

The Eyes of the Gazelle

BY RICHARD WASHBURN CHILD

FEW, comparatively, are the Federal district-attorneys in the United States. This makes it necessary in telling about the adventure of the girl with the gazelle eyes—whose story, by the way, is much more true than untrue—to conceal the identity of one of them in a makeshift way by calling him Everett Edwards Brevoort.

If any think for a moment that this Brevoort showed the slightest trace of his Dutch ancestry in his appearance, they merely show their ignorance of America. America cuts men out of her own pattern, all forebears to the contrary notwithstanding. America made Brevoort tall, and not only angular, but also rectangular. He was so rectangular that he seemed to be just the sort of a creature that America so often likes to mold by tamping the soft, plastic material into the rectangles of streets, such as Wall and Nassau, for instance, or down a Chicago elevator shaft, or a Philadelphia mail chute. He was the adamant, rectangular product of an adamant, rectangular American city. He was the pattern of American success. He was the form of clear, cold, selfish thought. His head worked so well that he could raise one of his long fingers and argue an anti-trust law into an automobile speed regulation by pure logic. Twenty thousand dollars had meant very little to him as a fee. He paid that much for rent of his winter-quarters. And, after all, when he was fifty a year or so ago, he was a somewhat attractive, middle-aged bachelor. His skin, for example, always seemed to have emerged a moment before from bitterly cold water. His features were somewhat Greek. His ordinary smile was satanic, and his "eye thrust," as the young Harvard man who was assistant attorney said, was simply—what shall we say?

This is a detective story, even though true, and there is something feminine in it, which calls for haste, but if one

cannot have a picture of Brevoort, one will miss the point. The truth was that Brevoort was a curious tragedy himself. He might have had a Supreme Court seat, or even the Vice-Presidency, if it had not been for his record.

A record at middle age, when the vision clears, is the confounded thing! To have been brilliantly successful in advising promoters how to keep ahead of the legislators—which is not such a great achievement when one comes to think of it—is success which lasts until the plain people of inferior mental equipment stupidly insist in vulgar terminology that you have been running an expensive school in the gentle art of playing dirty tricks. Brevoort, along with others, said that he had "done the thing customary and current in big business and big law." No one had ever outwitted him, anyhow. He said so to the man who had married the one woman he had wanted. He said it at the University Club on the eve of the Republican Convention, when the machine would have given him gladly anything he wanted, if it had not been for the way plain folks insisted, in spite of all logic, in looking upon his record. The windows of his apartment were high above the street, and that night, when he realized that his party did not dare even to mention his name for elective office, he would have slipped out of one of them as if by accident, if pure logic had not overcome, as usual, the coarser yearnings of his heart.

This was Brevoort, who suddenly threw over all his old practice, all the lucrative clients, all the fascinating sway of the largest American affairs, and, to all intents and purposes, said to executive authority: "Here's my ability. Here's my logic. Here's my law. If you want me to bring my gifts to the public service, appoint me wherever you dare to do it. There has been something empty in my life. Perhaps I've lacked an ideal. Now at any rate I am ready to work per an-

num for a sum rather less than my club bills. Give me a chance at Service, with a big S."

So when C. B. D. was served with a warrant in the Industrial Shippers rebate cases, he had exclaimed involuntarily to the deputy sheriff: "It's Brevoort, of course. He served me once loyally at a pretty price; now he's serving the government with the same perfect mind for twenty-five dollars a day. Always somebody's servant, anyhow! All head and no heart." The sheriff was surprised to hear so great a man so described; he was, however, familiar with the prosecution of the Atlantic Fidelity Trust Company's banking-law case; he had seen the wife of Morton O. Parsoner, with red eyes, trying to get signatures on a petition for Parsoner's pardon, and he had listened to the cross-examination in the traction cases. Brevoort, he knew, did the Federal attorney's job without need of blinders; he did not shy at old friendships. He had no prejudice. His was a terrible prosecuting pounce. And he played with witnesses—a jaguar with rabbits. Servant, perhaps; the devil himself, anyhow!

