

UPSTAGE

(Continued from page 6, Col. 5.)

the direction of the brownstone house. On the top step she dropped.

Not a cent in the world! Diamond gone! Car that was no good!! And no place to put it!!!

Early in her career as a motorist she had discovered that cars have a way of gathering expense like dust by the wayside. There had been extra tires and repairs even while you were learning to run it. It fairly ate up gas. You needed twice as much as she had reckoned.

And now—this!

Hopelessly she gazed at the point far down the block where the policeman stood guard. From time to time his glance roved impatiently—and when at last he swung on his way, leaving the mite unprotected, Sallie knew there was nothing to do but sit there and watch it all through the night.

Then it was that the wells which had run dry filled once more, overflowed. Huddled in a corner of the stoop, she fastened her wiled gaze on a spot of blue parked close to Broadway and wondered what she was going to do with it when morning arrived.

She came to drowsily as a clock struck one and something heavy descended on her shoulders. It pulled her upright, shook the sleep from her eyes and a cry from her lips. The policeman!

"What are you doing out here?" She strained forward.

"Jimmie!!!"

"What are you doing, I say?"

"Jimmie—is it—is it—you?"

"Answer me!"

"I—I—oh, I can't believe it—you—you!" Then panic seized her. "Jimmie—don't—don't go again. Wait—let me tell you! I've been praying you'd give me the chance to tell you. I—it was true—I did buy all those things myself. I did—I did! I was afraid you'd be ashamed of me."

He stood glaring silently down at her. When his voice did come, it was thick and tense.

"Didn't you know it was just those old clothes of yours that convinced me the story you gave me was straight?"

"But the girls always made fun of them—and I wanted to look right for you. And you thought—oh, Jimmie, what you thought has nearly killed me!"

"What could a man who knew his Broadway think when you appeared all of a sudden in a million dollars' worth of finery?"

"But it wasn't true! I took all my money out of the bank to look nice just for you, Jimmie—if you go again—the way you did—I'll die!"

He gave no direct answer. Instead, he gripped her shoulders until they ached.

"What are you doing out here this time of night? Answer me that!"

The car! Her eyes raced down the block. There it stood, untouched.

"I—I hocked my diamond, Jimmie, and bought a car. I made the girls think you were going to give me one and I didn't want them to know that you—you—"

She turned away.

"So I hocked the ring—and—and got—that—"

He followed her eyes to where a spot of blue reposed near the corner.

"And now it won't go and I haven't any money to put it anywhere. They have been keeping it for me where I bought it and I never thought about garaging. So—so when it broke down, I just had to sit here and watch it all night."

The rushing words halted. She looked up at the face bent above hers. If Mr. James Fowler Patterson had a sense of humor—and he had—the comedy of the present situation failed to bring it to light. He stood and gazed down into the small tired face lifted with such desperate appeal.

"I—"

"Jimmie, won't you believe me this time—please?"

He bent closer. "If I tell you I could take a gun this minute and blow out what little brains I've got, will you believe me? Will you?" He did not give her time to answer. "I deserve it—shootings too good. Why, even if you dressed up like a Christmas window, only a saphead that's wasted all his life chasing up and down Broadway could have made such a mistake. What's love, anyhow? And sweetheart—I do love you. These weeks without you have proved how much."

She closed her eyes as the words came.

"Why," he plunged on, "my dad had given me up as a bad job—said he was through! And six weeks ago I went to him and told him I'd found the girl who could make a man of me—asked him to take me on at the Patterson Iron Works. I didn't care in what capacity. He thought I was joking—but I put on overalls and rolled up my sleeves. Because I wanted to be good enough for you. That was just about the time you showed up in all that gorgeousness. And I let the idea get hold of me—Don't cry, honey, I can't stand it!"

There was an instant of potent silence, then:

"How did you happen to come past here tonight—Jimmie?" came smoothly.

"I've been coming past here every night."

"Then why—why did you stay away from the theatre?"

"I didn't—for long. Wanted to—but couldn't! I've watched you come out from around the corner—" He broke off. "Sweetness—you've been looking awfully sick."

"I've been awfully lonesome."

He lifted her chin.

"Baby—"

"Yes, Jimmie—dear—"

"Will you forgive me?"

"Jimmie—"

"Yes, Baby—dear—"

"Will you wait here till I get into my old rig, then take me for a ride in my new car?"—Cosmopolitan Magazine.

The Blind Man's Eye.

(Continued from page 2, Col. 6.)

reading table, turning over the magazines there; abandoning them, he gazed about as if bored; then, with a wholly casual manner, he came toward Eaton and took the seat beside him.

