

Lighted Windows

By EMILIE LORING
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SYNOPSIS
THE STORY SO FAR: Janice Trent runs away from wedding Ned Paxton, rich, but a gay blade. Disguised as a tubercular youth, she becomes camp secretary in Alaska where Bruce Harcourt had been made chief, replacing Jos Hale who had been going down hill. Janice keeps out of sight of Bruce, who knows her. But one day, while visiting the cabin of the Samp sisters, who run the Waffle Shop, he sees her asleep in a chair. Jimmy Delevan, the secretary, is the very Janice whom he had on his last visit to New York impulsively advised not to marry Paxton. He decides camp is no place for a woman, but Tubby Grant, his assistant, thinks it's hard to get a good secretary in the wilderness. Janice tells Bruce her story. Now continue with the story.

CHAPTER V

"And then?" asked Harcourt. Janice went on:
"I saw you. I clutched at your suggestion that we go out for dinner. Suppose my resentment proved but a wooden sword of defense against Ned Paxton's persuasive smile, suppose it broke, I asked myself. If I were out of the house when he came, its strength wouldn't be tested. And then as we talked all my old liking for you, my trust in you, came sweeping back. You sold me Alaska. When you spoke of the secretary you couldn't get I had an inspiration. After my first year in Society with a large S, feeling as futile as a goldfish in a crystal bowl, bored to tears by the ceaseless round of teas and dinners and dances, of ushering here, selling something there, I plunged into a secretarial course and made good, rather exceptionally good. Father lost his money before he died. I had the choice of three alternatives: marriage, living on my brother, or getting a job. The first was no longer to be considered; the second was an impossible situation. Why should I not take that Alaskan position? Remember that I observed that there would be dozens of girls ready to go?"

"I do."
"Well, later in that sleepless night I began to wonder why you should have been the man out of all the hundreds astir in the city to appear at the dramatic moment to pick up my slipper. You had acknowledged that you believed that there was an unknown force in the world which no one as yet understood. That force wouldn't bother with me the second time, I argued, if I were dumb enough to ignore its attempt to help. Was this my chance to earn a living, to escape the publicity which my cancelled wedding would broadcast? Remember that you said that young trees grow more sturdy after transplanting?"

"They don't bring plants from a hothouse to this wilderness and expect them to grow."
"Perhaps they don't, Bruce, but I'll take a chance that I'll flourish."

Harcourt steeled himself against her charm. "Go on! Explain Jimmy Delevan."

"Mussolini! Holding my nose down to the grindstone of facts, aren't you? I devoted two days to thinking the situation through, while at the same time I superintended the return of wedding presents. I knew that so far as the work went I could do it. I decided to try for the position, to put thousands of miles between myself and Ned Paxton."

"Do you still love him so much?"

"I wonder now if it was love. This northern country has done things to my sense of values. To proceed with the story of my young life—I left New York stealthily—to evade reporters—with my trousseau—almost all of it—I remembered what you said about the chic women—and a few cherished possessions. I had told Billy that I had broken with Paxton. He was white with relief. Then one day I slipped away leaving a note, telling him not to try to find me."

"That was what I did. I went to Seattle. It had seemed delightfully easy when I planned it. Imagine my amazed consternation when I found that the agency at which I applied would not send a girl to an engineers' camp in Alaska."

"At least there is one man in the business with sense."

"Don't growl! I settled down to constructive thinking. I remembered a newspaper story of an English woman who for years had passed herself off as a man, remembered that because of the husky note in my voice I had taken men's parts in dramatics. Good old subconscious had done the trick. I would apply as a boy. A dye for my hair, a low drawn hat, Prince of Wales style, tweed suit, a hectic, a super hectic flush on my cheeks to suggest a reason for my exile, and lo, Jimmy Delevan evolved."

"And one darnfool agent fell for you?"

"With a groan of relief he swallowed me, bait, hook and sinker, signed me on the dotted line."

"I have no words in which to express my opinion of your infernal recklessness in coming to this wilderness!"

