

THE LADIES' HOME JOURNAL



Painted for The Ladies' Home Journal by Henry J. Soulen

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Activity

THE tired, footsore and hungry traveler timidly knocked at the side door of the rather dilapidated farmhouse and nervously cocked an ear to detect the presence of a dog.

No dog dashed forth as the door opened. Instead, he was looking into the wan, pale face of the housewife, who said in a tone that was at once tart and kind: "I suppose you want something to eat?"

"I do, ma'am," said the traveler. "I am a little bit down on my luck. I —"

"You needn't go into details," said the woman. "I have heard it all before. I don't believe a word of it. But you shall have some bread and milk and the few scraps I can spare."

"Thank you, and bless you," said the man as he ate. "When the time comes I will repay you a hundredfold."

The wan, pale housewife gave him a curt good-by, and the man went away.

Five years later he returned. He had made his pile some way or other. Perhaps it was oil. Perhaps it was anthracite coal. Maybe it was this man who discovered the secret of making ice cream without having to depend on cows. Anyway he came back, in a sedan of the kind which does not have the gasoline under the front seat. He stopped before the house and got out of the car like a man who is going to do something much gladder and lovelier than anything that happens in the glad books. He glanced at the house and saw that it was newly painted and had a wide veranda on the front. It took away some of his glad stuff, but on second thought he said, "Well, I'm glad the poor woman has had a little luck."

The veranda had an unusual look as he entered. The rug looked like real Chinese. The furniture was the last word in wicker. A simply but expensively dressed lady, rich but not gaudy, rose and greeted the man inquiringly. With his hat in his hand the man said: "I'm sorry to disturb you. The party I wished to see has gone, I see. I suppose she is dead. She did not look strong. But I came to pay a debt of honor. Five years ago she gave me, a famishing man, food and kindness, and I told her I would repay her a hundredfold. I —"

"I remember you," said the distinguished-looking lady. "I was the woman who gave you the food. I don't remember the kindness."

"You?" he cried. His fingers released hold on the hundred-dollar bank note which was ready in his pocket. "You—you have prospered, I see. I am too late."

"I am a scenario writer," she explained simply. "Yes, I suppose I might be called prosperous. Perhaps you have heard of the Lightning-Quick Comedies, made by the Knock-Out Company. I write them all."

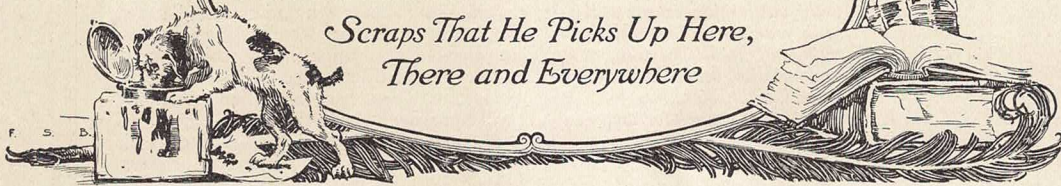
The man leaned against the nearest support. "Marvelous!"

"No, not so marvelous. It came about naturally, I think. I will tell you. One day I heard that the comedy films being made were not fast enough. They wanted quicker action. For sixteen years, in this house, I had been doing the upstairs, the downstairs, the cellar and the barn work, the baking, the milking, the splitting, the sawing, the firing, the plowing, the harrowing, the nursing, the husking, the buying, the selling and the swapping; I took care of the cows, the hens, the pigs, the ducks, the children, my husband, tramps and the minister's laundry; the well was a hundred feet from the house, and two hundred from the barn; the kitchen was twenty feet square, and for fifteen of the sixteen years the kitchen range was out of repair. I decided that if quick action was needed in the movies it should be supplied by someone who knew what quick action was. Yes, I've done very well, but I haven't quite done it yet. When the time comes that I can get a picture that will move as fast as I did for sixteen years I can get my own price for the scenarios. People will have to develop a new motion of the eyeball to get it all in. Must you be going? Well, it is good to know you really weren't a tramp after all. Good-by."

—FREEMAN TILDEN.

The Office Dog

Scraps That He Picks Up Here,
There and Everywhere



HE WHO dances may get out of paying the fiddler, but it's a safe bet that he'll pay the saxophone player.

ULTIMATELY the up-to-date housekeeping apartment will include among its conveniences a built-in Christmas tree.

THE millennium will be a lot nearer when a man who has fallen on an icy pavement gets as much sympathy from the bystanders as a horse in the same plight.

THE dictionary is strangely misinformed on some points. For example, it defines a flapper as "a young bird, not yet able to fly well." Oh, innocent Webster!

THE old-time child was satisfied with writing a letter to Santa Claus. The modern youngster will expect to "pick up" an answer on dad's radio. Broadcasting stations which have a monologue by Santa on their Christmas Eve program will make a huge hit.

He Was Glad

"GEORGE, dear," she said, "I've got something I want to talk to you about." "I'm glad of that, darling," her husband replied. "Usually you want to talk to me about something you haven't got."

Satisfaction Guaranteed

"YOU are certain," the middle-aged woman customer said, "that this young century plant will bloom in a hundred years?"

"Positive of it, ma'am," the florist assured her. "If it doesn't, bring it back."

What is Your Inference?

IS THE writer of the following want advertisement in a Western paper a jilted suitor bent on revenge or merely a great lover of sport?

"To Exchange—\$85 diamond ring for double-barreled shotgun."

Amateur Reminders

WHEN days are bleak and winter's near, When dank the outlook is and drear, What joy it is to have a book Of photographs in which to look At all the views and groups one took When summertime was here!

—"First, here's the lake. How bright the day I snapped that view! Of course, it's gray and rather dull—the print, I mean. But say, it is a lovely scene!"

—"And here's the brook in Balsam Dell, a charming spot. It's hard to tell just why the picture isn't good. Perhaps the shadows in the wood were much too deep for snapshot views. Too bad such fine effects to lose. But still, it's not so very bad —"

—"Now here's a picnic that we had, a jolly corn roast on the beach. I meant to send this print to each of those that in the group you see, had it turned out successfully. But, focusing the gosh-blamed thing I got in bad. I didn't bring the camera close enough, I fear. The whole effect, you see, is queer."

—"However, this one's not so worse; a baby and her nifty nurse. The cutest couple at the place, but light struck, hang it, in the face."

—"This picture, though, has got some class, some touch of art. You see that mass of heavy clouds so fierce and black, a regular tropic typhoon track? I'll say that's good. I don't know what occurred to cause the sky I got. The sky was blue, a perfect day, when I — But still, that's just the way my camera works. I had to call that view 'The Coming Thundersquall.'"

—"I took some others, but the rest are simply fierce; you've seen the best."

When days are bleak and winter's near, When dank the outlook is and drear, What joy it is to have a book Of photographs in which to look At all the views and groups one took When summertime was here! —A. H. F.

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The Vanishing American

By ZANE GREY

Illustrations by Pruett Carter

This is the story of the great American desert; of the love of a cultured girl from the East and a college-bred Indian who has gone back to live among his own people. Nophaie, an Indian lad, kidnapped and deserted in the desert, is found by some white excursionists, who take him back East. For eighteen years he is surrounded with the white man's culture, is educated at Carlisle, achieving scholastic and athletic fame. After he returns to his native element he writes Marian Warner, whom he had met and loved, to come and help his people. Arriving at the trading post where she is to stop, the trader's wife draws from Marian the story of her love for Nophaie. She encourages her in her desire to help the Indians, but cautions her of the chasm she has to bridge. Marian asks the trader to start with her the next day for Nophaie's camp.

TWENTY-FOUR hours at Kaidab were for Marian exceedingly full and prolific of new sensation. A sunset over the deep notch between the red rampart and the black mesa to the west; a strange sad twilight, deepening into desert night with the heavens dark blue and radiant with a million stars; a walk out into the lonely, melancholy, silent emptiness; a wonderful hour with this woman who loved and knew the souls and lives of Indians; a sinking to sweet rest with eyelids seemingly touched by magic; a broken moment of slumber when the dead stillness awakened to wild staccato yelps and mournful cries; a cold, keen, invigorating dawn; and then a day of thrills, not the least of which was a horse-back ride out across the sandy, green-dotted plain with an Indian boy—these somehow augmented the process of change in Marian's heart, clarified her mind and established the strange fact of love for the desert. It seemed like the evolution of a long period. Out of these hours grew realization of the unlimited possibilities of life and joy and labor.

That evening, in another and more important council with Mrs. Withers, the matter of Marian's work was discussed. They both agreed that a beginning should be made at Mesa, in whatever connection might be available at the Indian School. Marian repeated Friel's talk to her. And Mrs. Withers' failure to express surprise or disgust or, in fact, to say anything, was illuminating and further increased Marian's desire to learn the truth of what was going on at Mesa. It was decided that in case Marian's overtures there were futile, she could come back to Kaidab and go about her work among the Indians on her own initiative. Nophaie's possible wishes and suggestions were taken into consideration. Neither Mrs. Withers nor Marian, however, anticipated anything but approval from him. What he might have to tell Marian could only inspire her or drive her to greater effort. As for the language, Marian decided she would be quick to learn enough of that to get along with the Indians, and proficiency would come with time.

Next morning Marian arose at five o'clock. It was with real pleasure that she donned her rough warm outdoor garb, blouse of flannel, riding trousers and boots. She had coat and sweater and heavy gloves to go with them. But somehow the hat she had brought did not now seem suitable. It was too jaunty, too small. Still she would have to wear it, for she had nothing else. Other necessities she packed in a small duffel bag.

