

Miss Nobody from Nowhere

BY ELIZABETH JORDAN

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

A beautiful young woman finds herself on the sidewalk in a strange city. She cannot remember her name or where she came from. She has nothing in her purse to tell herself who she is. A young man who has seen her in the hotel where she is stopping notices her and takes her to the hotel in a cab. There she finds that she is registered, in French as "Miss Eve Nobody of Nowhere." The clerk has been calling her Miss Parsons. The young man tells her she is in New York. His name is Eric Hamilton of Chicago. She is terrified at her loss of memory. He asks his friend Dr. Carrick, a nerve specialist, to call at the hotel. Dr. Carrick talks encouragingly, but says that he will send a nurse to stay with the mysterious "Miss Parsons" that night.

Miss Nobody listens while Hamilton tells her what the doctor has said, then steps into another room. When the nurse arrives, the girl has vanished from the hotel!

Eve's departure was simple. She went out of a back door into the servants hall of the hotel, where she encountered a young Frenchman porter, who claimed to recognize her. He had seen her in Paris. "Then you knew my name?" she demanded eagerly. But the porter had forgotten that. He would write at once to a friend in Paris and find the name of the American young lady they had both admired. He tells her of an apartment house where the janitor, he thinks would take her in. Meantime, while Hamilton is anxiously hunting up the nerve specialist for advice, Eve gets into a taxicab and drives away.

She arranges with Marcel's friend, the janitor of a dingy little apartment house on the East Side of New York, for a small furnished apartment. He tells her not to be frightened if she hears the young woman who occupies the next apartment come in very late in the morning. Eve wonders what sort of a place she has got into.

The girl in the next apartment is Ivy Davenport, a professional cabaret dancer with a weak heart. Eve helps her one night when she is ill. Ivy suggests that Eve, who is short of funds, should take her place in the cabaret. Eve thinks it over, dislikes the idea, but realizes that she has to do something to earn a living until she finds out who she really is, Ivy has twisted the name of "Personne" which is the only surname Eve knows for herself, into "Berson."

Eve finds "Jake's a strange sort of place and the girls who dance there even stranger, though kind to the stranger who is taking Ivy's place.

She meets a young man named Hunt, who frankly tells her that she doesn't belong there.

One evening when she is talking to the friendly young man named Hunt one of the other girls tells her there's a man from the West whom Jake wants her to entertain.

The man from the West is a total stranger to Eve, so far as she can recall. No memory of her past life has yet returned, but the stranger acts and talks as if they were intimate friends. His manner suggests that he has some claim upon her, and Eve is terrified. Her instinct is to find Eric Hamilton, the one friendly figure in her new life. She escapes from Jake's by a back way and hurries to the hotel where Hamilton lives.

Hamilton shows her an advertisement which has been appearing in several papers, describing Eve and asking for information about her. It does not give her real name, however. She immediately connects this with the man from the West whom she met at Jake's and decides to adopt a disguise. She buys some different clothes and has her hair dyed.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY

"Dearie, you could go to the minister's funeral in them," the young clerk earnestly assured her. They parted with the impression in both young hearts that they could have love death other if life had not held so many other interests.

It was pleasant to be clad in her own garments, now, though she had to carry Margaret's outfit in

a box, as well as her own additional purchases, packed in the new suitcase.

Last of all she visited the ship's beauty parlor. "Dye my hair black," she said.

The subsequent effect was not bad, but she surveyed it with more approval than it warranted. It not only changed her greatly, but it crystallized in her mind a half-formed plan to abandon the farm hibernation she had considered, and to remain in the city and find some work.

Back in her hotel rooms once more, she looked at her wrist-watch. Quarter-past four. In less

but the quiet assurance of his manner had its usual effect and he was relieved to see her look of high nervous tension give way to one that quietly expressed utter hopelessness. Both were silent while the car made its swift way up Fifth Avenue. When it entered the park Hamilton gave the driver another order.

"There's a quiet little corner up at the northern end, where we can talk," he explained to Eve. "I've gone there several times lately to think things out."

