

T H E L A D I E S ' H O M E J O U R N A L

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Childhood

*Painted for
The Ladies' Home Journal
By Harold Copping*

*Beginning—*THE VANISHING AMERICAN
By Zane Grey

NOVEMBER 1922

THE CURTIS PUBLISHING COMPANY PHILADELPHIA

15 CENTS By subscription \$1.50
in the United States and in Canada

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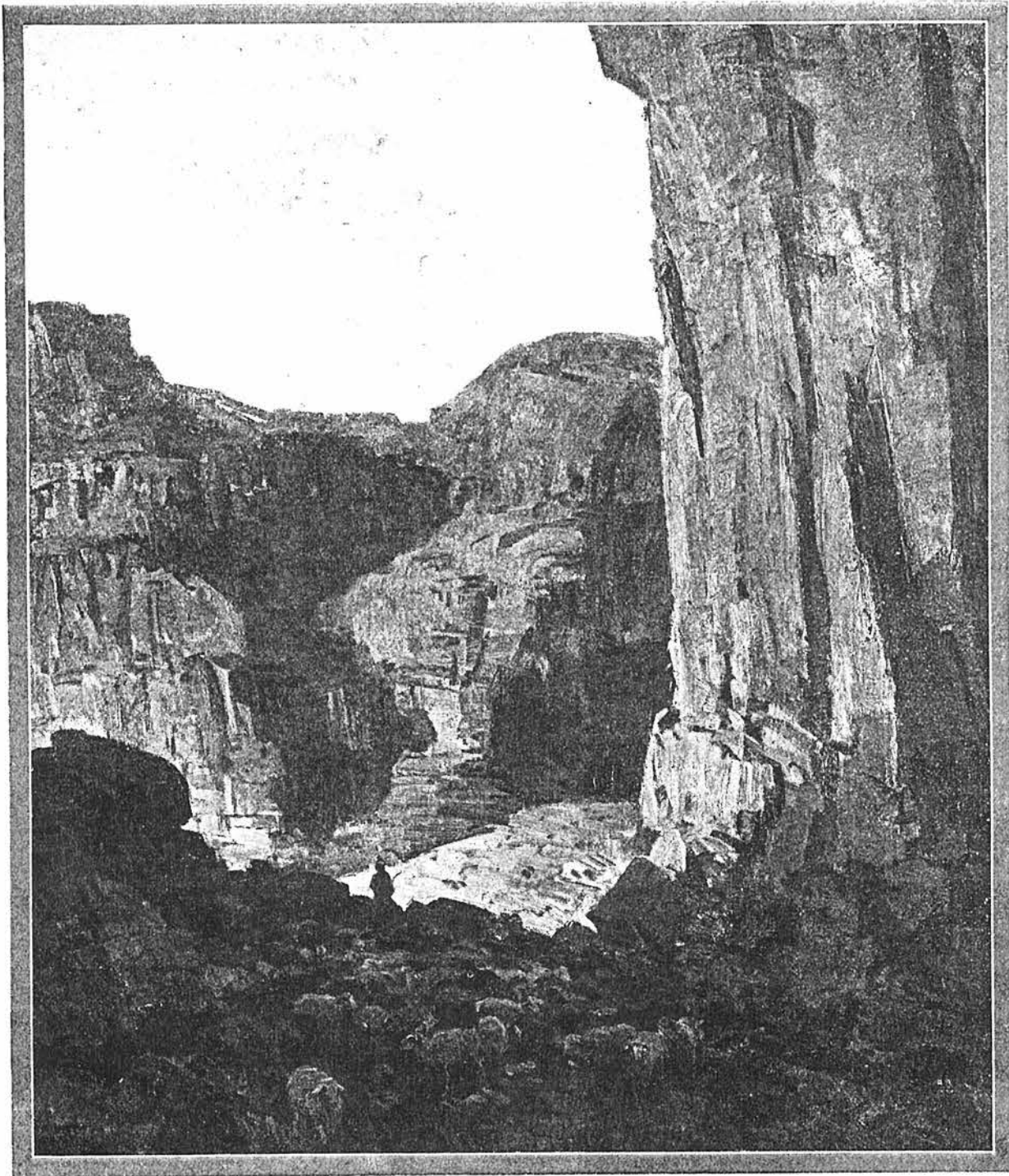
AT SUNRISE Nophaie drove his flock of sheep and goats out upon the sage slopes of the desert. The April air was cold and keen, fragrant with the dry tang of the uplands. Taddy and Tinny, his shepherd dogs, had wary eye and warning bark for the careless stragglers of the flock. Gray, gaunt forms of wolves and tawny shapes of wildcats moved like shadows through the sage.

Nophaie faced the east where, over a great rugged wall of stone, the sky grew from rose to gold, and a splendor of light seemed about to break upon the world. Nophaie's instinct was to stand a moment, watching and waiting without thought. The door of each hogan—or hut—of his people opened to the rising sun. They worshiped the sun, the elements, all in nature.

Motionless he stood, an Indian lad of seven years, slim and tall, with his dark face turned to the east, his dark eyes fixed solemnly upon that quarter whence the light and warmth always came. One thin brown hand held a blanket round his shoulders and the other clasped his bow and arrows.

WHILE he gazed a wondrous change came over the desert. The upstanding gloomy wall of rock far to the fore suddenly burned with a line of flame; and from that height down upon the gray lowlands shone the light of the risen sun. For Nophaie sunrise was a beginning, a fulfillment of promise, an answer to prayer.

When that blazing circle of liquid gold had cleared the rampart of the desert, too fiery and intense for the gaze of man, Nophaie looked no more, and passed on down the aisles of sage behind his flock. Every day this task was his. For two years he had been the trusted shepherd of his father's sheep. At five years of age Nophaie had won his first distinction. With other children he was out in charge of the accumulated flocks of the tribe. A sandstorm suddenly swooped down upon the desert, enveloping them in a thick, yellow pall. Except Nophaie, all the little shepherds grew frightened and fled back to find their hogans. But Nophaie stayed with the sheep. They could not be driven in the face of the storm. They wandered on and on, and became lost. Nophaie became lost with them. Three days later Nophaie's father found him, hungry



NOPHAIE WANDERED ON WITH HIS SHEEP, UNDER THE LOFTY TOWERS OF ROCK. HE HAD NO CARES, NO NEEDS, NO SELFISHNESS

He seemed a part of that red and purple desert land. It was home. He had been born under the shadow of the wonderful mountain wall which zigzagged from east to west across the wasteland. The niches were cañons. Its broken segments were pinnacles and monuments, shafts of red stone lifted to the skies, bold, stark and mighty, chiseled by wind and sand and frost. Between these walls and monuments spread the sandy floor of the desert, always gray-spotted with sage, always gray green with patches of grass and weed, purple in the distance.

THAT spring the lambs had come early—too early, considering the frosty breath of the dawns. A few had succumbed to the cold. Many a pink-and-white little lamb had been tenderly folded in Nophaie's blanket, and warmed, and cared for until the heat of the sun made safe its return to its mother. The lambs and kids were all several days old now, fleecy and woolly, grown sturdy enough to gambol in the sage. A few were solid black, and many were all white, and some had beautiful markings, spots of black on white, and four black feet, and two black ears. One was pure white with a black face; another was all black except for a white tail. The dead stillness of the desert dawn was often pierced by the sweet, high-pitched bleat of these lambs and kids. Nophaie wandered on with them, finding a stone seat from time to time, always watching, listening, feeling. He loved the flock, but did not know that. His task was lonely, but he did

not realize it. The flock leisurely traveled on, a white-dotted moving mass against the background of gray, tearing at the sage, nipping the weeds. Taddy and Tinny trotted to and fro and around, important and morose, Indian dogs that knew their work; and they seldom had to bark a warning. Nophaie leisurely plodded along behind, intent and absorbed. An eagle pitched from his lofty perch on one of the red towers and shot like a thunderbolt down and over the flock, until he saw the Indian boy on guard, and then he swooped up and up, wide-winged and free, to soar away across the skies, a dark bowed shape against the blue. A coyote wailed his desolate note of hunger. From the cliff a cañon swift trilled his strange wild song.

The Vanishing American

By ZANE GREY

Illustrations by Pruett Carter

and fearful, but true to his charge. He was praised. He was taught. He was trusted. Legend and lore seldom told to so young a boy were his to ponder and dream over.

Nophaie's shepherding task was lonely and leisurely. He had but to drive the flock from grassy flat to sage slope, slowly on and on, and back again by sunset to the home corral, always alert for the prowling beasts of prey.

The sun rose higher. The golden belt of sunlight along the tops of walls and mesas and monuments widened downward, encroaching upon the shadow and shade. Dawn with its icy edge paled and melted before the warming day. And the desert changed again. Shadow and color and freshness seemed swallowed by an intense and all-absorbing light.

Nophaie was no different from other Indian lads, except that the dominant traits of his tribe and his race seemed to be intensified in him. His was the heritage of a chieftain. His mother had died at his birth, whispering strange and mystic prophecies. The old medicine men, the sages of the tribe, had gathered round him during the one illness of his infancy, and had spread their sand paintings on a flat rock, and had marveled at his quick recovery, predicting for him unknown and great feats. He was named Nophaie, the Warrior.

THROUGH song and story and dance the traditions of his tribe were forever impressed upon his sensitive mind. The valor of Indian braves in war was a memory of the past, but the spirit lived. The boy was taught to understand the nature of a warrior, and to revere his father, and the long line of chiefs from which he had descended. Before Nophaie could walk he had begun to learn the secrets of the life of the open. Birds, lizards, snakes, horned toads, scorpions, pack rats and kangaroo rats, prairie dogs and rabbits—these, and all the little wild creatures of the desert, were brought to him to tame, to play with, to study and learn to love. Thus the brilliant and intense colors of desert life were early stamped upon his brain.

The love of natural beauty, born in him, had early opportunity for evolution. The habits and ways of all desert creatures became a part of his childhood training.

Next in order Nophaie learned the need and thrill and love of the hunt. By his own prowess as a hunter he must some day survive. The tracks and signs and sounds and smells of all denizens of his desert environment became as familiar to him as those of his hogan.

Nophaie wandered on with his sheep, over the sage and sand, under the silent lofty towers of rock. He had no cares, no needs, no selfishness. Only vaguely had he heard of the menace of the white race encroaching upon the lands of the Indian. Only a few white men had he ever seen.

The soft, sweet air he breathed was rich with the whispers of spirits. Above the red wall to the west loomed up a black and white dome—a mountain height, pure with snow, fringed by pine—and this was Nothis Ahn, the home of Utsay, the God of the Indians. He dwelt there with Utsay Asthon, his woman, and together they had made the sun out of fire; they had made all. Utsay was the Great Spirit, and sometimes he communed with the medicine men through their sand paintings. Nophaie that morning, as he turned from the sunrise to the looming mountain, had breathed a prayer to his Great Spirit.

*"High chief of the mountain, the beautiful mountain,
To me tell your secrets that it may be well before me as I go;
Behind me tell me it may be well;
Beneath me tell me it may be well;
Above me tell me it may be well;
Tell me, let all that I see be well;
Tell me that the Everlasting will be merciful toward me;
Like the Chief of the Good, tell me that it is well with me,
That the God of the medicine will let me talk well; tell me—
Now all is well,
now all is
well,
Now all is well,
now all is
well."*

AND Nophaie believed all was well with him, that his prayer had been answered. The rustling of the sage was a voice; the cool touch of the breeze on his cheek was a kiss of an invisible and kindly spirit, watching over him; the rock he leaned a hand upon left a clinging response, from the soul therein. The all-enveloping sunlight was the smile of Utsay, satisfied with his people. Nophaie stepped aside to avoid crushing the desert primroses, thriving in the shade of the sage. Through those wide white blossoms looked the eyes of departed relatives who watched him from the Happy Hunting Grounds below.

So Nophaie wandered on and on over the sage trails, proud and fierce as a young eagle, aloof and strange, dreaming the dreams conjured up by the wise men of his tribe. At seven years of age he had begun to realize the meaning of a chief, and that a chief must some day save his people. What he loved most was to be alone, out in the desert, listening to the real sounds of the open and to the silent whisperings of his soul. In the shadow of the hogans, among the boys and girls there, he was only Nophaie. They were jealous. They resented his importance. But out on the desert, in the cold rosy dawns and the solemn hot noontides and the golden sunsets, when the twilight stole down softly and white stars smiled at him from the velvet blue—then Nophaie could be himself. He did not walk alone. Innumerable spirits kept pace with his light steps. The gleams of melted frost, sparkling and pure, were the teardrops of his mother, who forever hovered near him, wandered with him along the sage trails, in spirit with his steps. The sun, the moon, the crag with its human face, the black raven croaking his dismal note, the basking rattlesnake, the spider that shut his little door above him, the mocking bird, singer of all songs—these held communion with him, were his messengers.

Towards sunset Nophaie was far out on the open desert, with many of the monuments and mesas and masses of rim-rock between him and the golden-purple glory of the west. Homeward bound with his flock Nophaie had intent eyes for the colorful panorama of sinking sun and transfigured clouds. Against the effulgence of the western sky stood up the monuments, silhouetted on that burnished brightness of sunset, black and clear-cut, weird and colossal, motionless and speaking gods of stone.

A WARNING bark from one of the shepherd dogs drew Nophaie's attention from the sunset. A band of white men had ridden down upon him. Several of them galloped ahead, and came round between the Indian lad and his home. The others rode up. They had extra horses, wild and dusty and caked with froth, and pack mules heavily loaded. Both men and beasts were jaded.

Nophaie had seen but few white men. None had ever tendered violence. But here he instinctively recognized danger.

"We gotta hev meat," one dark-visaged man called out.

"Wal, we'd better find the squaw who owns this bunch an' buy our meat," suggested another.

"Moze, you know it all," growled another. "Whysquaw?"

"Because squaws always own the sheep," replied the other.

These men of the desert were tired and hungry, perhaps not honestly so, judging from the extra saddle horses they were driving. More than one furtive glance roved across the sage to the east. Sullen heat and impatience manifested their signs in the red faces.

"We hev'n't time fer thet," spoke up the dark-faced one.

"Wal, we don't want Indians trailin' us. I say take time an' buy meat."

"Aw! You'll say next lets eat hoss meat," returned the man called Moze. "Knock the kid on the head, grab some sheep, and ride on. Thet's me!"

Moze's idea seemed to find favor with some of the band. The dominating spirit was to hurry on.

Nophaie could not understand their language, but he sensed peril to himself. Suddenly he darted out between the horses, and swift as a deer flashed away through the sage.

"Ketch that kid, somebody," called out the voice of authority.

One of the riders touched spurs to his horse and, running Nophaie down, reached a strong hand to haul him across in front of the saddle. Nophaie hung there limp.

"Bill," called the leader, "thar ain't no sense in hurtin' the kid; now you-all wait."

This man was tall, gaunt, gray-haired and lean, with the eyes of a hawk. He scanned the sage flats clear to the pillars of stone. Neither Indian nor hogan was in sight. Presently he spoke: "Bill, hang on to the kid. An' some of you drive the sheep ahead of us. Thar's water over hyar somewheres. We'll find it an' make camp."

"Huh!" ejaculated the man Bill in disgust. "Talkin' about sense, what's the idee, cap, packin' this heavy kid along?"

"Wal, it ain't decent to kill him, jest fer nothin', an' it is sense to keep him from gettin' back home tonight."

"All right, you're the boss. But I'll eat sage if them Indians don't track us, jest the same."

"Bill, you're a bright feller," retorted the other. "Mebbe this kid's family will find our tracks by tomorrow, but I'm gamblin' they won't."

NOPHAIE hung limp over that horse for several miles before he was tumbled off like an empty sack. The band had come to a halt for the night. Nophaie's hands and feet were bound with a lasso. He heard the bleating of the sheep, and then the trampling, low roar of their hoofs as they were driven off into the desert. One of the men gave him food and drink; another covered him with a blanket. Nophaie's fear eased, but there was birth of a dark heritage of hate in his heart. He did not sleep.

At daylight the band was off, riding hard to the southward, and Nophaie had no choice but to go with them. Towards nightfall of that long day the spirits of the men appeared to rise. They ceased to look back over the rolling ridges of purple sage, or down the leagues of cedar aisles. They avoided the Indian hogans and sheered off well-trodden trails.

Next day some of the band were in favor of letting Nophaie go free. But again the leader ruled against them. "Reckon it's tolerable lonely along hyar. We don't want the kid to be lost an' starve."

About noontime one day later they let Nophaie go free, and pointed down a road towards an Indian encampment. Then in a cloud of dust they trotted on. Roughly, but kindly, they had used him, unconscious of their hand in his destiny. But Nophaie never reached the Indian hogans. Another party of white people, of different look and voice, happened upon him. They were travelers of leisure, seeing the West, riding across the reservation. They had wagons, and saddle horses, and Western men to care for them. Again Nophaie ran, only to be caught by one of the riders and hauled before the women of the party.

"What a handsome Indian lad!" exclaimed one.

"Let us take him along," said another.

An older woman of the group, with something more than curiosity in her face, studied Nophaie for a moment. She too was kind. She imagined she was about to do a noble thing.

"Indian boy, I will take you and put you in a school."

There was no delay. They took Nophaie with them by force. They took him out of the desert and far to the east.

And Nophaie lived and studied in the white man's school and college for eighteen years.

II

AS THE train neared the western town which was her destination Marian Warner realized that this ride was not a dream, but the first act of the freedom she had yearned for, the first step in her one great adventure. All the excitement and audacity and emotion that had been her undoing now seemed to swell into a thrilling panic.

Long days of travel had passed since she had boarded the train at Philadelphia. The faces of friends, of her aunt—the few who loved her—had grown dim, as if every revolution of the wheels had deadened memory as well as

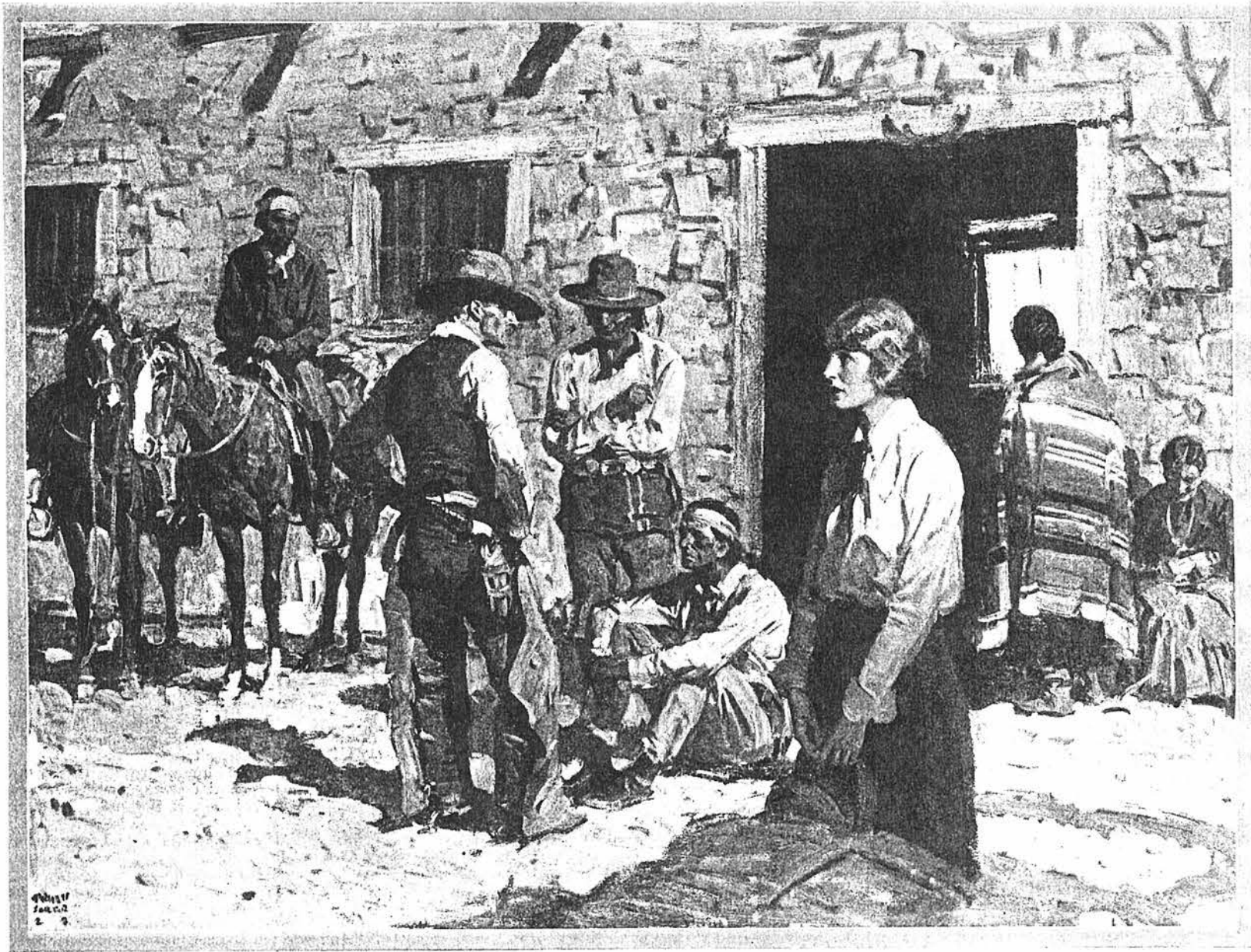


MARIAN BRIEFLY TOLD MRS. WITHERS OF HER ROMANCE WITH NOPHAIE

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SHE MANAGED TO WALK AMONG THEM WITHOUT BETRAYING HER TRUE SENSATIONS

lengthened miles. Little had she guessed how she had cut herself adrift. But to the last she had kept her secret.

Somewhere back along the way, where she had crossed the line into this desert state, she had become conscious of a quickening of her long apathetic feelings. Had her first glimpses of the bleached gray of the desert stirred her heart? What of that strange line of red and yellow cliffs—bold rock fronts almost incredible to her? Deep and vague was the emotion they roused. It was April, and the clouds were gray, the weeds tumbling over the land before the wind, the dust puffs whipping up and circling into yellow columns. Bold and raw and inhospitable indeed this desert land! Its bigness began to amaze and frighten her. Miles and miles of barrenness—rocks, flats of gray, black mountains in the distance—and again those strange façades of red cliff! Few and far between were the ranches. And the occasional herd of cattle appeared lost in immensity. Marian strained her tired eyes searching for horses and riders, for the flashes of red blankets of Indians, but these were denied her.

THEN, as many times during this long ride, she had recourse to the letter that had influenced her to come west.

OLJATO (Moonlight on the Water)
Feb. 10, 1916.

Dear Marian: Your letters and gifts were welcome as May flowers. I did not get them at Christmastime because I did not ride into Kaidab. The weather then was cold, and I had my one living relative to look after. He was ill. He is better now.

I rode the ninety-odd miles to the post between sunrise and sunset, over a trail known only to Indians. And all the way I thought of you, of the love for you that only strengthens with distance and time. Remembering your fondness for horses and how you used to long for wild and lonely places, I wanted you to be with me.

But in spite of the joy that came with your remembrances my ride back from the post was full of bitterness. I was again brought into contact with the growing troubles of my tribe, and with the world of white men which I have given up.

Marian, my people now are very prosperous. The war has brought false values. Wool is fifty cents a pound. Horses and sheep bring higher prices than Indians ever dreamed of. They think this will last always. They will not save. They live from day to day, and spend their money foolishly. And when the reaction comes they will be suddenly poor, with the trader's prices for food and clothing higher than ever.

More than this, the work of other white men distresses me. Whenever I come in contact with it I grow sick. I could not tell you in few words the wrong they are doing to my people. You would be shocked. They are slowly grasping the richer pieces of land from the Indians, forcing them off. Some day these outsiders will possess all the really good land of the reservation. Powers of evil, Marian! White men are preying upon the Indians. Believe me, dear loved one of a race alien to mine, I tell the truth.

Come out here to the reservation and work for a year or two among my people. It could not hurt you. And you might do much for them. You could be a teacher at Mesa or one of the other schools. None would ever know that you came for my sake.

Your letters heaped upon me terms of reproach. Marian, I have not forgotten one moment of our summer at Cape May. I live over every meeting with you. I love you more than I did then. It seems I am old now. Wisdom came to me here in my desert home, under the shadow of old Nothis Ahn. I was born under this great mountain. When a boy I was stolen from my home under its red walls. And after eighteen years I have come back. I burned my white man's clothes and books—even the records of my football games—all except your picture. I put on buckskin and corduroy and silver. I never speak English, and I am again an Indian. No more Lo Blandy, but Nophaie!

I was young and full of fire that summer at Cape May. I was praised, fêted, sought because I had become a famous Carlisle star, the football and baseball player, winner of so many points against the great colleges. I danced and played the same as white college men.

Then I met you, Marian. You were different from most of the white girls. I loved you at sight and respected you when I knew you. I called you Benow di Cleash, the white girl with blue eyes. And I'm sure your influence kept me from the fate of more than one famous Indian athlete.

But when I returned to my people the great change came—not in my love for you, but in my youth. I am a man now, old as these sage hills, and I've learned from them. It was selfish and wrong for me to run after you, to love you, to take your kisses—wrong, though it was the best influence of my life. I am an Indian.

Then, once here, whatever wild dreams I may have had were forgotten. I see the life of my tribe as a tragedy. The injustice to them is the blackest of white men's baseness. The compulsory school system for the Indian boys and girls has more bad points than good. I am an educated Indian, a chief in my tribe. I see their misery. I see them vanishing. I cannot marry an Indian girl because I love you. When an Indian loves he loves forever. It is infinitely easier for an Indian to love a white woman than for her to love him. I don't know why.

So, Marian, I am here—no longer Lo Blandy, but Nophaie. My name means Warrior. The red sand I tread is partly the bones and flesh of my ancestors. I will live my life here and mingle my bones with theirs. I will do all I can for them. But alas! The eighteen years of education forced upon me by the whites enable me only to see the pitiful state and the doom of the Indians.

Come, Marian, to Oljato; come to help me a while or just to see the wildness and beauty of my home, so that always afterwards your memory will be full of the color and music and grandeur and fragrance of the Indian land.

NOPHAIE.

MARIAN put the letter away, conscious only at that moment of her emotions. Every perusal of it seemed to glean new sensations of pain and regret, sweetness and love and awe.

"Nophaie, the Warrior," she soliloquized dreamily. "Somehow it suits him." She recalled the first time she had

ever seen him. It was at Cape May, where a group of college men maintained baseball games with visiting teams, professional and otherwise. Her aunt, with whom she lived, and most of her Philadelphia friends always spent some weeks at the seashore. And Marian enjoyed games and bathing and dancing as well as anyone. One summer afternoon a friend took her to the athletic field and pointed out the famous Carlisle Indian star.

HOW curious she had felt! There was a strange pain in recalling that first sensation. Her eyes had fallen upon a tall, bareheaded athlete, slenderly yet powerfully built, his supple form broadening at the shoulders. His face was dark, his hair black as coal. Striking and handsome as he was, it was not his appearance alone that thrilled her so. She was a thoroughly modern young woman and had seen her share of college games. In action the Indian was simply beautiful. He had earned his great fame as a football star, and had been picked by experts for the All-American team three successive years. But he did not need to be so great a baseball player to be good to look at. He played an outfield position, and the chances of the game fell so that he had little to do except run. And his running grew more and more thrilling to Marian. How easily he moved—what a stride he had! Marian found she was not alone in her admiration. This Indian athlete did not need her applause.

Toward the end of the game, at a critical time for the home team, he hit a ball far beyond reach of the opposing fielders. The crowd roared its delight. The Indian dashed down towards first base, and turning appeared to gather speed as he ran. Marian felt the pound of her heart, the sudden shock of delight and pride in the Indian's sheer physical prowess. He ran as the Greek runners must have run, garlanded for their victories. How fleet! How incredibly faster and faster! Then he was making the turn for home base, and the crowd was yelling wildly. He seemed to be facing Marian as he sped on, magnificent in his action. He beat the throw and scored his home run, a feat the audience applauded with prodigious abandon. Marian then became aware that she, too, had been rather undignified.

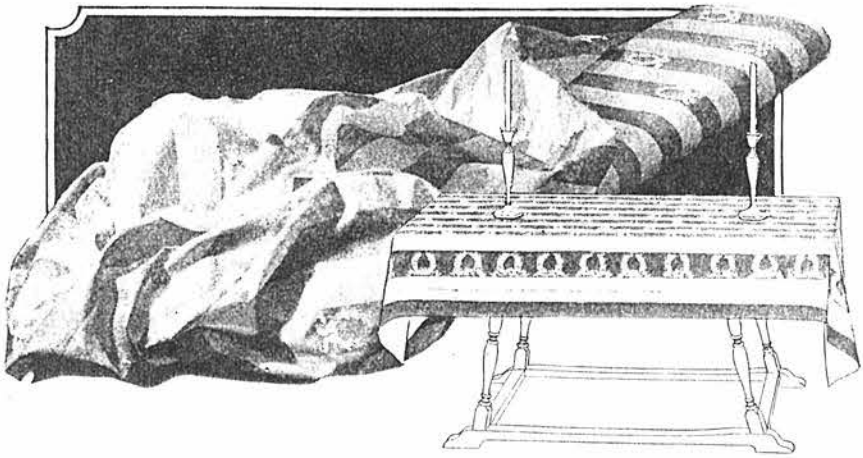
That night at a dance one of Marian's friends had asked her, "Have you met Lo?"

"Lo? And who's he or she?" queried Marian.

"He's the Carlisle crack. You saw him play today. The Indian—Lo Blandy."

And so it came about presently that Marian found herself facing the Indian athlete she had admired. Not just then

(Continued on Page 204)



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The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 5)

had she realized it, but the truth was she had fallen in love with him at first sight. Something in her nature, never dreamed of before, went out to the Indian. He had a fine face, dark and strong, with eyes of piercing blackness. There was something noble in his stature, or the poise of his head, or the eagle look of him.

"Will you dance with me?" he had asked, and appeared as much at his ease as any of the college men.

Marian found herself dancing with an Indian, a very strange and momentous circumstance, it seemed. He did not dance with the ease of modern sophistication. But he was light and strong; he carried her on without the bold contact so prevalent among most dancing men; and so Marian enjoyed that dance.

They met again by accident on the beach, and because no one else came and they were interesting to each other, they talked for long. After that day Marian went to all the baseball games. And Lo Blandy became one of her numerous admirers, to the amusement of her aunt and friends.

But these meetings had been deadly earnest for Marian. She loved the Indian. She fought against herself, then surrendered and fought no more. He had more principle and better habits than any white boy she knew. So that summer, in the cool amber-lighted mornings by the seashore and on the moonlit nights when dance and music held their sway, Marian quaffed the spiced magic draught of love.

SHE wondered if she had as true and steadfast a nature as the Indian? Would she love once and once only? Vain queries. She loved now and that was all of pain.

Marian gazed out of the train window at the scenery flashing by. The topography of the country had changed. Dark, bushy green trees, very beautiful, had appeared on the slowly rising desert land, and the spaces between them were white with bleached grass. No more cliffs of stone passed under her sight. There were wooded hills in the background. And presently these low green trees gave place to larger ones, growing wide apart, brown trunked, with spreading branches and thin green foliage at the tops. Pines! She welcomed them. She greeted every little gain of pleasure or knowledge, somehow trying to persuade herself that there were to be education and broadening of sympathy in this wild trip to the West.

SHE had not been ashamed of her love for Lo Blandy. She felt that she might reach a point where she would glory in it. But she had shrunk from making confidants of her aunt and her friends. No one guessed the truth of that summer at Cape May. And now she was on a train, far out in the West, soon to take whatever means offered to reach the Indian Reservation. The farther she traveled the more untrue her situation seemed. Yet she was glad. She strove to justify her action in her own eyes. Surely one flight of freedom need not be denied her.

"I have no close family ties," she said to herself in sincere defense. "I am twenty-three. I am my own master. I've always dreamed of love with honor, of marriage with children. Perhaps in vain! My aunt, my friends would call me mad. They do not understand me. I am not throwing my life away. I can do good out here. I can help him—Nophaie; what a strange, beautiful name! I am not rich. But I have some

money, and that I will gladly use now. Let the future take care of itself."

So she settled the matter of perplexity and of conscience, and gave up to the singular appeal of the prospect before her. Always, Marian had yearned to do something different, unusual, big. She had traveled a little, taught school, tried journalistic work, and had one short weakness for dramatics. And she knew she had accomplished nothing. Here indeed was the bright face of adventure, mysterious and alluring, coupled with a work she might make uplifting and all-satisfying.

Flagerstown, the first Western town Marian had ever been in, was not at all like what she had imagined it would be. Her impressions of the West had come from books and motion pictures, which mediums, she was to learn, did not always ring true to life.

IT WAS a thriving little city, bustling with motor cars, and active over its lumber, railroad and cattle interests. It bore no signs of the typical frontier town. What surprised Marian a little was the fact that neither hotel proprietor nor banker, post-office official nor clerk in the store, nor a cattleman she chanced to address, showed any curiosity concerning her. When she made inquiry about the Indian Reservation she simply stated that she was interested in Indians and might do some journalistic work out there.

She ascertained that a mail carrier left Flagerstown twice a week for the places on the reservation—Mesa, Red Sandy and Kaidab. And the post-office man was kind enough to engage passage for her. Next morning the hotel porter called to take her baggage. Marian saw the most dilapidated motor car that had ever come into her vision. What there was of it appeared to be wired and roped together. And it was loaded heavily with mail bags, boxes and sacks. There was a coop containing some chickens going by parcel post. Next to the driver's seat had been left a small space, evidently for Marian.

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"Goodness!" ejaculated Marian as she surveyed this doubtful contraption. "Will it hold together? Is it safe to ride in?"

"Why, miss, sho thet Injun will get you thar," replied the porter.

"Indian! Is the driver an Indian?"

"Yessum. An' sho blowin' snow er sand makes no difference to him."

MARIAN could have laughed in spite of her uneasiness. But all she could do was to gaze helplessly at that machine. Then appeared a young man in ragged dark suit. His small feet were encased in brown buckskin moccasins with silver buttons.

His dark face appeared to be half hidden by a black sombrero. She could see that he was young. She noted his hands as they slipped over the wheel, dark, thin, nervous, sinewy hands, well formed and mobile. Then he got into the driver's seat and looked up at her. He was only a youth. His face was keen, smooth as silk, without a line, dark as bronze. He had a level brow and eyes black as night. Suddenly they gleamed with intelligence and humor. This Indian sensed her consternation. "You ready go?" he queried in intelligible English.

The tone of it gave Marian a little shock. Something about it, the low pitch or timbre, recalled the voice of Lo Blandy. "Y-yes, I guess so," faltered Marian.

Dare she trust this frightful junk heap of a car and its Indian driver on a long desert

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The Vanishing American

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journey? Marian's Eastern compunctions did not die easily. "You go Kaidab?" asked the driver. "Yes," replied Marian. "I get you there seven o'clock," he returned with a smile.

IT SEEMED a flash of understanding. He read her mind and wished to reassure her. Marian's new spirit revived with a rush. She had burned her bridges behind her. "Will it be cold?" she asked as she was about to climb into the car. "You need blanket for while," he said. Marian had no blanket, but she had brought a heavy coat which would serve as well. This she put on. She squeezed into the space beside the driver. The grinning porter called "Good night!" which dubious farewell in no wise diminished Marian's concern.

The Indian driver moved something that made the rickety car crack like a pistol and lurch forward. Marian could not stifle a gasp. The square-fronted buildings with their queer, high board signs began to speed back out of her sight. Ahead the white asphalt road merged into one of dark earth, and there appeared a long slope of pine trees. Cold, keen, biting wind fanned Marian's cheeks. It nipped with its frosty breath. And it brought a strange, dry fragrance. The car passed the line of buildings; and to the left loomed a mighty green-and-white mountain mass that hid its summit in gloomy rolling clouds.

"Storm," said the Indian. "We hurry so get way from snow."

If anything more were needed to complete Marian's demoralization she had it in the gathering speed of that car. It belied its appearance. "Oh, if they could see me now!" she murmured as she snuggled down into the warm coat and peeped out at the wonderful green slope of the forest.

She thought of those at home who would have looked aghast at her boldness. Perhaps this was the moment of severance. Whatever it was, above all Marian's misgivings and defiance there pealed a subtle voice of joy.

III

THE road upon which the Indian was driving led out into a pine forest, between the stately trees of which Marian caught glimpses of cloud-enshrouded mountains. The cold, the raw wind, the increasing gloominess of the day, with its ominous threat of storm, in no wise checked her momentary enthusiasm and awakening joy for the open country. For as long as she could remember she had been cooped up in a town, and in her heart love of nature had been stultified. At last! She breathed deeply of the keen air, and the strong, pitchy smell of pine began to stimulate her.

"What mountains?" she asked. "Spanish Peaks," replied the driver. She made other inquiries to which he gave brief and unsatisfactory replies. Perhaps it took all his attention to keep the car in the road. Besides, the car made such a rattle and clank that conversation was really not easy. Marian ceased asking questions.

The road led through a forest of pines such as she had never seen, wonderfully fragrant and exhilarating after the cities and railroads.

The grass was dead, bleached white, but the green of the pines gave relief to her eyes. Ten miles of forest the car traversed; then came an open valley—fine ranch country, Marian judged—from which the view of the mountain range was magnificent; and then they entered forest again, with the difference that the ground appeared to be all cinders. The car chugged uphill, losing much of its velocity. From a ridge-top Marian's eyes were greeted by a strange and desolate spectacle—



a wide black valley, a slope of black cinders, and a stream of red lava crusted and jagged; and beyond these, foothills of black cinders smooth and steep, all waved and ridged like sand dunes carved by wind. A line of pines crested the first hill, and under this green stretch was a long bank of snow, its pure white contrasting markedly with the ebony cinders. A range of these foothills rose off toward the south, growing higher and smoother, weird and sinister monuments to the havoc of volcanic action in the ages past. Beyond and above this range towered a mountain of cinders, strangely barren, marvelously colored in purple, black and red.

MARIAN saw so much in this scored and devastated region that she regretted passing on so rapidly. Soon her Indian guide reached a downgrade in the forest, ran out of the cinder zone upon hard road again, and here Marian feared every flying mile would be her last.

By and by the pines began to decrease in size and grow farther apart, so that glimpses of open country came to Marian. Then from round a rocky ridge quite abruptly the car sped out into thin forest from which stretched a vast waste of gray. The desert! Marian did not try to repress an exclamation of delight and awe.

She was looking down over many leagues of desert. The pines failed, the cedars began, and beyond them rolled and waved away the white billowy miles of wasteland. Only two colors prevailed, black and white. How soft and velvety! Only the west appeared barred from limitless gaze; and there a succession of rounded hills, bare except for grass, led away down into the desert.

Marian feasted her eyes, trying to grasp what it was that she saw. Moments and miles passed, and suddenly a gray squall of rain and snow swooped down from behind, enveloping the car. It brought a piercing cold. What rain there was soon changed to sleet. It pelted Marian, many hailstones bouncing off the glass windshield to sting her face. Gloves and pockets appeared little protection against such cold. Marian suffered. Her cheeks, her nose, her ears seemed to congeal to ice.

THE world around the car was white, swept by a blizzard, with snow fleeing across the ground. The sky was obscured. When Marian opened her eyes, at intervals, she could not see far in front. This obscurity did not deter the Indian from driving fast. So that between her pangs and fears Marian had to make heroic enjoyment out of this hour.

