

THE ENCHANTED BARN

copyright 1918, by J. B. Lippincott Co.

CHAPTER XXV.

The man looked up from the paper he was twisting for a fire and saw Shirley's attitude of despair.

"Say, kid," he said, with a kind of gruff tenderness, "you don't need to take it that a-way. I know it's tough luck to lose out when you been so nery and all, but you knew we had it over you from the start. You hadn't a show. And say! Girlie! I tell you what! I'll make Hennie sit down right now and copy 'em off for you, and you can put 'em in your book again when you get back and nobody be the wiser. We'll just take out the leaves. We gotta keep the original o' course, but that won't make any beans for you. It won't take you no time to write 'em over again if he gives you a copy."

Somehow it penetrated through Shirley's tired consciousness that the man was trying to be kind to her. He was pitying her and offering her a way out of her supposed dilemma, offering to assist her in some of his own kind of deception. The girl was touched even through all her other crowding emotions and weariness. She lifted up her head with a faint little smile.

"Thank you," she said, wearily, "but that wouldn't do me any good."

"Why not?" asked the man sharply. "Your boss would never know it got out through you."

"But I should know I had failed!" she said sadly. "If you had my notes I should know that I had failed in my trust."

"It wouldn't be your fault. You couldn't have helped it!"

"Oh, yes, I could, and I ought. I shouldn't have let the driver turn around. I should have got out of that car and waited at the station as Mr. Barnard told me to do till he came. I had been warned and I ought to have been on my guard. So you see it was my fault."

She drooped her head forward and rested her chin dejectedly on the palm of her hand, her elbow on her knee. The man stood looking at her for a second in half-indignant astonishment.

"By golly!" he said at last. "You certainly are some nut! Well, anyhow, buck up, and let's have some tea. Sorry I can't see my way clear to help you out any further, being as we're sort of partners in this job and you certainly have got some nerve for a girl, but you know how it is. I guess I can't do no more'n I said. I got my honor to think about, too. See? Hennie! Get a move on you. We ain't waitin' all night fer eats. Bring in them things from the cupboard and let's get to work."

Shirley declined to come to the table when at last the repast was ready. She said she was not hungry. In fact, the smell of the crackers and cheese and pickles and dried beef sickened her. She felt too hysterical to try to eat, and besides she had a lingering feeling that she must keep near that piano. If anything happened she had a vague idea that she might somehow hide the precious notes within the big old instrument.

The man frowned when she declined to come to supper, but a moment later stumbled awkwardly across the room with a slopping cup of coffee and set it down beside her.

"Buck up, girlie!" he growled. "Drink that and you'll feel better."

Shirley thanked him and tried to drink a few mouthfuls. Then the thought occurred to her that it might be drugged, and she swallowed no more. But she tried to look a bit brighter. If she must pass this strange evening in the company of these rough men, it would not help matters for her to give way to despair. So after toying with the teaspoon a moment, she put the cup down and began to play soft airs on the old piano again while the men ate and took a stealthy taste now and then from a black bottle. She watched them furtively as she played, marvelling at their softened expressions, remembering the old time:

"Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast," and wondering if perhaps there were not really something in it. If she had not been in such a terrifying situation she would really have enjoyed the character study that this view of those two faces afforded her, as she sat in the

shadow playing softly while they ate with the flaring candle between them.

"I like music with my meals!" suddenly chanted out the boy in an interval. But the man growled in a low tone:

"Shut up! Ain't you got no manners?"

Shirley prolonged that meal as much as music could do it, for she had no relish for a more intimate tete-a-tete with either of her companions. When she saw them grow restless she began to sing again, light little airs this time with catchy words; or old tender melodies of home and mother and childhood. They were songs she had sung that last night in the dear old barn when Sidney Graham and Elizabeth were with them, and unconsciously her voice took on the wail of her heart for all that dear past so far away from her now.

Suddenly, as the last tender note of a song died away Joe stumbled breathlessly into the room. The boy Hennie slithered out of the room like a serpent at his first word.

