

"Don't you like me any better now you've seen me?" he asked.

"I am more interested in you," I confessed.

"Why?" he urged.

"On account of your appalling jacket," I replied. "Your Joseph's coat. But then, it's just like you Englishmen to wear a thing like that, no one else would have such a boundless nerve."

"I don't see anything wrong with this coat," he said; "it's loose and warm. I bought it in Scotland."

Just then Colonel Appleby and Teddy hove in sight followed by the little secretary.

"I must get on," I said. "I'd like to finish this game, but I specially don't want to meet Mr. Brett. I'm going home."

"Not," said he, "until you have told me your name."

I DID not want to go home. Surely if I could get over the hill I could scurry down the course and have some good tries before dusk without being recognized. So without stopping to think of any consequences, I said,

"I am Cora Dever," and then ran toward the hill. To my surprise, he followed. We were in its shelter on the side farthest away from the oncoming trio when I stopped for breath.

"What are you coming, too, for?" I asked.

"Well," he pretended to be crestfallen, "I see I'm not wanted, but I met those two duffers at dinner last night, and I'm not equal to them so soon again."

"You're making a great mistake," I told him. "You have not seen Colonel Appleby when he is most interesting. He has a stock of the most wonderful swear words anybody ever heard. But he only uses them on the links."

"I didn't know that," said the captain, as if he had half a mind to go after the colonel.

"Yes," said I, encouragingly. "He seems inspired down here. Sometimes I just sit and listen," and that's the truth, Cora and Eileen say they often forget to play with wondering what he will say next. "It's really quite amazing," I went on, "the immense number of swear words he knows. He almost makes poetry with them. I should think it would be a real education for anybody that cares for that sort of thing to be with him, and you might find it useful when you get back to the front."

However, he didn't seem to be of my mind, but trailed along after me offering to carry my clubs. It was all very disappointing. How could I play under the circumstances and ruin Cora's reputation first shot, if I hadn't done it already. So I watched the captain. He showed me a few of his choice plays. But he did not seem very keen about playing, either, rather wanted to talk. He told me a lot of interesting things, and some good stories. He made me laugh, and struck me as being rather a good sort. After a bit, it had stopped raining and the sun was out, we sat down to rest on a little seat under an oak tree secure from observers. As I am nearly sixteen, I realized that the captain was trying to flirt a bit at this stage of the proceedings, and I set myself to puzzling what Cora would say under the circumstances. Cora is an awfully nice sort of girl, no nonsense about her, and yet a good sport, and a great favourite with the men. But the captain was very eligible, and for days I had heard mother and Eileen and Martha talking about him, of his being an officer with a private income besides, and such a golf enthusiast, and coupling his name with Cora's in the most unmistakable manner, although if you had suggested that they were making any plans or had any hopes they would have all been vastly indignant. Still, as much as I had seen of the captain, I felt he would be a splendid match for Corrie, and I did not want to put her in wrong the first thing. So it was rather a responsibility for me, taking the whole thing together. I tried honestly to be as charming as he said I was. But a terrible thing happened. The little false curls I had pinned on came off. They simply fell into my lap as we sat talking. For a moment I was speechless, then I dared to look at him, and his eyes were far away, much too far away, and the muscles all down the side of his face were twitching in a frantic manner.

"Why don't you laugh out loud," I said, in disgust. "Of course it's funny. I know it's funny."

So then he did laugh. He laughed so hard I thought something would happen to him, he being

invalided home and all that. After a while I laughed, too.

"But," said I, with my thoughts on poor Cora's reputation, "you must not think all my hair comes off."

"I must believe it," said he, conclusively, "unless you can prove to the contrary."

"Nothing easier," I retorted, triumphantly. Cora's hair and mine are precisely the same colour, so I was quite safe. I took off my tam, pulled the pins out of my hair and shook it all down around me. There's a lot of it and it's real girlie hair, light as a baby's. I peeped at him from behind it. "Now, you see," I said, "and you may pull it if you like to be sure it's on tight."

He put out his hands and gathered some of it up.

"By Jove," he said.

"Pull it," I advised him, "to make sure."

He gave it a little tug with both hands.

"How's that?" I asked.

"It's fast, all right," said he.

Then I realized that his face was very close to mine.

