"If you are a gentleman," she said in his ear, "you will not fail to escort me home. Otherwise-

She stopped, but the roll of her eyes conveyed a threat that went beyond words. She was a tigress, after all, a woman of dark passions and uncontrolled anger, a woman who beneath her languid grace had the strength and the courage to strike. And now as she faced him the mill-race of people surged against them and carried them on. They moved with the crowd, there was no escape, and she lashed him with bitter words. He listened, unchastened, his head held high, his eyes still seeking for Mary; and as they plunged into the opposing currents of the street, he met her, face to face.

THE distinguished man was talking now and Mary was listening to what he said; yet her eyes, that were accustomed to read from the lips, were now free to look about. A swift, unbidden gladness leapt up into them at first as she recognized Rimrock in the crowd; and then, quick as lightning, she saw the other woman and the glad look went out of her eyes. They flared up suddenly with the old anger and resentment and as quickly took on a distant stare. Then they turned to her escort and as Rimrock was shoved past them he heard her answer him pleasantly. It was just a word, only a fraction of a word, and then Mrs. Hardesty broke in. What she said fell again upon unheeding ears, but Rimrock knew it was harsh. Harsh and threatening and yet with an undertone of passion that thrilled him against his will.

He found himself in a gliding auto, with the street lights twinkling past, and there he came out of his dream.

"What's the matter with you?" he asked at last as he discovered her still weeping quietly, and she burst into hysterical tears.

'What's the matter!" she echoed, "why, can't you see? I'm in love with you that's what's the matter! Oh, I hate that woman! She's a cruel thing—didn't you see the way she looked at me? But I'll pay her back, I'll get even with her yet! Ah, my God, how I hate the sight of her!"

She fell to weeping and Rimrock, silenced, drew away and left her alone. Then the automobile stopped and through the glass they could see the imposing entrance of the St. Cyngia. The chauffeur reached back and threw open the door and Rimrock leapt quickly out, but Mrs. Hardesty did not follow. She sat in the halfdarkness, composing her hair and working swiftly to cover the traces of tears; and when she stepped out she was calm.

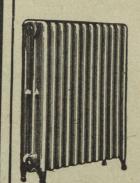
"Excuse me," she whispered as he led her towards the door, "I didn't mean what I said. But I do love you, Rimrock, in spite of myself, andwon't you come in for a moment?"

They stood at the entrance and the Sphinxlike doorman opened the door to let them pass. Outside it was cold and from the portals there came forth a breath of warm air, but for the first time Rimrock held back.

"No, thank you very much," he said, bowing formally, and turned quickly back towards the car. She watched him a moment, then drew her cloak about her and hurried in swiftly through the door.

(To be continued.)



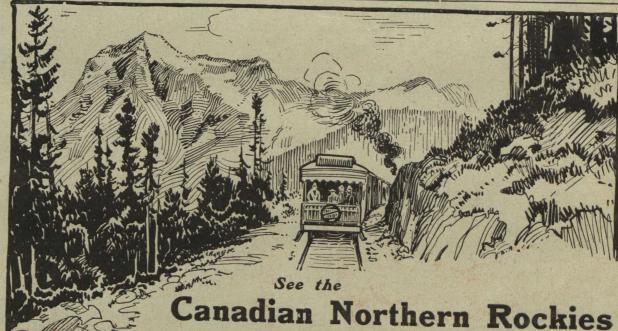


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