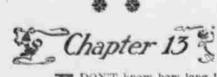
Lady Betty Across the Water

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was before the thought came to me that I would take Vivace and a handbag and run away to Sally, but anyway it was before it had occurred to me to

sit down.

Sally said before she went away that I was to go to her if I felt like it, and Sally always means what she says Now I felt like it so much that it seemed suddenly the only possible thing to do, so all I had to decide was the best way and the best time to do it.

As for the time, if I didn't escape before Mrs. Ess May and Potter formed a hollow square round me to pour their volleys into my heart in the morn all that was prophetic in my soul said I would never escape, but would suffer great confusion and rout,

As for the way, it was more difficult to make up my mind, but the first thing was to see how much money I had in my exchequer, which happened to be a gold purse Sally had given me. I badn's spent much, and since com-

ing over dear old Stan had sent me another fifteen pounds, which he wrote was part of one night's winnings at bridge-unusual for him, if it's true, as Vic thinks that he continually loses. Altogether I had nearly thirty pounds in hand, which seemed a lot, only I didn't know at all how much it would cost for Vivace and me to reach Sally in Chicago, and I couldn't tell until I had got irrevocably away from Mrs Ess Kay and the Moorings.

By this time it was nearly 2 o'clock, and in a couple of hours it would be light. I must sneak out of the house with a dressing bag before any of the servants were stirring, and meanwhile I must pack up all my belongings except such things as Mrs, Ess Kay bad given me-so that I could write and have my boses sent on by and by.

As soon as I had realized that there wasn't a minute to throw away, the worse was over, for I didn't stop to grizzle I finished getting out of my bridesmaid's dress in which I had



danced so gayly a little while ago. dashed a thin frock, a dressing gown

and a few other things into my fitted dressing hag (which was almost too beavy to carry, but not quite, and then stuffed everything else, except a traveling freek, into the boxes that were stored in a huge wardrobe built into the wall.

I made all the haste I could, but I'm not clever at packing, so I heard some clock striking 4, when I had slipped on my thin gray canvas cont and skirt, and was putting on my hat, with cold hands that trembled so much I could hardly stick in the hatpins.

I had been excited enough the day I heard I was to come to Mrs. Ess Kay, but I was twice as excited new when I was going to leave her, I felt rather frightened, still I couldn't belp smiling when I said to myself now little I had thought when I learned the great news about America and Mrs. Ess Kay, in what circumstances 1

should past from her.

Each step Vivace and I took in the corridors and on the stairs seemed to make such an incredible noise in the quiet house that I felt like a runaway elephant cloping with a hippopotamus, but either it wasn't as bad as I thought or every one was lying charmed in a magic sleep, for we got out through a window in the dining room, down the veranda steps and across the lawn without being stopped, as I half ex-

I knew the way to the railway station very well, for I had often been there since I arrived (the last time forbade any other thought. I wanwas when I saw Sally off), but the question was, When would there be a train? And a good deal depended on of any kind at the Grand Central be-Kay and Potter might not exactly have the power to drag me back, I wanted to get as far away from them as I could before they discovered that I had

I was horrified to find when we ar- green hansom with great round port- ing in his pice voice how a wfully sorry est in the train, you know."

rived that, as the Americans say, there was "nothing doing." Not a soul in sight, and there I was, very bot and hysterical, with Vivace and my dressing bag looking like an escaped burglaress. I had been so nervous while I was packing that I'd been afraid of evcrything, even the soap in the soap dish, which had two great blinking bubbles at one end, like a pair of goblin eyes that watched me move, but I was much worse now, and I could have fallen on the neck of the first official person I saw moving about the station after I had waited for perhaps a quarter of an hour. I don't know what he was, but when I appealed to him for news of a train for New York, instead of calling the police to give Vivace and me in charge as a dangerous pair, he scratched his head and said there was a milk train due presently if I was

unighty anxious. A milk train sounded innocent and subable to a girl traveling alone, but even if it hashi't I should have been byulaful to go in it I couldn't buy a ticket, it appeared, in the ordinary

as, but when the milk train came man introduced me to another Perhaps he was a milkman; anyway he seemed to have authority and he said as a favor Vivace and I could be taken. He was a nice person, and he talked a great deal after the train had given several false starts and at last had got off. I sat on my bag, as I had on the docks, in a bare, curious car, which really belonged to the milk, and cometimes when we bumped I should have fallen on the floor if it hadn't been for him. He told me all about himself, and wanted to be told al about me, but I thought, nice as he was, it would be safer not. He asked leading questions which it was loved to keep from answering unless I har his feelings, but I think he somehow got the impression that I was going tsee a sick relative, though I never ex activ sald so

