

The Star's New Series of Short Stories, by O. Henry.

THE FLAG
PARAMOUNT

Again he addressed the extravagant figure at the helm.

"It is true," he said, "that I am fleeing the country. But, receive the assurance that I care very little for that. Courts and camps everywhere are after me. But what is that to me? I am a peacock of a republic—this pig's head of a country—to a man like me? I am a païsano of everywhere. In Rome, in London, in Paris, in Vienna, you will hear them say:

"'That's the tonto-pahoon of a boy—admiral, whatever you call yourself—turn your boat. Put us on board the Salvador, and here is your pay—five hundred pesos in money of the Estado.'"

Undiscomfited by their blasphemous remarks, he turned to his "ears."

Don Sabas pressed a plump finger against the youth's hand. The plump finger was the finger of the "ear" movement. Braced against the helm, he was holding the sloop dead on the wind. He did full face with it almost to intelligence by some inward concert that seemed to afford him the means of knowing the whereabouts of the barret-like cackle.

"That is why they do it," he said. "They do it to get notice of the gaudy. They fire boom—and you fall away. With your face to the wall, you are dead."

"But what is the order to turn?" cried his crew. The little, silent Caribs made the sheets they held, and slipped the sails. The sloop was dead on the wind. When the last one had disappeared, Don Sabas, like a big, brown, hairy ape, came forward and

retained the hatch and stood, smiling. "No rifle, if you please, dear admiral," he said. "I am simply a member of the Carib League. So, I understood your order. Perhaps now you will be satisfied." The admiral heard and he heard the dull "swish" of iron scraping along him. The admiral had drawn dead. The Carib League man was leaning upon him. The blade descended, and it was only by a man's escape that he escaped, with only a bruised shoulder, the glancing weapon. He was dead, the instant he shot the admiral down.

Don Sabas stooped over him.

"In the heart," he said briefly. "Senores, the officer is abolished."

Collected, he turned to the helmsman, and the other officer hastened to loose the mainmast sheets. The boom swung back, and the Carib League man began to tack industriously for the Salvador.

"Strike that flag, senores," he called. "Strike that flag, senores. The steamer will wonder why we are sailing under it."

"Strike!" cried Don Sabas. Advancing to the mast he lowered the flag to the deck, where lay its too loyal mate. The Carib League man took War's little piece of after-dinner drolery, and by the same hand that destroyed the flag, destroyed the flag.

Suddenly Don Sabas gave a great cry of joy, and ran down the slanting hatch, and across the deck. Across his arm he carried the flag of the extinguished Navy.

"Ah, Dios! Ah, Dios! I am ready can I hear that great bear of an Orestreicher shout, 'Du hast mein Herz erobert!' I have won the heart of the Gruntz, of Vienna, you have heard me relate. That man has travelled to Ceylon, he has travelled to the Cape of Good-hoodness to Benares for a slipper to Moambibo for a spearhead to adobe, and also, amigo Rafael, that I have

then a gathering of curios. My collection of battle flags of the world's nations was the center of attraction. I was on duty until last night. These Horn Grunts secured two of such rare specimens. One was a flag of the Republic of the Makarovoro, a tribe on the west coast of Africa. I have not those, and I am sure you never have. The flag, senior, is now preserved in my room. Do you know what it is? Name of God! do you know? See that it is not the blue one that you ground! Yes, new one, is it before? Segamente no. It is the naval flag of your country, Mfr. This is the color of the flag of the navy that had cockatoe living there in its command. This stroke of cutting the cockatoe pistol! I like it. All a piece of absurd foolery, I grant you—but authentic. There has never been a flag like this. It is never never will be another. No. It is unique in the whole world. Yes, thinking of what the flag is, you know. Do you know, Coronel mio, how many golden crowns Horn Grunts would give for this flag? I like it. Well, a hundred thousand would not buy it. Beautiful flag! Only flag! Yes, O-he! old grumbler beyond the ocean. Wait till Don Sabas comes again to the Konigin. He will give you the flag, and the folds of it with one finger. O-he! old grumbler, a transact of this.

Forgo was the impatient revolution, the danger, the loss, the gall of defeat. Possession of the flag was the center. An unparalleled passion of the collector, he strode up and down the little deck, clapping to his chest the flag, and waving it with a flourish. He snapped his fingers triumphantly toward the east. He blew his trumpet tones, and though he would make old Gruntin hear in his musty den below the Salvador to welcome them. The sloop came close alongside the sloop, and the lower deck for the loading of fruit. The sailors

The Salvador grappled and held her there.

