NATALIE SUMNER LINCOLN

I SPY

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Contact: DigiCat@okpublishing.info

Table of Contents

CHAPTER I

Table of Contents

AT VICTORIA STATION

The allied forces, English and French, had been bent backward day by day, until it seemed as if Paris was fairly within the Germans' grasp. Bent indeed, but never broken, and with the turning of the tide the Allied line had rushed forward, and France breathed again.

Two men, seated in a room of the United Service Club in London one gloomy afternoon in November, 1914, talked over the situation in tones too low to reach other ears. The older man, Sir Percival Hargraves, had been bemoaning the fact that England seemed honeycombed by the German Secret Service, and his nephew, John Hargraves, an officer in uniform, was attempting to reassure him. It was a farewell meeting, for the young officer was returning to the front.

"Much good will all this espionage do the Germans," said the young man. "We are easily holding our own, and with the spring will probably come our opportunity." He clicked his teeth together. "What price then all these suspected plots and futile intrigues?"

"Don't be so damned cocksure," rapped out his uncle, his exasperation showing in heightened color and snapping

eyes. "It's that same cocksureness which has almost brought the British Empire to the very brink of dissolution."

His nephew smiled tolerantly, and shifted his thickset figure to a more comfortable position.

"Now, now," he cautioned. "Remember what old Sawbones told you yesterday about not exciting yourself. Said you weren't to read or talk about this bally old war. Leave the worrying to Kitchener; he'll see we chaps do our part."

"If everything were left to Kitchener!" Sir Percival thumped the arm of his chair. "Some of us would sleep easier in our beds. And I know you chaps at the front will do your part. Would to God I could be with you!" glancing at his shrunken and useless left leg. "If I could only take a pot at the beggars!"

"According to your belief the firing line will shortly be on English soil," chaffed his nephew, avoiding looking at his companion. He knew the tragic circumstances surrounding his uncle's maimed condition, and wished to avoid anything touching upon sentiment.

"If the plans to undermine England's home government are perfected and carried out, every man, woman and child will have to band together to repel invasion." Sir Percival lowered his voice. "If there are any able-bodied men left here."

"Don't be so pessimistic. Kitchener has built up a great army, and is only waiting the proper moment to launch it in the field."

"The best of England has volunteered," agreed Sir Percival, "but what about the slackers? What about the coal

strikes—the trouble in our munition factories? All are chargeable to the Kaiser's war machine which overlooks nothing in its complete preparedness. Preparedness—England doesn't yet know the meaning of the word."

"It's time for me to leave," said the young officer, consulting his watch. "Take my word for it, Uncle, we're not going to the demnition bowwows—count on England's bulldog grit. God help Germany when the Allies get into that country!"

"When—ah, when?" echoed Sir Percival. "I hope that I live to see the day. Tell me, boy," his voice softening, "how is it with you and Molly?"

His nephew reddened under his tan. "Molly doesn't care for a chap like me," he muttered.

"Did she tell you so?"

"Well, no. You see, Uncle, it—eh—doesn't seem the thing to suggest that a charming girl like Molly tie herself to a fellow who may get his at any time."

"Piffle!" Sir Percival's shaggy eyebrows met in a frown. "Sentimental nonsense! You and Molly were great chums a year ago. You told me yourself that you hoped to marry her; I even spoke to her mother about the suitability of the match."

"You had no right to," blazed his nephew. "It was damned impertinent interference."

"You have not always thought so," retorted Sir Percival bitterly. "What had that most impertinent American girl you met in Germany to do with your change of front toward Molly?"

"I must insist that you speak more respectfully of Kathleen." John Hargraves' expression altered. "If you must know, I asked Kathleen to marry me and—she refused."

"I said she was impertinent. All Americans are; they don't know any better," fumed his uncle. "Forget her, John; think of Molly. I tell you the child loves you. Don't wreck her happiness for the sake of a fleeting fancy."

