

## The GIRL IN THE CASE

Leads to the Finding of a Wife

By STACY E. BAKER

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Rawlins, reaching for his own inferior timepiece, found in its place an expensive watch with three diamonds set in the rear case and the initials W. A. W. engraved thereon.

Naturally Rawlins was surprised. He returned the watch to his pocket, carefully folded his paper and glanced about in search of the philanthropic person who had effected the exchange. The vinegary faced female wedged in the seat to the right of him stared back suspiciously.

A wheezing fat man, uncomfortably crowded, sat at his left and grinned heavily as he noted the observant eye of his fellow passenger.

"These street cars are crowded sunthin' awful, ain't they?"

Rawlins agreed. He couldn't accustom himself to the thought of this man's pudgy fingers deftly inserting themselves in his waistcoat pocket on a delicate mission of substitution.

He stared about him searchingly, but the enigma was unsolved when the conductor called Twenty-third street.

In the sacred precincts of his own little used law offices Rawlins gave a keener inspection to this gift of the gods had thrust upon him.

Heavy lines corrugated the brow of the young attorney, and he pushed his thick black hair back into an impromptu pompadour as his mind grappled with the problem. The slim fingers of the youth touched the stem, and the case snapped suddenly open, disclosing the pictured face of a radiant girl.

Rawlins—John P. Rawlins, Esq.—was young—young enough, in fact, to believe in the ideal woman, and this likeness corresponded exactly with the dream in his heart. The great blue eyes, the flawless contour of the face, with its piquant, reticent nose and determined little chin; the wave in the heavy hair, the peerless neck and shoulders—everything about the maid summed up soul dear to the youth.

The sudden advent of that rare avia, a client, compelled him to forego the pleasure of lingering longer in admiring contemplation of the picture. Before finding the likeness of the probable owner—Rawlins had an active mind—the man who had come into such peculiar possession of the watch had decided to turn it over to the police, but now—

Now the united efforts of the entire constabulary of the town could not have dragged it from him.

And yet—paradox—the youth wished to find the owner, if possible, more than ever. The riddle of how the little timepiece happened to be in his pocket had gripped him with an insatiable curiosity at first; now, strangely enough, his sole thoughts were of the maid in the case. He longed to meet her. He wanted to become acquainted with her.

The attorney was bothered with no clients that day, and in the afternoon, with the fair pictured face of the mysterious damsel propped before him, he compiled an advertisement for the morning papers:

Found, under peculiar circumstances, valuable watch. Owner can have same by calling at—Broadway and proving property. Rawlins, fourth floor.

Rawlins was a wealthy youth of good city connections. He had graduated from Harvard the year before and was now awakened to the fact that New York is overcrowded with attorneys. Clients, from a pecuniary standpoint, he didn't need, but the ennui of a listless life was boring him, stilling his ambition. This little advertisement, with the flavor of romance so strong upon it, bade fair to give life back its relish.

The advertisement brought results. Every faker in the city seemed to have bought a paper and picked the Rawlins "found" as the easy money of the morning.

The lawyer entertained the six adventurers with tentative questions on their lips, keen searchers after information that, in turn, was to be given over to shrewd confederates, who would follow up with better chances of landing the prize, and coarse women who attempted to wheedle the advertised article away from its holder, and, falling in this, fell into a vocabulary of vehement and impolite protest.

The attorney's faith in human nature was sadly jarred.

The keen youth gave absolutely no information to the gleaners along the paths of chance, and thus it came about that none was able to come later with sufficient information to draw down the trophy. Rawlins breathed his relief at the end of the day and again drew the watch from his pocket and studied the photograph. One long doubtful for the unattainable. The youth was in a perfect frenzy to meet the girl.

Time passed. Several months went by and still the young man was vainly striving to meet the fair one of the photograph. It became a habit with him to stand before the window of his office and stare down into the street. In this way there was a chance that his knowing eyes would find the owner of the watch.

One day as he stood at his usual

point of vantage, his contemplative eyes on a lazy cab, the latter came to a stop in front of one of the large stores, and—oh, the sudden shock of it—she stepped out.

In a moment the long legs of the youth were fairly flying down the stairs—he wouldn't wait for the elevator—and he was across the street and into the store in another fast following sixty seconds.

It took the attorney some time to find the girl. The wonder of it is that he found her at all in that huge beehive of struggling patrons and clerks. She was on the first floor and at the handkerchief counter. He patiently waited until she had finished her purchases.

"I beg your pardon!" he commenced, approaching, hat in hand.

The girl stared at him coldly. She was a revelation in beauty—all and more than the photograph had promised.

