

THE COPPER HOUSE

A Detective Story

BY

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Wallion, who overheard her, was on the point of refusing, but Lona Ivanovna said:

"Let the child go, she can look after herself better than any boy!"

The journalist, moved by the pleading in the girl's eyes, gave in to the old lady, and offered no opposition, the more so, as every minute's delay was dangerous. Sonia had changed into her black riding costume, probably in the expectation of some such contingency, and was already at the window; to Leo's whispered attempt to dissuade her, she only replied with a shake of the head.

"Be off, then, at once, all three of you," said Wallion briskly; "don't stop, whatever happens; if one of you gets through, lose no time in getting in touch with the nearest authorities; knock people up, telephone to Stockholm, do everything you can...."

He continued to whisper his instructions to them, whilst he was helping them to get through the window. They were eager to start off, and carry out their orders, and the storm seemed to swallow them up in a moment. It was like being thrown into the sea. The rain lashed their faces, and the wind tore at their clothes, but the three adventurers summoned up all their courage, bent their heads, and began to cross the terrace.

Darkness had obliterated the big house behind them, they could not hear their own footsteps, and groped their way onwards, afraid of losing one another. Sheets of rain enveloped them; it was impossible to see or hear the sentries, who must certainly be near them; but this they had to risk.

"This way," said Leo, just above his breath.

They were brought up short by the stone balustrade, over which they scrambled, jumping down on to the grass. At that instant, the sky was lit up by a flash, broad and blue as a stream of molten silver. For one second, they, the trees and the bushes, stood out distinctly, then the darkness wrapped them round again, and they were deafened by the succeeding peal of thunder. Leo seized Sonia's hand, and dragged her along with him; an alarming sight had met their eyes; crouching under the shelter of the trees were a number of sentries, their heads pulled up over their heads, and their guns under their waterproof capes. The fugitives had been seen. A shrill whistle was audible through the dying reverberations of the thunder, and lanterns appeared at various points. The darkness protected them for a moment, but they dreaded the next flash. The lights seemed to move more rapidly, and voices called out questions and answers. Leo and the girl ran on wildly through the wet grass; suddenly a rough voice shouted something quite close to them, and a lantern was flashed into their faces. Before the young man knew what was happening, he found himself engaged in a hand-to-hand combat; his left hand grasped a rifle-barrel, his right, a wet and twisted collar. A shot rang out, and a red flame seemed to flash just below his elbow; using his knee as a lever, he bent the gun across it, wrenched it free, and flung it away. His panting assailant, whose breath reeked of bad tobacco, seized him by the shoulders and tried to force him down, but Leo got the fellow round the waist, lifted him off the ground, and they rolled over together. His clenched fist came in contact with a chin and he received several kicks from feet tramping backwards

and forwards. He sprang up, caught hold of someone, who swore violently, and hurled him far in amongst the bushes, just as another flash lighted up the landscape. The vivid glare showed him the Austrian struggling with three men at once.

"They've got me!" Raelbel cried; "see to yourself!"

Leo turned to find yet another adversary, gave him a stinging blow on the ear, and dodged past him into the shelter of the trees. Somebody made a grab at his foot, but he kicked it loose, and after a minute's frantic rush through soaking wet branches and leaves, which slapped him in the face, he found himself on level ground, drew a deep breath, and realized that he was in the avenue. Had he actually broken through the cordon of sentries? It seemed almost impossible, but without stopping to puzzle it out, he sped on down the avenue. He fancied he could hear light footsteps running a little ahead of him; it was Sonia, and he called out softly to her. But what was this? She was running towards him: was she turning back? They stopped opposite one another.

"Why have you turned back?" he panted; "are they in front of us?"

"No, no," she whispered eagerly; "it is you... if you go in this direction... it's you that are making a mistake.... look, look!"

Sure enough, Leo noticed to his dismay that in the darkness he had taken a wrong turn. Through the trees in front of them, he now saw the terrace steps, full of lights and men. The little party from the boat were just marching up the path from the bay, and the short figure in the waterproof was ascending the steps, at a brisk, steady pace. Someone held a lantern in front to guide him, and by its light they saw his pale, determined face, looking upwards and onwards, as though he intended to allow nothing to turn him from his purpose.

