

ly perfect specimens, with their aims and motives selfish; and they drank too much and played poker too late. Martin was no saint himself, but he knew a girl who was as near one as it is possible for human being to be, and he wanted the man to whom she granted supremest happiness to be worthy of her, that's all.

This morning Marion came upon him seated on a mound behind the wood-hedged links, slowly and carefully filling his pipe. A broken golf-stick lay at his feet. The peak of a plaid golf-cap protruded from the much-battered piece of sod, mute evidence of Martin's recent mental soliloquy on golf in general and two players in particular.

Laughter danced in the girl's eyes at sight of him and quickly she unslung the kodak from her shoulders. At the click of the instrument Martin turned inquiringly, and admiration and appreciation of the picture before him wiped out six weeks of failure from his memory. She matched the environment so well, the gold of her hair, the pink of her cheeks, her wild bubbling life.

Then he turned the picture to the wall. She had frowned.

"Exhibit number one hundred and twenty," he shivered. "What are you going to name this one, Marion?"

"The Quitter," she returned icily.

"Eh?" Martin sat up. "What do you mean, the quitter?"

"That's what you are, aren't you, Jimmy?"

He looked away. "I'm not long on golf," he said rather lamely. "I can't play golf with any degree of success any more than I can play billiards or ride horse-back; but listen, Marion," pleadingly, "I'm no quitter."

"No?"

"No, siree, I'm no quitter. Haven't I stuck and done my level best, only to be beaten by the Cap. and Billy every time? They're players, those chaps," he acknowledged. "I'm just a misfit, that's all."

"You allow the captain and Billy

to beat you at everything, Jimmy." There was banter in her tones, but Martin did not get it. To him, it was a brief, cold statement of fact. According to her own words, he was done.

He sat frozen of soul, numb of mind. A man sentenced to be hanged may live a thousand deaths before the big day, but, after all, there's nothing to be compared with the real hanging.

Martin plucked his cap from the earth and flapped it on the log. There was a certain finality in the action which the girl intuitively read.

"Jimmy," she said gently.

He looked up at her. "I'm going back to the city to-morrow," he said shortly. "I'm not going to spoil your last snap-shot, Marion. I'm a quitter."

Perhaps the autumn day was in harmony with his depression of soul. As he spoke the sun went out from the skies and the gold on shrub and tree-top faded to bronze and gray. Even the face of the girl he loved better than anything in the wide world seemed to grow sad and dreary in expression. A cold wind whipped in from across the marshy lake, lifting her cap and unloosing a strand of gold-brown hair. Never before had she seemed so dear to him—and yet so far away.

Yet all she said as they turned up the path together was:

"Of course, if you wish to go, we cannot think of asking you to stay, Jimmy."

Wasn't that like a woman! Jimmy bit his tongue and stood it like the quitter she believed him to be.

That night, in the smoking-room, Martin casually let drop the intelligence that he was striking cityward on the morrow. He fancied he detected a look of mingled contempt and relief on the faces of his rivals at the news, though both were profuse in their expressions of regret at having to part with him. However, they hoped to meet him later on in the city,