I don't below what time I should have got to New York if I had had to travel all the way with the milk, for milk, it seems, objects to speed, but after we had jogged along for a couple of hours, we crawled into a station where a real train was ready to start. There were just five minutes to say farewell to my friend and buy a ticket, when, all flushed and panting, I found myself and Vivace and the bag in a car different from any I had seen yet. It had no nice easy chairs and plate glass mirrors and wire nettings in the windows, like the one in which I'd traveled to Newport, but there were two rows of seats, and when the train moved a cloud of coal smoke poured In through the door at the front end Babies squalled, children whined and their faces grew black and damp with mingled dirt and heat while grownup people scolded, but a dear old lady got into my seat before long, and just be cause I helped her with a bandbox the made me a present of a huge peach I was thankful to have it, for by this fine I was collapsing with hunger. having been up all night without anything to eat.

The peach made me think of Mr. Brett and the little basket he had sent me on the docks. Then this thought suggested another. He had said he would do anything for me that was in his power, and if he were still in New York it was in his power to help me a good deal. He could tell me how much It would cost to go to Chicago, and he could show me how to get there.

I really believe that at first I hadn't had a thought of seeing him, but once it had got into my head I welcomed it. begged it to sit down and make itself

I could have clapped my hands wit' joy when I saw the Grand Central station and the delightful cafe au lait porters with their red caps. It tooked as familiar and comforting as if I'd passed through a hundred times instead of once, and I had the nice feel ing that now something pleasant was

one first arrives in Paris. Vivace brightened up, too, and he took me out, rather than I him. I was I sat wan hing the door, watching the in such a hurry to get away, for fear that I flew along with my bag and Vivace without waiting for a porter. followed other people out of the station, with the intention of finding a cab and driving to the club where Mr. forgot and let there go, Brett was employed: but, though there were dozens of hansoms drawn up by the pavement, they had the air of being private ones. It did seem queer that so soms waiting for them at this particu-

lar hour (it was half past 12), but the smart coats and bright, clever faces, the glitter of the harness, the newness of the cab linings and appointments all dered wistfully along the line, wondering if there were no public conveyances ing as a procession of African lions. When I came to the end I caught the have unconsciously taken them all in eye of a well groomed young man in a in a flash, for I knew them afterward. pale gray topcoat, looking down from

holes knocked in the staes, and struck me that there was pity kindling in his glance. I snatched at the ray as if it had been that everlasting straw which always seems to be bebbing about when an author is drowning one of his characters.

"Do you think there is anybody who

could drive me?" I luquired meekly. "You bet, miss," said he. "I'm engaged myself or I'd be only too pleased. but you just speak to that other gen tleman there," with an encouraging jerk of his sleek head toward the next vehicle. "He'll take you anywhere you want to go

'Are you sure it isn't a private ban som?" I breathed up to bim in a low. confidential voice, for the cab he had eated was even finer than his, and Standoesn't look as smart on his coach on a coaching parade day in the part as did the gentleman I was recommended

"Sure pop," said my friend, grinulag. but not in a way to hurt my feelings. co I thanked him, and we both bowed very politely, and the new man, who had beard after all, said that none of the hansoms were private. Anybody might have them who could pay, but needa't be afraid; he wouldn't charge me too much.

When he resked where I wanted to go, after all I hadn't the courage to mention the club. The only other place I could think of was the Waldorf As toria, where Potter had said any stranger who liked could walk in and sit down. I told the man to drive me there, so he did, and only charged me 50 cents, which he blated was a very special price. "We don't want you English young ladies to think bad of us," he explained, and I assured him there was no danger of that, if I could judge by myself.

They wouldn't let me go into the Turkish room-which I remembered



Satd there was a milk train due presently if I was mighty anxious

very well-with Vivace, so I had to give him up to be fed and taken care of, and I was obliged to part with my bag too. Then I wrote a note to Mr. Brett, Just a few lines, saying that I was alone in New York, in a little diffculty, and, remembering his kind offer. I ventured to ask if he would come to the Turkish room at the Walderf-Astoria to help me with advice.

A messenger took the letter-such an aggressively brisk child I was sure ha wouldn't waste a second on the wayand as soon as he had gong I was beset with fears lest Mr. Brett should have left New York or lest, ligstill in town he might be surprised or shocked at my taking bim at his word.

