



KING'S MATE

BY ROSITA FORBES

gently toward the door. She turned to him, moved beyond speech, but he was unresponsive.

The night air struck cold in her face and the women surrounded her with their song. It was harsh now and insistent. Frightened, she offered them money, muttered thanks in her few words of Arabic, and retreated toward the protection waiting indoors. But her room was empty.

For a long time the girl sat on the couch, staring at the door, through which Westwyn had left. Zarifa, tearing herself reluctantly from the excitement in the court, smiled when she saw her mistress so absorbed. "Allah give you happiness," she whispered, "but you must prepare for the master's return."

"Don't be an idiot!" retorted Rosemary in English.

The days which followed reconciled Rosemary to Tehehd. There were moments when she almost liked it. She no longer felt a prisoner among strangers. Westwyn managed to inspire her with enough of his enthusiasm to make her appreciate the qualities of the mountaineers. She watched the brown-robed riflemen laughing in anticipation of the morrow's raid and watched those same men drag themselves home wounded, with a smile for their pain. They took war lightly, these mountain people. It was part of the natural hardship of their lives. "Man was born to fight. Woman to work!"

Sometimes Rosemary rode no under the brow of the pass with Westwyn and, from one of the twin peaks, they could see the headwaters of the river, whose dam was going to burst, but more than that he would not tell her. "It is better that you should know nothing. Zarifa is an awful chatter and she has some sort of relation in Martengo's house. By the way, the Spaniard is on his feet again. I wonder what revenge he is plotting! I shouldn't be surprised if he tried to sell us to Spain."

"You seem very calm about it." "Well, he'd never get paid—that's certain! Our gallant enemies are freer with promises than with money." In spite of such lightness, there was a grim guard now round Westwyn's house, and Rosemary never rode alone.

Westwyn would talk for hours about the Rif and, through it, they became friends, but always on the surface was the antagonism of their interest in each other. If the man had not been so busy he would have realized himself in love. As it was, Rosemary was a stimulus to him, and a danger, because she crept into his thoughts when they ought to have been occupied with maps and mountain batteries.

The rains had begun, and each mountain path was a stream. Excitement permeated the village, though few guessed its origin. Something was pending, but only Abd-el-Krim's counselors knew what it was.

"The secret has been well kept," they could assure each other with satisfaction.

Even Zarifa's curiosity drew blank. "A great thing is going to happen," she told her mistress. "It is like the feeling before a storm. Martengo, that evil one, is excited. Perhaps he sees a chance to interfere."

"How do you know about him?"

"My mother's cousin is a servant in his house. All day he plays chess, that game of wooden armies, with a Portuguese, who is his friend, but I think they plot more than how to mate a dummy king." Zarifa's mixture of French and Arabic was forcible and it caused Rosemary's curiosity. That afternoon she asked Westwyn pointblank. "What is being planned? The whole village is on edge. It's rather like sitting on the rim of a volcano and waiting for it to explode. The ministers are like children with a secret. Mystery is written all over their faces. It's as irritating as it's silly."

Westwyn laughed, but he would not explain. "It's a great feat for a Rif to keep a secret at all. No wonder they have intelligence."

"You are quite convinced, aren't you, that a woman is not to be trusted with one. You thought I should tell the French about the pass?"

"Secrets are not healthy in Tehehd. Martengo is the unscrupulous gal, and I don't like that Portuguese pal of his." Westwyn evaded the question with a fact which was so obvious that Rosemary felt it lay about in chunks about her to fall over!

"He shall tell me," she thought. "I'll make him," and her chin set in the firm sweep that had antagonized De Vries.

"You look like Lucretia Borgia plotting the death of her latest husband." "No, only the downfall of my fleet," retorted the girl, a gleam and a her

shrouding issues. They looked like smudges of smoke on her cheek, thought the man, and told her, when she banished the expression, regarding him out of cat's eyes, still and deep. "Nobody could be as good as you look in this moment. I suspect you of the worst."

"I also have a secret?" mocked the girl.

"You shall know mine in a week," offered Westwyn.

"I'll know it before then," vowed Rosemary to herself, and aloud. "You shall know mine—never!" Her hair was like misty spirals in the damp, her mouth curled at the corners. She was young, radiant, and excited. Westwyn's blood responded. He wanted to make love to her, but he hadn't time! Their moments together were growing fewer. The meals which Ahmed, from the first, had decided they must share, were interrupted by the sultan's messengers. Even now, as they stood by the well in the harem court, under a lowering sky, mist hiding the peaks, there was a clatter of mule hoofs beyond their wall.

"That's young Menobbe. I recognize his particular brand of oaths. I never got you to myself for a moment. But," he bent till his lips almost touched her hair, "the war is going to end, and then—"

"Are you content to wait as long as that?" asked Rosemary, drawing back. Westwyn's eyes accepted her challenge, the twist at the corner of his lips was expressive, but he did not answer.

"He shall tell me! It's absurd. I must know what's going on," thought Rosemary, as she tried the effect of a cruise scarf which Abd-el-Krim's mother had sent her. Two lamps,

"Do you want to go, now?" asked Westwyn at last.

