

JENNIE BAXTER: JOURNALIST

BY ROBERT BARR

VII.—The Wizard in His Magic Circle.

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When Jennie entered the carriage in which her friend was waiting, the other cried, "Well, have you seen him?" apparently meaning the director of police.

"Princess, I want a trustworthy man, who will take a long telegram to the central telegraph office, pay for it, and come away quickly before any one can ask him inconvenient questions."

"Oh, I know!" cried the princess. "I will send our coachman. He will be out of his livery now, and he is a most reliable man; he will not answer inconvenient questions or any others, even if they are asked."

To her telegram for publication Jennie had added a private dispatch to the editor that it would be rather inconvenient for her if he published the account



He glared at her through his glasses.

"Not from the Palace Steinheimer," said the princess, with decision.

"Well, he might hesitate about that; yet, nevertheless, it is too funny to think that a mere newspaper woman, coming into a city which contains only one or two of her friends, should dare to walk to the chief of police as I have done tonight and force him actually to beg that I shall remain in the city and continue to assist him."

"Tell me what you said?" asked the princess eagerly, and Jennie related all that had passed between them over the telephone.

"And do you mean to tell me that you are going to give that man the right to use all the information you have acquired, and allow him to accept complacently all the kudos that such a discovery entitles you to?"

"Why, certainly," replied Jennie. "What good is the kudos to me? All the credit I desire I got in the office of The Daily Bugle in London."

"But, you silly girl, holding such a secret as you hold, you could have made your fortune," insisted the practical princess, for the principles which had been instilled into her during a youth spent in Chicago had not been eradicated by her residence in Vienna.

"Well, Jennie, all I can say is that you are a very foolish girl. Here you are, working hard, as you said in one of your letters, merely to make a living, and now, with the greatest nonchalance, you allow a fortune to slip through your fingers."

"I wish to see," said the girl hurriedly as the old man was preparing to shut the door.

"What do you want from him?" "I want some information from him about explosives. I have been told that he knows more about explosives than any other man living."

"Quite right—he does. What, then?" "An explosion has taken place, producing the most remarkable results. They say that neither dynamite nor any other known force could have had such an effect on metals and minerals as this power has had."

"Ah, dynamite is a toy for children!" cried the old man, opening the door a little farther, exhibiting an interest which had up to that moment been absent from his manner.

The old man shut the door behind her and led her along a dark passage into a large apartment, whose ceiling was the roof of the building. At first sight it seemed in amazing disorder.

where the walls were not occupied with cupboards, and every shelf was burdened with bottles and apparatus of different kinds. Whatever care Professor Seigfried took of his apparatus, he seemed to have little for his furniture.

"Now, young woman," he said sharply, "what have you brought for me? Don't begin to chatter now, for my time is valuable. Show me what you have brought, and I will tell you all about it, and most likely a very simple thing it is."

Jennie, interested in so rude a man, smiled, drew up the least decrepit chair she could find and sat down, in spite of the angry mutterings of her irritated host.

Then, to the consternation of Jennie, who had already risen in terror from her chair, the old man plunged forward on his face. Jennie had difficulty in repressing a shriek.

With a struggle he muttered, "The bottle—the bottle—in the cupboard behind you."

She hurriedly flung open the doors of the cupboard indicated and found a bottle of brandy and a glass, which she partly filled. The old man had with an effort struggled into a sitting posture, and she held the glass of fiery liquid to his pallid lips.

"No one, I came of my own accord. I wished to meet some one who had a large knowledge of explosives, and Herr Feltz, the chemist, gave me your address."

"Herr Feltz! Herr Feltz!" he repeated. "So he sent you here?" "No one sent me here," insisted the girl. "It is as I tell you. Herr Feltz merely gave me your address."

"Where did you get that powdered gold?" "It came from the debris of an explosion."

"I know; you said that before. Where was the explosion? Who caused it?" "That I don't know."

"Don't you know where the explosion was?" "Yes, I know where the explosion was, but I don't know who caused it."

"Who sent you here?" "I tell you no one sent me here."

"That is not true. The man who caused the explosion sent you here. You may never tell who may sneak quietly up the stair. I am surrounded by spies trying to find out what I am doing."

"Wait a moment," said Jennie. She went quickly to the outer door, found that it closed with a spring latch, opened and shut it two or three times until she was perfectly familiar with its workings; then she closed it, drew the inner door nearly shut and sat down.

"There," she said, "we are quite safe from interruption. Professor Seigfried, but I must request you not to move from your chair."

subject to such attacks and I ward them off with brandy. Some day they will kill me. Then you won't learn any secrets from a dead man, will you?"