"Beat it!" he cried in a hoarse whisper. "Get a move on! All hell's out after us! I bet they heard her singin'! Take her an' beat it! I'll douse the fire an' out the candle."

He seized a full bucket of water and dashed it over the dying fire. Shirley felt the other man grasp her arm in a fierce grip. Then Joe snuffed out the candle with his broad thumb and finger and all was pitch dark. She felt herself dragged across the floor regardless of furniture in the way, stumbling, choking with fear, her one thought that whatever happened she must not let her slippers get knocked off; holding her feet in a tense strain with every muscle extended to keep the shoes fastened on like a vise. She was haunted with a wild thought of how she might have slipped under the piano and eluded her captor if only the light had gone out one second sooner before he reached her side. But it was too late to think of that now, and she was being dragged along breathlessly, out the front door, perhaps, and down a walk; no, it was amongst trees, for she almost ran into one. The man swore at her, grasped her arm till he hurt her and she cried out:

"You shut up or I'll shoot you!" he said with an oath. He had lost all his suavity and there was desperation in his voice. He kept turning his head to look back and urging her on.

She tripped on a root and stumbled to her knees, bruising them painfully, but her only thought was one of joy that her shoes had not come off.

The man swore a fearful oath under his breath, then snatched her up and began to run with her in his arms. It was then she heard Graham's voice calling:

"Shirley! Where are you? I'm coming!"

She thought she was swooning or dreaming and that it was not really he, for how could he possibly be here? But she cried out with a voice as clear as a bell: "I'm here, Sidney, come quick!" In his efforts to hush her voice, the man stumbled and fell with her in his arms. There came other voices and forms through the night. She was gathered up in strong, kind arms and held. The last thought she had before she sank into unconsciousness was that God had not forgotten. He had been remembering all the time and sent His help before it was too late; just as she had known all along He must do, because He had promised to care for His own, and she was one of His little ones.

When she came to herself again she was lying in Sidney Graham's arms with her head against his shoulder feeling oh, so comfortable and tired. There were two automobiles with powerful headlights standing between the trees, and a lot of policemen in the shadowy background. Her captor stood sullen against a tree with his hands and feet shackled. Joe stood between two policemen with a rope bound about his body spirally, and the boy Hennie, also bound, beside his fallen bicycle, turned his ferret eyes from side to side as if he hoped even yet to escape. Two other men with hawk like faces that she had not seen before were there also, manacled, and with eyes of smouldering fires. Climbing excitedly out of one of the big cars came Mr. Barnard, his usually immaculate

pink face smutty and weary; his sparse white hair ruffled giddily, and a worried pucker on his kind, prim face.

"Oh, my dear Miss Hollister! How unfortunate!" he exclaimed. "I do hope you haven't suffered too much inconvenience!"

Shirley smiled up at him from her shoulder of refuge as from a dream. It was all so amusing and impossible after what she had been through. It couldn't be real.

"I assure you I am very much distressed on your account," went on Mr. Barnard, politely and hurriedly, "and I hate to mention it at such a time, but could you tell me whether the notes are safe? Did those horrid men get anything away from you?"

A sudden flicker of triumph passed over the faces of the fettered man and the boy, like a ripple over still water and died away into unintelligence.

But Shirley's voice rippled forth in a glad, clear laugh, as she answered joyously:

"Yes, Mr. Barnard, they got my note-book, but not the notes! They thought the Tilman-Brooks notes were what they were after, but the real notes are in my shoes. Won't you please get them out, for I'm afraid I can't hold them on any longer, my feet ache so!"

It is a pity that Shirley was not in a position to see the look of astonishment, followed by a twinkle of actual appreciation that came over the face of the shackled man beside the tree as he listened. One could almost fancy he was saying to himself: "The nery little nut! She put one over on me after all!"

It was also a pity that Shirley could not have got the full view of the altogether precise and conventional Mr. Barnard kneeling before her on the ground, removing carefully, with deep embarrassment and concern, first one, then the other, of her little black pumps, extracting the precious notes, counting over the pages and putting them ecstatically into his pocket. No one of that group but Shirley could fully appreciate the ludicrous picture he made.

