# O. HENRY AND AL. JENNINGS

(Continued from last week)

CHAPTER FIFTY-SIX.

Night was the revealing hour for the magician of Bagdad. When the million lights flashed and throngs of men and women crowded the thoroughfares in long, undulating lines like moving, black snakes, Bill Porter came into his own.

He owned the city; its people were his subjects. He went into their midst, turning upon them the shrewd microscope of his gleaming understanding. Sham, paltry deceit, flimsy pose, were blown away as veils before a determined wind. The souls stood forth, naked and pathetic. The wizard had his way.

At every corner, adventure waited on his coming. A young girl would skim stealthily around the corner, or an old "win" would crouch in a doorway. There were mysteries for Porter to solve. He did not stand afar and speculate. He made friends with his subjects.

He learned their secrets, their hopes, their disappointments. He clasped the hand of Soapy, the bum, and Dulcie herself told him why she went totally bankrupt on $6 a week. New York was an enchanted labyrinth, yielding at every twist the thrill of the unexpected—the wonderful.

**Porter Leads Into Strange Kingdom.**

Into this kingdom of his, Bill Porter took me.

Jaunty, whimsical, light hearted, he came for me one of the first nights of my visit. He wore a little Cecil Brunner rose in his buttonhole. With a sheepish wink, he pulled another from his pocket.

"Colonel, I have bought you a disguise. Wear this and they will not know you are from the West."

"Damn it, I don't want the garnishings." But when Bill had a notion he carried it out. The pink bud was fastened to my coat. "I've noticed that the bulls look at you with a too favorable eye. This token will divert suspicion from us."

"Where are we going?"

"Everywhere and nowhere. We may find ourselves in Hell's Kitchen or we may land in Heaven's vestibule. Prepare yourself for thrills and perils. We go where the magnet draweth."

It was nearing midnight. We started down Fifth Avenue and were sauntering along somewhere between Twenty-fifth and Twenty-sixth. Dozens of women with white, garish faces had flitted by.

"Ships that pass in the night," whispered Porter. "There are but two rocks in their courses—the cops and their landladies. Battered and storm-tossed, aren't they? They haunt me."

**"Girl's First Trip" Whispered Porter.**

Out from the shadow came a ragged wisp of a girl. She looked about 17.

"She's been skimming the bogs of country life."

"Aw, shucks, she's an old timer."

"First trip," Porter nudged me. "She hasn't learned how to steer her bark in the deeps of city life yet. She's just flying that sail for effect."

"No, you're mistaken. You investigate and we'll see who's correct. I'll stand here and hold the horses." Porter had a way of pulling things out of the past and snapping them at me.

As we came up the girl dodged into a doorway, making a pretence of tying her shoe. She looked up at me, fright darting in her wide, young eyes. "You're a plain clothes man?" Her voice was low but it shrilled in her fear.

"Yes, very plain."

"Please don't take me in. I never did this before."

"I'm not a policeman, but I'd like to introduce you to a friend of mine."

Bill came over. "You've frightened the lady. Ask her if she would like to dine with us."

More frightened than before, the girl drew back. "I dare not go with you!"

"You dare go anywhere with us." Porter addressed her as though she were truly the princess and he the Knight Errant.

**Nothing Personal In His Interest.**

There was nothing personal in his interest. He had one indomitable passion—he wished to discover the secret and hidden things in the characters of the men and women about him. He wanted no second hand or expurgated versions. He was a scientist and the quivering heart of humanity was the one absorbing subject under his crutiny.

We went to Mouquin's. The little, thin, white creature had never been there before. Her eyes were luminous with excitement. Porter made her feel so much at east, it disconcerted me a trifle. I wanted the girl to know that she was in the presence of greatness.

"He's a great writer," I whispered to her. Porter turned a withering sneer at me. "I'm nothing of the sort," he contradicted. "Oh, but I believe it," she said. "I'd like to see what you write. Is it about wonderful people and money and everything grand?" "Yes," Porter answered. It's about girls like you and all the strange things that happen to you."

"But my life isn't mine. It's just mean and scraping and hungry, and fine things never happened to me until tonight. Ever since I can remember its' been the same."

Porter had started her on the revelation. He was correct. She was but a little country girl. She had tired of the monotony and came to life.

**Nothing Remarkable About This Girl.**

There was nothing remarkable about her. I couldn't see a story there. The only spark she showed was when the dinner came and then a look of inspired joyousness lighted her face. It seemed to me that Porter must surely be disappointed.

"When I see a shipwreck, I like to know what caused the disaster," he said.

"Wel, what did you make of that investigation?"

"Nothing but the glow that wrapped her face when the soup came!" "That's the story."

What's behind that look of rapture? Why should any girl's face glow at the prospect of a plate of soup in this city, where enough food to feed a dozen armies is wasted every night? Yes, it's more of a story than will ever be written!"

Each one that he met yielded a treasure to him. Into the honkatonks, the dance halls, the basement cafes he took me. The same indomitable purpose guided him. No wonder that New York threw off its disguise before the Peerless Midnight Investigator.