Then Leo and Sonia turned and fled, without looking behind them. Gabriel Ortiz' face had terrified them by its indomitable strength, and they realized that all was lost, unless they succeeded in obtaining help. Stumbling along through the pools of water, they hurried on faster and faster.

CHAPTER XVI.

Gabriel Ortiz Musters His Forces and Counts His Prisoners

Maurice Wallion remained at the window for some little time. The lightning had shown him the terrace empty: would the three messengers succeed in getting past the sentries? He was quivering all over with excitement....

Ah, what was that! That ominous whistle must mean that someone had seen them. There was a flash through the darkness as a shot was fired; he leaned out, and heard a confused noise among the trees, where lights now began to dance like will o' the wisps.

Lona Ivanovna, at his elbow, gave a little gasp.

"That was a shot," she said; "what is wrong out there?" The lights clustered together, then shifted rapidly from one spot to another.

"Hark, that's the Austrian's voice; it sounds as though they had caught him... but the others! Sonia!" she whispered anxiously; "if only we could see!"

They held their breath, but now nothing could be heard except the swish of the rain, and most of the lights had disappeared.

"They've done it!" said

Wallion. "I believe they have got through." He closed the window, and went out into the hall.

"Our part of the task remains to be done," he added; "look, there comes the procession, but without its band and colors. This begins to get exciting! I wonder in which character the great man will appear tonight: emperor or millionaire?"

He posted himself just inside the glass doors, and watched with calm interest the spectacle outside. It was really, as he said, a regular procession that was advancing, though at present, one could only distinguish a line of shadowy forms, interspersed with flickering white lights.

Five of Rastakov's men ran first up the terrace steps, and took up their position at some distance from one another; they were followed by Rastakov himself, calling out a series of orders in Russian. A minute later, the whole terrace was illuminated by the powerful glare of four acetylene lights, carried by as many torchbearers, who halted at the top of the steps, and looked round them expectantly: other shadows were visible behind them.

The short, upright figure in the waterproof now marched up the steps, with Baron Fayerling on his left: his every movement was firm and unhesitating. The baron was speaking: he was evidently giving his report, to which the chief listened without stopping, without answering, without looking at his companion. Close behind them came six men, wearing the uniform of marines, and armed with cutlasses and carbines.

"Look at his bodyguard!" murmured the journalist; "the great man doesn't trust himself entirely to his friends: one might almost imagine...."

He broke off. The torchbearers had shifted their position a little, and the bright light fell directly on Ortiz' face. From that moment, Wallion no longer saw anything ridiculous about his antagonist; he was obliged to admit (like everyone else who had been brought into contact with this man), that the first glimpse of Ortiz' face made a remarkable impression upon him; its look of intense concentration fascinated him: the man's whole self seemed bent on the attainment of an all-embracing, all-absorbing, and as yet unrealized ambition. His face was pale, but expressive of unlimited strength of will; the mouth small, straight, thin-lipped, and unsmiling; the eyes, which were deep set and penetrating, seemed to look far beyond their immediate surroundings into some boundless realm of fancy, bright with the promise of power and sovereignty; and from their depths shone the unquenchable conviction which is the hall-mark of the fanatic.

"Do you see him?" whispered Lona Ivanovna.

"Yes," answered the journalist; "I see that I have made a miscalculation."

"What did you expect?"

Wallion did not answer. What exactly had he expected? A caricature of Napoleon? A common adventurer, acting a ridiculous part? No, and yet he had perhaps unconsciously hoped that Gabriel Ortiz should turn out to be—just the "Emperor of the Amazons."

But the antagonist who at length presented himself, after months of suspense, was no comic hero—he was a man! A man who, in deadly earnest, was bent on fulfilling his dearest ambition in defiance of law and order—and between him and his ambition stood only one obstacle—Maurice Wallion.

"What a fight it will be!" said the journalist aloud; "one of us ought to go under!" He breathed hard, and clenched his fists.

"Now!" whispered Lona Ivanovna.

The group on the terrace advanced again; Baron Fayer-

ling had finished talking, and stepped on one side. Gabriel Ortiz was walking toward the house, his head bent, and his hands clasped behind him. Suddenly he looked up, and said sharply:

"Who are in the house?"

The baron's reply was in audible, but Wallion was sure that he only mentioned three names, as he made a gesture towards the dark garden. Ortiz nodded shortly. Lona Ivanovna remarked, from her place by Wallion's side:

"If only I had that baron's throat between my fingers!"