At length the gray cloud lightened, the snow thinned out, and the blue of sky shone

(Continued on Page 206)

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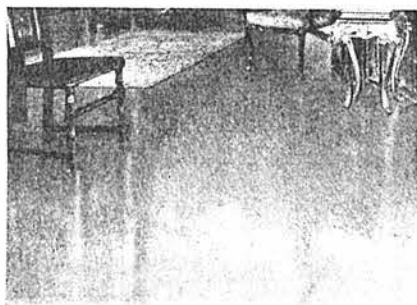
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The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 205)

through a thin haze of white. That, too, faded or melted away, and then the storm veered, leaving clear a great open space above. Marion grew aware that she was now far down in the desert with open bare ridges all around her and the distant prospects out of view. The snow failed. The earth changed its white-and-black hue to a dull red. Once again the car sped out upon a height from which she had a second look at the leagues of desert. Here the immense reach and slope struck her more forcibly, and especially the great volume of light.

The sun came out from behind the cloud bank over the east, and the desert magnified lines and colors and suddenly unmasked an appalling beauty.

Once the Indian stopped the car to examine some of its internals. Thus Marian was enabled to get out, to stretch her cramped, cold limbs. After that, when the journey had been resumed, she soon grew comfortable under a warming sun, and at length forgot both pangs and fears in absorption of this desert land. Her driver traveled downhill for fully three hours. This brought them to what seemed an incongruity—an iron bridge spanning a rock-walled gorge through which ran a muddy stream. Here in this valley the sun was hot. Marian had to remove the heavy coat.

BEYOND the river stretched a gravelly plain, hard packed by wind, and its slow ascent at last gained another height, from which Marian confirmed her wondering expectations. Three level benches of colored desert, as high as mountains, lifted their wondrous reds and purples and grays and golds toward the blue sky, a land of painted steps, the portal of Lo Blandly's country.

What, then, would Oljato be like? Marian felt confounded in her own impressions. Once she glanced behind her, as if to make sure of the distance she had traversed, of land she knew to be solid and not a substance of dreams. The spectacle to the rear was vastly different: a gray desert slope, a red desert slope, league on league, shelving back to rise and lift to a great dark plateau from which the Spanish Peaks showed pure white snow against the sky.

The ensuing hour, during which the Indian driver crossed the bare plains of sand and gravel and climbed the successive steps of colored rock, passed by all too quickly for Marian. The sun beat down hot. To the north, in the direction the car was heading, more storm clouds were gathering.

Above the last desert step the earth appeared a place of ruin and decay, a zone of sinister red and strange drab, where rocks and clay had been weathered into fantastic shapes.

SOON it lay behind, and she found herself confronted with a wide valley between glaring walls of rock. Dark, rich, green fields of alfalfa formed the floor of this valley, and she saw clusters of trees beginning to show green, and the roofs of two flat houses.

"What's this place?" she inquired.

"Copenwashic," replied the Indian.

"Are those green fields Indian farms?"

"Some are. White men got most land now."

"But isn't this a reservation for the use of Indians?" went on Marian curiously.

All the reply she received was a grunt of disgust.

The Indian drove fast up this level valley, making the dust fly from under his car.

When he came to the first house he stopped and carried packages in. Marian saw no one. In the fields, however, were picturesque laborers she took to be Indians. Upon resuming the journey her guide pointed out some low stone houses, standing back under shelving cliffs, surrounded by greening trees. These were the homes of missionaries.

From that point the road ascended the side of a steep gorge. Up on top of this elevation the land was level, covered with rough low bushes, dull green in color. Gray and red buildings showed in the distance and long lines of bare trees. In a few moments the car had reached them. Marian was consumed with interest and curiosity.

"Mesa. We stop little while," said the driver, coming to a halt before one of the stone structures.

IT WAS large, with few windows, and appeared rather inhospitable looking. Little ragged, wild ponies, wearing crude square-topped saddles, stood near by with bridles down.

"Are they Indian horses?" she asked.

"Yes. Not much good. You wait," he replied with his reassuring smile. "This trading post. People friendly. You go in. I take mail."

Marian got out, glad to stretch her limbs again, and strolled to and fro. She saw a wide tree-lined avenue, with well-built gray stone houses on one side and large red stone buildings on the other. These latter she took to be the government school quarters. How out of place they seemed! The great tableland of desert seemed to encompass them, accentuating their incongruity. The avenue was long so that Marian could not see what lay at the upper end. Then her attention was attracted toward the trading post. Three men, Indians, had just come out. They wore white man's garb, even to shoes and hats, and did not rouse Marian's admiration. What swarthy faces, secretive and impassive—what sloe-black eyes, beady and sharp! These Indians watched her. Marian suffered something of disillusion and disappointment at sight of them. Then a white man appeared, tall, sandy-haired and open-faced.

"Come in. I'm Paxton, the trader," he said. "My wife is always glad to meet visitors. You must be tired and hungry. And it's a good way to Kaidab."

"Thank you, I am hungry, but not tired," replied Marian as she followed him in, wondering how he had learned where she was going.

HE LED her through a huge hall-like storeroom, in which counters and shelves were loaded with merchandise, to another part of the house, into a living room, comfortable and pleasant. There Marian met the trader's wife, a young and comely woman who was most kindly and agreeable. Neither by word nor look did she manifest any curiosity. She was merely glad to meet a strange visitor and to give her rest and refreshment.

Marian liked her. "I'm on my way to Kaidab," she volunteered.

"It's fine of you to be interested," said the woman. "Heaven knows the Indians need friends. We traders believe we are about the only friends they have."

Marian asked casual questions about the Indians, being careful not to give the impression of more than ordinary interest, and

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Wells & Richardson Co., Burlington, Vt.

The Vanishing American

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altogether she spent a pleasant half hour with Mrs. Paxton.

"I hope you come to Mesa again," said her hostess as they passed out through the store.

From the door Marian saw a white man standing beside the car, in conversation with the Indian driver.

"There's Friel," went on Mrs. Paxton, and evidently the recognition of the man changed her train of thought.

"Thank you for your kindness," said Marian. "I'm sure we'll meet again. Good-by."

MARIAN walked out to the car. At her step the man designated by Mrs. Paxton turned to see her. Marian was used to meeting strangers and classifying them after the manner of women. But she had not any recollection of a type like this man.

"I'm Mr. Friel," he said, touching his sombrero. "Can I do anything for you?"

"No, thank you," replied Marian.

His face had the brown of the open, but it was not one that inspired Marian to interest or liking. Quick was she to see the gleam of curiosity in his eyes, and then, as he took a good look at her, the leap of admiration.

"You're traveling alone," he said. "May I know your errand?"

Marian told him what she had told the trader's wife. Then she felt rather than saw an increased interest in her, with something of antagonism.

"Have you permission to go on the reservation?" he inquired.

"No. Is it compulsory?"

"I—well, no; hardly that. But it is always best for visitors to see Mr. Blucher."

"Who is he?"

"The agent in charge of the reservation."

"Very well. Where can I find him?"

"Unfortunately Mr. Blucher is away attending an investigation. But I can take it upon myself to—make everything all right. Wouldn't you like to see the school?"

THE man was well spoken enough. But apart from that, Mr. Friel had the look in his eyes which she hated; and she never met that look twice. Nevertheless she must accept people out here in the desert as she found them, and if possible, without suffering indignity, she must learn from them. "It would be interesting to see the Indian children. I may return here and find some kind of work with them. But I've no time."

"I can get you a position here," he said eagerly. He was too eager.

"What authority have you?" asked Marian.

"Well, no outright authority to hire government employees," he returned. "But I hire people to work for me occasionally. And I'm hand in glove with Morgan. He's the power here."

"Morgan?"

"He's been here over twenty years. And he runs things."

"If I return here to find work, whom should I see first?"

"Come to me on the quiet. Then we'll see Morgan. If you got a job before seeing him, you'd soon lose it."

"Indeed. Well, I'll think it over," returned Marian as she stepped to the car.

Friel took hold of her arm, not to assist her but to keep her from entering.

"Let me drive you to Kaidab. I have my car here. There's no room in this filthy junk box. Besides, a handsome girl like you oughtn't be riding alone with one of these Indians."

"Why not? He's the mail carrier. I'm paying him for driving me."

"They're all alike, these Indian louts. You're not safe with any one of them."

"If that's true, Mr. Friel, it doesn't speak well for the white men. I'll take a chance on this Indian. Good day."

With that Marian resumed her seat in the car and signaled the driver to start. He did so after a fashion that presupposed he was glad to leave the vicinity. Marian sat back, just as glad as she imagined he was. The breeze was pleasant. The wide colored spaces beckoned. She was a little amazed at the heat running along and cooling out of her veins. How disgusting and irritating! That man, vain and wooden-headed and utterly lacking! Upon sober reflection Marian discerned that she resented most the insult to the Indian. She turned to him.

"Did you understand what that man said?"

"I savvy him. His head big stick with skin stretched over."

MARIAN was forced to admit that the Indian had discernment and originality. Then straightway she dismissed the irritation from her mind. The ride over the desert was all important. How far was she from Kaidab, from Oljato? Every speeding mile brought her closer to the home of Lo Blandy.

She whispered his Indian name over and over again, trying to accept it and make it familiar. She could not succeed. And every thought of him augmented a mounting consciousness of an ordeal to come, baffling and tremendous in its significance. Yet what sweetness of thrill, of strange fire and magic!

The gray clouds soon obscured the sun, and Marian again felt the chill of the wind. She bundled up once more. Her driver had turned off to the north from the Mesa road, and was following a depression of land, where Marian could not see far. There was a stretch of sandy going, then a climb up a long slope that led to a level plateau, sparsely green with plants and monotonously gray with distance.

Here the Indian put the car to its limit of speed, too fast and too noisy for Marian's pleasure.

Burying her face in scarf and coat collar she crouched there and endured.

When the storm cleared away and the sun shone again they had reached a wide red basin, sand-sloped and walled in by low cliffs, now shining wet.

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

By PHILLIPS BROOKS

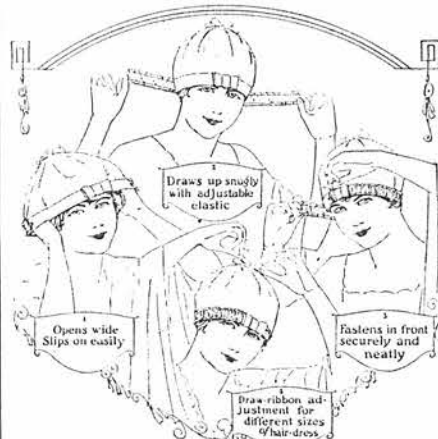
O LITTLE town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie;
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep

The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary,
And gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth!
And praises sing to God the King,
And peace to men on earth.

O holy Child of Bethlehem!
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in,
Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell;
Oh, come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel!

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No Hairpins in the Morning!

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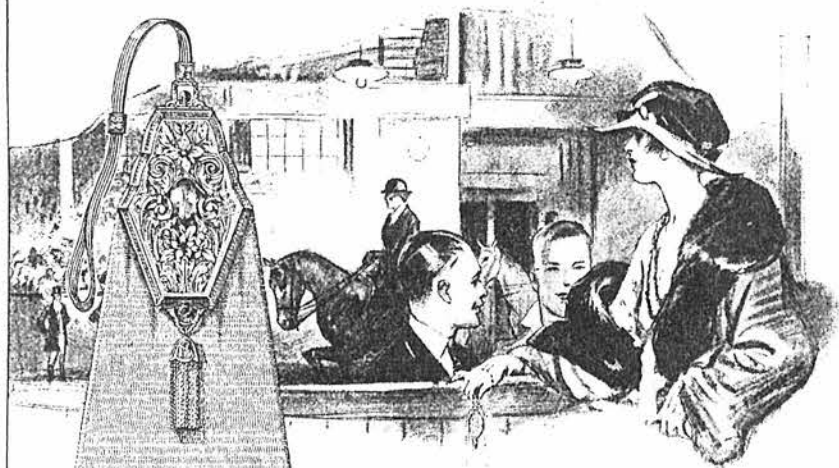
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The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 207)

At three o'clock the Indian brought his car to a halt before Red Sandy, a fortlike trading post located high upon an immense slope of sand. The traders, two young men, were as solicitous and kind as had been the Paxtons.

Marian was indeed glad to warm her frozen cheeks and ears and hands. The traders conducted her to a loft above their store. It was warm, and somehow peculiarly fitting and picturesque with its blankets and baskets and other Indian handiwork. The wind moaned weirdly outside. From the window of this house Marian had a wonderful view that fascinated and repelled her. How desolate and dreary! The immense basin appeared to spread to all points of the compass. Ponds of water glimmered under the lowering sky; vegetation was scanty. Following the horizon round towards the west, she suddenly beheld a dim purple-and-white dome. For long it held her gaze. It did not seem real, so deep was the purple, so ethereal the white.

"IS THAT a mountain?" she asked one of the traders.

"Shore is," he said. "That's old Nothis. Ahn. It's worshiped by the Indians."

Marian went back to the car, where the Indian sat waiting for her. Almost she resented this swift passage across the desert. It left no time for realization, let alone contemplation. One more moment she gave to Red Sandy. It had beauty, but how austere! There was no life, no movement. The silence was impressive.

On the way down across the sandy basin Marian espied dark riders approaching from around the bluff. She watched them grow until they met and passed her, two Indian men and one woman, riding shaggy ponies and packing blankets and sheepskins behind their saddles. The woman was heavy, garbed in loose, dirty garments, with dull, dark face and unkempt hair. It was only at a distance that these Indians looked picturesque.

Then there ensued an hour in which the car chugged over a sandy road, mostly uphill, with view restricted except on the eastern side. Here the long black flat mountain assumed nobler proportions. Bands of little horses dotted the gray-green rise of ground. An Indian rider appeared on the rim of a ridge, loping along, lending a touch of wildness and life to the scene.

PRESENTLY the driver called Marian's attention to a mound of earth with a dark hole leading into it. "Hogan—Indian house," he said.

How crude and primitive! Verily the wants and the comforts of the Indians must be few.

It was only from the high places, Marian came to learn, that the incredible openness and boundlessness of the desert could be grasped. And there came a ridge summit from which she could see afar, down and across a land of prairie, on to slowly rising bare waste that swept upward to purple and black heights. In another hour she learned that the black heights were forests of cedar and the purple ones were meadows of sage. Long before she reached these beautiful open patches of purple she became aware of a pervading fragrance in the air. It grew keener, stronger, sweeter. Marian recognized the odor of sage. How wild and strange, stifling almost, and wholly exhilarating!

If this long, twenty-mile upgrade of desert had not slowly grown from waste to verdure, from desolate, sinister badlands to noble heights of keen, sweet air and beautiful color, Marian would not have been prepared

for the next phase of this bewildering country. But she had been given time. She had grown with the miles, so that when the Indian driver sped his car down a steep break, round curve and corner, out of the forest into a changed world of stone, Marian was not utterly confounded.

The road stretched on through a long narrow pass, above which towered cliffs of red and gold and yellow, so lofty that she had to look almost straight up to see their rims. They seemed not to be cliffs, but stone

faces of mountains. Marian gazed upward until her eyes ached.

All too swiftly ran the car and all too short was that pass. It opened out upon ridged gray desert, with the black mesa on the right, zigzagging away to the eastward, and the red corrugated wall of stone on the left notching its bold skyline away to the north.

Ten more miles of travel removed both ramparts far to either side, and another hill-top gave Marian her first sight of Kaidab. Her letters, her gifts to Lo Blandy had been sent to this trading post. All she saw was several low, flat, stone houses. A crude and dreary habitation! Yet no splendid spectacle of the whole long ride had given Marian the thrill that now shot over her.

IV

CLOSE at hand, Kaidab trading post showed striking aspects of life and activity. Marian looked and looked with mounting delight and wonder.

First, there were a number of the shaggy Indian ponies, unaltered, standing with uplifted heads and black rolling eyes glancing askance on the mail carrier's car. Several were without saddles, having blankets tied on their backs; one was of a cream color, almost pink, with strange light eyes and wonderful long mane and tail; most of them were a reddish bay in color; and there was a fiery little black that took Marian's eye.

Huge bags of burlap containing wool were being packed into a wagon by Indian freighters. And Indians were lounging around, leaning against the stone wall of the trading post. The look of them somehow satisfied Marian. Raven black hair, impassive faces of bronze, eyes of night, lean and erect figures clad in velvet and corduroy, with glints of silver and bead ornament—these circumstances of appearance came somewhere near fitting Marian's rather sentimental anticipations.

Before the open front of one building, evidently a storehouse, other Indians were packing wool in the long sacks, a laborious task, to judge from their efforts to hold the sack erect and stamp down the wool. The whole interior of this open house appeared hung and littered with harness, rope, piles of white sacks, piles of wool and skins. The odor of sheep struck Marian rather disagreeably.

THE sun was hot and fell glaringly upon the red blankets. Flies buzzed everywhere. And at least a dozen lean, wild-looking and inquisitive-eyed dogs sniffed around Marian. Not one of them wagged its tail. White men in shirt sleeves, with sweaty faces and hands begrimed, were working over a motor car as dilapidated as the mail carrier's.

Two Indian women, laden with bundles, came out of the open door of the trading post. The elder woman was fat and pleasant-faced. She wore loose, flowing garments, gaudy in color, and silver necklaces, and upon her back she carried a large bundle

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The Vanishing American

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or box. When she passed, Marian caught a glimpse of a dark little baby face peering out of a hole in that box. The younger female was probably a daughter, and she was not uncomely in appearance. Something piquant and bright haunted her smooth dark face. She was slender. She had little feet incased in brown moccasins. She wore what Marian thought was velveteen, and her silver ornaments were studded with crude blue stones. She glanced shyly at Marian.

A sturdily built, keen-eyed man stalked out of the post, with a hand on the Indian mail carrier's shoulder. He wore a vest over a flannel shirt, but no coat or hat. His boots were rough and dusty.

"TAKE her bags in," he said to the Indian. Then, at his near approach, Marian felt herself scanned by a gaze at once piercing and kindly. "Glad to welcome you, Miss Warner," he said. "I'm John Withers."

Marian followed him into the yard beside the trading post, where somewhat in the background stood a low, squat, picturesque stone house with roof of red earth. Withers ushered her into a wonderful room that seemed to flash Indian color and design at her. Blankets on floor and couch, baskets on mantel and wall, and a strange painted frieze of Indian figures, crude, elemental, striking—these lent the room its atmosphere.

A bright fire blazed in the open stone fireplace. Books and comforts were not lacking. This room opened into a long dining room, with the same ornamental Indian effects. And from it ran a hallway remarkable for its length and the variety and color of its decorations.

Marian's quick eyes had only time for one look when a woman of slight stature and remarkable face entered. "Welcome to Kaidab, Miss Warner," she said warmly, with extended hands. "We're happy to meet you. We hope you will stay long."

"Thank you, Mrs. Withers; you're very kind. I—I am very glad to get here," replied Marian, just a little confused and nervous. "You've had a long, cold ride. And you're red with dust. Oh, I know that ride. I took it first twenty-five years ago on horseback."

WHILE washing and changing her dusty clothes, Marian pondered over her singular impressions of Mrs. Withers. She was no ordinary woman. For some reason not apparent to Marian her hostess had a strong personal regard for her. Marian had intuitively felt this. Besides she must have been a woman used to welcoming strangers to this wild frontier. Marian sensed something of the power she had felt in women of high position, as they met their guests; only in the case of Mrs. Withers it was a simplicity of power, a strange unconscious dignity, spiritual rather than material. But Marian did not spend much time in making herself comfortable, nor in conjecturing about Mrs. Withers. She felt drawn to this woman. She divined news, strange portents, unknown possibilities, all of which hurried her back to the living room. Mrs. Withers was there waiting for her. "How sweet and fair you are!" she exclaimed, with an admiring glance at Marian's face. "We don't see your kind out here. The desert is hard on blondes."

"So I imagine," replied Marian. "I'll not long remain 'Benow di Cleash.' Is that pronounced correctly?"

Mrs. Withers laughed. "Well, I understand you. Let us sit down." She led the way to the couch. "We'll have to talk our secrets at odd moments. Somebody is always bobbing in. First, I want to tell you two things that I know will make us friends."

"I hope so—believe so," returned Marian, trying to hold her calm.

"LISTEN. All my life I've been among the Indians," said Mrs. Withers in her low voice. "I loved Indians when I was a child. I've been here in this wild country for many years. It takes years of kindness and study to understand the Indian. These Indians here have come to care for me. They have given me a name. They believe me, trust me. They call on me to settle disputes, to divide property left by their dead, to tell their troubles. I have learned their dreams, their religion, their prayers and legends and poetry, their medicine, the meaning of their dances. And the more I learn of them the more I love and respect them. Indians are not what they appear to most white people. They are children of nature. They have noble hearts and beautiful minds. They have criminals among them, but in much less proportion than have the white race. The song of Hiawatha is true—true for all Indians. They live in a mystic world of enchantment, peopled by spirits, voices, music, whisperings of God and of immortality. They are as simple as little children. They personify everything. With them all is symbolic."

Mrs. Withers paused a moment, her eloquent eyes riveted upon Marian.

"For a good many years this remote part of the Indian country was far out of the way of white men. Thus the demoralization and degradation of the Indian were retarded, so far as this particular tribe is concerned. This Nopah tribe is the proudest, most intelligent, most numerous, and the wealthiest tribe left in the United States. So-called civilization has not yet reached Kaidab. But it is coming. I feel the next few years will go hard with the Indian, perhaps decide his fate."

"Oh, there seems no hope?" murmured Marian.

"There indeed seems none, if you look at it intelligently and mercilessly. But I look at this question as the Indian looks at everything. He begins his prayer: 'Let all be well with me,' and he ends it: 'Now all is well with me.' He feels; he trusts. There really is a God. If there were not I would be an infidel. Life on the desert magnifies all. I want you to let me help you to understand the Indian—for the sake of your happiness."

Marian could not voice her surprise. A tremor ran over her.

"NOPAH showed me your picture—told me about you," went on Mrs. Withers with an exquisite softness of voice. "Ah, do not be shocked! It was well for him that he confided in me. I met him the day he returned here from the East. I remembered him. I knew him as a boy, a little shepherd who refused to leave his flock in a sandstorm. I know the place where he was born."

(Continued on Page 212)

Harvest Song

By

MARGUERITE WILKINSON

LONG ago, in the silver spring,
Love went out sowing the seed
Over the broadest fields of earth.
Give thanks, my people!
Under the light of the widest sky
Power strove with drought and
wee.

Now is the golden autumn come.
Come to the feast, my friends.

Joy will gather the yellow corn—
Gather the crimson apples in;
Joy has gathered the purple grapes.
Give thanks, my people!
Full be the heart with harvesting,
Full as the proudest barn or bin.
Near at hand is the time of rest.
Come to the feast, my friends.

Mother!



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Boys are delighted with "Hanes" Union Suits, not only because they are man-like in all details, but because they allow for "give" and "take" and let a boy play hard without binding! For 2 to 16 year old youngsters in sizes 20 to 34. 2 to 4 year old sizes have drop seat. Made both in full length arms and legs and in knee length and short sleeves.

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- 3 Hanes Closed Crotch is cut and stitched in a way that really keeps it closed.

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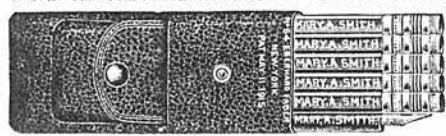


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The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 211)

I know the sage where he was stolen. I knew the horse thief who stole him. I knew the woman who took him east and put him in school. But Nophaie did not remember me. He went out to the sage slopes of Nothis Ahn, and when he rode back he had not his white man's clothes, or speech, or name. He was Nophaie. And he rode here now and then. The Indians told me about him. He is a chief who wants to help them in a white man's way. But the Indians want him to be a medicine man. Well, I saw his trouble, and when he came here I talked. I helped him with his own language. It returned but slowly. I saw his unhappiness. And in the end he told me about you, showed me your picture, confessed his love.

Marian covered her burning face with trembling hands.

"Marian, do not be ashamed of Nophaie's love," went on Mrs. Withers appealingly. "No one else knows. John suspects, but is not sure. I understand you, feel with you—and I know more; you'd not be here if you did not love Nophaie."

"Of—course I love—him," said Marian unsteadily as she uncovered her face. "You misunderstand. I'm not ashamed. It's just the shock of hearing—knowing—the suddenness of your disclosure."

Gathering courage, and moved by an intense and perfect assurance of sympathy, Marian briefly told Mrs. Withers of her romance with Nophaie, and then of her condition in life and her resolve to have her fling at freedom, to live a while in the West and, in helping the Indians, perhaps find something of happiness.

"Ah! YOU will grieve, but you will also be wonderfully happy," replied Mrs. Withers. "As for Nophaie, you will save him. His heart was breaking; and when an Indian's heart breaks, he dies. I kept track of Nophaie. He had a remarkable career in college. He was a splendid student and a great athlete. I've heard that Nophaie's father was a marvelous runner. And he carried the Testing Stone of the braves the farthest for generations. But what good Nophaie's education and prowess will do out here is a question. He must learn to be an Indian. Eighteen years away made him more white than red. He will never go back to the white man's life. Marian, I wonder—does that worry you? Be honest with me."

"No; I would not want him to go back," replied Marian.

"And you said you had no near and dear ties?" queried Mrs. Withers, with her magnetic eyes on Marian's.

"None very near or dear."

"And you were sick of artificial life, of the modern customs, of all that —"

"Indeed I was," interrupted Marian.

"And you really have a longing to go back to simple and outdoor ways?"

"Longing!" exclaimed Marian, almost with passion, carried out of self-control by this woman's penetrating power to thrill her.

"I—I don't know what it is. But I think under my fair skin—I'm a savage."

"And you have some money?"

"I'm not rich, but I'm not poor either."

"You love Nophaie, as you're sure you could never love another man, a white man?"

"I—I LOVE him terribly," whispered Marian. "How can I foretell the future—any possible love—again? But I hate the very thought. Oh, I had it put to me often enough lately. Marriage for money or convenience—for a home, for children, for anything but love? No, no; not for me!"

"And will you marry Nophaie?"

Marian uttered a little gasp. Again it was not shame that sent the prickling hot blood to her cheeks, but a liberation of emotion

she had restrained. This blunt and honest woman called to her very depths.

"Nophaie is an Indian," Mrs. Withers went on. "But he's a man. I never saw a finer man, white or red. I think you're a fortunate girl. To love and be loved, to live in this desert, to see its wildness and grandeur, to learn of it from an Indian, to devote your energies to a noble cause. I hope you see the truth."

"I don't see very clearly, but I believe you," replied Marian. "You express something vague and deep in me, that wants to come out. I ought not to forget to tell you—Nophaie never asked me to marry him."

"WELL, it wasn't because he didn't want to, believe me," returned the older woman. "I've seen some lovelorn Indians in my day, but Nophaie had it worst. What do you think you'll do—send for him or ride out to his home?"

"I—I'd rather meet him out—away somewhere in the desert," replied Marian in thoughtful perplexity. "But would that be—be right? It's so unheard of—this thing I'm doing. I want to do it. The strongest feelings in me sanction it. But I'm sensitive; I don't want people to know. Oh, it's the cowardice and deceit of my kind."

"Certainly it'll be all right. John will take you to meet Nophaie," rejoined Mrs. Withers warmly. "And no one, except John and I, will be in the secret. We'll tell the men and everyone who happens along that you've come out to work among the Indians."

At that juncture Withers came tramping into the room. "Well, miss, a Pahute Indian just rode in. He saw Nophaie this morning and talked with him. I thought you'd be glad to hear that."

"What did he tell you?" queried Marian eagerly.

"He said Nophaie was with the sheep. It's lambing time out there. Nophaie was a great shepherd boy. This Pahute laughed and said: 'Nophaie forgets his white mind and goes back to the days of his youth.' I think all the Indians feel joy over Nophaie's renunciation of the white man's life."

"May I take a look at this Pahute?" asked Marian.

"Shore. Come on. I'll introduce you," replied Withers with a laugh.

"Yes, go out with him," interposed Mrs. Withers. "I must see about dinner."

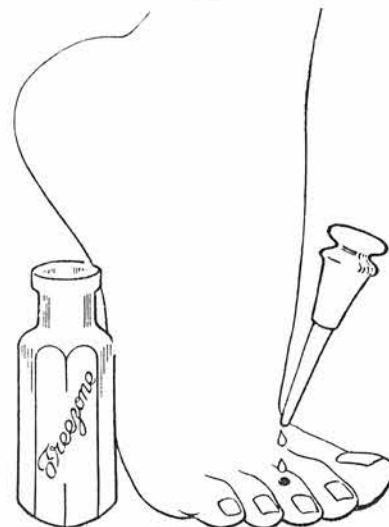
"I DON'T want to be introduced or have this Pa—Pahute see I'm interested," said Marian to Withers as they passed out of the house. "I think it's a matter of sentiment. I just want to—to look at the Indian who saw Nophaie this very day."

"I was only joking," Miss Warner, returned Withers seriously. "This Pahute is a bad Indian. He's got a record. He's killed white men and Indians both."

He led Marian through the back of the gray stone house into the store. The center of this large room was a stone-floored square, walled off from the spacious and crowded shelves by high counters. Indians were leaning against these counters. Marian saw locks of raven black hair, straggling from under dusty crumpled black sombreros. She saw the flash of silver buckles and ornaments. She heard the clink of silver money and low voices, in which the syllable predominating sounded like "toa" and "taa." All these Indians had their backs turned to Marian and appeared to be making purchases of the white man behind the counter. Piles of Indian blankets covered the ends of the counters. Back of them on the shelves were a variety of colored dry goods and canned foods and boxes and jars. From the

(Continued on Page 213)

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The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 212)

ceiling hung saddles, bridles, lanterns, lassos—a numberless assortment of articles salable to Indians.

"Here's your Pahute," said Withers, pointing from the doorway out into the open. "Not very pretty, is he?"

Marian peeped out from behind the trader to see a villainous looking little Indian, black almost, round-faced, big-nosed, with the boldest, hardest look she had ever seen on a human being's face. He wore a high-crowned, conical-shaped sombrero, with a wide, stiff brim. It was as black as his hair and ornamented with bright beads. His garb consisted of a soiled velvet or corduroy shirt and trousers of blue jeans. His silver-dotted belt held a heavy gun. A shiny, broad, silver bracelet circled a sinewy wrist, from which hung a leather quirt. Altogether this Indian was not a pleasant and reassuring sight for the eyes of a city girl new on the desert. Yet he fascinated Marian.

"Well, what do you think of him?" asked Withers, smiling.

"I'm not especially taken with him," replied Marian with a grimace. "I prefer to see him at a distance. But he looks—like —"

"Like the real thing. You bet he is. But to give the devil his due, this Pahute hasn't done a mean or vicious thing since Nophaie came back. The Indians tell me Nophaie has talked good medicine to him."

"What is this medicine?" asked Marian. "The Indians make medicine out of flowers, roots, bark, herbs, and use it for ills the same as white people do. But medicine also means prayer, straight talk, mystic power of the medicine men of the tribe and their use of sand paintings."

"What are they?"
"When the medicine man comes to visit a sick Indian he makes paintings on a flat rock with different colored sands. He paints his message to the Great Spirit. These paintings are beautiful and artistic. But few

white people have ever seen them. And the wonderful thing is that the use of them nearly always cures the sick Indian."

"Then Nophaie has begun to help his people?"

"He shore has. Do you want me to send a message or letter to Nophaie by this Pahute? He'll ride out tomorrow."

"No; I'd rather go myself," replied Marian. "Mrs. Withers said you'd take me. Will you be so kind?"

"I shore'll take you," he rejoined. "I've got some sheep out that way, and other interests. It's a long ride for a tenderfoot. When would you like to start?"

"Just as soon as you can."

"Day after tomorrow then. But don't set your heart on surprising Nophaie. It can't be done."

"Why? If we tell no one?"

"Things travel ahead of you in this desert. It seems the very birds carry news. Some Indian will see us on the way, ride past us, or tell another Indian. And it'll get to Nophaie before we do."

"What will get to Nophaie?"

"Word that trader Withers is riding west with Benow di Cleash. Shore won't that make Nophaie think?"

"He'll know," said Marian tensely.

"Shore. And he'll ride to meet you. I'll take you over the Pahute trail. You'll be the first white person except myself ever to ride it. You must have nerve, girl."

"Must I? Oh, my vaunted confidence! My foolish little vanity! Mr. Withers, I'm scared of it all—the bigness, the strangeness of this desert, of what I must do."

"Shore you are; that's only natural. Begin right now. Use your eyes and sense. Don't worry. Take things as they come. Make up your mind to stand them. All will be well."

(Continued in the December Home Journal)

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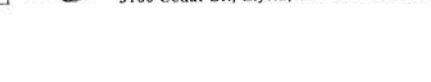
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The Vanishing American

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, kidnaped 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.

December, 1922

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.

(Continued on Page 190)



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 slow 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—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 acid 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.

(Continued on Page 192)





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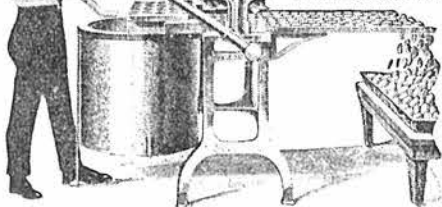
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The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 190)

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 Pabute 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 velvet, 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?

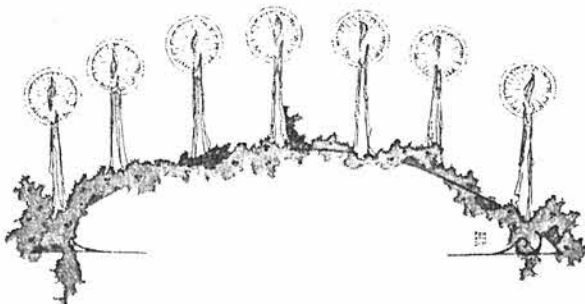
"I'M GLAD for what you think I am," she said, stepping to his side. "For what you say I do—and I want to—to make you happy."

"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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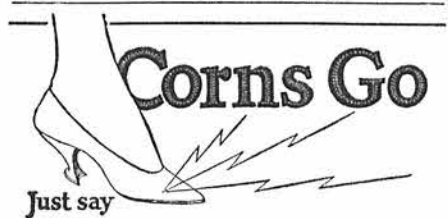
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The Vanishing American

(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 drawled, "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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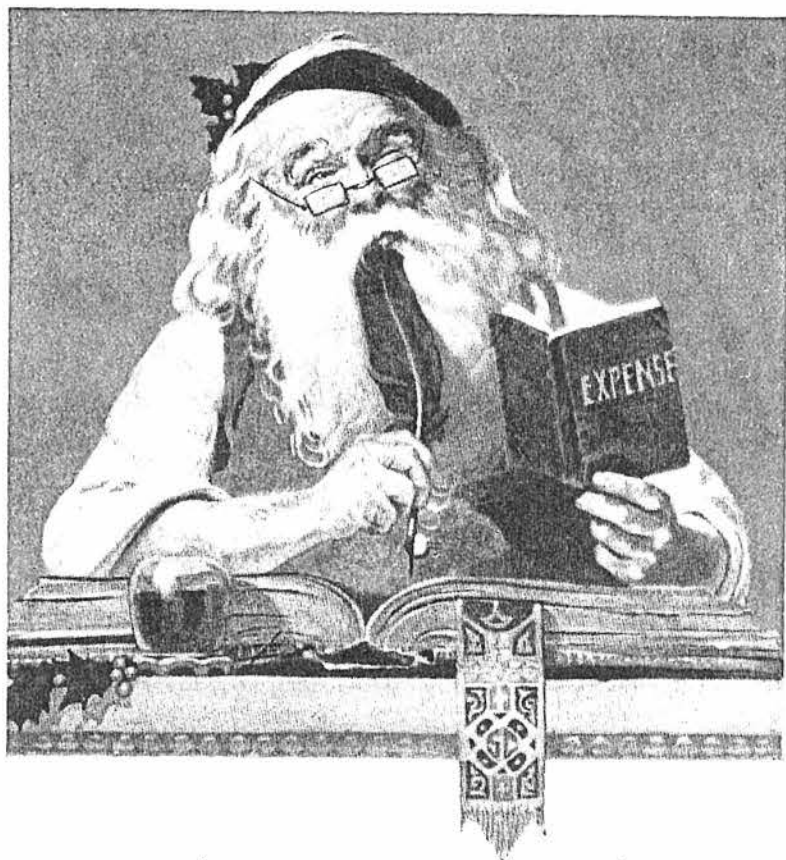
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The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 193)

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."

A TOUCH 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 prog-

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

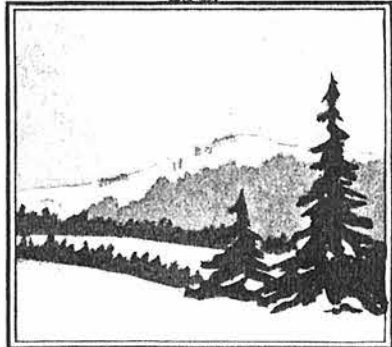
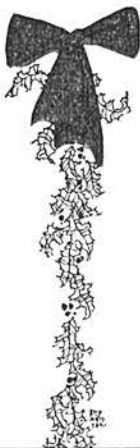
"My flock," replied Nophaie, answering Marian's quick look.

"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

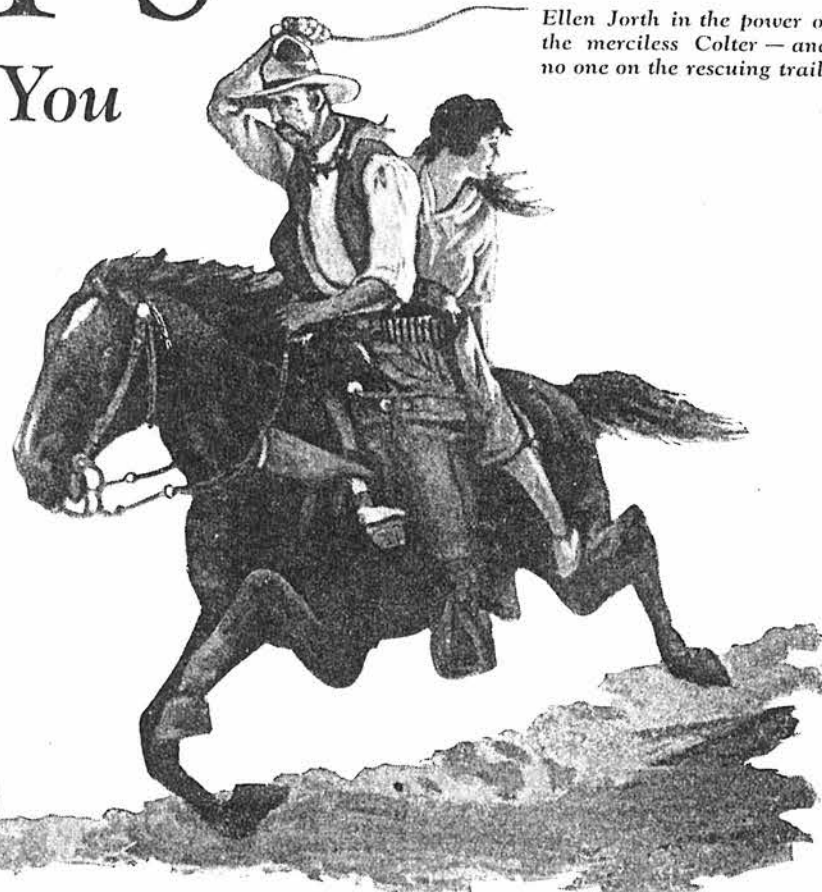
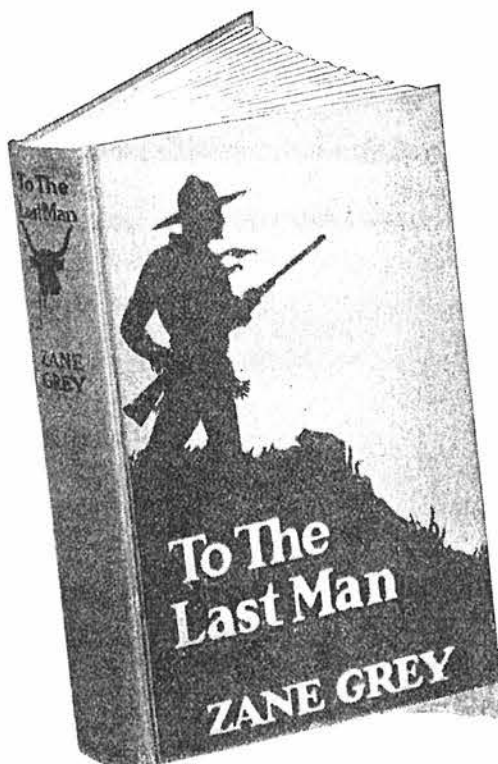
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The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 194)

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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The Vanishing American

(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 Nophaic.