"I have here," said the lawyer, "something that I believe belongs to you." He stilled in what he evidently believed to be a courteous manner, but which left an entirely different impression on the lady.

"I do not know you, sir," she answered in a well bred voice, the cadence of which thrilled her susceptible admirer to the full of his rapidly beating heart. "You have probably mis-taken me for another person." Her eyes rested meditatively upon an approaching floorwalker.

"I know we have never met," began Rawlins inane, "but—but—"

"At an almost imperceptible sign from the girl the floorwalker joined them.

"This gentleman," began the girl distantly, "thinks he knows me. He doesn't." She paused suggestively.

The floorwalker, wise of his kind, eyed the attorney with small favor.

"You had better go, sir, else"—He, too, ended his sentence with an eloquent stop.

Rawlins, despite his keen admiration for the girl, was angry.

"One moment," he said authoritatively to the official. He turned again to the girl.

"Perhaps you recognize this," he asked and held the watch before her eyes.

The maid gazed at it with some curiosity. "I do not," she said. "To my knowledge, I have never seen it before in my life. Are you the official propounder of enigmas here?"

The sarcasm was lost on the despondent Rawlins, who, with the iron hand of the floorwalker on his arm, was being rapidly escorted toward the door.

"I'm giving you a chance," explained the latter, "although I hadn't ought to. The bosses here haven't any time for fresh guys who antagonize the trade."

An elderly woman with gray hair and faded blue eyes came hurrying after the pair and touched the dejected lawyer on the arm.

"Just a moment," she began breathlessly. "My niece has been telling me about it. You—you must have my watch!"

"I knew it," interrupted the floorwalker. "I knew it from the start, madam. He's a 'dip,' old offender probably. If you'll just step into the office I'll see that you recover your property without any fuss, and we'll send this party down."

The woman stared.

"You are rather officious. This gentleman was attempting to do my niece a favor. He is no pickpocket. I am sure of that." She spoke coldly.

She turned to Rawlins. "Tell me, was the watch you wished to return set with three diamonds and did it contain a little miniature?"

Rawlins nodded a happy assent. The girl had joined them. The youth noted with an appreciative eye the embarrassed flush dotting her cheeks.

"This is your property," came from Rawlins. Once again he took the watch from his pocket, and the eager hands of the older woman accepted it.

"Oh, how can I ever thank you!" she gasped. "It really is my watch!" She turned to Rawlins. "And you recognized my niece from the little picture?"

Again the happy youth nodded. Words were beyond him.

"But how did you get it?" she asked wonderingly. "I saw that great, fat thief who grabbed it from my hands run and jump on a street car, and although I promptly reported the matter to the police I really had given up expecting the return of the trinket long ago."

"It was my first day in the city," she continued. "I live in New Orleans, you must know, and I am only visiting here. Marie—she is my sister—worries so over trifles that I didn't tell her. Really, I never expected to see it again!"

"But why don't you allow the gentleman to answer your question, auntie?" laughingly interrupted the girl.

Upon Rawlins a great light had dawned. The good natured heavy-weight seated on his right in the car had been the pickpocket who had stolen the watch. Evidently fearing capture, he had shifted the thing upon Rawlins and taken the cheaper timepiece of the attorney in return.

"It's a long story," explained the youth—"almost too long to tell here. I am a lawyer, with offices just across the way." He handed the older woman an card. "If I might suggest—"

"You must ride home with us to our carriage," eagerly interrupted the aunt, "and explain in detail. Really, I wouldn't miss the story for the watch. Or perhaps," she amended, "you can't spare the time just now?"

Rawlins glanced at the red checked girl.

"I will be pleased to ride home with you," he said.

# The Stowaway



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**TWO IN A GALE.**  
(Continued from page three.)

anything, then?" She seemed to breathe a little sigh of relief. "Why didn't you answer when they asked what you thought of my masculine attire?"

"There was nothing to say. I happened to see you when you arrived on the stage last night, and"—He paused, as if embarrassed by a too eager tongue.

"And?" she suggested.

"I thought you didn't need any frills, you know," he finished lamely.

"Thanks," she said simply, dropping down to a seat on the rock and pressing back the flying waves of black hair from her eyes. "But that is not the reason why I wear plain clothes. You see, I'm a western girl, and I was born and raised on a ranch. Father and I lived alone. There were just two after I came, and I had to be both son and daughter to dad. He died a year ago, and so I had to come east and make my home with Mrs. Bowker, my aunt. I had private tutors at the ranch, but of the outside world I have been quite ignorant. I am learning rapidly that girls are girls and boys are boys, so a little later I'm going to put on frills and fribbles. I'm wearing these plain things—oh, well, because of dad, you know. It seems as if the old days were not so far away." She choked over the last words, and her eyes were drowned with sudden tears.

