

THE LAST SHOT

By FREDERICK PALMER

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(Continued.)

Then impulse came through the restraint that seemed to characterize the Lanstron of thirty-five. The Lanstron of twenty-five, who had met catastrophe because he was "wool-gathering," asserted himself. He put his hand on Stransky's shoulder. It was a strong though slim hand that looked as if it had been trained to do the work of two hands in the process of its owner's own transformation. Thus the old sergeant had seen a general remonstrate with a brave veteran who had been guilty of bad conduct in Africa. The old colonel gasped at such a subversion of the dignity of rank. He saw the army going to the devil. But young Dellarme, watching with eager curiosity, was sensible of no familiarity in the act. It all depended on how such a thing was done, he was thinking.

"We all have minutes when we are more or less anarchists," said Lanstron in the human appeal of one man to another. "But we don't want to be judged by one of those minutes. I got a hand mashed up for a mistake that took only a second. Think this over tonight before you act. Then, if you are of the same opinion, go to the colonel and tell him so. Come, why not?"

"All right, sir, you're so decent about it!" grumbled Stransky, taking his place in the ranks. "Hep-hep-hep! The regiment started on its way, with Grandfather Fragnil keeping at his grandson's side.

"Makes me feel young again, but it's darned solemn beside the Hussars, with their horses' bits a-jangling. Times have certainly changed—officers' hands in their pockets, saying 'if you don't mind' to a man that's insulted the flag! Kicking ain't good enough for that traitor! Ought to hang him—yes, sir, hang and draw him!"

Lanstron watched the marching column for a time. "Hep-hep-hep! It's the brown of the infantry that counts in the end," he mused. "I liked that wall-eyed giant. He's all man!"

Then his living glance swept the heavens inquiringly. A speck in the blue, far away in the realms of atmospheric infinity, kept growing in size until it took the form of the wings with which man flies. The plane whirled down with steady swiftness, till its racing shadow lay large over the landscape for a few seconds before it rose again with beautiful ease and precision.

"Bully for you, Etzell!" Lanstron thought, as he started back to the aeroplane station. "You belong in the corps. We shall not let you return to your regiment for a while. You've a cool head and you'd charge a church tower if that were the orders."

CHAPTER V.

A Sunday Morning Call.

As a boy, Arthur Lanstron had persisted in being an exception to the influences of both heredity and environment. Though his father and both grandfathers were officers who believed theirs to be the true gentleman's profession, he had preferred any kind of mechanical toy to arranging the most gayly painted tin soldiers in formation on the nursery floor; and he would rather read about the wonders of natural history and electricity than the campaigns of Napoleon and Frederick the Great and my Lord Nelson. Left to his own choice, he would miss the parade of the garrison for inspection by an excellency in order to ask questions of a man wiping the oil off his hands with cotton-waste, who was far more entertaining to him than the most spick-and-span ramrod of a sergeant.

Upon being told one day that he was to go to the military school the following autumn, he broke out in open rebellion.

"I don't want to go to the army!" he said.

"Why?" asked his father, thinking that when the boy had to give his reasons he would soon be argued out of the heresy.

"It's drilling a few hours a day, then nothing to do," Arthur replied. "All your work waits on war and you don't know that there will ever be any war. It waits on something nobody wants to happen. Now, if you manufacture something, why, you see wool come out cloth, steel come out an automobile. If you build a bridge you see it rising little by little. You're getting your results every day; you see your mistakes and your successes. You're making something, creating something; there's something going on all the while that isn't guesswork. I think that's what I want to say. You won't order me to be a soldier, will you?"

"The father, loath to do this, called in the assistance of an able pleader then, Eugene Partow, lately become chief of staff of the Browns, who was an old friend of the Lanstron family. Partow turned the balance on the side of filial affection. He kept watch of the boy, but without favoring him with influence. Young Lanstron, who wanted to see results, had to earn them. He realized in practice the truth of Partow's saying that there was nothing he had ever learned but what could be of service to him as an officer.