HIS action designated an Indian blanket and a sheepskin with woolly side up—permost. Obviously the former was Nophaic's coverlet, and the latter was his mattress. Marian thought of the hard bed of the Spartans. So Nophaic 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 Nophaic'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. Nophaic 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 Nophaic 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 tonight 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."

"Nophaic, 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!"

Nophaic'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 Nophaic.

"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 Nophaic.

"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 Nophaic 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 Nophaic 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 Nophaic. "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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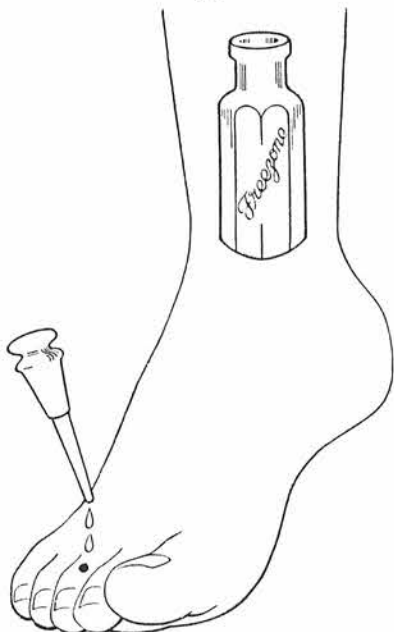
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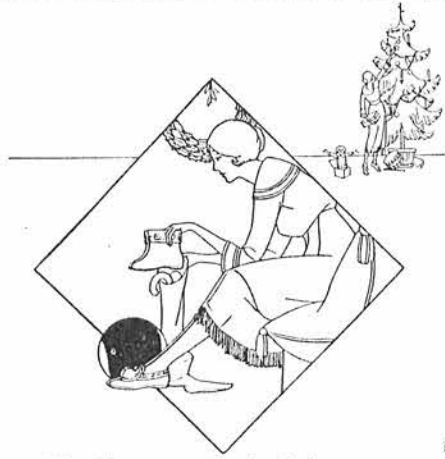
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The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 198)

Blue clouds, with your leggings let me walk,
Blue clouds, with your shirt let me walk,
Blue clouds, 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 infolded 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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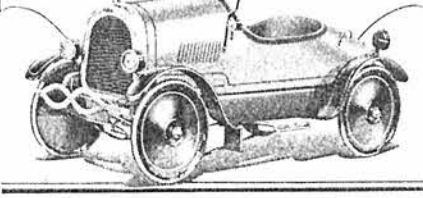
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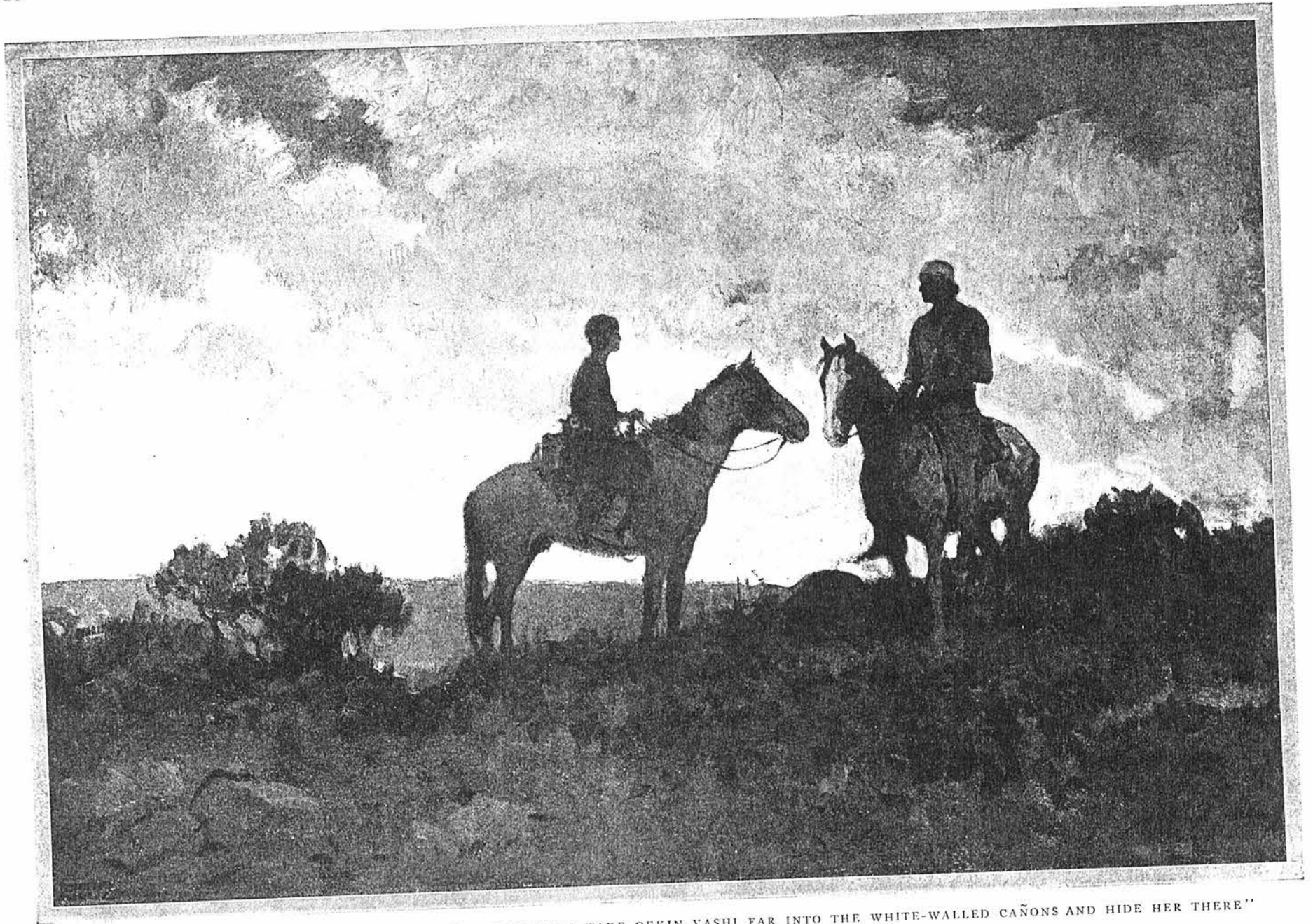
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"DAUGHTER OF DO ETIN, LISTEN," HE SAID. "NOPHAIE WILL TAKE GEKIN YASHI FAR INTO THE WHITE-WALLED CAÑONS AND HIDE HER THERE"

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 his people. Nophaie, an Indian lad, kidnaped 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 persuades Withers to start with her at once for Nophaie's camp. After a long ride over beautiful mountain trails she finds Nophaie waiting; he had heard of her coming. She sees the wildness, the grandeur of the Indians' country. Nophaie shows her his hogan, tells her how he lives. They take a walk at sunset, and Nophaie tells her he has no faith; that the religion of the white man fails and the faith of the Indian has somehow been lost to him. Marian is shocked. She tells him she will bring him back to the white man's religion. Nophaie tells her of her difficulties to come with intrigues by the government agents. They agree to meet clandestinely, to escape trouble with the suspicious agents.

VIII

THAT year the summer rains came late, just in time to save the upland country from severe drought. Nophaie's people all attributed the coming of the black thunderstorms and the down-dropping veils of moisture and the rainbows curving over the desert, to the efficacy of their dancing prayers. But Nophaie could not believe this.

Up under the brow of Nothis Ahn these rains were cold even in August. Sometimes sleet fell, pattering on the sage, whitening the flat rocks and patches of red earth, and crusting the woolly backs of the sheep. Maahesenie, who tended the flock during Nophaie's frequent absences, was exposed to these cold rains. Indian as he was, he did not seek shelter. The rain was good, even if it was cold. And when Nophaie returned from Kaidab he found his only relative seriously ill of a malady that had grown with the years.



Tending the flock in the rain and sleeping in wet clothes had brought back Maahesenie's rheumatism in more severe form. Nophaie feared that he had come home too late. Maahesenie, relieved of his responsibility, went to his bed a very sick man. Nophaie divided his time between Maahesenie and the sheep.

One day nearly a month after Maahesenie had been stricken, a Pahute rode into camp with a letter for Nophaie. The Indian had ridden from Kaidab in ten hours. Nophaie took the letter, which had been typewritten, and was without address or signature. Yet, singular at first glance as this seemed, he knew who had written it and that it was important. Rewarding the Indian courier and asking him to stay, Nophaie repaired to the solitude of his favorite cedar and spread out the letter.

I have ridden three times to our meeting place, once each week on the day set, and have been disappointed and worried and distressed that you did not come.

Today I met Withers at the trading post and he told me Maahesenie was dying. I am very sorry, yet relieved in that I now know what has detained you. Withers said he would wait while I wrote this letter to you and take it to Kaidab and send it to you by special messenger. He is very kind and good. You may trust him in every way. So I am writing here in the trader's office, pretending the letter is for Mrs. Withers. Believe me, caution is imperative. I am already deeply involved in the secret underhand workings of this dreadful place.

Do not send me any letters through the mail. If you cannot come to meet me—and



I'll ride out every week on the day we set—do not send messages unless in care of Withers. It is not safe. My mail from the East has been opened. I doubt not that my letters home have been opened. Some of them were never received by my aunt and friends. At first I put this down to the idle curiosity and jealousy of the clerk in the post office. He had done me the honor to press his attentions upon me, which I didn't accept. But I know now that he is merely a tool of Blucher. No letter of importance sent East would ever get by this agent unless favorable to him and Morgan. I suspected this, and fortunately I have written nothing home except my own personal interests, mostly concerning people there.

Two weeks ago Blucher asked me to do office work for him several hours each day after my regular duty at the school. I thought it policy to oblige him, but I insisted on one afternoon for myself, which of course is the time I am to meet you. Blucher apparently thinks well of me. I heard him arguing with Morgan. He called me a tow-headed doll and laughed at Morgan's advice to watch me. He said I minded my own business and did not hobnob with the men or gossip with the women. Then he heard me set Friel right. You remember the annoyance this Friel caused me. Since I have been in the office Friel has had more opportunity to approach me. He is vile. I am afraid, my friend, that I shall have to ask you to scalp him. To my mind that is exactly what he deserves. The Indians hate him. Never in a hundred years would they believe one word he says. How can these men lie to the Indians, cheat them in money deals, steal their water and land, and expect them to believe what they say? They do worse than these things, as you knew and told me, and which I could not believe until I got the confidence of the Indian girls. I can speak Nopah fairly well now and understand even better.

This duty in Blucher's office has been prolific of much information for me. I see, hear and read a great deal more than my work calls for. I feel justified in this. I am out here in your interest. Blucher is German. He is deeply concerned over the war in Europe. He hates England and he hates America. I know how to serve him to my own interest. But Morgan is suspicious of everyone. He really is in control here. He boasts of having put the "steam roller" under eleven former superintendents of this reservation. How he has power to do this I have begun to find out.

When any new government employe comes here Morgan loses no time in his peculiar politics. By his lies and persuasions he influences the newcomer to his side, and if he is successful, which he usually is, he proceeds at once to



lay some kind of a trap for that person. A frame-up, you know, instigated by him and carried out by his henchmen. If he fails, then he at once takes violent hatred of this interloper and begins the same kind of cunning to have him or her ousted. He really has something he can use against Blucher. That would not be difficult for an intelligent person to find.

For instance, the half-breed Noki Indian, Sam Ween, is Blucher's interpreter. Blucher pays Sam twenty dollars a month, when he pays him at all. I asked Sam. And I saw in government papers the amount appropriated by the Government for Blucher's interpreter.

But Morgan has something more on Blucher than the little matter of stealing from Uncle Sam.

All of which leads to the point of this letter. Morgan's most important emissary is Miss Herron, the matron of the Indian girls. I have won the love and trust of Gekin Yashi. She is not only the little beauty her name signifies, but she is sweet and good. I have talked much with her, and though very shy and afraid, she tells me her troubles. Miss Herron hates her. And my interest in Gekin Yashi has incurred Miss Herron's enmity towards me.

Now the situation as regards Gekin Yashi is this. Morgan speaks to us of Gekin Yashi's intelligence and says that he could teach her. But Morgan's interest in Gekin Yashi is really something far different.

Do Etin, the father of Gekin Yashi, will not allow her to go to Morgan's house. There is no rule to enforce this, and both Morgan and Blucher are angry at Do Etin. Morgan has influenced Blucher to have a rule enforced whereby Indian girls are compelled to go to Morgan's chapel. This rule, I understand, is about to go into effect. I fear it will cause trouble among the Indians.

But the rule will come and Morgan will have his way. Gekin Yashi is so afraid of Morgan that she actually shakes when I speak of him. The only way I can see to save Gekin Yashi is for you to steal her away from this school and hide her in one of those wild cañons until Morgan forgets her. This will save Gekin Yashi, but not the next little Indian girl who will be unfortunate enough to attract this man. You understand, of course, that you incur risk in attempting such a plan. Risk of your life! Risk not only of jail but of your life! Mine may be a foolish plan, for it is certain that Indians in Morgan's employ could track you wherever you hid Gekin Yashi. But I could not think of any other plan.

This is a long letter, my friend, and Withers is waiting. My personal messages must go until I see you, which I hope indeed will be soon.

NOPHAIE pondered over this letter and reread it only to become more somber and thoughtful. The plan suggested by Marian had occurred to him also, and now in the light of her revelation he decided he would risk stealing Gekin Yashi from the school.

But he was tied here to the bedside of his dying relative and there appeared to be every reason to hurry to Mesa. It could not be done. Maahesenie was closer to him than Gekin Yashi.

Nophaie waited, with his burdened heart growing heavier, and while shepherding the flock he revolved in mind plans to rescue Gekin Yashi and safely hide her. It would be comparatively easy to hide her from white men, but almost impossible from Indians. Yet he knew that he must try.

Maahesenie died one night while Nophaie slept. Although he had expected this, the actual fact was a shock. More of Nophaie's Indian nature came out in the presence of death.

His people were all afraid of a dead man. And from this stiff, ghastly mask of bronze the spirit had fled. Where had it gone? Where was it now? The mystery of death was as great as the mystery of life. Were not the strange beliefs

and faiths of the Indian as credible as those of the white man? But here, in this solemn stirring moment, as in all the hours past, Nophaie felt aloof from the soul of this dead Indian.

Nevertheless, Nophaie paid stern and strict observance to the burial custom of the tribe. Indians of his own tribe came to view Maahesenie, but left him for Nophaie to bury.

At dawn the morning after the burial Nophaie rode out into the sage on the trail to Mesa. A few miles from the eastern slope of Nothis Ahn he sheered off the trail to visit a Pahute camp, where he engaged a boy to tend his sheep during his absence. His route then lay through the range of the prosperous old Nopah chief whom Withers had accused of salting wool. Etenia, the Wealthy, had words of sympathy for Nophaie's loss of kin, and forgot his reason for discord. Nophaie did not tarry there long. He saw anew, however, the evidences of Etenia's wealth—a stone hogan of imposing proportions, corrals and cultivated fields, thousands of sheep and droves of horses, water in abundance, and all

in his mind by words of English. For long he had striven to conquer this. But it was impossible.

Nophaie did not easily yield the supremacy to the white man. There were many ways in which he believed an Indian superior. He thought of Maahesenie's resignation to death and how he had lain down to meet it. "My son," he had said to Nophaie, "do not stand over me to obstruct the sunlight. Go out with the sheep. My day is done. Leave me alone to die." How incalculably more selfish and ignoble the custom of the white man! Nophaie remembered a time in the East, at Cape May, when a dying man was kept alive for five days after he should have been dead. The Indian knew better than that. He had no fear of death. The mystic future held its promise. Life hereafter was a fulfillment of the present. The white man hated to let go his hold on material pleasures; the red man loved the belief of his spiritual metamorphosis.

Eight hours' steady riding across country brought Nophaie to the crest of the great plateau from which he saw the long green lines of poplar trees that marked the location of Mesa. Far removed was this country from the sage uplands surrounding Nothis Ahn. Bare yellow sandy desert, spotted with pale green, and ridged by lines of blue rock, swept and rolled away on the three sides open to his gaze. Heat veils rose waveringly from sand and smoke; and the creamy white clouds rolled low along the dark horizon line.

SOME wind-carved rocks of yellow marked the spot Nophaie and Marian had chosen as a rendezvous. There was cool shade, and shelter from rain or blowing sand, and a vantage point from which to watch. Marian was not there, nor did her white mustang show anywhere down the long bare slope toward the poplars. The time was about the middle of the afternoon, rather early for Marian. Therefore Nophaie composed himself to wait.

By and by his vigil was rewarded by sight of a white horse gliding out from the green and heading toward his covert. Nophaie watched Marian come. She had learned to sit a saddle like an Indian. Nophaie felt the shadows lift from his soul, the doubts from his mind. Always, sight of her uplifted him. More and more she was a living proof of many things—the truth of love and loyalty, the nobility of the white woman, the significance of life being worth while for any human creature, the strange consciousness of joy in resistance to evil, in a wholesome fight for others, in something nameless and hopeful, as deep and mystical as the springs of his nature.

How could he be a coward while this white woman loved him and worked to help his people? She was a reward to think evil was to do evil. For the hour then Nophaie knew he would be happy. He knew, too, that he would part from her strengthened. Nothing could cheat him out of the wonder of her presence.

At last she rode into the lane between the yellow rocks, and waved a gauntleted hand to him upon the shady ledge above. Dismounting she tied the white mustang to a knob



"YES, BENOW DI CLEASH," REPLIED NOPHAIE, "BUT SOME DAY THE SAVAGE AND CIVILIZED MAN IN ME WILL COME TO STRIFE"

around the wide, cedared, rolling country hogans of his people. Etenia had all any Indian could wish for. Yet the only thing for which Nophaie envied him was that simple faith which had been handed down from his forefathers.

Nophaie loped along the sage trail, with the cool fragrance of the desert in his face, the wide, green-clumped expanse of purple open to his eye. How immeasurably far apart he felt from the people who lived there! Every day brought more bitter proof. When he conversed with Indians he used their language, but when he thought, his ideas were expressed

(Continued on Page 139)

The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 21)

of rock, and climbed to Nophaie's retreat. He helped her up the few steep steps, and holding her hand, he knew she would have come straight into his arms if he had held them out to her. Never before had he so yearned to infold her, to yield to a strong shuddering need of her. But he owed her proof of her ideal of the Indian. She had once called him her noble red man. Would he let any white man be more worthy of that word?

But five weeks had changed Benow di Cleash. Did the light colored blouse and divided skirt, instead of the usual mannish riding garb, constitute all the difference? As she talked on and on Nophaie listened and watched her. What had become of the fair skin, so like the pearly petal of a sago lily? Her face was now golden brown, and thinner, and older, too, except when she smiled. Only the blue eyes and hair of gold now held her claim to Benow di Cleash. Her form had lost something of its former fullness. The desert summer was working upon her; the hot winds were drying up her flesh. And in repose of face there was a sadness that added new beauty and strength to her. Nophaie could accept this devotion to him and his people only because he saw that she was growing to nobler womanhood. In years to come she would look back upon this time and Nophaie without regret. He had vision to see that, and it permitted him to be happy with her.

THEN she passed from news of her friends in the East to matters at Mesa, and naturally, as was her way, she told humorous things that had delighted her in the Indian children. The school brought out as many funny things as pathetic. Nophaie was pleased with the progress she had made in the Nopah language, and yet he had a strange and unaccountable regret at hearing her speak it. From the tales of the Indian children she shifted to an account of the intrigue at Mesa, which was now involving friends she had made there, a young Texan and his wife, who were in trouble owing to the machinations of Blucher and Morgan.

Nophaie knew the Texan, whose name was Woltersen. He was a government stockman and his duties were to ride out over the ranges to instruct the Indians in the care of sheep and horses and cattle. What little Nophaie had heard from the Indians about Woltersen was all to his credit. This heightened Nophaie's interest in what Marian had to say, and he soon gathered the truth of Woltersen's case, which held something of significance for him.

Woltersen had come to the desert in search of health. He was a cattleman and received an appointment from the Government to be inspector of Indian stock on the ranges adjacent to Mesa. Being a young man of fine Southern family and highly recommended, he at once incurred the dislike of the superintendent. When he asked Blucher what his duties would be, that individual succinctly replied "Ride around," and that comprised all the directions he ever received. He mastered the work solely by his own energies. Morgan solicited the good offices of Woltersen through Miss Herron's overtures to Mrs. Woltersen.

As soon, however, as the Woltersens discovered conditions patent to all old residents of Mesa, those overtures fell flat. Then began the insidious underhand undermining work against Woltersen.

"AFTER I've gone today," concluded Marian, "I want you to ride down and see Woltersen. Then ask the Indians about him. Soon Blucher will trump up some charge against him and call an investigation. Unless Woltersen can disprove it he will be dismissed. Then we'd lose a good friend of the Indians. Woltersen has befriended

Do Etin. That is the real cause of Morgan's enmity."

"And—Gekin Yashi?" asked Nophaie, in slow reluctance.

"Safe and well, still," replied Marian in glad eagerness. "The mills have been grinding as of old, but not so fast."

Morgan has been to Flagstaff town. Blucher has been wrangling all his time with his henchmen, Jay Smith, and Ruhr and Glendon. I don't hear much, but enough. It's mostly about Woltersen now, and something about the land and water mess stirred up by the Nokis at Copenwashie. Friel has obtained a patent to the land once owned or at least controlled by the Nokis. Blucher, of course, aided Friel in this deal, but now, true to the twist in his brain, he is sore about it."

"I HAVE had talks with Gekin Yashi. She is ready to run off. We contrived to get permission for her to visit her father. Woltersen is dipping Do Etin's sheep and this morning Gekin Yashi rode out to the hogan. She's there now and will remain over Sunday. You can go out there at night and make your plans to meet her as she rides back alone."

"Do Etin will be glad," said Nophaie. "Is Woltersen in the secret?"

"Yes, he approves. But we must not let him have a hand in it."

"I shall take Gekin Yashi to a Pahute in the Valley of Silent Walls," rejoined Nophaie thoughtfully. "But few Nopahs know this place. It is down under the west side of Nothis Ahn, deep in the cañons."

"Valley of Silent Walls," mused Marian. Then she flashed at Nophaie: "Will you take me there some day?"

"Yes, Benow di Cleash," replied Nophaie. "But you run a danger."

"Of what—whom?"

"Me!"

Marian flushed under her golden tan and her eyes searched his. Nophaie dropped his gaze, that alighting upon her brown hand, saw it tremble and then clench at her glove.

"You—you are jesting."

"No. I think I am telling the truth," responded Nophaie. "Some day the savage and civilized man in me will come to strife. My Valley of Silent Walls is the most enchanting, the wildest and most beautiful place, the loneliest in all this desert. Walls of white and red, so high you cannot see their rims, running snow water, flowers and grass and trees! If I ever got you down there I might never let you go."

"WELL, you frighten me," laughed Marian. "I see that you still retain some of your brutal football training. But if all goes well, take me there to visit Gekin Yashi, will you?"

"Could you get away from here?"

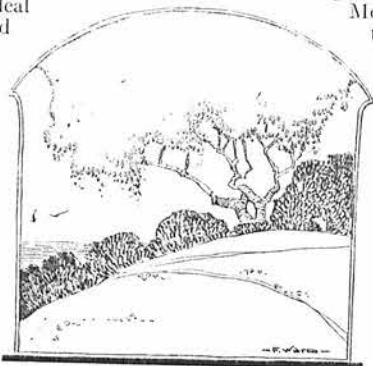
"Nophaie, I will never be permitted to work long at Mesa," replied Marian. "Some day Blucher will awake to my two-faced nature. For I have certainly used woman's wits to fool him."

"Well, then I will take you to my Valley of Silent Walls."

Marian placed her hand on Nophaie's and looked up into his face and then down, with evident restraint of emotion. "Nophaie, Gekin Yashi loves you."

"That child! Why, she has seen me but a few times," protested Nophaie, painfully reminded of Do Etin's proposal that he marry his daughter.

"No matter. She has seen you enough. These Indian girls mature early. Gekin Yashi is not yet fifteen, but she is a woman in feeling. I think she is very lovable and sweet. She is quite the best scholar in the school. I have spent all the time possible



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Features on the Way

Here are just a few of the articles already planned for early issues; they will give some idea of the sort of material you can expect: Are You Yoked to a Scrubbing Brush? Why I Went in for Dairying; Wash Day at the Frahm's; Small Time Savers; The Country "Literary"; The Farmer's Wife Protests; Kitchen Metals; Women on the School Board; My Pioneer Grandmother; Good Food in New Forms; What a Tenant Faces; Rice for Fat Folk; Easing the Pain; Mirror Mothers; Mother Takes Off Her Apron;

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(Continued on Page 140)

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The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 139)

with her. Believe me, Morgan is not the only venomous reptile that threatens the girl. Gekin Yashi is Indian clear through, but she has sense. She likes the ways of good white women. I have taught her that when a white woman loves she holds herself sacred for the man who has won her."

"Marian, are you thinking that the way for me to save Gekin Yashi is to marry her?" inquired Nophaie.

"It might—be," murmured Marian tremulously, "if—if you —"

"But I do not love her, and I cannot marry her," declared Nophaie.

After that no more was said about Gekin Yashi. Nophaie felt a great throb of pity and tenderness for this white girl. How she inspired him to mastery of self, to beat down the base and bitter! Something of gayety and happiness came to her in the closing moments of that meeting.

Then the time arrived for her to go. Lightly touching his face with her hand she left him, to run down the declivity and mount her mustang. Once, as she was galloping away, she turned to look back and wave to him. Her hair flashed gold in the sun. Nophaie watched her out of sight with emotion deep and strange, half grief for the fate that was his, half exaltation that, miserable and lost Indian as he was, this woman of an alien white race made him a king.

IX

AT THE upper end of the long, poplar-lined avenue that constituted the only street in Mesa, the Woltersons occupied a little stone house built by the earliest founders of the settlement. A grove of cottonwood trees surrounded a tiny reed-bordered lake where ducks swam and swamp blackbirds and meadowlarks made melody. Here was rich, dark green verdure and cool shade and a sweet drowsy breath of summer blowing in from the hot desert.

On the other side of the Woltersons house lay a garden that bordered on the spacious playground of the Indian school.

Nophaie watered his horse at the thin, swift stream that ran down from the lake through Woltersons' garden and along the fence to the orchards. The sun was westerling low and the heat of the day was dying. Down at the other end of the long avenue Nophaie espied Indians and mustangs in front of the trading post. He went into the open gate of the Woltersons place and let his horse graze on the rich grass bordering the irrigation ditch.

"Howdy, Nophaie," drawled a voice. "Shore am glad to see you."

Nophaie returned the greeting of the Texan, speaking in his own tongue. Few white men on the reservation had ever heard him speak English. Woltersons was a young man, tall and lithe, with a fine, clean-cut face, bronzed by exposure. He did not appear to be rugged. His high-heeled horseman's boots and big sombrero were characteristically Texan as his accent.

Nophaie dropped the bridle of his horse and took a seat near where Woltersons was damming up an intersection from the irrigating ditch. Indians rode by down the avenue. A freighter's wagon, drawn by six mustangs and loaded with firewood, lumbered along with the driver walking. Bees hummed somewhere in the foliage.

"THE Nopahs think well of you and your work," said Nophaie presently. "You're the first stockman they ever praised. If you are brought before an investigating committee I'll get Etenia, and Toloniah bi Dony, and several more influential chiefs to testify for you."

"Shore, that's fine, Nophaie," declared Woltersons. "I'm giving you a hunch I'll need them."

Nothing was said about Gekin Yashi. Woltersons spoke of his plans for dipping

sheep over the ranges as far as Etenia's place. Nophaie and the Pahutes of that upland country must drive their flocks down there. Grass on the lowlands had begun to grow, so that the Nopahs would not have to range so far. Then Woltersons informed Nophaie that the Government was going to instigate a blood test of cattle and horses, as the latter especially showed evidence of tuberculosis.

"ANY horse or steer that has become infected will have to be shot," said Woltersons seriously. "Now isn't it going to be hard to convince the Indians of the necessity of this?"

"Yes, I'm afraid it can't be done," replied Nophaie. "Is there a real necessity of testing stock for this disease?"

"I think so. I have sent my approval to Washington. But I dislike the prospect of trouble with the Indians. Nophaie, would you be willing to help me by explaining this test to your people?"

"I will if you can convince me of its need."

"Well, when the order comes I'll ride first to your range, and you shall see me make tests. Has Etenia many cattle?"

"Not a great many. They are all healthy."

"Nophaie, they may look healthy and still have tuberculosis."

At this juncture the little Indian boys and girls began to pour out of the big red dormitory like a stream of blue gingham. Nophaie noted that only the children from three years to five or six years of age appeared to be in evidence. They were a scampering, silent little horde, playing without the noise characteristic of white children. They spread over the playground to the number of several hundred, making a scene of color and animation. Several little boys came along to peer through the wire fence at Nophaie. They looked healthy and well cared for, and certainly were cleaner than any Indian boys he had seen. How stolid they seemed! They gazed at Woltersons with blank black eyes and at Nophaie with scarcely more of interest.

Nophaie also observed that two of the school-teachers were out on the grounds with the children, but he did not recognize them.

Then Mrs. Woltersons appeared, coming into the garden wearing gloves and carrying a trowel. She was a striking young woman, dark as an Indian, beginning to show the effect of desert wind and heat. She had a pleasant greeting for Nophaie. He saw her glance run over the three Indian boys and beyond to the playground as if she were looking for someone.

"Here comes Marian with Evangeline," she said as if pleased.

IT WAS then Nophaie saw Marian leading a little Indian girl towards them, and he got the impression that this meeting was not as accidental or casual as might appear to others.

The two teachers were watching Marian. And Nophaie, with his sharp eyes, caught a glimpse of a woman's face in a window of a house across the avenue. This appeared a busier thoroughfare now. Indians were riding out towards the desert. Some of the older schoolboys were playing ball. Three Indian workmen passed by carrying long shovels over their shoulders.

"Shore," drawled Woltersons with eyes on the avenue, "and here comes the champion liar of the reservation."

"Bob, don't say that," said Mrs. Woltersons quickly. "Somebody might hear you. The very trees have ears, not to speak of these Indian boys."

Nophaie saw a heavily built young man, roughly clad, typically western in corduroys and boots and sombrero, swinging with rider's gait up the avenue. Upon sighting the group in the garden he swerved, and tilting back his sombrero he lounged against the gate post. His face was brown and broad,



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The Vanishing American

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rather coarse, with thick lips and prominent eyes, wine dark in color.

"Howdy, folks," he said with a slow grin. "You ain't really workin'?"

"Howdy, Jay," responded Woltersen. "I don't get much time except of evenings."

"Why, you seem to have all the time there is," returned the other dryly, with satire. "And look who's here—the handsome Mrs. Bob. I calculate to find me a wife like her."

This was the first time Nophaie had ever seen Jay Smith, known as a one-time trader on the reservation and now apparently employed by Blucher. Careless, easy, cool, with his air of devilish insouciance, this leering westerner did not enhance Nophaie's respect for the white man. Sight of him, so palpably other than the good-natured friend his familiarity assumed, roused something latent and dormant in Nophaie.

"Jay Smith, you're a sad flatterer," observed Mrs. Woltersen.

"SAD? I reckon not. I'm gay," he replied, and sauntered into the garden. His bold gaze fell upon Nophaie, and he addressed him in Nopah. "Say, ain't this the Carlisle Injun?" he inquired of Woltersen, seeing that Nophaie paid no attention to him.

"Carlisle? Who's that?" drawled Woltersen.

"Aw, come off," retorted Smith, in disgust. "I mean the Carlisle Indian School where this redskin went. You know as well as anybody."

"Jay, shore I don't know anything."

"Right. You spoke wisdom once. An' I reckon the less you know the safer, hey?"

Then Smith espied Marian, who had come up to the fence, leading the little Indian girl. Mrs. Woltersen went over to them, answering Marian's greeting. Smith doffed his sombrero and waved it low, crude in his assumption of a dignified salute, yet dauntless in his admiration.

"I reckon I'll hang round a while," he said, as he approached the fence and hung over it. "Why, who's this here little girl? Aren't you an Injun?"

"I'm not," piped up the little girl, in astonishingly good English. "I'm Miss Evangeline Warner."

"Ho! Ho! Listen to the little Injun girl," replied Smith, with a loud laugh.

"Jay, please don't tease Eva," said Mrs. Woltersen appealingly. "All the men tease her, just because she's so bright. But you will spoil her."

Nophaie had heard of this three-year-old prodigy. Her Indian mother had been glad to get rid of her, yet showed great pride in Eva's fame. For some strange reason the child, who was a full-blooded Indian, had taken remarkably to the white people's language and ways, and after two years hated the very name of Indian. She was a sturdy child with heavy round face and black staring eyes and straggling black hair, neither in appearance nor expression any different from the other little Indian girls. Nophaie roused to a strong interest in Eva.

"No, I'm not, I'm not," declared Eva vehemently, and she kicked at the wire fence.

"NEVER mind, Eva," said Mrs. Woltersen, as she knelt down to take the little girl's hand. "Say your go-to-bed prayer for us."

Evangeline appeared wholly devoid of the shyness characteristic of Indian children:

*"Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep.
If I should die before I wake,
I should worry!"*

Jay Smith roared his laughter and Woltersen, too, enjoyed a laugh.

"Why—why, goodness gracious!" exclaimed Mrs. Woltersen, divided between

horror and mirth. "Evangeline, where did you learn those last words?"

"From one of the men, that's sure," said Marian. "I never heard her say it that way before." Then she stooped to Evangeline and peering into the little dark face she shook her gently. "Eva, you will get spanked. Say your prayer over again, the right way. Remember—you will get spanked."

Very soberly the little Indian miss eyed her teacher:

*"Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep.
If I should die before I wake,
You will get spanked!"*

Before Marian could protest or even before the men could laugh a loud voice of peculiar timbre rang out from behind: "Shut that brat's mouth."

NOPHAIE knew before he wheeled that the speaker was Morgan. And he had closer view of this man than ever before.

"Come, Eva," said Marian hurriedly, and, rising, she led the child away.

Nophaie saw a matured man of medium height, thick-bodied, with something slack in his physical make-up. He had a smooth face, the striking features of which were pale eyes the color of ice and a long, thin-lipped, tight-shut mouth. He had a big nose, somewhat of a reddish hue, and his complexion was an olive tan, rather than the healthy bronze peculiar to the desert. Morgan seemed not to be an outdoor man. His was a strange, strong face with an intense cast of thought or will, a deeply lined face, especially in the furrowed, frowning brow. He was magnetic, but it seemed a magnetism of strife of mind, a dynamic energy of brain, a tremendous mental equipment. All about him breathed of intolerance.

"Woltersen, the agent tells me you drove Gekin Yashi home this morning," said Morgan.

"Yes, sir," replied the stockman, leaning on his shovel, and slowly lifting his gaze.

"How's come?" jerked out Morgan.

"Wal," drawled the Texan, "if you mean what did I have to do with it—Blucher gave Gekin Yashi permission to visit her father. I am dipping sheep out at Do Etin's—had to haul supplies this morning. Gekin Yashi rode on the wagon. That's all."

"Humph! When's she coming back?"

"I don't know. She said she hoped her father would keep her home."

WHEN Morgan's restless glance fell upon Nophaie it became fixed. Nophaie met that glance. One of the qualities he had not absorbed from his long association with white people was their habit of dissimulation or deceit. Something emanating from this man called to the

depths of Nophaie—not the old racial hatred of red man for white foe! It was a subtle complex instinct, born of the moment. Leisurely Nophaie rose to his tall stature, and folding his arms he gave Morgan eye for eye.

"Are you the Carlisle Indian?"

Nophaie did not feel that he was required to answer.

"Sure he's the one," put in Jay Smith.

"They call him Nophay or somethin' like."

"Can't you speak English?" demanded Morgan sharply. "Let's hear some of your eastern lingo."

"I would not have to speak English very well to do it better than you," replied Nophaie in his low, level tones, perfectly enunciated.

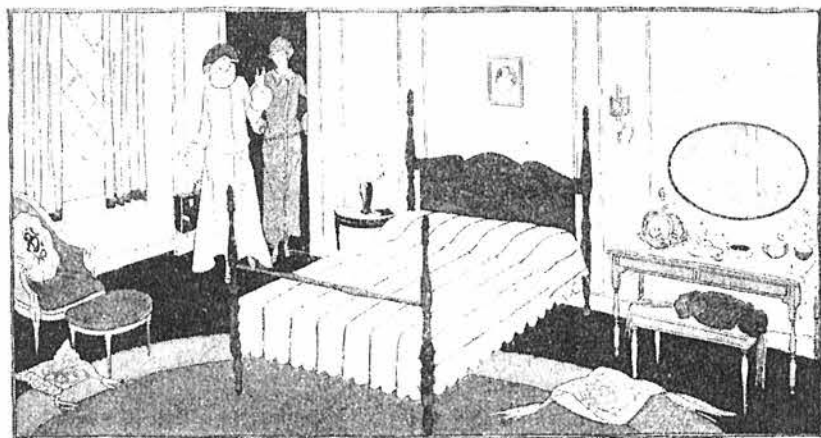
"Wha-at?" blurted out Morgan.

Nophaie eyed him with inscrutable meaning and did not vouchsafe any more.

"Have you ever been to my church?" went on Morgan.

"No."

(Continued on Page 144)



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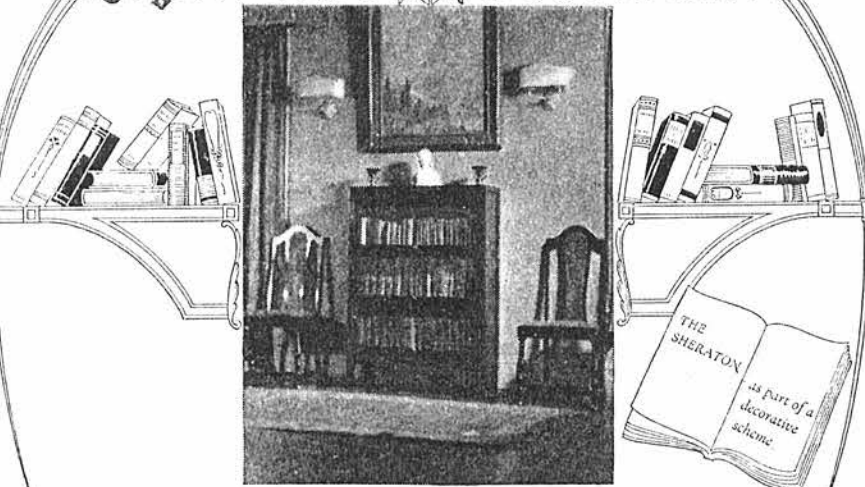
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The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 143)

"Well, then I want you to come."
"What for?" queried Nophaie.
"To hear me preach. If you speak English as well as you brag, you can carry the word home to your heathen tribe."

"We have no desire to hear it," returned Nophaie. "The Indian's own religion is infinitely better for him than the white man's."

