

QUESTION of HONOR by Ruth Cross

Chapter I "MISS EVE"



Chapter I "MISS EVE" N.E. hung herself flat on the ground and drank eagerly from the cold, sparkling mountain spring.

Her thirst quenched, she leaned farther over the spring and gazed down curiously into its liquid, glass-green depths.

The deep, cup-like basin was rusted thick with crystals which asbed in the leaf-dappled sunlight into a million jewels, diamonds, sapphires, emeralds and rubies.

"If those were only real and mine," she mused idly.

She pulled herself a little higher a her elbows, turned her head lowly from side to side, studying herself critically in the mirrored surface of the spring.

Her skin glowed satin-smooth and he was glad. Before leaving New York she had thought she detected signs that tattle of passing youth.

She was glad she had stolen away from the lodge, her Aunt Emily, and Leon Morse, for this moment alone. She sighed as she thought of Morse, multi-millionaire New Yorker, who was her host in his retreat in the Sierras. She knew that someday he would propose but had she not grown up knowing that she must marry someone with his qualifications? Nothing less would satisfy her Aunt Emily.

Half hypnotized by her crystal gazing she was unaware that she was not alone. Then she noted the shadow that turned to brown the surface of the spring.

As she straightened up she found a tall man, his steel gray eyes fixed on the pliant picture she presented.

With an expert eye born of long appraisal she took in, with a swift glance, the muscular lines of the intruder whose face was stamped with the healthy vigor of the west.

From his plain costume—flannel shirt, khaki trousers and high boots—she concluded he was a workman. The man broke the silence. "I would not mean to intrude, I thought you were someone else. Strangers seldom come here."

"How do you know I'm a stranger?" Anne asked interestedly. He swept her from head to foot with an amused glance. "That's not hard to guess—with Fifth avenue written on your clothes or is it the Rue de la Paix?"

Anne smiled at his discernment. Her visitor apparently had traveled, she thought.

"Can I be of any service to you in finding your way back to the lodge?" he inquired solicitously. "But I'm not lost," Anne protested.

"No—" The amusement lingered in his eyes. "Anyway, this trail to the left will take you back to the lodge in half the time you came up." He paused, then added, "I must apologize for interrupting

your mirror gazing. Miss—Eve? With a humorous, satirical glance he turned to go and did not note the red which swept into Anne's face. She was not accustomed to that tone from a man.

It was plain that he had watched her admiring herself in the spring and had interpreted it as a display of vanity. A biting retort formed in her mind but she checked herself. She was hungry and had noticed the knapsack that hung from his shoulder.

"Don't go yet—please," and there was a pleading note in her tone that caused the man to halt. "I don't want to be a nuisance but I am frightfully hungry."

"Why didn't you say so before?" he demanded brusquely as he loosened his knapsack and began to prepare a meal.

While Anne watched his deft movements, he kindled a fire for coffee, and spread sandwiches before her.

"Help yourself," he offered as he turned to watch the coffee. "Sheb always puts up enough for a dozen."

"Who is Sheb?" Anne inquired as she munched a sandwich. Her host poured some coffee in a tin cup before giving any sign he had heard.

"Sheb—oh, he's my pal and general factotum—an old gold hunter I ran across down in the foothills

years ago. He's stuck to me ever since, as faithfully as his old dog, Japheth, sticks to him. I put up the grub stake as he calls it, and he goes right on prospecting."

"You mean there's still gold in these mountains," Anne interjected. "Yes, plenty of it, Sheb says, and he has been prospecting in the Sierras for almost 40 years."

Lighting a cigar, he watched Anne devour the food. He wondered what she was doing at the lodge, what connection she really had with Morse and if she knew of Morse's scheming and planning. He was about to question her when Anne finished and set down her cup. Then, before he could speak, a ringing blow against the side of the cliff drew their attention.

"Sounds like Sheb—" he remarked and as he moved toward the edge to look, there was a louder noise, and part of the cliff crumbled.

"It's Sheb all right," he corroborated smilingly, then in a louder tone, "Hey, there old man, what are you trying to do? Pull down the whole mountain?"

Anne leaned forward and gazed cautiously over the edge. She beheld the most crooked, shaggy old man she had ever seen, as he crawled from under the landslide of rock and earth.

He stooped and dragged out an old bound dog, as lank, as rawboned and as shaggy as himself.

"That's Japheth," Anne's companion explained. "They haven't been separated night or day for almost 10 years. Better not let them see you—they're inveterate woman-haters, both of them."

"I see—" Anne mused aloud, "I runs in the family?" He laughed. "By no means—"

Nevertheless, Anne drew farther back out of view but heard the shrill, piping voice of the prospector.

"Young man, of I see B. to pull back the angry tears, she turned to discover the old gold-miner and his dog just clambering up over the edge of the cliff. They advanced warily. On a long forked stick in front of him, Sheb carried Anne's tam-o'-shanter.

He proffered it—still warily, Anne took it with the briefest thanks, pulled it down over her disordered hair and looked about for her gloves. Sheb draped his lanky body negligently against a tree.

