

THE BRASS TACKS OF ADVENTURE

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put together, she'd look like the dev— she'd look like sin, she'd look like an enameled nigger. Do you get me? I'm—beat."

The girl jumped as if she had touched a dynamo-wire. The words hurt her when they came, though she knew they were coming. Jim beaten—*Jim* beaten? Beaten, perhaps; but owning it with his own bold mouth! It went shivering through her, half terror, half cold anger. It was black, deep, awful. Jim made the papers into a roll, and then bent it across his knee.

"This'll never get out of my shop," he said, so low she could hardly hear him. "When you're a fool, Carrie, it's a very good thing to know it."

And walking around the table he opened the door of the little stove. Then the girl, leaning apprehensively on the table, brought herself erect with a sudden cry.

"Jim!"

For one giddy second she remembered there had been yards below her, and fences in thin lines, waving green branches, the steep, smooth slant of shingles from her feet, a sickening drop at the eaves—she felt herself falling, wavering, falling—then a boy's voice and she saw him stand there steadily before her, eyes slitted half-shut, making her steady too. And then it came rolling in on her, what that had meant, and what it meant now to see Jim there, and the purple-flickering coals. He was falling, too—seared, wavering, his nerve gone. He was afraid.

"Give me that."

It was anger that told her what to do, steady, white-hot anger such as she never had known. She knew he would obey her. He pulled the papers out and flung them to her on the table. One corner was burning, and she stamped the flame out with her hand.

"You ain't—" she said.

"Well?"

"A coward, Jim."

She threw it in his face, her head up, her hands quivering. Jim eyed her with amazement, then with something like a grin; then he turned very red. It made Carrie sick to look at him, so sheepish, so comical, in that great moment when she saw the headlong precipice there, the untried path at his feet and the white peaks shining round him.

"You ought to be ashamed!" she cried. "I'm ashamed of you! To start a thing—a big thing like that—and not finish! Yes, I know it's a chance—one chance in forty—but it's *your* chance! It's *big*! And you get—*afraid*!"

Jim was walking up and down, saying nothing. Now he stopped.

"I know what I'm doin'," he snapped.

Carrie spread out the drawings on the table.

"Come here," she ordered, in Jim's own best manner. "Now you look. This tower—didn't you know it was right? Didn't you know it was the very finest thing that could be, tonight at the restaurant? Didn't you know it?"

"M-m-m," Jim admitted gently. "It looked pretty good. But it is gingerbread, Kid."

"May be, I don't know. But I can see, and it is beautiful. It is! It is! It is! That's what I meant when I said 'pretty.'"

"Oh," Jim said, "the stuff hangs together all right enough! The curves sing up pretty well. You know, Kid, with all this polished white tile on her she'd hit that blue tropic sky with a bang."

"Of course, Jim! Of course, she would. You see that, don't you?"

"I see that, Kiddie. But—well—I've been afraid of this style all along. That tower is too much of a good thing."

"But—"

"But—" Swiftly her hand went out to his where it was rapping, and softly it pressed it down on the table.

"You're tired, dear," she said.

The little rosy word was out, though she never meant to say it; and, shocking as it was, she would not have taken it back for all the world. Jim did not even know what she had called him, though something must have reached him; for when he spoke, the anger and the hard laughter were both gone out of his voice.

"I am tired," he said thoughtfully.

"That may make a difference."

Her hand was still on his, and she moved it a little, caressing his thick, cold fingers. He turned his head with an odd smile.

"You like this?" he asked.

"I do, Jim."

"And you know good architecture when you see it?"

"Oh, yes," she answered cheerfully—and Carrie knew, when she said that, that she was lying.

"These drawings are in pretty bad shape," Jim mused at last. "But they'll take 'em all right. And—Oh Lord, there's another plan to finish!"

"Will you send them, then?"

"M-m."

"That's a promise?"

"Sure!"

So, her battle was won; and Carrie brooded on the wonder of it while Jim rushed and fumed and sputtered over that last plan for two mortal hours. Then, he rolled it up with the others, crumpled and charred as they were; and they went off in a rush, because he had to catch a car for his office. He would show her where to get a cheap breakfast in Fourteenth street. Down in the street they

came into sunshine—streaming white sunshine—and all the busy morning racket of New York; and it was all glorious to Carrie.

"Now it's coming true. You're going to Porn," she sang as they turned into bellowing Sixth avenue. And: "Did you notice, Jim? You got seared just the way I did on the roof, and I said just the same thing to you—about being a 'fraid cat. Remember!"