"You think you're smart, don't you?" snarled Morgan.

"Morgan, the most stupid Indian on this reservation is smart enough to see through you."

"Bah! Your tribe is too ignorant to see anything, let alone the white man's religion."

"What do you know of the Indians out there?" demanded Nophaie, pointing to the desert. "You have never been out in the desert, unless to ride in an automobile to visit one of your friends."

SLOWLY the color left Morgan's face, and there was visible a contraction that suggested a powerful effort of will to control fury and amazement. When he had himself in hand, amazement still was his predominant expression. He had encountered an Indian beyond his wildest experience. That sudden check, that sudden restraint showed Morgan's depth. He could retrench. Nophaie read his craftiness. Also he received an impression that this man must be a composite of knave and fanatic, an unscrupulous usurper who had no illusions as to his honesty, yet was a visionary zealot.

"What do you think you know of me?" he demanded.

"Only what the Indians say—and what I can see," returned Nophaie in subtle scorn. "I have been missionary here for over fifteen years. The Nopahs are harsh. They are slow to appreciate my work."

"No, Mr. Morgan," retorted Nophaie. "You have it wrong. My tribe has been swift to appreciate your work. Don't try any of your talk on me. It is all bunk. You are not a missionary."

"Insolent heathen!" ejaculated Morgan, choking so that the thick folds of flesh on his fat neck worked up and down.

"A missionary is a man sent out by church or society to propagate religion in the sincere hope and faith that an alien race will be saved," continued Nophaie. "If you were a real man you might help the poor Indians. You might teach them better ways to build, cook, harvest, irrigate, shear their sheep and store their corn. You might teach them sanitary laws. You might, by example, show them how a white man works with his hands. But you do not work. Your hands, I see, are softer than Mrs. Woltersen's—if she will permit that doubtful compliment. No, Mr. Morgan, you are not a builder. You are a destroyer."

"And whatever else you are, it is certainly not a missionary."

MORGAN'S egotism was stronger than his restraint; his outraged sovereignty could not all in a moment be silenced. "I—I'll put you in jail," he said with hard expulsion of breath.

"What for? Telling the truth!" rejoined Nophaie in lofty scorn. "This is a free country. I am an American—an honest Indian."

"I'll haul you up for this," Morgan threatened, lifting a shaking hand.

Swift as light Nophaie leaped out of his statuesque posture, so suddenly that both Morgan and Smith recoiled, as if from attack. Certain it was that Morgan's face paled.

"Haul me into court," returned Nophaie piercingly. "Haul me before your investigation committee. Let me tell you I would like

nothing better. I will have Indians there, and real white men to listen. Do you get that, Mr. Morgan?"

But Morgan shirked an answer and, with somber glance sweeping away, he drew Smith with him and passed out of the gate, down the avenue. Smith's voice, low and hoarse, came back on the breeze.

Nophaie turned to Woltersen and his wife.

The Texan's habitual calm appeared to have been broken. "Shore, you gave it to him," he said, breathing deep. "You could have knocked him down with a feather—and me too. About the happiest few minutes I ever passed in Mesa!"

BUT Mrs. Woltersen appeared pale and distressed. "Oh, he was furious," she whispered.

"Shore, I never saw Mr. Morgan upset like that," returned her husband with a slow grin. "He just couldn't believe his ears. Nophaie, take a hunch from a Texan. Somehow and some way that man will injure you. He has had to suffer an unparalleled affront before other people. Besides he actually was afraid of you—amazed, furious, then afraid. I felt it. I've long studied this

man. And I can't prove much, but I feel he is capable of anything."

"Morgan is a coward and liar. I wonder that some Indian has not killed him long ago," said Nophaie. "It proves the patience and the restraint of my people."

"Nophaie, I've lived among violent men," rejoined the Texan soberly. "Don't underestimate Morgan. He's been long in power here. He's arrogant, malicious. I'd put nothing beyond him."

"Well, to be forearmed is half the battle," replied Nophaie as he turned to his horse. "I'll not ride to Mesa any more in daylight, or let Morgan know I'm over here."

It was long past dark when Nophaie reached the hogan of Do Etin. A fire still burned and in its flickering light sat the father of Gekin Yashi, a man little beyond middle age, stalwart, deep-chested, with massive head and great rolling eyes like those of an ox.

NOPHAIE saw that he had been expected. Bread and meat and drink were tendered him. Do Etin was not rich in horses and sheep, as were most of his neighbors, nor was he a chief. Yet he occupied a position of respect and dignity in the tribe, by reason of his intelligence. Gekin Yashi was his only child. Do Etin's range had long been a grassy flat in a shallow cañon watered by a never-failing spring. Nophaie looked round in the shadows of the hogan for Gekin Yashi and her mother, but they were not there. Perhaps Do Etin waited upon him to go into council, and had sent his women to a hogan of relatives near at hand.

By and by Do Etin gave his consent for Gekin Yashito go with Nophaie and approved of that procedure. But he doubted it would be possible to hide his daughter for long. Nophaie should not at once incur risk of government punishment by marrying Gekin Yashi or letting it be found out that he had hidden her away. Do Etin believed the white man's education good for the Indian boys and girls. It taught them to help their parents in new and better ways of living. The ruin of Indian girls by white men employed on the reservation was the basest and blackest of the many crimes the white race had perpetrated upon the red.

Do Etin went on to tell of the confessions made to him by Gekin Yashi—of Blucher's enmity toward her father, of Morgan's haranguing at her, of the matron's forcing upon

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(Continued on Page 145)

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The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 144)

her menial labors when she should have been in school, of brutality to the Indian children—how all the milk and fruit, which should have gone to the children, were used by Blucher and his associates.

Nophaie brought the information of Blucher's new ruling, the enforcement of which, soon to go into effect, meant that the Indian girls must go to Morgan's chapel to hear him preach.

Do Etin showed intense passion and vehemence. "Never shall Gekin Yashi go to Morgan!"

"DO ETIN, we are in the power of the white men," Nophaie said earnestly. "There are good white men who believe in justice to the Indian. But many of them are bad. We must look far ahead."

"The white race will never wholly absorb the red. If that were possible it might be well for both. But the Indian will merely be pushed back upon the barren lands and eventually swept off the earth. These things we strive against, as the Nokis fight being cheated out of their water and land, or as our efforts to save Gekin Yashi, these things are nothing but incidental to the whole doom of our people. We must resist, but the end will come just the same."

"Better to fight and die, as our forefathers," rolled out Do Etin sonorously.

"Yes, it would. But who will fight? Only one Indian here and there whose heart has not been crushed."

Do Etin bowed his massive dark head, and the somber firelight shadows played over his still form. "Nophaie, you come with the white man's vision of the future," he asserted.

"Yes. You were taught to see with your heart. The white education taught Nophaie to see with his mind."

"The sun of the Indian's day is setting," replied Do Etin mournfully.

IN THE clear, cool, gray dawn Nophaie waited out on the desert for Gekin Yashi, as had been planned. Eastward the dim light on sand and shrub lifted to the long blue wall of rock that cut the plateau, and above it flared the pale gold herald of sunrise. The desert was as still as death. Nophaie waited, at last fixing his gaze down the gradual slope at a point where Gekin Yashi must appear. She came into sight, a slim, dark figure on a gray mustang. Nophaie felt a thrill in that moment. Deep in him old Indian instincts survived. He was the Indian brave waiting for his Indian maiden. The desert stretched there vast and lonely. Mountain and mesa, vale and cañon, the long greasewood-dotted ridges, the innumerable stones, and the sands of the wastes, all seemed to cry voicelessly of the glory of Indian legends of love.

The sun rose, now shining upon Gekin Yashi's raven-black hair, upon the face that was like a dark flower. Two months had changed Gekin Yashi. And never had he beheld her in other than the blue gingham uniform of the government school. She wore now the velvet and silver and beads and buckskin common to her tribe. As she reined in the little mustang beside Nophaie her dusky eyes flashed one shy, frightened yet wondrously happy glance at him. Her bosom heaved. Gekin Yashi could not hide her love, perhaps did not want to. Nophaie mourned in his heart his unworthiness and the futility of his life.

"Daughter of Do Etin, listen," he said. "Nophaie is the Indian with the white man's mind. He has come back to help his people. He is Do Etin's friend. He loves Gekin Yashi—but as a brother. Nophaie will never marry."

"He will take Gekin Yashi far into the white-walled cañons, to the Pahutes, and hide her there. And always he will be her brother and try to make her as the white girl, Benow di Cleash, teaching her what is evil and what is good."

NOPHAIE rode away with Gekin Yashi to the northward, avoiding all trails, hiding as best he could their tracks, searching the desert with keen eyes for Indian riders he wished to avoid. As sunset came he turned to the hogan of a Nopah he could trust. Next day the black slopes of Nothis Ahn loomed on the horizon. Nophaie had opportunity to study the effect of the government school upon an Indian girl. Most of what Gekin Yashi had learned was good. Some of it was bad. When she went back to her home and married, to have children of her own, she and they must certainly be the better for her schooling. Nophaie saw that as a fact, provided she could return to Indian ways. In the long run many educated Indian girls and boys might change the squalor and improvidence then natural to their elders. It relieved Nophaie to settle this question in his mind. Education, then, for the Indian was good. The faults in the system and the terrible wrong to the Indian girls were due to the individuals who were in power. The simple-minded, worshipful Indian maiden, primitive in her instincts and unsustained by any moral law, was merely prey for beasts of white men. White race and red race could not mix. If the red man was inherently noble, a dreamer of the open, a fighter of imaginary foes, a warrior against warrior of another tribe, a creature not meant for civilization, then the white man was a step above the Indian in evolution, past the stage of barbarism, steeped in a material progress of the world, selfish and intellectual, more pagan than the Indian, on the decline to a decadence as inevitable as nature itself. For Nophaie saw clearly that

nature was the great law. The Indian, even the barbarian, was nearer the perfection for which nature worked so inscrutably. The individual must perish that the species might survive.

Fireflies

By CHRISTINE HAMILTON WATSON

THE little ghosts of sunshine
Come back to us at night,
And flit around the garden
Where they have played as light.

They take the shape of fireflies—
The fairies know them well;
But the fairies make a promise
That they will never tell!

And so these bits of sunlight
Pretend, in phantom play,
To be the fairies' lanterns—
These little ghosts of day.

paid for it. It was much harder to say good-by to Gekin Yashi.

"Nophaie! Nophaie!" she called as he rode away.

Her cry pierced his heart. What was it that he saw in her dusky eyes? Shadow indeed of the Indian's doom! He rode back to cheer her, to speak for once words that he could not swear were truth. Then he rode out again.

"Nophaie!" Her faint cry pealed out over the sage.

But he did not look back.

(Continued in the February Home Journal)



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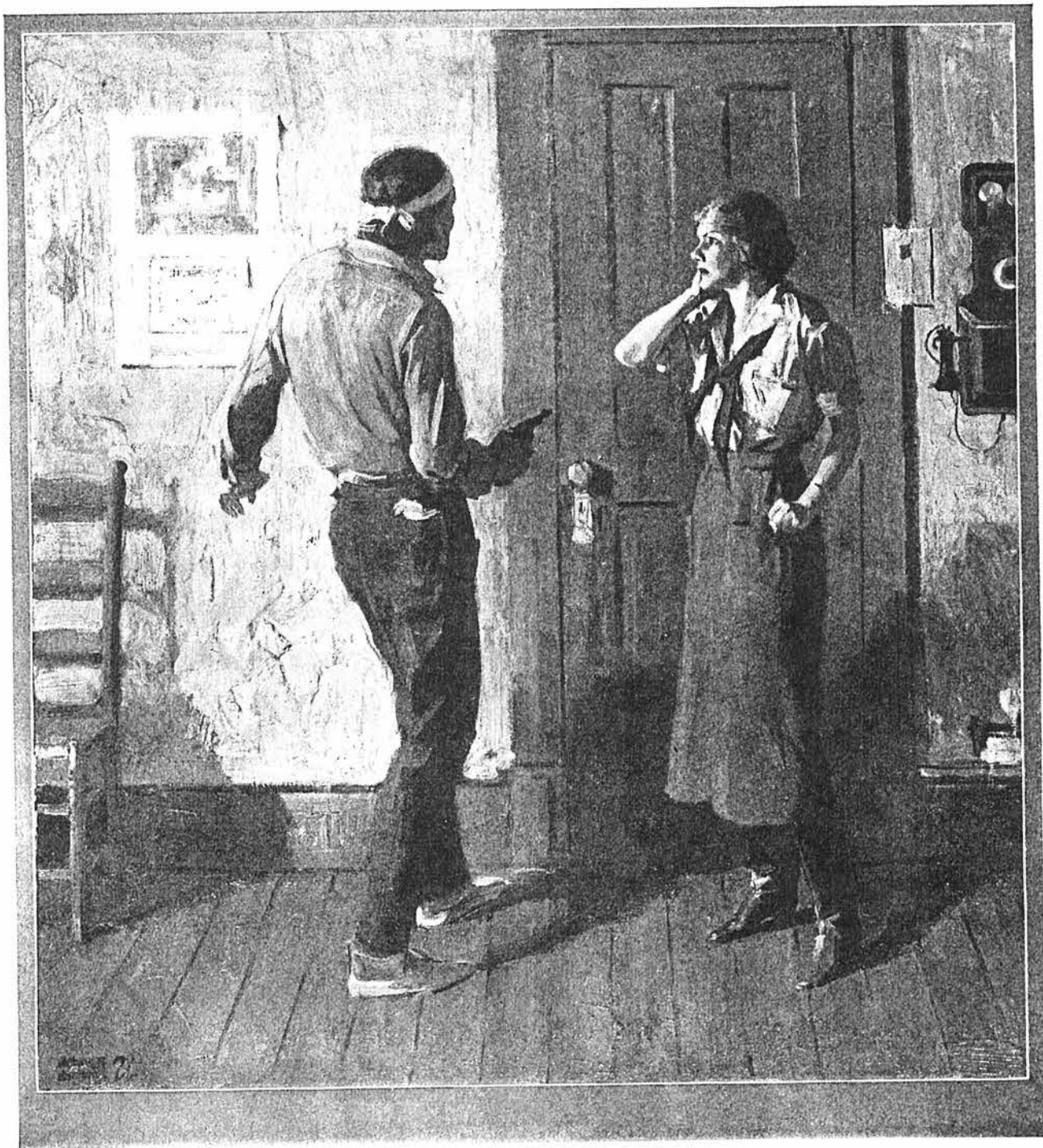
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NOPHAIE PULLED A GUN FROM SOMEWHERE, AND LUNGING AT THE LOCKED DOOR HE SHOVED HIS FOOT AGAINST IT WITH TREMENDOUS FORCE

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 his people. After he returns to his native element, Nophaie, the Indian, writes Marian Warner, whom he had met and loved, to come and help his people. She goes but finds Nophaie somewhat changed. He tells her he has no faith; that the religion of the white man fails and the faith of the Indian has somehow been lost to him. Marian is shocked. She tells him she will bring him back to the white man's religion. Nophaie tells her of her difficulties to come from intrigues by the government agents. They agree to meet clandestinely, to escape trouble with the suspicious agents. At one of these meetings Marian tells Nophaie of the temptations and dangers that beset Gekin Yashi, a very pretty Indian girl at the government school. She tells him that Gekin Yashi loves him. Nophaie plans to take her away from the school, to save her from the scheming and unscrupulous agents and to hide her with an honorable Indian family in a distant cañon fastness. On a visit to the trading post he has an unpleasant encounter with Morgan, about whom Marian has warned Nophaie. A little later Nophaie gets Gekin Yashi, the Indian girl, away from the school and takes her to her new home.

X



FROM the hour Nophaie gave up his sheep to the Pahutes in payment for their care of Gekin Yashi he became a nomad, a wanderer of the sage. With responsibility removed from his life he was no longer tied to his lonely upland home—a fact that at first seemed grievous. But he was soon to discover how his loneliness had been a kind of selfishness which had kept him aloof from his people. In the past he had spent only a small part of his time among the Indians, and that upon his rides to Kaidab or to Mesa and return. How little had he really helped them compared with what he might have done! Looked at now, he found this owing to his

love of being alone, of wandering with his sheep in the sage, of brooding over his strange life; and also to the sensitiveness with which he realized that though he could go among his people, he could not become a part of them.

A few rides from hogan to hogan showed Nophaie that his status among the Nopahs had undergone a remarkable change. Not at once did he grasp what it was to which he must attribute this welcome change. At Etenia's home, however, the subtle fact came out in the jealousy of Etenia's daughter; she and all the Nopahs had learned of his abduction of Gekin Yashi.

Nophaie was much concerned over this discovery, for it augured ill for the seclusion of the Little Beauty of the tribe. Upon consulting the old Indian he learned that the news had traveled far and wide across the ranges, from rider to rider, from hogan to hogan, from lip to lip. Soon every Nopah on the reservation would become acquainted with the great feat of Nophaie, who had stolen Gekin Yashi from the reservation. Nophaie had been born of chieftains; he was now a chief of wisdom and valor. The spirit of the Nopahs still lived. The glory and the dream were gone, but there still lived a man of the olden time, a master.

Etenia swore there was not one Indian in all the tribe who would betray Gekin Yashi. Perhaps some of the sneaking, crawling Nokis, in fear of Morgan and Blucher, would trail Gekin Yashi to her hiding place. But every Nopah gloried

in the deed of Nophaie. He was a hero. All the greater Indian now because he had used his white man's brain to save the maiden of proud Do Etin!

"Nophaie will marry Gekin Yashi now," concluded Etenia, and all his enmity seemed gone. He honored Nophaie and feasted him, and had his braves sit round the hogan fire and sing the beautiful Nopah legends of love and courage.

Nophaie was powerless to correct this impression that had gone abroad. All Nopahs, and Pahutes, too, took it for granted that the Little Beauty was destined to be Nophaie's wife. All in a day, it seemed, his fame had been transformed. Every Indian knew Nophaie's story, and all the aloofness and scorn and distrust engendered by his white education would be now as if they had never been.

IN A WEEK of riding over the country Nophaie had impressively forced upon him the truth of Etenia's judgment. Indian boy, maiden, brave, chief, medicine man—all revered him. The Nopahs had been warriors. There still survived in them worship of the strong, the courageous, the fighter. The youths of the tribe looked up to him as one whom their elders held to be a master, one whose greatness would one day be told to them.

Nophaie rode far to keep his next appointment with Marian at Mesa, and for the whole hour of their meeting he talked of the change that had come through his taking Gekin Yashi away from the power of Morgan. Telling her seemed to clarify the vague and strange conceptions of what had happened to him. Then her instant joy was uplifting.

"Nophaie, your great opportunity has come," she said, with earnest eyes on his. "You can be a power among your people. But keep secret that their faith is not yours."

"I will," he replied. In just those few words she illumined the wondering, brooding subjectiveness of his mind. Whatever he was, opportunity now smiled upon him. He would be listened to and followed.

"Now let me talk, for soon I must go," said Marian. "No one suspects you. All they know at the agency is that Gekin Yashi has disappeared. Blucher did not care. But Morgan was furious. I heard him raving. This will make bad blood between them. And Do Etin will suffer. I fear for him. He was summoned to the office, and I was there when they questioned him. What a grand old Indian! He thrilled me—so calm, so sonder and aloof before those men. He answered every question put to him, yet he seemed not to lie.

"Do you think she ran off?" demanded Morgan.

"Yes," answered Do Etin.

"Where?"

"Gekin Yashi's tracks led north off the road to Mesa, and disappeared in the sands."

"You'll help us find her, get her back?"

"No."

"Yes, you will."

"Do Etin will die before he sends Gekin Yashi to you."

"Why, you impudent heathen!" shouted Morgan. He drew back to strike Do Etin, but Blucher prevented that. And Do Etin stalked out. I have never seen a man look as Morgan did then."

"OH, I FEAR for Do Etin," Marian went on. "They will do him harm. I know it. After Do Etin left, Morgan ordered me out of the office. 'Get out, you white-faced cat,' he shouted. And he pushed me out and slammed the door. I heard him say: 'Blucher, when we find this Indian hussy you've got to enforce that rule. And if Do Etin doesn't put his thumb mark on my paper it'll go bad for him. And you'll get the steam roller! I've put that steam roller over eleven former agents of this reservation and I'm good for a full dozen.' Then they quieted down, and I could not distinguish what they said, but they were talking for a long time. I think you ought to advise Do Etin to move to the very farthest point on the reservation."

"He would not go a step," replied Nophaie.

"Then indeed I fear for him," said Marian. "It was the look of Morgan, the tone of his voice. The terrible nature of the man seemed to be unmasked. Blucher, too, is growing harder. He is under a strain. I think the war in Europe is on his mind."

Nophaie returned by way of Red Sandy, where at the trading post he was surrounded by Nopahs he had never seen before, and made to realize his importance. The trader there was buying wool at fifty cents a pound and complaining about the scarcity of it. The Indians did not need money. They were not making any blankets. Nophaie was struck with the evidence of prosperity and independence exhibited by these lowland Nopahs. None of their silver trappings was in pawn to the trader, which was an unparalleled sign of good times.

Riding off across the sand to the northward with some of these Indians, Nophaie covered twenty miles and more before he dropped the last horseman at his hogan door. Everywhere the gray-green benches were spotted with flocks of sheep and little bands of mustangs and cattle. At every hogan the women crowded to the door to peep out at him, smiling and whispering.

One old squaw elbowed her way out. "Nophaie, look at Nadglean Nas Pah," she said with great dignity, "who tended your mother at your birth. Nadglean Nas Pah washed your eyes. She lives to see you Nophaie, the Warrior. Come, feast with us."

Nophaie stayed there, keen to learn of his mother, grateful to feel stealing over him a closer touch with his people. By nightfall, when the feast was served, the hogan had no room for more Indians. They ate for hours and sang until late in the night. The occasion seemed one of honor and joy to these Indians, who delighted in Nophaie's company. Many a dusky eye shone the brighter for his words. Next morning he rode on his way more impressed than ever before with the prosperity and happiness of the Nopahs. It seemed he now could reasonably calculate that all the twenty thousand Nopahs of the reservation were on the high tide of well-being. Almost his hopes rose to a point of believing what Nadglean Nas Pah had said: "Now all is well." Only the wise old men like Etenia and Do Etin saw the future. Most of the simple-minded Indians lived on in the present, taking their wealth as a matter of their worthiness, eating, sleeping, riding, shepherding the days away, unmindful of the handwriting of the white man like a shadow on the sage.

Night overtook Nophaie on the crest of the great heaving slope that led to the upland country. He had made a short cut from Shibbet Taa, westward toward Etenia's range. His horse was weary. Nophaie turned it loose in the sage and made his bed under a thick-branched cedar. For his meal he ate meat and corn given him at the last hogan.

All that was truly Indian in him beat in his blood and stirred in his soul here in the solitude and the loneliness. He was miles from any trail he had ever ridden. Only sight of Nothis Ahn could give him his bearings.

Upon reaching the upland pasture under Nothis Ahn the next day, Nophaie herded his horses into a band and drove them out on the Pahute trail. That night he camped down in the deep cañon with the family who lived there, finding in this remote place that his fame had arrived before him. Welcome was his in every Indian habitation. At sunrise he headed his horses up the overhanging colored slope of earth and rock, out on the cedarled flats, down into the monument country where Oljato and the range of his boyhood called with poignant sorrow and regret, and across the red and yellow desert to Kaidab.

"Sure I'll buy your horses," said Withers in reply to Nophaie's query. "What will you take for them?"

Nophaie hesitated a moment, then named a figure.

"That's not enough," replied Withers. "I'll give you five more on each horse. What'll you take, cash or trade?"

NOPHAIE took part of the deal in new outfit for himself, which included a gun.

"Reckon you're going to do what Blucher told Wolterson, 'Ride around,'" said Withers with a laugh. "You can do some riding here for us. I'm glad you came. Mrs. Withers was about to send for you."

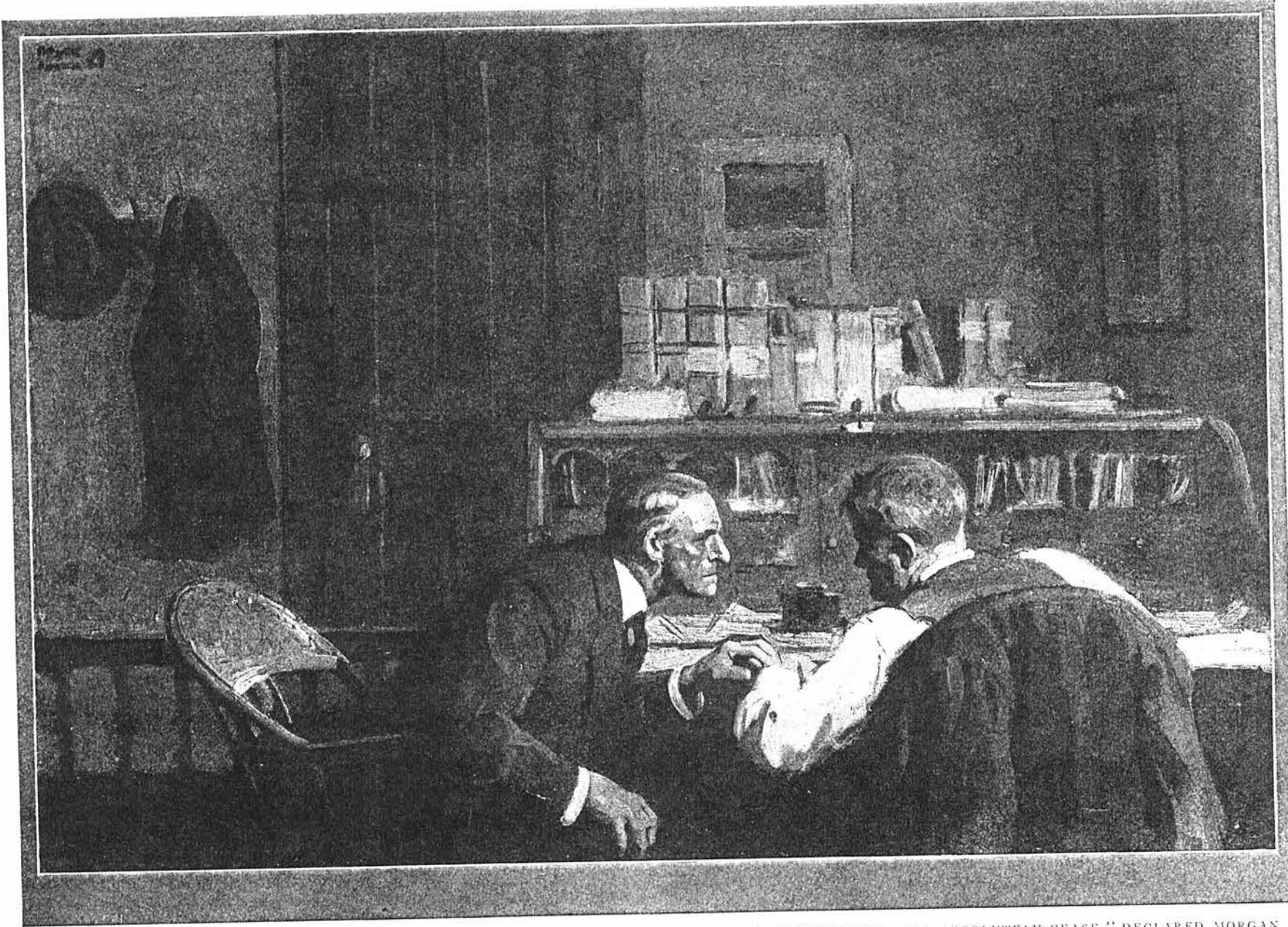
Nophaie wondered what the trader's wife could want with him, unless for something in connection with Marian. Also, he was curious to see if she had any knowledge of his rise to fame among the Indians through his taking Gekin Yashi from the school. Mrs. Withers was glad to see him and was eager to hear news of Marian, but she had heard nothing of his abducting Do Etin's daughter.

"Nophaie, I would like you to help us here in a little job," she said presently. "Do you know this half-crazy Indian we call Shoie?"

"No," replied Nophaie.

"Well, he claimed to have bewitched a squaw who died. And he has told two other squaws that he means to work his spell upon them. The first one, Nolgoshie, the loping woman, got to thinking about this, and she fell sick. I'm afraid it will kill her. I want you to help me get Shoie to say he will remove his spell. Then ride over to Nolgoshie's

(Continued on Page 163)



"IF YOU DON'T MAKE EXAMPLES OF DO ETIN AND NOPHAIE YOUR AUTHORITY ON THIS RESERVATION WILL ABSOLUTELY CEASE," DECLARED MORGAN

The Vanishing American

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hogan and tell her. The other squaw is the wife of Beleanth do de Jodie. He is a rich Nopah and a good man. I'm afraid his wife will also get to brooding about this spell."

"I can influence this Shoie," he replied, and then briefly related what had happened in Woltersen's yard at Mesa, his interview with Do Etin, his taking Gekin Yashi away into hiding, and the strange reaction of his tribe.

Mrs. Withers grew intensely animated, almost excited, and she seemed at the half-way point between elation and anxiety.

"So that was it!" she exclaimed. "I've been wondering about this sudden interest in you. Well, Nopahie, there is no other single thing you could have done to establish a great name for yourself among the Indians. That will put you high up. So in one way it is good. But it is bad in other ways. They will get Gekin Yashi. Some of the Nokis will trail her. If Blucher finds out your part in it he will arrest you. And when they do find Gekin Yashi, I wonder how Do Etin will act."

Thereupon Nopahie told of Do Etin's anger and his stern ultimatum.

"That is very bad," she said gravely. "Do Etin can't keep Gekin Yashi from going to Morgan's chapel, once that rule is put into effect. You see the Indians are really prisoners on this reservation. They have to obey. If they don't, they will be forced to. That is bad. Do Etin will never break his word or give in. It means jail for him—or worse."

NOPAHIE took some time over the selection of his outfit, especially the gun. He felt himself a novice in the use of firearms, and after considerable deliberation he decided a small weapon he could conceal if desirable, or carry on his belt, would be best for him.

"Here's your man Shoie," said Withers, coming into the post.

Shoie denied that he had cast a spell upon any squaw. But after some persuasion he confessed it, saying these women were possessed of evil spirits which he wanted to exorcise. Nopahie at length induced him to say that he would remove the spell.

Next day a messenger arrived in Kaidab with news that Beleanth do de Jodie's wife had died. This gave Nopahie a profound shock. He exerted himself in every possible way to keep Nolgoshie from finding out. In vain! Her own attendants, in spite of advice and importunity and threats, told her of the death of the other woman who had been under Shoie's evil spell.

Nolgoshie fell back into the panic of superstitious fears. Nopahie besought her with all the eloquence and persuasion he could command. She only grew worse. Then he galloped off in search of Shoie. At last he found him, on the very moment bragging he had put back the spell upon Beleanth do de Jodie's wife, and intended to do the same for Nolgoshie.

"Come back with me," demanded Nopahie, "so that Nolgoshie may hear from your own lips the spell is broken." He forced the frightened Indian to ride with him to the hogan of Nolgoshie. But they arrived too late to lend any light to that darkened brain. Nolgoshie was raving.

Nopahie drove Shoie off with a threat to kill him if ever again he claimed to cast a spell of witchcraft on an Indian. Upon Nopahie's return to Kaidab with the news Mrs. Withers expressed sorrow, but not surprise.

"I knew just that would happen," she added. "Nolgoshie will die."

And next day came the messenger with news of her death and that none of the Indians would bury her. Nopahie took this duty upon himself.

MORGAN put some letters in a drawer of his desk and locked it. His office was not an austere room by any means. Color and comfort were exceedingly in evidence.

There was a significant absence of anything of Indian design. This study had two other doors, one opening into his living room, the other out upon a back porch.

His first visitor that morning was Jay Smith. Heavy-booted, lazy-striding, he entered familiarly without removing sombrero or stopping his smoking, and his bold face wore a mask of a smile. His dusty garb attested to recent travel.

"Howdy, Morgan," he said. "I got back last night. Haven't seen Blucher yet. Reckon I wanted to see you first."

"Did you find out anything?" queried Morgan.

"Wal, yes an' no," returned Smith. "I can't prove what Blucher wants. Them Pahutes are sure close-mouthed. But I've a hunch the Carlisle Injun Nopahay had a lot to do with Gekin Yashi's disappearance."

"SO HAD I that hunch," retorted the missionary darkly. "Blucher didn't want to send you. He doesn't care, now the girl has been brought back. But I care. And I want examples to be made of Do Etin and whoever rode off with Gekin Yashi."

"Reckon you'll never prove anthin' on either Do Etin or Nopahay," said Smith dryly. "You'll just have to frame them."

"Jay Smith, I don't like your talk."

"Wal, if you don't like it you can lump it," drawled the other. "I told you I was ready to work for your interests in the dark. An' so I am. But don't call spades hearts to me. I've been ten years rustlin' round this reservation."

Morgan's pale eyes studied the blunt, nonchalant Smith with that penetrating somber gaze of a shrewd man who trusted no one. "Very well. We'll call spades spades," replied Morgan succinctly. "I need you, and you want to replace Woltersen. I'll see that Blucher puts the steam roller over him. And I'll pay you besides."

"Ahuh! Wal, we understand each other. An' is my hunch about Blucher correct?"

"What is that?"

"Wal, you wasn't particular clear, but I sort of got an idee you wanted more on Blucher, so you could steam roll him when it suited you."

Morgan deliberated. The way his hand closed tight betrayed his realization that he was dealing with a shrewd, unscrupulous man whom he must bind and hold. "You're no fool, Jay Smith. That's why I want to keep you here at Mesa. Now tell me why you believe this Carlisle Indian had something to do with Gekin Yashi's disappearance?"

"WAL, the day after she was lost I rode across the mesa," rejoined Smith. "I found where Gekin Yashi had rode off the trail. An' I searched round till I saw moccasins tracks in the sand, an' hoss tracks. I've been a hoss-tracker all my days, an' there wasn't a wrangler in my country who could beat me. I jest got down on my knees an' made a picture in my mind of them moccasin tracks an' hoss tracks. Then I measured them. I trailed them tracks all day, till I seen they were goin' straight north. Then I came back."

"Well, go on," said Morgan impatiently.

"The Nokis did as well as that."

"Sure. But it took them long to find out what I knew right off—that they'd lose the trail when they came to the sage and the flat-rock country up towards Nothis Ahn." "Yes, but if the Nokis lost that trail, how did they eventually find Gekin Yashi?"

"Wal, I found that out this trip. Your Nokis didn't find Gekin Yashi. The Pahutes who had her brought her to the camp of the Nokis."

"Humph! Pahutes? This is queer. Were these Pahutes afraid?"

(Continued on Page 164)

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The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 163)

"Not of you or Blucher," replied Smith with a sardonic grin. "It came about this way: There's a half-nutty Nopah named Shoie. He's a spellbinder. He heard about these Pahutes having Gekin Yashi hid deep in the cañons. Of course all the Nopahs knew that. Wal, this nutty Injun sends word by a Pahute that he had put his spell upon Gekin Yashi to kill her. He'd already killed two Nopah women with his spell. The Pahutes are more superstitious than the Nopahs. They fetched Gekin Yashi out to the Nokis who were huntin' her."

"Well!" ejaculated Morgan. "And how do you connect the Carlisle graduate with this?"

"Wal, that's the funny part, hard to prove to anybody but myself," responded Smith, scratching his head. "While I was up in that country I found out where Nophay had lived an' buried his relation. Sure it's a wild country. But I rode across it, an' I finally found Nophay's hogan. I searched around for hoss tracks and moccasin tracks like them I had pictured in my mind. An' I found them, plain as print. I found clean-cut moccasin tracks on the grave of Nophay's relation. I recognized that track. An' on the way down here I asked a Nopah who buried Nophay's relation an' he said Nophay. Now, Morgan, that's my hunch. It doesn't prove anythin', except to me. I know who stole Gekin Yashi away."

"THAT'S proof enough for me," returned Morgan somberly. "Smith, you're a sharp fellow. I didn't appreciate you. We'll get along. Now, don't tell Blucher this about the Carlisle Indian. Go now and do Blucher's bidding. Keep your eyes and ears open. And see me often."

Morgan then wended his observant way up the shady avenue of tall poplars toward the agent's office. Morgan was light-footed. He stepped softly, though not from any instinct like the Indians. Manifest indeed were the intricacies of his habit of life. As he mounted the high porch steps he heard voices. Friel and the Warner girl! Morgan paused to listen.

"Let me alone," wearily protested the girl. The sound of scraping chair on the floor followed, then swift soft steps, and a man's voice, with a quick note, rather hoarse. "Marian, I can't let you alone. Don't you know when a man loves you?"

"No, I don't, if the man's you," declared Miss Warner. "I don't want to know. Mr. Friel, I've long despaired of your showing any instincts of a gentleman, but I didn't—I didn't think you would attack me."

"Nonsense. I only wanted to kiss you." "Your intrusion, your words are an insult," returned the girl with spirit. "And your—your trying to hold me is worse."

"Didn't I ask you to marry me?" he said banteringly.

"Yes, and your proposal had not the ring of sincerity. Even if it had I would have refused you. I tell you once more: No! I don't care for you; I couldn't care for you."

"But I can make you care," he responded. "Mr. Friel, I wonder you can be such a fool," retorted Miss Warner in anger. "Do you imagine me to be one of these simple-minded Indian girls?"

"I think you're adorable," he returned, "and I'll make you pay for calling me a fool. Of course I am—to be so crazy over you. Come here, golden hair."

"Oh! you—you—" burst out the girl.

MORGAN strode to the door and entered. Friel was trying to enfold Miss Warner in his arms and she was thrusting him back.

"Hah! Excuse me, young folks," said Morgan with severe levity. "Am I interrupting a love scene?"

"You are not," cried Miss Warner hotly, now jerking free of Friel. Her face was

red. Her dark blue eyes blazed. Her bosom heaved. For the first time Morgan thought this blond girl handsome. Only dark women appealed to him.

"So ho?" he ejaculated with pretension of surprise. "What was it I interrupted then?"

"Mr. Morgan, you can judge for yourself," replied the girl, with trembling hands at her disheveled hair. "This man sneaks in here while Mr. Blucher is out. I despise him. I think he's the cheapest, most offensive cad I ever saw. I'm not in the least afraid of him. I don't run to get out of his way. But I will not stand his—his —"

"Attacks, I suppose you mean," interposed Morgan as the girl paused breathless and at loss for a word.

FRIEL confronted Morgan in suppressed agitation. He was a tall man, not yet beyond middle age, thin and nervous, with lean face of pale, wolfish cast.

"See here, Morgan, you're quick to grasp at things, aren't you?" he rasped out sneeringly. "You sneaked in here yourself."

"Miss Warner, this is serious, but I acquit you of blame," said Morgan, paying no attention to the irate Friel. "Where is Blucher?"

"He went to the dormitory to consult Miss Herron."

"Please go for him. Don't mention this unfortunate affair. Leave that to me. I'll see you are not attacked again."

When Miss Warner had gone Friel fell into a fury. Finally he gave Morgan one comprehensive glance, keen and malignant and somehow impotent. Then his whole demeanor changed. Manifestly he had been surprised by Morgan in the expression of amatory advances he did not deem criminal, and next he had fallen prey to perfectly natural wrath. But now he had suddenly lost his excessive irritation, his impulsive and explosive fury.

"Friel," said Morgan, "I've been your friend here. I've kept you here on the reservation. Your behavior is not becoming. And your ranting at me did not sound like music to my ears. I might call an investigation."

"You might," returned Friel sarcastically; "which means you won't just so long as I stand hand and glove with you?"

"Precisely. You remember that little irregularity of yours concerning the testimonials—the thumb prints of Indians who didn't know they were signing away their land and water rights for land you now have a patent to?"

"Yes, I remember; and most decidedly I remember the idea did not originate wholly in my brain."

