

even respectable, except a hideous dress of black alpaca that her aunt had made for her to go to church in. So you see what they needed was a miraculous amount of money. Money enough to work a transformation scene. Think about that for a while and you'll get the full emotional impact of the situation.

"Remember it was the one day when the only possible source of money afforded a fool's chance. Uncle Lemuel had gone to town. He would come back tonight with an indefinitely large amount of currency upon his person. He would be more or less drunk, and if he was drunk to the precise degree where his amiability was highest it might be possible for Rosemary to get him to give her the money. Not drunk enough, he'd be too cautious; too drunk, he would be ugly—might even be dangerous. Forty dollars was what Amy Belle decided they would need.

Rosemary was aghast at the prospect, but resolute. She promised across her heart before Amy Belle started back to town that she would sit up until her uncle came back and see what she could do.

"She had to pretend to go to bed, of course, when the family did, which was pretty early, since on these occasions they made a prudent point of getting under cover before Uncle Lemuel turned up. When the house got quiet she put on her clothes again, whatever of them she had taken off, and stole out of doors. That part of it was easy because the room where she slept—it wasn't hers in any proprietary sense—was just off the kitchen. Her aunt and uncle occupied the front room, what would have been the parlor if they'd have been New Englanders, and the boys bedded down in some sort of loft or attic.

Rosemary's idea was to follow her uncle into the stable with an offer to help him put up the horse and to make her attempt upon him there. It wouldn't do to try it in the kitchen, because of the danger of arousing her aunt.

"She waited out in the yard most of the night, and, of course, the longer she waited the more hopeless her project became, since the later the drinker was a pretty good working rule with her uncle. But she seems really to have felt that she was under orders—from somewhere—to see the thing through. It's that streak of mysticism in her, I suppose, that gave her later the look she needed.

"Well, at last she heard her uncle coming. Heard his cursing and beating the horse as they lunged into the gully between the road and yard. She knew then, of course, that was beyond her persuasions, and she stayed where she was, hidden among the trees, because there was nothing else for her to do. She didn't dare to try to get back to her room until after he'd gone in and fallen asleep.

"He unhitched the horse in the shed; didn't take the harness off, though; let the beast find his own way into the stalls. Then he stumbled and staggered into the house. But she didn't follow him in. She went, instead, into the shed where the buggy was and felt around on the seat and on the floor of it, and found, by God! his pocketbook.

"She stuck a little at telling me why she searched the buggy, but I got it out of her that she believed she was told to do it. Anyhow she took the pocketbook out into the moonlight, opened it up, and found a lot of money in it, counted out \$40, and put the rest back where she found it, not frightened a bit, but perfectly triumphant.

"If she could have flown back with it then and then there to Amy Belle it would have been easy. But, of course, she couldn't do that. She had to face it through. She had to stay out the whole two weeks that remained of her spell with her uncle. She said that getting up the next morning and helping her aunt cook breakfast and seeing her uncle come through the kitchen and go out to the shed where the buggy was and waiting for him to come back was like a nightmare.

"If he'd looked at her with any sort of suspicion she'd have died of fear right there. But he didn't. He'd been too drunk, most likely, to know how much money he did bring home with him; was lucky, perhaps, to have come off with any. But she couldn't help wondering if he didn't suspect and wasn't perhaps secretly watching her.

"Real drama, that is! She had the corpus delicti wrapped in a rag and pinned where she could feel it all the time to some sort of undergarment she never took off. She had no sort of real privacy, you know. No sort of place to hide anything. Even her person wasn't especially sacrosanct. Those boy cousins of hers were pretty rough and familiar with her. And her aunt was likely to pop in upon her at any time. She had the same sort of psychological experience that soldiers at the front went through when they had a leave coming; the nearer their day of de-

liverance came the more impossible it seemed that they'd live to get away.

"But she did get away without any hindrance at all, and the first moment she could evade her aunt she slipped round to Amy Belle and put the \$40 in her charge. She lied to Amy Belle, though, about the way she got it. Told her Uncle Lemuel had been feeling affectionate and had given it to her, but under a promise not to tell a soul. So everything must be kept dark."

