

**BY F. M. WHITE**  
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Crimson Blind," Etc.

"I declare that nobody will know the difference," she said. "Unless you are in a very strong light."

Jessie murmured respectfully that she knew everything. All the same, she was quite at a loss to know how she was to identify the General Maxgrew when he did come. The mystery of the whole thing was becoming more and more bewildering. Clearly Vera Galloway was deep in the confidence of the queen, yet at the same time she had crept concealed from her majesty the fact that she had substituted a perfect stranger for herself. It was a daring trick to pull upon so exalted a personage, but Vera had not hesitated to do it. And Jess

"Let me guess your thoughts," Maze said in a low tone of voice. He reclined elbows on the lip of the fountain so that his face was close to Jessie's. "I am not so good at that kind of thing. You thinking that the queen did not care me for the picture?"

Jessie repressed a start. There was distinct menace in the speaker's words, they meant anything they meant day and that to the people whose interest was Jessie's to guard. And she knew that Vera Galloway could not possibly know—the man was a soundred.

tonight. She recognized his face, for her features behind the glow of the moon. She had made up her mind to wait. Surely the queen would understand that there was cause for delay, that some foreseen danger threatened.

The man with the cigarette strolled calmly by the fountain. He had his hands behind him, and appeared to be plunged in thought. He would have passed the fountain altogether without seeing the staid there, only Jessie called to him to stop in a clear gay voice.

"Have you lost anything, Cap?"

Galloway my heart seemed to ache the night of you. I told about you often. Now tell me why did your pride break down so suddenly tonight? You might have said to Veta had you not spoken at the roses."

"I had the most pressing need of your assistance," Jessie said hoarsely. "I not want to disclose myself, but conscience called me imperatively. I dare say you are wondering why I am intruding here as Miss Galloway, and where

have ever been rash where their ancestors were concerned. And even before you came Erno's bride, I warned you what to expect, I would have taken you off to bed and there and married you, even though I had lost my career and all Europe would have talked of the scandal. But your mind was fixed upon saving Astoria for Russia, and you refused. Not because I did not love me—"

The queen smiled faintly. This handsome, impetuous, headstrong soldier said no more than the truth. And she

"I assure you, my lord, I am saying no more than the truth," Mazan said eagerly. "The secret treaty between Russia and Asturia over those passes is ready for signature. It was handed King Erno only today, and he promised to read it and return it signed in the morning."

"Provided that he is in a position to sign," Lord Merehaven said drily.

(To be Continued.)

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