

In his uneasy frame of mind, Ellsworth began to think that his waiter was growing suspicious of him. Every time the waiter drew near, Ellsworth had a spell of the creeps. Now he brought Ellsworth's check, left it, melted away, stayed away a while, returned, coughed, shifted the check the one-thousandth part of an inch, withdrew, and at last approached once more.

Just as he did so that pretty girl leaned towards her escort, and said something to him that made him put down his glass, get unsteadily to his feet, and wobble over to startled Ellsworth.

"I beg your pardon," the stranger said, "but my friends know you: you're Mr. Lockwood, the author of 'Shows'; an' we wan' you over with us at our table."

"I really beg your pardon," rejoined embarrassed Ellsworth, "my name is Ellsworth—not Lockwood."

"O th's alright," returned his caller, with a sweet smile, as he swayed gently to and fro. "Aw'ly fine of you to be so modest, y' know. But you see we know you, we do, an' you simply got to come over."

He turned toward his own table. "Here," he giggled, "the lion refuses t' be a lion. Come on 'n' make 'm roar!"

The girl whose eyes had so often met those of Ellsworth rose in a flash and joined the men. Ellsworth sprang to his feet as she addressed him:

"It's really too unkind of you, Mr. Lockwood, not to recall me, for I had the honor of tea in actually the same room with you at Mrs. Van Lensing's, last Thursday, and I feel especially privileged to be remembered. Do join us, won't you?"

"I regret it most sincerely, but I must insist that you are mistaken,"

murmured Ellsworth, his face crimson, and his words stumbling over one another; "but you see my name is Ellsworth, not Lockwood, and I really am nobody at all—distinctly nobody."

"How charming of you," rejoined the girl, laughing merrily. "I suppose I should respect your wish for privacy; but I happen to be in a most stubborn mood tonight, so you'll please come along peaceably."

Ellsworth opened his mouth once or twice like a gold-fish making bubbles in an aquarium, but no words came forth. The girl, suddenly leaning towards his table, thrust his dinner-check swiftly towards her escort.

"That's yours. Take it!" she commanded. "Mr. Lockwood has been our guest all evening—though he didn't know it until now."

Suddenly comprehending what she had done, Ellsworth made a determined effort to capture the paper; but the grinning wabblor held firmly to it, and the girl was baffling.

"No, Mr. Lockwood," she decided, firmly, "I am eccentric and daring, as you see. Now don't say anything, but sit down."

"That's right, Lockwood, ol' chap," put in the amiable second, "come on!"

And he almost hauled Ellsworth into the extra chair that a waiter shoved to that enchanted table.

When Ellsworth finally rose with them, it was still as "Mr. Lockwood", in spite of his efforts to prove his identity, and with his bill paid by the fond youth of many drinks, who considered the paying a privilege. And, moreover, he rose under an order—it was no mere invitation—that he ride back with them as far as "his" hotel; they would be passing right by it.

When they reached the fashionable hotel where lived the real Lockwood,

the other girl and the quieter man had been dropped off at their homes. The amiable tippler sat beside the chauffeur, nodding sleepily. In the tonneau, the girl of daring sat alone with Ellsworth.

Ellsworth dismounted, and the girl leaned towards him with outstretched hand. He took it; and all his planned-out words of gratitude died within him for joy at its touch.

Then, at last, words came. "For the four-hundredth time I must tell you," he said, "that I am not Mr. Lockwood. I'm getting out at his hotel lest our friend in the front seat rouse up and throw me out, so convinced is he that I don't know who I am myself. In accepting your hospitality—in letting—"

He faltered, and his eyes fell.

"Well, that—that dinner-check of mine—" he went on.

"Sh-h-h!" interrupted the girl. "Listen!"

She stole a glance at the two in front. The man was asleep, the chauffeur properly deaf and motionless. "Listen: The rest of them did not remember that you were the man we almost ran down at Seventy-second Street. They didn't know that—that you had raised your hat. They didn't—must I tell you?"

"—Will you forgive me?—They didn't see your face when you saw your dinner-check—O, forgive me—but I did! And, although you do resemble him, I knew you were not Mr. Lockwood. I've seen him often. You will forgive me, won't you? And when you get home—look in your left-hand coat pocket. I'm afraid I dropped something in there—Good-night!"

