

God's Country and the Woman

(Continued from page 16.)

Purposely he gave her the chance to seize upon this explanation. The sobbing breath came to her lips again.

"I guess—it must have been—that," she said, drawing her hands from him. "I was going out—to—the baby. Thank you, Philip. I—I will go to my room now."

She left him, and not until her door had closed behind her did he move. Had she spoken the truth? Had she in those few moments been temporarily irresponsible because of grievous anxiety over the baby's death? Some inner consciousness answered him in the negative. It was not that. And yet—what more could there be? He remembered Jean's words, his insistent warnings. Resolutely he moved towards Josephine's room, and knocked softly upon her door. He was surprised at the promptness with which her voice answered. When he spoke his name, and told her he was important for him to see her, she opened the door. She had unbowed her hair. But she was still dressed, and Philip knew that she had sitting alone in the darkness of her room.

She looked at him strangely and expectantly. It seemed to Philip as if she had been waiting for news which she dreaded, and which she feared that he was bringing her.

"May I come in?" he whispered. "Or would you prefer to go into the other room?"

"You may come in, Philip," she re-

sponded. "So that I may watch her. I understand."

"She might rest easier with you—if you can arrange it," he agreed. "Your father worries over her now. It will not do to let him know this."

She nodded.

"I will bring her to my room, Philip. I will tell my father that I am nervous and cannot sleep. And I will say nothing to her of what has happened. I will go as soon as you have returned to your room."

He went to the door, and there for a moment she stood close to him, gazing up into his face. Still he did not put his hands to her. Tonight—in her own room—it seemed to him something like sacrilege to touch her. And then, suddenly, she raised her two arms up through her shimmering hair to his shoulders, and held her lips to his.

"Good-night, Philip."

He caught her by his shoulders. For a moment he felt the thrill of her warm lips. Then she drew back, whispering again:

"Good-night, Philip!"

The door closed softly, and he returned to his room. Again the song of life, of love, of hope that pictured but one glorious end filled his soul to overflowing. A little later he knew that Adele's wife had gone with Josephine to her room. He went to bed. And sleep came to him now, filled with dreams in which he lived

DID you ever notice how much you feel to worry about? This week there's something to try the patience of a saint; and, go where you will, you can't keep from thinking about it. Then, next week, something else comes up and it seems far worse than the trouble of last week. You wonder how you could have it a little thing like last week's trouble bother you so! Some day of life—the bitter is mingled with the sweet. But as you near the sunset hour and look back over the days' trials, I think you can say that the blessings have far outnumbered the sorrows, and can see that without some trials you never could have appreciated the blessings.—Farm Journal.

plied, letting him take her hand. "I am still dressed. I have been so dreadfully nervous to-night that I haven't thought of going to bed. And the moon is so beautiful through my window. It has been my company." Then she asked: "What have you to tell me, Philip?"

She had stepped into the light that flooded through the window. It transformed her hair into a lustrous mantle of deep gold; into her eyes it put the warm glow of the stars. He made a movement, as if to put his arms about her, but he caught himself, and a little joyous breath came to Josephine's lips. It was her room, where she slept—and he had come at a strange hour. She understood the movement, his desire to take her in his arms, and his big, clean thoughts of her as he drew a step back. It sent a flush of pleasure and still deeper trust into her cheeks.

"You have something to tell me?" she asked.

"Yes—about your mother." Her hand had touched his arm, and he felt her start. Briefly he told her what had happened. Josephine's face was so white that it startled him when she had finished.

"She said—she was going to the baby!" she breathed, as if whispering the words to herself. "And she was in her bare feet, with her hair down, and herrown on top to the snow and wind! Oh my God!"

"Perhaps she was in her sleep," replied Philip. "It might have been that, Josephine."

"No, she wasn't in her sleep," replied Josephine, meeting his eyes. "You know that, Philip. She was awake. And you have come to tell

with Josephine always at his side, laughing and singing with him, and giving him her lips to kiss in their joyous paradise.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO.

OUT of these dreams he was awakened by a sound that had slowly and persistently become a part of his mental consciousness. It was a tap, tap, tap at his window. At last he sat up and listened. It was the sound was repeated: tap, tap, tap on the pane of glass.

He slipped out of bed, his hand seeking the automatic under his pillow. He had slept with the window partly open. Covering it with his pistol, he called:

"Who is there?"

"A runner from Jean Croisset," came back a cautious voice. "I have a written message for you, M'sieur." He saw an arm thrust through the window, in the hand a bit of paper. He advanced cautiously until he could see the face that was peering in. It was a thin, dark, furbrowed face, with eyes black and narrow like Jean's, a half-breed. He seized the paper, and, still watching the face and arm, lighted a lamp. Not until he had read the note did his suspicion leave him.

"This is Pierre Langlois, my friend of the Pipestone. If anything should happen that you need me quickly let him come after me. You may trust him. He will put up his traps in the thick timber close to the dock. We have fought together. L'Ange saved his wife from the smallpox. I am going westward. Jean."

(Continued next week.)

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