"That you cannot prove," replied Morgan tersely. "So I think you'll be wise to stand on my side of the fence. Here comes Blucher. Not a word of this."

MORGAN locked the door of Blucher's private office. He did not need more than sight of the agent's face to see that the German's twist of mind was at work.

Blucher was stocky of build, light-complexioned, broad of face, with a look of intolerance.

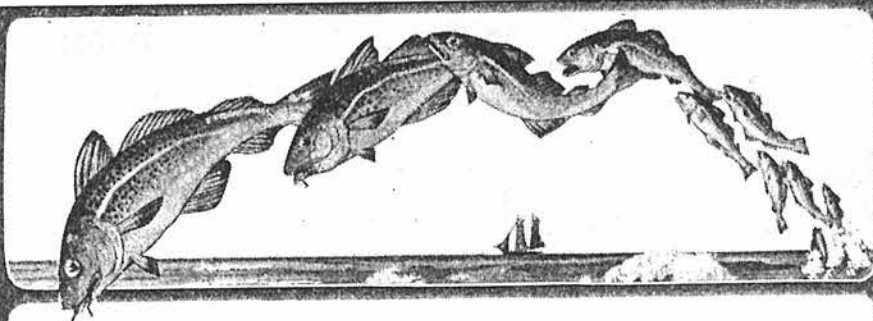
"What's the trouble?" asked Morgan, and it was certain he lowered his voice.

Blucher's gray-blue eyes dilated and suddenly appeared to gleam dancingly with little arrows of flame. "What's your trouble?" he queried with a laugh. "You're stewed up, same as I am."

"Don't talk so loud," replied Morgan with a significant look and motion at the door of Miss Warner's room. "I don't trust that girl. My Noki says he saw her at the Castle Rocks talking to our Carlisle Indian. If it's true I can see through a good deal. But I'm not so sure of that. The Noki wasn't close to them. But we're cautious now."

"Suppose it was true?" asked Blucher, interested.

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The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 164)

"It was that educated Nopah who stole Gekin Yashi from the school."

Blucher vibrated to that. "Who told you? How do you know? What —?"

"Never mind how I get my facts. I know. That's enough."

"But what you know doesn't satisfy me," returned Blucher testily. "I like Miss Warner. She's a fine girl. I can't see one fault in her. What's more, she's a great help to me. I'd miss her."

"I'm not suggesting you give her a ride on my steam roller," rejoined Morgan. "If she's valuable get all you can out of her—until we know for sure, and meanwhile be cautious."

"How're we going to know for sure? We've read some of her letters. But they didn't prove anything to me. I think you're overcautious."

"Not me. Those letters of hers gave me an idea. She lived in Philadelphia and spent her summers at the seashore. She wrote of seeing baseball games there. Now I've learned that our Carlisle graduate was one of the most famous athletes the Eastern colleges ever developed."

"That Indian?"

"YES, that Indian," rejoined Morgan.

"I'm not likely to forget the sample he gave us of his education. That Nopah has brains. Well, I'm wondering if Miss Warner might have known him in the East. I'll write to my Philadelphia friend and ask him for more information, especially if this Carlisle Nopah played baseball at the seashore."

"Why not cut straight to the heart of a problem?" queried Blucher impatiently. "You work in the dark."

"It's never wise to show your hand."

"Let's not waste opportunity. I'll have Miss Warner in here," replied Blucher.

The missionary raised a warning hand, restraining the agent. "Wait a moment," Morgan's pale-cast thought grew more intense. "All right. Fetch her in. But let me question her. I'll take a chance."

Blucher, unlocking the door, opened it and called: "Miss Warner, please step here."

She came in, quiet, composed, but a keen eye could have detected a slight constriction of her throat, a glistening dilation of the pupils of her blue eyes.

Morgan assuredly saw the slight signs of agitation. He fixed his cold, icy gaze upon her face. "Miss Warner, you deny you're a friend of the Carlisle graduate Nopah, that you meet him secretly?"

The girl's golden tan seemed to recede, leaving a clear pallor on cheek and brow. A quick breath escaped her. Then she flushed dark red, her eyes blazed as they had blazed at Friel, her head went up with dauntless spirit. "Mr. Morgan, am I to understand that I am a hireling to whom you are privileged to put such personal questions?" she flashed at him in counter query.

Morgan made a slight motion of his hand, as if for Blucher to dismiss her. Manifestly he had been answered to his satisfaction.

"Do you deny?" interposed Blucher.

"I would not deny any implication whatever made by Mr. Morgan," returned the girl loftily.

"Very well. That will do," said Blucher, waving her to the door, which he closed and locked after her.

MORGAN signed him to draw a chair closer, and he whispered: "It's more than I suspected. Your doll-face is a deep, clever woman. She meets the Indian. Maybe she's in love with him. Absolutely she's not what she seems."

The agent stroked his chin and gazed with abject wonder and disgust at Morgan. "Morgan, you look for rottenness in every man and woman because your mind is

rotten," he said. "I don't believe what you think about her."

Morgan's stout body jerked a little, as with the propelling of blood in sudden anger, and the lowering cold shadow of his eyes might have been thought provoking to a less stolid man than Blucher. "I usually find what I look for," he rejoined. "Let's drop Miss Warner for the present. How about the Wolterson case?"

The agent unlocked his desk and produced letters and papers. "Wolterson is about ready for your steam roller," said Blucher grimly.

"All my reports have gone through. Here's a copy of a letter to Wolterson from Commissioner Salisbury, Department of the Interior at Washington."

BLUCHER spread a paper covered with handwriting in lead pencil and read:

"ROBERT WOLTERTSON, Esq., Through Superintendent Mesa Indian School

"Sir: Reports indicate that your services as stockman are not satisfactory; that you lack energy and initiative; that you boast you can make a living without work; that you are wholly inattentive to your duties and have no interest in the welfare of the Service; that you spend your time in idleness, loafing around your quarters, at different traders' stores, or taking pleasure trips; that you almost invariably remain in bed after the other employees are at their work; that you have neglected the agency stallions which were in your care to such extent that one of them died; and that through your negligence a young heifer recently died."

"You will be given ten days from the receipt of this letter to show cause, if any, why you should not be transferred or dismissed from the Service. Your reply should be submitted through the Superintendent within the time specified."

Respectfully,

"OTTO SALISBURY."

"Humph!" ejaculated Morgan. "That's not much of a charge against Wolterson. What was his reply through you?"

"It's too long to read. Take this copy with you. One thing sure—Wolterson makes a strong case and just about proves it. More than that, he has bobbed up with influential friends in Texas, one of them a senator. The best we can expect is that Wolterson will be transferred to some other point on the reservation."

"So much for him," mused Morgan, with deep gaze into space. "Before we get on to the Do Etin case let's thresh out this matter of the Indian young men being permitted to get into the girls' dormitory at night."

"Isn't that my affair?" inquired Blucher. "Are you superintendent of this school and reservation?"

Morgan's reply was neither negative nor affirmative. It was a silent study of the face of the agent.

"I got the truth of it," slowly began Blucher.

"FROM what source? Miss Herron told me all she knew before you heard of the goings-on."

"You think she told you all," retorted Blucher with malice. "As a matter of fact she lied. I believe she had something to do with those Indian youths stealing into the dormitory."

It was Morgan's turn to show amaze and skepticism. "Miss Herron has the responsible duty of looking after the moral welfare of the girl students," he declared.

"Bah! Morgan, can't you call things by their proper names, at least to me?" queried Blucher. "What you mean is that this particular matron was put in her job by you. Therefore she is responsible to you. Responsible to you, yes, for the moral welfare of

(Continued on Page 168)

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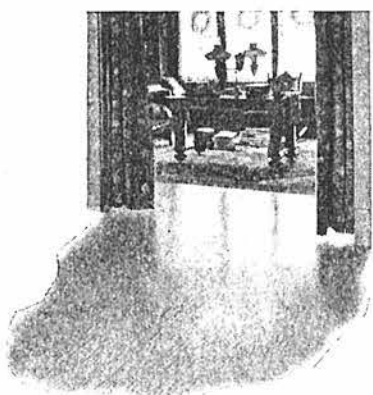
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The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 167)

these Indian girls, and for accurate record of what goes on, so that you could be kept posted."

Morgan made a gesture which seemed to intimate that Blucher's talk was Sanscrit to him. "Blucher, what you think of me and what I think of you are not the issues at present. By and by we are going to clash. But just now we've serious business that necessitates unity."

"Yes, I know," grunted Blucher, "and I hate to get down to it."

"If you don't make examples of Do Etin and Nopahie your authority on this reservation will absolutely cease," declared Morgan impressively.

Blucher's face set like that of a bulldog. "I'll make him consent to that rule or —"

"You'll never make him do anything," interrupted Morgan. "You don't know Indians. Do Etin will keep his word."

"Do Etin has bucked me," Blucher declared. "He has opposed me. He will make me look weak to all the Indians. But how to make an example of him—unless —"

Morgan leaned forward to whisper tensely. "Unless! You have it. Send Rhur, the policeman, Glendon and Naylor at night to arrest Do Etin. But they are not to arrest him. They will return with news to you. Do Etin refused to consent to the new rule of the Government. He resisted arrest. He fought. He was shot."

"For once we agree," whispered Blucher in reply. His set face had grown pale. "And how about the Carlisle graduate?"

SWIFTLY Morgan snapped his fingers, but the lifted hand shook before Blucher's strained gaze. "That educated Indian is the most dangerous man, red or white, on this reservation," hissed Morgan.

"Then it's settled," replied Blucher. "Send your men after Do Etin tonight," added Morgan.

"Yes; the sooner the better. And that compulsory rule goes into effect right now."

Morgan hurried across the wide avenue toward his house. He strode as a man who would be dangerous to meet on a narrow footway. Apparently all he saw was the hard-packed sand upon which he trod.

In his study sat the Indian whom he had expected, a Noki, a slim, tall, very dark man with straight black hair and eyes of piercing sharpness. This Indian's latest service to Morgan had been the bringing back of Gekin Yashii. Long had he been the white man's spy and tool of craft.

Morgan gripped his arm and dragged him to the couch, there to force him down and loom masterfully over him.

Moistening his lips Morgan began in hoarse whisper of singular potency: "Noki, tonight you pay your full debt to the white man. Go to Do Etin's hogan. Be there just at dark. Let the Indians see you, but not the white men who come. Watch these white men go into Do Etin's hogan. Steal close and listen to what they say. Trust to the darkness. Listen to that council. Remember every word you hear. And watch, see every move. When the white men go away you hurry back to me."

For a long time after the Indian had left, Morgan sat motionless in his study, locked in thought, his brow a congested mass of furrows. What bound him there was a habit of mind, a recourse to invention to meet every possible future angle, to fortify against the unexpected, to hide the machinations of a master strategist, to satisfy a monstrous egotism. No still small voice pierced his conscience.

At last he arose, muttering half aloud: "That for sure puts the steam roller over Blucher. But it's not enough."

XII

NEXT morning, while at breakfast, Morgan had a caller, the old man who had been the government farmer at Mesa for years. His short, wedge-shaped figure seemed

energized by rugged vitality; his features were a record of the desert.

"Mr. Morgan, the Nokis down at Copenwashie are raisin' Cain with me," he began.

"Yes? What for?"

"It's a dry season. All but two of the springs have failed. The Nokis haven't enough water for their alfalfa. Friel gets the water first for his land. That's what the Nokis are sore about. An' I'm sayin' they've got reason."

"Why do you come to me? I do not deal with the Indians' water rights."

"Wal, Friel's deals are most with their water rights," replied the farmer bluntly. "Now my stand is this. The Nokis are industrious farmers. They've worked hard on that alfalfa. An' I don't want to see it burn up. Friel said what he did was none of my business. I want the Indians to have more of the water that belongs to them."

"Belongs to them? How do you figure that?"

"The Nokis were here before either the Nopahs or the whites."

"THAT'S nothing. The water belongs to the Government. And Mr. Friel has a patent on land and water from the Government. I couldn't do anything, even if I wanted to."

"Friel has no horses suffering for hay or water. He sells his hay. The Indians need good hay and plenty of water. They can't send their horses out into the desert to live on soapweed and greasewood."

"These Nokis are freighters. They freight supplies from Flagstaff. That's how they earn their living. They're not gettin' a square deal."

"Go to Blucher," replied Morgan.

"I just left him," returned the farmer. "He wasn't interested, sent me to you. I reckon he was upset by his men havin' to kill an Indian last night."

"That so? I hadn't heard," rejoined Morgan, with no especial interest. He might not have been aware of the gray desert eyes bent upon him.

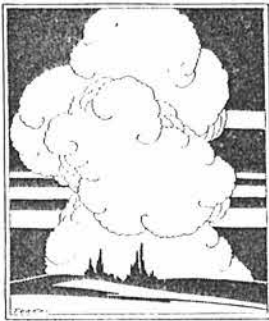
"Wal, it was owin' to some new rulin' or other Blucher ordered," went on the farmer. "Do Etin refused to obey, as I heard the story. When Rhur with his deputies, Glendon an' Naylor, tried to arrest Do Etin he fought, an' they had to kill him."

"That was unfortunate," said Morgan, gravely shaking his head. "But Indians must learn to obey."

"Mr. Morgan, would you be good enough to have Friel ease up on the water?" asked the farmer earnestly. "He's usin' more than he needs. An' we haven't had a lot of rain at Copenwashie."

"No. Such a request from me would imply that I shared your opinion as to Mr. Friel's wastefulness, which I don't."

"Ah-huh!" ejaculated the government man, and abruptly turned on his heel. His heavy boots thumped on the porch. Then he was gone.



IN THE course of that day Morgan heard many versions of the killing of Do

Etin. He read Blucher's brief statement to the officials at Washington; he asked for the distressed Miss Warner's knowledge of it; he heard Rhur tell how it had happened, and also Glendon.

He showed grave concern as he met the stockman Wolterson and asked what he had heard about it. All stories were substantially the same, precisely what the school policeman and his deputies had reported first to the superintendent and later told to other government employees. There was no excitement nor any particular comment. The death of an Indian was nothing. But when Morgan asked Jay Smith what he had heard, Smith added a few trenchant words of his own to the reiterated story: "Wal, that's what they say!"

(Continued on Page 169)

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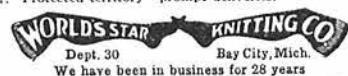
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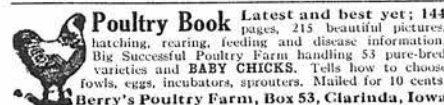
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The Vanishing American

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Late that day Morgan received the Noki spy in his study, the windows and blinds of which were closed. And peering down into the dark, inscrutable face of this Noki who hated Nopahs, Morgan heard a long story, told with all the singular detail of an Indian's subtle and faithful observance, a story strangely and vastly different from all the others concerning Do Etin's tragic death.

The Noki peeping into the hogan had seen Do Etin rise to his feet and extend his hands in the greeting of hospitality.

"White men are welcome in Do Etin's hogan," he said in Nopah.

Rhur advanced first into the circle of firelight, then Glendon and Naylor.

"Howdy, Do Etin; shake hands," said Rhur in the white man's tongue.

With dignity and friendliness the Indian extended his hand.

Rhur grasped the Indian's hand and suddenly pulled with all his might. "Now, rough-house him—quick!" he called low and hard to his followers.

BUT Do Etin wrenched loose. With powerful heave he flung Rhur across the hogan against the wall. Glendon and Naylor then grappled with Do Etin. They wrestled with him and in the struggle kicked over the cooking utensils and sent the firebrands scattering. Do Etin only strove to free himself. This the two men helped him to do, one with a blow, the other with a shove. Do Etin staggered back and half turned. Then out of the gloom beyond the fire circle Rhur shot, once, twice, three times. The heavy reports boomed in the confined space of the hogan. Do Etin swayed and fell without a word.

"Has he croaked?" queried Rhur hoarsely.

"See! Hurry! One of you muss up the place."

Glendon knelt beside the still figure while Naylor kicked utensils around, scattered the fire and food supplies. The hogan filled with smoke. The light grew dim. The figures appeared shadowy.

"Sure. He's dead," whispered Glendon.

"Come; beat it," replied Rhur.

They lifted the blanket before the door and filed out.

It was again night, and one of those nights set for the Indian girls selected by Morgan to come to his chapel to hear him preach. He harangued at them for an hour; then he dismissed them, but at the door he drew one Indian girl back.

"Gekin Yashi, you stay," he said as he held her. "I want to see you alone."

The Indian maiden's face was pale and agitated, yet beautiful with its contour, its great dusky eyes, its red lips. She was trembling as Morgan led her back from the door. Suddenly he pushed her into a seat and towered over her, obsessed with his fanaticism.

"Gekin Yashi, do you know your father is dead?" he asked in harsh, sharp voice.

"Oh—no, sir," the girl faltered, sinking back.

"He is. He was killed last night, killed because he fought the white men who went to arrest him. He would not obey."

MORGAN paused. Gekin Yashi's sweet and youthful face slowly changed, quivered with tears streaming from her tragic eyes and set in a strange, dull expression of fear, bewilderment and misery. Then her dark head drooped.

"You ran off to the Pahutes," he went on. "Who took you?"

Gekin Yashi made no answer.

"It was Nopahie. He will be shot the same as your father unless you confess. Speak! Did Nopahie take you away?"

"Yes," she whispered. "But Gekin Yashi has not sinned. She is like the white girl, Benow di Cleash."

Then the missionary thundered at her. "Yes, you have sinned. But I will save you. Love me, the white man. Promise to do what I tell you."

The Indian girl lifted her face, and then her little brown hands that fluttered like

leaves in a storm. "Gekin Yashi promises," she breathed almost inaudibly. "Gekin Yashi—will—love—you."

XIII

MARIAN, while waiting for the dismissal she expected every day, worked on as if no untoward thing had happened. But in reality nothing was left for her save a morbid curiosity in the affairs of this government school and her faithful, stubborn, unquenchable desire to help the Indians.

No more did Marian ride out to Castle Rocks. No more did she have the thrill and joy of meeting Nopahie.

Neither he nor she had any proof that his life was in danger, but they suspected it, and they knew his liberty was threatened.

Nopahie had intrusted one letter to Withers and another to a Nopah shepherd, both of whom delivered these missives through Wolterson.

A note of despair and of love rang through Nopahie's wild words, troubling her soul, yet somehow inexpressibly sweet. Separation made him desperate. He needed her. And Marian, in her growing poignancy, longed to go to him, to be his wife. She would have lived in a hogan. Yet even in her longing she realized the nobility of the Indian and his attitude toward her. Infinite respect for Nopahie had added to her love. He was a man. How passionately she burned to prove to the world what an Indian could be! Somehow she would prove that, if not by her own modest pen, then by the power of someone to whom she could tell her story. Nopahie, the same as she, was waiting for developments, perhaps for the hour of her dismissal. Meanwhile his entreaty was for her to hold on and keep her courage, and do what good she could in her own way. What sustained Marian most of all was the cry of his heart for her.

Between her and Gekin Yashi had come a strange, cold, somber shadow, like that in the little beauty's dusky eyes. Marian refused credence to the fears her intelligence prompted. Circumstances had altered her opportunities to be with Gekin Yashi. These came now but seldom. Miss Herron's enmity was open and scarcely possible to combat. The matron was all-powerful in the school. Moreover, Gekin Yashi no longer received Marian with shy, sweet gladness. The Indian maiden had aged. She listened, but did not respond. She seldom raised her eyes. Only rarely did Marian penetrate her reserve.

AS WINTER approached, and the war in Europe extended its claws farther and farther over the world, and especially towards the United States, Blucher indubitably leaned more to an obsession of the rights of Germany. Marian typed many of his letters, and she noticed that he let slip the mental note of lesser things. He could scarcely put his mind on the tasks before him on the reservation, let alone solve their problems. Thus he grew lax in caution, at least as far as Marian was concerned. Nor was he guarded in speech with anyone.

Meanwhile Marian's observations and convictions grew with the passing of time. How much she would have to tell Nopahie upon their next meeting! Morgan and his followers did things in an underhanded way, which kept at white heat a feeling of bitterness among government employees. Morgan was a master in this Machiavellian game of politics. He had been seen repeatedly on the school fields and at the school stables, and in other isolated places, talking earnestly to enemies of Blucher. Most significant of all was the singular fact that letters written to Washington were not only never answered but never received by the officials to whom they were addressed.

Yet keen as was Marian's curiosity she avoided some things that would have been easy to see, as she avoided listening to the

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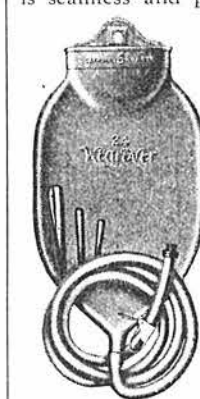
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(Continued on Page 170)



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HAT FINISH

The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 160)

older Indian girls when they tried to tell her about the matron and Morgan. On the other hand there were incidents she did not care to see, yet could not help seeing. Morgan often reported the children to the matron with instructions that they be punished. Marian had seen several instances of Miss Herron's punishments. She compelled children to bend forward, hands touching the floor, or to stand erect, with hands lifted high, for as many minutes as they could endure it. Not unusual was it for a girl to faint under this punishment. One day some Indian boys ran across the porch of Blucher's house. Marian saw the agent run out, catch one of them, knock him down, and kick him after he was down. The little fellow did not rise very readily.

Marian grew brooding and nervous and was troubled by strange portents impossible to define. She felt that something was about to happen.

And one morning when Miss Herron, her hard face pale and agitated, came running into the room where Marian was working, she felt a shock. Her intuition had prompted her aright.

THE matron ran into Blucher's office, the door of which was open. "Where's Morgan," she asked shrilly. "I can't find him." "What's wrong?" queried Blucher, with a frown of annoyance at this intrusion or at the disruption of his thought.

"That Carlisle Indian forced himself into the schoolroom," cried Miss Herron. "He scared me out of—my wits. He's dragged Gekin Yashi into the hall, where he's talking to her. I heard Morgan's name; then I ran out—over to his house—to tell him. Oh, that Indian looked terrible."

"Nophaie!" ejaculated Blucher. Manifestly that Indian name conjured up swift and bewildering ideas. Blucher looked mightily concerned. When Miss Herron started to run out he detained her. "You stay right here—and keep your mouth shut." Then he grasped at the telephone.

The shock to Marian had kept her standing just where she had been when Miss Herron entered. Shuffling soft footsteps that she recognized as Morgan's gave her another shock. Then he entered. Certain it was he did not know of the presence of Nophaie. But his glance at Marian, and then sight of Miss Herron in the next room told him something was amiss.

"What—why are you here?" he demanded, entering the office.

"Shut up," interrupted Blucher. "Morgan, your Carlisle Indian is here—with Gekin Yashi. Hello!"

"Yes, this is Blucher. . . . Where's Rhur? . . . Not there? . . . Where is he? . . . Find him quick."

BLUCHER slammed down the receiver of the telephone and glared at Morgan. Marian could only partly see Morgan's face, and what she saw was pale.

"Morgan, that Indian is with Gekin Yashi now," said the agent hoarsely. "Your friend Herron here heard him speak your name."

"What's it mean?" Morgan blurted out.

"I don't know, but I wouldn't be in your boots for a million," replied Blucher sardonically. "Have you got a gun?"

"Lock the door," shouted Morgan, wheeling. He banged it hard, and Marian heard the key turn.

Marian had a glimpse of his face as he shut the door and somehow sight of it roused her. She peered through the open door, out into the yard, toward the dormitory. A tall

Indian was running fleetly toward the office. Marian thrilled to her depths. Had she not seen that magnificent stride? This Indian was Nophaie, running as she had seen him many a time, running with the incomparable swiftness that had made him famous on all the Eastern college fields. Before she could draw another breath he had reached the porch steps to mount them in one pantherish bound. His moccasined feet padded on the floor. Then he flashed in upon her, somehow terrible. A soiled handkerchief, folded narrow and spotted with blood now dry, circled his brow and black hair. His eyes seemed to pierce Marian.

"I saw Morgan come in," he said. "Is he there, with Blucher?"

"Oh, yes," gasped Marian. "They're locked in—you mustn't—oh!"

NOPHAIE pulled a gun from somewhere, and lunging at the locked door he shoved his foot against it with tremendous force. The lock broke. The door swung in. Nophaie bounded across the threshold.

Marian, suddenly galvanized into action, ran after him. Miss Herron lay on the floor in a faint. Blucher sat back in his chair, mouth agape, eyes wide. Amaze had begun to give way to fear. Morgan was ghastly.

Nophaie, with his right hand, held the gun low. It was cocked, and it had an almost imperceptible quiver. With left hand Nophaie significantly touched the bloody bandage round his head.

"Do Etin's murderers did not give me that," said Nophaie. "They came three times to find me. But they failed. It was your Noki who ambushed my trail and shot me. I have his confession."

Neither of the accused could utter a word. The Indian's menace was unmistakable, as inevitable as it was terrible.

"Morgan, I thought well to get Gekin Yashi's confession also, so I can kill you without the compunction white education fostered in me."

Morgan gasped and sagged against the wall. Blucher, livid and fearful, began to stammer incoherently.

Marian felt a tremendous sensation in her breast. It seemed to lift her. It passed, and she found herself burning deep within, suddenly unclamped from that icy terror.

"I am going to kill you both," said Nophaie.

With that Marian shut the door behind her. Then she got between Nophaie and the men, facing them. She realized what she had to do and was equal to it. "Keep quiet," she ordered.

WHEELING to Nophaie she went closer to him, with one hand going to his shoulder, the other forcing down the leveled gun. "You must not kill these men."

"Why not? Blucher had his men murder Do Etin. Morgan has murdered Gekin Yashi's soul."

"That may well be true," responded Marian. "It's not a question of justice. If you shoot them you will go to the gallows."

"Yes, if I were caught. And then I would like to tell in a courtroom what these men are."

"Nophaie, you would not be believed except by a few who could not help you."

"Then I'll kill them in revenge—for Gekin Yashi, for my people."

"No, no! You are above that too. It's only your passion. There is no good to be accomplished. The evil these men have done will earn its punishment. Don't kill them."

(Continued on Page 173)



The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 170)

"I must. There is no justice. All I know cries out to kill these devils. I must do it." "But you are the man I love," cried Marian, driven to desperation by his cold truth, by the remorselessness of his just wrath. "You are the man. It would break my heart if you became a murderer, a fugitive from justice, and if—if they hanged you, I'd die! Nophaie, for the sake of my love, for me, let these men live. Think of what it means to me; you know I'll marry you whenever you say. I'll live with you. I'll spend my life helping your people, if—if only you will not spill blood."

She embraced him, clung to him, weakening at the end of her long appeal.

Nophaie slowly let down the hammer of his gun. Then, as slowly, he held the weapon out to her. "Benow di Cleash, hold my gun."

Marian accepted the heavy weapon, wondering the while what he meant to do. She began to throb and thrill. His look, his demeanor, the very radiation of him had undergone a remarkable transformation.

"This girl of your race has saved your lives," he said to the other men. "I meant to kill you. But not even she can save you wholly from the Indian."

THEN with swift violence he turned upon Morgan, and in one singular powerful motion in which his whole body appeared to participate, he shot his knee up and struck the man. Morgan crashed against the wall, his head struck hard, his mouth spread wide, and a tremendous expulsion of breath followed. All the wind had been kicked out of him. Next, in one bound Nophaie leaped upon the desk, and from that right down on Blucher, breaking the chair and sending the agent hard to the floor. Nophaie did not even lose his balance. How light, supple, wonderful his movements!

Nophaie no longer meant to kill; he meant only to hurt. And that liberated something deep in Marian's blood. It seemed to burst and shoot in fiery currents all over her. Every time the German got to hands and knees Nophaie would swing a moccasined foot. And then it appeared he was plunging Blucher nearer and nearer to Morgan, who had gained some breath. Another kick sent the agent hard against Morgan, knocking him over.

AND without particular violence or rancor he kept up this game of football until both men were disheveled wretches. Suddenly he ceased. Marian saw then that Miss Herron had revived and was sitting up. Nophaie looked at her with the same disgust that the men had inspired in him.

"I ought to kick you too," he said. "But I have a white man's education." Drawing Marian out of the room he closed the door and took his gun from her shaking hands.

"Don't be frightened, Benow di Cleash," he said, with a strong, tender arm round her. "You saved me again. I can do nothing but love you more—and go back to my cañons. Don't worry about what Blucher and Morgan will do. They are cowards. They will not speak one word of this. If you get dismissed go to the trader's house. I beg of you, stay on the reservation yet a while. Send me word through Withers. Good-by."

"Oh, Nophaie," cried Marian. He glided out upon the porch, looked to right and left, and then leisurely trotted down the steps, down the path to the road. Marian espied his horse tied to the fence near the gate.

She expected to see men running from all directions. But there were none. She saw Nophaie mount his horse and lope away.

(Continued in the March Journal)

One Hundred Years of Joan

(Continued from Page 17)

but then, like an idiot, Tommy went right off again and left us standing there. I knew that Captain Mallet would see what had happened, so I said, straight out, 'Captain Mallet, this is just a clear case of pick-up, but I was frantically lonely and you looked frantically lonely, so I wondered why we couldn't get together and talk.'

"Why, Joan!" protested her mother. "Oh, goodness, mother!" answered Joan. "It was all right. He understood."

"What did he say?"

"He said, 'Why not?' And so we sat down and did talk. And he's just as sweet as he looks. He has a slow, dry, helpless way of talking, as if he were kind of pathetic and lost. Then suddenly you realize that, underneath, he's said something perfectly wonderful."

"I suppose —" Violet Danneman began; but whatever the sentence was to have been, it trailed off unfinished. Instead, she turned toward the bed with a sudden briskness. "Joan, dear, you really must go and get dressed."

"Mother," Joan begged, "I wish you'd tell me the whole story. I'm really quite worked up about it."

HER mother tried to expostulate nervously. "My dear child, I tell you there isn't any story—and there never was"; but Violet Danneman could never be even faintly untruthful and, looking away toward the window, she added, "Not really."

The little added note of unhappy confession was so wholly typical of her that a sudden wave of protective tenderness swept over her daughter.

"Dear mother," she said, "I didn't mean to tease you." She abruptly changed to a broad, extravagant manner that could be taken in any way that her mother chose.

"Wasn't the story," she asked, "simply this: That once you cared a lot about Captain Mallet and Captain Mallet cared a lot about you; but you were a gorgeous and

gilded dollar princess and he was nothing but a plain farmer lad; and so the proud parents decided that it could never be, and proceeded to carry you off, far away from the dangerous attraction, and lock you up in a dungeon vile?"

HER mother had stepped back in amazement and held one hand on her dressing table, as if for support. "Who told you that?" she demanded.

Joan smiled. "He told me himself."

Her mother drew a sudden sharp breath. She looked at her daughter aghast. "He—told—you—that?" she repeated in a slow, dull monotone.

Joan saw at once that she had gone too far and immediately abandoned her bantering tone. "No, mother dear," she said reassuringly. "Please don't always take me so literally. I'll tell you exactly what he did say. What really happened was perfectly harmless. We were sitting there on the long stone bench on the country-club terrace, having a beautiful time, talking about everything under the sun, when suddenly I realized that, even then, I didn't know just who he was. So, in a very idiotic way I asked: 'Is this your first visit to Lakeland?'"

"Of course he smiled at that. 'No,' he said. Then he took his cane and pointed to the place where the road from the lake turns into the road from here. 'I suppose,' he said, 'that in my vanished youth I have driven over that road several thousand times with a load of hay or a load of lumber.'"

"Then he stopped for quite a while with a funny little musing twinkle in his eyes. Of course I was crazy to know what he was thinking about, so I just up and asked him. 'As a matter of fact,' he said, 'the most tragic moment of my life was passed right down there at that crossroad.'"

Joan looked at her mother cautiously. "It was really quite sweet," she continued,

(Continued on Page 174)



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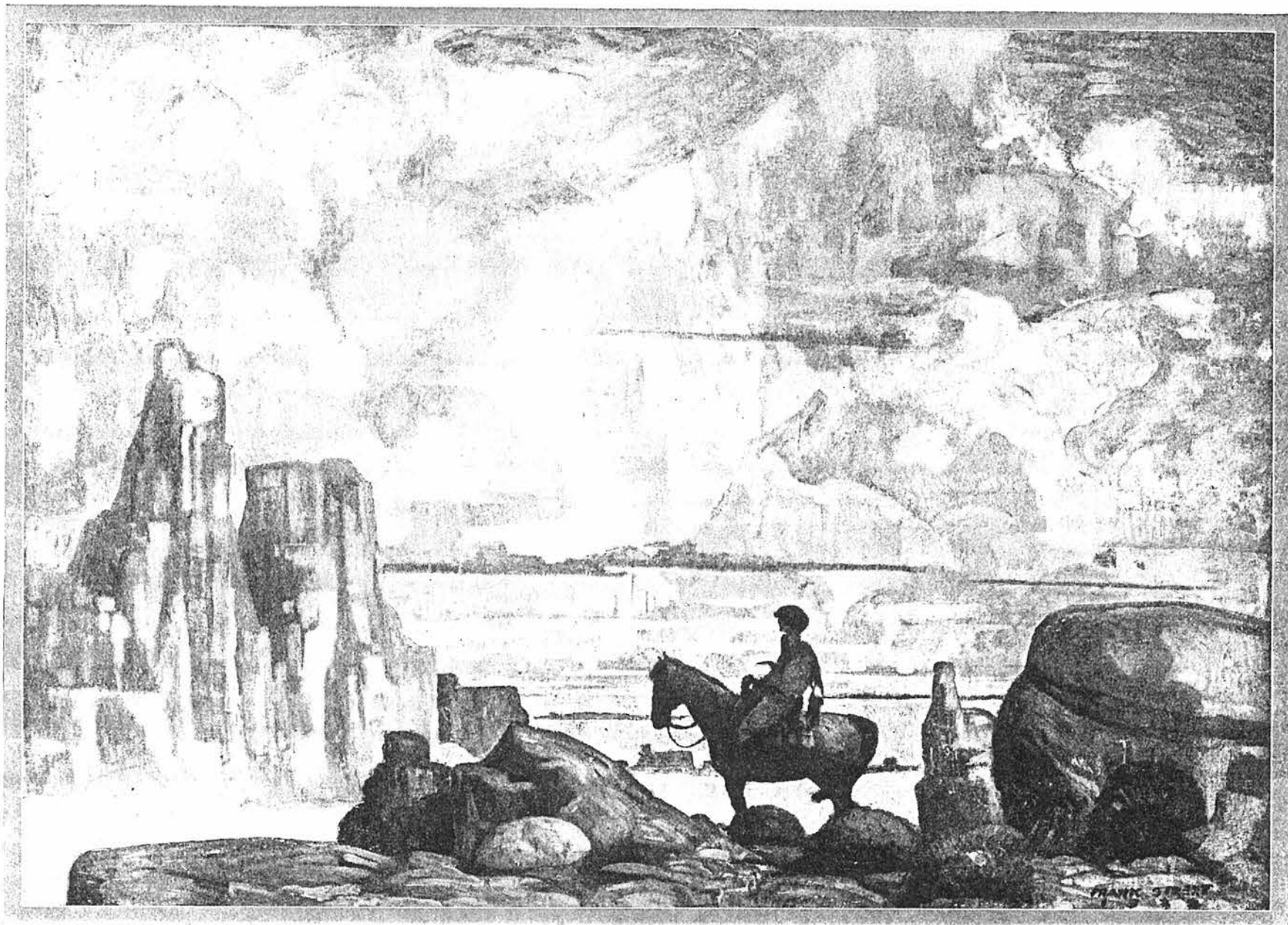
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2

"The Heart of the Home"



SOAP



"ALWAYS ROCKS AND WALLS OF STONE WILL HAVE SAD SIGNIFICANCE FOR ME"

The Vanishing American

By ZANE GREY

Illustrations by Frank Street

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 his people. After he returns to his native environment, Nophaie, the Indian, writes Marian Warner, whom he had met and loved, to come and help his people. She goes, but finds Nophaie somewhat changed. He tells her he has no faith; that the religion of the white man fails and the faith of the Indian has somehow been lost to him. Marian is shocked. She tells him she will bring him back to the white man's religion. Nophaie tells her of her difficulties to come from intrigues by the government agents. They agree to meet clandestinely, to escape trouble with the suspicious agents. At one of these meetings Marian tells Nophaie of the temptations and dangers that beset Gekin Yashi, a very pretty Indian girl at the government school. She tells him that Gekin Yashi loves him. Nophaie gets the girl away from the school and hides her with an honorable Indian family in a distant cañon fastness. Immediately Blucher, the superintendent, and Morgan, the missionary, suspect Nophaie and Marian. Gekin Yashi is found by the government agents. Later one of the Indians is killed by Blucher's police. They also try to kill Nophaie, but Nophaie gets the confession of the man who tried to kill him and finding Blucher and Morgan together threatens to kill them. Marian saves them from death by telling Nophaie that she loves him; that she will marry him and help him save his people. Nophaie, however, cannot resist giving each of the men a terrible beating; then, with a word of caution to Marian, he rides away.

XIV

DEEP in the cañoned recesses of the rock-ribbed earth, far beneath the white dome of Nothisis Ahn, Nophaie established his refuge in one of the almost inaccessible niches of his Cañon of Silent Walls. He had packed supplies in from Kaidab and had left the post with an arrangement whereby any letters from Marian, and more supplies, would be sent once a month by a trusted Pahute.

Nophaie held dear to heart and conscience Marian's appeal that he would not become a murderer, and, it seemed, the only way he could escape spilling blood was to hide himself in the cañons, there to spend the winter months and to wait. He had little fear of Blucher's hired policemen finding him here. Long before they could get near the only entrance to the Cañon of Silent Walls they would have lost any possible trace of him. Between his retreat and the upland plateau

of Nothisis Ahn lay many miles of labyrinthine cañons, and the great western roll of the Marching Rocks. There was no trail over these hills of marble. The smooth wind-worn slopes left no trace of hoofs or of moccasins. Many were the perilous precipices along which would the only course over this range of wind-carved mounds. The last Pahute hogan stood on the cedared brow of the upland slope, thirty miles away in an air line, three days of exceedingly toilsome travel up and ever upward out of the rocky depths.

Nophaie penetrated to the farthest corner of one of the cañoned wings of the valley; and here, where the foot of white man had never trodden, under gleaming white walls lifting to the sky, he pitched his camp. It was a place of all places for the lonely Indian. The upland country was now in the grip of winter. Down here the grass and moss were still green; the willow and oak leaves had thinned out—yet many were left, fluttering gold in the sunlight, and the cottonwoods tenaciously clung to their autumn hues. Flowers still bloomed on the benches where the sun lingered longest. Bees and beetles buzzed throughout the noonday hours, and from the high niches and crannies pealed down the sweet, strange, piercing twitter of the cañon swift, a bird that pitched downward like the gleam of an arrow.

Nophaie had reasoned that if there was anything to help him now in his extremity it was communion with his soul and mastery of his physical self here in the shadow of these lonely silent walls. If arrest for assault threatened him out there on the reservation he could not long have gone on working among his people. Besides, more than arrest surely threatened him. The wound from Noki's treacherous bullet had scarcely healed. Thus there were several reasons why it was well for him to hide, to be alone, to await some mystic

issue that was written. He would escape his enemies; he would be free of the cold winter that bound all Indians to their hogans; he could live in utter freedom here in this beautiful valley; he could dream and think the hours away, facing his soul, finding himself, growing away from that fierce hatred, realizing some melancholy happiness in the sweetness of love for Benow di Cleash.

