Day and One for Sunday



Although there is no end of variety in the shapes of hats for little girls, the small-brimmed hat promises to continue as a favorite. At least five out of six of all the hats shown may be relied upon to carry a soft, moderately large crown upon a gently drooping brim. The brims are more or less wide and more or less flexible, the wider ones providing the floppy, gracefully curved lines about the face that suit girlhood so well.

A hat for daily wear, to and from school, or otherwise, and one of velvet for dress-up are shown here. They are selections from a number of thoroughly practical hats for little girls. The hat for school wear is made up in several novel weaves in woolen fabrics and has a plain crown and a flexible brim. Machine stitching is an important factor in its make-up. The brim may be turned up or down at any position. The crown is quite plain and finished at its base with a band of the same material as the hat. Colored contrasts and novel patterns in the material are the factors that place this hat above the commonplace.

The hat at the right is of brown velvet with soft puffed crown and plain brim that suggests the poke-bonnet shape. A full ruching of tan-colored satin ribbon is gathered about the joining of the crown and brim. Near its

lower edge it is gathered in a tiny ruffle and sewed to the upper brim. There is a full bow with short-standing loops and longer hanging ones at the back. One small, metal blossom rests on the brim at the left side.

There is nothing startlingly new or unusual in these hats although the season offers some very pretty innovations for those who are looking for them. There are odd four-cornered brims and hats with crowns made in sections that are laced together with silk cord. There are transparent brims and occasionally one sees birds or flowers, or little chickens, or ducklings, cut out from velvet and applied to velvet hats in a contrasting color.

JULIA BOTTOMLEY.

Blue and White Footwear.

Black and white footwear has been rather overdone in the last few months, although it is still worn by very smart women. But blue and white footwear is not only newer, but less likely to be overdone than black and white. There are some charming blue pumps (navy blue of course), touched with pipings and bands of white kid, and these are worn with navy blue silk stockings, showing white clocking or narrow stripes of white. This blue footwear is, of course, worn with navy blue frocks.

GIRL SEES HORSE OF ORANGE HUE

Oddly Radiant Beast Is Discovered in Chicago by Indiana Girl.

'TOO MUCH!' SHE CRIES

Other Peculiarities of Animal Are Canary-Colored Eyes, Sky-Blue Mane and Green Tail—Carried Cleaver in Foot.

Chicago.—An orange-colored horse—absolutely not the scarlet one that haunted Evanston last February, but orange-colored, vivid, like flame—has been observed lately on the South side of Chicago, especially, if not exclusively, in the neighborhood of Fifty-third street and Indiana avenue.

A riot call brought a wagon load of police to that corner immediately after the first appearance of the oddly radiant beast. The shrill screams of a woman who never had seen a horse like that before aroused the whole neighborhood. But the horse disappeared as quickly as it had come.

Have Only Description.

Detectives who have sought to identify the animal and to question its owner if he should be found, say that they have not themselves seen the horse, but have obtained an eye-witness description from a young lady, as follows:

"The horse is quite different from the type ordinarily seen in Chicago. The orange-colored body is merely one of the peculiarities. In addition I noticed that the eyes are canary yellow, the mane sky-blue, the tail a tropic shade of green, the tongue jet black and pointed like a fishhook, and the teeth—presumably artificial—are of polished gold."

Meat Cleaver in Forefoot.

Questioned more closely, the young woman remembered that the beast limped a little with its right forefoot, and that the left forefoot, oddly shaped like the hand of a gorilla, brandished an ordinary meat cleaver such as would be observed in any butcher shop. This item, the cleaver, is believed to be the only tangible clue to the identity of the beast. At a late hour last night, however, the police had not received any complaint of a missing cleaver.

The Young Lady Said Also That the Lips of the Horse, when she saw it, were parted in "a sort of leering grin."

But this testimony is not taken at par, for authorities are agreed that a horse laugh never is a leer. It is therefore supposed that she is mistaken about the lips.

Had Late Supper In Loop.

It was Monday night that the young woman saw the horse. It must have been nearly midnight, too, for she



Never Had Seen Horse Like That Before.

says she had a late supper that evening in the loop district, and she did not see the horse until some time after she had retired.

The lady's home is not in Chicago, but in Peru, Ind. She was visiting friends here and enjoying the taste of city life greatly, very greatly, immensely. In fact, it would be difficult to exaggerate the degree of the enjoyment.

But in Peru, it is said, the oldest inhabitant never has seen a horse like the one she saw here. Some of the village residents, it is true, have seen other curious animals, such as centipede-mice, sixteen-ounce spiders and dachshunds longer than the village fire hose, but never an orange-colored horse with gold teeth.

The appearance of the horse was, indeed, so strange that she screamed hysterically when she saw it, and it was her cries that brought the matter to the attention of the police.

Diamond Found in Pancake.

Newcastle, Ind.—Mrs. C. C. Hyde recently missed a diamond set out of a ring. After a diligent search about the home the set was given up as lost. A few mornings ago pancakes were served for breakfast. One member of the family found something hard in his mouth and on examination it proved to be the lost diamond. It is supposed the set dropped from the ring into some butter and was conveyed to the cake.