

"Say," she said, "do you ever git up there?"

"Nope," said Jim with serious eyes. "I'd never darst to. An' Gram'pa would n't like it, neither."

"You don't darst to? 'Fraid-cat! 'Fraid-cat! Oh, Mister 'Fraid-cat!"

She pointed her finger half an inch from his nose; then, she broke and ran. In a minute she came backing around the corner of the stable again, dragging the step-ladder that had been the lifeboat when the steamer was wrecked. Jim helped her to set it against the wall.

"I ain't afraid," he said. "You lemme go first."

"No. I'm the tallest. You git under me an' boost, Jim. There! You all ready? Now boost. Boost hard!"

Jim did as he was told, and Carrie went up in a scramble of waving legs and clutching fingers from the top of the ladder to the top of the wall. She helped Jim up by the shoulders, and then they both knelt, clinging to one another and looking at the great depth below. Jim felt unsteady. High places always scared him, and as he looked down at the litter of chips and ash-piles and the thick burdocks among them he felt as if he were out floating on a raft, somewhere in the sky.

But it just suited Carrie. In half a minute she had found out that they could get from the high wall to the stable roof; and so, over she went, with her pig-tail tucked in her month and Jim after her. The slope of the shingles was almost too steep to climb; but they lay on their stomachs with arms spread out, and wormed themselves along until they had the ridge-pole safely under their arm-pits.

"Say!" Carrie shouted, tossing her hair down her back again with a quick, hard head-shake. "Ain't this fun? Like real adventures? Like climbing mountains, Jim? Say, don't you wish it *was* real?"

"M-m-ye-ah," Jim answered rather weakly. "Like climbin' the Andes Mountains. Let's us play we're in Peru."

"Sure! We're in Peru. Say, Jim, do you darst to stand up?"

"No!"

Jim had no doubts on that point. The houses and yards all looked queer; so far below, with the high fences all thinned and narrow and the trees without any trunks, only tumbled, waving leaves.

"'Fraid-cat! Oh, Mister 'Fraid-cat!"

In another second Carrie had straddled the ridge; then, she got to her hands and knees; then, she straightened herself and stood up there against the blue sky, shaking her head till her red pig-tail flapped on her shoulders.

"I'm goin' to walk to the euperlow," she shouted.

The cupola was not a rod away; but it looked ten times as far.

"'Fraid-cat!" Carrie sang to Jim again as she went slowly past him, walking the very ridge, fitting each heel exactly in front of the toe of the other foot.

That was more than the boy could stand. He fixed his eyes on the shingles, so that he could not see; and then — scared, dumb and white — he pushed himself clumsily to his feet. He could stand, after all — unsteadily; but he stood. Carrie was at the cupola already. She hardly touched the clapboards as she turned, she was so sure of her footing. Slowly she started toward him again.

"Carrie! Carrie-ee! *Mercy!*"

It was a shriek from Carrie's mother. She was crying and waving her apron on her porch. Jim saw her in a flash; then, his eyes came back to the roof.

"Don't you look!" he shouted.

But he was too late. Carrie turned and saw her mother. She saw the yards, too, and the waving trees and the thin fences below — then, the steep, smooth slant of shingles, and the sickening drop at the eaves. Jim saw the look of it come on her face before she began to scream. Her yelling cry shrilled in his ears. Her arms went out. She was losing her balance. Jim heard, and walked straight to her as if he had not been afraid. She grabbed at him, and he caught her arm with his hand and looked her in the eyes.

"Be you a 'fraid-cat? Be you a 'fraid-cat? Be you a 'fraid-cat?"

He kept saying it over. He was not talking loud; but in a way he never had talked — slowly, with his eyes half shut. The girl's face changed. She straightened herself, and Jim turned, as sure-footed as if he had been on the ground.

"Put your hands on me," he ordered.

She did as he said, and they walked back slowly to where they had climbed the roof. They went down slowly, holding tight to one another, and landed at the foot of the ladder at last, safe and sound except for four torn stockings.

"Carrie-ee!" her mother's voice came to them over the fences.

"Ye-es, Ma!" the girl called.

She brought her pig-tail over her shoulder again, as she turned to the boy, and stood pulling it awkwardly.

"Say, Jim," she said. "You — you did n't say I *was* a 'fraid-cat — up



Defiantly demure . . . a little jaunty  
. . . and so very pale

there, did you? That — say — you know, that was awful good of you, Jim."

He had no idea what was coming; but she hugged him all of a sudden, and gave him a warm, big kiss on the mouth. Then, she ran away. Next day her mother kept her indoors; the day after, Jim's visit to his grandfather was over, and after that they did not see each other for sixteen years. But often the girl would go over to the yard across the street and look for the ocean and the jungles and the Andes. And, finding them ordinary dooryard and stable, and being a girl of few dreams, she made a great deal of their one daring day of play-adventures, and wished and wished that Jim would come again — that Jim would come, and be with her again, having adventures, and that he would make it all be real.

## II.

AND, IN A WAY, he did. It happened in New York, where anything may happen, where indeed almost anything does happen once or twice a year. Jim came swinging through Forty-first street, his hands in his overcoat pockets, a hard winter wind from Jersey blaring in his face. It was nearly eight o'clock; an overtime rehearsal had just let out on Sixth avenue, and the girls of the chorus were strung all along the block to Broadway, fluttering and slanted against the wind like the flags in a battle-picture. Jim forged past them, forded the Broadway traffic in the lee of a theater that looked like a sunrise, and pushed on into Seventh avenue.

The policeman's whistle shrilled at the crossing above; the dark mass of automobiles surged forward at the signal, and then he was in the thick of it — dark shapes, growling, rushing, swerving, shaking paired lights like horns; quick glares of glass and metal, humped chauffeurs, bearlike and mountainous, the flash of a rose-red mantle and a shining throat; gasoline-smell, clacking chains, shouts, hoots, hoof-beats, and over all a great shaking roar as the trolley-wheels came down like pounding surf on the crossing. A north-bound taxi brayed suddenly, splitting apart a couple close to him. They belonged to the rehearsal crowd, and the girl was Carrie.

He never would have known her if he had not seen her jump, one hand thrown out, the way she used to, with a quick, hard headshake. She was very small. He had always supposed she was a tall girl.

"Hello! Say, hello!" he shouted through the racket. "Say, don't you know me?"

"No," she answered him coldly, with her head up and her lips pressed tight.

"Yes you do. You're Carrie —"

"Why — Jim! Well, of all people — and you've grown so! My, you've grown! Now, don't you keep me here talking in the street — here's a chance —"

He tucked her under his arm, whisked her through the breach between a limousine and a laundry-wagon and landed her on the sidewalk. While they were still exclaiming and looking, a man saved himself from the whizzing Avenue and came up to them.

"Mr. St. Clair, I want you to meet —"

(Continued on Page 11)



SCENTING BIG GAME

Drawn by Alice Beach Winter