When they reached the quiet corner he paid and dismissed the chauffeur, while Eve glanced



"I want you to go through a marriage ceremony with me, Eve."

than two hours Hamilton would be calling for her. She wondered what he would think of the dyed hair, and immediately realized exactly what he would think of it. He would not like it. She would put on her hat to avoid giving him too sudden a shock.

There was a tap on the door and she hastened to open it. Almost before she could do so, it was flung upon and Hamilton hurried into the room.

"Don't be worried," he said trying to speak naturally, and even producing a fair imitation of his characteristic smile. "He's down there."

"He? Who?"
But she knew.

"The man you spoke of last night. At least, I'm pretty sure it's the same man. He fits the description and he's asking at the desk for Miss Berson. He described you to a dot, and Robinson immediately made the bright suggestion that it might be Miss Parsons. Fortunately, I was passing the desk and heard him, so I didn't stop for the elevator, but sprinted up the stair case to warn you."

She caught up her coat and hurried into the bedroom for the suitcase she had not yet unpacked.

"Let's go," she called back as she hurriedly added to it the garments of the night before. "We can slip out the back way."

The room telephone tinkled, but she was already in the hall, almost running. He took the suitcase and kept close by her side, walking with long strides. His manner was normal now, and he spoke so casually that her nerves relaxed.

"Better go down the back steps," he advised, as she turned toward the service elevator.

"Of course. I didn't think . . ."

He led the way and she followed him.

Hamilton picked up a taxicab. "Up into Central Park," he told the driver. "Make good time and keep going till I tell you to stop."

As the cab started he turned to his silent companion and was shocked by her pallor.

"There's nothing to worry about now," he hastily reminded her. She broke out with a desperation that horrified him:

"Perhaps not . . . till the next time! But I can't keep up this sort of thing—running from place to place, hiding . . . or trying to hide—as if I were a criminal. I can't endure it any longer."

"Of course you can't . . . and you are not going to." He spoke soothingly, as he would to a child. "As soon as we get to the park I'll tell you how we can avoid any more running and hiding. But just now I want to relax. There's absolutely nothing to be worried about, and there isn't going to be any more worry for you in the future."

She sighed, plainly unconvinced;

around without interest. She had, indeed, a look that alarmed him—something of the look of an exhausted swimmer, ready to go down.

He led her to a bench and sat down beside her.

"I expected something like this, Eve," he began casually. It was the third time he had used the name, but neither of them was conscious of this. "I don't know why I expected it," he went on, "but I did. Perhaps I had what's called a hunch. Perhaps I merely reasoned that your large friend's next move would be to get professional help and track you. Anyway, I was sure something was coming, and I got ready for it. That's why I told you there would be no more of it. There won't be, if you will trust me and do what I suggest."

She replied with a gesture, but it was a gesture of despair so that it made his throat ache. She merely raised her right hand, which lay in her lap, and dropped it again as if the effort had been too much for her; but there was eloquence in the simple action. It implied that she had come to the end of things. He had to wait a moment before he could go on.

"I'll put my plan before you," he said at last, "and I want you to hear it all before you speak. You can't continue like this. You see that yourself, clearly enough. The time has come when you must give some one else the right to protect you. So I want you to go through a marriage ceremony with me, Eve and I want you to do it right now."

"Of course it will only be a matter of form," he hurried on. "That goes without saying. But it will give me the legal right to stand between you and the world. You can drop your troubles on my shoulders and forget them; and if any large stranger comes looking for you, he'll find me ready to tell him where he gets off. By meeting him, too, I may find out who you are, and all about you; and eventually, as soon as you're willing to, we'll get into touch with your family, or with your friends if you have no family."

She seemed stunned, and he was not surprised. But she asked a question that made his eyes shine. She was actually considering his suggestion: "Would such a marriage be legal? We don't even know my name."