"Rotten weather, isn't it?" Avery observed somewhat ungraciously.

Eaton could not well avoid a reply. "It's been getting worse," he commented, "ever since we left Seattle."

"We're running into it, apparently." Again Avery looked toward Eaton and waited.

"Yes—lucky if we get through."

The conversation on Avery's part was patently forced; and it was equally forced on Eaton's; nevertheless it continued. Avery introduced the war and other subjects upon which men, thrown together for a time, are accustomed to exchange opinions. But Avery did not do it easily or naturally; he plainly was of the caste whose pose it is to repel, not seek, overtures toward a chance acquaintance. His lack of practice was perfectly obvious when at last he asked directly: "Beg pardon, but I don't think I know your name."

Eaton was obliged to give it.

"Mine's Avery," the other offered, "perhaps you heard it when we were getting our berths assigned."

And again the conversation, enjoyed by neither of them, went on. Finally the girl at the end of the car rose and passed them, as though leaving the car. Avery looked up.

"Where are you going, Harry?"

"I think someone ought to be with Father."

"I'll go in just a minute."

She had halted almost in front of them. Avery, hesitating as though he did not know what he ought to do, finally arose; and as Eaton observed



She Had Halted Almost in Front of Them.

that Avery, having introduced himself, appeared now to consider it his duty to present Eaton to Harriet Dorne, Eaton also arose. Avery murmured the names. Harriet Dorne, resting her hand on the back of Avery's chair, joined in the conversation. As he replied easily and interestedly to a comment of Eaton's, Avery suddenly reminded her of her father. After a minute, when Avery—still ungracious and still irritated over something which Eaton could not guess—rather abruptly left them, she took Avery's seat; and Eaton dropped into his chair beside her.

Now, this whole proceeding—though within the convention which, forbidding a girl to make a man's acquaintance directly, says nothing against her making it through the medium of another man—had been so unnaturally done that Eaton understood that Harriet Dorne deliberately had arranged to make his acquaintance, and that Avery, angry and objecting, had been overruled.

She seemed to Eaton less alertly boyish now than she had looked an hour before when they had boarded the train. Her cheeks were smoothly rounded, her lips rather full, her inches very long. He could not look up without looking directly at her, for her chair, which had not been moved since Avery left it, was at an angle with his own.

To avoid the appearance of studying her too openly, he turned slightly, so that his gaze went past her to the white turmoil outside the windows.

"It's wonderful," she said, "isn't it?"

"You mean the storm?" A twinkle of amusement came to Eaton's eyes. "It would be more interesting if it allowed a little more to be seen. At present there is nothing visible but snow."

"Is that the only way it affects you? An artist would think of it as a background for contrasts—a thing to sketch or paint; a writer as something to be written down in words."

Eaton understood. She could not more plainly have asked him what he was.

"And an engineer, I suppose," he said, easily, "would think of it only as an element to be included in his formulas—an x, or an a, or a b, to be put in somewhere and square-rooted or squared so that the roof-truss he was figuring should not buckle under its weight."

"Oh—so that is the way you were thinking of it?"

"You mean," Eaton challenged her directly, "am I an engineer?"

"Are you?"

"Oh, no; I was only talking in pure generalities, just as you were."

"Let us go on, then," she said gayly.

"I see I can't conceal from you that I am doing you the honor to wonder what you are. A lawyer would think of it in the light of damage it might create and the subsequent possibilities of litigation." She made a little pause. "A business man would take it into account, as he has to take into account all things in nature or human; it would delay transportation, or harm or aid the winter wheat."

"Or stop competition somewhere," he observed, more interested.

The flash of satisfaction which came to her face and as quickly was checked and faded showed him she thought she was on the right track.

"Business," she said, still lightly, "will—how is it the newspapers put it?—will marshal its cohorts; it will send out its generals in command of brigades of snowplows, its colonels in command of regiments of snow shovellers and its spies to discover and to bring back word of the effect upon the crops."

"You talk," he said, "as if business were a war."

"Isn't it?—like war, but war in higher terms."

"In higher terms?" he questioned, attempting to make his tone like hers, but a sudden bitterness now was betrayed by it. "Or in lower?"

"Why, in higher," she declared, "demanding greater courage, greater devotion, greater determination, greater self-sacrifice. Recruiting officers can pick any man off the streets and make a good soldier of him, but no one could be so sure of finding a satisfactory employee in that way. Doesn't that show that daily life, the everyday business of earning a living and bearing one's share in the workaday world, demands greater qualities than war?"

