

is likely to want me to be ready to go to the country club."

"About half-past twelve, I think."

"And what time shall we be coming back?"

"Probably about five."

He thanked her and withdrew. As Miss Davis stood holding open the door, he had not looked at her, and he did not look back as she closed the door behind him; their eyes had not met; but he understood that she had comprehended him fully. To-day he would be away from the Santoine house, and away from the guards who watched him, for at least four hours, under no closer espionage than that of Avery; this offered opportunity—the first opportunity he had had—for communication between him and his friends outside the house.

He went to his room and made some slight changes in his dress; he came down then to the library, found a book and settled himself to read. Toward noon Avery looked in on him there and rather constrainedly proffered his invitation; Eaton accepted, and after Avery had gone to get ready, Eaton put away his book. Fifteen minutes later, hearing Avery's motor purring outside, Eaton went into the hall; a servant brought his coat and hat, and taking them, he went out to the motor. Avery appeared a moment later, with Harriet Santoine.

SHE stood looking at them as they spun down the curving drive and onto the pike outside the grounds; then she went back to the study. The digest Harriet had been working on that morning and the afternoon before was finished; Miss Davis, she found, was typewriting its last page. She dismissed Miss Davis for the day, and taking the typewritten sheets and some other papers her father had asked to have read to him, she went up to her father.

Basil Santoine was alone and awake; he was lying motionless, with the cord and electric button in his hand which served to start and stop the phonograph, with its recording cylinder, beside his bed. His mind, even in his present physical weakness, was always working, and he kept this apparatus beside him to record his directions as they occurred to him. As she entered the room, he pressed the button and started the phonograph, speaking into it; then, as he recognized his daughter's presence, the cylinder halted; he put down the cord and motioned her to seat herself beside the bed.

"What have you, Harriet?" he asked.

She sat down and glancing through the papers in her hand, gave him the subject of each; then at his direction she began to read them aloud. She read slowly, careful not to demand straining of his attention; and this slowness leaving her own mind free in part to follow other things, her thoughts followed Eaton and Avery. As she finished the third page, he interrupted her.

"Where is it you want to go, Harriet?"

"Go? Why, nowhere, Father!"

"Has Avery taken Eaton to the country-club as I ordered?"

"Yes."

"I shall want you to go out there later in the afternoon; I would trust your observation more than Avery's to determine whether Eaton has been used to such surroundings. They are probably at luncheon now; will you lunch with me here, dear?"

"I'll be very glad to, Father."

He reached for the house telephone and gave directions for the luncheon in his room.

"Go on until they bring it," he directed.

She read another page, then broke off suddenly.

"Has Donald asked you anything to-day, Father?"

"In regard to what?"

"I thought last night he seemed disturbed about my relieving him of part of his work."

"Disturbed? In what way?"

She hesitated, unable to define even to herself the impression Avery's manner had made on her. "I understood

he was going to ask you to leave it still in his hands."

"He has not done so yet."

"Then probably I was mistaken."

She began to read again, and she continued now until the luncheon was served. At meal-time Basil Santoine made it a rule never to discuss topics relating to his occupation in working hours, and in his present weakness, the rule was rigidly enforced; father and daughter talked of gardening and the new developments in aviation. She read again for half an hour after luncheon, finishing the pages she had brought.

"Now you'd better go to the club," the blind man directed.

She put the reports and letters away in the safe in the room below, and going to her own apartments, she dressed carefully for the afternoon. The day was a warm, sunny, early spring day, with the ground fairly firm. She ordered her horse and trap, and leaving the groom, she drove to the country-club beyond the rise of ground back from the lake. Her pleasure in the drive and the day was diminished by her errand. It made her grow uncomfortable and flush warmly as she recollected that if Eaton's secrecy regarding himself was accounted for by the unknown injury he had suffered—she was the one sent to "spy" upon him.

As she drove down the road, she passed the scene of the attempt by the men in the motor to run Eaton down. The indefiniteness of her knowledge by whom or why the attack had been made only made it seem more terrible to her. Unquestionably, he was in constant danger of its repetition, and especially when—as to-day—he was outside her father's grounds. Instinctively she hurried her horse. The great white club-house stood above the gentle slope of the valley to the west; beyond it, the golf-course was spotted by a few figures of men and girls out for early-season play. And further off and to one side of the course, she saw mounted men scurrying up and down the polo field in practice. A number of people were standing watching, and a few motors and traps were halted beside the barriers. Harriet stopped at the club-house only to make certain that Mr. Avery and his guest were not there; then she drove on to the polo field.

AS she approached she recognized Avery's alert figure on one of the ponies; with a deft, quick stroke he cleared the ball from before the feet of an opponent's pony, then he looked up and nodded to her. Harriet drove up and stopped beside the barrier; people hailed her from all sides, and for a moment the practice was stopped as the players trotted over to speak to her. Then play began again, and she had opportunity to look for Eaton. Her father, she knew, had instructed Avery that Eaton was to be introduced as his guest; but Avery evidently had either carried out these instructions in a purely mechanical manner or had not wished Eaton to be with others unless he himself was by; for Harriet discovered Eaton standing off by himself. She waited till he looked toward her, then signaled him to come over. She got down, and they stood together following the play.

"You know polo?" she questioned him, as she saw the expression of appreciation in his face as a player daringly "rode-off" an antagonist and saved a "cross." She put the question without thought before she recognized that she was obeying her father's instructions.

"I understand the game somewhat," Eaton replied.

"Have you ever played?"

"It seems to deserve its reputation as the summit of sport," he replied.

He answered so easily that she could not decide whether he was evading or not; and somehow, just then, she found it impossible to put the simple question direct again.

"Good! Good, Don!" she cried enthusiastically and clapped her hands as Avery suddenly raced before them, caught the ball with a swinging, back-handed stroke and drove it directly toward his opponent's goal. Instant-

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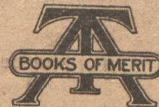
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