"Probably it wouldn't be legal in your present condition. But it doesn't matter whether it's legal or not, since it's merely a bluff for present use. The persistent gentleman who is dogging you won't know it isn't legal, any more than he knows of the other complication. I will make him, or any one else who is interested in you deal with me as your husband, until you meet with some one in whom you have more faith. When you are yourself again, and all this

Seeks New Honors at Fair



Championship Southdown Eve lamb, which in 1929 won premier honors for William Dornborough of Laura, Sask., Canada, is expected to compete again with prize-winning animals from the western states at the Oregon State fair in Salem, Sept. 22 to 28.

trouble is past, I shall ask you to really marry me, and if you consent we'll have another ceremony. If you don't we can have this little bond nullified very easily, as a simple matter of expediency in the unusual conditions existing when it was made. And all my life, even if I never see you again, I shall be happy because I was able to be of use to you."

He stopped now, so definitely that she knew he was waiting for an answer, but she merely repeated that tragic little gesture of her unglued hand. He took the hand and held it.

"I know all about you," she murmured.

"Of course you do. I saw to it that you knew all about me, for I was sure something like this would come up."

He thought he was following the workings of her mind, but her next remark surprised him.

"You don't know anything at all about me. Why?" she broke out. "I may be a criminal—an adventuress! I may be anything! It will be taking advantage of my one friend. It may put you into a po-

sition that is simply horrible."

"See here," he said, "I won't have a moment of peace till I've safely guarded you. Let's stop talking and go and get married."

To his incredulous delight she rose as if the matter were settled.

"But I've warned you," she reminded him as they walked to the nearest roadway.

"And I think," she added, "I shall despise myself for letting you do this."

They followed the roadway, walking several minutes before they found an empty cab to take them to the marriage license bureau. There, after the perfunctory details

YOU'LL LIKE THEM BETTER

If Your Snap Shots are finished at

Rowell's Music House

Grants Pass, Oregon

were over, Eris asked Eve: "Which shall it be—the justice or the clergyman? As it's only a matter of form, I suppose it doesn't matter, though I think the clergyman would be better for our purpose."

"I think so too," she agreed, almost inaudibly. After that she did not speak until they reached the East Side of the license bureau.

The clergyman filled in the marriage certificate and offered it to Eve, who took it and held it vaguely, as if she did not know what to do with it.

"Put it in your hand-bag," Hamilton said, and she followed the suggestion as mechanically as she had followed the others.

As they descended the steps leading to the street, Hamilton put the soft pedal on himself, with a firm foot. This was the big hour of his life. But it was not the big hour in the life of the silent girl beside him, who still looked like one in a dream. He steadied his racing pulses, stopped a taxicab and spoke his first words since the ceremony:

"It's a case of 'home James,' isn't it? I mean," he added as he saw her inquiring look, "we'd better go right back to the Garland and meet what's there, hadn't we?"

Her silence seemed an acquiescence to the plan and he gave the cabman the direction. They entered the hotel lobby and a large man who had been seated in a lounging chair near the entrance, quietly smoking a cigar that looked as if it had been made especially for him, rose and came to meet them with an air of assurance.

Eve stopped, but Hamilton, with a murmured "One moment please," swept her past the large man and into the elevator a few feet farther on.

"Go upstairs, dear," he quietly told her. He put the suitcase in the elevator, gave the starting signal to the operator, and, as the car began its ascent, turned back to the caller, whose look of assurance had given way to one of stunned surprise.

"My wife is very tired," Eric courteously explained. "She has been shopping all day, so I'm sure you will excuse her. Perhaps you will come in here," he went on, leading the way to the writing-room, "and let me act for her in any matter that interests you."

"My name is Henderson," the stranger briefly announced: Samuel Henderson; and I'm from Chicago."

(CONTINUED NEXT WEEK)

The Man

who has a thing to sell

and whispers it down a well

is not nearly so likely

to COLLAR the DOLLARS

AS THE CHAP

Who Climbs a Tree

AND

HOLLERS

Mac's Printing Co.

Glendale,

Gold Hill,

Central Point

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