He hushed her with a look, and drew her back from the door as she was on the point of saluting forth.

"You must keep as cool as ice!" he warned her; "you will want all your wits, all your cunning now. Our aim is to gain time, not to indulge in heroics; put away your revolver, it would only make matters worse."

She replaced the weapon reluctantly in her workbag, and they withdrew silently.

At a signal from the baron, the lights were turned upon the entire front of the house, shining right into the windows; slanting, flickering shafts of light illuminated the hall, and just as Lona Ivanovna and the journalist were leaving it, the locked doors yielded to a violent push, showers of glass tinkled over the oak floor, and the walls echoed to the steady tramp of men.

"Lights on everywhere!" ordered the baron. "Put a man at every door; you two stop here."

Steps approached the dining room: the curtain that screened it from the hall was pulled aside with a rattle, and Ortiz appeared in the doorway.

He looked coolly and critically at the persons who awaited him: then he came in, still accompanied by the baron. Two of the men in uniform stood on guard by the door, and two others placed their lamps on the mantelpiece, filling the room with a dazzling light, in which faces appeared unnaturally pale, and shadows unnaturally dark. There was silence for an instant; Ortiz, his hands still behind him, signed to his adjutant to draw back a little, that he might speak. His deep, piercing glance travelled from the white-haired form in the armchair to Lona Ivanovna's upright figure, and finally rested upon Wallion. He seemed to be looking down upon them from a great height, taking stock of everything, and co-ordinating all details into one complete whole.

But the journalist, who was growing impatient, could not deny himself the satisfaction of the first word.

"Good evening, Gabriel Ortiz. I have long wished to meet you; dare I hope that Baron Fayerling will introduce me?"

Ortiz unfastened his dripping waterproof, and threw his hat on a chair.

"It is not necessary, Maurice Wallion: I know you already."

"And my—friends?" asked the journalist, emphasizing the word "friends," and waving his hand towards Lona Ivanovna and the sick man. "Do you...?"

"I know them also." Ortiz' reply was short and sharp. His expression changed as he looked at the journalist: it evinced more hostility but at the same time, more interest than before, and he added:

"Do you count them among your friends? That is risky; I am sorry that you have come here, Maurice Wallion."

"Would it not be more to the point if you explained by what right you invade the Copper House in this brutal way?"

"By the strongest right!" "You are on Swedish soil: let me remind you of its laws."

"I have my own." "In other words, you are an outlaw."

"From your point of view—not from mine."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Court Declares Husband Is Head of Household

DAYTON, OHIO.—(UP)—The husband is the head of the household whether he likes it or not. If he tells his wife to make home brew and she gets arrested for doing it, the husband is the one to be punished.

Judge William C. Wiseman so ruled here when he pronounced Mrs. Daisy Lansing not guilty of manufacturing and possessing beer. Dry raiders testified they found 45 bottles of "high powered" beer

in the Lansing home which the wife claimed her husband directed her to make for him.

Whisky and Bad Temper Blamed for Most Crime

ATLANTA, GA.—Whisky and bad temper cause much of America's crime, says James L. Beavers, Atlanta's police chief who presided over the recent convention of the International Association of Police Chiefs.

"Of course, many of our criminals are made in the home," the

chief said. "Parental neglect of the child is one of the greatest police problems of the day. Training of children doubtless has more to do with the making of good or bad citizens than any other one thing."

Persons under influence of liquor or a bad temper are most likely to commit crime, he says. "Any person who acts or talks while in a rage likely will live to regret it."

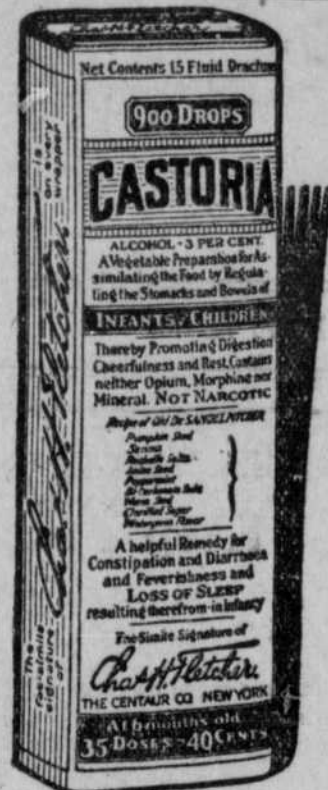
HE'S THE ONLY ONE PORTLAND, ORE.—Tie this one, if you can. A conscience-stricken motorist recently sent the following letter to Traffic Captain Irwin:

"I was in Portland recently and upon starting for home, I went several blocks without putting my lights on. I did not do so intentionally, nor did anyone say anything about it, but I thought I would write and find out if there is any fine for it. If there is, I wish you would let me know."

