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no! You couldn't. But what will you do now—go home to your family?"

"No. I haven't a home to go to—only my aunt in Oklahoma. I may go there after a while. I think I will stay right here in the city for a week or so."

"How will you live?"

"Oh, I've some money, and I took my jewelry! It isn't much," she added apologetically, "but it's mine. It came to me from my own people—things I inherited, and wedding presents. I didn't take a thing he gave me—left everything of his on the bureau. He can't say I robbed him."

"But he wouldn't say that of his own wife!"

"Yes, he would, too."

Miss Warren gasped. "I don't think," she said judicially, "I will ever marry."

"Don't," said the wife grimly. "But you don't have to—I see you're independent. You're an artist, aren't you?"

The golden head nodded assent. "Yes—how did you guess?"

"Oh, from the look of your place, and the sketches hung on the wall, the skylight and all—and then you're artistic, the right variety, not the sloppy sort. You look like the kind that paints miniatures at five hundred per minute."

"I think you have second sight," said Miss Warren.

"What was that?" the visitor exclaimed, springing to her feet, alert and tense.

The women held their breath expectantly, and Miss Warren inventoried her guest. She had recognized the dis-

you'd doctor me?" inquired Mrs. Grayson.

"You didn't write it on a placard, of course," replied the hostess, "but you might just as well have done so. You're too ingenious, my girl."

"Go help yourself, anyway. I've relieved your fears."

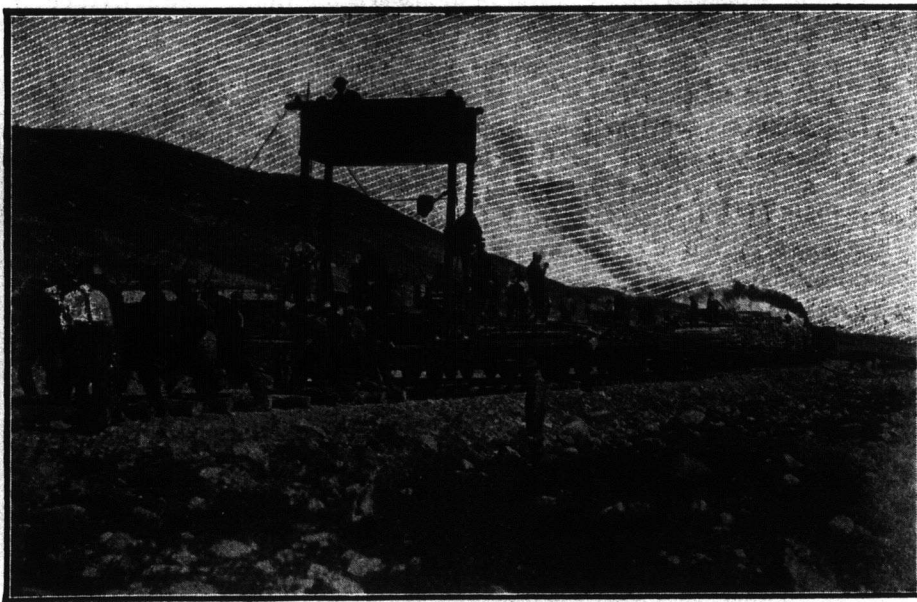
"Come, too," said the guest, her quick glance sweeping the walls of the room.

"No," said Miss Warren, laughing again; "the telephone isn't here; it's in my room. My word! You're suspicious."

Mrs. Grayson started, the expression of annoyance deepening. "Well, I must be a sieve!" she exclaimed. "For goodness' sake, are you a human Marconi station? I didn't want to hurt your feelings, you know, after you've been so white to me; but it's been so long since I was treated with any consideration that I get leery if any one is half decent to me, and you—well—you haven't any reason to be kind."

"Oh, yes, I have," was the cordial rejoinder; "every reason—the best of reasons! I was bored to extinction when you dropped in—bored, but not a bit sleepy. I have insomnia, you see; didn't want to take a powder—they interfere with my work, I find. Like all 'would-be's' I'm proud of my art, and want to do my best. Thanks to you, I've spent a very interesting hour—so come on—I'll go with you, and you can rifle the ice-box."

Mrs. Grayson smiled for the first time. She had a large, flexible, boy-



Railroad building in Saskatchewan.

turbing noise as the velvety thump of her Angora cat leaping from his favorite sleeping-place on top of the dresser in the bedroom. A moment later a loud purr corroborated her thought and relieved the situation, as Tomo, tail in air, entered the room, sprang upon his mistress' lap and sniffed affectionately at her nose.

"You gave us a start, O Pig-Cat of my heart!" she said. "What is it?—Hungry? Go find mice for mother. Oh," she exclaimed, "that reminds me; I'm no sort of a hostess. Pour soul, you must be used up—you must have a bite with me! What will you have to drink? I've a little brandy, I think, and there's some claret and ginger ale—and a bottle of milk."

She rose as she spoke. The runaway followed her example, but without enthusiasm.

"No, I thank you," she said. "I'm neither hungry nor thirsty—don't bother, please."

Miss Warren laughed. "I hadn't the slightest intention of doping you," she said quietly; "but don't tell me you don't need it—food, not doping, you know. You're worn out, Mrs.—what-ever-your-name-is?"

"Grayson," said the girl.

"Mrs. Grayson, then, go into the pantry yourself and take out what you want. You'll find everything in the ice-box. Bring me whatever you choose. I'm hungry—and I'll trust you. If you didn't kill Mr. Grayson, why you certainly won't poison me." She smiled merrily.

"What made you think I thought

ish mouth and excellent teeth. The smile was attractive. "Miss—what-ever-your-name-is—"

"Miss Ely," said Miss Warren promptly.

"Miss Ely, would you mind putting up that revolver that's lying in the loop of your sleeve? I've a horrid fear of firearms."

Miss Warren blushed crimson. "Really I—" she hesitated. "I'd forgotten I had it here. However, you have quite disarmed me, Mrs. Grayson. I'll put my revolver here on the mantel-shelf if you'll take yours from your pocket and put it there, too."

It was the guest's turn to start and color. "Well, Miss Marconi, it's X-ray eyes you have. I've never met a girl with all the modern improvements before. Here goes!" She drew an up-to-date magazine revolver from her jacket pocket and laid it beside the snub-nosed derring. She drew away nervously. "It's his," she almost whispered, "and—it was with that I wanted to kill him—I believe I would have if I hadn't been afraid of the explosion and the mess. All women are like that, I guess. Aren't you?"

Miss Warren shook her head. "I really don't know," she answered. "I never had to use mine, you see, but I feel so safe when I have it. I don't really suppose I could hit the side of a house at two paces; but it is a comforting sensation to hold one in one's hand, isn't it? You see, I felt I could shoot right through the sleeve, if I had to; just slip my hand inside—so—it would have spoiled my tea-