WHEN she got outdoors the sun had risen and appeared to be losing its brightness. A gray haze of cloud overspread the sky. The wind was cold, gusty and whipped at Marian's hair. Indians were riding in to the post, and already the work of the day was under way. Withers, bareheaded and coatless as usual, was directing the packing of two mules. Presently Withers espied her. Then he halted in his task. A broad smile spread over his face and a twinkle shone in his eye. "Shore, I thought you were a boy," he said. "Was wondering where *such* a boy might come from. You shore look good medicine to me."

His frank admiration was pleasing to Marian. She would have much preferred to appear before Nophaie in distinctly feminine apparel, such as she had worn when he first saw her. But it would have been out of place here, and she had a moment of happiness in the thought that perhaps Nophaie, too, would find her attractive in this riding suit.

"Reckon we're going to have some wind today," said Withers as he scanned the eastern horizon. "Couldn't you put off going till tomorrow?"

"Oh, no, I couldn't," cried Marian, aghast. "Mr. Withers, you don't really mean we oughtn't go?"

"Yes, I do; but if you feel that way, we're shore going," he replied decidedly. "You may as well get used to blowing sand now as later. Have you got glasses?"

"Yes, I have my auto glasses."

"That's good. But you'll have to find another hat."

"Oh, I was afraid of this—the looks of it, I mean. What's wrong with it?"

"Shore, its looks are great. But it's no good. You want a sombrero with a wide brim. It protects your face from sun and rain. You're going to get sunburned, miss."

"That won't bother me, Mr. Withers," replied Marian. "My skin looks delicate, but really it's tough. I burn red, then brown."

"Well, we shall see. If you haven't a sombrero, I'll dig up one for you."

Marian never experienced such an endless hour as the ensuing one before Withers was ready to start. Breakfast for her seemed a superfluous thing. Yet she was hungry. All the time she was aware of Mrs. Withers' eloquent and penetrating glances and the subtle little smile of understanding and sympathy. This woman who loved Indians understood her, and was living with her these thrilling, calling moments of young life. Yet a haunting sadness, too, seemed to hover like a shadow in those magnetic eyes.

"Marian, you're in for a hard but glorious trip—no words of mine can tell you. Nophaie's country is beyond words to describe. Remember, study of this desert will reward you. Be careful on high trails. Good-by."

Two Indians drove the pack mules ahead. Withers had instructed Marian to mount and ride after them. He would presently follow. To her disappointment she had been given a horse instead of one of the shaggy Indian mustangs—a short, stocky horse not at all spirited and quite ugly. But when she had gotten astride him, ready to try to adapt herself to saddle and motion, she found to her amazement that she did not seem to need to do anything. The horse started off. He moved briskly. But it was not a trotting gait. She had ridden at a trot yesterday and assuredly soon tired of it. This gait was new to her, and she had imagined she knew something about horses. She felt as if she were riding in a rocking-chair that moved on a level, if such a thing were possible. The motion delighted her.

ONE of the Indians was old, judging from his gray hair and sloping shoulders. He wore a red bandanna round his head; a thin cotton blanket, gaudily colored like calico, covered his shoulders, and his long legs dangled below his stirrups. The other Indian was a boy of sixteen years perhaps, and the sight of him was pleasing to Marian. His ebony hair waved in the wind; his darkly brown face was round and comely; he had eyes as black as his hair, and these, together with the smiling, parted lips showing white, even teeth, made of him a handsome youth.

To see everything was Marian's resolve. Yet just sight of these colorfully clad Indians and the bobbing pack mules made her forget to look anywhere else. She felt the cold puff of wind, she smelled the dust, she rode easily without any strain whatever.

Withers soon overtook her, then rode ahead to the pack mules and quickened their pace. The Indians jogged on in the lead. And Marian appeared to be left to her horse and the trail and the encompassing scenery. Ahead, bare hills of yellow stone loomed up high toward the overcast sky. The trail led into a defile. Slanting surfaces rose on both sides and gradually lifted to imposing heights. In pockets and niches grew stunted cedar trees, with roots growing

out of the solid rock. The wind did not strike her here, a fact she found relieving. Buckskin held to a pace that kept him within sight of the horses ahead. On rocky places of the trail he appeared as sure-footed as in the sand. Marian began to appreciate why Withers had chosen him for her.

Slowly the slopes closed in, grew higher, and the trail led uphill. Perhaps half an hour of gradual climb brought Marian out on top of a ridge from which she soon saw into the distance.

WITHERS had waited for her, evidently anticipating her delight. "Thought you'd like this ten-mile strip," he said. "The big black rock standing out of the plain is called 'The Captain.' And the Indians call that sharp monument you see 'Slim Rock That Stands High.' It's twice as high as the Washington Monument."

Long and green and broad appeared the level hollow of desert that led to these upstanding figures, lonely and sentinel-like in

SHE COULD ONLY LOOK AND LOOK, SLOWLY TO GROW INTO REALIZATION OF THE DECEIT OF DISTANCE, THE MARVEL OF COLOR, THE IMMENSITY OF THESE UPLANDS

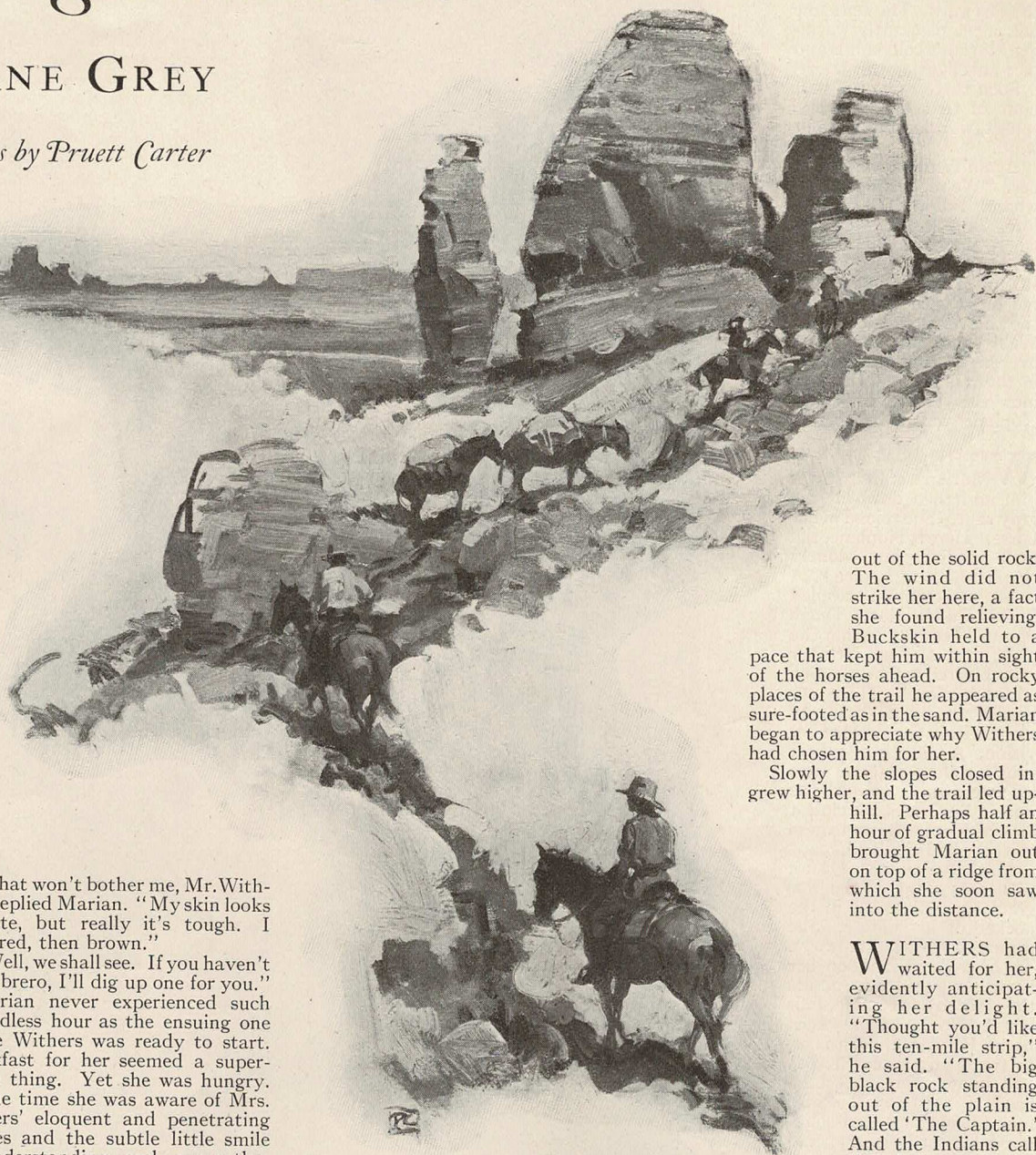
the distance. Ten miles! It did not seem a third of that. Yet Marian, riding on and on, always watching these statues of rock, soon discovered how deceiving was the distance. For a whole hour these desert monuments did not change shape or size or color. In another hour Marian rode between them, to gaze up in awe, to marvel at the black granite grandeur of The Captain and the red sandstone splendor of Slim Rock That Stands High. And these were outposts to the gateway of desert land, beyond Marian's comprehension. She could only look and look, and ask Withers questions, and ride on and on, slowly to grow, hour after hour, into realization of the deceit of distance, the marvel of color, the immensity of these uplands, and the weird, fantastic and sublime nobility of sculptured shafts of stone.

Something great was entering her soul. Was this the home of Indians? What did white people realize of the nature and wildness and loneliness that had created these children of the desert? What must dwell in the minds of a race living in this land of enchantment?