I remarked, given a chance to interrupt by Zachary's pausing to light a cigaret, upon the queerness of Rosemary's confessing her felony to him when she had been afraid to tell about it to her best friend.

It had been natural enough that she should tell him about it, he thought, but he admitted that her reticence with Amy Belle had struck him as curious. "Because she doesn't regard herself in the least as a criminal. Never has. So it couldn't have been shame that made her lie to the other girl. As near as I can make out, it was a fear that Amy Belle would lose confidence, if she knew how the money was come by, in the—the big medicine, the charm, the special providence—whatever you want to call it.

"And that perfectly serious conviction was what they took with them through the whole thing. You won't understand the rest of the story at all—and I warn you there's quite a lot more of it—unless you accept that. Regular Joan of Arc stuff, that's what it was. It keyed them up to the shifts and bargainings they had to make to get that costume complete for \$32—they found they could get the photograph for eight.

"They got the materials, all they needed, they thought, for the dress and the hat for \$13.25 and thought they were on easy street. The accessories, gloves, stockings and slippers, cost them \$12, which still left them a comfortable margin. But they ran across, accidentally, a parasol that matched—a wonderful thing that simply cried out to be bought at the greatly reduced price of \$5—and they fell for it. The consequence was that when they went wrong with the hat they were almost in despair. A bit of wide expensive ribbon they'd bought for it couldn't be made to do. But they found a providential remnant of the original organdie which by bargaining they got for a dollar and there they were with 75 cents left over. So they made the ribbon up into a bag and put the spare 75 cents into it.

"They got a shock after it was all complete, but, luckily, before they went to the photographer, to find, reading over the instructions once more, that hats were barred in the contest. But it couldn't be. Amy Belle argued, that they had wasted labor on the hat. It would be found to serve part of the great purpose in the end. Well, it did, all right!"

I remarked that I thought I could imagine what the hat looked like, but Zachary didn't believe I could. "One of those girls had an eye," he said, "and I judge it was Rosemary herself. Anyhow, the hat was a nice hat, with a soft looking crown and a wide drooping brim. And, indeed, the whole costume. Oh, yes, I saw her in it. It was not smart—didn't try to be—but with it on the girl had charm, had an air. In a word, she looked a darling in it.

"But it all went back into tissue paper the day the photographs were made, even the bag with the 75 cents in it, and Rosemary went back into calico and alpaca to wait for the day when the prize award should be made—two months or so, she knew it was going to be. It seemed so extraordinarily rigorous a thing to do, putting it all away, like that (the hat and parasol hadn't served her at all, you see; not even in the photograph) that I couldn't help wondering if she'd really done it. I asked if she hadn't, now and then, dressed up and gone out on parade, picking up a little of the admiration that was due, even if nothing more tangible—such as an invitation to the movies with an ice cream soda after. Imagine a pretty girl refraining for two whole months from wearing the only pretty clothes she had ever had! But there's no doubt she did it. She was visibly shocked at my idea. Those clothes were sacred, see? Part of the big medicine. Hold fast to that idea, because you're going to need it!

"Well, the waiting was pretty hard. Amy Belle's mother had a boarder who bought the Sunday papers, and each week after he finished with them Amy Belle rescued the section that had pictures of some of the contestants in it. Occasionally there would be a face that struck one or the other of them as fatally too beautiful, but never both at the same time, so together they managed to keep their faith warm.

"Oac thing they worried about; the prize would be, they assumed, a letter with money in it. Ten thousand dollars! Suppose Aunt

Letty should open it, or even find out about it! Rosemary didn't know much about the law, but she bitterly well knew what happened to money that was supposed to belong to her. It went into the lawsuit, and people fought for and over it, and the only people who got any of it to spend were her guardians. She's 18, but it seems that in Kentucky she's still a minor. So if the prize was to do her any good it was necessary that it be received privately and promptly hidden. The best safeguard they could think of was a letter to the paper asking that when the prize was sent it should be directed to general delivery. Rosemary had been making trips to the postoffice two or three times a day for as much as a fortnight when the telegram finally came.

"It strikes me as a devil of a telegram for the paper to have sent. Of course they could have hardly been expected to reckon on anything quite as Arcadian as those two girls, but even so they might have made it a little clearer. Rosemary didn't show me her copy of it, so of course I've only her impression from it to go on. It was a constricting thing for a fact.