"You are doing fairly well. Stop pacing the floor as though you were an Alaskan bear and listen. I'll acknowledge that for a moment the silence, the wildness, the terrific expanse of land, sea and sky got me by the throat. I hadn't had the slightest conception of what the word Alaska stood for, this part of it. When later I thought of the clothes I had brought—trunks of them—ordered and designed for the prospective wife of a millionaire, the table linen and bedding I had selected from my bountiful supply, for the first time in my life I touched the borderland of hysterics. I laughed till I cried. But I licked the fear-complex. I'm here."

She rose laughing, exultant, lovingly. "And I have made good, yes? Haven't I, Mr. Grant?" she demanded of the man who entered the cabin with the husky at his heels. The dog thrust his nose into the girl's hand. Every hair of Blot, the black cat, bristled as though electrified.

"I'll say you have. What's he going to do?"

Harcourt looked from Grant's round, smooth face, with its belligerent green eyes, to Janice's. A man like Paxton wouldn't let such



"They don't bring plants from the hothouse to this wilderness and expect them to grow."

a lovely girl slip away. She was safe here. The outfit needed her. "Jimmy Delevan goes."

At Grant's sharp protest and an indignant exclamation from Janice he held up his hand.

"Wait a minute! Your secretary stays, Tubby, but only as Miss Trent. And if she stays she will do exactly as I say." Ignoring her indignant protest, he went on: "Make up your mind to it—otherwise there is a boat going out tomorrow—and you go with it."

His jaw set grimly. How a feminine invasion could mess up a situation! His turmoil of mind was reflected in his voice.

"Does Jimmy Delevan go or does Miss Trent stay?"

"Miss Trent stays," the girl assured promptly.

"Then she is not to report for work until after the boat goes out tomorrow." Without waiting for an answer Harcourt crossed to the door.

As he walked toward his office his thoughts returned to Janice Trent. She had run away from her prospective bridegroom because she didn't trust him, yet loved him so much she didn't dare stay. His lips tightened.

The Hales would be off tomorrow. Millicent was sweet and much to be pitied, but she had claws, and he had a conviction that she would scratch deep and raggedly where other women were concerned. She had reigned as queen in this outpost camp. She would not abdicate gracefully.

At the door of his office he collided with a man coming out. His red face registered relief.

"Been looking for you everywhere, Chief."

"What's wrong?"

"Hale! Had a slight shock. We radioed to Fairbanks to ask if we should take him to the hospital by plane. Answer came, 'No! Keep him there.'"

"We can't keep him here."

"March me. Mrs. Hale says he'll

go tomorrow if he goes on a stretch-er—but the Doc will have the say."

"Where were we, Miss Trent?" Theodore Grant Junior tilted back in a chair beside the typewriter desk in the administration office he and Bruce Harcourt shared at headquarters.

Janice read from her note-book.

Grant's voice went on and on till steam-shovel gangs and ditching gangs filed in endless procession through the girl's mind. She stopped for an instant to flex her fingers. Grant noted the surreptitious action.

"I'm sorry. You're such a bird at it I forget that you're not a machine. That will do for the present."

He departed. Tong bestowed a moist doggy kiss upon Janice's hand before he followed at his heels.

She clasped her hands behind her head, tipped back in her chair, regarded the moss-chinked walls, the old-time Yukon stove, which made the modern filing cabinets seem blantly nouveau riche, the high desk at which the chief of the outfit worked when he was in the office. Through the open window she could see the kennels and the huskies in the yard, some rollicking, some soaking in sunshine, some yelping.

Months had passed since the night Bruce Harcourt had returned her slipper, had brought vividly to mind her childish adoration of him. When he had stepped out upon the stage of her life again he had seemed a divine answer to her prayer to know what was right to do. Their paths crossed. Immediately the pattern of her life was changed. Her trust, her belief in him, in his power to surmount obstacles, surged up from her subconscious where it had lain quiescent through the years. He knew what he wanted and went after it. Why shouldn't she do the same?

The way which had threatened to be rough with complications had smoothed out like a trotting-park when she had seen the Samp sisters. She had told them the truth at once. Gaunt Miss Martha's agate eyes had disappeared in a network of fine lines.

"If you're bent on keeping this job, tell Harcourt the truth, quick, or he'll send you back hummin'. Keep clear of Hale; he might—well, just keep clear of him, that's all."