This was Brevoort who stayed in the city through the hot spell in August, working like a dog on some investigation, the subject of which no one yet has been able to guess, because even those who get the crop reports and the President's message first cannot foretell the thing Brevoort will do. And it was on August 30th that Brevoort pressed a button of the panel of his desk and looked up when Cooley, the second assistant, who does the small criminal work—the mail-fraud, immigration, eight-hour-law, and postal-robbery prosecutions—came in. Brevoort held a letter in his right hand and touched the tips of his stiff, white, clerical collar with the tips of his stiff, white, clerical, satanic fingers.

"The Senator from this district writes me," he said, letting his words fly like chips of porcelain. "He writes me about one Peter Schmolz, a pensioner—and political creditor of the good Senator. There was a theft of the last pension draft and voucher. The draft was forged and collected. What has this office done?"

The second assistant looked nervous.

"Janis has been on the case," he said.

"Janis! He considered it game of his size?" asked the man of little greatness. "What has he found?"

The second assistant, being a young man desirous to please, imitated the incisive brevity of his superior in his reply.

"Schmolz lives on West Twenty-ninth Street," he said. "It is a boarding-house kept by Mrs. Kohlan, a Russian. The first postal inspector on the case absolved the carrier. Mrs. Kohlan admits that the letter was seen by her on the hall-stand. None but the boarders had access that day to the letter. Janis says it was stolen by one of them or by Dosia Kohlan, the twelve-year-old daughter of the landlady. The little girl admits cashing the draft at the bakery where she is known. This was discovered, confessed, and then substantiated. But it is impossible to discover who directed the child's action or received the money from her. She could not have conceived and carried out the criminal transaction alone. Even the forgery, which is awkward, probably is not hers. There must be a principal."

"Obvious!" asserted Brevoort, who did not even scent the interest of the case. "Whom does the child accuse?"

"Nobody."

"Nobody? You mean to tell me that Janis, with his bulldog, bulldozing, third-degree face has met his match in a twelve-year-old girl?"

The second assistant reddened.

"You've talked to her?" asked Brevoort.

The other nodded.

"It is a blank wall—a stone wall—a wonderful thing—that—that—er—child," he stammered.

"Hm!" said Brevoort, exuding the chill of pure reason. "Have I to go into a puny little matter like this? Where's Janis?"

"Waiting to testify in the Co-operative Gold-mining Securities fraud-order case."

"Send him in."

Janis, who came, is a great man himself. He has a bull neck, fat jowls, sleepy eyes. The bull neck is on chunky shoulders, the fat jowls are on a broad, almost criminal face, and the sleepy

eyes are fastened onto a brain that works like a rat-trap. His whole appearance, however, is that of a lazy sealer of weights and measures, owing an appointment to ward politics. And, by the way, he has one affectation; he wears tortoiseshell eye-glasses.

Janis, like others of his kind, will not often tell how he does his work. Only now and then it is discovered that he caught a thieving postal clerk by pretending to be the father of the woman for whose love of gifts the thefts were committed, or that he picked out the murderer who had killed the postmaster at Hollinsworth by reciting to five suspects the scenario of the crime, step by step, while he watched their individual faces. "If not by one means, then by another," is his motto, and he founds his method of nailing the guilty upon the theory that no human being is a good liar.

"A man named Schmolz—" began Brevoort, looking up blackly at the inspector.

Bill Janis ran his fingers around his collar, coughed, blushed slightly, and scraped his feet.

"Well, why don't you arrest somebody?" snapped the Federal attorney. "That's not the business of this office—to get evidence."

"Does your office want to prosecute, as it were, a twelve-year-old girl with pink cheeks and black pigtaails—what?" inquired the sleuth, sarcastically.

"Wasn't there any one back of her? Wasn't there an older person? Why don't you make the child disclose? You're a past-master of the third degree. What's the matter?"

Janis grinned sheepishly.

"Sullivan, who first had the case, tried his hand, and Martin tried his," he said. "We had the girl under arrest and in a cell, and tried threats, and Sullivan took her for a trip to some open-air theater and tried entertainment, and your young Cooley gave her a cross-examination for two hours and tried flattery, and I tried threats, bribery, flattery, and cross-examination, and then some."