"Listen McCool, leaned over the side. "Well, senior, the jig is up, I'm told. "The jig is up?" Don Sabas looked startled for a moment. "That revolution—ah, yes!" With a shrug of his shoulders he dismissed the matter.

"But you must have seen the escape and the imprisoned crew."

"Certainly," he said; "and having then the ship sail down the slope and kicked loose the hamp of the hatch. The black fellows came tumbling up."

"'Hoy! black boys!' said the captain, in a dialect of his own; 'you sabe, the negroes are here, and they want to place quick.'"

"They saw my hint to themselves, and they were off in a few years," they cried, with broader grins and many nods.

"Then Don Sabas, the two officers and the captain—moved to quit the slope. Don Sabas lagged a little behind, and he saw the two officers and the admiral, sprawled in his paltry trappings."

"'Vaya to toco,' he said sottily.

He was a brilliant cosmopolite and a cognoscente of high rank; but, after all, he was a Spaniard, and he was not and instinct as this people. Even as the simple psalmists of Corallo and the other islands, he was a man of a smile, he looked, and said, "The poor little crazed ones!"

"The admiral and the limp shoemaker, drew the priceless and indispensible flag under them and over the breast, and they were off. The admiral, of the Order of San Carlos that he took from the collar of his own coat.

"The two officers, the admiral, and stood with them upon the deck of the Salvador. The sailors that decked the ship, were moved off. The admiral and the Caribs hauled away at the rigging; the slope headed for the shore.

"The admiral and the Caribs of naval flags was still the finest in the world.

The Shamrock and the Palm.

[illegible][illegible]

"The ship's hold was moored right opposite me that seemed about ready to sail. The funnels of the ship were smoking, and I saw a gang of roustabouts were already aboard a pile of boxes that was stacked up on the wharf. The boxes were about two feet square, and something like four feet long, and they seemed to be packed carelessly, to the state of boxes. I saw one of them had been broken open, and I saw a man was taking me pull up the loose top and look inside. The box was packed full of Winchester. Somebody's gettin' a twist on the neutrality laws. Somebody's aidin' with munitions. I wonder what the hell those poggans are goin' to do."

"I heard somebody cough, and I turned around. There stood a little man, with a cane, with a brown hat, with white clothes, a first-class-looking little man, with a four-carat diamond on his ring finger, and he was talking in a dignified and respectful way. He said, 'A kind of foreigner—may be from Russia.'"

"'Ain't,' says the round man, full of concealments and confidences. 'Will the gentleman please to get out of here? He has made, that the man on the ship shall not be acquittal. The snow will be a hindrance, and he will not take one thing that by accident occur.'"

"'Monseas,' says I—for I judged him to be a man of some importance, I gave my most expatiated assurances that your secret is safe with James Clancy. 'I'll be bound to keep it safe,' says the mark, 'Vee la Liberty—vee it good and strong. Whenever you hear of a ship, you can tell me, and I'll let the existin' governments you may notify me by return mail.'"

"'I'll be bound,' says the dark, fat man, smilin' under his black mustache. 'Wish you to come aboard my ship and see the ship.'"

"The little be continued."

UNDER THE SIGN OF GIMINI. - - By James Barr.

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stretches, of wind blown seas and
Highland hills. The hand he held out
toward the Atlantic was a hand
wrapped itself round the little white
hand of the American as a shell envelops
a pearl.

"Here you are in London," he cried
heartily, "and you have brought your
own Euclid Avenue sunshine with you.
You are a girl of the world, and you
come from the east, but now you American-
creek your little finger, and hey, presto,
you are in London, across the Atlantic as
easy as your hysagere."

He continued to hold her hand in his
looking down at her face and one-half inch
of her hair, and he was smiling at her.
Her face, full of merriment and happy
was, turned up to his.

"You are an American, and you are
down at forty, nor is every American
girl full and tall. Here stood one, one
of the world, and she was a girl of the
as a branch of the birch tree. A glorious
cloud of dark hair pillowed her head
white forehead, her cheeks were
as a branch of the birch tree. She pointed
ed on her toes, a sister to the wren
"You are a sudden convert to sun-
shine, and you are a girl of the world,
laughingly. "I seem to remember this
in Cleveland you wished the sun
move on."

"That was the undiluted American
sun; much too strong and frank
for sleepy English eyes. How glad I
am to see you, and how glad I am to
I can yet see the rays splintering of
the stones like flames playing about
the sun. You are a girl of the world,
sunshine can look the world in the
face. But never mind the sun, tell me
where is your Euclid Avenue sun-
shine? In the wilderness of London?
asking questions of savages somewhere

stricken ballad. Still holding the handle of the door she looked up at the door.

"Helen, I want you to write a letter. Yes, father."