Three weeks had passed since she had discarded her disguise and gone to the office in one of the sports suits of her trousseau. The engineers had greeted her with smiling courtesy, the workmen with sheepish grins. What explanation had Bruce Harcourt made to them? She had her own log house now, connected by a covered passage with the Samp cabin. It had gone up as by magic after Bruce had decided that she might stay.

Bruce had commanded her to keep out of sight till Hale had sailed and then—Hale hadn't sailed. The physician from Fairbanks had decided that it would be a risk to move him, that he would be better where he was, had warned him against excitement, letting his temper get the best of him. Was his wife in love with Bruce Harcourt? Was he in love with her? Had Millicent Hale been one of the lures which kept him in this northern wilderness? Did she resent the presence in camp of another woman of his class?

What did Bruce Harcourt think of it all? He was rarely in the office. One day he would be up the inlet in the launch to inspect the damage done by the rise of a stream, next he would be off with a section-gang and a steam-shovel; perhaps before forty-eight hours had elapsed he would be miles away inspecting the work of a ditcher. Not once had he entered the Samp cabin which had become the evening rendezvous for the engineers. Why didn't he join them? Why did he treat Tubby Grant's secretary with distant courtesy? Her leisure time was full. Jimmy Chester was teaching her to shoot; Tubby was patiently training her to be a fairly efficient photographer; the geologist of the outfit provided her with a hammer and showed her how to get at the secrets pebbles and rocks had concealed within them. What fun she and Bruce might have together.

The ring of the telephone brought her iridescent day-dream and the front legs of her chair down in a simultaneous crash. She answered the call.

"Office."

"Hale speaking. Is this Miss Trent?"

"Yes."

"Will you take pity on a poor dufer who's been forbidden to write and take a letter or two for me?"

"Certainly, Mr. Hale. When?"

"At once if you will. I want it ready to go in the first plane that takes off."

"I will come."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

ASK ME ? ANOTHER ?

A quiz with answers offering information on various subjects

- The Questions**
1. What are agenda?
 2. What is the Dick test?
 3. Who cut the Gordian knot?
 4. What does frappe mean in cooking?
 5. Was "Old Ironsides" sheeted with iron?
 6. Who wrote the lines, "The world is so full of a number of things, I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings"?
 7. Mohammed fled what city on what is known as the hejira?
 8. What are the two most northerly countries in South America?

- The Answers**
1. Memoranda of things to be done.
 2. A test made by physicians to determine the susceptibility to scarlet fever.
 3. Alexander the Great.
 4. Chilled with ice.
 5. No. The historic ship was wooden.
 6. Robert Louis Stevenson.
 7. Medina.
 8. Venezuela and Colombia.
 9. Belgium.

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In the Postal Service you may start without special experience



Drop in Temperature
"Did Jack remain cool when the burglar's came in?"
"Cool! He was positively shivering!"

On Wrong Trail
A Negro preacher was hearing confession. In the middle of it he stopped the young sinner.
"Young man," he said, "you ain't confessin'—you's braggin'."

A silent man often has a reputation for knowing about ten times as much as he really does know.

Off Pitch
Ben—I'm continually breaking into song.
Gladys—You wouldn't have to break in if you get the key.

Well Described
As Sandy walked slowly down the village street two of his old friends looked on sadly.
"Man, Sandy's lookin' awful white and thin these days," said the first.
The second shook his head dolefully.
"Ay, ye're richt," he replied. "He's just like a bottle o' milk w' shoes on!"



Young Man's Need
It is not book learning young men need, nor instruction about this or that, but a stiffening of the vertebrae which will cause them to be loyal to a trust, to act promptly, concentrate their energies, do a thing—"carry a message to Garcia."—Elbert Hubbard.

Relief At Last For Your Cough

Creomulsion relieves promptly because it goes right to the seat of the trouble to help loosen and expel germ laden phlegm, and aid nature to soothe and heal raw, tender, inflamed bronchial mucous membranes. Tell your druggist to sell you a bottle of Creomulsion with the understanding you must like the way it quickly allays the cough or you are to have your money back.

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Kindness Is Greatness
Kindness is always an evidence of greatness. Malice is the property of a small soul. If anyone is glad you are here, you have not lived in vain.—George F. Hoffman.



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