She searched vainly for a handkerchief, and Billy, full of tender solicitude, drew a snowy square from his own pocket, shook it out and tossed it into her lap; then he turned away and looked at distant ridges that seemed strangely blurred in outline.

"Thank you so much. I'm very sorry I made such a goose of myself," said the girl after a little while, "only—"

"You needn't say a word," interrupted Billy energetically. "After my mother went—why—well I know all about it. It's a stiffish gale," he added hastily.

"It is," she laughed through her tears. "How horrid you must have thought me, Mr. Satterly, but I heard what you were all saying, and I did feel so lonely and unappreciated, you know. Wasn't it silly? So I just tipped downstairs and flew up to this rock out of sheer desire to be alone."

## AN ARCTIC KNIGHT

Story of an Exploring Party  
By **EDWIN B. ERHART**  
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Arters ceased biting his nails and rested a long, lean chin in the hollows of his hands.

"I could tell you something that would surprise you," he said, gazing at me across the table.

I stared at him expectantly. "What?" I monosyllabed.

Arters gloomed meditatively, but showed no disposition to answer.

The girl on the cot flung a pitifully thin arm over her head and moaned and murmured in her sleep.

"Well, what?" I reiterated sharply. The long trip that day across the monotonous, never-ending white plain had done little toward improving my temper.

Arters arose to his great height, squared his broad shoulders and tipped around the table.

"I am God!" he whispered in my ear. I saw that I had to do with a madman.

"This is a strange world," continued Arters, a ruminant note in his voice. "Here we are come, you and I, to this forsaken country in a quest for a lost woman explorer and all for a miserable pittance doled out to us by a Chicago newspaper." He brushed an impatient hand across his eyes. "My memory isn't all that it should be," he confessed. "I should have remembered who I was—and then this trip would have been unnecessary."

Arters cast a furtive glance toward the cot in the dim corner. "Is she an angel," he murmured querulously, "or Ruth Proctor, the girl we came searching for? I can't seem to remember somehow."

"Both," I answered, and my companion was satisfied.

It seemed years since the Meteor had assigned us, staff reporters at the time, to the hazardous task of finding Ruth Proctor, the intrepid girl explorer, who had set out two years before to find the north pole and was now supposed to be somewhere in the vicinity of the ninety-fifth degree.

The Meteor is not one to stint his embellishes. We, the words of Arters to the contrary, fairly reveled in money, and the essentials of the trip were all forthcoming and were of the best. Our boat, the Lost Hope, was a marvel of technical construction, made for this very purpose and for our enterprising journal.

Miss Proctor, the young society woman who had forsaken New York and the callow amusements of her set to do something really worth while, had been conspicuous in the limelight on the eve of her departure and for twelve months thereafter. Now if she was referred to at all in the papers formerly enthusing over her nerve and daring she was given no more than a passing paragraph. Her fame bade fair to be niched with that of her illustrious predecessor, Andra, the fame-of-failure.

But the Meteor kept an impatient eye northward, and when the relief expedition came home without her Arters and I were given the word to go in search of the girl.

Arters was the Benjamin J. Arters of much mad scrambling on the part of ambitious dailies that lusted for his efficient services. He was a writer keen of brain and pen and one of the highest salaried fact getters in the world of smudge and cheap paper. No college degree journalist was Arters, but a reporter.

Smith, the managing editor, had said to me, "You are to accompany Arters"—not on account of my stellar position on the staff, understand, but because I had been one of the adventurers in that first rush to the Yukon and knew my north.

Our ship had rare good luck, the ice drift allowing us at the last to come within a quarter mile of the silent Maid of Orleans, Ruth Proctor's boat. Of course it was deserted. The log book was gone. We had no way of telling whether the crew had returned to the trail after the original first rush toward the pole or perished of cold.

With four Eskimos, dogs and sledges we began the tail of our trip. Our route in all probability was the same as that of Ruth Proctor's party.

Eskimos are peculiar humans. Our men seemed perfectly contented, but one morning we crawled out of our sleeping bags to find them gone. They had taken with them our fastest dogs, two sledges and a large supply of our provisions. Wisely we decided not to pursue.

Fate must have planned our expedition with an eye for the melodramatic. At any rate, when we found the fur clad maid explorer she was alone, seemingly deserted by everybody and half crazed and sick. She had food, but in order to make this last she had been slowly starving herself to death. She was moving toward the pole; I felt in love with her straightway, and I guess Arters did.