Q. How many observation planes did the army air corps buy last year? M. T. S.

A. The United States army air corps during the last year purchased 63 observation planes costing \$1,021,472. The planes averaged from \$12,000 to \$16,000 apiece.

If Baby has COLIC



A cry in the night may be the first warning that Baby has colic. No cause for alarm if Castoria is handy! This pure vegetable preparation brings quick comfort, and can never do the slightest harm. Always keep a bottle in the house. It is the safe and sensible thing when children are ailing. Whether it's the stomach, or the little bowels; colic or constipation; or diarrhea. When tiny tongues are coated, or the breath is bad. Whenever there's need of gentle regulation. Children love the

taste of Castoria, and its mildness makes it suitable for the tiniest infant, and for frequent use.

And a more liberal dose of Castoria is always better for growing children than some needlessly strong medicine meant only for adult use. Genuine Castoria always has Chas. H. Fletcher's signature on the wrapper. Prescribed by doctors!

The Old Spendthrift!

He has the reputation of being the stingiest man in the Indiana town he calls home, it even being whispered that he counts the grains of corn he feeds his chickens. It was in the holidays that he entered the store in mild excitement, telling how his four children, three married and two with one or more children, were coming home for Christmas.

"We're going to have a big time, all of us together at home again. Give me 2 cents' worth of candy."—Indianapolis News.

Probably Would Be

"What now?" "Got to do a thesis on arsenic." "Sounds poisonous."

Vanity is the only intellectual enjoyment of some women.

Typewriter Prints Music

After several years of effort an Italian composer has made a typewriter for composing music which he calls a "dactylomusicograph." The machine resembles an ordinary typewriter, and is operated in the same manner. It types all kinds of music and is able to inscribe on the page either vertically or horizontally.

New Brunswick Once French

What is now the Canadian province of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick was known in the days of the French regime as Acadia. The country passed to Great Britain under the treaty of Utrecht in 1713 and became known as Nova Scotia, the Latin for New Scotland.

What is more disappointing than a magazine—when it is?



To Identify Genuine Aspirin

THE increasing use of Bayer Aspirin every year is proof that it has no ill effects. It is the accepted antidote for pain. It always helps; it never harms. Quick relief when you've a headache, or cold; or are suffering from neuralgia or neuritis. Rheumatic pains yield, too, if you'll only give these tablets a chance. But you want genuine Aspirin, so look for the Bayer Cross on every tablet. The box always bears the name Bayer and the word "genuine" printed in red. Proven directions inside.

Aspirin is the trade mark



of Bayer Manufacture of Salicylicacid

Petrified Tongues Found

Iowa paleontologists are endeavoring to identify seven petrified tongues found in a gravel pit. It is thought they are buffalo tongues cached by Indians.

Maybe It's a Fellow Feeling

"That pedestrian just gave me a laugh." "Yeah? What was the joke?" "He was pitying the miners living such dangerous lives."



Backache Bother You?

A Persistent Backache Often Warns of Sluggish Kidneys.

DOES every day find you lame and aching—suffering nagging backache, headache and dizzy spells? Are kidney excretions too frequent, scanty or burning in passage? These are often signs of sluggish kidneys and should not be neglected.

To promote normal kidney action and assist your kidneys in cleansing your blood of poisonous wastes, use Doan's Pills. Endorsed the world over. Sold by good dealers everywhere.

50,000 Users Endorse Doan's:

Mrs. L. Dietz, 2015 S Street, Sacramento, Calif., says: "I surely feel grateful to Doan's Pills. Dizzy spells bothered me and I felt tired and nervous. At times I had such a lameness across the back that it was very hard to get around. My kidneys were not acting normally. I started to use Doan's Pills and I am glad I did. Now I enjoy good health."

Doan's Pills

A Stimulant Diuretic to the Kidneys