AN OUTSIDER—A GIRL'S ADVENTURES IN SOCIAL PIRACY

By LOUIS JOSEPH VANCE, Author of "The Lone Wolf," "The Brass Bowl," Etc.

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STNOPSIS.

Sally Manvers, 27 years old, out of work and desperate, is locked out on the roof of her house, in New York. Driven to seek shelter by a storm she tries the trap-door of other house, in New York. Driven to seek shelter by a storm she tries the trap-door of other house and finally enters the house of a rich family. No one is at home and Sally, fascinated by benutiful clothes, changes her own for them. As she is leaving she seek a man trying to open a safe. As he works and as she watches, the man is suddenly attacked by another burgiar. The two men grapple and the first is likely to he overwhelmed when Sally breaks in, selses a revolver which has been dropped in the souffe, and covers the men. The one in blue serge, the first burgiar, assumes that she is helping him, and they drive out the other. Then Sally flees from the house.

Wandering almiessly, Sally meets the burgiar has befriended at Grand Central station, and insists that he get her are commodation to Boston. They go giar vito the restaurant, and here the burgiar vite ends that Sally is one of his pricession.

The "burgiar reveals himself a Waiter savage, brother of the end forgotten the condition, when the true burgiar attacked the sally hears this confession, Adele Standish, divorce, the sister of Savage, comes in. The matter is explained to her, and the brother and sister ask Sally to come as secretary to their aunt. They "fake" a letter of recommendation and all take the own train to Boston.

A telegram announces that the Standish home has been robbed after all, apparently by the burgiar who was first driven of. Mrs. Standish asks Sally to say nothing of Savage's presence in the house, Lettleton and Treso. The former attractes ally every much. The latter is a Westerner, who seems out or place and who teels that Sally, too, is "an outsider." He tries to be friends with her.

CHAPTER VIII-Continued.

Leaving it barely ajar, she stepped out beneath the stars, hesitated for a moment of cautious reconnaissance, then darted across an open space of moonlight as swiftly as the shadow of a cloud windsped athwart the moon, and so gained the sheltering shadow of the high hedge be-tween the formal garden and tennis court.

The dew-drenched turf that bordered the paths muffled her footsteps as effectually as could be wished, and keeping circumspectly in shadow, the bet-ter to escape observation from any of the windows, she gained at length that corner of the terrace overlooking the water where she and Trego had paused for their

first walk Nothing now prevented her from appreclating the view to the full. Enchanted, she withdraw a little way from the brow of the cliff to a seat on the stone wall, overshadowed by the hedge, and for a long time sat there motionless, content. Below her the harbor lay steel gray and still within its guardian headlands, a

hundred slim, white pleasure craft riding hundred slim, white pleasure that its silent tide. Far out a Sound steamer crawled like some amphibious glowworm, its triple tier of deck lights almost blended into one. Farther still the lights of the mainland glimmered low upon the

At a little distance and a point invisible an incautious footstep grated upon a gravel path of the terrace and was in-But the girl, stiffened to rigidity in her place, fancied she could hear the whisper

of grass beneath stealthy feet.

Abruptly a man came out into broad moonlight and, pausing on a stone platform at the edge of the cliff by the head of the long, steep, wooden zigzag of stairs to the sands, looked back toward the

Sally held her breath. But her heart was like a mad thing-the man was Donald Lyttleton. He still wore evening dress, but had exchanged the formal coat for that hybrid garment which Sally had lately learned should not be termed a tuxedo. The brim of a soft, dark hat masked his eyes. He carried one shout-der stiffly, as if holding something in the hollow of his arm. She could not make

out or imagine what this might be. His hesitation was brief. Satisfied he awang round to the stairway, in another instant had vanished. Only light footfalls on the wooden steps told of a steady descent, and at the same time furnished assurance that Sally had not victimized erself with a waking vision bred of her

The footfalls, not loud at best, had become inaudible before she found courage to approach the platform. With infinite pains to avoid a sound, she peered over

For a little the gulf swam giddily beneath her who was never quite easy at any unusual height. But she set herself with determination to master this weakness and presently was able to examine the beach with a clear vision. It was only partially shadowed by the

cliffs, but that shadow was dense, and outside it nothing stirred. None the less, after a time she was able to discern Lytafter a time she was able to discern Lyttleion's figure kneeling on the sands at
the immediate foot of the cliff, a hundred
fect or so to one side of the steps. And
while she watched he rose, stood for a
little staring out to sea, wasted a number of matches lighting a cigarette (which
seemed curious, in view of the unbroken
calm), and moved on out of sight beyond a shoulder of stone.

