



apples, which the barrels had contained. It was almost dusk when the work was completed.

"Now, Jim," said Corrigan, "get a hustle and have a big supper, as you are to sleep on the premises to-night, and be careful none of the bad boys in the neighborhood steal your nice apples from the trees." Bidding his employe good evening, Corrigan entered his auto and raced back to the city.

The next morning the idea man was at his desk wading through a big pile of mail which had come in response to his "ad." in the *Daily-Record*. His experience quickly separated the wheat from the chaff, and presently five letters only were on his desk, the balance consigned to the waste paper basket. One letter in particular was lovingly fingered by Corrigan. He read it over quickly, then slowly re-read it; the third perusal was a lingering drawnout study.

"I guess this is my man," murmured Corrigan, "but Kitty's opinion will be worth while in this matter." Pressing a button on the side of his desk brought the trim, smiling stenographer to his side. "Give me your opinion of this letter, Kit," said Corrigan.

Toronto, Aug. 27th.

Home Sweet Home, *Daily Record*.

Sir or Madam:—The writer is in the third stage suggested in you ad. My wife and myself need a little home with some grounds sufficient to plant flowers and fruit.

We are particularly desirous of locating in Oshawa. Can pay spot cash if the house is satisfactory. I mean business, so call at once one Carl Schmidt, 51 King Street west, Toronto.

"Really, Mr. Corrigan," observed Kitty, "it seems to me Mr. Schmidt is the right man, so I would advise prompt connections."

"That's the way I feel about it, Kit, so put a sign on the office door, 'Out of Town Until Monday,' and get into your things, for I need your services in winding up the sale."

Kitty had her hat and dust-coat on in a few minutes. Locking the office door, they got on the elevator, and a few seconds later they were on the street.

"Now, Kitty," said Corrigan, "I want you to go at once to the house in Oshawa and get Jim fixed up on the invalid chair on the porch. Remember, he is your invalid father, and you are his only daughter, and it almost breaks your heart to leave your happy home, but your father's lungs are badly affected, and it is necessary to remove him to the mountains at once."

"Impress on Mr. and Mrs. Schmidt that your only regret is leaving your dear little home—and, by the way, Kit, recommend the brand of apples which grows on the premises. You will find a goodly number of choice ones scattered under the trees, so let Mr. Schmidt sample them to his heart's content. Now Kit, are you wise to my scheme? If there is a hitch in sight, ask questions." Kitty's sly wink and confident smile hardly needed her confirmations that the idea was bully, and would surely succeed.

Leaving Kitty to proceed to the depot to take a local train to Oshawa, Corrigan seated himself in his red auto and headed in the direction of King Street. Stopping at 51, which proved to be a superior type of boarding house.

Corrigan handed the landlady the envelope which contained the reply to the advertisement with his name under it. In two or three minutes footsteps sounded in the hall, and a moment later Mr. Schmidt entered the parlor. Advancing with outstretched hand, Corrigan greeted the gentleman. In spite of his name, Mr. Schmidt did not suggest colloquially or otherwise any Teutonic peculiarities. He spoke English excellently, and seemed to Corrigan's expert eye, a mild-mannered, home-loving, middle-aged German-Canadian. "Do you know, Mr. Schmidt," said Corrigan, "that I had hundreds of replies to that ad. in the *Record*, and I selected yours from all others as the one who would appreciate this place, but I want you to understand right at the beginning I have no interest whatever in the house. My solicitude for a motherless girl and con-

sumptive father led me to take up the sale of the home. I know nothing, only the house and grounds seem like a little fairyland to me, and the ridiculously low price which the owners are willing to take for it stamps it as a bargain of a lifetime."

"When can I see the house, Mr. Corrigan? Mrs. Schmidt and myself are anxious to move in right away. We are tired of boarding, and would like to make a home right away."

"The owners are just as anxious to move out as you are to move in," answered Corrigan, "but of course it will be necessary for Mrs. Schmidt to see the house as well as yourself, so if you bring her along, my auto is at the door and I can drive to Oshawa in an hour."

"That's a good idea, Mr. Corrigan, I shall go at once and bring Mrs. Schmidt down. We will take great pleasure in accompanying you to Oshawa."

After quite an interval Mr. Schmidt returned with his wife. Introductions being over, Corrigan mentally sized up the lady, and decided that she was entirely governed by her husband's opinion.

During the run to Oshawa Corrigan found time to keep his visitors interested in the surrounding country. He pointed out that Oshawa was an ideal home site, that it was increasing in value yearly and, although the Hendersons' house was some distance from the town, it was in the direct line of growth, and in a few years would be worth much more than the \$5,000 which was the price asked by Corrigan, an increase of \$1,000 over the Hendersons' valuation.

The morning was ideal. It was very warm, yet with breeze enough to exhilarate the occupants of the auto. When at last the house was reached, the Schmidts leaped lightly to the ground and, following Corrigan, advanced up the gravel walk hand in hand like school children. Reclining in the invalid chair on the veranda was Jim, alias Henderson. His daughter (Kitty) was holding his head and administering a drink as he had just got through a spasm of severe coughing which was, as it was intended to be, quite audible to the occupants of the auto.

"Good morning, Mr. Henderson; good morning, Miss Kitty," said Corrigan. "I have brought you some visitors, Mr. and Mrs. Carl Schmidt. They are interested in you, and will purchase your home if they like it."

Kitty advanced and shook hands with the visitors. She acted her part so well that Mrs. Schmidt was immediately won over by her grace and charm. Her

beauty and modesty seemed to make a hit with Mr. Schmidt.

