

The GIRL and the GAME

A STORY OF MOUNTAIN RAILROAD LIFE

FRANK A. SPEARMAN

AUTHOR OF "WHISPERING SMITH,"
"THE MOUNTAIN DIVIDE," "STRAT-
EGY OF GREAT RAILROADS," ETC.

COPYRIGHT, 1915, BY FRANK H. SPEARMAN.

SYNOPSIS.

Little Helen Holmes, daughter of General Holmes, railroad man, is rescued from imminent danger on a scenic railroad, by George Storm, a newsboy. Grown to womanhood Helen makes a spectacular double rescue of Storm, now a freight fireman, and of her father and his friends, Amos Rhinelander, financier, and Robert Seagrue, promoter, from a threatened collision between a passenger train and a runaway freight. Sate-takers employed by Seagrue and Capelle, his lawyer, interrupted by Helen while stealing General Holmes' survey plans of the cut-off line for the Tidewater, fatally wound General Holmes and escape. Storm and Helen chase the murderers on a light engine and capture them. Spike has hidden the plans and manages to inform Seagrue where they are cached. Her father's estate badly involved by his death, Helen goes to work on the Tidewater. Seagrue helps Spike to break jail and uses him to set fire to a powder train hauled by Storm's engine. Helen saves Storm from a horrible death.

FOURTH INSTALLMENT

CHAPTER IV.

When Helen Holmes took the day key at Signal the little office had already passed from the quiet kind to the remorselessly active kind of those small way stations that drive innocent men mad. Two rival lines maintaining large construction camps and getting all their supplies through Signal station, were engaged in a race to build a mountain cut-off—and a considerable one. Despite all the help Lyons, the overworked agent, could give Helen, she found the tasks of her day about all that her strength would compass. There were little moments of respite. The railroad men were, every one, considerate of her.

Nor could Helen, situated as she was, escape occasional office visits from Seagrue, whose activity as head of the opposition construction camp was unabated. Going over to the station one day to watch his men unload a shipment of material he stepped into the office ostensibly to make inquiries—in reality, to steal a few minutes with Helen Holmes, whom he found busy but alone.

Seagrue spoke blandly: "I hear you're becoming quite a railroad expert." She made no effort to reply. "Getting really clever at the key, Lyons says." Helen, entering waybills, went on with her writing. "By the way," asked Seagrue, evenly, "any word this morning from our steam shovel?"

She looked toward the window—the local freight train had just pulled in. "It may be out there now, on No. 85."

Seagrue seemed in no haste to investigate, and Helen had almost lost hope of any diversion in that direction when the office door opened and George Storm walked in.

He was just out of his engine cab, and deliberate and composed as usual, but his eyes, lighting to greet Helen, cooled when he saw Seagrue. Storm nodded curtly toward him and was greeted in kind. Then the stalwart engineer turned his attention to Helen and Seagrue was soon made to feel the pangs of being distinctly third in the situation and without an anesthetic.

"And the best of it all is," said Storm at length to Helen, "this is my last run on local freights. I am assigned tonight to the Limited."

Helen lifted her eyebrows in surprise: "Some run they're giving you!"

Seagrue took the chance to join sarcastically in: "Right in line for chief of motive power, eh Storm?"

Storm was not to be disturbed. He only regarded Seagrue calmly for a moment. Then he turned good naturedly to thank Helen. While soldiering agreeably at this task, his fireman intruded on the scene long enough to remind him they were waiting for him to get out. Storm, with an expression of disgust at the interruption, nodded gruffly to the fireman, concluded his talk with Helen and walked out. Helen rose to go out on the platform also. Seagrue intervened to distract her attention. It was useless. She must deliver a message, she said, to the conductor, and Seagrue, peeved, was left to stay with himself or unwillingly to follow. He followed; but even then it was only to find himself watching Storm's good-bys waved to Helen from the cab. And she saw them, too; nothing escaped her attention.