Ruth Proctor was a striking thing despite her ugly, shape destroying skin, and the hunger and snow fever had made her dauntless face but that which more pathetically beautiful. Despite her stern resolve to find the pole and the self reliance of her, she was a most feminine person.

We turned back. The girl, now that the incentive for keeping up was par-

tially removed, grew seriously ill, and after nine days on the back track we came across a deserted slant that had been a vantage point on our poleward trip and prepared to stay there until she was some recovered. We knew nothing of her struggle nor why we had found her alone. Her mind was gone temporarily.

I was worried, and had been for some time, about Arters. His gaunt face had metamorphosed into a pinched, weird caricature of its former loquaciousness, and if I spoke to him suddenly he started curiously nor deigned an answer. Occasionally he broke out into a babble of meaningless sounds apropos of nothing whatever in our arctic world. He would sometimes catch himself at this and flush shamefacedly.

Arters was now again back in the rickety chair across the table from me, mumbling incoherently and with his great knotted hands clinching and unclenching restlessly.

This deserted shack, erected by some forgotten voyager who, Providence knows how, had got timber enough together for that same purpose, was the point of our first food cache. We had now eaten down to almost the last of our pemmican. Tomorrow we would dig up our treasure, enough to last us until we reached not too distant civilization.

Arters suddenly ceased his mad jumble of words. He pillowed his head on his arms and slept. I yawned, and, despite my resolve to stay awake and guard my mad comrade, the rhythmic breathing of the two sleepers lulled me to an unconscious condition.

I was awakened by a gentle shake of the arm. The frightened eyes of Ruth Proctor stared into mine. All illness seemed to have vanished from her.

"He is dead," she gasped and pointed an eloquent finger at the still form opposite me.

An investigative hand touching the feet of hfm testified to the truth of this.

With infinite tact Miss Proctor came forward and placed a soft little hand in my own. "I will be little bother to you," she said simply. "The snow sickness has left me. What—what shall we do with"—The tears sprang from the black depths of her eyes, and she turned her head away, unable to complete the sentence.

"We must leave him here," I answered. "We have only one sled, you know. Later I will return for him."

"To think," came brokenly from the lips of the maid explorer, "that he gave up his life in his effort to save mine." Woman-like, she cradled her pretty face in her arms and abandoned herself to her grief.

It devolved upon me to still the wall in my own heart and be practical.

"Don't," I whispered, so close to her that I felt her fragrant breath brush my cheek as she raised pathetic eyes to me. "What is done cannot be undone."

In what would be the morning in the United States I went forth and dug for our reserve food supply and—dug, in vain! Some vandal had platted it during our absence.

With a heavy heart I returned to the shack. The girl stared interrogatively at my empty hands.

"Looted," I ventured briefly. What food for me to put off the truth? Eventually she would have to know.

"I am sorry for your sake," she answered, and again an inexplicable look came into her eyes.

"We must go at once," I warned. "We have only enough provisions for about two days."

After a meager meal I hitched the dogs (Arters had long since been laid at rest) and went back for the girl, who was donning her heavy arctic coat and mittens. A noise caused me to leap to the door of the hut just in time to see my huskies, mad, lithe streaks of gray, speeding across the snow in pursuit of that rara avis, an arctic hare.

Yelping excitedly, they refused to respond to my cries—in fact, it is doubtful if they heard me. With a heavy heart I remembered that everything was packed in the sledge.

I turned despairingly. The dogs were gone. They might return; more likely they would not. The arctic husky—more wolf than dog—is an unknown quantity.

In the open door, as I raised my eyes, I saw the girl. I knew from the pallor of her face that she had seen all, but I attempted a brave smile.

"They will return," I spoke reassuringly.

"Perhaps," she said softly. "I know them and their ways, you must remember." She smiled at me bravely.

Suddenly my arms were about her. I knew not how it happened.

"My love," I said passionately, "must we die here just when we have found each other?" At last I had fathomed the secret in the eyes of her.

"Dearest," she said, looking up at last from my shoulder, "you will never know the snow as I do. Search again for your supplies. I have a belief—I can't tell why—that you will find them."

I looked. Sure enough, they were not two feet from where I had hunted.

Luck now cloyed us with her favors. That night the dogs came whining to the door, and—oh, marvel!—the sledge, though overturned, was with them.

"Ruth," I philosophized, "some good came out of it, for I am sure had the dogs not run away I would not have had the courage to speak."

And the lips of her came close—closer!

The trip was done in safety. The maid explorer was given over to my ship—a maid no longer, however, but, thanks to a venturing, gold hunting seaman, my wife.