

To her quick eye and natural talent had been added years of careful training under expert maitres; for, to Frederick, she was both son and daughter, and he had encouraged her in everything that went to strengthen body or mind. Yet she was so very modest about it, that only very lately had even Armand known of her proficiency; and now, he regularly put on the mask and plastron with her, and had her present when Moore and he were practicing.

"And for more than a little while," the archduke replied; "and if you do have to draw, try to forget you're fencing with pointed weapons, and bear in mind only that you must not be touched.'

She leaned closer to him.

"Goodness Armand, you make me afraid," she said, with a little shiver; "I don't want to fight any one."

"Please God you won't have to, dear, but if you do, remember that the surest way to save your life is to take the other fellow's." She shivered again.

shouldn't want to be a man." He slipped his arm around her

and bent down. "Let me send you back to the palace, sweetheart," he whis-pered—"for my sake go back." "It is for you sake I'm going on," she answered, "and-I'll kill the other fellow if I have to -but I don't want to."

The carriage drew in to the curb and stopped. It was on a side street near the rear gate of the Ferida, and as the archduke got out, two officers in quiet uniforms and capes, who were walking slowly along halted, and, after a glance, came up and sa-luted. They were De Coursey and Marsov.

"I thank you for your attendance," said the archduke; and leaving it for Moore to acquaint them with as much of the business in hand as was necessary, he linked arms with the regent and they went leisurely on; there was ample time, and they reached the entrance as the

on the second floor, where she prayed that they wait until she could announce them to madame.

"And say to your mistress," the archduke ordered, "that it is our pleasure not to intrude upon her until everything is arranged as intended."

"If Spencer will respect the request, it will be much easier for you, dear," he said to Dehra; "when we are watching Lotzen, the boudoir will have to be in darkness, and I'll take care that we leave the moment you have seensthe book."

"Do you think she will recognize me?" the princess asked.

"I don't know; it's hard even to think what she can do or will do."

"At least, it has been easy thus far," she laughed; "almost so easy as to indicate a trap."

The same thought had naturally been in his mind, and he had hoped it would not occur to her

"Everything has worked so smoothly it rather suggests the reverse," he said confidently; "but whatever happen, you must keep with me or Moore-Gentlemen, I neglected to say that you will retain your caps until I remove mine .- Lieutenant Marsov, will you oblige me by turning off all the side lights ?'

Presently, from somewhere down the corridor, came the ripple of Madeline Spencer's laugh, and the ring of her clear voice.

"Good night, Monsieur le Comte! I thank you for the dance, and all the rest;"-then in quieter tones: "no, you may not come in; you have annoyed the duke quite too much tonight, as it is-tomorrow? well, may be -tout a l'heure!" and the laugh again, and the closing of a door. The princess looked at Ar-

mand and gave a faint shudder, but made no comment.

In a moment the maid returned. "It is as you wish, Mon-sieur le-Monsieur," as the archduke's gesture stopped the title. "Madame awaits you at once.

In the room adjoining the boudoir, the archduke left the others and went in alone. Mrs. Spencer curtsied.

aside a little way.

"Yes, he is there," she said, 'but Bigler is with him . . ah! he is going-now, we shan't have long to wait."--she motioned the archduke to her. "See-there shouldn't be any doubt of the identification, if he give you a chance to see it."

He went over and looked. She was right; nor would they need the field glass to recognize it. Fifty yards away, in the opposite wing, were Lotzen's apartments -his library windows raised, the shades high up, the curtains drawn back; and he, himself, at the big table under the chandelier, a twin drop-light focused on the writing pad.

And even while the archduke looked, Lotzen arose and from the safe behind him took out a package wrappped in black. "That's it!" Madeline Spencer

exclaimed, "thats it' !- Here is the glass-

He lingered for nother glance, before summoning the othersand Mrs. Spencer forestalled him. She ran to the door and flung it wide.

"Come," she said, "comehis highness needs you."