"Finding enough work to do?" Partow would ask with a chuckle when they met in these days; for he had made Lanstron both chief of intelligence and chief secretarial officer. Young Colonel Lanstron's was the duty of gaining the secrets of the Gray staff and keeping those of the Brown and organizing up-to-the-moment efficiency in the new forces of the air.

He had remarked truly enough that the injury to his left hand served as a better reminder against the folly of wool-gathering than a string, even a

large red string, looped around his finger. Thanks to skillful surgery, the fingers, incapable of spreading much, were yet serviceable and had a firm grip of the wheel as he rose from the aeroplane station on the Sunday morning after Marta's return home for a flight to La Tir.

He knew the pattern weaving under his feet as one knows that of his own garden from an overlooking window. Every detail of the staff map, ravines, roads, buildings, battery positions, was stitched together in the flowing reality of actual vision. No white posts were necessary to tell him where the boundary between the two nations lay. The line was drawn in his brain.

Now that Lanstron was the organizer of the aviation corps his own flights were rare. Most of them were made to La Tir. His visits to Marta were his holidays. All the time that she was absent on her journey around the world they had corresponded. Her letters, so revealing of herself and her peculiar angles of observation, formed a bundle sacredly preserved. Her mother's joking reference about her girlish resolution not to marry a soldier often recurred to him. There, he sometimes thought, was the real obstacle to his great desire.

When he alighted from the plane he thrust his left hand into his blouse pocket. He always carried it there, as if it were literally sewn in place. In moments of emotion the scarred nerves would twitch as the teltale of his sensitiveness; and this was something he would conceal from others no matter how conscious he was of it himself. He found the Galland veranda deserted. In response to his ring a maid came to the open door. Her face was sad, with a beauty that had prematurely faded. But it lighted pleasantly in recognition. Her hair was thick and tawny, lying low over the brow; her eyes were a softly luminous brown and her full lips sensitive and yielding. Lanstron, an intimate of the Galland household, knew her story well and the part that Marta had played in it.

Some four years previously, when a baby was in prospect for Minna, who wore no wedding ring, Mrs. Galland had been inclined to send the maid to an institution, "where they will take good care of her, my dear. That's what such institutions are for. It is quite scandalous for her and for us—never happened in our family before!"

Marta arched her eyebrows. "We don't know!" she exclaimed softly. "How can you think such a thing, let alone saying it—you, a Galland!" her mother gasped in indignation. "That is, if we go far back," said Marta. "At all events, we have no precedent, so let's establish one by keeping her."

"But for her own sake! She will have to live with her shame!" Mrs. Galland objected. "Let her begin afresh in the city. We shall give her a good recommendation, for she is really an excellent servant. Yes, she will readily find a place among strangers."

"Still, she doesn't want to go, and it would be cruel to send her away," "Cruel! Why, Marta, do you think I would be cruel? Oh, very well, then we will let her stay!"

"Both are away at church. Mrs. Galland ought to be here any minute, but Miss Galland will be later because of her children's class," said Minna. "Will you wait on the veranda?"

He was saying that he would stroll in the garden when childish footsteps were heard in the hall, and after a curly head had nestled against the mother's skirts its owner, reminded of the importance of manners in the world where the stork had left her, made a courtesy. Lanstron shook a small hand which must have lately been on intimate terms with sugar or jam.

"How do you do, flying soldier man?" chirped Clarissa Eileen. It was evident that she held Lanstron in high favor. "Let me hear you say your name," said Lanstron.

Clarissa Eileen was triumphant. She had been waiting for days with the revelation when he should make that old request. Now she enunciated it with every vowel and consonant correctly and primly uttered; indeed, she repeated it four or five times in proof of complete mastery.

"A pretty name, I've often wondered how you came to give it to her," said Lanstron to Minna. "You do like it!" exclaimed Minna with girlish eagerness. "I gave her the most beautiful name I could think of because"—she laid her hand caressingly on the child's head and a madonna-like radiance stole into her face—"because she might at least have a beautiful name when"—the dull blaze of a recollection now burning in her eyes—"when there wasn't much prospect of many beautiful things coming into her life; though I know, of course, that the world thinks she ought to be called Maggie."