"Fleeting fancy?" John Hargraves shook his head sorrowfully. "When
Kathleen refused me I was hard hit; so hit I can't marry any other girl.
Don't let's talk of it." He smiled wistfully as he held out his hand.
"Time's up, Uncle; the train leaves in an hour, and I must get my kit.
Good-by, sir. Wish me luck." And before the older man could stop him he
was retreating down the hall.

Sir Percival stared vacantly about the room. "The last of his race," he muttered. "God help England! The toll is heavy."

In spite of his haste John Hargraves was late in reaching Victoria Station, and had barely time to take his place before the train pulled slowly out. As he looked down the long trainshed, he encountered the fixed stare of a tall, well-groomed man standing near one of the pillars. Hargraves looked, and looked again; then his hand flew up, and leaning far out of his compartment he shouted to a porter. But his message was lost in the roar of the more rapidly moving

train, and the porter, shaking a bewildered head, turned back.

The crowd of women and children and a few men, which had gathered to witness the troop train's departure, was silently dispersing when an obsequious porter approached the tall stranger whose appearance had so excited John Hargraves.

"Ye keb's out 'ere, sir," he said. "This way, sir," and as the stranger made no move to follow him, he leaned forward and lifted the latter's top coat from his arm. "Let me carry this 'ere for you, gov'ner," then in a whisper that none could overhear, he said in German: "For your life, follow me."

"Go on," directed the stranger in English, pausing to adjust his cravat, and made his leisurely way after the hurrying porter. The latter stopped finally by the side of a somewhat battered-looking limousine.

"'Ere ye are, sir," announced the porter, not waiting for the chauffeur to pull open the door. "I most amissed ye," he rattled on. "Kotched the keb, sir, an' tucked yer boxes inside, then I looked for ye at the bookin' office, 'cording to directions. Let me tuck this 'ere laprobe over ye."

As the stranger stepped into the limousine and seated himself the porter clambered in after him.

"They're on," he whispered, his freckles showing plainly against his white face. "The chauffeur is one of us, he'll take you straight to our landing. This packet's for you. Good luck!" And pocketing the sovereign offered, the porter, voicing loud thanks, backed from the limousine and slammed the door shut.

The outskirts of London were reached before the man in the limousine opened the slip of paper thrust into his hand by the porter. It was wrapped about a small electric torch and a book of cigarette papers. Slowly he read the German script in the note.

Be at the rendezvous by Thursday. Hans, the chauffeur, has full directions. Do not miss the seventeenth.

After rereading the contents of the note the man tore it into tiny bits and, not content with that, stuffed them among the tobacco in his pipe. Striking a match he lighted his pipe and planting his feet on the bag he gazed long and earnestly at his initials stamped on the much labeled buckskin. The slowing up of the limousine aroused him from his meditations, and he glanced out of the window to see which way they were headed. London, the metropolis of the civilized world, lay behind him. Catching his chauffeur's backward glance, he signaled him to continue onward as, removing his pipe, he muttered:

"*Gott strafe England*!"

CHAPTER II

Table of Contents

OUT OF THE VOID

Slowly, the sullen roar of artillery, the rattle of Maxims and rifles sank fitfully away. A tall raw-boned major of artillery stretched his cramped limbs in the observation station, paused to look with callous eyes over the devastated fields before him, then sought the trench. Earlier in the day the Allies had been shelled out of an advance position by the enemy and had fallen back on the entrenchments.

"Devilish hot stuff, shrapnel," commented a brother officer as Major
Seymour stopped at his side.

The Major nodded absently, and without further reply advanced a few paces to meet an ammunition corporal who was obviously seeking him. "Well?" he demanded, as the non-commissioned officer saluted.

"Only twenty rounds left, Major." The Corporal lowered his voice. "Captain Hargraves sent word to rush reinforcements here as soon as it is dark, sir."

Major Seymour glanced with unconcealed impatience at his wrist watch.
God! Would night never come!

"Can't we get our wounded to the base hospital, Major?" asked a younger officer. He had only joined the unit thirty-six hours before and while he had faced the baptism of fire gallantly, the ghastly carnage about him shook his nerve. He was not fed up with horrors as were his brother officers.

