The Girl of Mystery

By the "MASTER PEN"

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SYNOPSIS

Valuable governmental papers are stolen by Thempson, follower of Loubeque, in-ternational spy, from General Love, who Loubeque hates, in Manila. Love's daugh-ter Lucille files to a steamer to recover the papers in order to clear the name of Lieutenant Gibson, whom she loves.

Loubeque, tampering with the wireless on the steamer, is hurt. Lucille nurses him in an attempt to recover the papers. Lucille gets the papers, but the ship is wrecked. She is cast ashore on a Pacide island and is taken by a native chief to his hut to nurse his sick child.

The native child is restored to health, and the grateful natives hidding Lucille. Loubeque, also cast ashore, tries various plans to recover the papers, but in vain. Loubeque, amed, forms a smessige from a neighboring chief to ture Lucille away from her friends. She falls into a pitfall, losing the documents.

Loubeque's native sid steals the payers from his master, and Lucille takes them from the native after he is killed by a lion. She finds and follows an under-ground passage in the jungle. Lucille falls into the hands of a tribe

of ape men, whose leader drops a neck-lace of priceless rubles, which she takes, she and Loubeque are rescued from the island by a yacht commanded by Captain

The girl and Loubeque are set abritt in an open boat by Wetherell after she re-pulses the captain's advances, and he takes the papers.

Saved by fishermen. Lucille and Lou-beque are in China. As she passes a house Loubeque's diary is thrown to her mysteriously. She tries to board a vessel bound for America. Loubeque recovers the papers from Wetherell.

Lucille stows away, is caught and dresses as a cabin boy with the aid of the captain of the steamer in order to search Loubeque's stateroom for the papers. He catches her at work.

Loubeque takes the papers from Lucille. Landing at San Francisco she is kid-naped by the spy and held a prisoner in Loubeque's house by Thompson. She throws a Messare from her window to the captain of the beat, who passes the house, and a fight follows, which Louseque wins. He is hurt, and she takes and hides the papers. Thompson tries to steal the public.

At Loubeque's ranch in Mexico, to which Loubeque takes Lucille, the girl is befriended by a mysterious Mexican, who helps her to escape after she strikes down

CHAPTER XVIII. The Work of a Thief.

HE girl listened sliently to the ranchman's gratitude, then watched him as, following the captives, he entered the house to which they had been brought. It took but a little while for the sen try to emerge. Then she caught her breath with a cry of delight as she recognized a young officer whom she had known in the Philippines. He beckoned her silently, senting himself at his desk and writing busily for a moment before nodding briskly that she should speak. A dancing imp of mischief was in her eyes as she uttered his name.

"Lieutenant Carmody, don't you remember me?" The young officer's eyes opened as

wide as his mouth. ing from his sent-"Lucille Love or ber

"A very tired and hungry ghost," she hughed delightedly. "Just try me

As he summoned his orderly and gave him instructions to bring instantly some canned stuff Lucille hurriedly sketched out her adventures to him. eagerly persuading him when his face showed that he half believed she had taken seave of her senses. His expression was very grave when she fin

"I suppose you know that Gilmon was permitted to resign and notwely knows where he went?" he queried. "Hugo Loubeque showed me the newspaper," she nodded. "And fa-

ther"- Her tone was numbed at being brought into such close contact with one who could realize what all these things meant.

"The general is under a heavy cloud of suspicion. He has requested an in-quiry into his own conduct in the af-

The messages were most important-in fact, their sale could harm us greatly. 'And the people think that I'-"You have long since been given up for drowned. Harley told of taking

you aboard the Empress. The wreck is common knowledge, of course. must reassure them immediately. "No," she shook her head decidedly. "I have gone this far, and I firmly believe some influence is at work on my

behalf, helping me to do things better than any man could do them."

