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W. N. U., BALTIMORE, NO. 8--1920.

Breaking a Record.

We had bought a new phonograph. A number of friends called one evening and I was proudly pointing out the good qualities and fine workmanship. Picking up a disk, I said, "This record is unbreakable. You can let the children play with it or drop it on the floor and it will in no way injure it." I proceeded to demonstrate by dropping the record on the floor, when to my amazement and the extreme delight of my audience it broke in a thousand bits, and I could only stammer, "It—it must have been de-defective."—Exchange.

The Reason.

"What are you storming about so for?" "We're having a thundering good time."

Cuticura for Sore Hands.

Soak hands on retiring in the hot suds of Cuticura Soap, dry and rub in Cuticura Ointment. Remove surplus Ointment with tissue paper. This is only one of the things Cuticura will do if Soap, Ointment and Talcum are used for all toilet purposes.—Adv.

Read not to contradict and to confute nor to believe and take for granted, but to weigh and consider.

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Write for free Eye Care Book Murine Co., Chicago, U.S.A.

The House of Whispers

By WILLIAM JOHNSTON

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UP TO DATE GHOSTS

Fiction readers who like haunted houses and mysterious noises in the night, and ghost doings that baffle explanation, should stop, look, and read right here. For "The House of Whispers" is well named. It's even more fascinating than the old-time haunted house, because it's a mystery apartment in a big city building—the lovely heroine, for instance, can creep along a ledge from one window to another in the dead of night, and a wonderful pearl necklace can disappear from a wall-safe and find its way back again, and the superintendent and his employees can fasten a charge of murder on the hero, and there might be room in the walls for secret passageways. But there is nothing new-fashioned or queer about the loyalty and devotion of the heroine for her lover in trouble; it's the same glorious thing that has thrilled us all ever since true love ceased to run smooth. And of course she gets the reward that she deserves—and they live happily ever after.

CHAPTER I.
—1—

With an exclamation of annoyance I crumpled up the note from my great-uncle Rufus and flung it on the floor. My disappointment at its contents was the one thing needed to complete the utter misery of a wretched day.

Only that morning my roommates, Birge and Roller, fortunate fellows, had been informed that their applications for the ambulance service had been accepted. Our year of happy companionship had come to an abrupt end.

"Cheer up, old man," cried the optimistic Birge, "your luck will change some time."

"Right," said Roller, as he stooped to give a final tug to the straps of his new kit bag, "a chap as crazy about Adventure as you are is bound to meet her soon."

"Stop it," I cried in desperation. "It is you two who are to have the great opportunity. Soon you'll be seeing shrapnel burst, airplanes battling, regiments charging, heroes dying, and I—I'll be sitting here alone in a hall-room, eating my heart out with lonesomeness and envy, spending my days at an uncongenial desk, and my nights, God knows how, after you fellows have gone."

"You never can tell," chirped old Birge, "all kinds of strange things happen right here in New York. You may be the one that has had a bellyful of adventure before we return—if we do."

His last three words gave us all a sobering thought. There was a chance, more than a chance, that never again on this earth would we three be together again. Eight of our college mates had preceded Birge and Roller to the great battlefield. Already three of them lay in hero graves somewhere under the lilies of France.

The silence of a sad parting fell on us. The taxicab came and we drove together to the pier with hardly a word spoken.

As we shook hands at the gangplank old Roller spoke again, a glisten of tears in his eye, something almost prophetic in his voice.

"Nelson," he said, "I feel it in my bones that something is going to happen to you soon, something thrilling."

"I wish to God something would!" I answered bitterly.

Disconsolately I waved them a last adieu from the dock. In a black mood I railed against the fate that had left me behind, poignantly lamenting the lack of the eight hundred dollars that would have set me free to accompany them.