**Faring Forth to Track Down Idea**

"I scent an idea tonight, Colonel. Let us go forth and track it down." It was another evening and I had dined with him at the Caledonia Hotel.

We started down Sixth avenue. The rain splashed sideways and downways. Puny lights flickered up from basement doors. The mingled odor of stale beer, cabbage and beans simmered up. We went down into many of these paltry hall, with the sawdust on the floor and the chipped salt cellars and the scratched up, bare tables.

"It's not here. Let us go to O'Reilly's. I don't like the fragrance of these dago joints. At Twenty-second street Porter pulled down his umbrella. "We'll find it in here."

At the bar were a score of men. The tables here and there were but shelves for the elbows of gaudily dressed, cheaply jeweled women.

We took a vacant table. As Porter sat down every woman in the room sent an admiring glance at him.

"For God's sake, Bill, you won't eat in this stench will you?"

"Just beer and a sandwich. Look over there, Colonel, I see my idea."

In one corner sat two girls, pretty, shabby genteel, the stark piercing glare of hunger in their eyes. Porter beckoned to them.

(Continued next week)







# MY HEART AND MY HUSBAND

Adele Garrison's New Phase Of

## REVELATIONS OF A WIFE

CHAPTER 46

WHAT LILLIAN SAID TO MADGE WHEN HER STORY WAS ENDED.

I lost no time in going to Lillian Underwood with the problem of my father's inexplicable actions.

I made the excuse of a desire to see Mrs. Cosgrove, Robert Savarin's sister, who was still with Lillian, watching over the slow convalescence of her artist brother, and so effectually lulled any lurking doubt of my mission which my father's general uneasiness might have conceived.

Lillian, wan, heavy-eyed from in part sharing the vigil of the sick room with the nurse and Mrs. Cosgrove, but more from the uncertainty as to Harry Underwood's fate and Robert Savarin's part in it which was consuming her, put her arms around me in convulsive greeting when Betty had shown me into the library.

"Miss Madge, ef yoh's got anything in the world to tak Mis' Lillian's mind off whatevah's troublin' her, I wish yoh'd spill it," Betty had whispered to me earnestly as we mounted the stairs, and I was glad of the injunction. Otherwise I never would have dared to trouble the tragic figure my friend presented with any problem of my own.

"You Always Understand—"

"Oh, my dear, my dear, I'm so glad to see you!" Lillian said as she drew me to a chair, and in her old, loving deft fashion removed my hat and coat.

"Is Robert—no—better?" I asked fearfully.

"Physically, yes" she answered, "although his progress is slow, and he is terribly weak. But mentally—oh, Madge—I wonder sometimes—"

She paused, struggling bravely for composure, gave it up, put her head against my shoulder, while hard, strangling sobs tore from her throat.

"There!" she said harshly a few moments later. "I knew I'd do this if you ever came near me. What is it about you anyway that makes me do the baby act whenever I'm in trouble and you come anywhere near me?"

"Because it isn't in human nature to face everything as bravely and composedly as you do," I said quietly. "You simply have to break sometime, and I'm very proud and thankful that I am near enough to you for you to be willing to come to me for the little comfort I can give you."

"The little comfort!" she repeated scornfully. "Child, you haven't any idea of what your loving comfort means to me. You always understand so, without my having to explain all over the place. And if anybody else but you saw me making an idiot of myself this way—well—I think there'd be a double job for the nearest undertaker.

"But that's enough for me," she went on brusquely. "You're looking sort of groggy yourself. What's the answer—that principal's wife you told me about?"

I started with surprise. My father's affairs had so engrossed my mind that for days I had forgotten all about the terror with which Milly Stockbridge had inspired me upon the night of her reception.

"It isn't she that's troubling me," I answered quickly, though awkwardly.

"Although she's raising Cain, a little more than usual," Lillian commented shrewdly. "Well, we'll dismiss her for the present, and take her case up later. What's the real trouble? I hope it's some trouble about which I can do something. I think I shall go stark staring mad if I don't have something to fake my mind off things. Work doesn't help me a bit any more."

Is Lillian Right?

"If you cannot help me no one in the world can," I answered, and was rewarded by seeing a look of interest flash into her strained face.

"Go ahead and talk slowly," she replied, settling herself into an attitude of attentive listening.

I began at my father's enthusiasm over our outing together, and reviewed the whole series of incidents which had so impressed themselves upon my mind. Lillian didn't interrupt me with a single question until I had finished. Then for several minutes later she sat motionless, her chin in her cupped hands. Then she lifted her head, looked at me steadily.

"A ghost from the past," she repeated. "Madge, dear, pardon me for raking up unpleasant things, but you told me once your mother's unhappy history. Do you know whether that woman for whom your father deserted her is living or dead?"

(To be continued)

## Saskatchewan Province Is Big Game Country

SASKATOON, Sask., April 20—The claim that the province of Saskatchewan is one of the best big game countries on the North American continent seems established by the chief game guardian's report for the season 1920. The report shows a total of 2170 big animals secured by the 3000 licensed hunters last season. The varieties taken include 80 caribou, 870 deer and 1200 moose.

The value of game resources is not generally recognized, but it is estimated half a million dollars is annually spent in this province on big game hunting.