Seagrue followed her with his eyes as she walked into the office. The more she showed her indifference to him—indifference sometimes bordering on contempt—the more she piqued his interest. He turned with better luck to look for the overdue steam shovel. The equipment had come and a gang of his men were preparing to set it up.

Rhinelander, in charge of the Tidewater line camp, was pushing Seagrue closely in the construction race and as the head of a big crew of men imbued with his own spirit was laughing at obstacles that made Seagrue's head ache; and with equipment actually somewhat inferior was forging daily ahead of his rival. But the mail now brought him a note from the chairman of the executive committee of his board that almost paralyzed his activities:

"Oceanside.

"Dear Rhinelander: Our survey party advise that they cannot re-locate the pass over the Superstition range. Unless you can furnish a survey of the cut-off pass before the first, our people will withdraw their financial support. BOWERS."

Amos Rhinelander, sitting at his dusty and littered desk, stared at the abrupt communication. Bowers was his friend; the executive committee of the board were with him—this he felt assured of. But somewhere influences must be at work against him. He suspected Capelle, still a board member, and a continual intriguer. Capelle was a master worker in underground effects and besides being Seagrue's own attorney was himself heavily interested in opposing enterprises of the Coast line. To throttle Rhinelander in the construction effort begun by Helen's own father before his death was to advance his own interests as well as those of his client. Rhinelander's decision as to what must be done to meet this opposition was prompt.

He consulted a timetable, called his foreman, asked for a man to carry his handbags to the station and began changing his clothes for a trip.

Not far away, and at about the same time, Seagrue was reading his own mail. It contained this note:

"Unsuccessful report concerning pass submitted. Persuaded backers to withdraw support on the first. This will stop operation on Rhinelander's cut-off, as we know he cannot produce survey."

"CAPELLE."

In Seagrue's hut a party of newspaper men from Oceanside were waiting to be taken on an inspection trip over the construction.

"I'm ready for you, boys," said Seagrue, in high spirits, to the journalists. "We'll look over the

work near here first," he announced, ripping open a box of cigars.

"Hold it, Mr. Seagrue," cried a camera man, focussing on the manager. "We want you, first, right there where you are, at your desk. Hold it!"

The picture was taken, a copy promised to Seagrue within an hour and the party started out. Had he left his hut two minutes earlier he might have seen Amos Rhinelander, followed by Seagrue's own Spike with Rhinelander's bags, entering the waiting room door of Signal station.

Helen, looking up from her table, perceived Rhinelander's anxiety reflected in his manner.

"Bad news, Helen," he said, plunging at once into the unpleasant subject. "I am on my way to Oceanside," he added, when she had read Bowers' note. "The directors meet tonight. Someone is trying to undermine us. But whether I succeed in

after many chilling storms. "What do you think of my construction headquarters?" he laughed.

Helen's gaze rested modestly on her table. She seemed to contemplate the picture with a quiet pleasure. Then she looked slowly up at Seagrue.

"This doesn't show very much of the camp,"—she drawled the words the very least bit—"you are awfully busy over there, I suppose."

"Never too busy to welcome our friends. Come over sometime."

"What to a construction camp?" asked Helen, feigning just enough amazement.

"Why not? Talk about Rhinelander's steam shovels! I'll show you shovels that can do everything but vote. Come on along."

For an effective moment she hesitated. "I couldn't possibly," she declared with decision, but she allowed a note of regret to linger an instant

had resolved to flag the Limited. Hardly touching the earth, she dashed to the station, hurried to the key and telegraphed Rhinelander:

"Have blue print of survey. Will be on Limited."

"HELEN."