"What does she do?" asked Brevoort. "Cry?"

"Cry, you say? Cry? She has soft brown eyes and smiling lips. She never

cries. That's what sands us all up, as it were. She *laughs*!"

The inspector looked slyly at Brevoort's scowl.

"We've all been wondering whether you could outwit her, sir," he said, insinuatingly, after a pause.

The Federal attorney sniffed.

"Merely as a study in human nature, sir—as it were."

Brevoort snorted.

"The men in the service have been sneering a bit over the story, sir—at me, sir. They say that if the Old One himself—beggin' your pardon—had the girl in hand, something would come of it. Of course, it's no work for you, sir. I know that. Only, of course, if all you got from her—wit against wit, as it were—was what we get—why—"

The great lawyer pulled down his waistcoat.

"I think I will look into this myself," he said, confidentially. "It is interesting."

"Shall I bring the child here—as it were?"

"No. You and Sullivan get together and dictate the facts to my stenographer. That will be all."

Janis hesitated at the door, brushed off his sleeve, lifted one eyebrow, and looked about the old room of the Federal Building, with all its bookcased walls and high, plaster-molded ceiling, apparently as innocent and unconcerned as a tourist from Keokuk.

"Say, Mr. Brevoort, you never seen this girl, have you?" he asked, nonchalantly.

The attorney shook his square-jawed head. Thereupon Janis closed the door and stood outside in the corridor, with the point of his tongue appearing from one extreme corner of his mouth and one eyelid drawn down.

"—, as it were," said he. "And then ag'in —, as it were."

Of course, the real interest centers around the attempt of Brevoort to accomplish, playfully and as a piece of recreation, the mastery of the girl with the gazelle eyes. It was, he appreciated fully, an experiment in vanity. What more it was to be, though he knew it not on that Saturday morning in August, makes this story worth telling and reminds the conscience that there must

be as close an adherence to the true details as exigencies will permit.

On Sunday, then, Everett Edwards Brevoort left his apartment in an unpressed suit of clothes which he had laid aside to give to Jimmy Bernard, his personal attendant. Instead of stretching, as usual, at the University Club, with its great hall of empty breakfast-tables, his broomstick legs took a long and brisk walk through the deserted business district, where the rap-tap-tap of his feet reverberated logically, and at last found themselves under a table in the "Epicure Lunch Room, Open At All Hours." However unaccustomed this performance of his legs, his mind remained as it had grown so perfectly. True to habit, he bought a copy of every newspaper on the counter, and in five minutes had bathed himself in the ample wallow of print, a process which some years ago he named "Saturating the mood of the people's day."

After finishing a perfunctory cup of coffee he went to the telephone booth and took from its stuffy interior the directory of well-thumbed pages.

"Kohlson, Kohlsberg, Kohldig," he read, half aloud, and moving a lean, precise finger up the page. "Kohlan, A. D., Physician. Kohlan, Mrs. B. Ah, she has one!"

He stepped into the closet and delivered the number into the mouth-piece, not so much to, as at, the operator.

Almost at once a voice answered. Even Brevoort, whose artistic sense is maintained by logic, felt the charm in this voice.

"Well, I want to speak with little Miss Kohlan," he said.

"She expected you to call," came the soft reply. "She wants you to leave the message."

Brevoort rubbed his chin.

"Janis couldn't have— Oh no!" he exclaimed, under his breath.

"Please tell her to come around the corner to the Epicure Lunch Room. She will learn something of the greatest importance," he said, aloud.

A gentle, soft, scarcely audible, rippling laugh came back through the receiver.

"Wait there for me," said the voice. "I'm only a girl, you know."

The great man stepped back from the instrument, smoothed one eyebrow with a cool finger-tip, and smiled at the position in which a national figure found himself. He thought of Janis, however, and squared his jaw. Then he became the famous Brevoort-in-Action, suave but alert, smiling like a satanic majesty who might devise legal schemes for wealthy underwriters, ready to pounce like a hawk of a Federal attorney zealous in the public welfare.