"The wounded would stand small chance of reaching safety if the German gunners sighted them. They must wait for darkness," replied Seymour. "Here, take a pull at my flask. Got potted yourself, didn't you?" noticing a thin stream of blood trickling down his companion's sleeve.

"Only a flesh wound—of no moment," protested the young man, flushing at the thought that his commanding officer might have misunderstood his question. "I'm afraid Captain Hargraves is in a bad way."

"Hargraves!" The Major spun on his heel. "Where is he?"

"This way, sir," and the Lieutenant led him past groups of men and officers. It was an appalling scene of desolation. The approach of night had brought a slight drizzling rain, and the ground, pitted with shell holes, was slimy with wet, greasy mud. Nearly all the trees in the vicinity were blasted as if by lightning, and along the right hand side of the road was a line of A.S.S. carts and limbers blown to pieces. One horse, completely disemboweled, lay on his back, the inside arch of his ribs plainly showing. His leader was a mass of entrails lying about, and on the other side lay four or five more, one with a foreleg blown clear off at the shoulder, one minus a head. A half-dozen motor cycles and over a dozen push bikes lay in the mud with some unrecognizable shapes that had been riding them. Between the advance trenches,

in No Man's Land, the ground was thickly strewn with corpses of Scotties killed in the charge.

"The Huns had us cold as to range," volunteered the Lieutenant, loss of blood and reaction from excitement loosening his tongue. "They outed five guns complete with detachments by direct hits. Here we are, sir," and he paused near a demolished gun emplacement. The ground about was a shambles.

Major Seymour stepped up to one of the figures lying upon the ground, a mud-incrusted coat thrown over his legs. Several privates who had been rendering what assistance they could, moved aside on the approach of their superior officers. Hargraves opened his eyes as Seymour knelt by him.

"My number's up," he whispered, and the game smile which twisted his white lips was pitiful.

"Nonsense." Seymour's gruff tone concealed emotion. Hargraves' face betrayed death's indelible sign. "You'll pull through, once you're back at the hospital."

Hargraves shook his head; he realized the futility of argument.

"Have you pencil and paper?" he asked.

"Yes." Seymour drew out his despatch book and removed a page. "What is it, John?" But some minutes passed before his question received an answer, and Hargraves' voice was noticeably weaker, as he dictated:

DEAR KATHLEEN:

I saw Karl in London at Victoria Station. I swear it was he … warn

Uncle ... Kathleen ... Kathleen ...

There was a long silence; then Seymour laid aside the unneeded brandy flask and slowly rose to his feet. He mechanically folded the scrap of paper, but before slipping it inside his pocket, the blank side arrested his attention.

"Heavens! John never gave me her address or last name. Who is Kathleen?" he exclaimed.

More shaken than he was willing to confess even to himself, by the loss of his pal, he stared bitterly across the battlefield toward the enemy's lines. How cheerily Hargraves had greeted him that morning on his return from a week's furlough in England! How glad he had been to rejoin the unit and be once again with his comrades on the firing line! A gallant spirit had passed to the Great Beyond.

Back in his observation station Major Seymour an hour later viewed the gathering darkness with satisfaction. Two hours more and it would be difficult to see a hand before one's face. Undoubtedly the sorely needed ammunition and reserves would reach the trenches in time, and the wounded could be safely transferred to the base hospital. The Allies' line had held, and in spite of their desperate assaults the Germans had been unable to find a vulnerable spot.

Seymour passed his hand over his eyes. Against the darkness his fevered imagination pictured advancing "gray phantoms." "They come like demons from the hell they have created," he muttered. "I hope to God they don't use 'starlights' over our trenches tonight. Flesh and blood can stand no more."

The darkness grew denser and more dense. In the long battle front of the Allies no sentinel saw a powerful Aviatik

biplane glide over the trenches and fly onward toward its goal. Several times the airman inspected his phosphorescent compass and map, each time thereafter altering his course. Finally, making a sign to his observer, he planed to a lower level and, satisfied that he had reached the proper distance, a bomb was released.