"In the first place, it came directly to the house. It just happened that Rosemary was making the bed in the front room and saw the messenger get off his bicycle and come into the yard. Her aunt was busy in the kitchen. Rose-

mary should open it, or even find out about it! Rosemary didn't know much about the law, but she bitterly well knew what happened to money that was supposed to belong to her. It went into the lawsuit, and people fought for and over it, and the only people who got any of it to spend were her guardians. She's 18, but it seems that in Kentucky she's still a minor. So if the prize was to do her any good it was necessary that it be received privately and promptly hidden. The best safeguard they could think of was a letter to the paper asking that when the prize was sent it should be directed to general delivery. Rosemary had been making trips to the postoffice two or three times a day for as much as a fortnight when the telegram finally came.

All was irretrievably lost if she failed in that.

"They were perplexed by what struck them as a contradiction in the telegram on the matter of the expenses of the trip. Amy Belle thought perhaps the money for the fare to Chicago had been sent with the telegram and by an oversight had not been delivered. Rosemary didn't think you could telegraph money.

"She had to go straight back home, her excuse to her aunt having expired, so Amy Belle undertook to go to the depot, find out when the train went to Chicago, how much the ticket cost, and whether by any lucky chance the money was waiting at the telegraph office. She was to report to Rosemary's house at 2 o'clock.

"There was one small indication that the fates were kind. This again was the right day. The day of the monthly meeting of the sewing circle, the thing which Aunt Letty never missed. She would be off the board entirely from 2 to 6, leaving the girls a free field.

"And at 2 o'clock, five minutes after Aunt Letty had turned the corner, Amy Belle arrived, desperate. The train left at a quarter of six. You went on it as far as Louisville and there you changed to another train that took all night getting to Chicago. The fare was \$16.09, and there was no money at the telegraph office. Money could be telegraphed all right, but in



The look was enough to tell Rosemary that he was the one.

mary slipped out to meet him, saw that the telegram was addressed to herself, signed the receipt, and packed off the boy, all, by a miracle, before Aunt Letty happened to poke her head into the front room or to speak a casual word to her niece. She stuffed the telegram down her neck without attempting to open and read it, went back and finished tidying up the room. Half an hour later she made an excuse to her aunt and flew over to Amy Belle's, where together they read the message.

"It said that it was important for Rosemary to be in Chicago on Wednesday—tomorrow, that was. She should telegraph the Sunday editor saying what time she was arriving in Chicago, and by what railroad she was coming. If her mother, 'or other companion'—which, of course, meant Aunt Letty—wished to come with her the paper would undertake this expense also. It added that the return fare and all local expenses would be paid in Chicago.

"There wasn't a word in it to the effect that Rosemary had won the prize. In fact I believe she had won it only tentatively. They wanted to see her before confirming it to make sure she was the girl and that the winning picture was an honest photograph of her.

"Anybody less serious or more sophisticated would, of course, have drawn a happy augury from a message like that. But these two young fanatics it meant nothing but an utterly unforeseen ordeal. What would they do to her in Chicago? What sort of dreadful inquisition awaited her there? It didn't matter. Whatever it was, she must go through with it. And she must be in Chicago tomorrow

this case it hadn't been done.

"For two and a half mortal miserable hours the girls sat in Aunt Letty's darkened parlor discussing and rejecting one frantic expedient after another. They weren't idiots, you know. There were two factors in the situation that blocked them off from thinking of the dozen obvious ways of getting the money. One was the real need for secrecy. They couldn't appeal to any one they knew without giving the whole show away. And if either of Rosemary's guardians even so much as guessed what was in the wind the prize would do her no good if she won it. The other was that they had drawn no hint of victory from the telegram.