"But"- he protested. "No," she shook her head firmly. "You have no idea how dangerous a game it is working against Hugo Loubeque. There is every chance that he may yet defeat me; that I may be killed or injured before I succeed. Father would demand my return, papers or no papers. Can't you see what it means to me? Can't you see that the man who has ruled and ruined nations. who has compelled thousands to do permitted himself the luxury of a his will, has every chance of success

against anything a man could do?" The officer smiled a superior smile. Lucille merely took the diary of the spy from its kiding place and placed it

his hands, watching the swift changes of expression upon his face as he read. Finally he returned it to the "Please ent," he said quietly, motion-ing toward the end of the deak where

orderly was spreading a cold repast of canned meats and vegetables and steaming coffee, "and forgive me if I can't talk now. I must think what is best to be done." Lucille smiled as she devoted her at-

tention to the repast. She finally fintaked to find young Lieutenant Carmody staring fixedly at her, his brow

"It's too much for me," he muttered.
"Of course it is," she laughed hearti-"But I firmly believe that I will

"But why?"

"Because," and all the mirth had pone from her face, all the laughter from the eyes that were reverently lifted. "because everything I have done

because love has watched over me and the car. The conductor turned be helped me. That is the reason, Lientenant Carmody, Hugo Loubeque can never be bent n or brought to justice trembling figure while the fresh air the nuse of feur or hate, for his own powers in that direction are greater than those of nations."

The officer unwillingly am god. "What do you propose doing? bu't there some way in which I can

"Yes," she answered promptly. You can let me have money. You can fell me how to dispose of one of these valuable rubles, or all of them, and you can help me catch the first train for San Francisco,"

Carmody whistled aloud his amazed delight as he regarded the marvelous ewels in the necklace she laid upon the table. Then he loaned her the money he had and insisted upon her lying down and resting until he could

It was dawn before she wakened, and, though she felt alarm lest he had allowed her to miss a train, his reassurance and the sight of the clothing he had found for her made things seem much brighter. Then, too, the ninety odd dollars in currency seemed far more than even the rubles about her neck. Several hours later she boarded the train, assisted by a worried looking young officer, her heart light and gay, for she felt within herself that the journey that had been so long and so hazardous was finally nearing an end; that the familiar, dear faces would surround her on every

With every clamping of the wheels upon the frogs of the track her heart gave up a song of confidence, for Hugo Loubeque had put forward his own strength against her and, added this, the strength of a portion of his organization. He had imprisoned her in two apparently impregnable places, and still she was here, all unbeknownst to him, speeding toward his house, intent upon beating him once and for

And in the compartment at which she stared with unseeing eyes Thompson regarded her in the mirror, his



He Got Her Some Proper Clothing. own eyes glittering with malicious tri-

umph and with avarice. Thompson crouched back in his con partment, feigning deep slumber while the colored porter made up his bed. Immediately the porter disappeared he became the incurnation of energy. His hands nervously fumbled with the lock of his grip, opening it finally and disclosing a secret trap in the bottom, "Lucille Love!" he gusped, half ris- from which he took an atomizer, a pair

> For an hour he waited, motionless not even his fixed eves blinking as he regarded the curtains of the berth Lufille occupied.

> He was swift; he was certain; he ... Deftly parting the curtains, he is as I down upon the sleeping girl. No atom of pity was in his heart. All the thirf now, his eyes glittered as he allowed them to rest upon the glowing strand of stones about her neck.

Swiftly he leaned over, applying his pinchers to the gas jet and unscrewing it so that the odor of the gas slowly began filling the stuffy section. then he gently sprayed the ether across her face, never moving when she unconsciously stirred to fight off the an-

Her breathing became heavier while her lips took on a bluish tinge. The gas was becoming stronger, and be knew her condition would be ascribed to amply viation when she recovered from the effects of the ether. Stooping, with no appearance of care now be unfastened the rubles from her throat. A moment he waited, slipping his pocket, then he slipped back to his own compartment.

Carefully he repacked his grip, tuck Against the door he crouched, waiting No trace of anxiety he showed. He clamping down upon the ties as the air brakes worked. Thompson threw open his window, looking out to dis cover it was opposite a tiny station. With a pocket knife he cut out the screen that separated him from the

tracks Catitionaly he looked up and down the track. The train was slowing down He tossed his bag far out from him, then slipped partially through the window. The lights of the station were almost in his eyes when he jumped, landing on his feet and regaining his balance with an effort. Then he

The next train through would be time enough, and the booty in his breast pocket was worth many risks.