"Missy," he said solemnly, "jes' you take my advice an' leave 'im be—leave 'im be."

Anne, busily engaged in putting on her gloves which she had located finally, snapped a fastener and glanced up. "I'm afraid I don't know what you're talking about—"

the built-down mountain down on me. It ain't nobody's business but mine, is it?"

"Not as long as you don't pull anybody else down with you," the man on the cliff acknowledged.

Sheb suddenly threw down his shovel and hauled something out of the dirt. It was Anne's tam o' shanter.

"He has found your hat. I'll go down and get it," and started off but Anne shook her head emphatically.

He repacked his knapsack and rose to go. Anne extended her hand with frank friendliness.

"I don't know how to thank you, I—" she said.

"You needn't," he broke in. "Anyone would do the same."

Anne started to draw away her hand but he held it raised to his lips and kissed it deliberately.

"Good-bye Miss—Eve." He swept off his hat, turned and strode off up the trail, without a backward glance.

Anne stood motionless, watching until his big, easily swaying body was lost around a curve in the trail. Her skin was on fire with that last hateful glance; her hand stung as if it had been plunged into a bed of nettles. Her pride and vanity had been outraged.

Blitting her lips fiercely to keep her

back the angry tears, she turned to discover the old gold-miner and his dog just clambering up over the edge of the cliff. They advanced warily. On a long forked stick in front of him, Sheb carried Anne's tam-o'-shanter.

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"Oh, I thought you did that to bar me out," broke in Peggy. "So that was the milk in the cocoanut?"

"No, ma'm, Miss Peggy. I put dat dar 'ole de cat I borrowed fum Miss Deborah," explained Julia. "I was mo' feared ob rats den yo' am ob cats, Miss Peggy; and I done took de cat back an' fo'th to Echo Farm when yo' all wasn't lookin'."

Obadiah stamped about the room and stopped before the opened door of the secret message that Peggy had found.

"I'm dumbed if I know how you located that—" as he turned with admiring eyes to Peggy.

"It is quite a long story; I'll tell you some time. Do you see the ar-

row in the woodwork that opens the door?"

"Jim, have you told Peggy that all of her uncle's wealth was found in the vault in the secret room?"

Chapter 25 RETROSPECT

QUIET returned to the living room as the sheriff departed with his deputies to take Phillander Chase to the Litchfield county jail to await the action of those charged with administering justice.

The shock of the sudden turn of events that lifted the cloud that had hung over the Lodge since Peggy had become its mistress was written on the faces of the little group.

Peggy shuddered as she thought of the moments she had been alone with Phillander Chase. She might have met the same fate as her uncle and Edgar Stanton. How easily she had been fooled by the man's feigned friendliness. But there was a distinct note of relief to Peggy in the revelation that Phillander Chase had slain Stanton for she had been worried to the last by the suspicious circumstances that pointed to Jim.

"Whew, I can breathe easier now he's gone," Obadiah exclaimed, breaking in on the thoughts of the others. "Julia, where did you get that gold money you were handling when you thought people weren't looking?"

Julia's mouth drops open and she stared abashed at Peggy and Obadiah. Jim came to her rescue.

"I gave it to her," he said. "Julia recognized me as Jameson Sinclair from a photograph my sister had of me."

Obadiah chuckled, and Peggy with feigned sternness turned on her maid.

"So you took hush money and didn't tell me who Jim was," Peggy said.

"No, ma'm, Mistah Jim asked me not to," Julia answered, and there was a contrite note in her voice.

Turning to Jim, Obadiah sobered. "Knowing your cause to hate Stanton I feared you might be involved, Jim," Peggy looked up quickly; so others had had the same thought.

"You were everlasting hanging around here. I know now," as Jim started to interrupt him, "you were after the copperheads I put out at Prescott's request to kill frogs; when you said on the phone 'other night you'd got 'em both, I was some relieved."

"You gave me another start the night I was coming back from Sundown's camp with Aquila Chase and saw you in the basement bedroom when I thought you were in Litchfield."

"I was searching for Sundown," Jim explained. "I twice caught him hanging around the place." He turned to Peggy. "Your uncle gave Pop a key to the house so he could kind of look after things and," with a ghost of a smile, "I appropriated it."

"And thereby upset my foolish ideas," declared Obadiah. "As a matter of further foolishness I put another padlock on the room downstairs so you couldn't get in there again."

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The Secret of Mohawk Pond By Natalie Sumner Lincoln

SYNOPSIS: A secret chamber of New London discovered by Peggy Prescott precipitates a series of revelations that lift the veil of mystery. The dawn message of Herbert Prescott given to Sundown reveals his plan to foil Phillander Chase from stealing his fortune, securing the clue to the hidden store of his wealth in the Oldish Evans then exposes Phillander Chase conspiring as his brother, Aquila, who was killed by a snake; then Phillander confesses having killed Lieut. Edgar Stanton to prevent exposure.