The princess had been talking to Colonel Moore, her back to the door; as it opened, she threw up her head, and turned with an eager smile, thinking it was Armand-and so gave Mrs. Spencer a full view of her face. Then Moore stepped quickly between them and suavely bowed Mrs. Spencer into her boudoir; the next moment the archduke was there.

"With your permission, madame, we will extinguish the lights," he said, "and raise the shades."

She smiled maliciously, deliberately moving near enough to see the princess over Moore's shoulder.

Extinguish the lights?" she laughed, "certainly; darkness will be better for the business, and will conceal-everyone,' and herself went over to the main switch at the corridor and pushed it open.

The princess caught Armand's hand.

"She recognized me," she whispered.

"Oh, no, dear; you're only nervous," he answered-though he was satisfied she was right. Keep you hat well down, and don't look at her; the moment leverything quite, y another De away; I don't want another De will leave; you go with Moore; I'll engage the vixen until you're out of range." He had led her to a window and raised the shade. The lights from the duke's library leaped. across the garden court at them. but he, himself, was not visible, though on the table lay the package, still wrapped in black as when taken from the safe. Some one came behind them, and Armand glanced over his shoulder -it was Mrs. Spencer, and she was looking at the princess; nor did she cease, though she knew his eyes were on her; instead, she smiled and shot him a quick glance, and resumed the looking. He felt Dehra begin to tremble -whether with anger or nerves, he could not tell-and Mrs. Spencer spoke. "Your highness' companion is evidently unused to adventures. despite his uniform; he is actually twitching with excitement."

then suddenly laid it aside, and coming over to the window, seemed on the point of drawing the shade, but he changed his mind, and after staring into the garden and toward Mrs. Spencer's apartments, he returned to the table.

Without more ado he removed the black cloth, but pushed it in heap, so that it hid the bookthat it was a book, they could distinguish, but nothing elseand went to examining some papers he took from it.

The princess stirred restlessly; her nerves were not attuned to such tension; and the archduke reassured her by a touch and a word. Over at their window, Mrs. Spencer and Colonel Moore were whispering, and laughing softly, the latter, however, with a wary eye across the courtyard. The swinging cadence of a Strauss waltz came, brokenly, from the orchestra still playing in the great hall, with, now and then, a burst of men's voices in noisy hilarity from the card rooms or the main guard.

Presently the duke put down the papers, and, pushing aside the black cloth, disclosed the back of the book-black, with heavy brass hinge-bands across

"Look," the princess ex-claimed, "look! it's very like it -why doesn't he lift the cover too!—it must be!—it is!—it—" "Run away, girl!" came Count Bigler's voice from the

corridor, "run away, I sayyou're pretty enough, but I want your mistress now." There was a moment's scuffle, and the door swung back---- "Dark ! well, 'let there be light!" and he snapped the switch.

It all was done so quickly and unexpectedly that Mrs. Spencer was caught half way to the door, as she sprang to lock it; Armand had time only to push the princess away from the window and step in front of her; while Colonel Moore, with De Coursey and Marsov, tried to get across to cover the archduke.

But they failed. Bigler saw him instantly.

"The American!" he shouted, the American!" and wrenching back the door, he disappeared down the corridor.

"The fool!" Madeline Spen-cer exclaimed; "he has spoiled Saure house here," with a look at Armand—"the way you came will still be open."—She hurried ahead of them through the rooms to the stairway. . . . "I've been honest and I want to prove it, but," she laughed sneeringly after them, "the next time her highness plays the man, let her wear a mask and a larger shoe." The noise of men running came from below. "Hurry!" she cried, "they are try-ing to cut you off." With the regent between them, and De Coursey and Marsov behind, the archduke and Moore dashed down the lower passage to the small door and out into the garden.



Y

They Spring Up Fast.

Exact Copy of Wrapper.