Not three minutes later, the door having opened, a twelve-year-old girl came up the aisle between the two rows of tables and sat down calmly, quite at her ease, directly opposite the great prosecuting attorney.

Many centuries of peasantry were in her somewhere, yet her young skin was of the finest texture, her eyes were indeed as soft as the gazelle's and seemed always to be on the point of seeing some marvelous, unbelievable happening, and her features, though large and mature, were delicately turned, not unlike those modeled by the Greeks. Two braids of black, black hair fell far down her back.

Brevoort observed her, thrusting toward her fresh, youthful countenance darts of fire from under his thick eyebrows.

"What's the matter?" she said, with a pout. "You aren't nice to me. Don't you shake hands—ever?"

The Federal attorney shrugged his shoulders, extended his long fingers, and felt the contact of the warm, soft hand of the child under whose skin the blood raced with the merriment of youth.

"You do not know me," he said, mysteriously, looking about as if fearful that the walls had ears.

"Yes, I do, if you please. You're the man who telephoned."

Brevoort glanced up quickly. The brown, gazelle eyes were fairly dripping innocence.

"Yes," whispered the lawyer. "Only I must explain that I came to warn you."

"About the pension money?" she asked.

"Yes."

"Why, aren't you funny?" she inquired, seriously. "Everybody seems to know I had the money, and everybody wants to know what I did with it."

"It is a mighty serious matter, young lady."

She seemed interested; she leaned forward over the table, her red lips parted expectantly.

"And I am a lawyer."

"Are you?" she asked.

"Yes. I have heard all about everything from those who have tried to catch you. But I can show you how you can be free of all trouble. You must tell me the story just as it happened, and you have my word that no harm will come to you."

The little girl leaned her head first to the right, then to the left; a little quirk appeared at each corner of her childish mouth.

"Suppose I didn't tell the truth?" she said, reflectively.

"Oh, you must tell the truth," said Brevoort, sternly. "It is always right to tell the truth—particularly to any one who wishes to help you."

"Do you want to help me?"

The government's attorney, taking up his crumpled napkin, wiped his mouth.

"Certainly," said he.

Dosia tightened the bow at the end of one of her braids of black hair.

"Do you always tell the truth?" she asked, suddenly, as if interested in the ethics of truth and falsehood.

"Your poor mother—" Brevoort began, hastily.

The girl nodded, and one might say the nod was expressive of sympathy for a parent whose anxiety could not very well be allayed.

"Your poor, poor mother—" Brevoort repeated, dramatically.

The child's hand touched his.

"Don't cry," she cautioned. "Perhaps, by and by, I will tell everything."

"Tell me now."

"Well, I gave the money—the money—I got—to—to—"

"Well?" he exclaimed, thinking of Janis.

"I guess I won't tell," purred the little girl. "I won't—just yet."

"When?"

"Why, when you and I are good friends."

"But we can't sit here all day."

"No. But if we went in an automobile—"

"Where?"

"Mother has gone to the Greek church.

We could go into the country," she suggested.

Brevoort made a swift mental calculation of his cash on hand.

"Why, that is nonsense," he said, gruffly.

The child arose. She brushed down her short skirts and adjusted her hat.

"Where are you going?" asked Brevoort.

"You aren't nice," she asserted. "I am going home."

"Wait," commanded the great lawyer. "I will take you up to see the menagerie."

"In an automobile?"

"No, the cars. It's miles out there."

"Automobile!" insisted Dosia. "I never rode in one but once. And that was the plumber's."

"Oh, all right," Brevoort assented, impatiently. "Wait here while I telephone."

The short of the matter was that the Federal district attorney spent his morning with little Miss Kohlan. His own car was at the shops. The cost of the trip in a hired machine was twenty-three dollars.

On the ride up-town she informed him that she had recently given up playing with dolls, and that her school-teacher was in Europe, and that one girl in her class had a father who had become very, very rich by making ice-cream and funny little cakes, and that she liked kittens best of all animals. Brevoort, after they had reached the Zoo, endeavored to question her about who lived in her mother's house. He wanted her to tell which of the lodgers she liked the best.