Down through the black void the infernal machine sped. A sickening pause—then a deafening detonation, followed by another and another, cut the stillness, and the earth beneath was aflame with light as the high explosives and shells stored in the concealed ammunition depot were set off. Nothing escaped destruction; flesh and blood, mortar and brick went skyward together, and a great gash in the earth was all that was left to tell the story of the enemy's successful raid.

From a safe height the German airman and his observer watched their handiwork. Suddenly the latter caught sight of an aeroplane winging its way toward them.

"Bauerschreck!" he shouted, and the airman followed his pointed finger. Instantly under his skillful manipulation their biplane climbed into the air in long graceful spirals until they were six thousand feet above ground. But as fast as they went, their heavier Aviatik was no match in speed for the swift French aeroplane, and the bullets from the latter's machine gun were soon uncomfortably near.

The German airman's face was set in grim lines as he maneuvered his biplane close to his pursuer and, dodging and twisting in sharp dips and curves, spoiled the aim of the Frenchman at the machine gun, while his own revolver and that of his observer kept up a continuous fusillade.

For twenty minutes the unequal fight continued. It could not last much longer. Despair pulled at the German's heartstrings as he saw his observer topple for a moment in his seat, then pitch forward into space. The biplane tipped dangerously, righted itself and sped like a homing pigeon in the direction of the German lines. There was nothing left but to fly for it. The German dared not look behind; only by the mercy of God were the Frenchman's shots going wild. It could not last; he must get the range. Surely, surely they were past the last of the Allies' trenches?

The German turned and fired his revolver desperately at his pursuers. Glory to God! one of his bullets punctured the latter's gasoline tank. It must be so—the French aeroplane was apparently making a forced landing. The shout on the German's lips was checked by a stinging sensation in his right side. The Frenchman had his range at last.

Almost simultaneously his machine turned completely over. With groping, desperate fingers the German strove to gain control over the levels and right himself. In vain—and as he started in the downward rush, the hurrying wind carried the frenzied whisper:

"The cross, dear God, the cross!"

CHAPTER III

Table of Contents

POWERS THAT PREY

Not far as the crow flies from the scene of the German airman's catastrophe, but with its presence hidden from general knowledge, was the Grosses Hauptquartier, the pulsing heart and brain of the Imperial fighting forces. Vigilant sentries patrolled the park leading from the chateau commandeered for the use of the War Lord and his entourage, to the quarters of the Great General Staff. In a secluded room of the latter building a dozen men sat in conference about a table littered with papers; they had been there since early evening, but no man permitted his glance to stray to the dial of a library clock whose hands were gradually approaching two o'clock. Truly, the chiefs of the divisions were tireless toilers.

The Herr Chief of the Great General Staff was emphasizing his remarks with vigor unusual even for him, when the telephone, no respecter of persons, sent out its tinkling call. Hitching his chair closer to the table, the Herr Chief of the Aviation Corps removed the receiver from the instrument. A courteous silence prevailed as he took the message. Replacing the receiver, he turned and confronted his confrères.

"An outpost reports," he began formally, "that Captain von Eltz in his Aviatik biplane was pursued and wrecked by a French airman who was obliged to make a forced landing inside our lines. The French airmen were shot in their attempt to escape. Owing to the Aviatik biplane catching in the branches of a tree and thereby breaking his fall Captain von Eltz was rescued alive, although desperately wounded. The observer who accompanied him is dead. On regaining consciousness Captain von Eltz reported that his mission was successful, the new ammunition depot having been completely destroyed by his bomb."

A low hum of approval greeted his words. "Well done, gallant von Eltz!" exclaimed one of the hearers. "He deserves the Iron Cross."

"He will receive it," declared another officer enthusiastically.