It was not too soon. Through the window she saw Seagrue rushing down the platform. She slammed the office door shut and locked it. Seagrue threw himself viciously against it. The lock held, but she must get away at once. There was a window in the freighthouse and she ran into the freightroom. Seagrue had snatched up a stone. He reached the operator's window only to see Helen, who had sprung through the freighthouse window, running up the track. He followed her at top speed. Intent on escaping, she gave no thought to where she was running; it was only to get away from her hated enemy and save what she had so hardly regained. Helter-skelter through a grove of scattered oaks that fringed the hills above the sea, on and on she ran, until breath and strength were deserting her, but at every turn her detested pursuer was fast upon her heels. Between his lunging footfalls she could hear his panting threats, and the clearness of the night gave her little chance to elude his savage pursuit. She realized she was running across what had been her own father's great estate. The ocean spread suddenly below her. She had reached Signal Bay and the precipitous cliffs that frowned high above it. Like a frightened fawn she ran up the rocks and down only to hear Seagrue breathing maledictions close behind and with the distance steadily lessening between her and certain capture. Brought at last to bay, she darted down the cliffs to find a hiding place. Not a nook or cranny offered a hope of concealment and a misstep where she trod meant

whistle. The signaling continued and his attention was finally drawn to the launch now dropping behind the train. Helen caught up her signal flag again. In a flash he recognized her, and calling his fireman over they listened to her appeal.

"Give me paper, pencil," shouted Storm, as he shut off the throttle and listened to the long and short toots that re-echoed in jerky succession from the surface of the sea against the towering cliffs and through the flying cab. On a leaf, torn from a pad, Storm scratched out the signals:

"Have survey. Seagrue on your train. Delay so I can reach Oceanside first. HELEN."

The engine whistle shrieked his answer to her eager ears:

"Something wrong with engine already."

The fireman, learning the truth from Storm, tried to persuade him, whatever happened, not to delay the train. It would cost Storm, he urged, his job.

"What's the job to me?" demanded Storm, applying the air and bringing up the train with a jolt.

Seagrue had made his way into the coach. He summoned the conductor, and being known was accorded every courtesy. But the race was now first on his mind, and when he heard the brakes grinding, and running back on the platform saw fire screaming from the wheels, he called the conductor, demanding to know the cause of the stop. Going forward together for an explanation, the two men found Storm under his engine with wrench and hammer, while in the distance Seagrue could see the Spiderwater cutting the waves like foaming glass and slipping away to where a stormy directors' meeting was in session at Oceanside, and Rhinelander was in the fight of his life to prevent summary action being taken to stop the cut-off work. In vain he showed Helen's telegram, which had come in time to rescue him from complete defeat. But Seagrue's henchman, Capelle, conniving with the disaffected element in the directorate, was pushing to a vote with every prospect of success the resolution to stop work.

"What have we got to go on?" he demanded, facing Rhinelander down. "You know as well as I do we are throwing hundreds of thousands into a project absolutely uncertain. You offer a telegram. What good is the telegram?"

Beside the engine of the Limited the conductor and Seagrue were volleying sharp and suspicious questions at the fireman. He told, reluctantly, of the mysterious launch and of Storm's exchange of signals. No more was needed to infuriate Seagrue, who now understood the connivance. Storm crawled out from under the engine and Seagrue met him with an abusive epithet. The stalwart engineer promptly knocked him down. The crew dragged the two men apart and the conductor ordered the fireman to take the Limited in, Storm, with folded arms, refusing to lend further assistance. But despite his stubbornness the big train pulled into Oceanside just after Helen stepped from the deck of the speed launch to the dock. She ran all the way up the esplanade, survey in hand, to where she could catch a taxicab and drove hard for the Tidewater building. There she alighted only to be confronted by two men—Seagrue and an officer. Seagrue pointed to Helen: "There she is! There are the documents she stole—in her hand. Arrest her!"

Before Helen could collect her senses, the officer had seized her and Seagrue had snatched the survey.

"Stop," she cried, "that is my property, stolen from my father. I, not he, am its rightful owner!"

While she protested, stormed and wept tears of humiliation and anger, Seagrue was producing papers to convince the slow-witted official that the survey belonged to him and that Helen was the thief. In spite of all she could say, he won out.

