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Smart Girl

By George F. Worts
A policeman came running from the corner. He straightened out the snarl, and the ambulance was off again with howling siren and clanging bell. It turned west on Sixty-third.

The redheaded girl said, "Thank heaven!" in a shivery voice of relief. Her part of the job was at last done. Now for the telephone. She glanced at her wrist watch. Three thirty-five. She saw a green coupe pull in at the curb. A man in police uniform got out and went into the building. She felt relieved but a little frightened. The police couldn't find out anything. And Stefan Zorane was, or should be, safe.

Miss Porter turned from the low wall and tiptoed into the living room, carefully closed the door, and tiptoed into the dining room. She heard the murmur of the two men's voices in the kitchen. She returned to the living room and went to the telephone she had seen. She picked it up and dialed a number. She could see herself in a mirror on the wall across the room—a slim, rather tall girl in a blue slicker and a blue hat, with the reddish-golden hair on one side of it chattering and holding tight. For a startled moment, she didn't recognize herself. She was looking at a slender, strange girl. In the dimness of the strange room she looked fragile and romantic.

A middle-aged blond woman in the doorway of Apartment 7-A was angrily denying to two young men in white with a stretcher that there was a man with a broken back in her apartment, or a man without a broken back, or a man of any description.

And in the penthouse kitchen, a curious conversation was taking place between the sunburned man in the chair and his lanky captor. The young man with the rumpled, tan-colored hair was saying cheerfully, "When I was knee-high to a hopped, my grandfather used to tell me that once you've taken a man's gun away, you must never give it back. Of course, if you'd like it delivered somewhere—"

The sunburned man grinned sourly. "Skip it, pal. When I was knee-high to a hiccup, my granddaddy used to tell me that once you've had your gun taken away, it's time to buy a new one."

"You don't care to tell me why you were chasing the young lady?"

Ask her, pal. She knows all the answers. His face was no longer purple; it was lipstick red again. And his eyes were lazy and not afraid.

The lanky young man was regarding him with solicitude. "You look a little pale. Like a drink?"

"I sure would."

"Scotch or bourbon?"

"Bourbon, if it's all the same."

"With ginger ale?"

The sunburned man looked at him reproachfully. "Do I look like the kind that take ginger ale with their bourbon?"

"I apologize. Neat, then?"

"Just a litty-bitty, water pal."

The lanky young man poured a generous drink of bourbon and took the glass to the sink and turned on cold water. "This much?"

The redheaded girl said into the telephone. "Hello? Hello, darling!" She held the transmitter close to her lips, and she talked in a voice that was low and husky but jubilant.

"Listen, darling," she said. "I've just stumbled on something hot for you. I'm sure it's a scoop. I just saw Zorane make a getaway from his apartment in an ambulance!"

"Oh, boy!" the man at the other end said.

"Listen, Barney. I was walking up Park Avenue, just across from his apartment, when an ambulance drove up. Zorane came out of the building dressed as an interne. Believe interne. Are you taking this?"

"Yes," Barney said impatiently. "Keep coming."

"When the interne and the driver went into the building with a stretcher, Zorane jumped off in the ambulance."

"Are you sure it was Zorane?"

"Yes. And I'm sure I saw three of Pop Kresco's men waiting the building. It was all too cute and smooth. Zorane just got in and drove off. The ambulance side-swiped a beer truck, and a traffic cop had to straighten out the jam. Off he went with the siren shrieking and the bell ringing."

"Which way?"

"West on Sixty-third. The time was three thirty-five. I got to a phone as fast as I could. Zorane must have had the interne's suit smuggled to him. He must have phoned for an ambulance, and when it came, met the orderly in the lobby and told him it was a stretcher case, because I saw the driver and the interne go in with a stretcher, and I saw Zorane drive off. Will this help, darling?"

"Sally," Barney answered, "you're a lifesaver. You're God's fury will kiss my hand! I adore you!"

"Well, I think you're very sweet to adore me," the girl said. "In fact I adore you, too. And I'll see you at dinner."

"You bet! And thanks a million my sweet."

When the redheaded girl walked into the kitchen, the two young men looked at her expectantly. The man in the chair had a drink in his hand. There was a strange, gay look in the brown eyes of the lanky young man.

He said briskly, "Do you want this wrapped up and delivered somewhere?"

"No," Miss Porter said. "No, he can go now."

(To Be Continued)

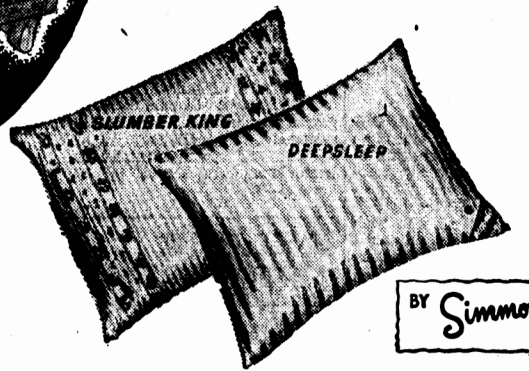
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Name Mover, Second Of Speech From Throne

OTTAWA, Nov. 21.—(CP)—Acting prime minister St. Laurent announced today that J.A. Dion (L.—Lake St. John-Roberval) and J.H. Dickey (L.—Halifax) will act as mover and seconder, respectively, of the Throne Speech to be read at the opening of Parliament Dec. 5.

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