Then, toward mid-afternoon, what Withers had feared and predicted came to pass. "Sandstorm," he said. "But not bad. It won't last long. Get on your glasses, and cover your mouth and nose with your scarf."

A pall of yellow swooped down out of the west. Dark and weird, magenta in hue, the sun shone through this wall of dust. The wonderful landmarks ahead were blotted out. The sweep of this desert storm seemed fierce and swift, swallowing up the monuments and the plains and moving down upon Marian with a majestic and inevitable precision.

She imagined she grew suddenly blind. And she began to choke and suffocate. She had to breathe through the scarf. The smell of dust seemed as stifling as the substance of it. She felt the fine, thin, stinging particles on face and neck. And when that heavy front of the storm passed by, Marian emerged just in time to escape acute distress.



Riding was disagreeable still, but gradually the gusts of whirling dust lessened, until the storm blew away toward the eastward. The sun came out, most pleasantly warming Marian's cold hands and face and lighting the desert.

Soon there came the best hour of that day, close to sunset, warmer and without wind.

Again Withers waited for her. "We're getting somewhere. I didn't tell you before. This is the sage flat where Nophaie used to shepherd his sheep. Here he was stolen. Yonder under that red mesa is the place where the thieves drove his flock. We'll camp near it. 'Way over here—that great break in the red wall—is the pass into the Valley of Gods. Nophaie was born there."

WITHERS rode on. Marian stared after him and then down at the gray sage. She reined in her horse. Here! Nophaie, the little Indian boy, lonely shepherd, here stolen! A wave of emotion swelled Marian's breast. Tears dimmed her eyes, so that the gray, soft color beneath her grew blurred and misty. She wiped her eyes. There appeared to be no mark of stone within the circle of her vision. A wide, gray-green, gently rolling plain of sage led everywhere toward the upstanding rocks, the closest of which was the red mesa Withers had signified.

Marian dismounted, and, gathering a bit of the fragrant sage, placed it in the pocket of her blouse. She meant to treasure it always. Then, with a hand on her horse, she gazed away across the plain toward the uplands where Nophaie had been born. It meant much to her, to tread on the earth that had known Nophaie's boyhood feet, to see the wild rock towers that had shadowed his birthplace. Magnificent monuments, pillars and columns and shafts, all reflecting the gold and red of the sunset, far away and infinitely lonely, speared the horizon line and the white clouds. Valley of Gods!

Marian mounted and did not look back. Her heart was full. To the fore stretched the trail, winding through the sage. It led her under the shadow of the ponderous red mesa, a massive butte with columns like an organ, standing out alone in the desert, far from the main wall of the uplands. Upon a grassy bench Withers had made camp. Already a fire was burning. The Indians were unpacking the mules. "Get down and come in," said Withers cheerily. "Find a seat and rest yourself. We'll soon have supper."

MARIAN became conscious of aching bones and tired muscles. She was glad to rest, but she forced herself to watch Withers at his camp tasks. He did not appear to be in a hurry, yet results multiplied magically, and all in a few minutes, apparently, there was supper steaming fragrantly, and a little tent stretched over a roll of blankets for her bed. Camping out was not entirely new to Marian. She had sat round camp fires in Maine and the Adirondacks. But this was different, just as the Dutch oven was a strange and fascinating cooking utensil in her sight. It was a black iron pot with a lid. Withers had thrown the lid into the fire. The pot sat upon a bed of red coals, raked to one side. Withers deposited the hand-modeled biscuits in the oven, lifted the lid out of the fire with a stick and set it on the pot. Then he piled red-hot coals over the lid, and apparently forgot this part of his task. Marian was curious to see what happened.

"Come and get it," presently spoke up Withers in his hearty voice.

"Get what?" queried Marian.

"That speech is the Western call to eat."

"Oh—and what's to become of the biscuits in that black pot?"



MARIAN PAUSED, HER EYES ON THE INCREDIBLE STEPS SHE HAD ASCENDED. SUDDENLY A CRY STARTLED HER

"Young lady, after you eat some of my biscuits you will never be happy again," replied the trader, laughing, and forthwith proceeded to knock the lid off the oven.

Marian could scarcely believe her eyes. Next moment she was sitting cross-legged before a strip of canvas upon which Withers spread the repast. The odor that assailed her suddenly awakened a ravenous hunger. And Marian began her first meal out on the desert with an appreciation and relish never before experienced in her life. Withers served her, then the Indians, who stood by with eager eyes, and then himself. Marian's acute senses fixed the reality of that hour—the picturesque Indians, the Western trader, forceful and wholesome and kindly, the fragrance of bacon and coffee and hot biscuits, the penetrating cold wind that swept in and blew the pungent smoke about her face, the pleasant heat of the fire on her back, and outside of the camp circle the vague sage-plain environed by looming walls. After supper Marian crawled into the little tent that was so low it touched her head as she sat upon her bed and, making a pillow of sweater and coat, she wearily unlaced her boots and slipped gratefully down under the heavy woolen blankets. She tried to think some more, to realize all that had happened, to ponder and dream over the future, but at once she was claimed by sleep.

In the morning Withers called her, and when she crawled out of the little tent it was into a wonderful

gray of dawn, cold and pure, stingingly sweet with its perfume of desert, with the great mesa standing clear and sharp and black against the eastern gold of sky.

"Today we climb out on top," was one of the trader's droll remarks.

An hour after starting Marian appreciated what he meant, though she was utterly at a loss to see how they could ever surmount the tremendous red wall toward which they were riding. It looked the scarred blunt face of a mountain. The slant of broken rock that leaned against its base might be surmountable, but it did not extend far up. For the hundredth time Marian learned that what she saw at a distance was vastly different at close range.

MARKS that had appeared to be scars turned out to be ledges and lines of broken cleavage and slopes of talus and masses of broken rock, through and over which it at last seemed barely possible to climb. The close approach to this lofty barrier was not without excitement for Marian. And when Withers led off the well-defined trail that kept to the lowlands, to take a dim rough trail which turned straight for the wall, she felt a deep thrill. This must be the Indian trail never traveled by white people.

"Here's our Pahute trail," said Withers as he dismounted. "It heads in from cross country. I'm sorry to say you'll have to walk. Climb slow, rest often, and in bad places keep on the upside of your horse."

The Indians were climbing on foot, leading their mustangs. The mules were bobbing the packs up a zigzag trail. Withers likewise began the ascent. Marian followed, confident and eager, with eyes roving everywhere.

HOW wonderfully that trail had been worked out, zigzagging the first long slope, then taking to ledge and crack, and then worming from side to side up a break between two craggy capes! It made Marian dizzy to look high at the rim. The Indians passed out of her sight and so did the mules, while Withers slowly got far ahead of her. Marian did not particularly like this aspect of the case and discovered that Buckskin did not either. She became extremely hampered and hindered by the horse climbing too fast behind her. He bumped her with his shoulder, nearly knocking her over, and he stepped upon her heels. Marian had to keep ahead of him, and on the increasingly steeper bits of trail this grew almost too much for her. Buckskin either could not or would not climb slowly; and at length Marian became aware that he had to expend considerable effort to make the grade.

"Look out below. Dodge the rocks," yelled Withers from far above her.

The zigzags of the trail had placed him directly over her and evidently his horse had loosened stones. Marian heard them clattering down, and quickly she chose a shelving portion of wall for protection. The sliding stones passed below her, gathering momentum and more stones on the way, until the sound augmented into a rattling roar. Then it ceased.

Marian resumed the climb, with most of her confidence gone and all of her breath. People back East never saw a hill! She thought of a friend who used to refuse to walk on a level, let alone upgrade. And soon the sensations of warmth and breathlessness passed to those of fire and pain. A burden pressed upon her chest, and her legs felt dead. She learned that to rest long was worse almost than no rest at all. For it grew too wonderfully good, if she halted more than a moment. So she staggered along and upward, panting laboriously, hot and wet, trying to avoid Buckskin, and to keep from looking down into the void that had become

awful. The light grew brighter over her. She heard the trader's cheery call of encouragement. How endless that last steep zigzag to the top!

"Fine! Shore you're there as a climber. But it's nothing to Pahute Cañon," Withers was saying.

"Oh-h-h!" panted Marian as she dragged herself up, to fall upon a stone seat.

She could not talk. Her breast seemed as if it were caved in. The trader's compliment fell upon most doubting and scornful ears.

"Rest a little," said Withers kindly. "And then look around. We're on the rim of Nophaie's country."

MARIAN looked back at the lowlands from which she had climbed. Straight down the trail sheered, yet she had ascended it. The Valley of Gods rose prominently out of the vast stretch of desert, now visible to the eye; and the crowns of the monuments were on a level with the great wall from which Marian gazed. They belonged to the same strata of red sandstone. All that space below and between had weathered away—worn by wind and sand and frost! The fact was plain to Marian, yet incredible. What of the ages! This land of mystery and beauty bade fair to transform her. Far away these red stone gods stood up, aloof, stupendous and grand. She watched them, and gradually her composure and strength returned.

"Shore, I'm glad to see you take to the look of this desert," observed Withers seriously. "Most people don't. Though of course very few ever have the luck to get such a view as this. What I mean is, all we have here is wonderful country. Indians, horses, birds—what few living things there really are—seem absolutely not to exist because we seldom see them. So there's nothing to look at but the vastness, nothing to think of. That is why an Indian is great. He's like his surroundings."

"I don't know what I feel—and couldn't tell, if I did," replied Marian. "I want days and months here. Yet afterward—could I ever be happy again?"