Rosemary countered. "I thought you said the war was going to end very soon?" She must know, first, the thing he hid from her. "Tell me what you meant?" Her eyes were shining, clear jewels, with life mirrored in them. There was a flush on her cheeks! She was at her loveliest, triumphant because of what she saw in Westwyn's face, a little afraid because she was up against the man inevitable to her womanhood. Disregarding the coffee, she leaned on the table, cupping her chin in her hands.

"Do you want to go?" repeated Westwyn, leaning back, his hands hidden in his pockets.

"No," said Rosemary, and the word was hoarse, as if it were dragged up from the depths.

There was a jar as the man's chair, grated back. It seemed to rip the silence of the room. Then he was beside her on the couch. "Rosemary—darling," but the girl made a gesture to ward him off.

"No, no. I want to know what is happening. I must know—tell me."

Westwyn laughed, bending over her as she retreated against the wall. "What'll you give me for my secret?" His voice was teasing. For a moment he looked a boy, and the tension between them eased.

"Anything!" promised Rosemary, delighted.

"But supposing I take what I want? After all, you are my wife."

The girl's breath was uneven. The instinct to know and the instinct of evasion were at war. She shook her head, fear and something greater than fear struggling in those depths she had all her life denied. Very gently Westwyn took her in his arms, but his deliberation made the action more irresistible. He turned her face up and kissed her lips. "I love you," he said. "I believe I've loved you all the time." For a moment Rosemary yielded, and her mouth was warm under his. Then she realized he had won. Revolt flashed into her brain, but it was far deeper than she knew. In a last obscure struggle to keep untouched that bit of her which had been cool, assured inviolate, she dragged herself away. Westwyn relaxed his hold, but his hands were still on her arms.

"It is too late," he said. "You asked for it, you wanted it." His certainty and the mastery of his touch exasperated her. All her modernity was stripped from her. She was at bay. To gain time, to postpone the inevitable, she threw at him the first words that came into her head. It is doubtful if she even realized what they were, and they were directed as much against herself as him.

"You are like every other man!"

Westwyn's face hardened, and his grip hurt her. "What do you mean? There could be no half-measures now. She had to choose between complete surrender and an irrevocable blunder, and she did not wait to think.

"Martengo—" she began, and stopped, really frightened at last.

Westwyn was pale under his bronze. His face looked oddly mottled. "Do you mean that?" he asked, biting her lip. "Take care what you say!"

Rosemary hesitated. She longed to

Westwyn's reserve, to force his secret from him, but she would not face the reason why she wanted to know. What did the plans of Tehehd matter, but she must win her point! Always, when they two were at issue, Westwyn had prevailed. Her will had broken before his. It had been humiliating, but—tonight! She stretched out young, smooth arms—surely tonight he would give way. "Afterward?" Her mouth was very red, her pulses throbbing. "Afterward," who knew, but first she must win her point!

Ahmed apologized for his failure to produce more than a dozen different dishes. Such a meal was beneath the Kaid's dignity, he explained, as he feigned with the arrangement of the camp table, but, as the noble lady knew, food was getting scarce. Then Westwyn came in, and from the first moment he could not take his eyes off the gold and blue and white that was a charmed Rosemary.

"Abd-el-Krim's mother sent me this," explained the girl, fidgeting the scarf. Beneath that uncompromising gaze she was not quite so sure of victory. She talked quickly, sometimes brilliantly, while they sampled the mystery of Ahmed's cooking. "I never know what's at the bottom of these bowls," she said, fishing with a fork, but Westwyn would not respond.

"It has been growing on me, in spite of my demerence, that you are very lovely. Odd, wasn't it, that I didn't grasp it when I first saw you down there by the caves?" His voice was gently mocking, but his eyes were direct. A flame burnt in them so that they seemed white hot. The girl had a suspicion of forces beyond her or any one else's power of control. "My charms were well overlaid with dirt," she remarked without looking up.

"No wonder you were so surprised that I would not let you go back to Fez."

The war was being pushed into her own country, and Rosemary rallied her forces. "You'll probably be thankful to get rid of me in the end." Her head went back, showing the long line of her throat. Westwyn knew the game. Many women in many lands had flung him that gesture of invitation. He had only to put out a hand to touch that smooth, sun-kissed throat, but he did not move. Ahmed came in and took away the tray, brought them coffee in handless cups, and departed, shutting the door with an air of finality.

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contradict herself to explain an impulse which was inexplicable, to give in, but she was confused by the indignation blazing at her. She tried to string words into sense, but found them brittle and meaningless.

Westwyn waited a moment and then, with an effort of immense deliberation, he got up. "There is no need to look like that. You're not going to get burned!" The irony rasped in his voice. He strode to the door and dragged it open and the wind whirled in from the yard. "My God! I swear



"I Swear I'll Never Touch You Again Until You Ask Me To!"

"I'll never touch you again till you ask me to!"