Upstairs the directors were closing their protracted session, Rhinelander vainly trying to hold them together until his ally should appear. The sound of an opening door raised his hopes. Helen rushed into the room and hastened to his side.

"The survey—where is it?" he cried, reading bad news in her face.

She told him of her battle—of how she had been robbed at the very foot of what were once her father's stairs.

Rhinelander put his arm around the despairing girl. "No matter. We know now who has our property, gentlemen. We'll get it yet."

Capelle, laughing furtively, left the room to report to Seagrue. The chairman rapped for order. Rhinelander, trying to comfort Helen, took her to her taxicab and they drove back to the launch together. Dazed, furious at her misfortune, Helen met another surprise at the pier. Storm, awaiting her return there, helped her to alight from the taxicab. She could only regard him breathlessly. He laughed in his reassuring way: "It's really I," he said to her, offering his hand. "I'm discharged—but I told the superintendent I might yet live long enough to discharge him. But I've got a marine license and I'm going to run your launch back to Signal Bay for you."

His robust humor was infectious. With Storm at the driver's wheel, they soon reached the office in the launch and were discussing the exciting events of the night when Helen's eyes fixed on the canvas covering the deck of the boat. It was on this she had laid the blue print to dry and the impression had been definitely transferred. She seized her uncle's arm, pointed and explained. Rhinelander, jerking a knife from his pocket, cut the canvas from the deck and showed it to Storm, who headed the launch in a great foaming circle back toward Oceanside.

The directors were preparing to go home when three half-crazed people dashed into their room. Rhinelander, Helen and Storm told their story and showed their find. Excited in spite of themselves, the listeners crowded about the table. They inspected, objected and argued. The evidence was indisputable and the chairman called the meeting to order and asked its sense. Sympathy for the plucky daughter of their old president was perhaps not wanting in influencing their action; at all events, almost before Helen could realize it was being done, a resolution declaring their support should not be withdrawn, was put and carried. Bowers, the chairman, clinched his own feelings by catching Helen's hands and congratulating her.

Seagrue—pleased with what he believed his escape from a serious complication—was bound for his camp on a returning train.

Helen, with Rhinelander and Storm, was again aboard the launch. They were speeding contentedly back to Signal Bay.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)



1—The Two Glared at Each Other. 2—"Rhinelander Has Just Gone to Oceanside!" 3—Helen and Seagrue Were Alone.

changing their views or not, I'm going to fight if I have to fight all night."

Helen was too upset to speak for a minute. For her, so much depended on the success of her own road in reaching the mountains with a cut-off first. Rhinelander, worried though he was, tried to cheer her up. Spike outside, listening, gathered that Rhinelander was on his way to the city. He hung around the platform till the local passenger pulled in, watched Rhinelander board it, and, mingling with Seagrue's men, walked unobserved over to the latter's camp. He found his boss with the journalists.

"What is it?" demanded Seagrue, scenting news in Spike's appearance.

"Rhinelander has just gone to Oceanside," Seagrue smiled. "Did he get a letter this morning?"

"He did."

Their confab was broken in on by one of the newspaper men who had a print of the photo he had taken of Seagrue at his desk. Seagrue inspected this with the greatest pleasure. "Fine!" he exclaimed. "Good picture!"

A whimsical idea seized him. He wrote a word or two across the back of the print and recalled Spike. "Take this over to Helen Holmes. Give it to her with my compliments." So saying he turned to the photographer.

Spike's reception at the station was always a chilly one. This time Helen took his message and dismissed him before she opened the envelope. When she saw what Seagrue had sent she was angry. Her first impulse was to tear the hateful print in two. Instead, she contemptuously impaled it on a steel file near at hand. A moment later, removing the print to file a message, she looked at the picture again. Her attention was attracted to a paper lying on Seagrue's desk. It had been caught by the camera lens. The longer she looked the more carefully her eyes fixed on this object revealed in the photograph. Very curious now, Helen opened a drawer, took from it a reading glass and studied the contents of Seagrue's desk. Her heart almost stopped beating as she realized that her suspicions must be correct. With the aid of the ordinary glass she could plainly see the survey that had been stolen from her father's library.

