

Miss Maguire looked at it. One leg was gone, one kid hand reduced to fingerless pulp; the nose was rubbed to nothingness, the pink and white glory of color was gone, and dirt was gritted into the wax cheeks. Out of the wreck only the blue eyes shone with undiminished luster.

Miss Maguire had a kind heart bound up with her sentimentalities. - For the moment she forgot how it ached, as she looked at the wretched toy held out in the dirty hand, red and raw from the cold.

"It is," she said, "but the doctor isn't in just now." Alas! And soon the mender of art treasures would be gone forever! "I think it would cost you less to buy a new one than to have that one mended."

"Cost? Ain't this a free hospital?"

The dismay in the old-young eyes was unmistakable. Miss Maguire's emotional nature responded swiftly.

"No, dearie," she said. "What made you think it was?"

"It was a free hospital where they took my mother."

"Oh!" The maker of candle-shades opened the door in the counter that railed her in.

"Come inside," she said, "and maybe, if you tell me something about yourself, I can get you a new doll."

"I don't want a new doll," said the child. "This is my own doll, and I love her."

The little girl held the insensate remnant of past glory close to her breast. The sentiment somehow found echo in Miss Maguire's soul.

"Your mother?" she said. "Did the doctors at the hospital make her well again?"

The child shook her head.

"That is why I wear mourning," she announced, touching the dingy black of her shawl. "And that is why I live with my aunt. She's trying to get me a place. She has too many children of her own."

"How old are you?"

"Eleven. Oh, I forgot! I must say I am fourteen, so as to be let work."

"If you will leave your doll," said Miss Maguire with determination, "it shall be mended for nothing—beautifully mended. Tell me your name and address. Lizzie Brown? All right. Come back to-morrow at the same time, Lizzie. Wait a minute. Don't you want an apple?"

Lizzie nodded hungrily. And that is how it happened that M. Dumond, returning from his hypothetical luncheon, found his fellow artist sitting in a rocker near the register, holding a dirty

little girl upon her lap, while in the little girl's arms a battered doll was clasped.

The sight was too much for the emotional little man.

"Ah, Mademoiselle, you are all goodness, all kindness, all angel, all Madonna!" he burst forth. "No, no!" This as Miss Maguire struggled to put Lizzie upon the floor. "No, no! Let me ever think of you thus—kind, benignant! Ah, I meant to go away saying nothing; but my heart, it will burst if I do not speak! I leave this shop, this paradise, Mademoiselle, because I cannot live in sight of your beauty and goodness and not love it. No, no, I will not hush! I must speak. I loved, I hoped—so kind your way to me, I hoped, I, the presumptuous one, not knowing how you are kind to all! And then I see you are another's. What is there left for me but to leave your presence, to——"

"Another's?"

"Yes. Ah, Mademoiselle, many a night have I walked before your dwelling! And one night—the hall light, Mademoiselle, the glass door, they showed me——"

Miss Maguire burst into tearful laughter.

"Oh, Adolphe!" she cried joyfully. "It was poor Bernard, my cousin! Is that all?"

Lizzie Brown was unfamiliar with romance either in books or upon the stage. It will be some time before she fully comprehends why she lives in the Maguire flat, why she goes to school in the forenoons and spends her afternoons learning the intricacies of the crape paper manufacture and the subtleties of interior decoration in the shop of M. and Mme. Dumond.

At present her clearest conception of the situation is that her doll is restored to her in all its early splendor.

*Katherine Hoffman.*

## The Call of the Quail.

THE quavering call of the quail reverberated through the darkening forest and across the clearing around the rude cabin where the reluctant corn, coaxed by the smiles of summer, cast glints of green athwart the sandy soil.

The little girl looked up from the treasure of wild flowers that she had gathered, clapped her hands in glee, and laughed merrily.

"Listen, papa! They're singin' their babies to sleep."

The man, tall, gaunt, long-bearded, paused with his hoe poised in air, turned

a seamed and kindly face to smile upon the child, and resumed his task.