CHAPTER III

Life has an exasperating habit of dropping into the commonplace. It is a pendulum swing between extremes. For hours after Westwyn left her, Rosemary, with a physical ache at her heart, planned explanation. Walking about the room, or prone on the couch, breathing deeply to crush the wild thing that raged in her, she told herself that next time it would be different. But there was no next time. Before she woke from the sleep of exhaustion into which she had fallen, fully dressed, at dawn, Westwyn had gone into the hills. He did not return for three days, and then Rosemary was confronted with a stranger. While he talked to her, cheerfully and a little formally, about the trend of French politics—"The Socialists in Paris are pulling every string they know to end this war," she twisted his signet ring under the edge of the table to be sure she had not dreamed their marriage. He spoke as if her freedom were assured. "You'll be out of this in a month," he told her, "and when you're back in Fez, you'll think it all a dream." He was kind and very thoughtful for her comfort, but he was busy and he let her see his preoccupation. She used to watch him desperately, while he ate, smoked or glanced at dispatches brought by runners, but there was no clink in his armor. Westwyn had been hurt once, and he had had none of that weakness which luxuriates in probing its wounds. He had made love to lots of women and asked none to marry him. Generally he had tired before they did, and now he couldn't even remember their names. Rosemary had been different. When he thought of her at all, it was to remember the joy of his leap at Martengo and the feel of the man's throat under his fingers.

That evening Martengo, occupied with one of his eternal games of chess, paused with his hand on a pawn. "Your king's in danger. In three moves I'll get you." He addressed the Portuguese, who sat opposite. The wiry, pockmarked half-caste smiled. "King's mate?" he said; "in how many days, Juan? Do you know when the thing's to be brought off?" "I can guess, thanks to Farnal," returned the other, referring to Menobbe's slave, who, since the miscarriage of his plans for the duel, had been at the mercy of the Spaniard's threats and his own greed. "I can't see why you don't warn our complaisant enemies," remarked the Portuguese.

"Too dangerous. I doubt if I could get word through, and the vengeance of Abd-el-Krim is a bit too certain." Martengo's voice was regretful as he moved his bishop. The half-caste played carelessly.

"That Australian will be in charge of operations at the dam," he suggested.

"Yes, and Westwyn will go down alone, at the last minute. I have friends along the road. I propose to visit them tomorrow."

The Spaniard's hand hovered over a piece.

"There's only one path down, west of the river, and I'll watch it night and day. This time the Kaid won't escape. It'll be better sport than gazelle and no man could miss at that short range." He moved his knight with a leer. "Mate to your king," he said, and the eyes of the two men met.

Pete was not enthusiastic about the job assigned to him. "Poor fun," he grunted. "Don't I get any innings at all?"

"It's a matter of timing," retorted Westwyn. "The men are all down in

(Continued on last page)

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(INCORPORATED)

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C. W. Semmes, Editor
C. W. Semmes and E. R. Semmes
Publishers

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NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION

Department of The Interior
U. S. Land Office at The Dalles,
Oregon, Jan. 11, 1928.

Notice is hereby given that

James P. Abbott, of Wapinitia, Oregon, who, on Apr. 23, 1923, made Homestead Entry under Act Dec. 29, 1916, No. 018,224, for W¹/₂ NE¹/₄, S¹/₂ NW¹/₄, N¹/₂ S¹/₂ NE¹/₄, NW¹/₄ SE¹/₄, S¹/₂ SE¹/₄ and Lot 5, Sec. 26, T. 6-S, R. 13-E., Willamette meridian, has filed notice of intention to make final three year proof to establish claim to the land above described, before Frank D. Stuart, United States Commissioner, at Maupin, Oregon, on the 25th day of February, 1928.

Claimant names as witnesses: Arthur L. Pechette, Thomas Kienzle, A. R. Wilcox, Frank McCoy, all of Wapinitia, Oregon.

J19-F16 J. W. Donnelly, Reg.

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION

Department of The Interior
U. S. Land Office at The Dalles,
Oregon, Dec. 12, 1927.

Notice is hereby given that

Anson T. Lindley, of Maupin, Oregon, who, on Nov. 13, 1920, made Homestead Entry under Act Dec. 29, 1916, No. 020,920, for NE¹/₄ SE¹/₄, Sec. 22, T. 3 S., R. 14 E., Lot 4, S¹/₂ NW¹/₄, Sec. 1, SE¹/₄ SE¹/₄, Sec. 2, NW¹/₄ NW¹/₄, Sec. 12, E¹/₂ SW¹/₄, Sec. 14, W¹/₂ NW¹/₄, Sec. 24, T. 5 S., R. 14 E., NE¹/₄ NE¹/₄, Sec. 7, and NW¹/₄ NW¹/₄, Sec. 8, T. 5, S., R. 16 E., Willamette Meridian, has filed notice of intention to make final three year proof, to establish claim to the land above described, before F. D. Stuart, United States Commissioner, at Maupin, Oregon, on the 1st day of February, 1928.

Claimant names as witnesses: John Donaldson, Floyd McLeod, Elmer Hornquist, Al Kennedy, all of Maupin Oregon.

D15-J12 J. W. Donnelly, Reg.

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