Nophaie's valley resembled somewhat the shape of an octopus, except that the main body was narrow and crooked, and the arms extended far and winding. Innumerable ramifications on a lesser scale cut into the cliff walls everywhere. The great carved arm that cut deep into the bulk of Nothisis Ahn was a tremendous cañon in itself, lofty walled at its head, opening wide at its juncture with the main body, margined by wondrous shining smooth walls waved like billows, red and yellow in hue. Through this cañon ran the stream of water, and its course was one of ruggedness. That stream in flood, swollen by suddenly melting snows on the mountain, had cut a deep and devious gorge, and had carried a million boulders on its way. It had dug a dry river bed of rocks. Gravel bars, sand bars hid their white surfaces amid the boulders, and cottonwood trees stood up among them, and willows shaded them. Thickets of reeds and matted brush and long coarse-bladed grass made impenetrable barriers to the wilder recesses. This cañon showed most the forces of the elements, and it was a wilderness.

NOPHAIE seemed driven to explore, to seek, to search, to climb, especially to climb for a height that was unattainable, but to which he must aspire. All Indians love lofty places, and Nophaie was like an eagle in his love of the lonely crag and the wide outlook. Rest and calm returned to him, and then the days seemed to merge into one another, to glide on and on toward a nameless and wished-for end, an unveiling of the future.

The day had been unusually warm for that time of year. At sunset, when Nophaie climbed the high, cone-shaped knoll in the amphitheater of the valley, there was still heat on the smooth rock. He felt it through his moccasins, and

when in climbing he touched it with his bare hand the contact was pleasant. A partially overcast sky and an absence of wind had kept out the cool air from off the mountain. He reached the round summit and there he reclined. Bees or beetles went humming past him, evidently on a line toward the higher cedared part of the valley.

The overcast sky broke but slightly in the west, and that only enough to send a faint rose color to the tips of the great white towers. Through the gap to the north Nophaie saw the dim purple rim of a distant mesa. The long slow twilight was one of the strange and beautiful features of this Cañon of Silent Walls. Sunset came early because the insulation walls stood up so loftily that before the day was done they hid the westering sun. So the waning light lingered long.

BEFORE darkness enveloped the valley he descended from the knoll, walking on a long slant, sure-footed as a sheep, sliding here and there, down and down into the boulder-strewn ravine, where indeed night had fallen. There beside the stream he was halted by sounds he had not heard before, the strange croaking of cañon frogs. The unusually warm day had brought summer again to the denizens of the cañon. With the cool night wind these songs of belated summer ceased, and Nophaie heard them no more.

But that little he had heard was good for him. While he sat there on a huge boulder the night fell black. He felt the sadness and tranquillity of the hour, and realized that many such hours must be his, out of which might come some alleviation of his sorrow.

Above him the rounded wavy lines of the knolls loomed dark, and beyond them towered the cañon walls with crags against the sky. No blaze of stars illumined the heavens. There was no blue. From the shadow under him there rose a sweet music—tinkle and babble and murmur and splashing and gurgling of swift water over stones. It accentuated the loneliness and silence of this isolated rent in the earth. Nophaie's people and the world of white men seemed far away and not necessary for him at that hour.

His emotions gradually grew deep and full. That bitter and hateful mood of the past slowly lost its hold on him. Noble thoughts began to form in his mind. His work left undone, his duty to his people, his responsibility to a white woman who had blessed him with love must be taken up again as the only rewards of his life. Emotion uplifted Nophaie and intelligence combated selfishness. Yet always sadness dominated, an ineradicable sadness now because there had come to him a tremendous realization of the mastery and tragedy of Nature.

BUT strangely a hope seemed gestating in his soul, trying to be born. More and more he felt its stirring deep within him. It was like that fleeting conception of aboriginal man he sometimes caught when he narrowed his eyelids and looked at Nature as if he were the first human to evolve. It was as ephemeral as the moment in which he felt but did not think. It had to do altogether with the physical. In Nature then was not only the secret, but also salvation for him, if any were possible.

He was sitting up high in the center of the amphitheater, and the hour of sunset was nigh. An intense hue of gold crowned all the rounded rims and domes that faced the west, out of which poured a glory of sunset light. High on the white towers of rock the gold was red; higher still on the snow of Nothis Ahn it was rose. Away across the gap of the valley, northward, loomed up the great mesa, veiled in lilac haze.

The beauty and the glory might have existed only in Nophaie's mind, but they were tangible things. The light fell golden upon his hand. All the valley was full of luminous glow, moving, changing, rays and shadows. An eagle, bow winged and black against the luminosity of the sky, swept flashing like a streak of darkened light,

to plunge into the purple depths beyond the walls. Nophaie knew not the prayer to say there upon his rounded altar of rock, but he breathed one of his own:

*"Glory of sun at dying day,
Beauty of cloud in the sky,
Splendor of light on the crag,
Passionless god of nature,
Make me as thou.
Lend me thy gift.
Teach me thy secret,
Give me thy spirit."*

*"Eagle of the marvelous flight,
Shade of the purple height,
Ray and veil and mystic glow,
Blue of heaven and rose of snow,
Come to Nophaie."*

*"Come all things of heaven and earth,
Come out of west and north and east,
Come from the blowing wind,
Come from without the silent walls
To the lost and lonely soul,
And call me thine."*

Nophaie turned to face the east, the sacred direction of the sun worshiper. Grandeur of the west must be reflected in the east. Rounded rocks, waved on high, billowing higher to the rims, in velvet tones of crimson and lavender, heaved to the loftier walls. Where the setting sun struck the wall faces in full light it painted them a vivid orange red. Deep shadows made sharp contrast. Crevices and lines of cleavage hid their purple mystery from the blaze of the sun. They lifted the golden surfaces, contoured them with edge of violet. The Cañon of Silent Walls had been flooded with transforming hues. It shone upon a thousand surfaces of gold and red, with undertones of steps, leading up and up, stairway of the gods, to the castellated towers above. Gray towers, white towers, tinged with gold, rugged and spired, crowned this horizon wall of rock, and led Nophaie's gaze onward to the south where the grand north wall of Nothis Ahn was emblazoned with the cataclysmic scars of ages.

WALL, columnar as the rolling lofty cloud of the sky! Nophaie gazed upward, lost in contemplation. And while he gazed the sun went on with its miracle of transfiguration—life of color, spirit of glory, symbol of eternal change! This enchantment of a moment was the smile of Nature.

Nophaie pictured the wondrous scene from above; he imagined he had the eye of the soaring eagle. Underneath that strong vision lay the dark cañons, the red knolls, the golden walls, a broken world of waved bare stone. High on one of the rounded hills of rock stood a lonely, statuesque figure of man, the Indian, Nophaie, strange, pitifully little, a quivering atom among the colossal monuments of inanimate nature. He was the mystery of life thrown against that stark background of the age-old earth. Like a shipwrecked mariner on his spar-strewn, sinking deck the Indian gazed up at the solid and enduring mountain. Bright stone face of light! Silent wall with a thousand walls!

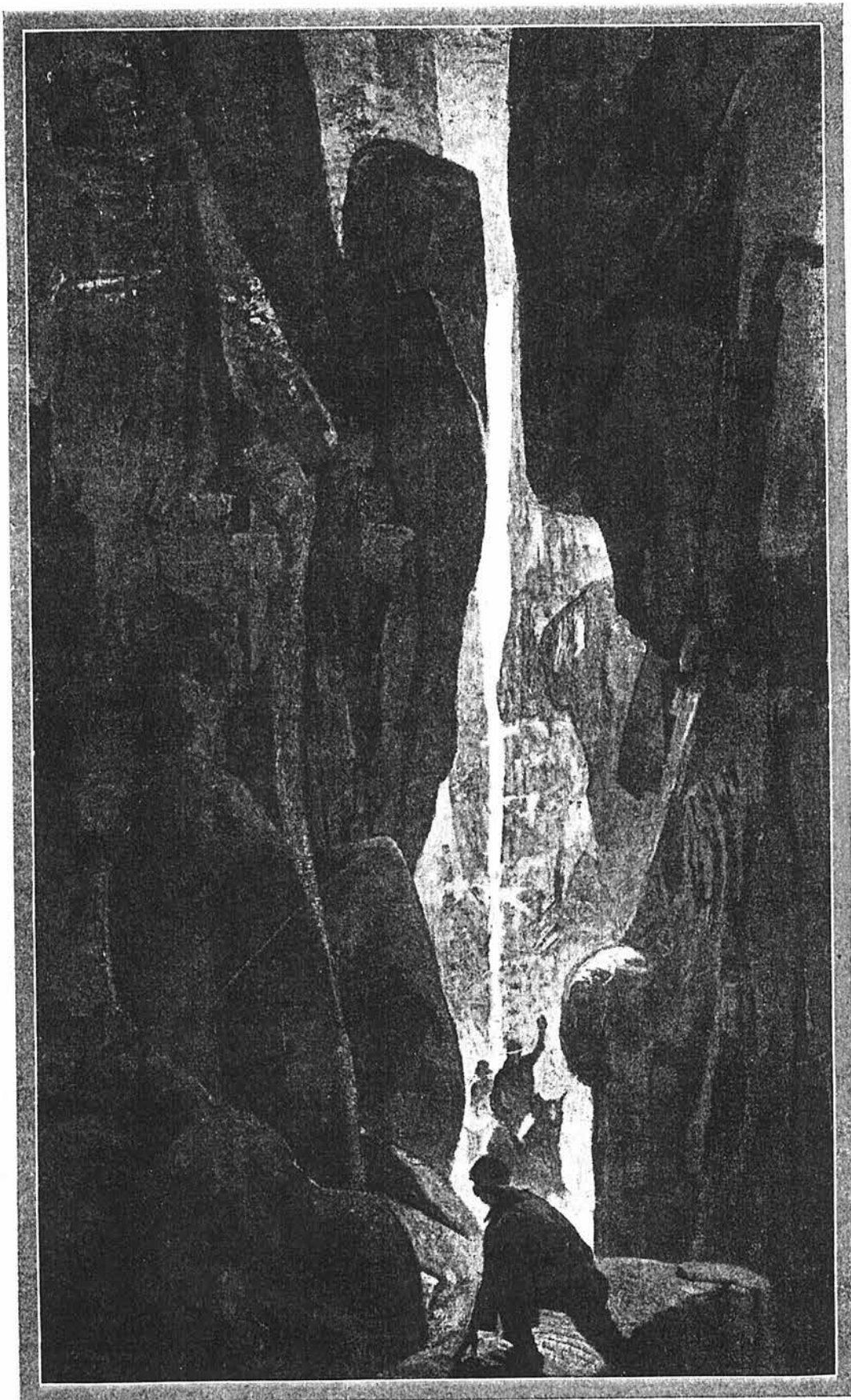
Days passed into weeks, and time was naught. The north wind roared on Nothis Ahn and storm clouds lodged there, black, with dropping gray veils. But down in the Cañon of Silent Walls there was neither winter cold nor wind. Nophaie sought the sunny walls and dreamed in their reflected heat. Only one arm of the cañon still remained unexplored, and he had left that for some task of energy and action to fall back upon when his spirit ebbed low.

ONE day, from far down the cañon, pealed and echoed the call of an Indian. It startled Nophaie. He had forgotten the Pahute whom Withers was to send with supplies. He had forgotten that and more. Surely there would be news of the world beyond these silent walls, of the reservation and of the affairs at Mesa; last and most desired, word from Benow di Cleash.

Nophaie ran. It was with the fleetness of an Indian, but the gladness of a white man. Almost he scorned that eagerness, that strange knocking at his heart. The solitude he had sought seemed to stand out clearer now, an enemy to his intelligence. Lonely cañons were abodes for barbarians, savages, Indians, not for men with developed thought. The work of white men should ever be to help the increasing progress of the world toward better life. But he was not a white man. As he ran his thoughts multiplied.

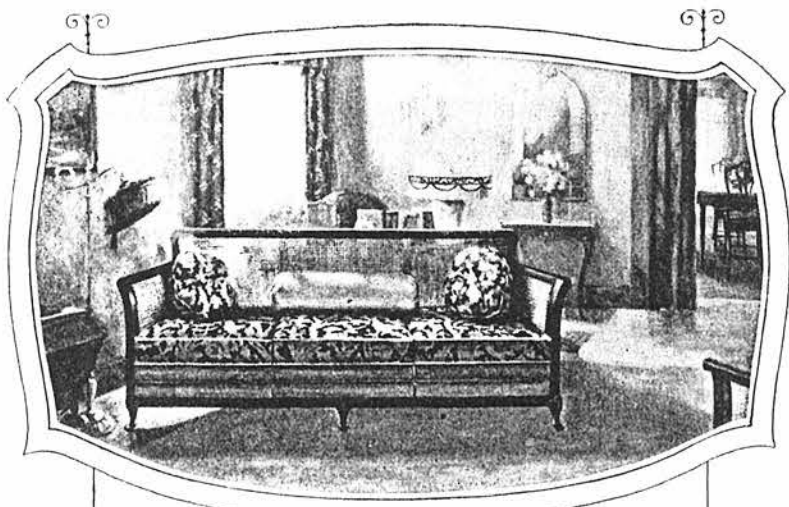
He found the Pahute in the main arm of the cañon. He had brought a pack mule heavily laden. Nophaie led him to his camp, and there unpacked the mule and cooked a meal for the Indian, and learned from him that white policemen had sought him all over the reservation and had returned to Mesa. No other news had the Pahute.

The Pahute left early in the afternoon, saying he wanted to get over the Marching Rocks before nightfall. Nophaie was again alone. Yet how different the loneliness now! There were



A LOUD CALL AWOKE THE DROWSY ECHOES OF THE SILENT CAÑON. NOPHAIE RAN TO THE GATEWAY BETWEEN THE WALLS. HE SAW HORSES, MULES WITH PACKS, AN INDIAN

(Continued on Page 94)



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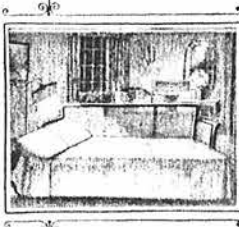
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The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 25)

packets and packages in that pile of supplies which, despite their outside wrappings of burlap and paper, did not bear the hall mark of an Indian trader. Nophaie felt rich. It struck him significantly that he was unutterably glad. But was it not a certainty of messages from Marian? That assuredly, yet he could not be sure it was all. Unpacking the heavier parcels first, Nophaie found that the trader had added considerable to the monthly order. Then there was a bundle of lighter weight, more carefully packed, and inside was a tag upon which was written in English, "Merry Christmas from Withers' outfit." It was Christmas Day. Nophaie tried to be annoyed at this, but he could not, and he found that what irritated him was the happy greeting in English.

"I am an Indian," muttered Nophaie. Yet he did not speak that in the Indian language. "Christmas gifts and greetings," he added, "and I am glad." Indian or not, he could not help his feelings. It was kind of the Withers family to remember the educated Indian in his lonely solitude.

HE FOUND tobacco, matches, chocolate, raisins, chewing gum, a clasp knife, a little hand ax, a large piece of tanned buckskin with needles and thread, and woolen socks and a flannel shirt. Withers had guessed his needs and had added luxuries.

Then with hasty fingers Nophaie opened the smallest packet, that he somehow knew was from Marian. Inside the heavy paper was more paper, and inside that waterproof cloth, and inside this a silken scarf all neatly folded round a soft, flat object.

Nophaie unfolded the scarf to behold a large, clean, thick white envelope upon which had been written one word: "Nophaie."

Marian's handwriting! A thrill went over him. There were illusions, but also there were realities. No moment of life that did not bring happiness to some mortal!

He put the letter aside and opened the second packet, larger, flatter, more strongly wrapped, incased in pasteboard. He expected to find a photograph and was not disappointed. But before he opened the cover, out dropped an envelope containing snapshot pictures of Marian taken at Mesa with her own camera. The best picture was one of her riding the white mustang he had given her. They were all good, yet not one of them seemed like the image he had in memory. The desert was hard on Marian. But when Nophaie opened the large envelope he saw a beautiful likeness of the fair face he loved and remembered so well. This was a fine photograph, taken in Philadelphia, probably some time after he had left the East.

"Benow di Cleash!" he murmured, and all the white flowerlike fairness seemed to flash in a beautiful light from that pictured face. Gazing, he forgot everything for a while.

WHEN he went back to his packages he found books, magazines, late newspapers, pads and pencils and envelopes, a small hunter's sewing kit, a box of medicines, bandages, candy, nuts and cakes and, last of all, a watch with radium numerals, and a buckskin fob decorated with Nopah buttons. She had not forgotten to include in all this loving munificence some token of the Indian. That thrilled him as nothing else had.

One by one he handled these gifts and pondered over the effect they had upon him. Beyond peradventure of doubt these established the connection between him and the world of white people. Eighteen years of his life, the forming and fixing period, had

developed to such things as these, and not to those of the red man. He might starve naked in a cave of the cañons, with nothing representative of the white race near him, but that could not change facts. He loved Marian Warner. Her gifts made him happy. The isolated solitudes of the desert were good for his soul and body, but they could never wholly satisfy. He carried her letter to his favorite resting place before he read it.

XV

AS SOON as Nophaie had reached his favorite resting and dreaming place, he opened the last package from Marian and started to read her message. Then, moved by an unaccountable impulse, he raised his eyes and looked about him. This place was a strange one, a narrow section of cañon where the west wall leaned to meet the cavernous eastern wall, the lofty red rims of which showed a blue ribbon of sky above. Here the cañon turned sharply to the left and then to the right, giving a strange impression of stupendous leaning walls.

At the base of the cavernous cliff ran the murmuring stream of clear green water. Banks of moss and grass stood out from the wall, dry, odorless and gray. The leaves of the cottonwoods were not yet devoid of their autumn hue. Nophaie gazed on the familiar scene from his accustomed seat and then with mounting beat of heart once more turned to Marian's letter. Was he really there, a lonely, outcast Nopah in the solitude of a silent cañon, holding in his hands the letter of a noble and loving woman of a hated race?

Dearest Nophaie: Greetings on your Christmas Day! I could not be happy without sending to you my greeting, and love, and my gifts. May these find you well. May they assure you at least of the constancy of Benow di Cleash. I shall not be able, even on Christmas Day, to believe wholly in the spirit, "Peace on earth—good will to men." Not when the one I love, who I know is worthy, lies hidden in the wilds, persecuted by men of my color!

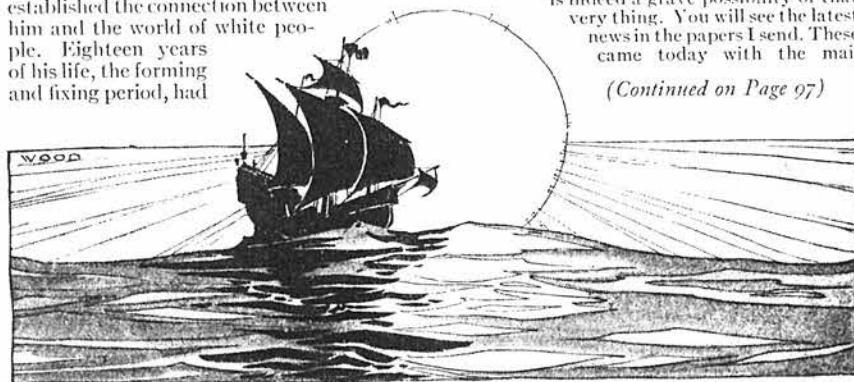
If I could write you a whole volume I would never be able to crowd in all. My dismissal came quite some time after your visit. In fact, I ran the office until Blucher and Morgan came out of seclusion. Then I got the "steam roller" all right, and without my month's pay! I'm grateful for that, because it gives me an excuse to go back to the office, which I have done regularly since I came here to stay with the Paxtons. They are very kind to me and allow me to pay my board. I help in the trading store sometimes, and thus I keep up my study of the Indians. Here I get another angle on the reservation.

As far as I am able to tell, nothing has yet leaked out in Mesa about that football match you had with Blucher and Morgan. I will never get over that day. Never will I trust myself again. If you were an Indian, I was a savage. I just swelled and tingled and burned with fiendish glee every time you kicked one of the—footballs. My only regret rises from the fact that I never saw you play real football in the college games that made you famous.

My last interview with Blucher and Morgan was a nightmare. Blucher was poison. Morgan tried to intimidate me and drive me off the reservation. He said—but never mind what he said. The Indian police have returned from their search for you, I imagine. You will do well to lie low for a while. There is a seething volcano under this particular part of the reservation. The Woltersons expect dismissal any day. All communication to Woltersen comes through the superintendent.

I suspect that Blucher is greatly concerned about the possibility of the United States being drawn into war with Germany. There is indeed a grave possibility of that very thing. You will see the latest news in the papers I send. These came today with the mail.

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The Vanishing American

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carrier from Flagerstown. Read them carefully. You may be a Nopah, but you are also an American, one of the truest of Americans, the red-blooded species! German militarism threatens not only the peace of the world, but also the freedom. If war is declared I trust you will tell the truth to every Nopah on this reservation. For I absolutely know that Blucher will oppose any Indian help to the United States Army. I read a letter he wrote to a German in New York. He was typing it himself, and when someone called him I read it. If I could only have secured a copy of it or have remembered it. But I was excited, shocked. Blucher is all German. If war is declared the situation here on this reservation will be a terrible one. Think how to meet that Nophaie.

I have seen Gekin Yashi but once. She was in the schoolyard near the fence as I passed on my way here from Woltersen's. I got close to her before she saw me. Her face has altered strangely. It gave me a pang. For a second I felt that I could tear and rend. When she espied me she ran. I called, but she paid no heed.

I have no plans. I am waiting. You may be sure I'll not leave the reservation. I might be taken off, but they'll have to carry me. This winter is no great problem. I need rest and I want to write some. Later, if nothing comes up here, I might go out to Kaidab. In the spring I hope to see you, I want you to know that I meant what I said in Blucher's office the day you confronted him and Morgan there. I would be happy to marry you, and share what I have with you and your life and work among your people. I have the means for a start. And we can work. I ask only that we spend some part of each year in California or the East. I have vanity enough not to let myself dry up in this desert air and blow away.

Time and trouble change character, do they not? I am the stronger for what has come to me out here. The desert is terrible. It destroys and then builds. I never knew what light was—the wonderful sun, and wind and dust and heat, stars and night and silence, the great emptiness—until I came to the desert. Perhaps so with love!

Somehow I will endure the long silence for you must not risk writing to me yet. I will dream of you, see you among the rocks. Always, as long as I live, rocks and walls of stone will have thrilling and sad significance for me.

BENOW DI CLEASH.

NOPHAIE gazed in seeming terror at the stupendous wall of stone opposite. He could not see either of its corners or its base. Solid rock, impenetrable and immovable and insurmountable! The temptation that confronted him now was just as much a wall, a barrier, an overpowering weight. Benow di Cleash loved him. She would marry him. She would share all she had as she would share his life. Live with him! Belong to him alone!

The fact was a staggering blow. Here under the accusing eyes of his silent walls he had feelings that no other place could inspire. Loneliness had augmented his hunger for a mate. Nature importuned him for her right. And suddenly Nophaie found himself stripped bare of all ideals, chivalries, duties, of the false sophistries of his education, of the useless fetters of his unbelief.

While he lay motionless on that mossy bank it seemed the elemental, the natural, the mindless automaton of living flesh must win. There was nothing else in life. One terrible moment he lay there under the walls that seemed to thunder the meaning of Nature. Then he sprang up to force himself into violent and sustained effort that must bring subjugation of the instincts which threatened his downfall. He ran. He leaped the brook. From boulder to boulder he bounded. Along the grassy benches, under the looming ledges, over the washes, through the thickets, up the cañon he sped with that incomparable stride of the Indian runner trained under the great masters of college athletics.

OUT he ran, straight for the notch of the cañon, with wild eyes on the white-towered wall of Nothis Ahn. No Indian had ever surmounted that wall. But Nophaie would surmount it or perish in the attempt.

Down the waved knoll Nophaie ran, light and sure as a wildcat, and over the wide area of bare rock to the main base of the wall.

There he began to climb in a long slant, up the brown smooth incline, veined and striped, and around the headed corners, and back to a long slant in the other direction, up and up by these zigzag courses, to the curved and rolling rim of red, where began the vast slow heave of the white amphitheater.

Nophaie pulled himself up, he let himself down, he leaped fissures, crept along abysmal chasms blue in depth, he rimmed the base of crags, climbed around and between them

Out of the zone of white pillars and turrets at last! Level with the nests of eagles! Nophaie stood at the base of the weathered slope of Nothis Ahn, the track of the avalanches, the tilted level of loose rocks; and he looked almost straight up to the green band of timber and the glistening dome of snow. If climbing had been difficult and hazardous before, now it was approaching the impossible. Nophaie sent the rocks sliding below him; he started the slides into avalanches. He loosened the slopes above him. He performed miracles of agility, speed and endurance. Like the Indian masters of the legends he consoled with eagles, bounded with the feet of the wind, swung on the edges of the clouds.

Snow and spruce halted Nophaie, a forest of evergreens, matted and webbed into impenetrable windfalls, buried deep in the white ice of the heights. He could not go higher. At the edge of the snow line, on a gray brow of rock, he built a monument, so that it would be visible to eye of Indian from below.

What Nophaie had climbed so desperately for seemed never to have been. He had spent the forces of his nature. For that hour, perhaps forever, he had conquered. On the heights came a regurgitation of emotion, a flashing back of thought. There was blood on the worn edges of his moccasins; his finger nails were worn to the quick. The ache in his bones, the pang in his lungs, the deadness of his muscles attested to the nature of that climb. Hours could be measured as years.

Long after dark that night Nophaie dragged his bruised and weary body into camp, there to crawl into his bed and stretch his limbs, as if never to move them again. Sleep and rest—for days and nights—restored his strength. And as the days and nights multiplied in the shadow of the silent walls, Nophaie learned that the noble proof of his love for Marian was not in surrender to it. He would not drag her down to his level. Utterly impossible for him was a life among white men. He was the Vanishing American.

Days passed into weeks and weeks into months. Three times the Pahute came, and three times a white, thick letter stormed Nophaie's soul, yet left him stronger.

Not until a late day of his sojourn there did he explore the one remaining arm of the cañon. What was his amaze and regret to find it beyond comparison with any of the others.

Three miles or more of exceedingly rough travel brought Nophaie to a point where this cañon changed its color, its height and width, its bed, its sky line, its every feature. Nophaie named it "Cañon of Gleams." Its hue was the strange one of pale marble in the moonlight; its height sheerly perpendicular and incredible; its width six feet at the base, gradually widening in V shape to perhaps fifty feet at the top; its bed was solid, smooth, grayish rock, hard as iron, worn into deep smooth ruts by the rushing stream; and its sky line was a long even straight lane of blue as far as Nophaie could see. No bird, no lizard, no beetle or bee, no frog or insect, no living creature or sprig of vegetation crossed Nophaie's vision. The hollow, reverberating, mocking voice of the stream was the only sound that could be heard. There was no wind. The uneven stream-bed gleamed, the water gleamed, the walls gleamed, the band of sky gleamed.

This Cañon of Gleams grew to have an insatiable fascination for Nophaie. He wandered there often, never to find it altogether the same.

SPRING! Nophaie grew restless. The hold of the silent walls lessened. In him were contending tides. Silence and solitude had dragged him to the verge. Forgetfulness and the thoughtlessness of the Indian had closely infringed upon his memory. Nature had importuned with all her insidious and supreme mastery over the senses. Hate and unbelief had trampled in vain on his soul. He was still free.

The day came when a loud call awoke the drowsy echoes of the silent cañon. It startled Nophaie. That had not been the voice of an Indian. Had the long solitude worked upon his mind? He ran to the wide gateway between the red walls. He saw horses, mules with packs, an Indian; and then out from the shade of a cedar strode Withers, mopping his heated face.

"Howdy, Nophaie," he said, with smile and earnest gaze. "You look fine."

Nophaie stirred to the warmth of the trader's close handclasp. He returned it and that was all his response. Utterance seemed difficult. Long had his voice been silent. Besides, Withers bore a look of intense strain. He was thinner, older. A suppressed passion seemed rampant in him.

"Come out of the sun," said Withers, turning. "It's hot and I've ridden hard."

Nophaie followed him to a seat on a flat rock in the shade. The moment seemed to hinge on strange events. The trader's presence might mean that which must add to Nophaie's burden.

"Throw saddles and packs right here," said Withers to the Indian who had come with him. "Nophaie, where is your horse?"

"Gone," replied Nophaie. "I have not seen him for a long time."

"I figured on that and I fetched one for you."

"Withers, why did you bring me a horse?" queried Nophaie, conscious of an inward tremor.

"Because I think you'll hit the trail back with me," replied the trader significantly.

"Has anything happened to Marian?" "Sure; a lot's happened. But she's O. K., well and fine."

"WITHERS, it's a long, rough ride here. You have a strong reason for coming yourself. Tell me."

"Strong! Wal, it sure is strong," retorted the trader grimly.

"Why did you come?" demanded Nophaie. "War!" flashed Withers.

In one bound Nophaie was on his feet, transfixed and thrilling.

"No!" he exclaimed.

"Yes," returned the other, and he too rose from his seat. A steel-gray flinty light shone from his eyes.

"Germany—and the United States?"

"Nophaie, you've said it!"

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The Woodcutter

By ALFRED NOYES

AS I WALKED through a
fir wood
Where wild pigeons croon
I found a deep glen
That was old as the moon;

And, deep in its midnight
Of gorse and thick fern,
I beheld a low lantern
Like a harvest moon burn.

Then for leagues I groped down
By wild rocks and dark streams,
Over fir roots and tree ferns,
Led straight by its gleams,
Till at last, by that lantern,
And still as a stone,
I discerned an old woodcutter
Standing alone.

And I crept nigh and saw
From the edge of that glow
That his face was like wisdom,
His elf locks like snow;
And his eyes like black magic
That sleeps in deep wells,
With a deeper night under
Where mystery dwells.

And his mouth had the strength
That has conquered desire;
And the ax on his shoulder
Was whiter than fire;
And he breathed very softly,
Like a deep sea at rest,
A tune from the lost woods
That Merlin loved best:

I hear the grass growing;
I hear the leaves fall;
I hear the years flowing
And heed not at all;
I hear the far changes
Of seasons and tides;
I am waiting, still waiting,
For hope still abides.

Then he lifted his lantern;
He swung it on high,
And I saw a great tree
Looming up through the sky,
With its opal-skinned clusters
In darkness impearled,
A bright fruitage of stars
On the tree of the world.

He lowered his lantern;
And now I could see
A deep gash like a cave
At the roots of the tree,

So deep that I trembled
Lest even a breath
Should send that proud Igdrasil
Crashing to death.

And the woodman breathed low:
Does the judgment draw nigh?
I am waiting, still waiting
One word from on high.
Are they eaten with cankers?
Is it poisonous fruit?
It will need but one stroke
Of mine ax at the root.

Have they trampled all beauty
And truth into dust?
Have they choked their own souls
With their greed and their lust?
One stroke, and my Master
Were freed of this pain;
Since His worlds of free-will
Will His work to be vain.

Then I saw the gaunt woodman
Like Azrael arise,
As he heaved the great heft
Of his ax to the skies;
It was moved by sure laws.
Every lie in the night,
Every wrong in the sun,
Swung the ax to its height.

By the laws in whose service
All creatures are free
Its might was upraised
As the moon lifts the sea.
Then the night held its breath,
And above the world oak
The blade—ah, how slowly—
Swung back for the stroke.

There was only one whisper
Of time dying out,
Yet the doomsman still waited,
Still paused, as in doubt;
A sigh of great ages
That ebbed with the tides.
He is waiting, still waiting,
For hope still abides.

No mercy can stay him.
He listens. He waits
Not the judgment of Heaven
Or the whim of the Fates.
No strength can delay him;
No godhead controls,
But the strength of the victims,
The choice of their souls.



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The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 97)

"Blucher—and the Indians?" Nophaie's voice was quick and ringing.

"I haven't a word to say about Blucher," burst out Withers passionately. "But I'll tell you a few facts outside the reservation. For weeks Germany torpedoed American trading vessels, threatened and bullied President Wilson, insulted the American flag. Then she sank the Lusitania with American men, women and children aboard. Then she sent submarines to our very shores. The President and Congress have declared war."

Nophaie recalled Marian's letters. Certain passages now seemed limned on his memory in letters of fire! German militarism! Downfall of civilization! Death of freedom! Slavery of Americans! By every right and law and heritage he, Nophaie, was the first and best blood of America. The depths of his whole soul roused to strange, fierce passion.

Withers held out a shaking hand. "My son has gone," he said thickly. "Already! He did not wait for the draft."

"What's a draft?"

"A new law. A war law. Every young man between twenty-one and thirty-one is called to Army or Navy, to fight for his country."

"Will this draft affect the Indians?" queried Nophaie sharply.

"No. They can't be drafted. But the Government has appealed to all Indians to register. That means, as I understand it, an enrolling of the names and numbers of Indians, their horses and stock, so that the Government can have this information for reference. We're all drawn into the war, whites and Indians. But no Indian can be compelled to go to war."

"Can they go if they want?"

"Yes. And the call is strong for Indians to enlist."

"I will go!"

WITHERS forced that shaking hand down on Nophaie's shoulder, where it gripped hard. For an instant speech was beyond him. How strange the agitation of his rugged face! The unplumbed passions of the man had been upheaved. "Nophaie, you don't have to enlist."

"I am an American," replied Nophaie.

"I didn't come to ask you to go to war," responded Withers in earnest passion. "But I came to tell you this: The Nopahs are being lied to. They did not understand the idea of registering. They are being made to believe it's a ruse, a trick to get their names, their thumb marks on paper. They are being deceived into believing that this register is only another white-man lie, that if they sign they can be drafted. Old Etenia met me on the way here. He said: 'If the Big Chief at Washington wants my young braves for war, why did he not ask them to go? The Nopahs have been warriors. But never have they been forced to fight.' Another old Indian said: 'Let the Germans kill all the Americans. Then we can get our land back and live in peace.' Nophaie, this tribe of yours numbers over twenty thousand. They must not be made to believe they can be unjustly driven to war. The truth must be told them. This false rumor of government treachery, this propaganda must not spread further."

Nophaie understood why the trader's lips were sealed as to what he knew. Marian had prepared Nophaie for understanding of this fostering of hostility among the Indians.

"I will tell the Nopahs the truth," he said. "I will take Indians with me to war."

XVI

NOPHAIE bade farewell to his Cañon of Silent Walls. He and Withers made a record ride to the camp of the Pahutes, where they stayed overnight. Nophaie began his

work there. None of the few Pahute men present, however, came within the prescribed limits of the war demands.

Another day brought Nophaie and the trader across the upland sage to the range of Etenia. The old Nopah had sons and relatives, and more horses and cattle than any other Indian in this quarter of the reservation. It was important that he be persuaded to accede to the act Withers had called registration.

Nophaie found himself received with respect and deference. It augured well for the success of his new work among the Indians. Nophaie sought council with Etenia, which was granted; and the old Indian asked the honor of the trader's presence. Nophaie had gone over in mind an exhortation he believed to be honest, eloquent and persuasive, and which he believed would appeal to the Indians. This he delivered to Etenia with all the force he could muster.

The old Nopah smoked in silence. He had been deeply impressed and could not at once reply to such a strong discourse.

At last he spoke:

"Nophaie sees with the mind of the white man, far and wide. He should sit in the councils of the Nopahs. Etenia believes and will register his name. He will sell cattle and horses to the Government. He will say to his sons: 'One of you shall go fight for America, for the white people, for the land where they keep us.' Etenia will say his sons shall draw lots for him who is to go to war."

WHEN lots were drawn among the sons of Etenia it turned out that the youngest, the favorite of the old Nopah, the joy of his declining years, must be the one to go with Nophaie.

"Etenia says it is well," declared the father with lofty pride.

At Kaidab there was a crowd of Indians, and an unrest and excitement totally new and strange to the trading post.

Nophaie found the white people stirred and upset under the stress of an emotion that none could control. Nophaie talked with all of them. The trader's wife showed the strain of worry and a mother's fear for her son, and a suppressed anger and concern over the Indian situation. The Indians were excited. They collected in little groups and talked. Every hour saw more Nopahs ride into the trading post and Nophaie found them sullen, distrustful and hard to approach. But for his late rise to the dignity of one worth listening to, he could not have got their ear at all. A subtle and powerful influence had been at work among them. Nophaie had guessed its origin, and he discovered how and by whom it was being propagated. He realized at once that he had been too late to influence the Indians in a body, and would have a difficult task to persuade them to register, let alone go to war. Nevertheless he did not allow this unfortunate circumstance to deter him from his great task.

AT THE outset of his activities he encountered Shoie, the binder of evil spells on Indian women. Nophaie was about to pass him in contempt. But suddenly he halted. This Indian was young, strong, a keen scout, a wonderful breaker and tracker of horses. His mentality might be one to adapt itself readily to war. Nophaie meant to leave no stone unturned.

"Shoie, I am going to fight for the Americans," he said in the Nopah tongue. "You are a warrior. Will you go with me?"

"Shoie will fight for Nophaie," replied the Indian with a gleam in his dark eyes.

For days Nophaie haunted the trading post and importuned the visiting Indians. His dogged efforts earned success, but nothing that satisfied him. Always he gained the

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The Vanishing American

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attention and the respect now due him; only he encountered the wall of doubt that once raised in an Indian's mind was almost impossible to break down. One old Nopah said: "All white men are liars!" Another Indian said: "No white man can lie to me twice."

The idea of registration met with a subtle and powerful check. Nophaie could not learn from any Indian just what was the content of the hostile propaganda. He guessed, however, that the idea of registering had been falsely represented to the Indians, and it was just such an idea that would stick in their minds.

Nophaie decided that it would be wise for him to ride out over the reservation and head off this German propaganda. He had intended that, in any event; but now he saw he must make haste. Yet he was loath to abandon Kaidab with only seventeen Indian names promised for registration and but three for service.

Withers' comment on this was significant: "Nophaie, you've done well."

NOPHAIE rode out into the desert on his mission, and few were the hogans he missed. One afternoon near sunset he reached a small trading post kept by a squaw man. The last Indian Nophaie had interrogated had bidden him ride in haste to this post. Mustangs exceeding a score in number were standing haltered and loose before the squat red stone house. But no Indians were in sight. Dismounting, Nophaie went to the door and looked in. He saw the backs and black-banded sombreros of a crowd of Indians, all attentive to the presence of a white man sitting on the high counter. That white man was Jay Smith.

"Indians, listen," began Smith in fluent Nopah: "Blucher has sent me out all over the reservation to tell you not to register. Don't put your names or thumb marks on any paper. If you do your horses and cattle will be taken and you will have to go to war. There's no law to compel Indians to fight. You can't be forced to go. But if you sign papers, if you register, the Government will have you bound. Then you've got to go. This register order is not what it seems. It's an old trick to fool you. You've been fooled before. Listen to your real friends and don't register."

When he concluded his harangue there followed an impressive silence. Then an old Nopah, lean and wrinkled and somber, addressed the speaker:

"Let the white man tell why Blucher sends him. If the Government lies to the Indians—to make warriors of them—then Blucher lies, too, for he is the Government."

"Blucher is a friend of the Nopahs," replied Smith. "He does not think the registration is honest. The Government has made a law to drive young white men to war. It does not hesitate to cheat the Indians for the same reason."

The ensuing silence of a moment seemed pregnant with the conviction of the Indians. Presently another of them moved forward. He leaped on the counter. He too was old, a scar-faced Indian, with fierce dark mien. He shook a sinewy hand at the young men before him.

"Hagoie will kill any Nopah here who registers!" he thundered.

THAT appeared to end the speech-making, for all the Indians began to jabber excitedly. Nophaie took advantage of the moment to slip outdoors. Twilight had fallen. He walked to a corral near the house and sat down out of sight to wait for darkness and to think. He did not intend to let Smith get away from that post without being confronted. He had noticed that he was packing a gun. Therefore it would be policy to surprise him. Nophaie argued dispassionately that he had good cause to kill Smith, aside from the possibility of self-defense.

