

# A PLOT FOR EMPIRE.

A THRILLING STORY OF CONTINENTAL CONSPIRACY AGAINST BRITAIN.

"You will owe Germany nothing, for she will be paid and overpaid for all she does. Russia has made terms with the Republic of France. Politically, she has nothing to gain by a rupture; but with Germany it is different. She and France are ready at this moment to fly at one another's throats. The military popularity of such a war would be immense. The cry of arms would ring from the Mediterranean to the Rhine."

into the drawing-room. That girl is an idiot! I hope she may not be war," she said. "I had hoped always that diplomacy, backed by a waiting army, would be sufficient. France at heart is true. I know. But, after all, it sounds like a fairy tale: You are a wonderful man, but how can you hope to move nations? What can you offer Germany to exact so tremendous a price?"

## CHAPTER XXIV. The Way of the Woman.

"I can offer," Mr. Sabin said calmly, "what Germany desires more than anything else in the world—the key to the world. It has taken me six years to perfect my schemes. As you know, I was in America part of the time I was supposed to be in China. It was there, in the laboratory of Allibon that I commenced the work. Step by step I moved on—link by link I have forged the chain. I may say, without falsehood or exaggeration that my work would be the work of another man's lifetime. With me it has been a labor of love. Your part, my dear Helene, will be a glorious one; think of it, and shake off your depression. This hole and corner life is not for long—the time for which we have worked is at hand."

Wolffenden had been shown, as he supposed, into an empty room by the servant of whom he had inquired for Mr. Sabin. But the door was scarcely closed before a familiar sound from a distant corner warned him that he was not alone. He stopped short and looked fixedly at the slight, feminine figure whose white fingers were flashing over the keyboard of a typewriter. There was something very familiar about the curve of her neck and the waving of her brown hair; her back was to him, and she did not turn round.

"Do leave me some cigarettes," she said, without lifting her head. "This is frightfully monotonous work. How much more of it is there for me to do?" "I really don't know," Wolffenden answered, hesitatingly. "Why, Blanche?"

"Lord Wolffenden!" she exclaimed; "why, what are you doing here?" "I might ask you," he said gravely, "the same question."

"You have not come to see me?" He shook his head. "I had not the least idea that you were here," he assured her. Her face hardened.

"Of course not. I was an idiot to imagine that you would care enough to come, even if you had known."

"I do not know," he remarked, "why you should say that. On the contrary she interrupted him.

"Oh! I know what you are going to say. I ran away from Mrs. Selby's dark eyes. The color came into her cheeks, and faded away. Mr. Sabin was vaguely disturbed. Sabin was vaguely disturbed.

"In what way," she said, without directly looking at him. "is Lord Wolffenden likely to be useful to you?"

"What I cannot understand," he said, "is why you are here."

"It is my new situation," she answered. "I was bound to look for one, you know. There is nothing strange about it. I advertised for a situation, and I got this one."

He was silent. There were things in connection with this which he scarcely understood. She watched him with a mocking smile parting her lips.

"It is possible, Helene," he said, "that you have allowed yourself to think seriously of the love-making of this young man? I must confess that such a thing in connection with you would never have occurred to me in my wildest dreams."

"This is the very last house in the world in which I should have thought of seeing you."

"I am the mistress of my own affections," she said coldly. "I am not pledged to you in any way. If I were to say that I intended to listen seriously to Lord Wolffenden—even if I were to say that I intended to marry him—well, there is no one who would dare to interfere! But, on the other hand, I have refused him. That should be enough for you. I am not going to discuss the matter at all; you would not understand it."

"I must admit," Mr. Sabin said, "that I probably should not. Of love, as you young people conceive it, I know nothing. But of that greater affection, the passionate love of a man for his race and his kind and his country—well, that has always seemed to me a thing worth living and working and dying for! I had fancied that Helene, that some spark of that same fire had warmed your blood, or you would not be here to-day."

"I think," she answered more gently, "that I know. I too believe in love, my country and my people, and my order. If I do not find these all-engrossing, you must remember that I am a woman, and I do not pretend to be capable of impersonal and patriotic love."

"There is nothing wrong with me," she said. "I am coming."

"You have considered, then, the possibility of upsetting my schemes and withdrawing your part?" Mr. Sabin said quietly. "You understand that your marriage with Henri would be an absolute necessity—that without it all would be chaos?"