"You are entirely sure that no one but yourself has seen these notes?" he asked anxiously as if he hardly dared to believe the blessed truth.

"Entirely sure, Mr. Barnard!" said Shirley happily, "and now if you wouldn't mind putting on my shoes again I can relieve Mr. Graham of the necessity of carrying me any further."

"Oh, surely, surely!" said Mr. Barnard, quite fussed and getting down laboriously again, his white forelock all tossed, and his forehead perplexed over the unusual task. How did women get into such a little trinket of a shoe, anyway!

"I assure you, Miss Hollister, our firm appreciates what you have done! We shall not forget it. You will see, we shall not forget it!" he puffed as he rose with beads of perspiration on his brow. "You have done a great thing for Barnard and Clegg today!"

"She's done more than that!" said a burly policeman significantly glancing around the group of sullen prisoners, as Graham put her upon her feet beside him. "She's rounded up the whole gang for us, and that's more than anybody else has been able to do yet! She oughta get a medal of some kind for that!"

Then, with a dare-devil lift of his head and a gleam of something like fun in his sullen eyes, the manacled man by the tree spoke out, looking straight at Shirley, real admiration in his voice:

"I say, pard! I guess you're the winner! I'd hand you what's comin' to you if I do lose. You certainly had your nerve!"

Shirley looked at him with a kind of compassion in her eyes. "I'm sorry you have to be there," she finished. "You were—as fine as you could be to me under the circumstances, I suppose! I thank you for that."

The man met her gaze for an instant, a flippant reply upon his lips, but checked it and dropping his eyes, was silent. The whole little company under the trees were hushed into silence before the miracle of a girl's pure spirit, leaving its impress on a blackened soul.

Then, quietly, Graham led her away to his car with Barnard and the detectives following. The prisoners were loaded into the other cars, and hurried on the way to judgment.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The ride back to the city was like a dream to Shirley afterward. To see the staid Mr. Barn-

ard so excited, babbling away about her bravery and exulting like a child over the recovery of the precious notes, was wonder enough. But to feel the quiet protection and tender interest of Sidney Graham filled her with ecstasy. Of course it was only kindly interest and friendly anxiety, and by tomorrow she would have put it into order with all his other kindnesses, but tonight weary and excited as she was, with the sense of horror over her recent experience still upon her, it was sweet to feel his attention, and to let his voice thrill through her tired heart, without stopping to analyze it and be sure she was not too glad over it. What if he would be merely a friend tomorrow again! Tonight he was her rescuer, and she would rest back upon that and be happy.

"I feel that I was much to blame for leaving you alone to go to the station with a bait like these notes in your possession," said Mr. Barnard humbly. "Though of course I did not dream that there was any such possibility as your being in danger."

"It is just as well not to run any risks in these days when the country is so unsettled," said the detective dryly.

"Especially where a lady is concerned!" remarked Graham significantly.

"I suppose I should have taken Miss Hollister with me and left her in the cab while I transacted my business at the war department!" said Barnard with self-reproach in his tones.

"They would have only done the same thing in front of the war department," said the detective convincingly. "They had it all planned to get those notes somehow. You only made it a trifle easier for them by letting the lady go alone. If they hadn't succeeded here, they would have followed you to your home and got into your office or your safe. They are determined, desperate men. We've been watching them for some time, letting them work till we could find out who was behind them. Tonight we caught the whole bunch red handed, thanks to the lady's cleverness. But you had better not risk her alone again when there's anything like this on hand. She might not come out so easy next time!"