Two letters, thrust under the door in lodging-house fashion, awaited my homecoming. One of them I recognized at once as my mother's weekly billet of good advice, and tossed aside to be read when I was in a better frame of mind. The other was in a cramped, unfamiliar handwriting. As I studied the envelope curiously a suspicion as to the writer's identity flashed into my mind and eagerly I tore it open. My great-uncle, Rufus Gaston, was an old, old man. It must be from him. What could he be writing to me about? Rufus Gaston was rich—worth many millions.

It was merely an invitation to dine with him and his wife. Disgustedly I flung it aside. It capped the climax of my dissatisfaction with everything. Here were my two chums starting off to the war, and here was I, Spalding Nelson, twenty-six, strong in physique, save for a "football knee" that had barred me from military service, thirsting for excitement, left behind in the prosaic business world and now bidden to an uninteresting meal with two decrepit old relatives. I made up my mind not to answer the note. My great-uncle Rufus could go hang, for all of his millions. I would not go near him.

The sight of my mother's letter lying unopened on my desk served to recall to me that it was she who had prevented my going. Poor mother! She and I had been at cross-purposes ever since my father's death while I was a youngster. It seemed to me that always she had opposed everything I wanted to do.

After I left college she had found a place for me in the office of one of my father's friends in the little western city where our home was. I had been two years getting away to join Birge and Roller in New York. Most of all she had set herself against my going to France. She did not believe in war. I was the only man left in the family. She was far from well. If anything should happen to her, my young sisters had only me to look to. When these pleas had failed to move me she had not hesitated to remind me that I was in her debt.

Unfortunately this was true. My years at college had cost me more than my small patrimony. I had borrowed freely from her, expecting soon to be able to repay her. Like all young graduates I had vastly overestimated my earning capacity. Three years had elapsed and I still owed her eight hundred dollars.

"I do not see," she had written me, "how you can honorably feel free to go while you are in my debt. To furnish you funds at college your mother and sisters practiced many economies. The girls are now reaching an age when their expenses will be much greater. I need the money for them. The least you can do is to pay it back before you give up your position and go off on wild-goose chases."

For this argument I could find no answer. My obligation to her was a debt of honor that must be paid before I could be my own master. Each week I had been putting away five dollars, and as it accumulated had been sending her a money order.

While I was debating what to do I began to read my mother's latest letter. The first part of it repeated her many arguments. She wrote:

"Two days ago I received a letter from my father's brother, Rufus Gaston, upon whom you called when you first went to New York. He asked about you and made me a proposition concerning you. I did not venture to give him an answer. Your views and mine are so seldom in accord. I gave him your address and suggested that he write to you himself. Probably he has done so by this time."

Hastily I rescued my great-uncle's crumpled note from the floor and smoothed it out. If Rufus Gaston—with his millions and no direct heir—had made a proposition concerning me, his letter took on a vastly more interesting complexion. Carefully I reread it, seeking for some hidden meaning between the lines, but it gave no clue to what he had in mind. He merely expressed the hope that I would be able to dine with him and his wife informally next Thursday evening.

What could it mean? It was at least well worth looking into. Mr. Gaston was seventy-four. He had made a fortune in the South American trade, retiring at sixty-five. There was only himself and his wife. On the Gaston side, through my mother, my sisters and I were the only blood relations. I wondered if it could be that old Rufus was thinking of making me his heir—heir to the Gaston millions!

As I penned a cordial acceptance of his dinner invitation I determined to set myself to pleasing the old couple, whom I had met only once, on the occasion of my call. A few years ago I would have despised the thought of catering to wealth, but since I had discovered how difficult it was to earn money and how much more difficult to save it, my views had changed.

I could hardly wait for the day he had set for me to dine with them to arrive. I found myself approaching their residence fully three-quarters of an hour before the time named. When I discovered how early I was I decided to loiter in the park for a few minutes. Old Rufus recently had given up his Avenue residence and now lived in one of those stately apartment buildings erected in the East Eighties. I turned into Central park opposite my great-uncle's street and dropped into the first bench I came to, depositing beside me a bunch of roses I had purchased as my first move toward winning my great-aunt's affections. Lighting my pipe I gave myself up to pleasant reveries, from which I was aroused by finding my roses tossed suddenly to the ground at my feet.