"Ne. York is a hustling city, and it is astonishing how fast we can pro-

"I dined the other evening in the a war profiteer. It was a magnificent it was over:

"'But I haven't been introduced to your husband yet. He's here, of course?

"'Well-er-no, he isn't,' said my hostess. "Then she shrugged her white shoul-

ders and added: "'You've got to draw the line some-

where, you know.' "-Pittsburgh Chronicle-Telegraph.

Put and Take.

Maybe Flying Too High. Desiring a position as kindergarten teacher, a pretty young miss went to a member of the school board in her city Eleanor, at three, was very fond of

comment on the minute.

August Belmont said at a dinner

Circumlocution in the civil service is party in Tuxedo: not always the result of the system. A few weeks ago an official in one

department made an inquiry about a duce aristocrats here. certain case to a subordinate official in another section who allowed the

new granite palace in Fifth avenue of matter to slide. Last week the first official addressed feast, and I said to my hostess after a complaint to the subordinate's superior and the superior passed on the

Cathedral bell rang the hour.

The great gate was closed and locked, but in it was a small one, so eleverly hidden among the frets and ornaments that the archduke had trouble in locating it, and still more in finding the catch, which Mrs. Spencer had engaged would not be fastened.

Across the street a number of men were loitering, and two came hastily over; but recognizing Colonel Moore, who had stepped out to meet them, they made a quick salute and were returning, when he called them back. "It will be for you to see that

we are not locked in," he said, and following the others, who had already entered, he closed the gate behind him.

The drive ran between great oaks straight toward the house, but, a little way in, a narrow walk branched from it on either side and wound through trees and between hedges to the side gates, and thence on to the front. Mrs. Spencer's apartments were in the wing on the right, and her instructions were to proceed by the path on that side until opposite the rear of her suite; then by anoter path tat bisected the first, and which, crossing the driveway between the rear and side gates, led to the house and close under her windows; there, at the first small door, they were to knock. · Eleven o'clock was a very early hour at Ferida palace, and the archduke looked dubiously at the lighted windows and the flitting figures inside, with the music of the orchestra, in the main hall, throbbing out irregu-larly in bursts of rhythmic melody. It seemed rather absurd for five people to attempt a surreptitious entrance into such a place; and again he urged the princess to return at least to the carriage, and await him there; but without success; and in deep misgiving he went on.

They gained the small door unseen, and with a quiet word of warning, he knocked.

From within came an answering knock, to which he responded with two quick taps, twice repeated; the door opened a little way and Mrs. Spencer's maid peered out; then, assured, she swung it back and curtsied them inside.

"Suivez de pres, messieurs," she whispered, finger on lips, and hurried down a narrow but rather brightly lighted passage, and up a stairway, and into a room

"Your highness honors me." she said.

"Pray, madame," said he, returning her greeting with the curtest of military salutes, "let us eliminate unnecessary ceremony-this is an official visit. made at your particular request; if we are ready to begin, I will call my witnesses."

She watcher him smilingly, pressing down the roses that lay across her breast-red roses, on a black gown that ended far below the dead white neck and shoulders.

"What a cold blooded brute you are, Armand," she mocked. "Can it be, that the pretty, innocent, little doll, out yonder in the palace, has found a drop that is warm even when fresh from the heart?"

He looked at her in steady threat.

"Madame, I have told you I am here for but one purpose; beyond that, even in conversation, I decline to go. I tried to make it clear to you at the inn, how I would come, and why. I do not remember your record, nor even know your name; if I did, it would be my duty to send you immediately out of Valeria, and under escort. If, however, you presume to use this occasion to become offensive, I shall be obliged to remember, and to know."

She laughed scoffingly, and taking a eigaret lighted it.

"As a token of peace," she said softy, and proffered it to him. . . . "No? — I thought Ferdinand said he had learned it from you and-but, of course, it does make a difference whose are the lips that kissed it.'

The archduke turned abruptly and went toward the door; another such word and he might forget she was a woman. She might be able to show him the book, but, even could she give it to him, he would not have it, if its price were the princess on her tongue.