I was past being hangry now, but my head ached and I felt dull and sure to happen, which one has when stupid. There was hardly any one ha the Turkish room, for all the works of the Waldorf-Astoria was innehing door until I seemed to have been in Potter might have come after me by a that place doing that one thing and quick train and be looking somewhere, nothing eige for years. My eyelids would keep dropping and my thoughts slipping away as if they flowed past me on a slow stream, I caught them back again and again, but at last I

The next thing I knew I was raising my head with a jerk and opening my eyes to look straight into those of Mr. Brett. It was he, there was no doubt many people should have private han- of that, and yet he was different. In my dreamy state I couldn't think how for an instant, but as I came to myself I saw it was all a question of drivers, with their tall shiny bats, dress. He had perhaps been making money in journalism, for he was no longer good looking in spite of his clothes. He had the most excellent gray flannels or something of the sort, just the right kind of cellar (I know it must be right, for Stan always wears it) and a waistcoat Potter himself that question, for, though Mrs. Ess sides the trams, which were as appall- might have envied. I didn't exactly think of these things then, but I must

By the time the flash had passed we his high seat at the back of a dark | were shaking hands, and he was say-

ne was to have kept me watting. He had been at the club, but owing to . stupid mistake there had been some felay to his getting my letter.

I was even more pleased to see him than I had thought I was going to be. I felt as if I had known him all my life, and he looked so strong and handsome and dependable that I couldn't bear to take my eyes off his face lest I should wake up and find him gonebecause I'd been dreaming him.

"I'll tell you all about everything if you'll sit down," I said, but instead of doing as I asked he inquired with



those of Mr. Brett.

s queer, worried expression on his face whether I had had lunch.

"No; nor breakfast either," I replied quite gayly, but with a watery smile "Good beavens," said he, going as red as if I had accused him of snatching it from my lips. "Then you must have both together before you begin to +-il me anything."

"We might go out and have a sandwich somewhere." I suggested. "There's nothing the matter with the Walderf sundwiches.

"Except that they're expensive," said aren't millionaires."

L. "You must remember you and I "I have been doing pretty well late-

said lie: "I can almost call myself rich. Please have some lunch. I can afford it, and if you refuse I'll know It's because"

I guessed what he might be going to say, so I stapped him

"Nonsense!" I exclaimed. "But I've run away from Mrs. Stuyvesant-Knox. and I don't want to be found. If she or her brother should have come to New York or if anybody else"-

"I've thought of that," said he quickly, "but we've no time to waste. You're starving. If you wouldn't mind my getting you a private dining room and sending you in some lunch"-

"But I want you to be with me." I He evidently besitated, but only for

a minute. I don't think he's the sort of man to besitate long about any thing

"Very well, that's what I'd like best, of course, if you don't mind," he said "I'll go and see to everything, and be back before you can count sixty, if you do It slowly."

I didn't do it at all, but thought how thankful I was that he had come tone for I was sure everything would go right now.

In two or three minutes he came back to take me into a charming little dining room, where there was no danger that Mrs. Ess Kay or Potter could. pounce upon us, as it was for Mr. Brett and me alone. I shuddered to think what it must be costing, but his clothes were so exceedingly good I hoped he hadnit exaggerated about the luck that had come to him.

Naturally & couldn't tell the part of my story which concerned Potter Parker, but I said that Mrs. Ess Kay wanted me-to-do things which I didn't think it right to de, and I couldn't stay in her house even a day longer:

"I should like to go homa." I went on, "but I can't yet, and the only other thing is to join Miss Woodburn in Chiengo. You remember Miss. Woodburn, don't you?" He said he remembered her very

well, had read in the newspapers that; she had left Newport the Chicago and thought it was a wise idea of mine to join her. "I'm glast you think that." said, I,

"for I want to start today, and I hope you'll tell me how to go, how much money it will be, how long it takes to get there and all about it." He didn't answer for a minute, but

sat looking very grave, staring at his brown hand on the white tablecloth as if he'd never seen it before. Then

"Curiously anough, I am going west, to my being in the same train? L wouldn't suggest such a thing, only, you see, as you're a stranger in the country I might be able to help you a

"How splendid!" I exclaimed. "It seems almost too good to be true. You can't fancy what a relief it is to my mind.

He looked pleased at that and said I was very kind, though I should have thought it was the other way round. "I'll get your ticket, then," he went

on. "If you'll give me twenty-five dollars-five pounds, you know-I'll hand you back the change, but I'm afraid it won't be much."

"Change?" I echoed. "Why, I supposed it would be ever so much more than five pounds to get to Chicago, which is almost in central America. isn't it?"

"The people who live there think it's central," said Mr. Brett, "but they make the railroad men keep prices down so that dissatisfied New Yorkers can afford to go and live there. It isn't a bad journey, you'll find. I think it will interest you. You sleep and

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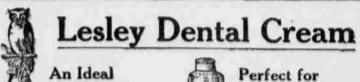
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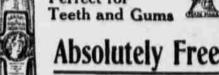




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