"Pardon me," I said indignantly, "but those belong to me."

"Benches ain't for bundles," croaked an evil voice beside me.

Recovering my flowers, I turned to find seated beside me a rat-eyed young fellow, cheaply dressed, eyeing me with an insolent stare. As I looked at him he began crowding over toward me. Plainly it was his intention to oust me from the bench.

"There's plenty of room on those other benches over there," I suggested resentfully.

"Beat it yourself if you don't like it here," he retorted, blowing the smoke from a cheap cigarette in my face. "I got a date here, and I'm going to stay, see?"

I answered with an angry retort and hot words followed. We had almost come to blows when the bushes opposite us suddenly parted. I caught sight for just a second of a villainous face, that of a man about forty, an unforgettable face with a red scar across the left cheek. He raised one finger in an imperative gesture, signaling to my unwelcome companion on the bench. With a profane exclamation of dismay, the rat-eyed fellow sprang up and walked hastily away along the park path. Wondering what it was all about, I watched him out of sight around a turning of the asphalt and then glanced toward the apartment house where in a few minutes I was to be a guest.

As I looked a young girl came out of the house and walked slowly toward the park. At the corner she hesitated. She seemed to be debating whether to continue on down the avenue or to turn into the park. Apparently the lure of the greenery won her, for she came on slowly toward where I was sitting. As she drew nearer I observed her with interest, for she was one of the prettiest girls I ever had seen. Her slim figure, her dainty ankles, her carriage, everything about her suggested the patrician. Her face, rosy and youthful, was set off by a jaunty feathered toque, from under which a pair of soft, black, roguish eyes, shaded by long lashes, looked out above a dainty nose, just a bit tip tilted, on either side of which a fugitive dimple played.

To my great amazement she walked right up to me and stopped short. I observed then that she seemed to be greatly agitated. Involuntarily I sprang to my feet and removed my hat, feeling certain that she had mistaken me for someone else.

She looked straight at me with an odd tightening of the lips. Into her great dark eyes came a look in which pride and fear seemed to mingle with utter loathing.

"I am here," she said.

In my confusion I mumbled something, I hardly knew what. She looked me up and down with a puzzled air and raised her hand to a red carnation she was wearing.

"You were to wear one, too."

"I don't understand," I answered.

"Didn't you," she asked hesitatingly, "didn't you come here about the papers—"

"What papers?"

"You know—"

"I don't know," I replied. "I know nothing about any papers. You must have mistaken me for someone else."

"But this was the place—this bench—the first bench?"

"I sat down here quite by accident."

"Oh!" she exclaimed with a sigh of relief. "And you're not wearing a red carnation, either."

I recalled then with misgiving that the ill-favored youth who just a moment ago had disputed the bench with me had been wearing a red carnation, and that he had muttered something about having a date. Yet it did not seem possible that a girl of this sort



"You Were to Wear One, Too."

would be having a rendezvous with a scamp like him. I determined if possible to ascertain the girl's mission.

"I am merely waiting here," I hastened to explain, "until it is time for me to keep a dinner engagement with some relatives in the apartment house from which you came."

As I spoke I noticed that the fear and loathing had vanished from her eyes and that she was looking with relief at a little college pin I was wearing. She was blushing now from confusion at her mistake, and the rising red in her cheeks added greatly to her exquisite loveliness.

"I was to meet someone here," she faltered; "you quite understand, don't you?"

"I understand perfectly," I answered, and recalling the scar-faced man who had been lurking in the bushes, I hurried on to say, "but if I can be of any service—"

"No, no," she sobbed, apparently overwhelmed by whatever it was that was besetting her. "It's nothing—nothing anyone can help."

"Tell me about the man you were to meet here."

"Who are you?" she demanded, her suspicion suddenly rising at my question. "You're not a detective?"