"The information as to the location of this new ammunition depot, which von Eltz has just destroyed, came from the man of whom I have been telling you tonight," broke in the Herr Chief of the Secret Service. "He has been our eyes and ears in England. Gentlemen, is it your wish that he be intrusted with the delicate mission of which we have just been speaking?"

The eyes of the Herr Chief of the Great General Staff swept his companions. "Is it that I speak for all?" A quick affirmative answered him. "Then, we leave the matter entirely in your hands." The Herr Chief of the Secret Service bowed. "You know your agents; the selection is left to you, but see there is no unnecessary delay."

"There will be no delay," responded the Herr Chief of the Secret Service. "My agent is not far from here. With your permission, I take my leave," and saluting he hastened from the room.

The sun was halfway in the heavens when a limousine drew up before a wayside inn near a semi-demolished city. Before the orderly sitting by the chauffeur could swing himself to the ground, a tall man had stepped to the side of the car and opened the door. For a second the Herr Chief of the Secret Service and the stranger contemplated each other without speaking, then the former motioned to the vacant seat by his side.

"We can talk as we ride," he announced brusquely. "Your luggage—"

"Is here," thrusting a much labeled suitcase inside the limousine and jumping in after it.

At a low-toned word from the Herr Chief of the Secret Service the orderly saluted and quickly resumed his seat by the chauffeur. There was a short silence inside the limousine as the powerful car continued up the road. They were stopped at the first railroad crossing by a trainload of wounded soldiers.

"Your pardon," and before the Herr Chief of the Secret Service could stop him, the stranger pulled down the sash curtains of all the windows. "You are well known; being recognized is the penalty of greatness. It is to my interest to escape such a distinction."

"I approve your caution, Herr Captain," observed the older man. "Will you smoke?" producing his cigarette case, and as the other smilingly helped himself and accepted a

lighted match, he surveyed him critically. Paying no attention to his chief's scrutiny, the Secret Service agent contemplated the luxurious appointments of the limousine with satisfaction and puffed contentedly at his cigarette. His air of breeding was unmistakable, but the devil-may-care sparkle in his gray-blue eyes redeemed an otherwise expressionless face from being considered heavy. The spirits of the Herr Chief of the Secret Service rose. His recollection and judgment was still good; his agent, by men and women, would be deemed extremely handsome.

"The new ammunition depot was destroyed last night by our airmen," he said, with some abruptness. "Your information was reliable."

"Pardon, is not my information always reliable?" interpolated the Secret
Service agent.

"So it has proved," acknowledged his chief cordially, but a mark was mentally registered against the Herr Captain. German bureaucracy does not tolerate presumption from a subordinate. "And owing to your excellent record, you have been selected for a most delicate mission."

"Under the same conditions?"

"The Imperial Government cannot be questioned," retorted his chief, his anger rising.

"I am different from other operatives." A puff of cigarette smoke wreathed upward from the speaker's lips. "A free-lance."

"And you have been given a free hand. We have not inquired into your methods of procuring information, being content with the result."

"And does not the result justify not only your confidence but promotion?"

The Herr Chief of the Secret Service considered before replying; then he answered with a question.

"Have you been to Ireland?"

The Secret Service agent smiled grimly as he took from his pocket a book of cigarette papers. Counting them over, he selected the seventeenth paper, and passed it to his companion, who examined the small blank sheet with interest. "Just a moment," and the young man again slipped his hand into a vest pocket, this time bringing out a nickel flashlight. Pressing his thumb on the switch he held the glass bulb against the rice paper. In a few minutes a faint tracing appeared on the blank page, which grew brighter as the rays of light generated more heat.

"Hold it a moment," said the Herr Chief of the Secret Service. "Keep it over the bulb," and taking out his notebook he made several entries, then closed it with a snap.

"Finished?" As he asked the question, the Secret Service agent replaced his pocket flashlight, drew out his tobacco pouch, poured a little in the rice paper, and proceeded to roll the cigarette with practiced fingers.

"About Sheerness?" questioned the Herr Chief of the Secret Service.

"All is arranged."