"Amy Belle at last caved in. Flung herself down upon Aunt Letty's brass bed and wept, a passionate acknowledgment of defeat. But Rosemary, slower to kindle, was made of harder material. She'd been through her vigil out in the yard the night her uncle came home drunk. She had, you might say, heard her voices. She scorned Amy Belle's tears. They turned her adamant. She abandoned the futile quest for expedients, sat silent, and watched the clock on the mantelpiece. At 4:30 she got up and said she was going; to Amy Belle's house, first, to dress and then to the depot. She couldn't take the train, could she, unless she were there when it left? And then she found the thing to say which not only restored her companion's courage, but immensely fortified her own. 'What do you suppose we made the hat for,' she asked, 'if it wasn't for this?' She couldn't have traveled to Chicago without a hat.

"Out they went together to Amy

Belle's house. Amy Belle helped her dress in the pink silk stockings and slippers, the organdie dress with the white lawn slip under it, the shade hat that had never been worn, the parasol that had never been put up, the silk gloves, and last of all the ribbon bag, with 75 cents in it that was left of Uncle Lemuel's unconscious contribution and was to be used for sending the telegram to the paper. Then they went down to the depot.

"They had quite a wait before the train came in. But Rosemary says they didn't exchange a word. Beyond speech, of course, both of them. Just waiting with quite a superhuman intensity. I asked her if she prayed and she looked at me a little startled, but didn't tell me. She did say, though, what amounted to an admission, that just as the train pulled in she knew it was all right, knew the answer was coming.

"The answer was a man who came out of the waiting room just then carrying a tightly rolled silk umbrella and a polished leather suitcase. An oldish man with a close trimmed gray mustache. You could see he was rich, which was the first requisite, of course, for Rosemary's purpose. And in addition, he looked friendly. His eye met hers as he was crossing the platform and he smiled a little and hesitated as if he wanted to speak to her. She held her breath. If he had spoken she'd have told him what she wanted then and there. But it didn't matter that he did not. The look was enough to tell Rosemary that he was the one.

"She kissed Amy Belle goodbye, followed the man into the coach, and sat down across the aisle and a seat or two in front of him. She decided to do nothing until the train had started.

"She went through, though, a terrible quarter of an hour after the train did start. She didn't recognize the sensation as fright. It seemed more like paralysis. She felt as if she couldn't possibly move her legs, nor turn her head nor speak. She was aware that the man was glancing at her in an interested sort of way, too, but she couldn't respond. However, when the conductor opened the front door of the car and said, 'Tickets, please,' the paralysis drained right out of her.

"She got up at once, went back to the man and, standing beside him in the aisle, told him that she had to go to Chicago that night and had no ticket. Would he buy one for her? He had just got out his own ticket and sat there with it in his hand.

"You know, the only thing Rosemary smiled over, in the course of telling me the whole tale, was the man's expression when she made that request. He looked almost frightened, she said, and this put her completely at ease. He glanced quickly around as if to see whether anyone was paying any attention to them. Then, almost crossly—that was her own word—he pushed his ticket into her and told her to go back to her own seat.

"She knew that he wasn't cross exactly and she obeyed the urgency of his manner promptly, though she didn't understand it, and slipped back into her own place.

"She took one look at her ticket, saw that it said Chicago on it, and then couldn't see anything more for a while because everything began to swim. She felt the conductor looking at her when he came along but didn't try to look back at him. He didn't say anything, though; just tore off a little of her ticket and went on.

"Then she began to come to, and she heard her benefactor talking at some length with the conductor, whom he seemed to be fairly well acquainted with. She didn't quite take in the details. He seemed to be explaining why he hadn't a ticket by saying something about a friend who had wired only at the last moment that he would go north with him. He wanted the conductor to telegraph from the next station to engage a drawing room for him on the night train for Chicago.

"He came over and sat with her after the conductor had left the car, and now he didn't seem cross at all; friendly, on the contrary, and funny. Full of stories at which she laughed, though she didn't understand some of them very well. It was all she could do, for she had no more to say to him than a pan of milk. She didn't exactly want to tell him why she was going to Chicago, and there was nothing else that she could talk about.

"His manner struck her now and then, as rather queer. She'd catch him looking at her in a startled, almost frightened way, just as he had at first. Finally he asked her whether she had heard what he had said to the conductor.

"She acknowledged—a little ashamed of herself for having listened—that she reckoned she had, most of it. Whereupon he asked her if it was all right about the drawing room.

"She was really embarrassed now, partly by the queerness of

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