

## PEARL OF THE ARMY

(Continued from page 3)

form, and she experienced the terrifying sensation of falling.

She never knew what exactly transpired during the next thirty minutes or so.

When her bewildered senses returned she was lying among weeds in an open lot somewhere in the sparsely settled city outskirts.

The first object to strike Pearl's dazed eyes was the handkerchief which had been used by the stranger to reduce her to a helpless condition. Then she saw heavy footprints in the mud.

Under ordinary circumstances, Pearl might have gone immediately to headquarters and told her story. But the events of that night had made her unusually wary, arousing a keen personal responsibility in following any clue which might bring disclosures.

Accordingly she set out at once to trace the movements of the fleeing assailant which was not difficult in the soft earth, aided by a brilliant, rising moon.

Now followed a long interval of wandering through a district which became more and more desolate. But presently her perseverance was rewarded. A little off in the distance, on an elevation stood a dilapidated frame shack belonging to an abandoned stone quarry toward which two men in guarded haste crawled up the hillside. From behind an old tree stump Pearl, craning her neck, saw them enter and quickly close the door. Smothering an exclamation she darted in the direction of the shack.

Ten minutes afterward she, herself, was inside this now notorious haunt, groping against rough board walls.

The darkness seemed to be augmented by the very stillness of the place but gradually she discerned a rickety wooden stairway ending through an open trap door in a loft.

She was starting to ascend when through a crack in a rude partition there gleamed a faint ray of light. Stepping hastily down, Pearl peeped.

The interior was not entirely within her range but the scene she beheld half startled her out of her wits.

Seated about a bare table were a number of men of distinguished foreign appearance. In the fitful illumination of an oil lamp, their faces were not recognizable although she was sure that the object of her search was among them. She could not see his face, however. Whoever he was, he was obviously their leader and spokesman and a very superior person to whom they paid a deep respect.

This man was exhorting his cohorts very earnestly.

Guarding her emotions lest they betray her, Pearl pressed closely against the wall, straining her ears at the crack in the board. She grew tense. Her countenance registered blank amazement.

His voice was musical, yet blunt and virile. "Messieurs, now is the time to strike when her golden vaults are full; for America, treasurer of the world, is tottering to her downfall."

Pearl paled, every nerve in her body tingling.

A murmur ran through the assembly. The speaker continued impressively: "Our combined armies outnumber hers and our fleets outrange her heaviest guns. We have in our possession the key to this defenseless nation"—he paused dramatically,—"the military plans which reveal how we can capture the canal. Already they are on their way to our southern rendezvous. The American government, messieurs, has fallen into our trap. It is not our fault that Capt. Ralph Payne is innocent." His voice trailed ironically.

Pearl suddenly felt faint. Her impulse was to fly at once to the war office, yet the import of what was transpiring on the other side of the wall glued her to the spot. She could hardly restrain an outburst.

"And this—this canal, messieurs," drawled the spokesman, "in our hands, destroys forever the Monroe Doctrine by which this ambitious young country has ruled the western seas for more than a century—too long. Have your foreign offices sent you here prepared to discuss the division of the spoils?"

Pearl drew away from the wall, inwardly scoffing and deeply resentful at these preposterous suggestions. She could hear no more of them. Were it not for the fact that the one in whom she had pledged her faith in manhood was being publicly disgraced for a crime she now knew to have been committed by others she would have believed that these arch international plotters were escaped lunatics. This alone kept her from doing something ridiculous.

A new thought flashed into her mind as the full meaning of the moment came upon her. She became inspired with a sudden determination to establish the identity of this coterie and its leader, matching cunning with cunning, intrigue with intrigue, regardless of personal hazard and for the country's cause—and Payne's—no matter whether it took her or how far, to checkmate this silent menace in the plot in which

he might be only a pawn, or yet a prince, or a disguised ruler himself. With that supreme confidence of young maidenhood contained in a noble and sacrificing patriotism, this resolute young Joan of what eventually became known as the American One Hundred Days now entered into an adventure, which was the beginning of many, out of which evolved the spirit of a New Americanism.

In her exalted mood, for a second she forgot the necessity of caution. She had found the door and was about to open it and face the intriguers when her sleeve caught upon a protruding wire. Before she had shaken it loose she was, to her dismay, discovered.

In her haste to evade pursuit, she mounted breathlessly to the loft, followed closely by the whole party, their faces now masked, the spokesman in the lead. He reached the top at the same time as she, with arms outstretched to grab her. She quickly dropped the trap, stood upon it and groped with him. Her one thought was to unmask him.

She was a fearless and athletic girl and fought with a frenzy that took her



Never Had She So Adored Him as Then.

opponent by complete surprise. They whirled around the room locked together.

"Who are you?" she cried in pain, doggedly trying to release herself.

"No personal enemy, madamelle, but dangerous if interfered with," he muttered thickly, in a disguised voice.

He had scarcely finished speaking when Pearl, freeing her right arm, struck him down. She was upon him at once and about to tear the covering from his face when his companions broke through the trap and rushed toward them. Before she could accomplish her purpose she was forced to protect herself, for they clearly meant to do her harm. Staggering backwards, she glared about for means of escape. She spied a window. Thoughtless of peril there, she ran to it and jumped out, striking the ground hard, for her fall was a long one.

She turned a challenging face toward the men who had gathered in the window and were scowling down upon her with pointed revolvers.

"You scoundrels and cowards!" she cried, defiantly. "Whoever you may be, America will avenge herself!"

Then she plunged into the bushes.

She heard them shooting as she ran, and bullets whistled in the air. Coming upon a barn she entered it and hid in a cow stall, crouching in a corner and rapidly covering herself with straw. Her hands suddenly came in contact with something warm and alive; and a little dog crawled out.

It was very dark here. The dog began to lick her face. Pearl's eyes dimmed with tears.

(END OF EPISODE TWO.)

**England's Uncrowned King.**  
Of the long line of kings which have ruled England since the days of William the Conqueror, nearly 600 years ago, there has been only one uncrowned king. King Edward V., the boy king, who met an untoward fate in the Tower of London in 1483, is the only monarch who reigned without receiving the church's blessing or the formal homage of his subjects.

Some people are inclined to include Lady Jane Grey among England's monarchs. If this doubtful claim is allowed, then England's only uncrowned queen ranks with Edward V. and deprives him of one distinction.—London Telegraph.

**Washing Glassware.**  
The wife of a glazier once told me, said a housekeeper, never to wash my glassware in hot water because, she said, it melts the thin glaze that is on the outside of all glassware and so makes the glass appear smeared and muddy. Since then I have used cold water, and the results are remarkable.—Washington Star.

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**Feeling For Death.**  
For a week the self appointed guide to the blind on their daily walks had noticed that the two men who were her special charges felt carefully of the wall on either side of the door of the asylum when passing in and out. Since she was there to lead them that precaution seemed unnecessary, and she finally asked their reason for it.

"I am looking for crime on the door," one old man told her. "They don't like to let us know here in the asylum when any one dies for fear of making us feel bad, but they put wraps on the door, and by feeling for it when we pass in and out we can find out for ourselves when one of us has gone."—New York Globe.

**Even Steven.**  
"Do you ever forget to mail the letters your wife gives you?"  
"Not any oftener than she forgets to take the studs out of my dress shirt before sending it to the laundry."—Detroit Free Press.

**Still Noisy.**  
"What's become of that noisy baby who used to live next door?" asked the visitor after an absence of fifteen years.  
"That's it blowing that cornet," replied the afflicted house owner.—Yonkers Statesman.

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