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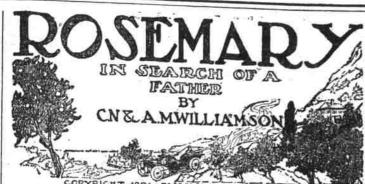
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"Perhaps I can write to you." Hugh tried to console her, feeling horribly guilty and helpless.

"That won't be the same. I do love you so much. Please don't

"I shall send you things-a doll's house for Evic. By the way, you didn't tell me why you named her that." "After Angel, of course," returned the child absentmindedly.

"But when you've vanished I"-"Is your mother's name Evic?"

"Evelyn. But that's too long for a doll."

"Evelyn-what? You-you haven't told me your name yet." "Rosemary Evelyn Clifford."

"Great heavens!"

"How strange your voice sounds!" said Rosemary, "Are you ill?" "No-no! I feel a little odd; that's all."

"Oh, it isn't the vanishing coming on already? We're a long way from our hotel vet."

Hugh drove mechanically, though sky and sea and mountains seemed to be seething together, as if in the convulsions of an earth-Her child! And her husband-what of him? The little one said

he was lost; that he had not been kind. Hugh gritted his teeth together and heard only the singing of his blood in his ears. Was the man dead, or had he but disappeared? In any case she was here, alone in Monte Carlo, with her child, poor, unhappy, working by day, crying by night. He must see her at once-at once! Yet-what if it were not she, after all, if the name were a coin-

cidence? There might be other Evelyn Cliffords in the world. It must be that this was another. His Evelyn had married a rich and titled Englishman. She was Lady Clifford. The things that had hap-

know quickly.

"Where do you live, little Rosemary?" he asked, grimly schooling his voice, when he felt that he could trust himself to speak. "The Hotel Pensior Beau Soleil, Rue Gira-

sole, in the Condamine, Monte Carlo," answered the child, as if she were repeating a lesson she had been taught to rattle off by heart.

Lost as he was to most external things, Hugh roused himself to some surprise at the name of the hotel.

"Why, that is where Mile. de Lavalette and her mother live!" he

"They're the ladies Angel lent the money to because she was so sorry for them," said Rosemary. "I've heard them talking about it with her and saying they can't pay it back. They're angry with her for asking, but she had to, you see. When they go past us in the dining room they turn their backs."

Hugh's attention was arrested now.

"Do they dine." he asked, "every night?"

"Oh, yes-always. Mademoiselle has lovely dresses. She is pretty, but the comtesse is such an ugly old lady-like Red Riding Hood's grandmother, I think. I'm afraid of her. Jane says her madame and monsieur don't believe she's really a comtesse. I had to knock at her door with a letter from Angel today, for Angel doesn't know I'm afraid. I couldn't help being glad madame wouldn't let me in, for it seemed as if she might eat me up. I knocked and knocked, and when I was going away I saw mademoiselle coming in in a pink dress with a rosy hat."

"I think she'll pay your mother back tomorrow," said Hugh, remembering the fatness of the pink bag.

"She didn't say she would. She was so cross with me that she called me a petit bete and snatched the letter out of my hand."

'At this Hugh's face grew suddenly hot and red, and he muttered something under his breath. But it was not a word which Rosemary would have understood, even if she had heard.





OSEMARY had tears in her eyes and voice when the fairy father stopped his car at the door of the hotel. He had driven so very quickly since he'd broken it to her that they must part! "Now, have you to vanish this yery minute ?" she asked, choking back z sob, as he

difted her to the ground. Wanish! He had forgotten all about vanishing. To vanish now

was the last thing he wished to do. "Something tells me that I shan't have to quite yet, anyhow," he said hastily. "I-want to see your mother. Has she a sitting room where I could call upon her or wait till she comes in !!

"We haven't one of our own," said Rosemary, "but there's a nice old lady who lives next door to us on the top floor and is very good to Angel and me. She writes stories and things for the papers, and 'Angel types them sometimes. When she's away she lets us use the sitting room where she writes, and slie's away now. 'Angel and I are going to be there this evening till it's my bedtime, and you can come up with me if you will. Oh, I'm so thankful you don't need to vanish for a little while!"

His heart pounding as it had not pounded for six years and more not since the days when he had gone up other stairs in another land to see an Evelyn-Hugh followed the flitting figure of the child.

The stairs and corridors were not lighted yet. One econom with electric light and many other little things at a hotel pension, where the prices are "from 5 france a day, vin compris."