"Places have more to do with happiness than people," rejoined Withers. "Well, let's be drifting. We've only climbed the first step of this stairway."

And then Marian dreaded to look toward the west. Yet she was impelled. Huge and beetling, wild with fringe of green trees, another wall obstructed the sky. It was close,

and northward it broke off abruptly. Withers was riding off through a forest of cedar trees. Marian got on her horse, not without some sharp pains, and followed the trader, deeming it best to keep him in sight.

The trail was dim. On that bare ground, however, Marian believed she could have followed the fresh tracks of the horses in the lead. This bench of fragrant green forest soon led to the base of a rocky rise where Withers waited for her.

"Just let Buckskin have free rein," he said.

"I'll keep an eye on you. And, say, I saw where an Indian's horse tracks cut in on this trail. I'll bet our Pahute you admired has got ahead of us. If so, Nophaie will be on his way to meet us before sundown."

Marian tried to drive thought of such a contingency out of her mind. It stormed her and left nothing of sense to meet the ever-increasing requirements of the ride.

She wanted to see all and not dream the hours away. She yearned for this meeting with Nophaie, yet dreaded it.

Withers held back now and accommodated his progress to Marian's. She felt relieved to have him near, though she did not want to talk. Withers, however, had little to say, considering time and distance.

THEY began a long climb up over bare yellow rock, wavy, hummocky, ridgy, with hills and holes that somehow permitted a labyrinthine travel toward the summit. Half a mile this strange slope ascended, at length reaching the level of the huge abutment of stone she had first noted from the rim below. She seemed now on the very summit of the uplands. Yet this was not true. There were farther and higher points to the westward. To the north the view offered wide contrast, with long, black ranges of mountains rising to peaks of white.

"Look back and down!" exclaimed Withers with a ring in his voice. "I've been here only once, yet I never could forget that—and never will."

From this height Marian found the spectacle to be immense and baffling—league on league of gray-green desert, the red ramparts on each side of the portal to the Valley of Gods, and between these wide sentinels the pinnacles of grandeur and mystery and light sacred to the Indian. She

felt the uplifting of her spirit. Could any soul be dead to this? What was nature, if not eternal? There were moments of life transcendent in revelation to the roused mind. Nophaie had made gift to her of this sublimity, and never would she be the same as she had been. Soon she would behold him—the Indian she loved—through whom had come deep thoughts and stirrings of her heart, and now the birth of nobler understanding. Nature flung its immortal task in her face, and she learned her first lesson in humility.

VI

FROM that vantage point of exceedingly wide range Withers led away to the west, ascending one step of the bold corner of bluff, and then traveling along at the base of a shelving wall. The last quarter circle round that widened wall sent the creeping cold sensations over Marian, for the overhanging sections of crumbling cliff above and the abrupt opening of an abyss below, a sinister chasm a thousand feet deep, made this part of the trail a perilous one. Then once more she rode

out into the sunlight, with level open desert ahead. The Indians and pack mules were in sight, going into a dark green forest of cedars and piñons, larger and richer than those below. Mile after mile this forest rolled westward, rising to a plain of purple sage. Beyond the horizon of deep color rose a black-and-white dome of a mountain that Marian believed she recognized as Nothis Ahn, the first sight of which she had obtained at Red Sandy. As she rode westward this mountain top dropped below the horizon.

It was hunger that reminded Marian of the passing hours and discovered to her that she had ridden until noon. Five hours of steady riding! At four miles an hour, she had in all covered twenty miles.

All at once she looked up to see a tremendous gash in the green-forested earth ahead. Withers, on foot, was waiting for her on the brink of a chasm. Far across Marian saw the opposite rim, a red-gold, bare-faced cliff, sheering downward. She was amazed. The very earth seemed to have opened. As she rode up to Withers the chasm deepened to astonishing depths, and still she could not see the bottom. The trader halted her before she got to the rim.

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SHE WATCHED NOPHAIE. IN THE FLICKERING LIGHT HIS FACE SEEMED IMPASSIVELY SAD, A BRONZE MASK MOLDED IN THE MOOD OF SORROW



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The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 23)

"Pahute Cañon," he said. "And it's bad medicine. You've got to walk fast. Because the horses can't go— and I'll have to lead them. Be sure to keep me in sight, otherwise you might lose the trail."

Marian dismounted, and handing her bridle to the trader she walked to the rim. A ghastly and naked, glaring cañon yawned beneath her, tremendously wide and deep, bare of vegetation and blazing with its denuded and colored slopes.

"White people don't get to see Pahute Cañon," said Withers as he gazed from beside her. "It's the wildest and most beautiful in the West. Reckon it'll be shore a spell before automobile tourists will drive in and out of her, eh?" He laughed grimly, with some note of gratification in his voice.

MARIAN felt speech difficult. She was astounded. Pictures of grand cañons could not convey any adequate conception of what was given by actual sight. "Wonderful! Fearful!" she exclaimed, feeling the strange drawing power of the depths. "Oh, it seems impossible even to—to slide down there!"

"Well, let me get down a ways with the horses before you start, so you won't roll on me," said the trader. "Then you'd shore better come a-sliding, if you want to see Nophaie today. We've got to rustle to make the other rim before dark."

The angle was forty-five degrees and the trail was a narrow line of loose rocks. Marian drew a deep breath and essayed the start. She had not taken half a dozen steps before she forgot all about the scenery. She became suddenly and violently aware of the treachery of loose rocks and of the hard nature of contact with them. That first fall hurt her considerably, especially bruising her elbow; and it also hurt her vanity. She started anew, more carefully, and soon found herself wildly clutching at the air and balancing on rolling stones. This time she saved herself. But she had a good scare. Caution would not do on this trail. She had to step lightly and swiftly, to be off a loose stone before it could turn with her. There was a thrill in this descent, and she began to grow reckless. Action liberated her spirit, and the faster she progressed the less she felt fear.

DOWN and down she zigzagged, growing out of breath. Stones as large as houses lay everywhere. Presently Marian ran out of this boulder zone upon red earth, still steep, but affording safer and easier going. When she gazed upward, to see the red rim far above, she could scarcely believe her eyes. Then she ran on down the easy stages over soft ground, soon to find Buckskin standing, bridle dragging in the trail. Withers waited a little way ahead.

Marian mounted, then became conscious that excitement had kept her from realizing both pain and fatigue.

She rode on to meet Withers and was indeed glad when the last incline led down to a sandy wash, that in turn opened out into the cañon floor.

The stream which from above had appeared a thread of silver now proved to be a shallow and wide flow of roily water into which the horses hurried to drink. Withers got off, lay flat and quenched his own thirst. The Indians had halted beside one of the clumps of green trees and were talking to another Indian who was on foot.

"Take a rest in the shade of these cottonwoods," suggested the trader. "You'll need all your strength climbing out. I see some Pahutes."

From the shade of the cottonwoods Marian watched with wondering interest and sympathy. No hogan nor shack nor habitation of any kind appeared to be in sight. But that this place was home for these Indians Marian had no doubt. What a stalwart Indian it was that talked with Withers! He was young, and little there was about him to connect him with the dirty, slouching Indians Marian had seen at Mesa. As she looked he raised a strong, capable hand, pointing, with singular grace and expressiveness and slow meaning movement, toward a point above and beyond the cañon. It was a beautiful gesture.

"THE Pahute whose tracks we saw crossed here early this morning. He's shore to meet Nophaie. And he'll tell Nophaie the same he told this Indian here," Withers said when he came back to Marian.

"What?" queried Marian, catching her breath.

"Benow di Cleash on the Pahute trail," replied the trader with a smile. "That may be strange to these Indians. But it won't be to Nophaie."

For answer Marian rose, averting her face, and went to her horse. As she reached for the bridle she saw her gloved hand tremble. Strong indeed was the hold she had on herself, but she could no longer trust it.

Once more she fell in behind Withers and the Indians. They rode up the cañon to a break in the wall, where they turned upward. The mouth of this gorge was narrow and jagged, opening back into the mountain of rock. Running water dashed over the rocks at the bottom of this gorge. Cottonwood trees, with foliage bright green and fresh, shaded part of the trail. Soon the rocks began to encroach upon that sandy strip. Marian saw the Indians above her on the left, toiling over the weathered slide.

At a crossing of the stream Withers bade her dismount. He filled her canteen. Marian found the water cold and fine, free of acrid taste and very satisfying. "You should drink oftener," he said as he watched her. "You'll dry up in this desert. Well, shore you've a climb ahead. Go slow. Be careful. Rest often. You can't miss the trail."

With that he started up a ledge of soft blue rock, leading Marian's horse. His own was evidently in charge of one of the Indians.

MARIAN gazed aloft with something of shock and awe. She actually saw a wedge of blue sky fitting into that red notch far above her. She began the climb with forced husbanding of her strength and a restraint to her eagerness. With eyes seeking out the tracks of the horses and marks of the trail, Marian slowly lent her energies to the ascent. This trail must have been very old, she thought, judging from unmistakable ruts worn in ledges and places where avalanches and weathering slides had not covered it. At every convenient rock to sit or lean upon, she rested. In half an hour she found the gorge opening wide, bowl shaped in the center, with slopes of broken rock leading up on all sides.

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The Vanishing American

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The sky began to lighten. The ragged red rim above seemed possibly attainable. Her watch told the hour of five. She feared she had made too leisurely a task of it or had rested too long. She grew nervous and hurried. Once she lost her footing and fell, to slide hard against a projecting rock. That hurt her. But the fright she suffered was worse than the hurt. Suppose she had slipped on one of the narrow ledges!