When Smith came out and strode toward his horse Nophaie glided after him. Then just as Smith reached for his bridle he must have heard something, for he stiffened. Nophaie pressed his gun against Smith's side and said low and sharp: "Don't move your hands. If you do I'll kill you."

"Nophay?" ejaculated Smith hoarsely. "Yes; Nophaie."

"Wal, what you want?"

"Listen. I heard your talk to the Indians. I know now what has influenced them all over the reservation. It's German propaganda, and you're Blucher's mouthpiece. You're no better than a German yourself. You're a traitor. Do you hear me?"

"I ain't deaf," growled Smith, straining to hold himself stiff. His face now made a pale blotch in the gloom.

"SMITH, this talk of yours is treason," went on Nophaie. "Do you have to be told that by an Indian? If I had time I could get Nopahs and white men too who'd help me prove your guilt. But I want all my time left to undo your dirty work. I'm going to war to fight for your country. Now here, if you don't quit spreading these propaganda lies for Blucher I'll ride to Flagertown and enlist. Then I'll come back on the reservation. I'll be an American soldier, outside the law. Blucher can't touch me or hold me. And I'll kill you, Smith; I swear I will. Do you believe me?"

"Wal, I reckon I do," replied Smith. "An' if you want to know, I'll give you a hunch I'm glad to be scared off this job."

"Just the same, get on that horse and keep your back to me," ordered Nophaie.

In another moment Smith, cursing under his breath, was in the saddle. A hard leathery thud and jangle attested to his use of spurs. The horse plunged away, to be enveloped by the darkness.

Nophaie stayed at the squaw man's house for two days, and all his earnest talks to the Indians who visited the post failed signally to overcome the insidious poison spread by Jay Smith. To Nophaie's dismay he found that the farther he penetrated into this part of the reservation, the colder the Nopahs were to his solicitations.

Hot weather came and Nophaie's passionate dream of leading thousands of Indians to war had to be dispelled. His tireless labors resulted in upwards of two score of Nopahs signing their thumb marks to his paper. Word came to him from various sources that Indians were enlisting in the Army, but he could not verify this until he got out of the desert.

NOPHAIE'S heart burned with hatred for the German who had ruined the noblest opportunity that had ever confronted his people. "I should have killed Blucher," he muttered. "No service I can render now will ever be one-thousandth as great as that would have been."

Nophaie rode into Mesa, there to take farewell of Marian. Long he had dreaded this and thrust it from his mind. But now with his work ended, and the near approach of the date set for him and his Nopahs to enlist, he had to think of her.

Much as he yearned to see Marian he was greatly relieved to learn from Paxton that she was in Flagertown, and would expect him there. She had left Nophaie a short note telling him where to find her, and she entreated him not to tarry long at Mesa.

Nophaie had need of that entreaty. Never in his life before had he been victim of the dark and terrible mood now fastened upon him. The wrath roused in him by the murder of Do Etin and his ambushment by the Noki, and the tragedy of poor little Gekin Yashi had not been the same as this, now so murky and hot in his soul. The idea of war had liberated something deep and latent in Nophaie. The menace to the fair seaboard of the United States, which he remembered so well; the encroachment of an utterly unscrupulous enemy had stung and roused in him the instinctive savageness of his nature.

It was in this mood that Nophaie reached Mesa, and the pathos of Marian's letter and the proximity of Blucher and Morgan only added fuel to the smoldering fire.

Nophaie made no effort to hide. He was in reality an American soldier. He had ridden thousands of miles in the service of the Army. No reservation jail, no jail at Flagertown, could hold him now. Freely he mingled with

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The cocoanut-oil in Fab makes the tiny flakes dissolve like snowflakes in warm water. No bits of soap can stay in Fab-suds to stick to woolly threads and shrink or mat them.

Fab-suds bring back the snowy white to mittens, leggings and sweaters. Fab-suds wash softly the little frock and flannels beneath.

Over 115 years' experience in making fine soaps has gone into the production of FAB. No effort was spared to make these cocoanut-oil flakes safe for children's clothes.

COLGATE & CO.
Est. 1806
NEW YORK



A color print, for framing, of this Saida (H. Willebeck Le Mair) painting for six cents in stamps, Dept. F. H.

The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 103)

the Indians at the trading post. An unusual number were there, all excited, and a few were bound for Flagerstown, on the same errand as Nophaie. The mail carrier had two of them engaged as passengers, and readily agreed to take Nophaie.

An automobile thrummed up the road from Copenwashie and stopped before the trading post. Two white men beside the driver occupied it. One of them was Blucher. Had that round bullet face thinned out? Nophaie felt the leap of his blood. Blucher and his companion got out of the car and climbed the stone steps in earnest conversation not distinguishable to Nophaie. But as the superintendent passed to enter the trading post Nophaie could have reached out a long arm to touch him.

Kill him now! The whisper ran through Nophaie's being. It was a flame. Almost it precluded thought. But the face of Benow di Cleash rose in Nophaie's reddening sight, and he was again master of himself.

Before sunset that day Nophaie was in Flagerstown and had dispatched a note to Marian. Before he started to meet her he had enlisted at the recruiting station and was a soldier of the United States Army.

At the end of a street near the outskirts of town Nophaie found the number he was looking for. And as he mounted the porch of the little cottage Marian opened the door. Fair golden flash of face and hair! He did not see clearly, stumbling as he went in. Her voice sounded strange. Then they were alone in a little room with vague walls. Dread he had felt at prospect of this meeting, but he had not understood. He wanted only to spare her pain. This woman now, holding his hands, gazing with strained, dark eyes of agony up at him, was remembered by her beloved fair face, but something in it was strange to him.

"Benow di Cleash!" he said unsteadily.

"Nophaie—lover—my Indian! You are going to war," she whispered, and threw her arms round his neck.

EVEN as Nophaie bent to her white face and to her lips, he grasped at the meaning of her singular abandon. One word had been enough. War! And he pitied and loved her as never before, and understood her, and clasped her close, and kissed her until she sank against him, pale and spent. To him her kisses, with all their sweetness of fire, called to his own lips only an austerity of farewell. Long ago, in his Cañon of Silent Walls, he had fought his battle against love. Here he was as strong, tranquil, grave as she was weak and passionate.

"Nophaie, when do you—go away?"

"Tonight at ten."

"Oh! So soon? But you go first to training camp?" she queried breathlessly.

"Yes."

"You might not be sent abroad."

"Benow di Cleash, do not have false hopes. You want me to go to France. I'm fit now to fight. And it will not take long to make soldiers of my Nopahs."

"That means the—the front line, the trenches, scout and sharpshooter duty, the most dangerous posts," she cried, with a hand going to her mouth.

"Indians would not court the safe places, Benow di Cleash. We are going—sixty-four Nopahs, most of whom I enlisted."

Then he told her of his long rides, of his importunities to beat Blucher's influence, and of his failure. She warmed to that, and in her anger at the treachery of the agent and her pride in Nophaie she passed by the more poignant moment of this meeting.

"I KNEW he was pro-German," she said, with flashing eyes. "Yet strange to say he has strong friends here. Oh, this little town is out of its head! What must Philadelphia or New York be now?"

"If the Indians are excited what must white men be?" replied Nophaie. "All this

war feeling is bad, wild, terrible. But I have nothing to lose and everything to gain. I —"

"Nothing—to—lose," she cried, suddenly sobbing, and again her arms flashed round his neck. "Nophaie, you have me to lose. Don't you love me still?"

"Love you! Child, you are beside yourself," he replied tenderly. He saw the havoc of war in this girl's breaking of reserve and intensity of emotion. "Only today I proved my love for you, Benow di Cleash."

"How? Not to me, not yet."

He told of the incident where Blucher passed within reach of his arm at a crucial moment when all the savagery of Indian nature was in the ascendant, and he had denied it. "Only thought of you kept me from killing him," he concluded.

"Me! I'd have been glad," she returned, with again that strange blaze in her eyes.

Nophaie realized anew that the white girl now presented a complexity of character perhaps beyond his comprehension. She who had been the one to save Blucher's life, now would have gloried in hearing of his death, through her lover. This war spirit had unsettled her mind.

"Nophaie, let me follow you to New York—to France," she begged.

"Let you follow me! Why, Benow di Cleash, I couldn't prevent you, but I implore against it."

"Let me go. I can become a nurse—do Red Cross work—anything."

"No. If you want to give me happiness, stay here and go on helping my people until I come back or —"

"DON'T say it," she cried, and shut his lips with hers. "I can't bear the thought—not yet. Maybe some courage will come to me after you have gone. I love you, Nophaie—a million times more since I came out here to your country. The desert has changed me. Listen, after you leave I will go East for a while. But I promise I will come back here and work—and wait."

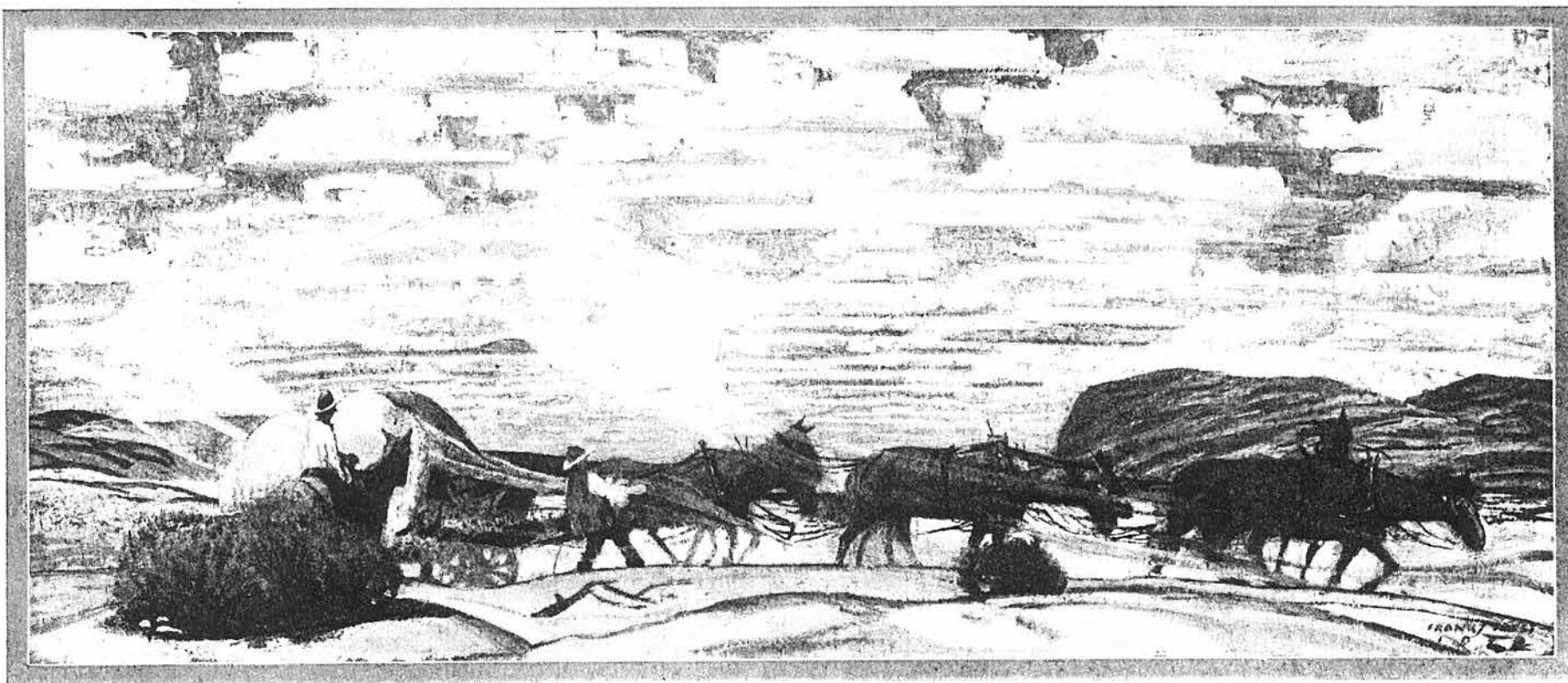
"All is well, Benow di Cleash," he said. "I feel that I will come back. Now let us go outside and walk. I cannot say good-by to you inside a house."

At the end of the lane a low, rocky eminence rose, the first lift toward the higher ground above the town. Stately pine trees grew there. Wide apart, rugged and brown, with their thick green tops, they appealed strangely to Nophaie. A solemn and beautiful and splendid emotion came to him as he walked under them with Marian. She was growing calmer and assimilating something of his faith, of the mystic in him.

The warm summer air floated away, and the cool wind from the mountain took its place. The rosy afterglow of sunset faded. A lonely star glimmered in the west. The great still pines grew black against the sky.

"Benow di Cleash, when the Indian says at the end of his prayer 'All is well,' he must mean just that. You must not have one unhappy hour on account of my going to war. Think of me as an American soldier. Physical pain is nothing to me. I have played football with injuries that would have laid white men in the hospital. I welcome this chance to justify the Indian. Any Indian not steeped in his ancestral blindness and ignorance would be as I am now. So I bid you not to be unhappy. If I live to come back to the reservation, then you may have cause to be unhappy about me. For I know the war will bring misery and poverty and plague to my people. But be glad now that with all my misfortune I can rise above it and fight for you and your people. Love of you saved me from the dissolute life so strangely easy for the Indian among white people. It has uplifted me to believe I may come somewhere near the noble Indian you have dreamed me."

(Concluded in the April Home Journal)



THE YOUNG NOKIS HAD WALKED THE WHOLE DISTANCE OF NEAR EIGHTY MILES, TO SPARE THEIR TEAMS

The Vanishing American

XVII

By ZANE GREY

Illustrations by Frank Street

AFTER Nophaie's departure Marian felt as if the end of all had come. She had not looked beyond this last meeting. And now with the poignant and stinging experience in the past, she seemed lost and broken-hearted. She fell into a terrible depression out of which she struggled with difficulty. The desert called her; the promise to Nophaie was a sacred obligation; but she could not at once return to her work among the Indians. She decided to go back East for a while.

The hour she arrived in Philadelphia she realized that outside of her need of change and the pleasure of old associations, there was other cause for her to be glad she had returned. Philadelphia, like other great cities, was in the throes of preparing for war. The fever of the war emotion had seized everyone. The equilibrium of the staid and tranquil City of Brotherly Love had been upset.

Marian found her relatives as changed as if many years had intervened between her departure and return. They had forgotten her. Each was obsessed by his or her peculiar relation to the war. The draft of a son or brother or nephew, the seeking of war offices, the shifting of trade to meet the exigencies of war demands—all these attitudes seemed personal and self-seeking. Many of Marian's acquaintances, young men under thirty-one, in one way or another evaded the clutch of the service. Conduct such as this was thrown into relief by the eagerness with which others enlisted before the draft.

YOUNG women were finding the world changed for them. Every opportunity appeared thrust upon them, even to the extreme of donning khaki trousers and driving ambulances in France. Marian could have found a hundred positions, all more remunerative than any she had ever had. It was a time of stress. It was a time of intense emotional strain. It was a time when the nobility and selfishness of human nature were enhanced.

Marian had her own reasons for being personally and tremendously stirred by the war. That made her charitable and generous in her judgments of others. But the wildness and unrestraint she could not condone. She could not blame any girl for heedlessly rushing into marriage with a soldier, for she had yearned to marry Nophaie; but she was affronted and disgusted by the abandon she saw in so many young people. The war had given them a headlong impetus toward she knew not what.

Yet Marian felt this strange and terrible thing herself. Why did her heart swell when she saw a soldier? Why did her eyes dim when she saw from her window a trainload of soldiers speeding towards New York? She had as much reason as any woman, except the mother of a soldier, to be terribly drawn into the chaos of wartimes. Whenever she thought of Nophaie a shuddering possessed her internal body and she was sick. Yet there was a pride in him that was growing infinite.

Marian did her bit in the way of buying and selling bonds, and in Y.M.C.A. and Red Cross work. But for her promise to Nophaie to return to the reservation she would have gone, like so many young women, to extremes of war enthusiasm. The urge to go to France was something hard to resist.

Nophaie's letters were few and far between, and not what they had been out in the desert, but upon them Marian lived and sustained her hope. In September she went to the seashore to get away from the humidity and tainted air of the city, which, since her sojourn in the West, she could hardly endure. And she needed rest. She went to Cape May and haunted the places on the beach where she had been with Nophaie.

The restless, bright Atlantic! Marian bathed in the surf and spent long hours upon the sand. This period was restful, yet it was singularly acute and living. The grand roll of the breakers, the thunder and boom, the white of foam and the flying spindrift, the green heaving sea far out—these elements seemed to be understood better and appreciated more through her memory of the desert. But she loved the desert most; and every day the call of the wide colored wastes, the loneliness, and something she could not define, rang more insistently in her ears.

So time flew by, and autumn began to decline into winter. It took time for Marian to dispose of the little property she had; and following that came a letter from Nophaie telling her he was soon to sail from New York for France. Marian went to New York in a vain hope of seeing him. But all she had of him was the sound of his voice over the telephone. For this she was unutterably grateful. The instant she had answered his "Hello," he had called: "Benow di Cleash?" Then shaking all over, there in the little booth, she had listened to his brief words of love and farewell.

SHE was one of the throng of thousands of women on the Hoboken docks when the huge liner left her moorings. Thousands of faces of soldiers blurred in Marian's sight. Perhaps one of them was Nophaie. She waved to them and to him. She was only one of these thousands of women left behind to suffer and endure. This was harder for Marian than the farewell in Flagerstown.

White, fluttering sea of waving handkerchiefs! Flash of ruddy boyish faces! These meant so much. They were so infinitely more than just incidents of life.

The keen, bright winter sun shone down on the dock of weeping women, on the huge liner with its tan-colored fringe of human freight, on the choppy, green-waved Hudson River, and the glitter of the towering city beyond.

Marian returned to Philadelphia with her spirit at lowest ebb and for once in her life fell prey to an apparently endless dejection. Besides,

the cold, wet climate had a bad effect upon her after the dry, bracing desert. She suffered a spell of illness, and when she recovered from that, she deemed it best to wait for spring before starting West. Meanwhile she went into war work. All of her notes on the reservation and the Indian School remained untouched. She had not the heart to rewrite them for publication. She read newspapers and periodicals upon the war until her mind was in a chaotic state. Once at least she was stung into specific realization and an agony of suspense.

A newspaper printed a report of French operations along a river at the Front. For some reason not stated it was important that observations be kept from the end of a certain bridge, long under German gunfire. For three days a soldier had stood motionless, whitewashed to resemble a post, at the exposed end of that bridge. He was successful in his observations and had not drawn the gunfire of the enemy. But he died from the strain and the coatings of whitewash. This scout was an American Indian.

"He—he might have been Nophaie," whispered Marian in torture.

In the spring Marian received a reply to a letter she had written Mrs. Woltersson.

Dear Marian: I am long indeed in replying to your most welcome and interesting letter. But you will forgive me, for my excuse is work, work, work. Imagine! Out of six white people and thirty little Indian children, I was the only one not down with influenza.

First, your account of the goings-on of people in the East, and all that war stuff, stirred me to thrills, made me long to be home—for I, too, am an Easterner—and yet caused me to be thankful I am out in the open country.

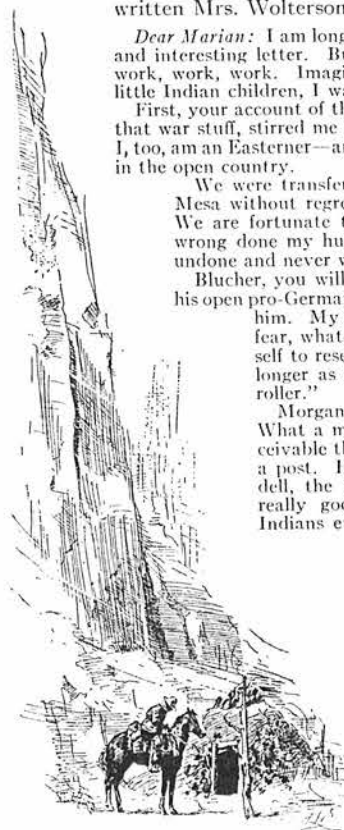
We were transferred here, as you already know, and left Mesa without regret, except for our few true friends there. We are fortunate to be retained in the service at all. The wrong done my husband by Blucher and Morgan was not undone and never will be.

Blucher, you will be glad to hear, had a sudden check to his open pro-Germanism. Something or somebody frightened him. My friends write me that his reaction to this fear, whatever it was, resulted in his applying himself to reservation work. But he will not last much longer as superintendent. He will get the "steam roller."

Morgan, however, goes on his triumphant way. What a monster that man is! It is utterly inconceivable that such a fanatical devil could have such a post. His latest stunt will interest you. Ramsdell, the cowboy missionary, was one of the few really good and helpful missionaries whom the Indians ever recognized. You will remember that

Ramsdell's way of work did not appeal to Morgan and his cronies. I suspect they feared Ramsdell was really acquiring influence. Robert, my husband, many a time came across Ramsdell helping the Indians. He worked with them, digging ditches, plowing, planting and building. Ramsdell was a good mechanic and he tried to teach things to the Indians. He was a rough diamond, a hard-riding parson, but as Robert says, "Shore the real thing."

Well, Morgan called one of his investigations, his tribunals. They brought Ramsdell to their court and



accused him of being a leader in heathenism. This charge was based on the fact that he dressed in Indian costume for the entertainment of Indian children. Another charge was that he was too friendly with the traders. He was dismissed.

Here is a bit of news that comes closer to us. Gekin Yashi has again disappeared. The report went out from headquarters that she had again run off. But my correspondent in Mesa does not believe it. No attempt was made to trace her. If she had run off she would have been tracked. Neither Ruhr nor any of the policemen have left Mesa.

I know what I think and so does Robert. But it seems best not to trust my suspicions to a letter. Some day the truth will come out. Alas for the Little Beauty of the Nopahs!

When I think of her, and the child prodigy, Evangeline, and noble Nophaie, I am sore at heart.

KING POINT is not at all like Mesa. I loved Mesa, despite what I suffered there. This place is high up on the desert, over seven thousand feet above sea level. It is bleak, barren, bitter cold, and the winds are terrible. The snow last winter blew level with the sand. It did not fall! But yet there is beauty here. Great red bluffs covered with cedars, and sand dunes forever changing with the wind, and yellow mesas, and long white slopes of valley. But the solitude, the cold and the mournful winds are dreadful. Influenza swooped down on us late in winter, a very fortunate circumstance. Had spring not come I believe the whole population of thirty-six would have been wiped out.

As it was everybody but myself fell sick. Can you imagine my labors? I had them all to myself before a doctor came, and then after he was gone. The poor little Indian children—they were so sick! I hardly had time to eat, let alone sleep. And when relief came it was none too soon for me.

I have no direct information regarding influenza ravages at other points on the reservation. But I understood it hit the Nopahs pretty hard. I never saw any disease like this. I dread the return of winter. Warm weather kills the germ or whatever spreads this sickness. If it should come early in winter I shudder to think what might happen out here on the reservation.

You wrote in your letter of returning. We are glad to hear this news. Mrs. Withers wrote me that she had received a letter from Nophaie from France, and that he said he had seen you on the pier at Hoboken just before his ship sailed. But you did not see him!

How strangely things happen! I have two brothers at the Front in France. When I think of them I think of Nophaie.

All good wishes to you, Marian, and let us hear from you.

Sincerely,
BEATRICE WOLTERSON.

Marian went back to the Indian country prepared to work independently for the welfare of the Nopahs. It had been her good fortune to meet a philanthropic woman who was at that time sending money to Morgan. She told the generous woman that she did not believe a single dollar of her donations ever reached the Indians. The wealthy philanthropist opened her eyes wide at Marian's revelations. She had influence. Marian interested her to the extent of getting her support in securing permission to pursue her work on the reservation, independent of the agent there.

At Flagerstown, Marian rented a little cottage out near the pines, from which she could see the green slopes and gray peaks of the mountains. This time, with knowledge and means to set about her task, she provided a comfortable place to live in during her absences from the desert.

Marian's first trip on the desert took her to King Point, where she spent a profitable day with the Woltersons. King Point was as cool and pleasant in summer as Flagerstown. Marian found instant antagonism in the head of the Indian school there, making any project of hers rather out of the question. Besides there was no place to stay. The school was a small branch of the main system, and no Indians lived in the near vicinity.

To Marian's regret she found matters not happy for the Woltersons. Blucher's enmity had a long arm. Woltersen had encountered the same underhand tactics that had been operative at Mesa. Moreover, the altitude and the cold, and the poor quarters had not improved his health. Marian advised him to leave the Indian service.

"Shore, I've got to," he drawled, "but I hate to quit just now. Looks like I'd be driven out."

Before Marian left she received a suggestion from Woltersen that made her thoughtful. He told her about the little

settlement of Nokis at Copenwashie, how they were growing poorer in water and land and had a hard winter ahead of them.

"Shore, they'll not be able to feed their stock," said Woltersen.

"Why?" inquired Marian.

"Because they have less land than formerly and very little water. They can't raise enough alfalfa."

"Why less land than formerly?"

"Friel and Leamon have gotten most of the Indians' land."

"Oh, I remember! But how can they do that? It seems absolutely unbelievable to me."

"Listen, and I will tell you," replied Woltersen. "First, the man selects the particular piece of ground he wants. Then he gets the superintendent to report to Washington that this land is not needed by the Indians. It is always the best piece of ground. The Government grants the use of a little tract. Soon it is further reported that this is not sufficient. Another tract is available and this is also turned over. After a time the white man applies for a patent to this land. Friel has got his patent. Leamon is pretty close to getting his. Others are pending."

"With the land he gets a supply of water for irrigating, and often in addition he gets a good spring, and this much water is simply taken from the Indians. Water on the desert is limited. Last year was dry. This one may be drier. And there you are."

MARIAN had planned to go next to Kaidab, but influenced by the incentive of Woltersen's suggestion, and a dread of seeing just yet the beautiful sage uplands beloved by Nophaie, she decided first to look over the field at Copenwashie. The Paxtons at Mesa gave her a warm welcome, and between them, for the sake of a subterfuge that might be wise, they arranged a basket-and-blanket-buying job for her.

(Continued on Page 222)



THE STORM SWEEPED ON, WREATHING THE RIMS AND FILLING THE NARROW CAÑON BEHIND

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The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 33)

Copenwashe lay down on the edge of the mesa two miles or more from the government post. At any time it was a barren, desolate outlook, and in summer under the leaden haze of heat it was surely mercilessly inhospitable to a white person.

The Nokis were agricultural in their pursuits, not nomads like the Nopahs. The two tribes had long been inimical to each other.

Marian went from door to door of their little low houses and asked for baskets. She saw stoves, beds, sewing machines common to white households. The rooms she got a peep into were whitewashed and clean. The Nokis were short in stature, broad-faced, resembling a Japanese more than a Nopah, and the women all appeared to be heavy. They spoke a little English, but they were reserved and shy. Marian was hard to please in style of baskets, but she paid the price asked without haggling. Thus she carefully felt her way along the line of procedure she had adopted. When she left the village and ascended the slope to the level of the mesa, she looked back.

The place seemed a jumble of little rock and mud huts perched on the very edge of a precipice. Below lay a wide green valley with Indian laborers at work and threads of water running to and fro. Across the valley rose a red-and-yellow bluff, rimming out on the ghastly desert. To the right of where Marian stood loomed an imposing structure of stone, built by masons, two stories high and with a tower. This was the home of white men. Somehow Marian resented its presence there.

PAXTON had driven her down to Copenwashe, and said he did not consider it safe for her to walk to the village unattended. Opportunity to ride was infrequent, so Marian adjusted herself to a slow progress of passing the time and winning the confidence of the Nokis. But there were other demands upon her time—study, reading, writing letters, keeping in touch with all pertaining to the war. The heat of midday was, after all, not unendurable, and she got used to it, though she endeavored to stay indoors during those hours. She hired the Indian mail carrier, who remembered her, to carry her letters to Flagstaff and to do her errands. Three or four times a week she visited the Noki village. On each trip she bought baskets, and left candy and dolls and musical toys with the children.

She anticipated embarrassing situations and prepared for them. Jay Smith sat on the trading-post steps during the summer evenings. Morgan had asked somebody what that "white-faced cat" was doing back on the reservation? Friel had learned of her presence. But so far Marian had been clever and fortunate enough to avoid meeting either of them face to face. She did not care, however, when that might happen.

If happiness could have been hers, it might have come to her here on the desert that had somehow changed her, and in the work she had chosen. But she could not be really happy.

NOPHAIE wrote but seldom. He was "somewhere in France." His letters were censored, and he wrote so little of himself. Marian lived in constant dread that she would never hear from him again, that he would be killed. It did not torture her that he might be injured. For she knew he was an Indian to whom injuries were nothing.

Even the tranquillity of the desert, its wonderful power to soothe, did not help her with this war emotion. Life did not stand still, but her heart seemed to.

With the end of summer there seemed to be an end to the uneventful waiting monotony of her life. Withers called for her one day and packed her off in his car to Kaidab.

The last day of Marian's stay at Kaidab she prevailed upon Miss Withers to ride out and climb the highest point available. Withers sent one of his Indian riders with them. They had a long, hard and glorious ride. From the brow of a great divide Marian saw the whole vast reach of the Valley of Gods, the red sentinels of the desert lonely and grand against the haze of distance. She saw the dark, organ-shaped mesa under the shadow of which Nophaie had been born. Then far to the westward, up and up over the giant steps, she caught a glimpse of green-cedared and purple-saged uplands, and above them the huge bulk and dark dome of Nothis Ahn.

WITHERS was waiting at the gate for the riders when they returned. His face wore an excited, eager and happy expression, such as Marian had never before seen there. What could have broken this intrepid Westerner's reserve? Marian experienced a sensation of weakness.

"Get down and come in," he called. "Come a-rustlin' now. I've got news."

Marian tumbled off some way and ran at the heels of Withers' daughter, who was crying: "Oh! Dad's got a letter from Ted."

So indeed it turned out to be. Mrs. Withers had been crying, but was now radiant. The trader fumbled over many sheets of paper, closely covered with writing.

"Sis, you can read all of this afterward," he was saying. "Ted's all right. Fussin' because he won't see any real fight. He says what I told you all, the Huns are licked. Whoopee! You know I wrote Ted months ago and asked him to find out about our Indians. I'd given up hoping. But he's found out a lot, and I'll read it. Marian, your Nophaie has got the D. S. medal! What do you know about that?"

Marian could not have spoken then to save her life. She seemed locked in sensation, mute in the sweetest, richest, fullest most agonizing moment of her life.

THE trader fumbled over the sheets of paper. His fingers were not wholly steady.

"Here," he began, "this letter seems less cut up than any we've had. Ted writes: 'I had some luck. Happened to run across a soldier who'd been in the thick of the front-line battles with some of our Indians. What he had to say about them was a-plenty. He knew Lo Blandy when he played college football. So it's a good guess Lo Blandy is our Nophaie. I got thick pronto with this soldier. His name is Munson. He hails from Vermont. He'd not only been in the front-line trenches with our Indians but in the hospital with some of them. I've forgotten names and places. This French lingo is sure hard for me. Munson said an officer told him there were thousands of American Indians in the service. That's news to me. It sure tickled me.'"

"A good many Indians have been killed. Whether or not any of them were Nopahs I can't say. But the Indian who pulled the bear-trap stunt is our own nutty Shoie, the spellbinder. Munson said they called him that, and he answered exactly to the description I gave. Now it appears that every night or so Shoie would pull a crippled German into the trenches. These German soldiers would have either an arm or leg broken

(Continued on Page 225)



ESTHER ALTHEA RICHARDS

The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 222)

and terribly lacerated. Shoie never had much to say over here. You know the Indian. But like all the other redskins he was a wonderful scout, and therefore had something more of freedom than the white boys. These Indians were no more afraid of No Man's Land than of crossing the desert at night. Shoie was watched. And it was discovered that he pulled these crippled Germans into the trenches in a Number Four bear trap attached to a long wire. Shoie would crawl out in the darkness—they said he always picked the places where German soldiers were sneaking—and set the bear trap. Then he'd slip back to the trench to wait.

"When he got one, everybody along that line sure knew of it. For the Germans hollered like all get-out. At that, to crawl into a Number Four bear trap would make any man holler. All Shoie said was: 'Me catch-um whole German Army!' I guess maybe the buddies didn't hand it to this Indian."

"Well, there's more about Lo Blandy. Munson lay in the hospital with him, and found out he had been wounded four times, the last time seriously. But he seemed nearly well then. That was three weeks ago. Blandy—or Nophaie—was to be discharged and sent home as an invalid, incapacitated for further service. He had been in everything the war afforded except actual death. That seemed to miss him. Munson said Nophaie was indifferent to danger and pain. Shell shock had affected him somewhat, and gassed lungs made him a probable consumptive. But to Munson he was certainly far from a physical wreck. I think Munson said Nophaie got into the great Chatoo-Therry (how'd you spell that?) mix-up, and that an officer gave him the D. S. right off his own breast. Sure some stunt for an officer, believe me."

"Anyway Nophaie, along with other Indians, must be on the way home by now. I'm sure glad. I can't remember ever caring a whoop about the Nopahs. But I've a hunch that a lot of Americans, including myself, haven't ever appreciated the red man."

"My chance of plugging a Fritz has become slim indeed, and for that reason I'm sure homesick for you all, and the smell of cedar smoke and sheep wool."

XVIII

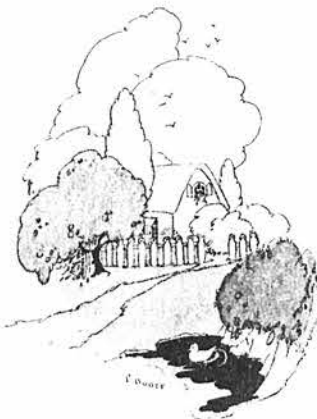
NEWS of the Armistice did not reach Mesa until late in the afternoon of that memorable November day. It came from the lips of the mail carrier. He was not credited. Paxton rushed to the telephone to call up Flagertown, only to find the wire down. A crowd of Indians collected around the mail carrier, and they all believed him. Only the whites were skeptical. But a little later Paxton's clerk came running in. "War over!" he cried. "Friel brought news, he and Leamon. They just got in from town. Everybody gone crazy."

Marian and Mrs. Paxton indulged in a few moments of heartfelt felicitations, not unmingled with tears. And these few simple reactions appeared to be the forerunners of an hour of mounting excitement. Supper was not thought of. Outside in front of the trading post the crowd grew apace, and now white faces began to mingle with the dark ones. Friel's car came humming along, and it contained three other white men and several Indians. The latter leaped off as Friel drove on. He saw Marian standing on the steps, and waving his hand he yelled: "War over!" Marian waved back, and this was the only time she had ever been glad to see him. He was a bearer of blessed news. He drove on, manifestly in a hurry to get to headquarters.

The November air was raw and cold. It chilled Marian through. She went into the Paxtons' sitting room, where she sat by the window. The trader came through and opened the window. "Don't miss anything."

There'll be trouble. Blucher has arrested some Nopahs. And I'll bet they never go to jail."

Marian was now all eyes and ears. The trader kept running to and fro with his wife at his heels. She was trying to make him stay in the house. Nothing unusual, however, occurred outside for a while. The crowd swelled to upwards of a hundred Indians, a motley dark assemblage, divided into several groups, each of which undoubtedly surrounded an Indian with a bottle. The white men had drawn apart.



It had been rather an overcast day, with clouds massing in the west. The time was perhaps an hour before sunset. Marian saw an Indian running down the avenue between the poplars. Some of the watching Indians shouted. This Noki evidently was frightened, for he looked back and then darted in among his fellows.

Friel's car appeared, still containing the same number. Marian recognized two of them. He drove to the steps, where he stopped the car and got out. Manifestly he was starting for the window to speak to Marian when one of the other men called out, "Hold on, Friel."

HALTED by the peremptory call, he impatiently turned back. The Indians were looking now up the avenue. Marian heard another car coming. Before it came in range of her sight, four white men came hurrying along. Ruhr, the policeman, was the foremost, and the last two were Glendon and Naylor. Marian did not recognize the second man. They had the mien of angry, excited men, yet not overbold. Then the second car hove in sight. Sam Ween, the interpreter, was driving it. Morgan stood on the running board and Blucher stood up inside. It was not a difficult matter for Marian to perceive the state of their minds.

When the car stopped Morgan dropped off and Blucher piled out. "Arrest that Indian!" he yelled. Ruhr apparently had the least reluctance to penetrate the suddenly silent crowd of Indians, and one of his deputies, the stranger Marian did not recognize, rather haltingly followed him. Glendon and Naylor hung back, a fact that added to Blucher's exasperation. Morgan, too, edged away from the ominous-looking front line of Indians. Presently that line was broken to emit Ruhr dragging an Indian behind him, the Noki that had hidden. Blucher ran in and shackled him.

"What'd you put irons on him for, you blockhead?" called Morgan. "Indians hate irons. And I told you they were in bad mood. Some of them drunk!"

"Who's doing this?" hoarsely called the agent. The younger and probably more intoxicated Indians suddenly appeared to move in unison and to spread round Blucher and his men. They closed in, shouting. "Let that Indian go!" yelled Morgan with all his might.

BLUCHER shouted a profane refusal. Then the crowd became noisy, violent and decidedly threatening. Marian lost sight of the white men in the mêlée. She felt her pulses beat in excitement and fear. Surely the Indians were in no mood to trifle. How dark and wild their upturned faces! They surged into a knot. That, too, broke as before, only more rudely; and it let out the white men, disheveled, pale and thoroughly frightened. The Indians had forced Blucher to unshackle the Noki he had arrested. They jeered at him.

Bottles flashed aloft, held by dark sinewy hands. Blucher was forced back toward the side of the trading post, as it chanced near the window where Marian crouched.

(Continued on Page 226)

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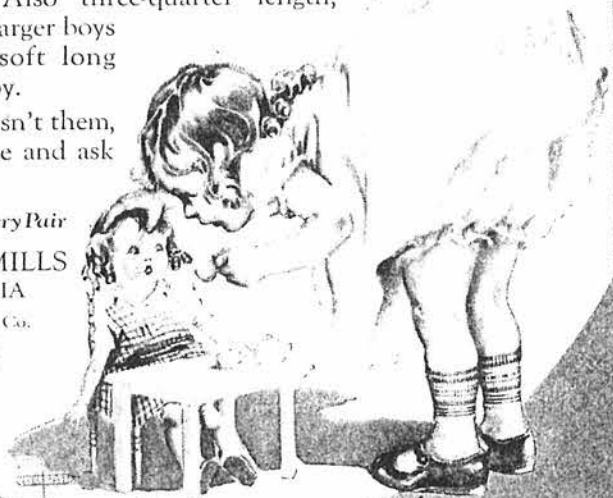
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The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 225)

"Skin stretched over stick!" yelled a Noki who could speak good English. Then both Nokis and Nopahs took up that slogan, each in his own tongue.

But older, sober Indians in the crowd dragged the violent ones back and away from the trading post. Still, plainly it was no easy task. Cooler heads prevailed, however, and it seemed that Blucher and Morgan had narrowly escaped violence.

"What'd I tell you?" shouted Morgan hoarsely.

Blucher vouchsafed no reply. His pale face seemed to have fixed in an expression of furious trance. Marian had a good look at him as he passed the window to go to his car. He might have been walking in a nightmare. Indians were naught to him. His strident orders and violent movements had been merely the explosion of an unabatable and terrible passion. Stolid, heavy, immovable German that he was, he had heard news to unseat his reason for this hour.

Likewise Marian had a fleeting glimpse of Morgan's face. Did she catch a lurking sardonic gleam, a malignant flash of eyes? Or had her sensitive imagination conjured up illusive justifications of her opinion of this man? She marveled at him. As a woman she seemed to shrink from her enormous conception of him. Was she right or wrong? She would have wagered her all that his mind was a dark abyss and that his soul was a wilderness.