"I like them all," she said, looking up into his face with her velvet eyes. "But I like you better because you took me for this ride. I had a dog named Pickles, too, and I liked him. He's buried in the back yard. I'll show you sometime—the very spot."

"We mustn't forget why I came to see you," Brevoort had said, leaning toward her sympathetically.

She shook her head, then looked up at the trees in the Park which shaded the path on which they stood, and laughed and laughed and laughed.

"What is it now?" exclaimed the national figure, reddening with anger.

"The monkeys!" gasped Dosia. "They are so much like men. They don't know so much as men do, anyway, do they?"

"No, but I've seen some men—" began Brevoort.

"The monkeys *think* they know."

"Yes."

"And our kind—like you and I—we think *we* know."

"Yes."

"Maybe, then, for all we can tell, the monkeys know more than we do, don't they?"

Brevoort smirked.

"But you said they didn't," urged Dosia.

She looked up at her companion and laughed again; then, as if she pitied him because he could not laugh as joyfully as she, her hand went forth, as they paused before the cage of the South American tapir, and clasped his long, cold, white, clerical fingers. Brevoort started.

"Have you got any wife?" she asked, tightening the clasp.

The lawyer shook his head.

"Any kids?"

"No."

"Sit down on this bench and tell me a story," she said. "Men without any kids tell the best stories."

"The automobile is waiting for us," he objected.

"But I like you," she answered, hitching up nearer. Brevoort could feel coming over him an irresistible desire to sit there in the warm, lazy sunlight.

"Well, you tell *me* a story," said he.

"All right," she exclaimed, wriggling with delight.

"Once upon a time—" suggested the great man.

"Once upon a time—" repeated Miss Kohlan. "Once upon a time there was a little girl who lived in Germany, and her house was built so if you went out on one of the balconies you could see lines of houses, all along a river running right through a city. They all had funny little balconies like those on the fire-escape, only made of wood."

"I believe I've been there," said Brevoort, his eyes half closed.

"Well, she grew up!" exclaimed Dosia, continuing with surprising haste. "Yes, she grew up. She had kittens and dolls, and her father bought her everything she wanted, because one by one all her mother and sisters died and her brother went away. And then she fell in love—

so quick. And her father was mad. Oh, he was mad as a good one! And she ran away. And he said he wouldn't ever speak to her again, and he was so mad he sold the house and he came to America like my father did."

"Then?" asked Brevoort, clasping his thin fingers over one thin knee.

"Well, I forgot," Dosia apologized. "She went and got married a whole lot of years ago, and they were poor, and finally he died."

"Who died?" the lawyer asked, squinting one eye perplexedly.

"The man she married. And she was old, too. And she hadn't any money, and didn't love anybody but her father, and she had loved him all the time, and she wondered if he loved her; but she didn't ever have any way to know, because he was gone."

"Gone to America?"

Dosia nodded gravely.

"But she found out!" she exclaimed. "Somebody found out that her father was an old man—oh, so old, and in America. So she cried. And she wrote to him and told him she hadn't ever done anything but love him. And she was so poor she couldn't even go on a train anywhere. She couldn't come to America. She couldn't do anything. And she was sorry for what she had done, only it was too late."

"I thought you said she wrote a letter?" said Brevoort, exhibiting the instincts of a great cross-examiner.

"Her father tore it up, he was that proud!" said little Miss Kohlan, holding up one finger to express a belief in the old man's naughtiness. "Sure he did. Only he said if he was ever to see her again—why, then he thought maybe he would break his oath and just jump up and down."

"With anger?" said Brevoort, flip-pantly.

Immediately he saw the sincere expression of disillusionment and pain on his little companion's face; he would have given much to have obliterated the effect of his words.

"Go on," said he, softly.

"She died."

"Without seeing her father?"

Dosia indicated by a drooping of her red lips that such was the fact.

"Did you make that all up?" he asked, conscious of the imaginative faculty behind the gazelle eyes. "That is a good story. It is the best story I have heard for a long time. But it is very sad. I would like to have had the daughter forgiven, Dosia."

"How did you know my name was Dosia?" she asked, quickly.

"Why—I—I think—" Brevoort stammered.