"Oh! this is new and hard for me," she panted. "Mr. Withers shouldn't—have trusted me—to myself."

SHE realized she had been thrown upon her own resources. Resolutely, but with trembling lips that she had to bite to still, she began to climb again.

Six o'clock by her watch, and the gold of sunset on the far points of the rim! It seemed only a short climb now, from every turn, yet she did not get there.

Slowly Marian toiled round an abrupt corner on a bare promontory. She paused, her eyes on the incredible steps she had ascended. Her breast heaved. A cold wind from above cooled her hot, uncovered brow.

Suddenly a cry startled her. Piercingly high and strange it pealed down, and the echoes from the cañon walls magnified it and clapped it from cliff to cliff, until it died weirdly far below.

With uplift of head Marian swept the rim above. An Indian stood silhouetted against the gold of sky. Slender and tall, motionless as a statue, he stood, a black figure in singular harmony with the wildness and nobility of that height.

"Nophaie!" whispered Marian with a leap of her heart.

He waved his hand aloft, a slow gesture, significant and thrilling. Marian waved her sombrero in reply and tried to call out, but just then her voice failed. Wheeling away with swift strides, shot through and through with a current of fire, she began the last few zigzags of the trail.

Endless that last climb, unattainable the rim! Marian had overreached herself. Dizzy, half-blind, with bursting heart she went on, upward, toward Nophaie. She saw him dimly as in a dream. He was coming. How strange the light! Night already? Vaguely the rim wall waved and rocked, grew darker.

NO, SHE had not fainted. Not for one second had she wholly lost sense of an arm like iron around her, of being borne upward. Then one long moment, not clear, and again she felt the bursting throb of her heart, that pang in her breast. The dimness left her eyes. She saw the gorge, a blue abyss, yawning down into the purple depths of Pahute Cañon. But she could not see anything else, for she was unable to move. Nophaie held her close, her cheek against his breast.

"Benow di Cleash!"

"Nophaie!"

There was no other greeting between them. He did not kiss her, and his close clasp slowly loosened. Marian rallied to the extent of being able to stand, and she slipped away from him, still holding his hand. The Indian she had known as Lo Blandy had changed with the resigning of that white man's name. Dark as bronze his fine face had grown, lean and older, graver, with long, sloping lines of pain not wholly hidden by his smile of welcome. His eyes, black and piercing with intense light, burned into hers. Unutterable love and joy shone in them.

"Nophaie, you have—changed," she said breathlessly.

"So have you," he replied.

An indefinable difference in the tone of his voice struck Marian forcibly. It was lower, softer, with something liquid in its depth, something proving that his mother tongue had returned to detract from the white man's.

"How have I—changed?" murmured Marian.

Her pent-up emotions had been eased, if not expressed. The great longed-for moment had come, strangely unlike what she had expected, yet full and sweet. Slowly she was realizing.

"Still Benow di Cleash, but woman now, more than girl. It's the same face I saw first at Cape May, only more beautiful, Marian."

"At least you've not changed Lo Blandy's habit of flattery."

"DO NOT call me that," he said, a somber look momentarily shadowing the gladness of his eyes.

Marian hesitated. She was trying to realize him, to find him again as she had known and loved him. But it was not easy.

"Must we get acquainted all over?" she asked seriously.

"You must."

"Very well; I am ready."

"Then you have come to work among my people?"

"Of course," replied Marian simply.

"I've come to do what you want me to."

Love and loyalty spoke unmistakably in her voice and in the gaze with which she met his piercing eyes. For an instant—then Marian trembled in a consciousness of his gratitude, of his sudden fierce desire to gather her to his breast. She felt that, and saw it in the slight leap of his frame.

"You are noble. You prove my faith. You save me from hate of the white race." Loosening her hands, he took a long stride toward the rim and gazed away across the purple cañon.

Then Marian had her first real sight of him. This appeared but a shadow of the magnificent form of the famous Carlisle athlete, Lo Blandy. Thinned out, lean and hard he looked. He was dressed in worn corduroy and velveteen, with silver-buckled belt and brown moccasins. His black hair was drawn back and bound under a red band that encircled his head. This garb, and the wonderful poise of his lofty figure against that background of wild cañon, removed him immeasurably from the man Marian had known as Lo Blandy. If there had ever been anything untrue or unreal about him, it was gone now. He satisfied some long unknown yearning in Marian's heart. Even the suggestion of the tragic was not discordant. What was in his soul then?

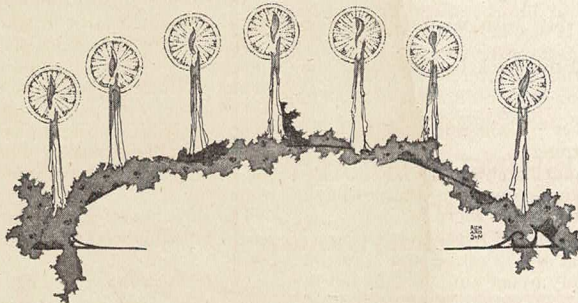
"I'M GLAD for what you think I am," she said, stepping to his side. "For what you say I do—and I want to—to make you happy."

"Happy! Benow di Cleash, this is the first happy moment I have ever lived since I was a shepherd boy—Nophaie down there with the sheep. Happy, because Indian as I am, I know you love me."

"Yes, I—I love you, Nophaie," she said low, unsteadily. She wanted him to know again at once.

Hand in hand then they gazed out across the purpling depths and the gold-rimmed

(Continued on Page 193)



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The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 192)

walls, to the vast heave of desert beyond. The sun set while Marian watched and divined the strange exaltation of the moment. Incalculable were to be her blessings, the glory of loving, and forgetting self, the work that was to be hers, the knowledge of this lonely and beautiful land, seen through the eyes and soul of an Indian. Marian marvelled now that she had ever hesitated or feared.

"Come, we must go," said Nophaie. "You are tired and hungry. Withers will make camp some miles from here."

When it came to getting upon her own horse again, she was not above a little feminine vanity in her hope to accomplish a graceful mount before Nophaie. But she made indeed a sorry one, for almost all her strength was gone. Then they rode side by side through a fragrant level land of piñon and sage, with the after-glow of sunset lighting the western sky. The romance of that moment seemed an enchantment of her dreams. Here was the gloaming hour, and a beautiful place of the desert wilderness, and the man she loved. His color and his race were no hindrances to her respect.

SHE talked a little while of their last times together at the seashore, and then of friends of hers whom he knew, and lastly of her home, in which she had no longer seemed to fit happily. Nophaie listened without comment. When, however, she broached the subject of her arrival in the West and her reception by the Witherses, she found him communicative. Withers was a good man, a trader who helped the Indians and did not make his post a means to cheat them. Mrs. Withers was more to the Indians than any other white person had ever been.

Presently the thickening twilight was pierced by the bright blaze of a camp fire. And Marian followed Nophaie down into a shallow ravine where a gleam of water reflected the blaze and the dark branches of cedar trees. Withers was busy at the supper tasks.

After the meal Withers and Nophaie made short work of what tasks were left to do. The two Indians appeared to mingle with the encircling darkness. For a moment the low, strange notes of their voices came back to Marian, and then were heard no more.

Withers erected the little tent under the piñon near the fire, and then drew, "Shore I reckon that's about all." Then bidding Nophaie and Marian good night he discreetly retired to his own bed under an adjoining piñon.

THE night silence settled down upon the camp, so lonely and sweet, so strangely full for Marian that she was loath to break it. She watched Nophaie. In the flickering light his face seemed impassively sad, a bronze mask molded in the mood of sorrow. From time to time he would lift his face and turn his dark gaze upon Marian. Then she thrilled and felt a warmth of gladness wave over her.

"Will you stay with us tonight?" she asked at last.

"No. I will ride back to my hogan," he said.

"Is it far?"

"For you, yes. I will ride back to meet you in the morning."

"Is your home at Oljato?"

"No. Oljato is down in the lowland. Some of my people live there."

"People? You mean relatives?"

He replied in the negative and went on to tell of his only living kin. And he fell to

talking of himself, how he had chosen this wildest and loneliest part of the reservation because he wanted to be far away from white people. It was a custom of the tribe for the women to own the sheep, but he had acquired a small flock. He owned a few mustangs. He was the poorest Indian he knew. He did not possess even a saddle or a gun. His means of livelihood was the selling of wool and hides, and working for some of the rich Indians in that section. He had taught them how much better corn would grow in plowed land. He built dams to hold the spring freshets from the melting snows, and thus conserve water for the long period of drought. What his tribe needed most was

to learn ways that were better than theirs. But they were slow to change. They had to see results. And therefore he did not find a great deal of work which was remunerative.

IT HAD never occurred to Marian that Nophaie might be poor. She remembered him as the famous athlete who had been highly salaried at Cape May. Yet she might have guessed it. The white people had taught him to earn money in some of their pursuits, which he had renounced. Poverty had always seemed a hideous condition. Marian had never known real luxury and did not want it, but she had never been in

need of the simple and necessary things of life. Perhaps to the Indian poverty was nothing. The piñons might be his roof and warmth, the sage-covered earth his bed, the sheep his sustenance.

Marian hesitated to voice her sympathy and perplexity. She could help Nophaie. But how? Maybe he did not want more sheep, more horses, more clothes and blankets, a gun and a saddle. Marian felt that she must go slowly.

After a long silence, which Marian yearned to break, but could not, Nophaie rose and touched her hair with his hand.

"Benow di Cleash, your eyes are heavy," he said. "You must sleep. But I shall lie awake. I will start back with the sunrise. Good night."