"I do not say that I have considered any such possibility," she answered. "If I make up my mind to withdraw, I shall give you no notice. But I will admit that I like Lord Wolffenden, and I detest Henri. Ah! I know of what you would remind me; you need not fear. I shall not forget it will not be to-day, nor to-morrow, that I shall decide."

swered, with a smile, "a remarkable disregard for all precedents and conventions. You ought to be already on your way to foreign parts with your guns and servants. It is Englishmen, is it not, who go always to the Rocky Mountains to shoot bears when their love affairs are over?"

He was watching her closely, and he saw that she was less at her ease than she would have had him believe. He saw, too, or fancied that he saw, a softening in her face, a kindness gleaming out of her lustrous eyes which suggested new things to him.

since we met yesterday I have been regretting that I did not mention it to you—I do not wish it to be known that I am in England."

"It is only by chance that I have not," she admitted. "I have scarcely seen him alone to-day, and he was out Mr. Sabin to him also."

"To him particularly," Mr. Sabin declared; "young men are seldom discreet."

"I am giving you," she said, quietly, "no hope. Remember that; but I do not mean you to go away."

"You are still," she said, "a man of mystery and enigmas. You are still, I suppose, a plotter of a plotter. In the old days you used to terrify me almost; are you still as daring?"

"I really don't know," she said, "I am not sure of my own mind."

"If you knew, Victor," she said, "how great a favor I feel towards you, you would not hesitate to do anything within my power to grant it."

"I am not going to tax you very severely," he said. "I am writing a critical paper on the armaments of the new Russian review. I had hoped for your introduction, but you have given me a great deal of valuable information. There were one or two things, however, on which he was scarcely clear, and in the course of conversation he mentioned your husband's name as being the greatest living authority upon those points. He would enlarge upon it, and I thought I would perhaps scarcely be wise, if I fancied, too, you might be inclined, for reasons which we need not enlarge upon, to help me."

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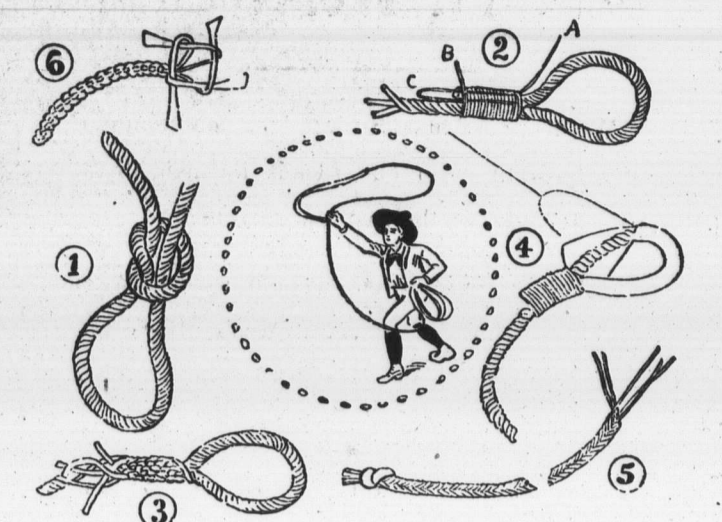
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# How to Braid and Throw a Lasso



BRADING AND THROWING A LASSO.

A good rawhide lariat costs from eight to twenty-five dollars and is therefore rather too expensive for a beginner. To make the loop in a braided rope fasten the end back by means of the endless tie shown in figure 2. When the winding is completed put the end (B) through the loop (C) and pull the end (A) until the loop and end have entirely disappeared beneath the coil. Then cut off the end (A) and the endless tie is complete. In order to have the rope run smoothly cover the loop with canvas or some other strong cloth, as shown in figure 4.

Real rawhide ropes are buried underground for some two weeks and afterwards greased with mutton tallow to make them pliable. Two weeks underground will not improve a linen or hemp rope, but the greasing I would strongly advise; only be careful where you hang up your lasso when not using it, for grease has a very penetrating quality.

The art of throwing a lariat cannot be reduced to rule. No two men do it alike, and you ask a cowboy to teach you he will say that every man must learn to do it for himself, by practice. He will be quite willing to show you how he throws the rope, but his style will be quite different from the very next cowboy you meet, and is certain to be entirely different from the method you finally adopt. The illustration shows the characteristic position assumed at the moment of delivery; but it can only suggest; practice is the only master who can teach lasso throwing.

hand scarcely ever leaves the room. He works there with a revolver by his side. If he were to find a stranger near his work, I believe that he would shoot him without hesitation.