Graham muttered a fervent applause in a low tone to this advice, tucking the lap robes closer about the girl. Barnard gave little shudders of apology as he humbly shouldered the blame: "Oh, no, of course not! I certainly am so sorry!" But Shirley suddenly roused herself to explain:

"Indeed, you mustn't any of you blame Mr. Barnard. He did the perfectly right and natural thing. He always trusts me to look after my notes, even in the most important cases; and I heard the warning as much as he did. It was my business to be on the lookout! I'm old enough and have read enough in the papers about spies and ruffians. I ought to have known there was something wrong when that boy ordered me back and said Mr. Barnard had sent me word. I ought to have known Mr. Barnard would never do that. I did know just as soon as I stopped to think. The trouble was I was giving half my attention to looking at the strange sights out of the window and thinking what I would tell the folks at home about Washington, or I would not have got into such a position. I insist that you shall not blame yourself, Mr. Barnard. It is a secretary's business to be on her job and not be out having a good time when she is on a business trip. I hadn't got beyond the city limits before I knew exactly what I ought to have done. I should have asked that boy more questions, and I should have got right out of that car and told him to tell you I would wait in the station till you came for me. It troubled me from the start that you had sent for me that way. It wasn't like you."

Then they turned their questions upon her, and she had to tell the whole story of her capture, Graham and Barnard exclaiming indignantly as she went on, the detective sitting grim and serious, nodding his approval now and then. Graham's attitude toward her grew more tender and protective. Once or twice as she told of her situation in the old house, or spoke of how the man dragged her along in the dark, he set his teeth and drew his breath hard, saying in an undertone: "The villain!" And there was that in the way that he looked at her that made Shirley hasten through the story, because of the wild, joyous clamor of her heart.

Continued next week.

"IT SAVED MY LIFE"

The Feeling Tribute of a Woman to

PE-RU-NA

READ HER LETTER—IT WILL DO YOU GOOD

"Pe-ru-na has been a Godsend to me. I feel safe in saying that it saved my life. I was all run down and miserable when I commenced taking Pe-ru-na, but am on the road to recovery now. I cannot thank you too much."

MRS. CHARLES ANSPAUGH,
R. F. D. No. 1, Lagrange, Indiana.

A letter like this brings hope and the promise of health to every sick and suffering woman. Perhaps you know what it means to have your daily duties a misery, every movement an effort, stomach deranged, pains in the head, back and limbs most of the time, nerves raw and quivering—not a moment day or night free from suffering.

Do as Mrs. Anspough did. Take Pe-ru-na. Don't wait but start right away.

TABLETS OR LIQUID SOLD EVERYWHERE

Giving a Guess.
"What were the Greenbackers, I saw?"
"People who lived up near the North Pole."—Louisville Courier Journal.

GREEN'S AUGUST FLOWER

The Remedy With a Record of Fifty-Five Years of Surpassing Excellence.

All who suffer with nervous dyspepsia, sour stomach, constipation, indigestion, torpid liver, dizziness, headaches, coming up of food, wind on stomach, palpitation and other indications of digestive disorder, will find Green's August Flower an effective and most efficient remedy. For fifty-five years this medicine has been successfully used in millions of households all over the civilized world. Because of its remarkable merit and widespread popularity Green's August Flower can be found today wherever medicines are sold.—Advertisement.

A contested will is one sort of hand-down suit.

But why is a man supposed to saw wood when he says nothing?

CURES COLDS IN 24 HOURS

WORLD'S FINEST STANDARD
AT ALL DRUG STORES
CASCARA QUININE
FOR TWO GENERATIONS
CURES LA GRIFFE IN 3 DAYS
DETROIT, W. H. HILL CO., MICHIGAN.

PUT TRUTH IN SECOND PLACE

Salesman, Like Some Oldtime Advertisers, Must Have Had a Strangle Hold on Conscience.

Frank Irwin Fletcher, the New York advertising expert, said in an address to advertisers:

"Another fault that is fast disappearing is exaggeration—lying, you know. Some of the advertisements of the past remind me of a dialogue between a salesman and a patron. It runs like this:

"What's the price of the article?"

"One dollar, sir."

"Bought direct from the manufacturer, I presume?"

"No, sir, we got it at a sheriff's sale of the manufacturer's stock."

"Why did the manufacturer bust up?"