She waited fully ten minutes; but he

She waited fully ten minutes; but he did not reappear.

Then, retreating to her seat on the stone wall, she waited as long again—still no sign of Lyttleton. But something else marked that second

period of waiting that intrigued her no less than the mysterious actions of her beloved—this although she could imagine

no link between the two.

Some freak of chance drew her attention to a small, dark shape, with one staring red eye, that was stealing quietly across the Sound in the middle distance of indefinite contour against the darkening waters but underbedly a motorboat ing waters, but undoubtedly a motorboat, since there was no wind to drive any sali-ing vessel at its pace, or indeed at any

while she watched it incuriously it came to a dead pause, and so remained for several minutes. Then, deliberately, with infinitely sardonic effect, it winked its single eye of red at her—winked por-

tentously three times.

She made nothing of that, and in her prefound ignorance of all things nautical might have considered it some curious bit of sea etiquette had she not, the next instant, caught out of the corner of her eye the sudden glow of a window lighted in the second story of Gosnold House.

As she turned in surprise the light went out a passent of perhaps 20 seconds en

out. A pause of perhaps 20 seconds en-sued. Then the window shone out again —one in the left wing, the wing at the end of which her bedchamber was located. But when she essayed to reckon the rooms between it and her own it turned black against, and after another 20 seconds once more shone out and once more was darkened.

After this it continued stubbornly black, and by the time Sally gave up trying to determine precisely which window it had heen, and turned her gaze seaward again, the boat had vanished. Its lights, at least, were no longer visible, and it was many minutes before the girl succeeded in locating the blur it made on the face of the waters. It seemed to be moving, but the distance waters.

the waters. It seemed to be moving, but the distance was so great that she could not be sure which way.

A signal—yes, obviously; but between whom and for what purpose?

Who was on that boat? And who the tenant of that room of the flashing window? She was satisfied that the latter was one of a row of six windows to three rooms occupied by Mrs. Standish, Mrs. Artemas, and a pretty young widow who

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had arrived late Saturday afternoon and whose name Sally had yet to learn.

She pondered it all with ever-deepening

Then fell a lull. She was conscious that perplexity until a change came over the night—a wind stirred, leaves rattled, boughs soughed plaintivaly, the waters wakened and filed the void of silence with soft clashing. Then, shivering, Saily rose and crept back toward the house.

But when she paused on the edge of the last shadow, preparatory to the dash across the moonlit space to the door, a step sounded beside her, a hand caught

at her cloak.

She started back with a stifled cry. "Steady!" Lyttleton's voice counseled guardedly. "Don't make a row! Blessed if it ain't Miss Manwaring!"

CHAPTER IX.

PICAROON. Plucking peremptorily at her cloak, Lyttleton drew the girl to him and, seizing her hand, without further ceremony dragged her round the clump of shrubbery to a spot secure from observation.

She submitted without a hint of resistance. But she was trembling violently, and the contact with his hand was as fire to her blood. Pausing, he stared and laughed uncer-

tainly. "Of all people!" he said in an under-

tone. "I never for an instant thought of you!" Controlling her voice tolerably, she

asked directly: "How did you get up again without my seeing you?"
"Simply enough-by the steps of the place next door. I saw you watching me—saw your head over the edge of the landing, black against the sky—and knew I'd never know who it was, unless by strategy. So I came up the other way and cut across to head you off."

He added, after a pause, with a semi-apologetic air: "What do you mean by it, anyway?"

"Watching me this way-spying on

"But I didn't mean to. I was as surprised to see you as you were, just now, to see me."
"Honestly?"

His eyes searched hers suspiciously. Flushing, she endeavored to assume some little dignity—drew up, lifted her chin, resumed possession of her hand. "Of course," she said in an injured

"Sure Mrs.-sure nobody sent you to

spy on me?"
"Mr. Lyttleton!" "I want to believe you

"You've no right not to!"
"But what, will you tell me, are you

doing out here this time of night? "I came out because I wanted to-I was restless, couldn't sleep." He reflected upon this doubtfully. 'Funny freak," he remarked. "You're impertment!"