Would he bend to kiss her? She had treasured and remembered his kisses, few as they had been. But he moved away silently, his tall form dark against the pale starlit sky, and vanished from her sight.

VII

UPON awakening next morning Marian realized how dearly she must pay for her horseback rides and climbs on foot. Breakfast had to be kept waiting for her, and Withers expressed both solicitude and amusement.

"I may look funny, but I don't feel funny," complained Marian with a rueful face. "How will I ever live through this trip? Oh-h-h! Those awful trails straight down and up!"

"We'll not go back the Pahute Cañon," replied Withers. "Now you eat all you can and walk round some. You'll find you feel better."

Marian was so sore and stiff that she had not the slightest faith in what he said, yet upon following his advice she found he had spoken truly. Nevertheless, when she came to mount Buckskin it was an ordeal that left her smarting with pain. There was nothing to do but endure until gradually the exercise warmed her blood and eased her pangs. Then she began again to have interest in her surroundings.

The slow heave of piñon and cedar forest reached its highest ridge after perhaps an

(Continued on Page 194)

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**T H E L A D I E S'
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The Vanishing American

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hour of riding. The sun was then high, and it lighted an enormous country of purple sage and clumps of piñons and yellow mounds of rock, now clear to Marian's gaze.

Withers waited for her and, as she rode abreast of his position, he pointed far down and across the purple plain. "Nophaie is riding to meet us," he said. "Show me how good eyes you have."

Eagerly Marian strained her gaze in the direction he was pointing, but she could not see anything that resembled a horse and rider. "Oh, I can't see him," she cried.

"Farther to the left. There, in line with that clay-colored bluff under the mountain. Keep your eye close down along the sage—two moving dots, one white, one black."

"Yes! Yes! I see those dots. But how tiny! Can they be horses?"

"Shore they can. Nophaie is riding the black and driving the white. I'll bet there's a present for you. Nophaie has one fine mustang, I've been told. But he never rode it into the post."

"For me! You think so? That would be wonderful. Oh, will I be able to ride it?"

"Some of these Pahute ponies are well broken and gentle. I don't think Nophaie would give you anything else."

MARIAN had use for her eyes from that moment on. She rode with gaze searching for the moving dots. Sometimes she lost them and had difficulty in finding them again. But gradually they grew larger and larger until they assumed the forms of horses, loping gracefully across the sage, lending wild and beautiful life to that lonely desert. The time came when she clearly saw Nophaie, and after that when she recognized him. Then she made the astonishing discovery that the white mustang had a long black mane and tail, flying in the breeze.

At closer view Marian was sure she had never seen any horse so beautiful. At sight of the Indians and the mules he halted, standing on a ridge, head up, mane flying. Then Nophaie caught up with him and drove him down into the trail, where he swerved to go round the mules. He pranced and tossed his head and whistled. His hoofs rang like bells on the stones. Marian now saw that he was almost pure white, of medium build and well set up, with black mane and tail reaching almost to the ground. These alone would have made any horse beautiful. It appeared presently that his wildness was only a spirit of youth and temper, for he evinced an inclination to trot along with the other horses. Nophaie's mount, however, was a really wild creature, a black shaggy stallion, powerfully built, but ungainly, that had a halter round his nose as well as a bridle.

NOPHAIE'S greeting to Marian was in his Indian language, the meaning of which was unmistakable. His smile and handclasp would have been enough to make her happy. Then, indicating the white mustang, he said: "I've brought you one of my ponies. He's Pahute, and the gentlest and best-gaited horse I've seen out here."

"Oh, thank you, Nophaie. How beautiful he is! You are very kind indeed. Gentlest, did you say? He looks as if he'd jump right over the moon."

"He wants to run, and he's lively, but you can ride him," replied Nophaie. "Would you like to try him now?"

"I'd love to, but, Nophaie, I—well, it's just all I can do to stay on this horse at the

present moment. Perhaps tomorrow I will feel up to it. How far to your camp, Nophaie?"

"I never think of distance as miles. Riding at this gait we'll get there at noon. Suppose we lope ahead. That will rest you."

"Lope! Withers says 'just hang on,' and now you say 'lope.' Very well. I consign my poor, aching bones to your machinations."

ATOUCH and a word from her were all Buckskin needed. Indeed he seemed to be both surprised and pleased. He broke into a long lope that Marian found to her amaze a most agreeable change of gait and altogether delightful motion. It changed everything—her sensations, the scenery, the colors and smells, the feel of the wind. Nophaie loped beside her, outside of the trail, through the sage. How sweet to Marian the cool fragrance blowing hard in her face! Her blood began to race, her nerves to tingle.

That ride intoxicated Marian. When at the end of three or four miles Nophaie called for her to pull Buckskin to a walk she found herself breathless, utterly reckless, and full of wild longings to race on and on, to capture this new exquisite joy just liberated, to range the desert and forget the world.

"Oh, splendid!" she cried. "I—never knew—what a ride—could be. You must race with me."

"Wait till you get on your white pony tomorrow. He will run like the wind."

They slowed to a walk and rode side by side. Marian awoke to the realization of a stinging happiness. Could it last? What was the cause? Herself, Nophaie, their love?—these did not account wholly for that new significance of life. Then she remembered what Withers had said: That places had more to do with happiness than people. What did he mean by that? She told Nophaie this remark of the trader's and asked for an explanation.

Nophaie did not reply for some moments. "People are false. Human nature is imperfect. Places are true. Nature itself is evolution, an inexorable working for perfection."

HIS reply made Marian thoughtful. How strange, coming from an Indian! For a moment she had forgotten that Nophaie had been almost as famous for his scholarship in college as for his athletic prowess. She must learn from him and in that learning per-

haps realize the strange combination of his Indian nature developed by the white man's intellect. Could any such training be other than tragic? Marian divined what she had not knowledge to explain.

They rode on across the undulating sea of purple, for a while at a walk, talking, and then breaking again into a lope, and from that to slower progress once more.

For Marian time ceased to exist. The baa-baa of sheep suddenly pierced the quiet air.

"My flock," replied Nophaie, answering Marian's quick look.

"Where?" she asked eagerly.

"In the cedars there. Benow di Cleash, here is the home of Nophaie."

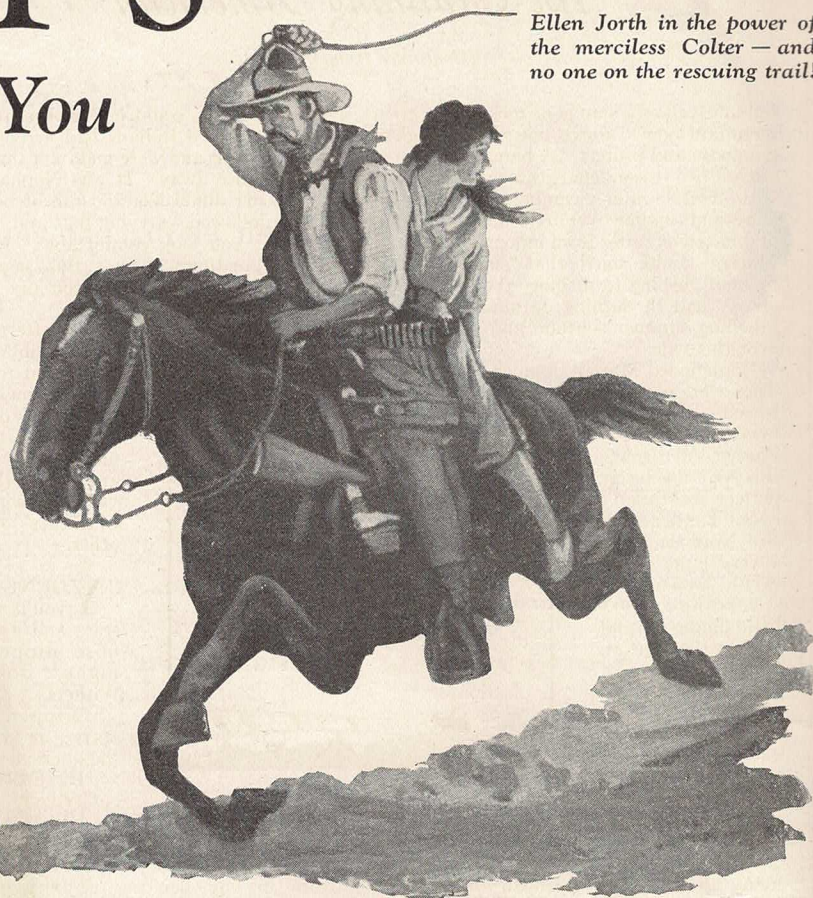
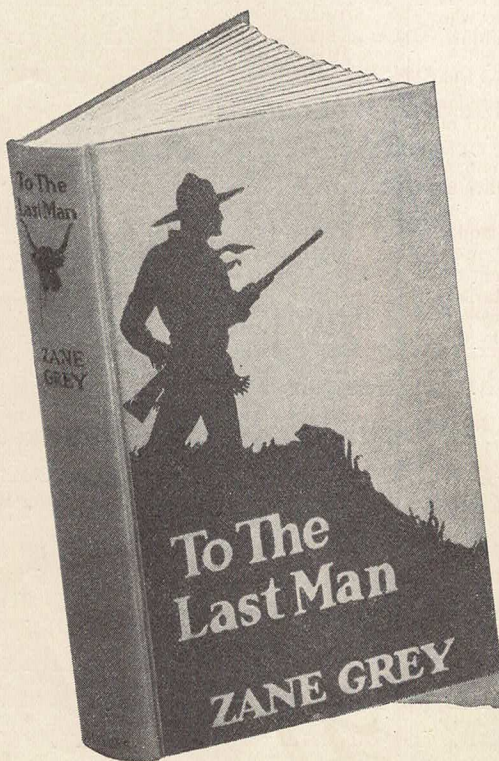
Marian's keen eyes swept the half circle of country indicated by Nophaie's slow, impressive gesture. She saw that they had ridden down miles and miles of gentle slope, which ended in a vale marked by richer luxuriance and purple of the sage, by clumps of beautiful cedar trees, and by isolated

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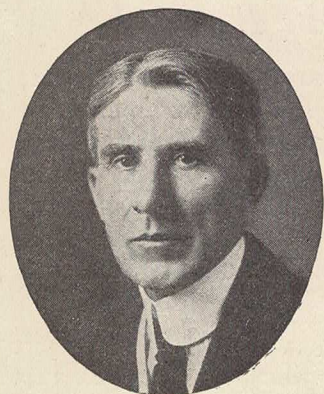
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The Vanishing American

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red-and-yellow mounds of rock. The great mountain loomed above, now close enough to dominate and protect. A bare, rock-floored stream-bed meandered through the vale, with crystal water gleaming on smooth inclines and tinkling over little falls. A column of blue smoke rose from among the cedars. Marian could smell that smoke, and it brought rushing to memory the delight she always had in burning autumn leaves. A brooding summer solitude and peace hung over this vale.