Her face had flushed eagerly as she spoke; a darker, livid flush answered her words on his.

"But the opportunities for evil are greater, too," he asserted almost fiercely. "How many of those men you speak of on the streets have been deliberately, mercilessly, even savagely sacrificed to some business expediency, their future destroyed, their hope killed!" Some storm of passion, whose meaning she could not divine, was sweeping him.

"You mean," she asked after an instant's silence, "that you, Mr. Eaton, have been sacrificed in such a way?"

"I am still talking in generalities," he denied ineffectively.

He saw that she sensed the untruthfulness of these last words. Her smooth young forehead and her eyes were shadowy with thought. Eaton was uneasily silent. Finally Harriet Dorne seemed to have made her decision.

"I think you should meet my father, Mr. Eaton," she said. "Would you like to?"

He did not reply at once. He knew that his delay was causing her to study him now with great surprise.

"I would like to meet him, yes," he said, "but"—he hesitated, tried to avoid answer without offending her, but already he had affronted her—"but not now, Miss Dorne."

She stared at him, rebuffed and chilled.

"You mean—" The sentence, obviously, was one she felt it better not to finish. As though he recognized that now she must wish the conversation to end, he got up. She rose stiffly.

"I'll see you into your car, if you're returning there," he offered.

Neither spoke, as he went with her into the next car; and at the section where her father sat, Eaton bowed silently, nodded to Avery, who coldly returned his nod, and left her. Eaton went on into his own car and sat down, his thoughts in mad confusion.

How near he had come to talking to this girl about himself, even though he had felt from the first that that was what she was trying to make him do! Was he losing his common sense? Was the self-command on which he had so counted that he had dared to take this train deserting him? He felt that he must not see Harriet Dorne again alone. In Avery he had recognized, by that instinct which so strangely divines the personalities one meets, an enemy from the start; Dorne's attitude toward him, of course, was not yet defined; as for Harriet Dorne—he could not tell whether she was prepared to be his enemy or friend.

Eaton went into the men's compartment of his car, where he sat smoking till after the train was under way again. The porter looked in upon him there to ask if he wished his berth made up now; Eaton nodded assent, and fifteen minutes later, dropping



Eaton Went Into the Men's Compart-

Santa Says

BUY IT

AT

Faibles

ment of His Car, Where He Sat Smoking Till After the Train Was Under Way Again.

the cold end of his cigar and going out into the car, he found the berth ready for him. A half hour later the passage of someone through the aisle and the sudden dimming of the crack of light which showed above the curtains told him that the lights in the car had been turned down. Eaton closed his eyes, but sleep was far from him.

Presently he began to feel the train beginning to labor with the increasing grade and the deepening snow. It was nearing the mountains, and the weather was getting colder and the storm more severe. Eaton lifted the curtain from the window beside him and leaned on one elbow to look out. The train was running through a bleak, white desolation; no light and no sign of habitation showed anywhere. The events of the day ran through his mind again with sinister suggestion. He had taken that train for a certain definite, dangerous purpose which required his remaining as obscure and as inconspicuous as possible; yet already he had been singled out for attention. So far, he was sure, he had received no more than that—attention, curiosity concerning him. He had not suffered recognition; but that might come at any moment. Could he risk longer waiting to act?

He dropped on his back on the bed and lay with his hands clasped under his head, his eyes staring up at the roof of the car.

In the card-room of the observation car, playing and conversation still went on for a time; then it diminished as one by one the passengers went away to bed. Connery, looking into this car, found it empty and the porter cleaning up; he slowly passed on forward through the train, stopping momentarily in the rear Pullman opposite the berth of the passenger whom President Jarvis had commended to his care. His scrutiny of the car told him all was correct here; the even breathing within the berth assured him the passengers slept.

Connery had been becoming more certain hour by hour all through the evening that they were going to have great difficulty in getting the train through. Though he knew by President Jarvis' note that the officials of the road must be watching the progress of this especial train with particular interest, he had received no train orders from the west for several hours. His inquiry at the last stop had told him the reason for this; the telegraph wires to the west had gone down. To the east communication was still open, but how long it would remain so he could not guess. Here in the deep heart of the great mountains—they had passed the Idaho boundary line into Montana—they were getting the full effect of the storm; their progress, increasingly slow, was broken by stops which were becoming frequent and longer as they struggled on.

(To be Continued.)

"Mrs. Black certainly avenged herself on me for neglecting her invitation."

"How?"

"She remarked to everybody that I was old enough to be a trifle forgetful."

Santa Says

BUY IT

AT

Faibles

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