"I don't mean to be. Forgive me. I'm

only puzzled-"So am I puzzled," she retorted with spirit. "Suppose you tell me what you're doing out here at this time of night-down on the beach-anxious to escape notice. If you ask me, I call that a fun-nier freak than mine!" "Quite so," he agreed soberly; "and a

very reasonable retort. Only I can't tell you. It's-er-a private matter."

you. It's—er—a private matter."
"So I presumed——"
"Look here, Miss Manwaring, this is a serious business with me. Give me your

What makes that essential? Why do you think I'd lie-to you?"

It was just that little quaver prefacing her last two words which precipitated the affair. But for it a question natural enough under the circumstances would have proved innocuous. But for the life of her she could not control her voice; on

those simple words it broke, and so the question became confession—confession, accusation and challenge, all in one. It created first a pause, an instant of breathless suspense, while Lyttleton stared in doubt and Sally steeled herself. with an effect of trembling, reluctant, upon the brink of some vast mystery.

mean me to understand you might lie to

another-but not to me?"

Her response was little better than a gasp. "You know it!" He acknowledged this with half a nod;

And she must have seemed very lonely to the man in that moment of defiance. She saw his eyes lighten with a singular flash, saw his face darken suddenly in the paling' moonlight and heard the sharp sibilance of his indrawn breath.

And whether or not it was so, she fan-cied the wind had fallen, that the night was hushed once more and now more profoundly than it had ever been, as though the very world were standing still in anticipation.

She heard him cry, almost angrily, "Oh,

amn it. I must not!"

And with that she was in his arms, sob-

lips.
Then fell a lull. She was conscious that his embrace relaxed a trifle, heard the murmur of his consternation: "Oh, this is madness, madness!" But when she tried to release herself

his arms tightened.
"No!" he said thickly, "not now-not after this! Don't. I love you!"
She braced her hands against his breast,

struggled, thrust him away from her, found herself free at last.
"You don't!" she sobbed miserably;
"you don't love me. Don't lie to me! Let me go."
"Why do you say that? You love me.

and I—"
"Don't say it! It isn't true. I know.
I threw myself at your head. What else could you do? You care nothing about me: to you I'm just one more silly woman. No; let me be, please! You do not love me—you don't, you don't." He shrugged, relinquished his effort to

ecapture her, muttered uncertainly, Blessed if I know—" Recovering a little, she drew her bands swiftly across face and eyes that still burned with his kisses.

"Oh," she cried brokenly, "why did you—why did I—"

you—why did I.—"
"What's the good of asking that? It's
done now!" he argued with a touch of
aggrieved resentment. "I didn't mean—I
mean to—I don't know what I meant!
Only—never this."
He took an impatient stride or two in
the shelter of the chadow turned back to

the shelter of the shadow turned back to her, expostulant, "It's too bad! I'd have given worlds—"
"But now I've gone and done it!" she retorted bitterly. In chagrin, her own indignation mounted. "It is too bad, poor Mr. Lyttleton!"
That was too much; he come closer and That was too much; he came closer and

grasped her wrist. "Why do you talk that way to me?" he demanded wrathfully. "What have I done...." You? Nothing!" she broke in, roughly wrenching her hand free in a fury of humiliation. "Do you ever do anything? Isn't the woman always the aggressor? Never your fault-of course not! But don't, please, worry; I sha'n't ever re-mind you. You're quite free to go and forget what's happened as quickly as you

She scrubbed the knuckles of one hand some scrubbed the knuckles of one hand roughly across her quivering lips. "For-get!" she cried. Oh, if only I might ever- But that's my penance, the morti-fication of remembering how I took ad-vantage of the chivalry of a man who

didn't care for me-and couldn't!" "You don't know that." Lyttleton re-torted. Provoked to imprudence by this sudden contrariety, this strange inconsistence, he made a futile attempt to regain her hand. "Don't be foolish. Can't you see I'm crazy about you?"

"Oh. yes!" she laughed, contemptuous.
"You're no fool," he declared hotly.
"You know well you can't—a woman like
you—play with a man like me as if he were a child. I tell you I--He checked himself with a firm hand; dince, it seemed, she was one who took

such matters seriously. "I'm mad about you," he repeated in a more subdued tone, "and I'd give anything if—. Only—the deuce of it is, I can't—" "You can't afford to!" she snapped him up. "Oh. I understand you perfectly Didn't I warn you I was penniless? You can't afford to love a penniless nobody. can you?—a shop-girl masquerading in borrowed finery! No-please don't look so incredulous; you must have guessed. Anyway, that's all I am, or was—a shopgirl out of work-hefore I was brought here to be Mrs. Gosnold's secretary. And that's all I'll be tomorrow, or as soon as

ever she learns that I waylay her men guests at all hours and-steal their kisses!" "She won't learn that from me," said Lyttleton, "not if you hold your tongue."