"Good." The Herr Chief of the Secret Service permitted himself to settle back more comfortably on the roomy seat so that he faced his companion. In the closed and semi-darkened limousine there was no danger of their conversation being overheard.

"I reserved for myself, Herr Captain," said the Herr Chief slowly, "the pleasure of informing you that your valuable services to the Kaiser and the Fatherland"—the Secret Service agent raised his hat—"are recognized. The Cross may yet be yours."

"How can I express my gratitude?" stammered the Secret Service agent.

"By not jumping to hasty conclusions," smiled his chief. "Never again question your orders."

"Be just," protested the Secret Service agent warmly. "I have risked my life daily for the Kaiser and the Fatherland in a hostile country. There have been hours which I do not care to remember." The speaker's tone grew husky. "Some day—a short shift; and I must make provision for another."

"I understood you were not married?"

There was a barely perceptible pause. "Spies do not marry, sir."

"And if a Secret Service agent has a healthy regard for his own safety, he is careful of serious entanglements," cautioned his chief. "However, judging by your past work, I believe you are quite able to take care of yourself. Thanks to the warnings and information of your organization we have been able to meet some of the Allies' contemplated concerted attacks, and your information as to the sailing of transports and the movements of ammunition trains has been of inestimable service."

"Do you still wish me to keep up this particular work?"

"No." The Herr Chief of the Secret Service leaned forward in his earnestness. "This war has demonstrated again and again that victory goes with the heaviest artillery."

"True! Antwerp, one of the strongest fortified cities on the Continent, crumpled up before our siege guns," broke in his companion.

The older man paid no attention to the interruption, but continued gravely: "Hand to hand conflict and cavalry charges are a thing of the past. We shell out the enemies' trenches from batteries six to twelve miles away. All this you already know; I repeat it now to explain what I am about to say. We are in possession of the mining district of France, they are getting hard pushed for ammunition; England's supply is not inexhaustible; Russia cannot half arm her fighting forces. They one and all are appealing to the manufacturing capitalists of the United States to furnish them with arms and ammunition."

"And with success," dryly.

The Herr Chief of the Secret Police frowned. "It must be stopped. You are to go to America—"

"I?"

"Yes, at once. You have a genius for organization; your work in England proved that. Let us know what merchant vessels and passenger steamers are carrying munitions of war. Be sure, doubly sure, that your information is correct, for we shall act upon it. Our Government stands ready to take most drastic measures to stop such traffic."

"I see." The Secret Service agent stroked his clean-shaven chin in meditative silence. "In England I went hand in hand with death; in the United States I am likely to outlive my usefulness."

"Perhaps," with dry significance. "But recollect our Government is ready to adopt *any* expedient to stop the exporting of arms and ammunition to our enemies."

"As for instance—?"

"Leave our methods to us; you have your work. You will make your headquarters at Washington City. There you will be able to place your hand on the pulse of the nation, and there you will find—idle women."

"Have we not already representatives at the United States capital?"

The Herr Chief of the Secret Service eyed him keenly. "Our embassy is concerned only with the diplomatic world. You are to send us word whether the United States Government arsenals are working under a full complement of men; of the orders placed by the Navy Department for submarines, and the activities obtaining in private munition plants. Be certain and study the undercurrent of sentiment for or against us. Report as you have heretofore."

"How am I to get in touch with the private shipyards and munition plants?"

"I will give you letters to residents loyal to their Fatherland. A number of the owners of powder companies and munition plants usually winter in Washington. I am also told that Mexican juntas still make Washington their headquarters." The eyes of the Secret Service agent were boring into him, but the older man's countenance remained a mask. "You must bear in mind that if the American capitalists persist in selling assistance to our enemies the attention of the United States must be diverted to other issues…."

"Such a plan could only be carried out by creating a necessity of home consumption for war munitions," supplemented the Secret Service agent softly.

Without replying the Herr Chief of the Secret Service pulled forward a small despatch-box from a cleverly concealed pocket in the upholstery of the limousine.

