

pleasant. But where are your roses, petite? What have they been doing to you?"

"M. Davidoff said you were to die," she answered brokenly.

"And you have been crying your pretty eyes out, my small child, it is too bad. I am sorry, but we must accept the inevitable. The country is at war, the revolutionists are beside themselves, and the Government has lost its head; and I, unlucky man, have to suffer for it all."

Then the lightness went out of his tone and he whispered eagerly, "Elizabeth, Elizabeth, we have never been betrothed, and you have never kissed me; would you now?"

She put her face to his instantly, and he kissed her, not once, but again and again, for he felt that this was all he would ever be able to take from the woman he loved.

She returned his caresses, whispering, "I am glad, so glad, for you do love me. M. Davidoff said you were really married to a Nihilist woman, and I could not help thinking of Sofie Theodorovna."

He put her away from him gently. "And what else did M. Davidoff tell you to say to me, my pretty child?" he said.

The change in his manner hurt the girl, and she answered instantly, "I am no child, Noah. You may call me one as a pet name, but I am a woman, and as able to suffer or to dare as you are or Sofie Theodorovna. I took Black Orloff from the stable last night when the police were all asleep, and rode to the railway station, where she said she would wait for you, and she told me that she was La Vierge Rouge. (the Red Virgin), you were nothing to her, but if possible she would save you for Russia's sake."

"Elizabeth, what have you done?" gasped Noah.

"M. Davidoff told me to stop at nothing to save you," said Elizabeth defiantly. "He said I was really your betrothed, and it was my duty. So I went to Sofie Theodorovna to find out if you were married already, and get her to help me rescue you. And I told her everything about us that she asked me, even the secret code which General Tshesky uses, which I know because I am M. Davidoff's secretary. Noah, please don't call me a wicked woman. M. Davidoff said something about saving you if you would tell something, but of course I knew you wouldn't, if it wasn't right, and I would never have asked you to. Noah, what do you think of me?"

"You are an angel," he said gravely, kissing her hands. "But, my God, Elizabeth, if they should find you out?"

"They won't," answered Elizabeth composedly. "Only Ogla knows I was out of the house last night. Golinka is very stupid, and M. Davidoff is not as bright as he used to be, he drinks too much. Noah, if the Red Army save you, will you join them?"

"No, little girl, I was an anarchist when you came in, and I think that the deeds of our Government which cannot govern justify even such treason as Kart-zow's. Still I do not see how all this terror and bloodshed is going to help us, so if I cannot serve my country without violence, I will leave her. If I am saved, my life will be yours, Elizabeth, and I must live as a Moravian should. But when shall we meet again, my dear one?"

"Whenever you send to me I will come to you. Wherever you are I will go; I will wait forever for you, for God has given you."

"And to-night, Elizabeth, they may be fighting here, and I would rather have died a hundred times than have you in their battles."

"I am in the hands of my God, who loves me far more than you can, Noah," answered the girl smiling.

Then she left him, and feeling that he was far stronger than his enemies, Noah said to Golinka, "You can tell M. Davidoff, sergeant, that his second attempt has failed. I have told the Barinia nothing."

An hour later, a mile from Andreyovna, Tshesky's little force was surprised, and cut to pieces by a party of Reds led by a young man in the uniform of a Russian naval lieutenant. Then in a whirlwind of galloping horses, with wildly yelling riders and red flags waving, Sofie swept down on Andreyovna. The big house where all the foreigners had taken refuge was too strong for her to make any attempt against, and if Noah had still been there, her effort to save him would have failed, but he was back in the village prison, which she stormed without any difficulty; and then leaving factory, farm buildings, and the great granaries packed with the season's wheat, in flames behind her, she disappeared with her wild riders, and the recovered prisoner, into the darkness,—La Vierge Rouge, the Woman who Worked with Oranges.