And she was in his arms, going to heaven against his lips.

She drew back a pace, as though he had I countenance. "Oh, I'm cured, no fear!" made to strike her, and for a moment was speechless, staring into the new He proved however the proved how the province how the proved h countenance he showed her-the set, cold mask of the insolent, conquering male.
And chagrin are at her heart like an acid, such spirit so that inwardly she writhed with the his experience

"I—" she breathed, incredulously. "I hold my tengue! Oh! Do you think for an instant I'm anxious to advertise my gnominy?

'It's a burgain, then?" he suggested coolly. "For my part, I don't mind admitting I'd much rather it didn't ever become known that I, too, was-let's say-troubled with insomnia tonight. But if you say nothing, and I say nothing why, of course, there's not much wouldn't do for you, my dear!"

After a little she said quietly, ourse I deserved this. But I'm glad now it turned out the way it has. Two min-utes ago I was wild with the shame of making myself so cheap as to let you-of being such a fool as to dream you could lower yourself to the level of a woman not what you'd call your social equal, who could so far forget her dignity as to let you see she cared for you. But, of course since I am not that—your peer—but only a shop-girl, I'm giad it's happened. Beuse now I understand some things better-you, for example. I understand you very well now-too well!" She laughed quietly to his dashed

Such spirit was not altogether new in

his experience, but it wasn't every day one met a girl who had it; whatever her

He proved, however, unexpectedly loath

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her; he had suspected as much from the! The unexpected humility of his to very first; connoisseur that he was, his flair had not deceived him.

His lips tightened, his eyes glimmered

And she was, in a way, at his mercy, if what she said of herself were true, he need only speak a word and she would be as good as thrown out. Even Abigali Gosnoid couldn't pretect her, insist on people inviting a shop-girl to their houses. And if such drudgery were really what she had come up from, you might be sure

she'd break her heart rather than forfeit all this that she had gained. And then again she had been all for him from the very first. She had admitted as much out of her own mouth. Her own mouth, for that matter, had taken his kisses—and hungrily, or he was no judge of kissing. Only the surprise of it, his own dumb unreadiness, his unwonted lack of ingenuity and diplomatics had almost lost her to him. Not quite, however; it was not yet too late; and though the risk was great, the penalty heavy if he were discovered carrying on an affair under this roof, the game was well worth the

Thus Mr. Lyttleton to his conscience; and thus it happened that, when she turned to go, he stepped quickly to her side and said quietly, 'Oh, please, my dear—one minute."

mixed with the impudence of that term endearment, so struck her that she he tated despite the counsel of a sound

tuition. "We mustn't part this way-misunds standing one another," he insisted, ign ing the hostility in her attitude and mod lating his voice to a tone whose poten often had been proved. "Three was can set me right with you, if you'll on listen..."

listen—"
She said frostily, "Well—"
"Three words." He drew still nearer
"I've said them once tonight. Will you
hear them again? No—please listen!
meant what I said, but I was carried ou
of myself—clumsy—bungled my meaning
You misunderstood, misconstrued, and before I could correct you I'd lost my temper.
"You said cruel things, fust enough, no

doubt, from your point of view—and you put words into my mouth, read thoughts into my mind that never were there. And I let you do me that injustice because I'm hot-tempered. And then, I'm not altogether a free agent; I'm not my own master, quite; and that's difficult to explain. If I could make you under-

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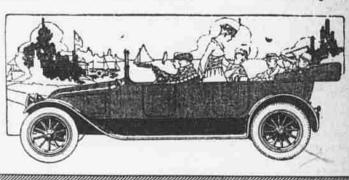
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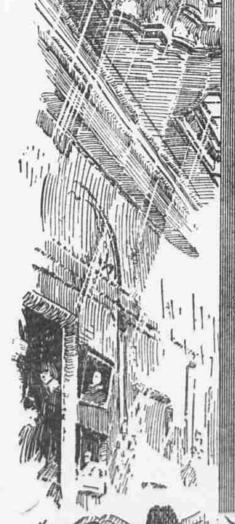
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