The little girl threw her head back and laughed and laughed and laughed.

"You are all so funny," she cried.

"Why, who do you mean?" exclaimed Brevoort.

"All old people. Let's go back. I love to ride in that automobile."

Brevoort, when they had reached the Park entrance after a silent walk, directed the chauffeur how to make the return trip.

"And now," said he to Dosia, "I want you to tell me the story of the money you took. You know you are a very bright little girl, and I like you, and I feel sorry for your mother, and I want to get you out of trouble."

"Yes, sir," replied the child, respectfully. "Perhaps to-morrow."

"To-morrow!" Brevoort exclaimed. "No! To-day!"

"Let me think," she begged.

The minutes sped by; Dosia did not seem to be thinking. On the contrary, she sat with her moist lips parted, gazing at the city pictures flashing by.

"Well?" said the Federal attorney, peevishly.

"Sh-sh!" cautioned the girl. She pointed significantly at the chauffeur. "He mustn't know! It's a great secret."

She hugged herself as if that great secret were concealed within her body.

"Damn it!" exclaimed the national figure, under his breath. "We are here already!"

She seemed to have read his mind.

"I must get out now," she said. "Don't you tell anybody where we've been, will you? I don't want anybody on my street to know. I want to whisper something to you."

Brevoort followed her onto the pavement.

"Bend down," came the command.

He stooped.

"I like you," she whispered.

It must be said in his favor that a real thrill of pleasure passed through the chill of the man's pure logic; his smile was not the satanic smirk of his custom.

"I like you," she repeated, "better than the others."

"Other what?"

The girl, delaying her answer, ran off down the street. She laughed merrily. Brevoort's dignity prevented his running, too, but his gaze followed the child. She was making a peculiar motion as she retreated; she was rubbing one forefinger down the other, which latter was pointed at him. It was the motion of one sharpening a pencil, and suggested to the Federal district attorney that an offense was being committed against the dignity of the Department of Justice.

"Detectives!" called Dosia, at last. "Oh, you—detectives!"

She disappeared.

Brevoort watched the street corner for a moment blankly, as blankly the chauffeur gazed at the single actor in this mysterious drama who now remained on the stage. Then came the transaction of the twenty-three dollars, and the great man strode off, alone again, through the sunny streets, under the roar of elevated trains, past the locked doorways of the stores that were enjoying their Sunday emptiness, with his eyes on the ground, and his long, cold, clerical fingers stroking a jaw that was fixing itself tighter and tighter with every moment of meditation. Brevoort was making ready for his second pounce.

At last he found a corner drug-store where the telephone sign was displayed. Entering, he called up the Sunday retreat of one William Janis, postal inspector.

"Janis," said he, "this is Mr. Brevoort. I know you are across the river, and I dislike to call you out to-day. At four this afternoon, however, I want this Kohlan girl brought down to my office. I want two uniformed men—regular patrolmen—who will stop in for a minute."

"I see, sir, as it were," came back the answer. "The idea is fright, as it were."

"Yes," said the national figure, trying to cling hard to the truth and his dignity at one time. "I have made an investiga-

tion of the case, and I would like to act at once—especially when there will be no other disturbing elements in or around my office.”

“Very good, then. At four—good-by.”

Brevoort rubbed his hands; he planned a perfect lunch at the Union with the Collector of the Port; then, after a discussion of the silk-importer cases which involved a certifying consul at a foreign port, there would be ample time to walk to the Federal Building and meet the unfortunate little Dosia Kohlan for the second and perhaps the last occasion.

Her personality, however, had made its indelible impression upon the master of pure reason. As he listened to the vehement Rawlinson describing the methods taken by textile houses to accomplish undervaluations, he still found himself confronted by her picture. He could see the depths of the innocent, gazelle eyes, the mockery of her smile, her black braids of hair, switching about like the tail of a kitten itching with mischief. He could feel the touch of her little fingers, so warm with life's vivacity.

“Some day she will be a girl no longer,” he said later, pushing through the revolving door of the gray granite structure where the United States Commissioner, the Engineering Corps of the army, the Secret Service, the Circuit Court, and the Department of Justice have their offices. “And then—Heaven help the man who tries to make her fond of him.”