Helen looked toward Seagrue's camp. It was there even now, and if she could recover the precious find it was not too late to save her own interests as well as those of her own good friend, Amos Rhinelander.

How could she recover it? With fast kindling hatred of its dishonest possessor, a dozen projects for regaining her own flashed across her mind. The more she thought the more impossible it seemed to devise any scheme that could be carried out in time to help Rhinelander's fight that night at Oceanside.

But what Helen could not devise herself, was being already devised for her. Following up what Spike—an unconscionable liar—had declared a flattering reception of the picture, Seagrue resolved to seize a moment while the going was good to forward himself with Helen.

She was studying the telltale print when she heard footsteps and, startled, looked out. Seagrue was coming up the platform. She felt frightened. Could he possibly have realized his blunder and come to demand the return of the picture?

Her wits rapidly cleared. She snatched the photograph. Seagrue, opening the door, caught her picture in hand. He walked forward pleased. It was not hard for Helen to counterfeit an embarrassment; nor was it in the least unbecoming to her. To Seagrue her look came like a burst of sunshine

in the tone of her explanation and glanced around. "No one here, you know."

"Well, but what time do you get off?" asked Seagrue feverishly.

"Oh, not for a long time yet."

His hopes were burgeoning fast. "See here, Helen; come over and take a camp dinner with me. Come, do. I'll show you what can be done without preparation."

She regarded him with an expression that indicated how completely such a proposal shocked her. She struggled an instant with the thought of it. Then she rejected the invitation; yet with enough indecision to invite a renewal. For the moment Helen was a heartless angler, and Seagrue deluded by vanity was unsuspectingly playing fish. Before he left—in the highest spirits he had known for many a day—he had, to his astonishment, secured Helen's promise to dine with him that night in camp. And at the appointed time she was ready.

The night was warm and a moon, rising full and into a clear sky, flooded the landscape. And after Helen's uneasiness at the strangeness of her situation had worn off, she was able throughout the trying hour with Seagrue in his hut to wear her mask of languid interest successfully. The table was served with surprising delicacies and a plentiful array of wines was in evidence. Yet, to an innocent intruder, a whole hour never went so slowly, nor was appetite ever more reluctant than that of Seagrue's guest. Though she went through the form of eating and assumed a carefree air, his food choked her. His wines she persistently declined; but that did not dismay Seagrue, who drank quite enough for two.

Where could the survey be, now? was the question recurring always to Helen's mind. Toward the close of the dinner, Seagrue, rising, unlocked his desk for a flask of Chartreuse. There, lying in the corner exactly where she had seen it, Helen again beheld the survey, a blue print beside it. Seagrue was pawky enough to close and lock the desk after he had taken the flask out. How, she asked herself, was she to get that desk open again?

Seagrue dismissed his serving man, and this did not allay Helen's uneasiness for herself. She did not want to be left alone a minute with him now; things were getting too complicated. But could she in some way get into the desk?

Rising, she said she would clear the table a little. Taking hold of the flask he had just taken from the desk and holding out her hand with a smile she asked him for his keys. Seagrue was in no position to refuse so intimate a request. With an air of camaraderie he handed them over and Helen pushed back the cover of the desk. But as she did so Seagrue threw his arms around her. She struggled indignantly, but could not get away. For a moment there was a fierce struggle. Then with a superhuman effort she tore herself free, caught up the first thing she could lay her hand on—it happened to be a bronze match tray—and struck Seagrue across the forehead.

He went completely over, leaving Helen horror-stricken at what she had done. She listened. Outside she heard no sound. Seizing the blue print that lay under her hand, she gained the door and ran out just as Seagrue regained his feet. She

certain death. Panting and bewildered, she heard Seagrue climbing down the ledge on which she had found a narrow foothold. Her escape was cut off and Seagrue descended triumphantly toward her. She warned him back.