"I hope, Professor Seigfried, that you have many years yet to live, and I must further add that I did not expect such a reception as I have received from a man of science, as I was told you were. If you have no information to give to me—very well, that ends it; all you have to do is to say so."

"Who sent you here?" "No one, as I have repeated once or twice. If any one had, I would give him my opinion of him when I got back. You refuse to tell me anything about the explosive that powdered that gold?"

"Refuse? Of course I refuse! What did you expect? I suppose the man who sent you here thought, because you were an engaging young woman and I an old dotard, I would gable to you the results of a life's work. Oh, no, no, no! But I am not an old dotard. I have many years to live yet."

"I hope so. Well, I must bid you good morning. I shall go to some one else."

The old man showed his teeth in a forbidding grin. "It is useless. Your bottle is broken, and the material it contained is dissipated. Not a trace of it is left."

He waved his thin, emaciated hand in the air as he spoke. "Oh, that doesn't matter in the least," said Jennie. "I have several other bottles here in my satchel."

"Who knows you came up to see me?" he whispered hoarsely, glaring at her.

"Who knows I am here? No one but the director of police."

"Oh, the director of police!" echoed the professor, quite evidently abashed by the information. The rigidity of his attitude relaxed, and he became once more the old man he had appeared as he sat in a heap in his chair.

"I noticed that you were, professor. But before you sit down again please unlock that door."

"Because I wish it open."

"And I," he said in a higher tone, "wish it to remain locked until we have come to some understanding. I can't let you go out now, but I shall permit you to go unmolested as soon as you have made some explanation to me."

"If you do not unlock the door immediately, I shall take this machine and fling it through the front window out on the street. The crashing glass on the pavement will soon bring some one to my rescue, professor, and, as I have a voice of my own and small hesitation about shouting I shall have little difficulty in directing the strangers where to come."

As Jennie spoke she moved swiftly toward the table on which stood the strange aggregation of reflectors and bent glass tubing.

"No, no, no!" screamed the professor, springing between her and the table. "Touch anything but that—anything but that! Do not disturb it an inch—there is danger—death not only to you and me, but perhaps to the whole city. Keep away from it!"

"Where? When?" exclaimed the old man, placing his hands on the arms of his chair, as if he would rise to his feet.

"Sit where you are," said Jennie firmly, "and I shall tell you all I can about it. The government, for reasons of its own, desires to keep the fact of this explosion a secret, and so very few people outside of official circles know anything about it. I am trying to discover the cause of that disaster."

"Are you—are you working on behalf of the government?" asked the old man eagerly, a tremor of fear in his quavering voice.

"No, I am conducting my investigations quite independently of the government."

"But that question—everything is involved in that question. I must know why you are here. If you are not in the employ of the government, in whose employ are you?"

"If I tell you," said Jennie, with some hesitation, "will you keep what I say a secret?"

"Yes, yes, yes!" cried the scientist impatiently.

"Well, I am in the service of a London daily newspaper."

"I see, I see, and they have sent you here to publish broadcast over the world all you can find out of my doings. I knew you were a spy the moment I saw you. I should never have let you in."

"My dear sir, the London paper is not aware of your existence even. They have not sent me to you at all. They have sent me to learn, if possible, the cause of the explosion I spoke of. I took some of the debris to Herr Feltz to analyze it, and he said he had never seen gold, iron, feldspar, and all that, reduced to such fine impalpable grains as was the case with the sample I left with him. I then asked him who in Vienna knew most about explosives, and he gave me your address. That is why I am here."

"(To be continued next Thursday.)"

Robbed the Grave. A startling incident is narrated by John Oliver of Philadelphia as follows: "I was in an awful condition. My skin was almost yellow, eyes sunken, tongue coated, pain continually in back and sides, no appetite, growing weaker day by day. Three physicians had given me up. Then I was advised to use Electric Bitters; to my great joy the first bottle made a decided improvement. I continued their use for three weeks and am now a well man. I know they robbed the grave of another victim." No one should fail to try them. Only 50c., guaranteed, at the Kiesau Drug Co.

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A new remedy for biliousness is now on sale at the Kiesau Drug Co. It is called Chamberlain's Stomach and Liver Tablets. It gives quick relief and will prevent the attack if given as soon as the first indication of the disease appears. Price 25 cents per box. Samples free.

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When you have no appetite, do not relish your food and feel dull after eating you need a dose of Chamberlain's Stomach and Liver Tablets. Price 25c. Samples free at the Kiesau Drug Co.



He staggered forward, shrieking, "Ah, mein Gott—mein Gott!"