Janis met him at the head of the stairs.

“She's here. We arrested her, as it were.”

“Very well,” said Brevoort, his face settling into its hard lines. “Bring the two patrolmen into my office first—then the child.”

He walked briskly down the broad, tiled corridor of the old building, pushed his way into the large, square room, and seated his lean frame behind the broad-topped desk facing the door. On his face was an exact counterpart of the expression with which, two months before, he had greeted Morton O. Parsoner, who had come in with the warrant in his fat, prosperous, trembling hands. His mouth was drawn into the same thin, cruel line which had made the great market-gambler cry out involuntarily:

“My God, Brevoort, don't look at me like that! Be human.”

He looked up as the patrolmen, borrowed from the local force, entered.

“Stand there, boys,” he said. “The blue coat is worth a lot to make the ordinary criminal understand that the proceeding is not in a court of equity.”

He pressed a button on his desk. Janis came in, his broad, bulldog visage grim as Retribution itself, his huge fingers touching the elbow of little Dosia.

The child had changed her dress since morning; now she was clad in white, and her slender, graceful forearms were bare. A little bow of blue ribbon held her braid in a knot on the top of her head. She seemed to bring a breath of cool meadows into the stifling room.

Into Brevoort's terrible glare of solemnity she tossed a familiar nod of greeting.

“They arrested me again,” she said, sweetly.

The two patrolmen stared at her.

She smiled back at them, and then looked up over her shoulder at Janis.

“Can't you hold me without help?” she said.

“Silence!” roared Brevoort. “You are a little fool! Such a thing as you have done leads to one result. You won't think all this so amusing when you are taken away from your mother and sent to prison.”

“But you will get me out of trouble,” Dosia answered. “You are my lawyer, and my friend, too. You made friends with me, didn't you? You didn't speak cross this morning, and I liked you.”

“Bah! I gave you your chance,” growled Brevoort, “and I'll give you another. What did you do with that money? Answer or I'll—”

Dosia examined a little garnet ring with scrupulous care. She seemed frightened and yet in doubt. At last she looked up, her velvet eyes widened as if she were striving to hold back her emotion.

“Well!” bellowed the Federal attorney.

The girl nodded.

“Please send those two policemen away,” she begged.

“You may go,” said Brevoort, sharply.

The second patrolman shut the great paneled door softly after he had gone out.

Dosia looked first at Janis, then at

Brevoort. A little ripple of laughter burst from her lips. She made a childish pretense of trying to confine her mirth. Then out it came—the same wonderful, spontaneous laughter.

Brevoort jumped to his feet.

"Don't be cross," begged the girl. "I couldn't help it."

"Then you do not mean to tell the truth?" said Janis, roughly. "What did you want those men to leave for? Eh? Eh?"

Dosia reached out for the lawyer's hand and clasped it tight.

"'Cause my new friend didn't want those men to hear me laugh," she said, looking up at Brevoort. "Did you?"

"No," said the national figure, dropping into his chair with a sickly smile. "You are right, little girl. I have done my best to get your secret, and I suppose I must mark down my first complete failure."

Janis grinned viciously. Dosia observed it, and with the quick divination of childhood she realized the situation as it stood. She saw that Janis was taking a malicious delight in her new friend's defeat.

She drew closer to Brevoort and looked toward the postal inspector defiantly.

She went further; she stuck out her tongue at him.

"I like you," she said to Brevoort, after a moment of silence. "So I'm going to tell you the truth. Only you mustn't tell anybody—not a soul! It's a secret. I signed the name on that piece of paper. I copied it from one of Daddy Schmolz's letters. I know it was *awful* naughty."

"But the cash?" exclaimed Brevoort. "Who got the cash?"

The child, opening the locket at her neck, drew from it a little piece of folded paper.

Brevoort spread it out on the desk. It was a post-office receipt for a foreign money order.

"You know the story I told you this morning," said Dosia.

"My stars—yes!" cried the Federal attorney, staring. His cool, clerical fingers closed over those of the child.