"Through selling this article at a dead loss."

"I suppose he'd paid too much for his raw material, eh?"

"Oh, no; he stole the raw material."

"Gee whizz! Wrap me up half a dozen."

Fatal Turn of Affairs.

"Mrs. Wiggs," said Mr. Huggins, "I asked your daughter to marry me and she referred me to you."

Mrs. Wiggs—I'm sure that's very kind of you, she always was a dutiful girl. Really, Mr. Huggins, I had no thought of marrying again at my age, but if you insist, suppose we make the wedding day next Thursday.

The Key to Success Is Work— There Is no Substitute for It!

In order to do your best work, you must be healthy. You must sleep soundly at night, your nerves must be strong, steady and under perfect control.

If you are accustomed to drinking tea or coffee with your meals or between meals, you may be loading yourself with a very great handicap. Your nervous system may be stimulated beyond what is natural for you.

For tea and coffee contain thein and caffeine. These are drugs as any doctor can tell you. They are known to irritate the nervous system by their action and to cause restlessness and insomnia, which prevent the proper recuperation of the vital forces.

If you want to be at your best, capable of doing the very best work that lies in you, why not stop drinking tea and coffee? Drink Postum, the rich, satisfying beverage made from scientifically roasted cereals.

Postum contains absolutely no drugs of any kind, but in flavor tastes much like rich coffee. It helps nerve and brain structure by letting you get sound restful sleep.

Postum comes in two forms: Instant Postum (in tin) made instantly in the cup by the addition of boiling water. Postum Cereal (in packages of larger bulk, for those who prefer to make the drink while the meal is being prepared) made by boiling for 20 minutes.

Ask your grocer for Postum. Sold everywhere.

Postum for Health
"There's a Reason"

MAN'S BEST AGE

A man is as old as his organs; he can be as vigorous and healthy at 70 as at 35 if he aids his organs in performing their functions. Keep your vital organs healthy with

GOLD MEDAL HAARLEM OIL CAPSULES

The world's standard remedy for kidney, liver, bladder and uric acid troubles since 1696; corrects disorders; stimulates vital organs. All druggists, three sizes. Look for the name Gold Medal on every box and accept no imitation.

PARKER'S HAIR BALM

Restores Color and Beauty to Gray and Faded Hair
60c and \$1.00 at Druggists.
Hiscox Chem. Co. vs. Falschowsky, N. Y.

HINDERCORNS

Removes Corns, Callouses, etc., stops all pain, ensures comfort to the foot, makes walking easy. 10c. by mail or at Druggists. Hiscox Chemical Works, Falschowsky, N. Y.

REPAIRS for STOVES FURNACES and BOILERS

OMAHA STOVE REPAIR WORKS
1208-S Douglas St. Omaha, Neb.

SIoux CITY P.T.G. CO., NO. 48-1921.

WERE NOT REALLY "VAMPIRISH"

College Girls Hastily Become Prim When Their Favorite Professor Hove in Sight.

The girl might have been born in Greenwich village. She wore her hair bobbed, tortoise shell-rimmed glasses, a loose jersey dress, green earrings which dangled from her ears, and she smoked a cigarette in an imitation jade cigarette holder. Not to overlook long green beads made of wood.

Her companion was a little less true to type. They were conspicuously at luncheon in a chop suey restaurant.

Suddenly a tall, rather distinguished looking man entered the tea room. The girls, who faced the door, gasped: "Good Lord, Dolly, there's Professor—! Lay off quick."

Instantly the earrings were jerked out of the girl's ears, her cigarette was thrown to the floor and hastily stepped on, the cigarette holder, was tucked into her bag and she rubbed her napkin briskly over her lips.

The professor sat down at the opposite table and never once glanced at the two girls.—Milwaukee Journal.

Speaking His Mind.

"Is it true that America is the land of opportunity?"

"There is no doubt of it," replied the disgruntled citizen. "I don't know of another country on the face of the earth where a man has greater opportunity to make a fool of himself in politics."—Birmingham Age-Herald.