The motor hummed, the car gained speed, and soon vanished in the darkness. Ellsworth stood staring after it, while the hot blood drummed in his ears. Then with trembling fingers he extracted a bit of cardboard from his pocket. Going close to one of the pillar-lights in front of the hotel, he read her name, address, and "Do come and take tea with us to-morrow," scribbled beneath.

So she had planned that all out! She had written that at the table.

Ellsworth straightened up.

"Will I call?" he said almost aloud. "Will I take that promotion game and make good? Will I?" Then suddenly, "Jove, I must look like somebody, after all!"

And he broke into a whistle as he swung his stick gaily along the way home.

The Air Pilot

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opposite the cab window, but could not distinctly distinguish the form. Then Brandt emerged under the glare of electric light, and stepped forth onto the broad sidewalk. As he appeared the figure flitted out from the shadows, and approached him. It was a woman, wearing a loose wrap. They exchanged perhaps a dozen words, although the man did not speak but once. Then they advanced across the walk together, and Brandt flung open the door of the cab. The next instant he had grasped her arm, and thrust her inside, springing in after her. I heard her utter a quick, smothered exclamation of surprise, felt her extended hands grasp me to keep from falling; then the cab started roughly with a jerk, and someone pressed her back into a corner of the front seat, while Brandt squeezed himself in beside her. Except for the occasional flash of a street lamp we were in utter darkness. I could barely distinguish the figures opposite, yet I knew the woman struggled to get to her feet, only to be thrust back helpless by Brandt who gripped both her hands.

"Keep still!" he ordered sharply. "You've shoved yourself into this affair, now, you'll take the consequences, young lady. Be quiet, I say! There is no harm going to be done you, only I'll put you where you can't talk for awhile."

The woman, whoever she was, made no outcry, but drew her hands indignantly from his grasp, and shrank back into her corner of the cab, covering there. Enveloped in her loose wrap, she was but a shapeless shadow, and, even in the occasional flashes of light, I was unable to distinguish the outline of her features. In truth I was so deeply concerned with my own predicament that my interest in her was only momentary. If her interjection into the game was some outcome of Brandt's love affairs it in no way concerned itself with me. Staring out as best I could I endeavored to determine where we were going, but my slight knowledge of the streets of the city was a serious handicap. Once I felt confident we turned onto Michigan Avenue, heading south, for there was a park on the left, and the street was illuminated by clustered lights. The cab was traveling rapidly, so much so that Brandt rapped sharply on the glass front, and ordered the chauffeur to slow down: "Not so fast," he snapped angrily,

"We cannot afford to be stopped, and taken to a police station."

Crushed in as we were any movement looking toward escape was useless. I endeavored to count the cross-streets, but became confused and lost tally. Then we whirled to the left over a block or two of rough pavement, made a circle through what appeared like a small park, and came forth into an ill-lighted street. As near as I could determine our course was still south, and we skirted a stone wall, perhaps eight or ten feet high, partially overgrown with foliage. I was hardly sure as to this, until the machine suddenly swerved, and ran in through an open gate, plunging us into complete darkness beneath the shadow of overhanging trees. But the chauffeur evidently knew the way, for, with lights extinguished, he half-circled twice on a noiseless roadway, and then came to a stop.

"Open the door, Fritz," said Brandt, leaning over to peer past us. "You and Swigert take care of your man; I'll look after the girl. Don't let go of him."

I was pulled forth rather roughly, but on reaching my feet outside, could perceive we were in the shadow of a large building, apparently a residence, but with no light visible anywhere. Just before us was a flight of stone steps. The two men gripped my arms urging me along a narrow walk which led to a basement door. I hung back just enough to anger them, while Brandt forced the woman to alight.

"Drive in under the cover, and wait," he commanded the chauffeur. "Cut out your cigarettes; someone might see the light. Now young lady."

She sprang back, tearing the sleeve of her wrap as she jerked it out of his fingers. Franzen, with a German oath, released his grasp on me and grabbed for her, and, before she could round the cab wheel, the Captain had her. She struck him once, struggling to break free, and the fellow laughed, crushing her arms down.

"That's enough, you little girl," he sneered, "come on now."

"I will not," the voice trembling, but determined. "Take your hands off me."

It was then I knew who she was, and, with one supreme effort, wrenched myself free from Swigert, and leaped straight at Brandt's throat.



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