THEN these two men, at once so infinitesimally little in her conception of life and so monstrously powerful to rouse the drumbeat of her passions, slowly passed out of her sight.

December came, bleak and raw, but holding off on the inclement weather that made the desert an inhospitable place for white people. Influenza was reported by the authorities on widely separated parts of the desert. No effort was made to check the disease or to minister to any Indians except the school children. But it was not considered serious.

Marian awoke one day to a realization that she had found favor with the Nokis. Long before she expected it she was welcome in the secluded homes of these strange desert people. After all they were very human, very susceptible to kindness and goodness. They would accept charity and presents, but a material gift was no sure way to their hearts. Marian really did not discover this until after she had won them.

Then it became clear to her that she had been under as intelligent and careful a scrutiny as she had bent upon them. She was judged by what she said and did, and by developments that verified the appearance of her actions.

AFTER Marian had acquainted herself with the actual conditions of these Indians she set to work in her own way to help them. There were babies and old men going blind from trachoma; there were children with congenital hip disease; there were always injured horsemen and sick housekeepers; last of all, the whole village was poor and growing poorer.

The war might be over, but its aftermath had just begun. There were signs that more than warranted the gloomy forebodings of Withers.

Marian never saw the school doctor waste a ride down to Copenwashie. She brought a physician from Flagerstown. And his several visits, followed by her own ministrations, alleviated considerable distress. When the skeptical Nokis saw there was no aftermath from this, no obligation, nothing but the kindness of Benow di Cleash, they subtly and almost imperceptibly changed. The old

Nokis learned to relax their somber faces in a slight smile; the children grew glad to see Marian, more for her presence than for gifts.

It was very hard for her to remain even half an hour inside the little houses because of the acrid smoke from the open fires. This severely affected her eyes and even her throat. When she got out into the cold, cutting, desert wind she was always relieved. So she did the best that she could, grateful indeed that her efforts were not futile.

Paxton went out of his routine to help her. Eckersall, in his rough, uncouth way, left no stone unturned in her behalf. Between the two of them Marian seldom had to walk the windswept two-mile stretch up the mesa. She did not come into contact with Blucher or Morgan and, so far as she could tell, they were not paying any attention to her affairs. This apparent fact, however, did not blind Marian to their possibilities. They were like moles, burrowing in the dark.

FRIEL had again pressed his amatory advances, which Marian had met with some rather blunt speech: "Mr. Friel, you may blind yourself with egotistic convictions. There's no limit to mental aberration. But I think you are a liar. And I'm not exactly flattered with your presumption that I'd marry you and live on the land you stole from the Indians."

Friel never again made fun of her or attempted to make love to her.

Naturally Marian's increasingly close relation to some of the Nokis resulted in their confidences. By the middle of December most of the little tribe who owned horses or cattle, and especially all of the freighters, were hard pressed for feed for their stock. Marian lent money to some of the neediest. But the situation was not to be met by the little money she could spare. So she took up the matter with Eckersall.

"Reckon I seen it comin' all along," was Eckersall's reply. "The Nokis are in for a bad winter, miss. I'll tell you what I'll do: I'll go to the agent an' make a strong talk for the Nokis."

"Thank you, Eckersall. That's good of you. Maybe we can do something."

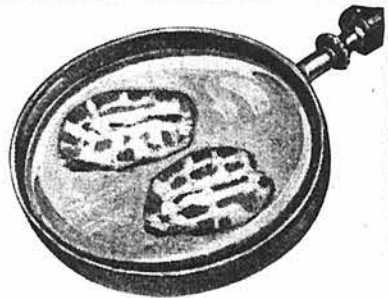
Several days elapsed before Marian again saw Eckersall. "Wal, me an' you are on the wrong side of the fence," he complained ruefully, in reply to her eager query.

"How so?"

"We have a hankerin' for these poor Indians. Miss, I went to our German agent an' I made the speech of my life. I painted the woe of the Nokis an' the sufferin' of the horses as it was never done before. I told him that he made the Nokis freight supplies from town; that he didn't pay them enough; that these freighters had no other way to make a livin'. He said he hadn't any hay to spare at twenty dollars the ton. Wal, I went to Friel an' talked with him. An' he said forty dollars a ton! The Nokis can't pay that. So I went back to Blucher an' railed at him again. He snapped at me: 'If the white men want forty dollars a ton for their hay, then the Indians will have to pay forty dollars.'"

NOT long after that Marian met one of the freight wagons at the foot of the mesa grade. The wagon was packed full of boxes and bales, making a prodigious load to haul through sand and up the desert hills. Three teams of mustangs were hitched to it. Six little horses! They were skin and bones. How dejected and weary and hungry they appeared! Their ribs showed like fence pickets. Raw sores had been worn by the make-shift harness.

(Continued on Page 227)



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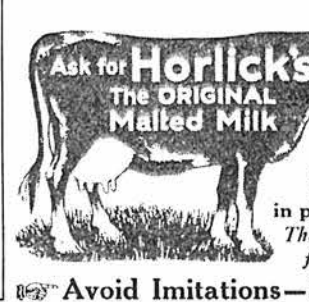
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The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 226)

The drivers, both young Nokis, were walking. One held the long reins; the other led at the head of the first team. They were as tired as their horses. They had walked from Flagerstown, the whole distance of near eighty miles, to spare their teams. Marian questioned them, and though they grinned, their replies were significant of depression.

Winter came at last, biting, icy, and the desert became an open waste to dread. Day after day dark clouds rose, threatening storm. Privation followed hard on the cold heels of winter, and many of the Noki families began to suffer. What with lack of food for man and beast the outlook was discouraging indeed. Marian bought stores of supplies from Paxton, who charged exactly what they had cost him, but these did not go far nor long.

THEN came the incident that heaped fuel on the fires of Noki resentment: Leamon had made a hurried trip to Flagerstown, where he learned that flour had gone up two dollars a hundredweight. It so happened that on his return trip he passed several Noki wagons going into Copenwashie to buy flour. Therefore, in possession of this information, he hurriedly drove to the trading posts at Copenwashie and Mesa and bought all the flour the traders had, some two thousand pounds, at the old price.

Leamon, before this incident, had won a universal dislike for himself. It then fell out that he was to go beyond the endurance of even these stoical Nokis.

He got permission from the agent to address the school children after they had assembled in the schoolroom each day. So he chose the first hour of the morning session. The Nokis objected to Leamon's taking the time from the school work, and they complained to the agent. Nothing was done. The Nokis grew more resentful. They roused dissension. Their activities caused reports to be made to the Government, and an inspector was sent out. He ruled that Leamon's activities be discontinued. But after he had gone, Leamon was seen to get audience with Morgan and Blucher, with the result that he went on as before.

The Nokis held a council over this turn of affairs and absolute usurpation of their rights. The chief himself came to Marian and asked her to read to him the ruling of the inspector. She did so, in Nopah and in English, both of which languages he understood. "Benow di Cleash, don't you think we ought to kill him?" asked the Noki.

Marian was shocked and told him with all the force she could command that murder would only add to their troubles.

"DON'T you think we ought to kill him?" the chief kept repeating to everything Marian said.

"No, no, you must not," she protested. "Try sending a delegation to face Leamon. Show him the inspector's ruling and tell him you have had white people read it."

"Don't you think we ought to kill him?" was all the chief said.

But the next day, while Leamon was in the school, this delegation suggested by Marian assembled in front of the village.

It was a cold, lowering day with wind sweeping down across the desert. The village had been swept clear of snow, except in the protected corners of stone walls. Marian had anticipated some untoward event, and she had borrowed a horse to ride down early. That trip had required something of fortitude. When she neared the village she saw Nokis riding in from the Red Sandy trail. And when she reached the dip of mesa rim she had further cause for excitement.

The delegation contained all the male Nokis, and some of the other sex, with a

plentiful addition of Nopahs. Marian's eyes gladdened at sight of the tall, graceful, picturesque Nopah riders, blanketed as they were. Manifestly there was something in the wind. The crowd was walking and riding toward the school. Marian followed. It was some distance, and all the way new riders fell

in with the delegation. What surprised Marian and added to her excitement was the apparent fact that the Nopahs were going to take part in this protest. But to Marian it looked more ominous than a formal stating of objections. The Nokis meant to stop the preaching that they considered an imposition on the time and attention of the

school children. "Leamon, come out!" shouted a clear voice in good English.

It rang in Marian's ears. Unmistakably Indian; but was it Noki? Marian had to restrain a strange agitation. She convinced herself she was nervous and overinclined to imaginings. But she felt that she could trust to her eyes, and she rode farther, to within one hundred feet of the school.

Leamon did not appear promptly enough to please the Nokis. They began to shout. Someone pounded on the door. Then again the clear, high Indian voice pealed above the others, silencing them.

"LEAMON, come out or we'll come in." The door opened and Leamon appeared. His face was red. His figure, which resembled Morgan's, seemed instinct with intolerant authority. Yet in spite of this he was not at ease. "What do you want?" he demanded.

"Get out!" replied the leader, and from the crowd came shouts confirming his order. "I won't!" yelled Leamon furiously. "Blucher gave me permission."

"Read the order from Washington."

Leamon waved aside the paper held out to him. It appeared to be in the hands of a short Noki beside whom stood a tall Nopah. He wore a wide sombrero pulled down over his face. The crowd of Indians rode and pressed closer. A low hubbub of voices began to rise.

"Come. Go to Blucher. Let us hear what he says. Let us have understanding."

"No," exclaimed Leamon hotly; "I won't go to Blucher."

One of the mounted Nokis cast a lasso, the noose of which circled Leamon's neck. The crowd shouted wildly.

"Haul him out," called the leader.

Then the mounted Noki rode away from the school, drawing the lasso taut, and dragging Leamon out through the crowd. His face was not now red. Both his hands clutched at the noose round his neck. Manifestly the intention had been merely to rope him and drag him into the presence of the agent. But a wild young Noki, mounted on a spirited horse, pulled it up until its front hoofs pawed the air.

"Hang him!" this Indian yelled in Noki.

AROAD broke from the crowd. In a twinkling the somber spirit broke to let out the devil. The time was evil. Long had the war oppression and passion been dammed in the breasts of these Indians. Their wrongs burned for revenge. But one of this crowd recognized the peril to Leamon and chose to divert it. He shouted piercingly and split the cordon of Indians closing around the man.

That piercing cry not only silenced the angry Nokis; it gave Marian the most startling shock of her life. She recognized that voice.

The tall Nopah reached Leamon's side and his long arms grasped the taut lasso. With one powerful lunge he jerked the Noki from his horse.



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The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 227)

That tall form! That action! Marian thought she had lost her mind. Then the Nopah, in recovering from his exertion, rose to expose his face.

Nophaie! Marian tried to scream the name, but no sound left her lips. She reeled in her saddle. She clutched the pommel. A terrible uplift of her heart seemed to end in bursting gush of blood all over her.

One sweep of long arms sent the noose flying from Leamon's neck. How ghastly and livid his face! He fell against the Indian, either in collapse or feigning faint. The Indian braced Leamon, shook him hard, hauled and pushed him through the crowd, and released him at the door of the school. Leamon staggered in out of sight. When the Indian turned to face the crowd, tall, lithe, with singularly free stride, Marian assuredly recognized Nophaie. He began to push back members of that mob, once again pressing toward the schoolhouse. Other Indians, guided by his example, fell in line to avert further violence, and at length the whole mass, sullen and gesticulating, was forced back into the village.

It was afternoon and Marian waited in Paxton's sitting room for Nophaie.

SHE had met Withers at the post. He had come to Mesa with Nophaie to take her back to Kaidab. They needed her there. Outside, the dark day had grown colder and grayer. A snow flurry whitened the ground. The wind mourned. Withers had said Nophaie looked well enough. No one could tell. He had reached the reservation from a point on the railroad east of Flagstaff. Two whole days—forty-eight hours—he had been on the desert without her knowledge!

Would Nophaie never come? Withers had gone to fetch him back. But Marian could not wait. If she could only see him, feel him, make sure this was not the madness of a dream, then she could be calm, unutterably thankful, strong to stand any shock.

Suddenly she heard a step—the soft, quick, padded sound of an Indian moccasin. Her heart almost stopped beating.

Nophaie entered. "Benow di Cleash," he said in a voice that was rich and happy.

She raised both arms and lips before strength left her. Then as he enveloped her she needed nothing but to feel. One woman's flash of sight—the keen, dark Indian face, thinner, finer, softening in its bronze; then she could see no more. But she felt rippling of muscles that clasped and set round her like iron bands. Pressed against his wide breast she felt its heave and pound. And his lips! "Oh, you seem well! Are you well?" Marian was saying later, for what seemed the hundredth time.

"Well, yes; but I'll never again climb the north wall of Nothis Ahn," he replied with a sad smile.

"Nophaie! Oh, I am not quite myself," she whispered. "You feel strong; you look the same. No, there's a strange change. Your eyes! Nophaie, your mouth! They twitch."

"That's only shell-shock," he said. "It will pass away. Really I am pretty well, considering. The gas left me liable to consumption, but I haven't it yet. And my old sage uplands will cure me."

MARIAN could scarcely believe her eyes. She had expected to see him maimed, broken, aged, wrecked, but he was none of these. Slowly she realized. Then she espied a medal on the dark velvet shirt he wore. His D. S.! How did he win that? Was she not a woman?

"Benow di Cleash, my dearest, I've not been to pink teas, like the ones you used to drag me to at Cape May," he replied with a laugh that signalized the acuteness of her joy.

"You fought! Oh, I've heard," she cried out. "The Withers boy wrote home. He had met a soldier who knew you—told him all about you—Munson."

"Yes. We met over there. But soldiers are apt to be quiet about themselves and to praise the other fellow."

"Nophaie, forgive me—something in me demands to know," she said, unable to repress her strange emotion. "I—I think loving you and living out here has made

me—a little more American than I was—more Indian! Did you play football with any Germans?"

He laughed, but not the same way. For an instant he seemed no longer Nophaie. "Benow di Cleash, I did—yes. I got into a field of Germans—scattered, running like the old football players—only I had a bayonet."

XIX

AMODERATION of the severe January weather attended Marian's arrival at Kaidab.

Withers had said to her: "We're a pretty discouraged outfit, and we need a little of your sunshine. We all had the flu except Colman. Mrs. Withers isn't her old self yet. That's the worst of this queer sickness. It leaves half its victims with some infirmity. We're going to need you, and I reckon you'll be better off and shore happier at Kaidab. And if it's work you're looking for among these poor Indians—ha! I reckon you'll have enough, for this winter has started in a way to scare us."

The son was still in France, safe now, at least from the Germans.

Nophaie had no home now, except the open, and Withers forced him to accept room and board in his house. Marian was sure that one of the trader's needs of her was to help him keep Nophaie from going back to the hogans of his people, to do which in midwinter would be fatal for him.

The afternoon of Marian's arrival at Kaidab was not without something of pleasure and happiness. The dark cloud hovered at the horizon of the mind. She herself brought cheer and gaiety, for she felt she certainly owed them that. Besides the proximity of Nophaie made her more light-headed than she would have cared to confess.

"Marian, you should see Nophaie in the uniform he wore when he got here," said Mrs. Withers.

"His service uniform?" responded Marian eagerly.

"Yes, and it sure showed service."

Whereupon Marian conceived an irresistible desire to see Nophaie in the garb of a soldier. So she asked him to put it on. He refused. She importuned him, only to be again refused. Nophaie seemed a little strange about the matter. But Marian did not care and, persisting, she followed him into the long hall of the Indian decorations and there she waylaid him.

"Please, Nophaie, put your uniform on for me," she begged. "It's only a girl's sentimental whim. But I don't care what it is. That girl loves you."

"Benow di Cleash, I hate the sight of that uniform now," he said.

"Oh, why?"

"I don't know. I didn't hate it until I got back here—on the desert—home."

"OH! WELL, you need never put it on again after this time. Just once for me. I want to take your picture. Think! I have pictures of you in football suit, baseball suit, Indian suit, and now I want one of you as an American soldier. Why not?" And she was not above lending her arms and lips to persuasion, which quite vanquished him.

"You're a white girl all right," he laughed.

"White? Certainly, and your white girl."

Somehow she seemed to want to be unutterably tender and loving to him, as if to make up for what she owed him. But when she saw him stride out in his uniform, she quite lost her teasing and affectionate mood. It was almost as if sight of him had struck her dumb. The slouchy loose garb of an Indian had never done justice to Nophaie. As a soldier he seemed magnificent. She dragged him out in the sunlight and photographed him to her satisfaction. Then all the rest of the afternoon, which they spent in the living room before the big open fireplace, she was very quiet and watched him.

After dinner he went to his room and returned in velvet and corduroy, with his silver-buckled belt and moccasins. Nophaie again!

Marian felt glad. That soldier uniform had obsessed her. Its meaning was so staggering.

(Continued on Page 231)

The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 228)

Withers seemed to throw off cares of the present and forebodings of the future. He teased Marian, and he kept coaxing Nophaie to tell something about the war. Marian added her entreaties to those of the trader. But Nophaie would not speak of himself. He told about the deaths of four of his Nopahs, all in action at the Front, and each story had for Marian a singular tragic significance. Then he told about Shoie, who had turned out to be more than a bear trapper of Germans. American officers discovered, late, Shoie's remarkable gift for seeing or picking out weaknesses in the German front line when they were driving. Nophaie said it was simply the Nopah's wonderful eyesight. At any rate Shoie was sent out on scout duty by both day and night. He could hide himself on apparently level bare ground. He needed no more cover than a jack rabbit. He had the Indian's instinct of stealthiness.

FROM one of his scouting trips Shoie did not return. He was reported among the missing. But some time during the fourth night of his absence he crawled back to his own trenches. A sentry stumbled over him. Shoie could not talk, and appeared covered with blood, probably seriously wounded. Examination proved that he had been spiked to a wall through hands and feet, and his tongue had been cut out. As Shoie could not write his own language or understand much of the white man's it was difficult to find out what had happened to him. Indians of his own kind at length pieced out the probable truth of his story. He had ventured too far and had been captured. The Germans had tried to force him to talk, or to make signs in regard to his regiment and trenches. They did not understand an Indian. Shoie made faces at them. They drove spikes through his hands and feet and left him to hang for a day. Then they tried again to make him tell what they wanted to know. Shoie stuck out his tongue at the intolerant Germans. They ordered his tongue cut out. And still they left him to hang. That night Shoie worked the spikes through his hands, then pulled out those that held his feet. And he crawled across No Man's Land to his own trenches. He recovered from his injuries.

"Oh, monsters!" cried out Marian. "Could they not have killed him?"

"Benow di Cleash, the Huns were like Blucher," replied Nophaie.

THAT was the only word he ever said against the Germans, the only time he ever spoke of them.

"And is Shoie here?" queried Marian.

"Wal, I reckon so," replied Withers. "He was in the store today, begging tobacco. Sure it's a sight when he tries to talk. The Indians are more scared of him than ever. They think he has offended the evil spirits who had his tongue cut out to punish him for casting spells. Something strange about what's happened to Shoie!"

Late that night, after the Withers family and others of their household had gone to bed, Marian sat a while with Nophaie before the glowing embers in the fireplace. This hour really was the happiest and most beautiful in its teaching of any she had ever spent with him. Much of his bitterness had vanished. If he had been great before he

went to war, what was he now? Marian could only feel little, humble, adoring, before this strange composite of a man. For Marian he was now more of a lover than he had ever been. Marian trembled a little, fearful even in her hour of bliss. Why had he let down his Indian reserve? What did he know that she did not? If he had gotten rid of the scourge of his soul—his unbelief—he would have told her. But she would have divined that. Nophaie was at once closer to her than ever, yet farther away. All she could do was to grasp at the skirts of the happy and thrilling and thought-provoking hour.

BAD news arrived the next day, along with more raw, cloudy weather. Both white travelers and Nopah couriers reported increasing illness in the sections of desert they had traversed.

"It's come," grated out Withers, somber as an Indian.

That night the desert wind mourned under the eaves of the house. Marian could not sleep for a long while. How mournful! It wailed low and rose to a shriek and lulled again. It made Marian shiver. It had an unearthly sound. Its portent was storm, cold, evil, plague, death, desolation.

At dawn a blizzard was blowing. Snow and sleet and dust sheeted across the bleak levels, obscuring the mesas. It lasted two days, and broke to raw rain that melted most of the snow—then sleet again, followed by bitter cold. The sun did not show. At night the moon and stars were hidden. A dark leaden rolling canopy obscured the heavens.

Nophaie rode the ranges. Neither Withers nor Marian could keep him in. And the concluding weeks of that month brought the catastrophe Withers had predicted.

The Indians were caught like rats in a trap. Their hogans were no places to fight influenza. Three months of growing poverty had suddenly culminated in a terrible situation. These Indians had saved no money. They had only horses, sheep and corn. The price of wool fell to nothing. Withers managed to hold the best of the blanket weavers working at a loss to himself. He kept these families. And no Indian was turned away empty-handed from the

store. Meat and corn were about all most of the Nopahs had to eat, and the time came when many of them did not have that. From a prosperous people they fell in six months to a starving people, at the mercy of a disease that seemed fatal to most. It killed them quickly. Those it did not kill it left blind or infirm or deaf.

IN THE midst of this tragic time Withers received word that Gekin Yashi had fallen victim to the dread malady. A sick Indian rode in with the news, disclosing the whereabouts of the Little Beauty. She was married to a Nopah who came often to the post, but who had never given Withers a

hint that might have cleared up the mystery of her disappearance.

"Just like a Nopah!" ejaculated the trader. "Well, Gekin Yashi is down with flu. It'll kill her, almost sure. Maybe we can get her out in time. Her husband's name is Ba ho Zohnie. He's a jester. Fine Nopah! His hogan is somewhere up Nugi Cañon."

(Continued on Page 232)

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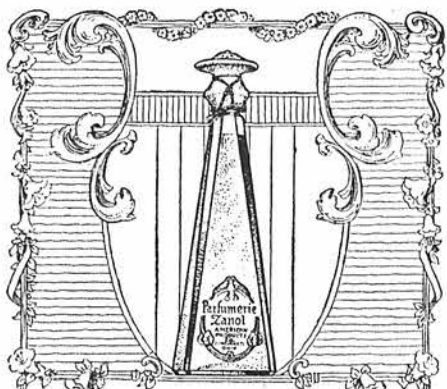
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The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 231)

I've sent Indians with horses to the mouth of the cañon. I'll take the car. Maybe I can drive up to the pass; maybe to the cañon. Give me medicines."

He had been talking to Colman and his wife. Marian sat beside the fire, startled and grieved into silence. Suddenly Nophaie entered, unfolding his blanket. His quirt hung on his wrist. Snowflakes gleamed on his sombrero.

"Ah! Here's Nophaie," said Withers. "I was hoping you'd get back. Have you heard about Gekin Yashi?"

"Yes. We must hurry. She is dying. And she has a baby."

Marian leaped up, stung into action. "Let me go with you," she entreated.

Nophaie showed less willingness to take her than Withers. But Marian prevailed upon both of them, helped by Mrs. Withers.

THE ride in the car, with a hot stone at her feet and heavy blankets round her and over her face, was not much for Marian to endure. But when she got into the saddle, headed toward the wind, it was a different matter.

The day was not far advanced, and the sky appeared divided into sections of lowering gray pall, broken purple clouds and steely blue sky. The sun shone fitfully. At the outset the cold was not bitter, though the wind cut like a knife.

About five or six miles up the Nugi Cañon a gray moving cloud, low down, filling the cañon thickly as fog, came swooping down. It was a snow squall. Withers led off to the left into one of the intersecting cañons. When the snow reached Marian she had a few moments of exhilaration in the feathery white pall; and then, as it came thick and cold, she protected her face and paid attention only to the trail. Presently the snow squall lost its vigor, thinned out, and began to blow away as it had come. Clearer, more amber grew the light; and soon purple slopes of sage rose from the stream-bed to the snowbanks under the cliffs.

The storm swept on, wreathing the rims and filling the narrow cañon behind. To the fore all was clear once more—blue sky, golden towers gleaming down upon a closed, notched end of this cañon. It was a wild, beautiful place, inclosed by wet-faced cliffs, fringed by black spruce, sloped in snow and sage.

WHEN Withers rode up a bank and into a clump of cedars to dismount before a hogan, Marian realized with a shock that she was at the end of the ride. She had forgotten its portent. Nophaie slid off his horse and, dropping his blanket from his shoulders, bent his lofty form and entered the hogan. Withers ordered the two

Indians he had brought with him to build a fire under the cedars. "Get down and exercise a bit," he said to Marian. "They'll soon have a fire to warm you."

"Won't you let me see Gekin Yashi?" asked Marian with hesitation.

"Yes; but wait," he replied, and taking a saddlebag off his saddle he hurried into the hogan.

Marian had scarcely dismounted before the trader came out again, with a look on his face that made Marian's halting lips stiffen.

"Too late," he ejaculated a little huskily. "Gekin Yashi died in the night. Ba ho Zohnie's mother must have gone sometime yesterday, and —"

"Someone said there was a—a baby," faltered Marian as the trader hesitated.

"Come here to the fire," rejoined the practical Withers. "You look blue. Yes, there is a baby, and it's half white, as anyone could see. It's about gone, too, breathing its last. I can't do anything but stay and bury them."

"Oh, Withers, let me go into the hogan!" asked Marian.

"What for? It's no sight for you, let alone the risk."

"I'm not afraid of sight or risk. Please, I feel it's a duty. I cared for Gekin Yashi."

"Reckon that's one reason why I'd rather you remembered her as she used to be."

"I will never forget the Little Beauty of the Nopahs," murmured Marian sorrowfully.

"All right; you can go, but wait," went on Withers. "I want to tell you something. Ba ho Zohnie was one of the best of Nopahs. He had loved Gekin Yashi since she was a kid. But she didn't care for him, and Do Etin wouldn't make her marry him. Maybe she ran off from the school at Mesa in her shame. For Gekin Yashi was as good as she was pretty. But if she did run off it was made easy for her. Ba ho Zohnie found her—his brother who's with us told me—and he took her home and married her. The half-white baby was welcome too. Now he's in there holding on to the poor little dying beggar as if it were his own."

IT TOOK courage for Marian to walk up to that hogan and enter. The smoldering fire was almost out. She saw Nophaie sitting with bowed head beside a young Nopah, the counterpart of hundreds she had seen, who held a four or five months' old baby on his lap.

Nophaie did not look up, neither did the other Indian. Marian bent over that tiny bundle and peered into the convulsed face. How dark the Indian's hand alongside of the baby's cheek! Even as Marian gazed, an indefinable changing reached its culmination and set. She believed that had been the passing instant of life.

Beyond these sitting Indians lay a blanketed form close to the hogan wall. It suggested the inanimate nature of stone. Snow had drifted in through the open frame-

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work of the hogan upon the folds of blanket. Behind Marian on the other side, next the wall, lay a slighter form, not wholly covered. Marian saw raven black hair and shape of head she thought she recognized.

"Nophaie," she whispered.

"This—this must be Gekin Yashi."

"Yes," replied Nophaie, and rising he stripped back the blanket from the dead girl.

AT ONCE Marian recognized Gekin Yashi and yet did not know her. Could this be

the face of a sixteen-year-old girl? Disease and death had distorted and blackened it, but this change was not alone what Marian imagined she saw. Gekin Yashi's songs and dreams and ideals had died before her flesh. She looked a matured, settled Indian wife.

Marian fled out of the hogan, back to the fire under the cedar. A horror possessed her of she knew not what. Gekin Yashi had passed away. It was better so. Bruised, trampled flower of the desert! Had she not cried out to Marian: "No one ever tells me beautiful things!" What was that cry of the soul? How great had been the potentiality of that awakening mind?

Marian's poignant reflections were interrupted by the voice of Withers inside the

(Continued on Page 234)



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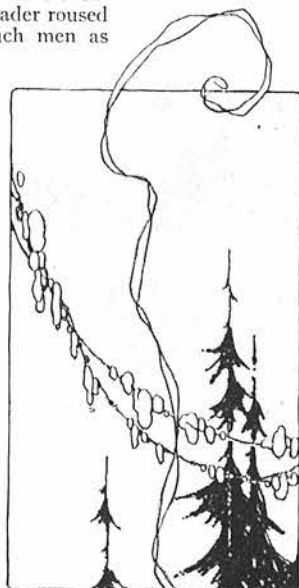


The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 232)

hogan. "Nophaie, the baby is dead. Make him give it up. We've got to bury these Indians and beat it out of here pronto."

Marian spread her cold and trembling hands to the fire. Somehow the trenchant words of the practical trader roused her out of the depths. Such men as Withers bore the greater burdens. He had kindness, sympathy, but he dealt with the cold, hard facts. He was making himself a poor man for this Nopah tribe and working like a galley slave and risking his life. Through him Marian saw more of the truth. And it roused a revolt in her against weakness and a too great leaning towards idealism and altruism, and for the moment against this stark and awful plague of influenza.



NOPHAIE might be taken. He would be if he kept riding the range day and night, exposing himself to both bitter weather and the disease. The fear struck at Marian's heart. It did not pass. It shook her and stormed her. She called Nophaie to her and led him behind the clump of cedars, where the horses were nibbling at the sage. Nophaie's mind seemed clouded. She held his hand, endeavoring to quell her mounting excitement. The sun had come out momentarily, crowning the towers with gold. How deeply purple bloomed the sage!

"Benow di Cleash, you should not have come," said Nophaie regretfully.

"I'm glad. It has hurt me—done something more than that," she replied. "I was sick—sick deep in my soul. But I'm over it, I think. And now I want to talk."

"Why, you're white; you're shaking," he exclaimed.

"Is it any wonder? Nophaie, I love you—and I'm terror-stricken. This awful plague!"

He did not reply, but his hands pressed hers closely and his eyes dilated.

Marian had learned to sense in him the mystic, the Indian, when it stirred. She wrenched her hands free and then threw her arms round his neck. The action liberated and augmented the storm in her breast. What she had meant to express utterly, in her frenzy to save Nophaie and make him take her out of the desert, burst all bounds of woman's subtlety and deliberation. What she said or did in this mad moment of self-preservation she never realized. But she awakened to a terrifying consciousness that she had inflamed the savage in Nophaie.

He crushed her in his arms and bent to her face with eyes of black fire. Tenderness, gentleness, love had no part in this response to her woman's allurements. His mastery was that of the primal man. He bent her, swung and lifted her. Like a sack he threw her across her saddle, head and feet hanging.

BUT Marian, once partially free of his iron arms, struggled and rose, and got into better position on her horse. She reeled against Nophaie. She could scarcely see. But she felt release from his grip. Something checked him, and his blurred face began to grow distinct, to come closer until it pressed against her bosom.

"White woman, you'll make—an Indian of me," he panted huskily.

It pierced Marian. What more strange, incomprehensible appeal could he have made? Yet how deep it struck! She, who had loved the nobility of him, to drag him from the heights! Then came her struggle. Only the tragedy of this Indian man could ever have mastered the woman at that moment. Gekin Yashi, the poor demented

Shoie, Ba ho Zohnie and his unquenchable sense of loss, Do Etin and Maahasenie—these strange figures loomed beside Nophaie's. That was a terrible moment.

"Nophaie, forgive!" she whispered, encircling his head with her arms and pressing it closer to her breast. "I've been beside myself. This plague, this death has made me a coward. And I tried to make you—"

"Benow di Cleash, that'll be about all," he said, raising his face, and he smiled through tears.

An hour later Withers' melancholy task had been completed. Ba ho Zohnie refused to leave with the party. Marian's last sight of him was one she could never forget—the dark-faced Indian standing before the hogan he could never enter again, peering across the graves of his mother and wife and the ill-gotten baby he had meant to father, across the gray sage flat to the blank walls of stone. What did he see? What did he hear? Whence came his strength?

XX

THREE thousand Nopahs died of the plague, and from one end of the reservation to the other a stricken, bewildered and crushed people bowed their heads. When spring came, with its warm sun dissipating the strange wind of death, the Indians believed that the eating of horseflesh had saved them.

Slowly the clutch of fear loosed its possession of Marian's heart. Slowly the long spell of gloom yielded to a hope inspired by sunshine and a steady decline in the death rate of Nopahs. Yet not wholly did her old spirit return. There was something ineradicable, vague, tenacious, inscrutable, something she felt every time Nophaie smiled at her.

They all worked to alleviate the sufferings of the Indians. If the trader had ever saved any money he lost it all and more that winter. Marian's means had shrunk to almost nothing. Civilization seemed far away, absorbed in its own problems. The affairs of the reservation moved on as always. And the little circle of white people at Kaidab lived true to something the Indians had inspired in them, forgotten by the outside world.

March, with its last icy breath of winter, yielded to April with its sandstorms. The wind blew a gale one day and the next was calm, warm, with spring in the air. Only a few cases of influenza were reported, and deaths but seldom.

Yet Marian could not quite feel free. The tentacles of a deep-seated emotion, stranger than love, and impalpable, still were fastened in her heart.

Nophaie had ridden to Oljato, and when he did not return the following day the nameless thing that was neither thought nor feeling laid its cold hand on Marian's soul. She worked on Withers' accounts that day; she wrote long-neglected letters; she busied herself for an hour over a sadly depleted and worn wardrobe; she rode horseback out to the rocky ridge above Kaidab and strained her eyes on the trail to Oljato.

BUT these energies did not allay her nervousness nor quell the woman's sixth sense. She tried the trading post, which of late had been hard to bear. Hungry, gaunt Indians would come in and stand around, staring with great dark eyes until Withers or Colman gave them something to eat. It was a starved tribe now.

(Continued on Page 235)

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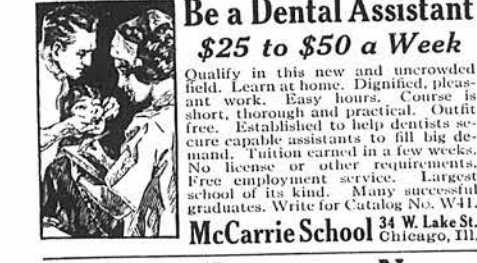
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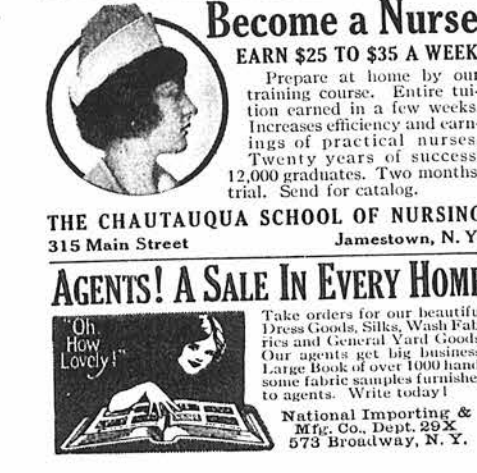
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The Vanishing American

(Continued from Page 234)

Marian saw Indians carrying bows and arrows, a custom long past, which had been resumed because the hunters had sold their guns or could not buy ammunition. Wool had practically ceased its use as a means of trade. The Indians would not shear sheep for the price offered. A few goatskins and an occasional blanket were bartered over the counter. It was distressing to watch an Indian woman come in with a blanket, often a poorly made one that Withers did not want and could not sell, and haggle over a price which was ruinous for the trader to offer. In this way Withers kept alive the Nopahs of his district. They did not thank him, for none of them understood.

This day Marian encountered Shoie again, and despite the feeling almost of horror that he incited she resolutely stood her ground and watched him. Shoie's companion was a young Nopah, very dark and wild-looking, ragged and unkempt, with a crippled foot. Something about this second Indian impelled Marian's sensitiveness even more than Shoie. He was watching Shoie's signs and the contortions of his lacerated lips as he tried to convey some meaning. Withers observed Marian's perplexity and gave her his interpretation.

"THAT crippled Nopah is one of the few criminals of the tribe. They caught him and held his foot in the fire until it was burned to a crisp. That was his punishment, and he is now an outcast. I reckon Shoie is trying to say that he'll cast an evil spell over him."

Marian earned her momentary forgetfulness of self then in contemplation of these two Indians. She compared them with Ba ho Zohnie and Nophaie. But when thought of Nophaie recurred, she could no longer stay in the store.

Outside it was growing cool. The sun had set, and there shone a ruddy effulgence over the tilted sections of wall in the west. Coyotes were wailing. Marian walked in the twilight. It seemed an immense and living thing, moving up out of the desert. An oppression weighed upon her. How dark and lonely the empty space out beyond! The stone-walled confines of the wasteland flung their menace at her thinking mind.

Withers appeared unusually quiet that night. His wife talked a little in her low voice, grown like an Indian's. Marian sat beside the hearth, with eyes on the glowing white-and-gold embers.

Suddenly she was startled out of her reveries. "What was that?" she asked.

"Horse. Must be Nophaie," replied the trader, as if relieved.

MARIAN sat still, listening. But she heard only a strange knocking at her heart. At length the door opened with a sweep. Nophaie! His eyes were those of an Indian, but his face seemed that of a white man. He staggered slightly as he closed the door behind him and leaned back against it. His whole body was in vibration, strung like that of an athlete about to leap.

His piercing gaze left Marian's face to search the trader's. "John, give me a room to die in."

Withers gasped and sank back limp. His wife uttered a frightened cry.

"It's got me," whispered Nophaie.

Marian's terror voiced its divination of her nameless instinct. "Oh, Nophaie!" she cried, and ran to him.

Nophaie reeled. He clasped her shoulders, held her away from him.

"Benow di Cleash, I should have been dead hours ago, but I had to see you. I had to die as a white man."

Marian shuddered under the clasp of his hands. They burned through her blouse.

"White woman, savior of Nophaie, go back to your people. All—is—well."

Then he collapsed against her and was caught by the trader. They half-carried him to his room and laid him on the bed. Then began frantic ministrations in his behalf. But little could be done for him. His jaw was locked. The fire of his face, the marble pallor, the hurried pulse, the congested lungs, the laboring heart all proclaimed the dread plague in its most virulent form.

ONCE in the dim lamplight, as Marian knelt beside the bed in agony, calling "Nophaie—Nophaie!" he opened his eyes, somber, terrible, no longer piercing with his unquenchable spirit; and it seemed to her that a fleeting smile, the old beautiful light, veiled for an instant his tragic soul and blessed her.

The trader took her back to the sitting room. There she huddled down before the fire, racked with pangs. Oh, the futility of Nophaie's life and of her love! Mrs. Withers came and went, softly stepping, tender of hand, but she did not speak. The night wore on. Outside the wind rose, to mourn into the dead silence. The vines under the eaves rustled.

Sometime in the late hours Withers came to her and touched her gently. "Marian, his sufferings are over," he said huskily.

"Nophaie—he is—gone?" whispered Marian, rising.

"Yes. Unconscious of course. I must tell you the strangest thing. Many of these Nopahs who died of this plague turned black. Nophaie turned white! I was shocked. It's as strange as what he said, 'John, give me a room to die in!' Marian, it must mean he was true at the last—to the mind, the soul developed in him. Yet his life here was one endless struggle to be true to his birthright. Oh, the pity of it!"

MARIAN wrapped a blanket round her and went out into the night. The cold desert wind fanned her face and whipped her hair. Dawn was not far away. The stars were paling and the blackest hour was at hand. Desert and sky, the shadows, the mournful wind, the silence—all kept their secret. But while life was here and there, only a step away was death. "All—is—well!" Nophaie's last words must be the inspiration of her life.

What had he meant by calling her his savior? Forever that must be mystery. But perhaps, in the grip of death, his unbelief had been illumined away. Her belief in God must teach her so. Yet she stood again with Nophaie on the heights above the Marching Rocks!

The desert was not to be her home. But always it must be an irresistible influence for thought, for good, for memory, for the clarifying of life. Always limned on her inward vision must be the upland sage of purple, the golden-crowned monuments asleep in the sunlight, the long green sweep and slope, and in the shadow of the silent walls—the Indian Nophaie.

THE END



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