"Don't you dare," I hissed, dragging my hair away



and myself away and putting all of it, not all of me, but all my hair under the tam.

"I don't know that I was going to," he said, a bit gloomily, "but why not?"

"Because—" I began, indignantly, and then I hesitated. I could not explain to him that I loathed the very thought of lovemaking and kissing and that I had told dad—not mother, because it would make her feel too badly—that I would never marry, but meant to be the editor of a sporting paper. But now that I was impersonating Cora, I could not let him know my real feelings. I must pretend.

"You know," I said, drawing away from him as far as the seat would let me, and trying to look very sweet and demure, "no self-respecting girl would permit any man to kiss her unless it was the man she was going to marry."

"Well," said he, "we might overcome all obstacles if you were willing."

I was not quite sure of what he meant by that, so I merely laughed softly, and said I must go home. But he detained me. He told me he considered our meeting one of the most wonderful things that had ever happened to him. His uncle had written to him about Cora being the lady champion of the Pacific

Coast, and had also described her as the prettiest girl he had ever seen. So he had been looking forward all the way from France to meeting her. Fate, he said, played strange tricks sometimes, and she had led us to one another in an undreamed of way. He might have met me for years and never had the real glimpse of me that he had had this afternoon. And because it had all been so unconventional, informal and all that sort of thing, he could say to me frankly, "Cora, you are adorable."

Well, that was very satisfactory, but I knew I must hurry away then and there, so as not to destroy his good opinion. I told him while I was very glad he liked me, and had enjoyed meeting me, that I had a request to make which he must grant if he ever expected to see me again. He asked what it was with great eagerness. I explained that he must promise never, on his honour as a soldier and a gentleman, to refer to this meeting again, never by so much as a word or a glance. If he did, from that time forth I would never speak to him. He laughed at first, but when he realized I was in deadly earnest, he consented. But he asked me to save him ten dances for that night.

Naturally I refused to discuss the dance at all. And I also refused with much trepidation, for I was afraid he would come anyway, to allow him to walk home with me. I told him I would be ashamed to be seen with a man in such a jacket as he was wearing, and then I ran as fast as my legs could carry me, and they could carry me pretty fast in such a short skirt, and the last I saw of him, he was standing just where I had left him looking after me.

It was easy enough to slip in the house without being seen. Easy enough to change into my own clothes and nobody the wiser, though I did have an awful time cleaning Corrie's shoes. I did not see any of the family until dinner time, and then at the table mother said:

"Jeannie, your walk did you good. Your eyes are as bright as diamonds."

"And look at the child's cheeks," said dad. "Jeannie, have you been putting anything on your cheeks?"

Dear old dad, when we were playing billiards after dinner I did so want to tell him what I had let Cora in for. But I didn't like to worry him. I watched the girls get ready for the dance with a shaky conscience. I told Cora if she wanted to make an impression on the captain she ought not to be too dignified, but to treat him in a friendly, easy manner. She laughed at me and called out what I had said to Eileen in the next room. Often I stepped beside her to look at our two faces in the glass side by side.

"We do look alike, don't we, Corrie?" I asked.

"For heaven's sake, Jean," said she, testily, "at least you've asked me that twenty times already tonight. And I do wish you would keep away from the mirror. Who is going to the dance, you or I?"

"Oh, excuse me for living," I said. I didn't want to watch her. I was not interested in her clothes or Eileen's, either, but I was a bit nervous. I tried to stay awake until they came home, so that I should hear if anything surprising had happened, but I went to sleep.

As a rule I never listen to their after-the-ball gossip, but Sunday morning, as soon as they gathered round the fire with "mums," I took a seat nearby and pretended to be reading the paper.

FIRST thing I learned, Cora had made a conquest of the captain, that he had never let her out of his sight the whole evening, and that everybody was talking about it. But Cora did not seem to plume herself much about it. Pressed for reasons she said she thought he was crazy. Mother suggested he was suffering from gas shock. But Cora said he had had no experience with gas, that he had only been shot in the leg and was all right now. Eileen said that she found him a perfect dancer, almost as good as Gerald, and very charming and well-bred, and that everybody but Cora had sung his praises.

Mother asked for a more definite explanation of his behaviour.

"Well," said Cora, "the very first moment he was introduced, which was as soon as I had entered the

(Concluded on page 20.)