She saw she had gone too far, "Armand !" she cried, "Armand ! stay-I'll be good-I'll be good."-She sprang forward and caught his arm-"Don't go -think of what I can show you.

"Then show it, madame," he answered, facing her and so displacing her hand; "show it; and leave off personalities."

Without replying, she went to a window, and drew the shade

"Or with the temptation of your proximity," Armand re-plied giving her his back. And Dehra laughed softly.

Colonel Moore had been at another window; now he came over, and, in the most casual way, found Mrs. Spencer's hand and gave it a familiar squeeze.

"You're pretty enough tonight to give even an old-stager like me a flutter," he whispered in his most caressing tones, and, in the darkness, slipped his arm around her waist.

She pushed it away, though not very vigorously it seemed to

"You are impertinent, sir," she said.

"I meant to be; it's the only way to get on with you," and he deliberately put his arm around her again, and rather more tight-"Come along to my winllv. dow," he urged.

She knew very well that his purpose was to divert her from the princess, but she went-nor appeared to bother that his arm remained. Here, was a new sort of man, with a new sort of method, and she was, if the truth be told, very willing for them both. Besides, her time would come presently.

Moore is a wonder," Armand commented-and broke off, as the duke came into view and sat down at his table.

But Lotzen was in no haste to unwrap the package; he drew it over and slowly loosed the cords, whe

"Come along !" said Armand; we don't want a fight; make straight for the gate.

Holding Dehra's arm, he ran across the drive and, avoiding the winding path, cut over the grass-to bring up, in a moment, at a fountain in a labyrinth of thick hedges and walks, none of which seemed to lead gateward.

With a muttered imprecation, the archduke chose the one that pointed toward the winding path by which they had entered, only to discover that it curved back toward the house.

"Take the hedge!" .he ordered; and he and Moore tossed the princess over the seven foot obstruction, and were swung up, themselves, by De Coursey and Marsov, whom they then pulled across.

(To Be Continued Next Week.)

As They Sounded to Her. From the New York Letter in the Pitts-

burgh Dispatch. "I have a new stenographer." said Wijjit, "she's a wonder. She writes what she thinks she hears without regard to what it means. And her hearing does not seem to be particularly acute. For instance, I dictated a letter in which I told a man to look after his finite ego' and the letter advised him to keep an eye on his 'fine eyed dago.' ' "It may have been good advice just the same," said his listener.

the same," said his listener. "Perhaps," was the answer. "But an-other of her efforts was not so good. That is it did not make much sense. I used the phrase, 'co-labor with you,' and she wrote it 'coal labor review.' I asked her what she thought it meant and she said it did not mean anything to her.

"Going to keep her?"

"Sure. She amuses me on a dull. drab day. It is always interesting to read the letters she has turned out to see if 'fly swatter' has become 'ice water,' or if 'cross I bar' has become 'cross-eyed bear.' she hears them." She writes things as

> A drastic anti-cigaret is in the Washington state legislature. It prohibits sale and manufacture of cigarets, wrappers and papers, and provides for confiscation

her chewing gum, yet promptly obeyed ctaimed: "Why, Eleanor, 1 thought your views on transcendentalism?" your gum was in the coal scuttle!" now ith over here where me is!"

and told him of her modest ambition. when one day her mother told her to He listened to the request in a fatherput it in the coal scuttle because din- ly way and no doubt considered that it ner was ready. However, she was was up to him to put a few general soon chewing again, so mother ex. questions. So he asked: "What are The girl hesitated for a while and And baby sweetly lisped, "It wath, but | then faltered : "Maybe I hadn't better try as high as kindergarten work."

Red Tape at Its Highest.

minute to the subordinate with the

The minute was returned marked

"Nothing," was the subordinate's

"Yes" and was sent back to the sub-

query, "Has nothing been done?"

ordinate with a laconic "What?"



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