

The Envoy

in peace and security. It was a red letter day for Alec when you brought him away from Delgratz, my dear," she continued, with a fond pressure of her hand on Joan's brown hair. "None of us knew it at the time; but there are events in life that, like certain short and sharp diseases, leave us all the better when they have passed, though their severity may try us cruelly at the time."

The Indian summer day was drawing to a close, and Bosko entered to close the windows and pull down the blinds. The sight of him moved Alec to speak in that sonorous Serbian tongue which was already foreign to his own ears.

"Do you like America, Bosko?" he said.

The imperturbable one almost started; for it was long since he had heard any words in his own language.

"*Oui, monsieur*," he said.

"And would you go back to Delgratz if you had the opportunity?"

"*Non, monsieur*." For a wonder, he broke into an explanation. "I can go out here without expecting to be fired at from some hedge or ditch around the next corner, monsieur. You did not know those rascals as I knew them. They nearly got you once; but they tried a dozen times, and would have succeeded too, if Stampoff had not been too sharp for them."

"Good gracious, Bosko!" said his master. "This is news, indeed. Why was I not told?"