Nophaie led Marian in among the cedars. They were not numerous enough to make a forest, yet they furnished all that was needful to make this spot absolutely perfect in Marian's eyes. For her camp site Nophaie chose a very large cedar, with branches spreading over a little sliding fall and pool in the stream. The rock floor of the stream appeared to be solid as granite and as smooth as glass. The ground under the cedar was soft and brown and fragrant. Indian Paintbrush, with its vermilion hue, vied with white and purple primroses.

"Here I have thought of you many and many an hour, and dreamed, and tried to pray," said Nophaie. "We will put your tent here, and your bed here, for you must sleep in the open, unless it rains. Come now, rest a while; then you can meet Maahesenie, my relative. You will see my hogan and my sheep."

NOPHAIE helped her out of the saddle, a service she welcomed, for she was very near exhaustion again; and he arranged a comfortable seat for her in the shade of the old cedar with the beautiful pool of amber water at her feet.

"Cold snow water from Nothis Ahn, my Mountain of Light," he said.

"Nophaie, fill my canteen," she replied. "Oh, how thirsty I am!"

When she had drunk deep of that pure water, so cold it had to be taken slowly, she understood another meaning of the desert.

Nophaie unsaddled the horses and turned them loose. A shaggy gray animal came bounding to him. Marian thought it a wolf, but it was a dog.

"Here's Taddy, my shepherd; and he looks like the Taddy of my boyhood. Taddy, go to Benow di Cleash."

Marian held out her hand and called "Taddy." He advanced slowly, obediently, and without fear or distrust. But in the pale, strange eyes shone a watchful inquisitive light. This dog was like the soft-footed canines Marian had feared at the post. But he permitted her hand to pat his fine head. Marian had been used to dogs of every description, but they were as unlike Taddy as if he really were a wolf. He was as curious about Marian as she was about him, and vastly less inclined to friendliness.

Nophaie came to look down upon Marian, with something soft and glad in his dark eyes.

"Benow di Cleash, to see you here, to have you come for my sake!" he exclaimed, with emotion he had not shown before.

"Nophaie, it is as good for me as for you," replied Marian.

"That could not be," he replied, with a grave smile. "Your soul is not in danger." "Nophaie!" she exclaimed.

BUT he offered no word in explanation of his strange speech and, bidding her rest, he strode away with the dog beside him. Marian was left alone. The shade was cool. A drowsy buzz of bees or other insects mingled with the murmuring and dreamy low song of the stream. They seemed to lull her thoughts and burden her eyelids. She fell asleep.

Upon awakening it seemed to her a long time had elapsed, for she felt wonderfully

rested. But she could not have slept long. Withers and the Indians had arrived with the pack outfit and were making camp some little distance away. It was Nophaie who brought her duffel bag and roll of bedding. Withers followed, carrying tent and ax.

"Shore, you look comfortable," was the trader's greeting. "Isn't this sage-cedar country great? I've never seen any part of the desert to equal this."

"A land where it is always afternoon," interposed Nophaie with his eyes on Marian. "Quote all the poetry you want to," she said. "I refuse to be surprised by you again."

The two men erected the tent on one side of Marian, and spread the canvas roll with the blankets on the other.

"YOUNG lady, you'll see the stars and get your nose nipped to-night," observed Withers.

"Nipped? By stars—or what?" she queried.

"By frost," he returned. Then

seriously he continued: "I love this purple sage upland. I've come here often, though not by the Pahute trail. You wouldn't dream this fine open country jumps off over here, down into the most terrible broken desert—rocks, cañons that're impassable."

"Yes, I would. I saw where," replied Marian.

"Well, I'm going to ride over here some ten miles south, round the corner of the mountain where an old Pahute lives," continued Withers. "I buy a good deal from him, and he buys from me. He's rich and an old scoundrel. He salts his wool. Now only few Indians do that."

"Salts his wool? What does that mean?"

"He spreads his wool out in the sun and covers it with salt. The salt draws moisture from the air and melts into the wool, making it almost twice as heavy."

"Withers, I've persuaded Etenia not to do that any more," spoke up Nophaie.

"You have! Well, by golly, I'm shore glad, as much for Etenia's sake as mine. I like him. He's an industrious, intelligent Indian. The blankets of his women are the best we buy. Nophaie, he's wealthy. I should think he would go shares with you in some sheep deal."

"Yes, he would," replied Nophaie, "but he wanted me to marry his daughter, and when I refused he grew very angry—said I had Indian body and white man mind."

"Humph! That's pretty serious," returned Withers soberly, and shouldering his ax he turned toward his camp.

"Is it serious, Nophaie?" asked Marian.

"I'm afraid so—for me."

"Why? Because you can't—can't marry or become what this Indian thinks?"

"BOTH. You see my position is hard. My people are proud that I have renounced the white man. But they expect me to fall at once into their ways. I tried. I have failed in many things."

Thought-provoking indeed were these words to Marian; and she began to get a glimpse of the problem before her.

"I'm rested now," she said, rising. "Take me to see your hogan and Maah—whatever you called him."

Beyond the stream a hundred or more yards, in an open space of higher ground, stood a large beehive-shaped mound of red earth with a column of blue smoke rising from the center of its round roof. At nearer view Marian saw that the earth had been plastered thickly over a framework of wood. The open door faced the east.

Nophaie spoke to her in his Indian tongue, something she sensed to be ceremonious and indicative of the sacredness of his act in bidding her enter. She stooped to go in.

(Continued on Page 198)



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(Continued from Page 197)

A smoldering fire occupied the center of this habitation called a hogan, and the smoke from it seemed to float round and round, to drift at last up through the hole in the roof. This roof was a marvel of ingenuity and skill, being constructed of heavy trunks of cedars planted in the ground, and affording support for the many thick branches that formed a concave network to hold the covering of red earth. How substantial and strong this Indian edifice! Something about it impressed Marian with a significance of its long adoption by the tribe.

A few iron and stone utensils lay scattered beside the fire. A haunch of meat hung from one of the posts, and beside it on the ground lay a sack of flour, with some boxes and tins that evidently contained food supplies. There were two beds in the hogan, one on either side of the fire, close to the wall.

"Which bed is yours?" asked Marian, unable to restrain her curiosity.

"Here," said Nophaie.

HIS action designated an Indian blanket and a sheepskin with woolly side up—permost. Obviously the former was Nophaie's coverlet, and the latter was his mattress. Marian thought of the hard bed of the Spartans. So Nophaie slept there! She forced her gaze to search farther, to the end that she saw an old coat, a leather pouch studded with silver buttons, and a worn hunting knife. This then was Nophaie's home.

Marian slept again for a couple of hours and awoke to feel somewhat eased of pangs and weariness. The afternoon was far spent, waning in a solemn glory of light and peace. Marian listened to the hum of bees and the murmur of water. Gentle stream and colorful sage! The cruelty of nature and life did not seem to abide in them, yet a few moments of sharp-eyed scrutiny made known to her tiny denizens of both, seeking to destroy.

Mystery of mysteries, that living creatures must prey upon other living creatures! And if species preyed upon species, why not man upon man?

"I declare," murmured Marian, suddenly aghast at her thoughts, "this desert is giving me the queerest ideas."

Withers called her to an early supper. Nophaie sat with her and the other Indians sat opposite. All of them did justice to the extraordinary meal served by the trader. "Well," he said, "my plan is to eat all the grub quick at the beginning of a hard trip. That builds up strength to finish."

After supper Nophaie walked with Marian, singularly thoughtful and sad. Suddenly he pointed to a distant cone-shaped mound of stone that appeared to have a monument on its summit.

"I want you to climb there with me to-night or tomorrow," he said.

"Take me now," she replied. "But why there, particularly?"

"I want you to see my Marching Rocks from there—and my Mountain of Light."

"Nophaie, you want me to climb there just because they are beautiful?" she queried, keen to divine his unexpressed thought.

"No. But because seen from that height they give me strength."

"Strength?" she echoed. "For what do you need strength now?"

HE SEEMED to shrink with a strange, faint, vibrant convulsion, not natural to him. "To tell you my trouble!"