"Singin' their babies to sleep!" he chuckled, shaking his head. "What a notion!"

A horse and rider, sweaty and mud-spattered, emerged from the forest and halted at the edge of the clearing. The rider was sturdy of form and grim of visage. From the cartridge belt about his waist two holsters swung heavily, their buckled flaps protecting the hidden weapons from mud and moisture.

"Evenin', pardner," he called out. "How far to Mound City?"

The tall man struck the handle of the hoe deep into the damp soil, and approached the horseman with long and leisurely strides.

"'Bout ten mile, straightaway," he answered slowly. "Nearer fifteen as ye'll have to go. Ye're mighty nigh five mile off the road."

"Tried fer a short cut and got lost," explained the other, wiping the mud from his face. "Follered the call of the quail fer luck and heered the little gal laugh, else I wouldn't have found ye in this out-of-the-way place."

"Better light off and take pot luck with us," said the tall man cordially. "Supper's 'most ready. The moon'll be above the trees in a couple of hours, and I'll show ye the way back to the road. It's a bad trail in the dark."

The horseman slipped from the saddle and leaned wearily against the stump of a fallen tree.

"Don't care if I do," he said. "I've come 'bout fifty mile through the mud sence mornin', and the hoss needs rest and a bite of fodder. I've got the money to pay."

"Keep yer money, stranger. Glad to have ye. Mighty seldom we see anybody out here."

"Tain't very public," observed the traveler, smiling. "Ben here long?"

"Seven year this spring."

"Own the place?"

"Only owe a hunderd now," replied the settler proudly, seating himself upon the fallen tree. "But it's took a power of hard work and scrimpin'."

The little girl shyly approached the stranger and gazed up into his face with the curiosity of childhood. The grim visage softened.

"Only one ye got?" he asked.

"Only one now—there was a little feller."

The child turned her face upward toward the twilight stars.

"He's up yonder now," she murmured, the little mouth quivering.

The eyes of the two men met. The stranger put his arm about the child and drew her closer.

"I've got one up there, too," he said softly. "The only one we had—a little gal."

There was a moment's silence; then the tall man asked: "Have to make Mound City to-night?"

"Yes. Want to git back to Montana soon as I kin."

"Montana! Ye didn't come from that direction!"

"No, had a little bizness in Pierre fust—with the Guvner."

The tall man slipped forward on the tree and drew his long limbs under him, like a panther about to spring.

"Montana, eh? What county?"

"Teton."

"Teton!" muttered the other, dropping his head. Then he looked up and remarked: "Ye go purty well heeled, even for a man from Montana."

"Yes. Have to in my bizness."

There was a long silence; then the tall man said quietly:

"Lottie, run in and tell mamma we'll have company fer supper—a man from Montana—Teton County. He's goin' on to Mound City to-night."

"'Quainted in Mound City?" asked the man from Montana.

"Some. Don't go often."

"Know a feller named Hungerford—Bill Hungerford?"

The questioner was still gazing after the little girl, and did not see the glare, like that of an enraged rattlesnake, that flashed from the tall man's steel-gray eyes.

"Hungerford? Yes, I reckon I know him."

"Friend of yourn?"

"Wust enemy!"

The man from Montana regarded the tall man long and earnestly. Then he asked carelessly:

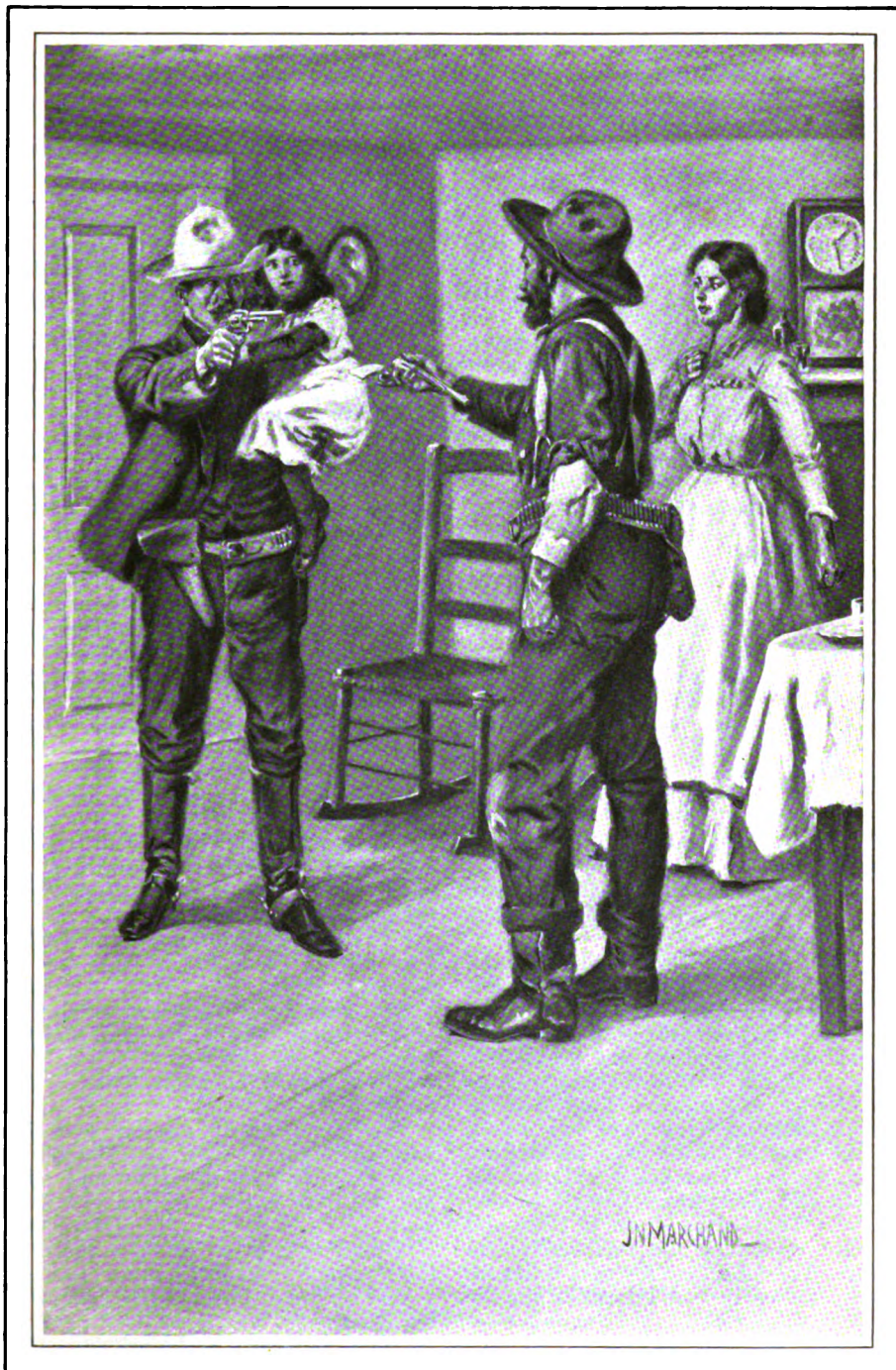
"Like to git even and make that hunderd dollars?"

"How?"

The man from Montana glanced around cautiously and leaned forward, his hands on the tall man's knees.

"Looky here, pardner, I believe ye're all right. I'm the deputy sheriff of Teton County, and there's a warrant and requisition for Bill Hungerford in my pocket—only his name's Frayne, Phil Frayne. What's the matter?"

"Nothin'. Thought I heered a rattler. Go on."



"GIVE ME THAT GUN—BUTT FOREMOST!"

"Well, he's been hidin' out in Mound City for eight year, goin' by the name of Hungerford, and I've jest located him. I

never seen him, and I need a little help. If I call on the sheriff at Mound City I'll have to split the reward. You come along

and lend a hand, and ye git that hunderd dollars."