Lucille felt herself struggling with a lesperate enemy, one whose fingers were of steel as they fastened themselves about her throat, grasped at her breath and held it despite her utmost efforts Even in the effort to waken insuccessful though it was, she seemed to recognize the calm, imperturbable, businesslike features of Thompson. Then she felt a sensation of case and omfort and peace such as had not been hers for a long time, and she allowed herself to drift away upon the gentle flowing river that hummed its

ong in her cars. She awakened to find herself being shaken violently by the conductor and a porter, whose abony face had changed to a saffron shade. Her head ached so fearfully that she pressed her fever-ish palms to her temples to keep it from bursting. Her throat and mouth felt as though she had been subsisting upon a diet of cotton soaked in oil. She singgered to her feet and stood, dazed and bewildered, in the sisle of

over to two women, who stood with her upon the platform, supporting her drove away the fumes of chloroform and gas to which she had been sub-

First she felt the rush of the train the dotting of lights in the distance, the rush of the train past the lights, only to come upon a new cluster. And she was rushing, rushing, rushing, just like these lights to a caveraous blackness which she could not describe even to

Suddenly the reason for her being upon the train came to her, and her hands sought her breast, then ber throat. With a little cry she staggered back into the arms of the women.

"Robbed!" she gasped. "I have been robbed!"

The women looked at one anothe skirmish up some proper clothing and pityingly, then incredulously and finally believingly as they caught the pallor and sanity on the girl's face. Sum-moning all her strength, she turned the knob of the door and sought the conductor. He looked incredulous at the girl's charge, but investigation showed that the light had been tampered with Nothing, however, could be done be fore reaching San Francisco except a search of the car.

Lucille went with him from place t place, scanning every face. But she knew who had done this thing. When she fought against the fingers of the drugs they had been the fingers of Thompson. When she had slipped from peaceful slumber into the drug ged stuper it was Thompson she had been bravely fighting.

But Thompson-where had he disap-peared? What had become of the man?

"We know who the thief was, a reported the conductor a little lates. "He had the compartment facing your section. The screen is cut out. must have dropped out the window after working his game."

Lucille smiled faintly. "A medium sized man, rather dark, plainly dressed, with features that nobody would notice especially and-a livid sear across the side of his face," she murmured.

The man looked at her in surprise "Thompson," she murmured. it was Thompson. I was positive from

the first." As the conductor corroborated her description of the thief she lay back against the dusty cushlons of her seat bily watching the train charging across the landscape. She had started badly, but she clinched her teeth firmly. Her purpose was firm as ever, her rage a

Hugo Loubeque cursed profoundly to himself as he paced up and down the floor of his San Francisco house. From below came the sounds of his servants searching into every book and cranny of the mysterious house for the packet of papers and documents he knew Lucille had bidden here.

He frowned heavily as he went to the window and looked down upon the street, deserted now save for the old woman who trudged toward the place. She carried a basket of fruit over her arm and Loubeque smiled grimly as she disappeared from his sight, then reappeared after being turned away from the door by the servant, As he idly studied the woman some

thing about her caught and held his ittention. She moved slowly, but there was an affectation about that slow-

those of a hawk now, upon the old woman. She had stopped beside the slarm box on the corner lamppost Suddenly the bent form straightened and he read the impulsive resolve of youth in every movement of the illy attired old woman. Her hand groped upon the ground. He saw her pick up a stone and smash the fire alarm. Came the sound of fire engines

rolling down the street. Loube watched the woman. She dashed to ward the captain as he darted up in his light lauggy, pointing eagerly toward the house of the spy, her eyes glowing with excitement. Then Loubeque smiled as he pressed a bell and ordered the search to stop immediately. Before the rush of firemen with their ose the door opened. Their heavy feet slumped upon the stairs, throughout the house. But Loubeque did not move. He watched Lucille as she tossed aside the habiliments she had worn over her girlish_clothes. She ooked swiftly about to make certain no one was in sight. Then she swiftly approached the extra truck upon which the slickers and hats of the fremen were laid. Once more she looked about

her, then flung herself into a long rub ber coat and Jammed a helmet ove Swiftly Loubeque peered over the stairs. Without an instant's hesitation Lucille had sped to the basement. He tiptoed to the room that had been assigned her when he held her captive here. Pressing a button, one wall of the room opened. He peered below,

watching her as, below, she searched feverishly for the papers.