"No wonder, little girl," he said, "that you are anxious to have your father away from here. It must be an awful trial for a little girl like you to be alone with a sick man."

"Now, Miss Kitty," said Corrigan, "show Mrs. Schmidt through the house while I point out to Mr. Schmidt the good features of the grounds."

Arm in arm, Kitty led Mrs. Schmidt away to inspect her little bedroom, which she said was dear to her because it was formerly her mother's.

Corrigan lost no time in pointing out the merits of the place. "You know," he said, "Miss Kitty is a wonderful little gardener. In addition to taking care of her poor father, she cultivated all these beautiful plants; she tended and watered them daily, and you can see for yourself how they have thriven under her expert care. Sample one of these fine apples," and Corrigan handed Mr. Schmidt a specimen he had just picked up from under the tree.

At that moment Mrs. Schmidt and Kitty appeared at an upper window. Mrs. Schmidt called out to the gentlemen below: "You greedy fellows, knock down some of the apples for us."

"Plenty of good ones on the ground, my dear," said Mr. Schmidt. "Look out now, I am going to throw you some."

Kitty deftly caught the big apples, one of which Mrs. Schmidt proceeded to sample. If Mr. Schmidt was pleased with the apples, his wife was doubly so. "Kitty," she said, "this is a lovely spot, and I hope my husband will buy it, for we could be so happy here."

Meanwhile, Corrigan and Mr. Schmidt approached the sick man, who up to this time had kept remarkably still, not uttering a single word. "Mr. Henderson, how do you feel?" enquired Corrigan. "Not so well this morning," was the reply. Mr. Schmidt was then introduced to Jim. He enquired compassionately regarding the extent of his illness.

"By the way, Mr. Henderson, what a fine lot of canaries you have here. How does your daughter find time to care for them all?"

"Those are not our birds, sir," answered Jim. "I love to hear them warble, and when I feel a bad turn coming on me, Kitty goes to the neighbors and borrows the birds for a little while."

"What is that unearthly squeaking I hear in the house?"

"It is a parrot, sir," said Jim. "I love to hear them talk, and when the pain in my lungs has got me awful bad I send Kitty to old Miss Jones for a loan of her Polly."

"Please, sir," a small boy's voice piped shrilly, "please, sir, my mother sent me for our canary and porch chair which Mrs. Henderson borrowed yesterday."

Corrigan wheeled round and coolly said, "Hello, Willie, Miss Henderson will be down in a moment and give you back the bird which she got this morning. While you are waiting, run out to my auto and jump in and sit down until I call for you."

"Please, sir, my name is not Willie, but I will be awful glad to sit on the

driver's seat in the auto," and he trotted away.

Corrigan realized that more visitors would arouse the suspicions of Schmidt and prevent a sale, so turning to him, he said, "Come, let us join the ladies and learn if your wife is as pleased with the house as we were with the grounds."

Seated in the parlor, listening excitedly to Miss Jones' parrot, were Mrs. Schmidt and Kitty. "Carl, dear, this is a wonderful bird. I wish he were mine. Just listen how nice he can talk."

"Now, Mrs. Schmidt," said the practical Corrigan, "does the house suit you?"

"Yes, indeed," was the answer. "I am pleased in every way."

"I am pleased also," said Mr. Schmidt, "but excuse us for a few moments. We want to talk it over." The outcome of the Schmidts' conference was the purchase of the house for \$5,000.

"Now, about the furnishings?" said Corrigan. "You might as well take the whole outfit. Come out here on the lawn and see the lovely plants and things. You surely wouldn't want them disturbed. Mrs. Schmidt complimented Kitty on the charming arrangement of the plants along the front of the house. 'What price would you take for the lot?' asked Mr. Schmidt."

"Ask your father, Kitty," said Corrigan. "Tell him to name the lowest price for spot cash."

Kitty went over to the invalid chair and had a short consultation with the invalid. When she returned she announced: "Father wants \$1,500 cash for everything, but this does not include the birds, which were loaned."

Mr. and Mrs. Schmidt exchanged glances. "We will accept your father's offer, Miss Kitty. Draw up a bill of sale at once and let us conclude the business."

"Before we sign," said Corrigan, "I must get Kitty's guardian. You know," and he leaned confidently towards the Schmidts, "you know that Kitty's father is incapable, and she is in charge of her aunt and uncle, who stop near by. In fact, the property is in their name, so I will run the auto down to the hotel where they are stopping and bring them here."

Corrigan strode quickly over to his auto. Proudly holding the seat down was the boy who wanted a porch chair and a canary.

The Hendersons were elated when Corrigan told them of his good luck. "It was a hard job," he added, "so don't have anything much to say, or you might queer the sale, and by the way, remember that the young girl who is helping me is your niece Kitty."

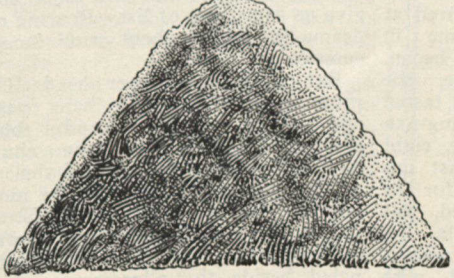
When the Hendersons reached their home, the transformation effected by Jim amazed them. The apple trees loaded with the red fruit especially affected Mr. Henderson.

At last the bill of sale for house, grounds and furniture, was signed, sealed and delivered, and a cheque for \$6,500 was safely deposited in Mrs. Henderson's handbag.


Acting on the advice of Corrigan, Mr.

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