Proceeding leisurely along the main path of the first terrace, Lanstron followed it past the rear of the house to the old tower. Long ago the moat that surrounded the castle had been filled in. The green of rows of grape vines lay against the background of a mat of ivy on the ancient stone walls, which had been cut away from the loopholes set with window glass. The door was open, showing a room that had been closed in by a ceiling of boards from the walls to the circular stairway that ran aloft from the dungeons. On the floor of flags were cheap rugs. A number of seed and nursery catalogues were piled on a round table covered with a brown cloth.

(To be Continued.)

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Here is a different store from that of last week, when nearly everything summery got its passports. This week begins a new business season in the KAUFMAN'S STORES.

Women's and Misses' New Fall Suits . . . \$24.75

Paris-copied Fall Suits.

Material of Broadcloths, Gabardines, Poplins and Imported Serges, in Redingote, Basque and Tailored Styles. Colors—black, navy, chocolate brown, Russia green and Wistaria. An actual \$35.00 suit; specially priced now, \$24.75

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For Women, Misses and Juniors They Are Here in Big Assortments An Early Fall Special, at . . . \$8.95

Made of all-wool novelty mixtures, in pretty styles; actual value \$12.50; now . . . \$8.95 Other Coats at . . . \$7.95 up to \$25.00

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Separate Skirts are once more easy to walk in, and more picturesque than skirts have been for a long time. Box plaits, knife plaits, accordion plaits and long tunics.

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For Women Misses and Juniors A Brilliant Variety of Handsome One-Piece

Silk and Cloth Dresses

The smartest lot of pretty dresses ever gathered together.

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ACTUAL VALUES, \$10 and \$12.50.

A big variety of Silk Poplin, Silk Messaline. All-wool men's wear serge and crepe materials. Gorgeous styles, including the favorite new Basque and semi-Basque style. Also the plain tailored and Russian tunic styles, in all the newer colors, black and navy blue, Russia green and chocolate brown.

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Come and take a peep at the new hats. You are welcome.

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\$6 & \$6.50 Extra Pants Suits \$3.90 FOR YOUR BOY

500 of these suits, crisp and new from the makers, in the newest models and colors for Fall. Will be heaped on our tables ready for you. Sizes 6 to 17 years.

Norfolk style, made of tweeds and cassimeres. Two pairs of peg-top trousers. You could not buy as good for \$6.50 in any other store in town.

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Boys' School Suits 2 pairs of Knickers \$4.90 Value \$7.50

Boys' School Suits \$1.95 Value \$3.50 6 to 10

BOYS' SCHOOL BLOUSE WAISTS, 50c MATERIAL IN THESE 25c

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We have found them—because we set out to look for suits to sell to our customers at a much lower price than they could buy at any other store.

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MEN'S FALL SUITS at \$7.50

These Suits are all wool serges fine cheviots and cassimeres. Lots of them hand tailored. Values in this lot to \$16.50.

Why? Because we are always on the lookout for bargains for our customers, which enables us to offer them about 1/2 you'll pay in other stores.

FOR TO-MORROW 500 pairs of Men's Durable Pants. Made with protected pockets. Sold elsewhere at \$2, for . . . \$1

750 Pairs of Men's Pants \$1.50

Handsome worsteds, made with protected pockets. A \$3.50 value . . . \$1.50

Girls' New Dresses For School

Rest assured, mothers, that you will find here THE SCHOOL DRESSES in which your girls will look their sweetest. DRESSES that will give long satisfactory service and be pretty to the last day of wear. DRESSES MUCH BETTER THAN OTHER STORES CAN SELL AT OUR PRICES. Save money by buying your girls' school dresses here to-morrow.



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GIRLS' SERGE DRESSES, \$5.00 Value, Choice For \$3.95

Made of all pure wool serges, in all colors, every one a new Fall model. Sizes 6 to 14.

SPECIAL A handsome assortment of Girls' Evening and Street Dresses. Sizes 6 to 14, for \$5.90 to \$15.00

Store Opens at 8:30 A. M., Closes at 9 P. M., Saturday.