Loubeque quietly moved back to his own room. Slowly his fingers reached out. Came a slight clink of machinery Then the spy stepped below and re ceived the assurance of the fire captain that everything was well. His smil was that of a man quite positive that everything was more than well.

CHAPTER XIX.

An Appeal. UCHLE started just as her hands ROUTE arimed papers and documents.

A faint humming sound mingled with the heavy tread of the firemen above stairs. But she had won, was victorious after many defeats. Still, that sound-

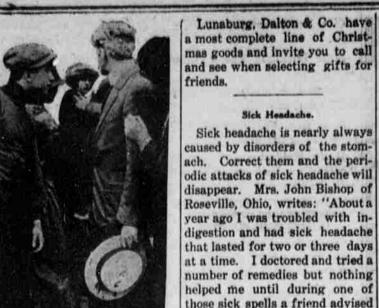
She seemed to have heard it before. With a little cry of horror she looked up, her hands clasping the packet to her breast. The room that had been her boudoir was slowly closing down down, its dark floor threatening to crush her like a letterpress closes upon

its contents. Then it stopped.
She looked toward the door through which she had entered, her delight at

the escape dying before the sight of Loubeque's tall, saturaine figure in the doorway, the glowing eigar tip picking out his every feature, the hateful smile upon his face. He extended his hand, bowing gracefully, sardonically. "The packet of papers, Miss Lucille, if you please," he murmured.

For the fleeting second Lucille wondered what would happen did she refuse to surrender the papers to Lou-beque—wondered what diabolical thing might enter his brain when he found

himself defied. A giance at the room which had started to descend upon her drove the thought away as quickly as it brought a studder through her slen-der frame. Blowly, reluctantly, she held out the packet to him, watching him furtively, as with the utmost cour-



She Saw Loubeque In the Doorway.

breast pocket. stairs. In his private room he motioned her to a chair, seating himself at the desk.

again," he said quietly. "I wish you to know that this is the last time you can interfere with my plans. Child, can you not be made to see what folly It is this fight against me?" "Mr. Loubeque," she said softly,

have you never grieved that it is impossible for the finer feelings you are continually suppressing to be returned because your ambitions are cruel and base? I do not like to wage this constant war with you. I do not like to battle with the man who has been so kind to me in his own way that I could tove him as another father. But you would ruin my father; you would wreck my sweetheart's life. You would keep me apart from perfect happiness after I have merely peeked through the door of that happiness only to have it slammed shut in my face. Can't you see that it is you who must go down to defeat? Can't you see that love such as supports a frail girl to battle with you as I have done will not be downed by the most powerful man? Can't you see that I cannot stop even if I do sometimes grow very tired and sick at heart and pray to this soul of mine to let me lie down for a little while and rest? Rest-rest"-She broke off with a sob of the most acute distress. "There is no such word as rest for me. Always it is go on, go on, constantly go on, until it seems I must fall along the wayside. But I do not fall. I have won from you con stantly; I have always won, and I shall always continue to win. And you know it. Mr. Lonbeque, for I can

see it on your face now."

Like one inspired she was, as the halting tones of her plea changed to those of passionate conviction, a certainty that expressed itself in words tumbling from the tongue with utter abandon, words that seemed to come from other lips than her own. And as Loubeque looked back at the beauti ful figure of the girl he was surprised to see that suddenly she seemed to have changed, that the slip of a child who had come on board the Empress from the hydroneroplane had suddenly become a woman of such capacity for

(To be continued next week.

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