"Oh, that old stuff at Grandpa's!" Jim said. "No. I only remember one part of that."

"Which part?"

"You kissed me."

"Oh!"

Jim looked down sharply at her chalk-white face, streaked with dark shadows by her long night watch.

"I'm game to do that much over again," he said. "Well—there's your restaurant."

They had come to the corner, and he stopped, and watched a car go clanging northward toward his office.

"Little girl," he said, "I only got twenty-five a week, you know. It ain't much. An'. M-m-m. But—"

"I don't believe I understand you."

Carrie was lying again.

"Well, here's my car. Goodbye. We'll talk it over—now, see here—Well—"

"What?" said Carrie.

And then—in New York, where anything may happen, where almost anything does happen occasionally, at Fourteenth street and Sixth avenue, faced by a department store, two cafés and an elevated station—Jim took her up in his arms and kissed her on the mouth, and ran for his car. And then, the girl's whole dream had come true. And she turned her face upward and looked straight at the shining sun, and something in her was beating, beating, beating, strongly, wildly, like the beating of phantom wings.

Jim told the gray and distinguished "Senior Whatchernamecallim" that his plans had been hit by a back-fire of his automobile, and the old gentleman thanked him for them courteously and took them off to Havana on the noon boat. It is pretty generally known what happened to the project for a great Cuban Monte Carlo, costing a million gold, which was to have stood in the suburbs of Havana. But Jim's flowery and black-edged drawings were shown to half the distinguished gentlemen of the Island, and there was one of them who—but what he wanted is his architect's affair. The cost of it ran to six figures, and Jim and his wife took a little white house with great iron bars in the windows. They had more than twenty-five dollars a week to start housekeeping.

HOW TO CHOOSE YOUR HOLIDAY POULTRY

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the highest price because it combines the tenderness of spring chicken with the full flavored, juicy meat of maturity.

In selecting a goose, get one that is fresh and fat; for the fatter the goose, the more tender and juicy it will be when cooked. They are marketed at the age of six months to one year, the best age being about ten months. If older than a year the meat will be tough. The yellow legs and bill of the young goose grow red as the bird grows older. Try the skin with a pin head and bend the breast bone, as in all poultry. Pressure on the windpipe should cause it to snap or mash like a big straw.

The domestic duck is chosen by the same general signs as all poultry and the same special signs as the goose. Long Island ducks, which are grown very quickly, reach the marketable age in ten weeks. These are fine summer ducks; but in winter one should select the slowly matured duck. The Pekin duck, as a slow grown bird, is plentiful at this season. At ten months, which is the best age, they weigh from seven to eight pounds.

Pigeons are the only other domestic bird in general use. Old pigeons have thin legs and dark breasts. Young ones,

or squabs, have light red flesh on the breast and full, fresh-colored legs.

All poultry keeps better dry-picked than when scalded. The best plan is to have the bird drawn as soon as slaughtered; but present market conditions prevent this. An undrawn fowl keeps better for market purposes than one that is drawn, but there is a corresponding loss of delicacy of flavor.

When thawed, a bird that has been well prepared and frozen for a reasonable period of time, will have skin of a clear, fresh color, of soft texture, slipping easily from the muscles underneath. The flesh and fat will be slightly deeper in color than if fresh.

In buying storage poultry have it delivered, if possible, hard frozen. Place in the ice box for a day or so, where it will thaw gradually.

After the turkey or other fowl is bought and delivered, the first thing to do is to singe it by holding the body by the head and feet and exposing every part to a flame. A piece of blazing newspaper will do. Remove the head, saving the neck for the giblet sauce. Split the skin on the leg joint carefully to expose the sinews without cutting them, run a skewer

or fork under the tendons and draw out one at a time. This makes the first joint as tender as the second. Then, cut the feet from the first joint. Keep immersed in a vessel of cold water by means of a weight for one hour. Remove and rub plentifully with salt. Lay on an inclined board to drain for a half hour. This soaking and salting removes all impurities from the skin. Place in a pan, pouring on water as hot as the hand can bear. Scrape with a knife to remove pin feathers, which can be loosened with a little boiling water if too tight. To draw, make an incision about two inches below the vent large enough to insert the fingers. Remove the entrails, being careful not to break the gall bladder, which is attached to the liver. Cut loose the liver, heart and gizzard, which can be cleaned by splitting, then place in salt water. Remove the lights and the oil sack on the back at the root of the tail. The windpipe and crop are easily removed through the opening at the neck. Rinse thoroughly in cold water, dry with a clean cloth and rub inside with salt. Then, stuff and cook, according to your favorite recipe.

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