"What's Bill been doin'?"

"Shot a man named Miller. Reckon he had to, to save his own hide; but Miller was a sport with a pull, and the gang 'll swear against Frayne. That ain't my lookout—I'm after that reward. It's easy money fer you. What d'ye say?"

"Stranger, it's resky. He's a desperate man, and as quick with a gun as—I am."

"And how quick air you?" asked the man from Montana banteringly.

Reaching to his guest's nearest holster, the tall man unbuckled the flap and drew forth a revolver, gold-mounted, with curiously carved and modeled stock. He sprang from his seat with an exclamation of surprise. The man from Montana grinned proudly.

"Ain't she a beauty? Try her."

A screaming blue-jay flew swiftly overhead. There was a quick movement of the long arm, a flash, and a report, and the shattered body of the bird whirled to the earth. The man from Montana smothered an ejaculation of wonder. The little girl called from the cabin door:

"What you shoot for, papa?"

"To skeer a hawk," the tall man called back to her.

"A beauty, sure," he concurred, caressing the weapon with his left hand. "Is t'other one like it?"

"No. I give the mate away."

"What fer?"

The man from Montana reached down, plucked a blade of grass, and chewed it meditatively.

"'Twas this way. I'd busted up a gang of train robbers, killed some, and some got away—that's why the company give me the guns. What was left of the gang got together and trapped me one night in a shanty ten mile out of Choteau—same night Miller was killed. They made a rush and broke my right arm with a ball. 'Twould have been all over in another minute, when a feller comes gallopin' up the trail and opens fire. Never seen sich shootin'. Three went down to stay, and the other two broke and run, one of 'em limpin'. The feller had his coat collar up and cap pulled down. I'd run from the shanty to some rocks, and he couldn't see me.

"Stay right where ye air," he yells. "I don't know ye, and don't want to. No thanks comin'. I'm allers fer the under dog," says he. "All I ask's another gun and some cartridges," he says.

"I'd dropped one gun when my arm was hit. The feller got off his hoss and picked

it up. I didn't kick—he could have had both fer the askin'. Then he took a belt of cartridges from one of my dead friends, and got on his hoss and galloped off. That's how it was."

The tall man balanced the weapon admiringly in his tanned right hand.

"Now, supposin'—jest supposin'," he said slowly, "that ye had a warrant fer that man fer—well, say fer murder, and there was a reward—say a thousand dollars—and ye was the only man as knowed where he was, would ye take him?"

The man from Montana shifted around the stump uneasily.

"That's a hard one, pardner. It would be a dirty trick, wouldn't it? But a thousand dollars don't grow on every bush, and I need 'em bad."

"And, in course, Miller's friends know ye've found Bill?" ventured the tall man.

"Not mucchee! I'm too smooth fer that. Nobody knows but me. Worked this up myself. The rest give it up long ago. Even the Guvner's signed without readin'. It's an every-day thing with them."

The man from Montana was smiling shrewdly, and watching the hungry horse crop the grass. The muzzle of the weapon in the hand of the tall man was swinging slowly toward him; the tanned forefinger was tightening on the trigger. The slight form of a woman appeared at the door of the cabin.

"Supper's ready," she called.

At sight of her the steel-gray eyes softened, the deadly muzzle dropped, the tanned forefinger relaxed.

"Take yer gun, stranger, and lead the hoss to the shed. I'll be with ye in a minute."

The man from Montana watched the other striding toward the cabin and muttered:

"Now, how'd he know 'twas a thousand?"

The woman, with anxious eyes filled with the light of love, watched the tall man as he entered the cabin and took a belt with its holster from a peg in the wall.

"What ye goin' to do?" she asked, laying a trembling hand on his arm.

The tall man buckled the belt around his waist.

"That depends. Ef he ever gits to the sheriff the jig's up; but the trail's mighty slippery 'round the clay bluff, and the river's high."