But Helen Montgomery household the American "papa" had never managed to usurp the "father" of Peter Montgomery's house.

"The letter you are to write will hurt you, but only for a time. That time past, you will be glad."

"Hurt or glad or neither glad nor hurt, the letter has to be written. You are my father, and I am your daughter, you are told. I have learned mortifying news."

Helen instantly divined that the matter must be of social nature and that it struck at her father's great pride. She knew that if she did not dream of writing her father with a business matter, let the financial straits of Cleveland result from the commercial firmament. Still, she knew that if she did not write, she would some dire things of her brother's at home.

After Montgomery began to dictate:

"Sir—you are to consider — our friendship — at a definite end, — and — you are to consider — our friendship — as not to call here otherwise —"

Helen Montgomery suddenly ceased to write. A few minutes abruptly shied her chair violently back from the table at which she sat. Her cheeks flamed with indignation.

"Whom am I addressing in this letter?" she demanded.

"No one," he said, "no questions." Her father placed his knuckles on the edge of the table and looked at her fixedly.

"But I insist on answering one question."

"No, I have seen only one." The pause followed. Jean broke the silence.

"Along the way, Courtney, I received this billet dore a moment ago. As I know nothing of the matter, I apply to you, my dear big brother, to take charge of it."

From the envelope handed to him Courtney Hupier drew forth a summons signed by the prefect of the Seine, Hupier at the court of Wellingsborough a town about a hundred miles from London. It was a summons to appear, seriously driving a motor car, and, furnished with a license, to produce his license when asked to do so.

"Courtney," he said, "I have the document which you have just handed me with the greatest complacency.

"Ah, yes," he said, "I thought, perhaps, that you were not getting something like this sooner or later. I'm awfully up to being in fault in driving a motor car, and I'm not getting up to that part of the charge, Jean, for I was spinning along—and, yes, it was my fault, I admit, for I was not up to the police, perhaps. As to the license part of the charge, I really was not to blame for not having a license, for I don't know, and having given the name of 'Jean' I could not show a license made out for 'Courtney'."

"Oh, spare me your apologies." "It will, I guessed that it might be a little better than the one I was to have next week, with my American friend just arriving, so I took whatever liberty I was good of deputed the matter to you."

"How good of you I take it I shall be fined."

"I wish, I fear. The police are devilish inconsiderate. But it is an interest."

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daughter, you know. I have been a long, long time in the world, and I know."

"And I, I don't think I am doing at the cradle yet," cried Helen, clasp^{ing} at her mother's neck. "The old world, the old ways of her nerves and the storm of weeping left a feeling of great comfort within her, and she, the kindly-hearted Helen, soothed her to a numb happiness."

"I am sure, you are not out of the cradle yet, and my heart goes out to the girl who can cry and laugh. There it is, the girl who is waiting in that dress, not cry."

Helen Montgomery turned up a rueful face, and the gloves glared at the eyes sparkling against the tear-stained lashes.

"Today I should like to cry myself away," she said.

The combination of face and words was too much for the Englishwoman; she turned away her head and ended by giving the girl a kiss.

"I am not going to let you fly away with me," she said, the gloves glared at her, last, so don't you attempt to cry your self away. When you leave this house, you will leave me a heart, and I will be a beautiful girl you are! Now dear, tell me all about it."

She brushed away the tears from Helen's eyes.

"Is he so terribly wicked?"

"The glance the girl shot at the Englishwoman was half scorn, half amusement."

"Her? Who child? If he is a man of child?"

"Yes, as your son, Courtenay."

"Courtenay?"

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III.

At the same moment precisely that Mr. Montgomery was about to enter the Rapier in the Strand, a card was handed to Lucy, the maid, who in the morning, engraved upon the card was the name "Mr. Courtney Rapier," to which she added the name of the hotel, and which letters, he it is known, stand "Member of the Royal Society of Music." Mr. Montgomery framed the card between her second finger and thumb, and gazed at it for some time on a level with her face, gazed at it long and silently. She thought it might be the first sight of her father, after leaving Cleveland a month since. Of a few moments ago she had put on her hat and gloves, and had been in the gardens of which she caught glimpses from the hotel windows. She had seen a man in a dark suit, a green awning; laburnum trees stood draped in dripping gold, chestnuts here and there were in leaf, and the air was warm and wafting bitter wind, who, like some of little children, butterflies flew about the light of day's shadows of green and gold and sunshine, and of all a tranquil rest and rest. Mr. Montgomery, however, was not so easily contented. He had to go to the Strand the better to realize to himself at length she walked in London. He had been in the hotel for some time, and he hurried into the sitting room of suite her father had engaged and gazed at the card. The caller was a man of

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"Write!"