Rosemary opened a door on the fourth floor, and for a mi

the twilight on the other side was shot for Hugh with red and purple spots. But the colors faded when the childish voice said: "Angel isn't here. If you'll come in, I'll go and see if she's in our room." "Don't tell her-don't say-anything about a fairy father," he

stammered. "Oh, no! That's to be the surprise," Rosemary reassured him as she pattered away.

It was deep twilight in the room and rather cold, for the eucalyptus and olive logs in the fireplace still awaited the match. Hugh could

see the blurred outlines of a few pieces of cheap furniture-a sofa, three or four chairs, a table and a clumsy writing desk. But the window was still a square of pale bluish light, cut out of the violet dusk, and as the young man's eyes accustomed themselves to the dimness of the room the room did not seem dark.

He was not left alone for long. In two or three minutes Rosemary appeared once more, without her hat and coat, to say that Angel had not yet come back. "But she'll soon be here now." went on the child. "Do you mind waiting in the twilight, fairy father? The electric light doesn't come on till

after 5, and I've just heard the clock downstairs strike 5." "I shall like it," answered Hugh, glad that his face should be hidden by the dusk in these moments of waiting.

"Angel tells me stories in the twilight," said Rosemary as she sat down on the sofa by the cold fireplace, and she let him lift her light little body to his knee. "Would you tell me one about when you were

"I'll try," Hugh said. "Let me think-what story shall I tell?" "I won't speak while you're remembering," Rosemary promised, leaning her head confidingly against his shoulder. "I always keep quiet while Angel puts on her thinking cap."

Hugh laughed and was silent. But his head was too hot to wear

a thinking cap, and no story would come at his half hearted call. Rosemary waited in patience for him to begin. "One, two three," she counted under her breath, for she had learned to count up to fifty, pened to Rosemary's Angel could not have and it was good practice when one wished to make the time pass. She happened to her. Still, he must know, and | had just come to forty-nine and was wondering if she might remind the fairy father of his duty when the door opened.

It was Angel, of course. But Angel did not come in. She stopped

on the threshold, talking to somebody, or, rather, somebody was talking to her. Rosemary could not see the person, but she recognized the voice. It was that of Mile. de Lavalette.

"You are not to write my mother letters and trouble us about that money, madame," said the voice, as shrill now as it could be sweet. "Once for all, I will not have it. I have followed you to tell you this. You will be paid soon—that is enough. I am engaged to be married to-a rich man, an American. He will be glad to pay all our debts by and by, but meantime, madame, you are to let us alone."

"I have done nothing except to write and say that I needed the money, which you promised to return weeks ago, or I couldn't possibly have spared it," protested a voice which Hugh had heard in dreams three nights out of

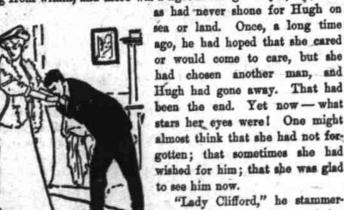
every six in as many years. "Well, if you write any more letters we shall burn them unread so it is no use to trouble us, and we will pay when we choose."

With the last words the other voice died into distance. Mademoiselle had said what she came to say and was retreating with dignity down the corridor.

Now the figure of a slender woman was silhouetted in the doorway. Hugh heard a sigh and saw a hand that glimmered white in the dusk against the dark paper on the wall as it groped for the button of the electric light. Then suddenly the room was filled with a white radiance, and she stood in the midst of it, young and beautiful, the woman he had loved for seven years.

Putting Rosemary away, he sprang up, and her eyes, dazzled at first by the sudden flood of light, opened wide in startled recognition. "Hugh-Hugh Egerton!" she stammered, whispering as one whispers in a dream.

She was pale as a lily, but the whiteness of her face was like light, shining from within, and there was a light in her great eyes, too, such



"Lady Clifford," he stammered, "I-will you forgive my being here my frightening you like

The brightness died out of her face, "Lady Clifford!" she echoed Don't call me that unless-I'm to call you Mr. Egerton! 'And, besides, I'm only Mme. Clifford here. It is better. The other would seem like estentation in a woman who works."

"Evelyn," he said. "Thank you for letting it be Evelyn." Then, his voice breaking a little, "Oh, say you're a tiny bit glad to see mefust a tiny bit glad!" She did not answer in words, but her eyes spoke as she held or

both hands. He crushed them in his, then bent his head and kissed them, first the girlish right hand, then the left. But she saw his face confract as

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he caught the gleam of her wedding ring. As he looked up their eyes met again, and each knew what was in the other's mind.