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AVIATRIX CRASHES IN CROWD KILLING TRIO NEGRO BOYS

HEARNE, Tex., Dec. 29.—(AP)—Three negro boys were dead and another in a critical condition today as the result of the fall of an airplane into a crowd at the flying field here yesterday. Miss Dorothy Stocker, 17, Houston student, said to have a private pilot's license and considerable flying time to her credit, was alone in the plane when it swooped down upon the crowd.

The dead youths' two of whom were killed instantly, were Kelvin Hearne, 7, and James Hearne, 9, sons of John Hearne; and Jim Webster, 12, son of John Webster. The boy injured was Dock Wright.

Attending to him, Miss Stocker was unable to regain altitude when she saw the impending tragedy.

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NEW BEAUTY For the NEW FORD

Wonderful things, eyes, at their best only when they are clear, radiant, starry. What makes them shine? First of all the mind or spirit of you. Eyes without dreams are shallow eyes. Dreams of beauty, of freedom and love. When you find these in the eyes they startle you with their radiant loveliness.

The nose and contour of the face remain more or less solid; the mouth and eyes only are plastic and the eyes are of much greater importance than the mouth, for in them all the emotions are pent up, all the depths and mysteries of life, its joys and sorrows, its gaieties and griefs.

Eyes are at their best, shining and young, only when they are taken care of. But because of the fact that the eyes are so sensitive, and they reflect all the eagerness of one's nature, all the joys of emotions, they need special care. Otherwise, some morning you will awake to the fact that your eyes look dull and faded, that the lids are getting crepey, that Time has etched faint lines at the corners.

After years of careful experimenting and constant study, Sight Specialists have found that Nature has great laws for Eye Youth and Beauty. These laws are simple and most potent. If you value the health and loveliness of your eyes, you must consult a competent optometrist. He can enable you to preserve that Youth and Beauty of your eyes.

Wherever you are, this Bank is as near as your closest mailbox. Why not send in a deposit this very day?

Things move fast today! Not so many years ago every deposit at Bank meant a trip to town, but today it simply means use the mails.

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"Just you take my advice, Missy, and leave 'im be, leave 'im be," the eccentric prospector admonished Anne.

BROWNSBORO

BROWNSBORO, Ore., Dec. 29. (Special.)—Mr. and Mrs. Leland Charley of Klamath Falls were Christmas guests of Mrs. Charles' mother, Mrs. Imogene Charley.

Boy Bagley will spend the remainder of the winter at the home of William Butler.

Mr. and Mrs. Lyle Hard and little son of Hly are guests at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Joe Maxwell.

Mrs. Haynes of Medford is visiting at the home of her son Mud Haynes.

William Swain spent Christmas at the home of Mrs. Briscoe and daughter in Medford.

HECKERT FAMILY HAS CHRISTMAS REUNION

JACKSONVILLE, Ore., Dec. 26. (Special.)—Mr. and Mrs. John Heckert entertained at a Christmas dinner the following guests: Mr. and Mrs. Fred Heckert, Tom Hunt and family. Later in the day the following guests arrived and spent the evening: Paul Godward and family, Fred Wolf and family, Albert Heckert and family, and Mr. and Mrs. Otto Heckert. A Christmas tree was enjoyed, and these were gifts for all. The guests were all members of the Heckert family.

ANDERSON CREEK

ANDERSON CREEK, Ore., Dec. 29.—(Spl.)—Jas. Mays and family enjoyed Christmas dinner at F. M. Center.

Jas. MacDowell and family spent Christmas at Central Point at the home of Mrs. Claid Clark, where a family reunion was held for 27 people.

Geo. Young was out to Medford Monday.

The program and Christmas tree at the schoolhouse Tuesday was well attended. Everyone enjoyed the program.

J. Price was out to the valley Tuesday.

Roy Bushnell is hauling out wood for Mr. Berson.

D. C. Hale and family were out to Medford Tuesday.

Pete Foster has gone to Weed for the winter.

Mrs. L. C. Jones went to Ashland Thursday.

Annie Schreier spent Monday and Tuesday with Ruth Mays.

LONDON (AP)—Margaret Bondfield, minister of labor, told the house of commons that the two American talking machine companies which are established in this country use only 41 Americans against 818 British employees. Most of the Americans are in technical or executive positions.

JACKSONVILLE CHURCH CLASS NAMES OFFICERS

JACKSONVILLE, Ore., Dec. 30. (Spl.)—The young people's class of the Presbyterian church and their teacher, Mrs. G. O. Sanden, gave a party at the church Friday evening in honor of Roland Merrifield and John Cook, former members of the class, who are now home from college for the holidays.

A business meeting was held, at which officers were elected for the coming six months, as follows: Robert Forbes, president; Lutz Metzger, vice-president; Helen Walton, secretary; and Malcolm Jones, treasurer. An enjoyable evening was spent playing games, after which luncheon was served. Twenty members and visitors were present.

ROME (AP)—Italy plans to spend 30,000,000 lire (about \$2,500,000) on its roads this coming fiscal year. Twenty important highways, including the Lake Maggiore road leading to the Swiss frontier, and well known to tourists, will benefit.

Portland.—\$5,000,000 hotel building will be constructed in this city in near future.

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