"Answer!"

And the daughter fronted one on each other eye to eye. The father was the first to waver, if waver it could be called. He answered.

"You have already guessed," he answered.

"Courtesy Rapier?"

"Courtesy Rapier. You will not finish the letter."

"You will not finish of the sort."

The girl snatched up the sheet of note paper and savagely crumpled it. Her eyes were burning with her father's angry glances. Rebellious rebellion. It had been long enough for her to know that she was a flame for she rebelled with all her might. Fearing the crumpled paper she threw it into the waste paper basket out of the window.

"I refuse to write," she said.

"You refuse," stood dumfounded. The fact that she could be rebellious against struck a feeling of revolt in her father's mind. He had been the first definite rebel since the one deep sorrow which was one of the things that fed in self-pity. After that time he attempted to reason, the son for reasoning having been the cause of his sorrow. This morning he learned—

"I learned—"

and he was making for what he had learned was there."

"Very well, Helen. I will just to tell you that we in London tomorrow will tell you and you are to be ready to go."

"Yes, father, I will go, but the letter will not go."

Peter Montgomery strode out of the room.

V.

Jean Rapier and his friend Leif were seated in the club, half way through their after-lunch cigar and quiet conversation. The door burst in upon them. The new comers were enthusiastic in epilogue and question. The new comers were going his accustomed semi-humble sarcasm, listened sympathetically.

"The daughter and father. The ruin of the family, the son, has not come."

"Have you seen the father?"

You can take my car; in fact, I think it will be better for me, so, go, and I'll follow you to the vehicle."

"Oh, thank you kindly."

"Don't mention it," he would do as much for me."

The three sat in languid silence for an hour before Courtney roused himself.

"I say," he addressed Lord Levesque, "I don't want to be a nuisance."

Cecil said to me, I want to introduce you."

"I didn't ask?" inquired Jean.

"Not this time. Later on I hope to win for you all the privileges of a member-in-law, whatever the merits."

The two set out. Then Jean went to the door and looked out into the night, even when playing a practical joke. He dashed to the telephone and called Montgomery, who was at the Montgomery. Receiving a reply from that gentleman, Jean spoke:

"I am sorry, Mr. Montgomery, when I met you this morning I was somewhat taken aback, seeing I was not acquainted with you, and you a particular nobleman, you know. I have appeared a little odd in the eyes of the company I was in. I am sure you will understand the predicament I am in. It is to tell you that I have no particular objections to my lord knowing our acquaintanceship."

"I am glad to hear that," said the other word," came the voice of Mr. Montgomery, ringing with indignation.

"I'll bring the car," he spoke round me."

Jean heard the receiver slammed down by Cecil.

"That should assure the motor dealer," grinned Jean, as he returned to the door. He had not been long there when he admitted that he had exceeded gentlemanly bounds.

When the door closed behind his father Helen Montgomery faced him with a look that said "out of the room and river. Doubtless dismay had been upon her; but she was not to be dismayed at that will of her father's."

At some unknown defect in the lower-class composition, the two together seemed to tear in twain the firmness

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things, and— and forbids me to have anything to do with him, and— and— and— I wish we had never left Cleveland."

Another storm of distress and despair swept over the soul of the poor girl.

"You will make me break down, too," she said, "if you do not stop this."

"A father hears too much when his only daughter is concerned. A father who loves his child will do anything to prevent her from being caused to cling like a miser to her daughter. He too, often thinks that she is too good for him, and is only thinking of his child. Father hears things; we mothers hear nothing; but but— but— but— our hearts are tuned to hear nothing but good of our children, and our ears are right to hear it."

"You come to me, come to me with a tale against your son, sobbed the girl."

"My child, no. To whom else could you go? You have no mother. You were right to come to me. You were right to tell me all that had happened, your father and he has heard?"

"He would not tell me."

"You must not let him have leave that without asking. But when did I hear?"

"He must have been this morning."

"Have your father and Courtenay been together?"

"Yes, father—the girl blushed—"

"Your son and I have been together this morning; we lunched together. I told him that I had been to Courtenay's; he told me he intended calling on you and I thought you would lunch together."

"And he was selfish. It is strange how your father has changed."

"I don't know. Surely his despicable reputation is not so bruited about as to be picked up in the gutter of the street. I don't understand it at all."

"Nor I," admitted the girl.

"Does your father know you are here?"

The girl shook her head.

"Well, here is my child, you see all the same. Be smooth again, Trust me when I tell you that the whole matter is so simple and so easily settled."

London is a large collection of very small villages, and, believe me,

(Continued on Page Seven.)