"Oh, Phil, don't! It's bad enough now, and——"

The man from Montana stood in the door. The child ran laughing to him,

holding out her hands. The stranger came into the room, stooped down, raised her on his left arm, and whispered something in her ear.

"Why, my name's Lottie—Lottie Hungerford," she laughed.

The revolver leaped from the tall man's holster, but the woman caught his arm, and he looked down the muzzle of the weapon in the hand of the Montana man.

"Hands up," the deputy growled, "and give me that gun—butt foremost—keep yer fingers outside the guard! Ye played me purty smooth, but it's——" His eyes fell upon the extended weapon, carved and gold-mounted, and he started back.

"You're the man I gave my other gun to!" he cried.

The tall man nodded. The woman held out her hands appealingly. The child threw her arms round the stranger's neck.

"Please don't hurt my papa!" she sobbed.

The threatening weapon trembled, drooped, and dropped into its holster. The man from Montana held out his hand.

"The gal wins," he said huskily; "the gal and the gun. But it's lucky for you that I follered the call of the quail."

*Frank Neilson.*

### The Diplomacy of Silas.

THE gate clicked sharply. Silas Bolton looked up. His wife, with a couple of bundles, was hastening down the road. He stared, then broke out:

"I swan, Joanner's going for her bill! Well, let 'er, and much good may it do 'er! The calf-pen's going to be right here just the same, and my impl'ments and tools in the back-yard, or anywhere else I please to put 'em!"

He enjoyed this thought until it occurred to him that there would be no one now to care what he did.

"Queer, mighty queer," he soliloquized. "Been a pulling and a yanking to have my own way, and now there's nobody to interfere I don't care shucks about it!"

He wandered around, feeling like a stranger. He and Joanna had lived on the farm for more than thirty-five years; their three children had been born and married in the old-fashioned house. He had missed the children, but there was always Joanna. Now—well, he supposed he would get used to it.

He picked up an armful of boards and carried them behind the barn. That was the place for the calf-pen! He dragged a plow out of the yard, and collected some tools in a pile to be hauled to the shed.

Then, taking note of his movements, he desisted with a feeling of self-scorn and went into the house.

"Yes, sir, gone for good! Got her duds all packed to be sent for!"

The deserted rooms echoed drearily to his footsteps; loneliness cried to him from all the corners. In the kitchen the table was filled with fresh baking.

"Last she's going to do here." He swallowed hard. "Left a lot, to do me till I can make arrangements."

At the cellar door a loose board tripped him. "There's that consarned old step I wouldn't fix 'cause I hardly ever used it; and that rickety door no woman ought to 'a' tussled with like s'he has; but Joanner never shirked. She made the best of what she had. She's been sharp and cutting with her tongue sometimes, but I reckon I have, too—and I've hogged things! The whole farm's been mine, and I begrudged 'er the door-yard! I've druv her checked so high she couldn't see her feet. I've penned her up till she couldn't turn round—now she's broke loose and jumped the fence!"

He straightened the plants on which he had trampled, and repaired as much as he could of the damage he had done to her flower-bed, which he had included in the new calf-pen. He kept up his muttering.

"I swan, I never thought she'd do it! I reckoned it was just contrariness, her threatening to get a bill. A man ought to boss the place, but he needn't be a hog—he don't want *all* the trough! I wonder if she'll—I swan!" he broke off suddenly. "What 'm I thinking of, letting her walk to town?"

In a few minutes he was speeding after Joanna in considerable excitement. It was almost as if she was going to ride back with him as usual. At any rate, he would see her, and perhaps have a chance to tell her that he could see that he hadn't always done the fair thing.

She was in her second mile before he overtook her. He swallowed again at sight of the shaker bonnet he had got her so long ago.

"Hadn't you better ride, Joanner? It's considerable warm," he said, halting beside her.

The shaker bonnet turned neither to the right nor left, and he sat and watched it gradually vanish down the hill, reappear on the opposite hill, and again vanish around a curve.

He could not go back with this heavy sense of defeat, and he would not! She should speak to him, if in anger only.

He soon overtook her. She had hur-