"Give me that blue print!" he shouted with an oath.

"Keep away from me," Helen panted. "You're a wretch. I'll never give it to you. I'll die first. Don't you dare come down here! I'll drag you over the cliff if I have to go over myself."

Nothing daunted, he came on. There was but one chance left to get away and, unhesitating, she took it. Turning, just when he thought he had her in his power, she sprang from where she stood on the edge of the precipice far over the ocean below. He stood spellbound. She struck with a great splash.

At no great distance from where she had plunged into the bay a speed launch lay at anchor. Helen recognized the boat; it had, in truth, once been her own, and she had named it The Spiderwater. It belonged now to the owners of her father's estate, but she believed she might borrow it once more. Seagrue, impotent with rage, and following her down the shore, saw her reach the launch and climb resolutely up over the gunwale.

Shaking herself like a duck, and without losing a minute, Helen spread the wet blue print out on the deck, broke the motor lock and turned the launch engine over. She knew the motor well; it was a powerful Loew Victor, and after her second effort it hummed like a dynamo. While it was warming up she cut the hawser. Seagrue easily suspected she meant to get to Rhinelander at Oceanside. He looked at his watch. If he could catch the Limited he could still reach the city ahead of her. Exasperated and out of breath he hastened back to camp, routed out his chauffeur and took his racing car for the station. Hardly a minute was left to him and his hope of reaching a point where he could flag the through train vanished when he heard its whistle and saw the gleam of its headlight coming down the Signal grade.

But he would not give up. Urging his man to speed, he gained the highway paralleling the railroad track, and as the Limited shot by, Seagrue, with all the power that could be got out of his motor, actually held for a time abreast of it. Helpless with rage, he saw the last car pulling gradually past and furious at being balked, he stood up on the seat and as the car drew past him, he jumped over the rail and landed on the observation platform.

Helen was pushing the launch toward Oceanside. The ocean below the bay laps almost the edge of the railroad track, but her heart sank as she looked back and saw the night train tearing up the track and rapidly overhauling her. Instantly told her that Seagrue would somehow board that train in an effort to get to the city first. As the engine drew nearer, she picked up a pair of glasses and leveling them on the cab discovered George Storm on the right side. She waved a signal flag frantically at him, but his eyes were glued on the track ahead. Then, as if by an inspiration, she seized the cord of the air whistle at her hand and in the Morse code signaled for help. Storm turned his head and looked back questioning along his train; then up at his own

whistle. The signaling continued and his attention was finally drawn to the launch now dropping behind the train. Helen caught up her signal flag again. In a flash he recognized her, and calling his fireman over they listened to her appeal.

"Give me paper, pencil," shouted Storm, as he shut off the throttle and listened to the long and short toots that re-echoed in jerky succession from the surface of the sea against the towering cliffs and through the flying cab. On a leaf, torn from a pad, Storm scratched out the signals:

"Have survey. Seagrue on your train. Delay so I can reach Oceanside first. HELEN."

The engine whistle shrieked his answer to her eager ears:

"Something wrong with engine already."

The fireman, learning the truth from Storm, tried to persuade him, whatever happened, not to delay the train. It would cost Storm, he urged, his job.

"What's the job to me?" demanded Storm, applying the air and bringing up the train with a jolt.

Seagrue had made his way into the coach. He summoned the conductor, and being known was accorded every courtesy. But the race was now first on his mind, and when he heard the brakes grinding, and running back on the platform saw fire screaming from the wheels, he called the conductor, demanding to know the cause of the stop. Going forward together for an explanation, the two men found Storm under his engine with wrench and hammer, while in the distance Seagrue could see the Spiderwater cutting the waves like foaming glass and slipping away to where a stormy directors' meeting was in session at Oceanside, and Rhinelander was in the fight of his life to prevent summary action being taken to stop the cut-off work. In vain he showed Helen's telegram, which had come in time to rescue him from complete defeat. But Seagrue's henchman, Capelle, conniving with the disaffected element in the directorate, was pushing to a vote with every prospect of success the resolution to stop work.