"Far from it," I answered amusedly. "I'm just plain Spalding Nelson, on my way to dine with my great-uncle Rufus Gaston."

"Oh!" she said, relieved, "their apartment is on the same floor as ours."

"Tell me about the man you were to meet," I insisted. "I may have seen him."

"Did you? What was he like?" she demanded eagerly.

"Don't you know him?" I countered.

"No, I never saw him. I don't even know who he is. I only know that there was to be a man waiting here on this bench this evening. We were both to wear red carnations. I was to come here alone, to see him and to get the—"

She stopped abruptly and tearing off the flower she was wearing, trampled it viciously under her foot.

"Not so loud," I warned her, fearful lest they might still be lurking about and overhear us. "There were two of them."

"Two," she whispered, turning pale.

"Yes, one waiting here on this bench, and the other, a villainous scar-faced fellow, hiding in the bushes yonder."

"I dare not go on with it," she sobbed, "I dare not! I dare not! Oh, what shall I do?"

"The thing to do now," I replied, "is for you to let me accompany you back to your home. They will make no further attempt to meet you this evening, since my presence has spoiled their plans. Come, let me escort you, Miss . . ."

As I hesitated over the name she answered simply:

"Bradford—Barbara Bradford."

She pondered for a moment over my suggestion and then turned to walk with me toward the apartment house.

"What were the men like?" she asked.

I described them as best I could, though really the impression that the youth on the bench had left was vague. His voice, an insolent, hoarse, uncultivated one, was almost all I could recall about him.

"I wonder who they were? I wonder how they knew?"

"Knew what?"

Her lips tightened into a straight line.

"I can't tell you. I daren't. It isn't my secret."

By this time we had reached her home and the bowing doorman was swinging back the great iron door for us. It had been my intention to announce my arrival, but recalling that Miss Bradford had said that the Gaston apartment was on the same floor as hers, I stepped with her into the elevator. When it had descended, leaving us together in the corridor, she turned to me and offered her hand.

"Thank you so much, Mr. Nelson."

"I wish you'd let me help you," I cried.

She shook her head.

"Well, promise me one thing," I insisted.

"What is it?"

"That you never again will go alone to the park to meet those men."

A tremor shook her body, and once more a look of terror crept into her eyes.

"I can't promise that. I must meet them. I must! I must!"

I reached out and took her hand.

"Promise me, then, that before you go again you will let me know."

"You must not try to stop my going," she cried desperately and freeing her hand turned quickly and unlocking her door left me standing there alone, staring after her.

Perplexed beyond measure as to what I ought to do, after a moment I pressed the bell and was admitted to the Gaston apartment and to the presence of my aged relatives.

Under the same roof with the heroine.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

MYTHS OF SEA "MONSTERS"

Remarkable Denizens of the Deep Said to Be Merely Creatures of the Imagination.

The appearance of wandering herds of sea lions along the shores of southern California reminds of the perennial stories about monsters of the deep. Some scientists have believed the rare specimens of "oar fish," which sometimes reach the surface, might be mistaken for sea monsters. Some of these fish are twenty feet long. Unfortunately, they are so adapted to lives at great depth they cannot live at the surface. Records show that two have been washed upon California beaches.

Many stories of sea monsters are the fruits of some excitable person's imagination. There are many things about the sea which might readily start such an imagination working. The sea is so large, and hides so many secrets, that such a person might readily believe that, if anyone objected to his story, he could say the monster disappeared. Then who could prove he had not seen it?

Various people have had traditional myths and legends about sea monsters and those probably have helped in keeping general interest in such stories now. The Norse tales are the most numerous and vivid.

Opportunity Everywhere.

The limits of what a man may grow into are found in himself. Men are so busy talking about their rights that they fail to see what is their opportunities. Men have risen to power because they have made brain and brawn work together. The world has rewarded them for it. When confidence is placed in a man the world gives him unlimited opportunity. It is then he must grow into a larger sphere or stay among the men of lost vision. If some people would cease trying to regulate the world and take a hand in regulating their own discontent there would be decided progress. Success after all is a matter of growing out of the old and into the new with ever increased development and power.