Nophaie's somber gaze and the pathos and solemnity of his voice further augmented Marian's fears, and prepared her for catastrophe. His trouble must become hers. How singular his desire for her to climb to this particular height so that he could unburden himself! Their silent walk through the sage and slow climb up a hill of smooth bare stone gave Marian time to fortify herself

against disaster of her hopes. She also anticipated some extraordinary spectacle from the summit of this hill.

The slope was steep and the ascent difficult. Looked at from their camp it had not appeared so high as it actually was. They climbed from the eastern side, walking in long, zigzag slants and resting often. Near the summit there was a depression, the upper side of which terminated in the point of stone that supported the monument. This pyramid of rocks stood eight or ten feet high and, crude as it was, it had some semblance of dignity. It meant something more than a landmark to passing Indians.

"Who built it?" asked Marian.

"Men of my tribe," replied Nophaie.

"What does it mean?"

"It signifies a place for prayer. Indians climb here to pray. Never unless they have something to pray for."

"Does each Indian make his own prayer?"

"No. THERE are many prayers, but they are those used by our forefathers."

"Have you prayed here?" asked Marian, speaking low.

"Many times," replied Nophaie.

"Are you going to pray—now?"

"Yes, to my Marching Rocks and to my Mountain of Light and to the Blue Wind."

"Will you let me hear your prayers?"

"Indeed, I want you to."

With that Nophaie again took Marian by the hand and led her

up the remaining few steps to the summit of this stone hill which had obstructed the view. "Look, Benow di Cleash," he said.

Marian did as she was bidden, suddenly to become silent and thrilled, motionless as the monument upon which she rested a reverent hand. As she gazed Nophaie began his prayer:

*Marching beautiful Rocks,
Part red and part white,
With light falling on you from the sky,
The wonderful light!
I give you this;
This a prayer for you.
On this day make my foot well,
Make my leg well,
Make my body well,
Make my face well,
Make my soul well.
On this day let me rise from my bed,
Let me walk straight,
Let me not have fever,
Let it be well before me,
Let all that I see be well,
Let me believe now all is well.*

Marian listened as she gazed and felt that forever on her memory would be limned the splendor and the strange phenomenon of the apparent life of this weird land of Marching Rocks.

BELOW her a cedared plateau, gray with grass and sage, led eastward toward bare mounds of rock, isolated and strangely set, with semblance to great prehistoric beasts. Scattered and striking they led on over the wide green plain, round and bare and huge, all seeming to move forward, to march on, to be impelled, to be endowed with mighty and majestic life. Marching Rocks! Van of the army of naked earth, vast riven mass of rock, rising and spreading from north to south, marching down from afar, driven by the dim slopes and immense heave of mountains!

"Benow di Cleash, the sculptor who carved those Marching Rocks is the wind," said Nophaie. "Listen to our prayer":

*Blue Wind, beautiful chieftess,
Send out a rainbow by which let me walk.
Blue clouds, blue clouds,
With your shoes let me walk,*

(Continued on Page 199)

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See page 192

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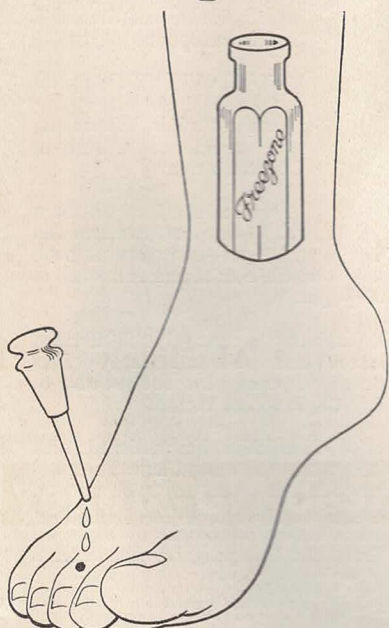


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The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 198)

Blue clouds, with your leggings let me walk,
Blue clouds, with your shirt let me walk,
Blue clouds, with your hat let me walk,
Blue clouds, make it dark behind me,
Blue Wind, make it light before me,
Earth Woman, let it rain much for me,
By which let the green corn ripen.
Make all peaceful with me.

Then Nophaie bade Marian sit down and lean against him beside the monument.

"We will watch the sun set over the desert," he added. "Sunset—the fulfillment, the glory, the end of the Indian's day! White people do not rise to see the breaking of the morning light, and they do not care to watch the declining sun. But for Indians these hours are rituals."

To the west, where Nophaie directed Marian's rapt gaze, the scale grew grand, a supreme manifestation of Nature's sculpturing. The purple shadows now began to define the cañons and lift the wavy knolls of red rock.

From out that thick sunset haze of the direct west swept majestic escarpments, level and dark, to overshadow the world of carved and graven marching rocks. Farther around, beyond the blazing center of the west, began the black jagged uplift of Nophaie's Mountain of Light.

THE shadows lengthened and widened and deepened. Marian's sense of color and proportion grew magnified or dwarfed, she could not tell which. The air grew chill. Farthest away across the river rock a grayness blotted out the horizon. The splendid landmarks seemed to be receding, retreating with the sunset.

The day was nearly done. How rosy the tips of the stone hills! Then the radiant disk of white fire vanished. A golden glow on cloud and sky marked the place where the sun had gone down.

Marian turned to Nophaie and said: "I have seen. I feel all you feel. Now tell me about your trouble."

Nophaie rose, lifting her with him, and towered over her, his face as she had never beheld it. Mystery and grief, age and strength came out in the bronzed lineaments, and his eyes were terrible. Marian imagined she saw the soul of the Indian.

"I am an infidel!" he said hoarsely.

The shock of intense surprise sustained by Marian precluded utterance.

"I did not know this when I came back to the reservation," Nophaie went on as if passion-driven. "I tried to return to the religion of my people. I prayed, trying to believe. But I cannot. I am an infidel! I cannot believe in the Indian's God; I will not believe in the white man's God."

"Oh, Nophaie!" gasped Marian, suddenly released from stunning surprise to consternation and horror. "Your faith will come back."

"NEVER. My white teaching killed it. The Indian's religion is best for him. The white preacher kills the Indian's simple faith in his own God, makes him an infidel, then tries to make him over. It cannot be done. There is not one real Christian Indian on the reservation."

"Why, that is terrible," replied Marian. "But you, Nophaie—I am distressed. Oh, do you mean you have no belief in a future life?"

"An infidel has no faith."

"But yours will come back. It must. I will help you. No one realizes more than I the necessity of faith in God and immortality. What good could life be without them? Nophaie, we must strive and pray for yours."

"Marian, cannot you understand?" asked Nophaie in pathetic earnestness. "The knowledge forced upon me by white people, my developed intelligence makes it impossible for me to believe in the Indian's religion."

"Impossible!" echoed Marian.

A silent and impressive spreading of his hands, a gesture of impotence and helplessness, fixed in Marian's mind the immutability of Nophaie's spiritual catastrophe. The certainty of it pierced her heart. But how to help him?

"Let us go down before night falls," said Nophaie, taking her hand.

WITH careful little steps Marian essayed the descent of the stone hill, which in the gathering darkness was difficult. An infinite melancholy pervaded the gray, silent desert. A camp fire blazed out of the shadow of the cedars. And by the time they had reached a level, twilight had unfolded the sage.

"Nophaie, listen to my plan for work among your people," said Marian, and forthwith she briefly told him the result of her interviews with Mrs. Withers. Nophaie not only expressed approval but also gratitude, and was particularly desirous of having her find a place at Mesa in the school.

"You can do so much good," he said. "The young Indian girls will love you. And as soon as you can speak their language, you will influence them against evil. They are primitive children. There's one Indian girl you must look after. She is Gekin Yashi, the Little Beauty. She is fourteen years old and large for her age. I know her father, Do Etin, the Gentleman. He is a fine old Indian. Morgan, who is in control at Mesa, is too much interested in Gekin Yashi. Her father told me, and then I got her to tell me."

"Nophaie, you don't mean to tell me—to expect me to believe these men—some of them even —" Marian broke off in heat and shame, unable to complete her query.

"Yes, I do mean it," he replied with fierce passion. "It calls for the spilling of blood."

"Nophaie," burst out Marian, "I am beginning to understand you."

"That is good. Now tell me; you will stay here a little? So we can ride and climb and talk?"

"YES, I'll stay two days. Withers cannot spare more. Ride? I'll race you through the sage. Then I'll go back to Kaidab, then to Mesa, where I'll begin my work—for you, Nophaie. You will come to Mesa?"

"Yes, I'll ride there every week. But we must meet in secret, somewhere out in the desert, to protect you. The agent Blucher has only seen me twice, but he took instant dislike to me as soon as he learned I was an educated Indian. He is bad medicine, Marian. Blucher and Morgan run the reservation and the school, not for Government or Indians, but for themselves. You will soon see through them."

"Then you'll come every week," rejoined Marian gladly. "Oh, that will be fine. And you think I must meet you secretly? I am not ashamed, Nophaie. I am proud of—of my friendship with you."

"Blucher and Morgan must not know you meet me," declared Nophaie. "You could not stay there after they found out. You'll soon understand why. I'll ride to Kaidab in ten days and find out from Mrs. Withers what you've done at Mesa. Then I'll write you and tell you when I'll come."

"And how and where to meet you? I'll have my white pony, you know. I can ride out on the desert."

"Yes," he said simply.

(Continued in the January Home Journal)

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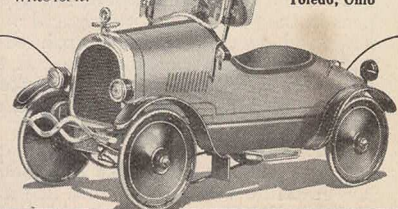
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