"We are motoring to your nearest destination," he said soberly, opening the box. "Here are your letters of credit, your passport, and introductions to our friends across the water," handing him a leather wallet. "They will see that you are properly introduced to Washington hostesses. Go out in society; I am told it is most delightful at the Capital. Make friends with influential public men and prominent Washingtonians. Above all," with emphasis, "cultivate the gentler sex; remember, idle women make excellent pawns, my dear Herr Captain von Mueller."

CHAPTER IV

Table of Contents

"SHOULD AULD ACQUAINTANCE BE FORGOT?"

Mrs. Winslow Whitney, gathering her wraps together, stepped from the limousine.

"I shall not need you again tonight, Henry," she said, as the chauffeur sprang to the sidewalk to assist her.

"Very good, ma'am," and touching his cap respectfully, he took from the limousine the heavy fur laprobe and hastened to ring the doorbell for his mistress.

Halfway to her front door Mrs. Whitney paused to scan the outward appearance of her home. The large, Colonial, brick double house, with lights partly showing behind handsomely curtained windows, looked the embodiment of comfort, but Mrs. Whitney heaved a sharp sigh of discontent. The surroundings were not pleasing to her. Again and again she had pleaded with her husband to give up the old house and move into a more fashionable neighborhood. But with the tenacity which easy-going men sometimes exhibit, Winslow Whitney clung to the home of his ancestors. It had descended from father to son for generations, and finally to him, the last of the direct male

line. Although business had encroached and noisy electric cars passed his door, and even government buildings dwarfed the impressive size of the old mansion, he declined to give up his home, stating that he had been born there and there he would die.

"Very well, you and Providence can settle the point between you, Dad," answered Kathleen, his only child, who had been brought in to use her persuasive powers upon her irate parent. "But as long as mother and I have to inhabit this old shell you must, simply must, put new works inside her."

And Whitney, with the generosity which marked his every action to those he loved, rehabilitated and remodeled the mansion until it finally rivaled in up-to-date completeness the more ornate homes of the newly rich in the fashionable Northwest.

"Has Miss Kathleen returned?" asked Mrs. Whitney, handing her wraps to the breathless Vincent, who had hurried to answer the chauffeur's imperious ring.

"No, ma'am."

"When she does return, tell her that I wish to see her."

"Yes, ma'am."

"Is Mr. Whitney in his studio?"

"Yes, ma'am. Shall I send Julie to you?"

"Tell her to go to my room and wait for me." As she spoke Mrs. Whitney crossed the broad hall and, passing the Colonial staircase, entered the elevator. The automatic car carried her to the first bedroom floor but, changing her mind, she did not open the door; instead she pressed the electric button marked "Attic." Her slight feeling of irritation

aroused by not being met downstairs by any member of her family was increased by stepping from the elevator into a dark hall.

"Winslow!" she called. Meeting with no response she walked over to the opposite wall and by the aid of the light in the elevator found the electric switch and turned it on. Not pausing to look about her, she went to the back of the large high-roofed attic and tried the handle of a closed door. Finding that it would not open to her touch, she rapped sharply on the panel. She waited several seconds before she heard a chair pushed back and the sound of advancing footsteps. The inside bolt was shot back with distinct force.

"Well, what is it?" demanded Whitney, jerking open the door. "Oh, my dear," his tone changing at sight of his wife, "I had no idea you were returning so soon."

"Do you call half-past six o'clock soon?" asked Mrs. Whitney following him into the room. "Winslow, Winslow, I warn you not to become too absorbed in your work."

Whitney laughed somewhat ruefully. "Does the kettle call the pot black?
What do you do but give up your time to the Sisters in Unity? I'm a
secondary consideration. There, there," noting his wife's expression.
"Don't let us dispute over trifles. I'm making headway, Minna—headway."

"I congratulate you, dear." Mrs. Whitney laid a caressing hand on his touseled gray hair. "I never doubted that you would. But, Winslow, such complete absorption in your work is not healthy. The doctor has warned you not to shut