Reached Its Destination.

A little boy was given a penny to give to the Lord at church. He returned home to report that not seeing God around he gave his penny to the man with a plate.

DADDY'S EVENING FAIRY TALE



THE WHISTLING KITE.

"Well, good-day to all the birds in the zoo," said the Whistling Kite. "I must say I am glad to see you. It's quite a long journey which I have taken."

"No longer than I took," said the White Goshawk.

"Well, let us tell how long each of us had of a journey," said the Whistling Kite.

"How strangely you talk," said the White Goshawk. "But then you haven't been here long. Soon you will do better. You will talk so we can understand you, for we can, naturally, understand bird language."

"Pray forgive me if I talk strangely," said the Whistling Kite. "I haven't been here long and maybe I am not yet over the effects of the journey. At any rate I can use that as my excuse."

"To be sure you can," said the White Goshawk, "for every one is always saying something of the sort after a journey. I've heard it many times. In fact, it is what is only expected of you. I believe creatures would feel badly if others didn't tell them they were still feeling the effects of a journey!"

"I am from Australia," said the Whistling Kite.

"So am I," said the White Goshawk, "and from Tasmania, too. At least I



"A Good Pair."

am from Australia, but the family live in Tasmania, too."

"Then," said the Whistling Kite, "we can talk over the good old scenes together, can't we?"

"Tell me," said the White Goshawk, "what is your favorite food? It is always well to find that out about creatures. It's such an important thing."

"Well," said the Whistling Kite, "I like some pretty queer kind of food. I eat quite a lot of horrible stuff that other creatures wouldn't touch—such as stuff that is old and far from fresh.

"Then, I like small creatures, too, and I am a good worker and also eater when it comes to destroying bad insects who would destroy trees and shrubs and plants.

"I destroy them before they get a chance to do any bad work and therefore I do a good work by destroying bad creatures.

"In that way I'm useful to folks, and I'm a whistler as you could tell by my name."

"Yes, I could tell that," said the White Goshawk, "just as you would know I was white by my name. Haven't I lovely white feathers?"

"You most certainly have," said the Whistling Kite.

"Well, some folks think my relations were gray but as I haven't any of those relations around now, folks aren't quite sure whether I've had those relatives or not.

"But because I am white I have a lot of luck."

"How is that?" asked the Whistling Kite.

"When I am seeking after prey, when I am hunting, or marketing or destroying or whatever you want to say, I have a great deal of luck for creatures think I'm a harmless white cockatoo and they don't bother to get out of my way.

"The white cockatoo is very harmless—that is quite true, but I go after my prey quite differently.

"But I have wonderful luck because they mistake me for another creature and they just help me to catch them!"

"That is luck," said the Whistling Kite. "But you can't fool them here, can you?"

"No," said the White Goshawk, "the zoo people know who I am and what I am and they have a notice in front of my cage which says I'm a white goshawk and not a white cockatoo.

"They've put the cockatoo family in another bird room, anyway,—or bird house, or whatever you want to call it."

"I'm glad they have put me beside you," said the Whistling Kite. "We'll make a good pair to talk to each other, for I'm not too fussy about the queer kind of food I can eat and you're a gay old deceiver, making creatures think you were harmless when you were going after them, and making them assist you in conquering them!"

"Dear me," said the White Goshawk, "the Whistling Kite is already talking in a very grand manner, very grand indeed!"

Miserable Comforters.

Why was Job always cold in bed? Because he had such miserable comforters.

Where the Horizon Is.

Little Arthur, taking part in a geography examination, should be awarded a prize for his definition of "horizon," which is as follows: "The horizon is where the sky and the water meet—only they don't."

Worst Thing About Riches.

"What is the worst thing about riches?" asked the teacher of the juvenile class.

"The scarcity," promptly answered the bright youth at the head of the class.

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