"What have we got to go on?" he demanded, facing Rhinelander down. "You know as well as I do we are throwing hundreds of thousands into a project absolutely uncertain. You offer a telegram. What good is the telegram?"

Beside the engine of the Limited the conductor and Seagrue were volleying sharp and suspicious questions at the fireman. He told, reluctantly, of the mysterious launch and of Storm's exchange of signals. No more was needed to infuriate Seagrue, who now understood the connivance. Storm crawled out from under the engine and Seagrue met him with an abusive epithet. The stalwart engineer promptly knocked him down. The crew dragged the two men apart and the conductor ordered the fireman to take the Limited in, Storm, with folded arms, refusing to lend further assistance. But despite his stubbornness the big train pulled into Oceanside just after Helen stepped from the deck of the speed launch to the dock. She ran all the way up the esplanade, survey in hand, to where she could catch a taxicab and drove hard for the Tidewater building. There she alighted only to be confronted by two men—Seagrue and an officer. Seagrue pointed to Helen: "There she is! There are the documents she stole—in her hand. Arrest her!"

Before Helen could collect her senses, the officer had seized her and Seagrue had snatched the survey.

"Stop," she cried, "that is my property, stolen from my father. I, not he, am its rightful owner!"

While she protested, stormed and wept tears of humiliation and anger, Seagrue was producing papers to convince the slow-witted official that the survey belonged to him and that Helen was the thief. In spite of all she could say, he won out.

Upstairs the directors were closing their protracted session, Rhinelander vainly trying to hold them together until his ally should appear. The sound of an opening door raised his hopes. Helen rushed into the room and hastened to his side.

"The survey—where is it?" he cried, reading bad news in her face.

She told him of her battle—of how she had been robbed at the very foot of what were once her father's stairs.

Rhinelander put his arm around the despairing girl. "No matter. We know now who has our property, gentlemen. We'll get it yet."

Capelle, laughing furtively, left the room to report to Seagrue. The chairman rapped for order. Rhinelander, trying to comfort Helen, took her to her taxicab and they drove back to the launch together. Dazed, furious at her misfortune, Helen met another surprise at the pier. Storm, awaiting her return there, helped her to alight from the taxicab. She could only regard him breathlessly. He laughed in his reassuring way: "It's really I," he said to her, offering his hand. "I'm discharged—but I told the superintendent I might yet live long enough to discharge him. But I've got a marine license and I'm going to run your launch back to Signal Bay for you."

His robust humor was infectious. With Storm at the driver's wheel, they soon reached the office in the launch and were discussing the exciting events of the night when Helen's eyes fixed on the canvas covering the deck of the boat. It was on this she had laid the blue print to dry and the impression had been definitely transferred. She seized her uncle's arm, pointed and explained. Rhinelander, jerking a knife from his pocket, cut the canvas from the deck and showed it to Storm, who headed the launch in a great foaming circle back toward Oceanside.

The directors were preparing to go home when three half-crazed people dashed into their room. Rhinelander, Helen and Storm told their story and showed their find. Excited in spite of themselves, the listeners crowded about the table. They inspected, objected and argued. The evidence was indisputable and the chairman called the meeting to order and asked its sense. Sympathy for the plucky daughter of their old president was perhaps not wanting in influencing their action; at all events, almost before Helen could realize it was being done, a resolution declaring their support should not be withdrawn, was put and carried. Bowers, the chairman, clinched his own feelings by catching Helen's hands and congratulating her.

Seagrue—pleased with what he believed his escape from a serious complication—was bound for his camp on a returning train.

Helen, with Rhinelander and Storm, was again aboard the launch. They were speeding contentedly back to Signal Bay.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)