"Angel, dearest," said Rosemary, "do tell the fairy father you're glad to see him."

Evelyn started. "Why do you call him that?"

"Because he said he was a fairy and would have to yanish soon. But you'll beg him not to, won't you?" "I-I should be sorry to lose him again. We haven't many

friends in these days." The bright head was bowed over the child's as Rosemary clung to her mother's dress. "You never lost me," said Hugh Egerton.

"It was I who lost you. Evie, you don't know what black years these have been. I loved you so."

"But that-was-long ago." "It was always!"

"Hugh! I thought you must have learned to hate me."

"Hate you because I couldn't make you care for me as-I hoped you would and because you cared for some one else ? No; I"-

"But-I did care for you. It was for my father's sake thatthat-ah, I can't talk of it, Hugh. You know we were so poor after father lost his money I tried with all my heart to forget and to do my best for-my husband. Perhaps it was my punishment that he-oh, Hugh, I was so miserable! And then-then he went away. He was tired of me. He was on a yacht, and there was a great storm! But you must have read in the papers"-

"Never. I never knew till this day." "It was more than three years ago."

Hugh was very pale. Three years ago-three long years in which he had worked and tried not to think of her! And if he had known! "You see. I've had a queer life knocking about in strange places," he said, trying to speak calmly. "Often I didn't see any newspapers for weeks together. I thought of you always as rich and happy, living in England, the wife of Sir Edward Clifford"-

"Rich and happy!" she repeated bitterly. "How little one knows of another's life! After his death there was nothing. There had been

some wild speculations, and the estates went with the title, of course, to his cousin. But, yes-in a way you were right. I was rich and happy because I had Rosemary."

"And Rosemary had you, Angel!" cried the child, who had been listening, puzzled and bewildered, not knowing that they had forgotten her presence until this moment. Rosemary had you. And now we've all got each other-till the fairy father vanishes."

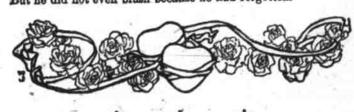
But I shan't have to vanish after all," said Hugh.

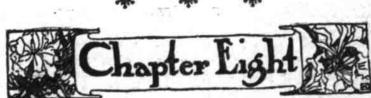
'After that-it seemed they had been together but for a moment when a wild wail went moaning through the house—the first gong for

So loud it was that it hushed their voices for a long minute. And when cool silence came again Hugh begged that the two would have their Christmas eve dinner with him at his hotel. "There's so much to plan for tomorrow and all the days," he pleaded. "And just for once Rosemary shall have a late dinner like the grownups. Do say

So Evelyn said yes. And it was not until they were all three seated in the restaurant of the Hotel de Paris that he remembered he had been engaged to dine at the Beau Soleil with mademoiselle and the comtesse, her mother.

But he did not even blush because he had forgottens







ANY of Hugh Egerton's best moments during the last six years had been spent in dresms. In those dreams the past had lived again, for he had seen the future as once he had hoped it might be for him.

But all through this night of Christmas eve he lay awake, and no dreams had ever been half as sweet as the thoughts that came to him then. It would have been a hideous waste of time to sleep when he could lie there and live over again each moment of his evening, beginning at the beginning, when she had nome into the room, and going on to the end, when he had brought her and Rosemary to the door of the Hotel Pension Beau Soleil to say "goodby until tomorrow." When he came to the end he went back to the beginning again with renewed zest, trying to call up some word, some look of hers which he might have neglected to count among his freasured jewels.

Then, when he was sure that he had each pearl and ruby and diamond duly polished and strung on the fine gold chain of loving memory, he would let his mind run ahead of time ... the next day.

What a Christmas it was going to be! There never had been one like it before in the history of the world, hat—the best of it was there was reason to hope that there would be many others to come just as exquisite, if not more perfect.

Evelyn Clifford had loved him even when she had let him go. She loved him now, and she had promised to make up for the long gray years of the past by marrying him almost at once.

There was nothing to wait for. He was lonely and rich. She w lonely and poor. Both were young and starving for happiness. In a week they would be married, for she had promised to begin the new year as his wife. Meanwhile there would be a great deal to do-s she said, though he could not see why-in getting ready. But Christmas was to be a holiday. They were going on that pienie to Ene all three. That was already planned, but Hugh had mentally made an addition to the plan of which he had said not a word.

He was as excited over the thought of this plan as Rosemary would have been had she known. And, lest there should be a hite

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

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