"Well, she didn't die. It was Daddy

Schmolz's own daughter—cross my heart! And the money—I sent her the money so she could come to America—so she could come to Daddy Schmolz."

Brevoort stood up. His thin lips, which had not moved except to express strength of mind for thirty years, for the first time seemed to tremble. His tongue, which for so long had only known the utterance of words weighed carefully, now seemed to mumble incoherences. He looked at Janis, then at the little girl. He moved toward her. He put his arm about her young shoulders and drew her close to him. He glared at the bulldog postal inspector as if to defy him to wish the child an injury. He looked down into her upturned face for several seconds. He searched the depths of the deep, gazelle eyes.

"Dosia!" he said at last.

His voice moved slowly with solemnity.

"Dosia. What's the matter with *me*?"

For the first time in his whole acquaintance with her he seemed to have penetrated to her seriousness.

Looking up at him, she turned her head first to one side and then to the other, wearing upon her face a little scowl of pain and anxiety, showing in her eyes the hesitancy of a perplexed critic. At last, however, she nodded.

"Well, what?" asked Brevoort.

"You don't *love* people enough," said Dosia, with childish assurance.

Janis retreated, closing the door after him.

An hour later he opened it softly.

The little girl had gone.

He looked about the old room, apparently as unconcerned as a tourist from Keokuk.

Then his eyes rested for a time on the figure of Brevoort, who was sitting at the big desk, his head in his hands. Janis hesitated, brushed off his sleeve, and lifted one eyebrow.

He did not speak, however. Instead, closing the door softly, he stood outside in the corridor, with the point of his tongue appearing from one extreme corner of his mouth and one eyelid drawn down.

"—, as it were," said he, with a sigh, "and then ag'in —, as it were."

The Street Called Straight

A NOVEL

By the Author of "The Inner Shrine"

CHAPTER XI

IT was not difficult for Davenant to ascribe his lightness of heart, on leaving Tory Hill, to satisfaction in getting rid of his superfluous money, since he had some reason to fear that the possession of it was no great blessing. To a man with little instinct for luxury and no spending tastes, twenty or thirty thousand dollars a year was an income far outstripping his needs. It was not, however, in excess of his desires, for he would gladly have set up an establishment and cut a dash if he had known how. He admired the grand style in living, not so much as a matter of display, but because presumably it stood for all sorts of mysterious refinements for which he possessed the yearning without the initiation. The highest flight he could take by his own unaided efforts was in engaging the best suite of rooms in the best hotel, when he was quite content with his dingy old lodgings, in driving in taxi-cabs, when the tram-car would have suited him just as well, and ordering champagne, when he would have preferred some commoner beverage. Fully aware of the insufficiency of this method of reaching a higher standard, he practised it only because it offered the readiest means he could find of straining upward. He was sure that with a wife who knew the arts of elegance to lead the way, his scent for following would be keen enough; but between him and the acquisition of this treasure there lay the memory of the haughty young creature who had, in the metaphor with which he was most familiar, "turned him down."

But it was not the fact that he had more money than he needed of which he was afraid; it was rather the perception that the possibility of indulging himself—coupled with what he conceived to be a kind of duty in doing it—was sapping

his vigor. All through the second year of his holiday he had noticed in himself the tendency of the big, strong-fibered animal to be indolent and overfed. On the principle laid down by Emerson that every man is as lazy as he dares to be, he got into the way of sleeping late, of lounging in the public places of hotels, and smoking too many cigars. With a little encouragement he could have contracted the incessant cocktail and Scotch-and-soda habits of some of his traveling compatriots.

He excused these weaknesses on the ground that when he had returned to Boston, and got back to his ordinary round of work and exercise, they would vanish, without having to be overcome; and yet the nearer he drew to his old home, the less impulse he felt for exertion. He found himself asking the question, "Why should I try to make more money, when I've got enough already?" to which the only reply was in that vague hope of "doing a little good," inspired by his visit to the scene of his parents' work at Hankow. In this direction, however, his aptitudes were no more spontaneous than they were for the life of cultivated taste. Henry Guion's need struck him, therefore, as an opportunity. If he took other views of it besides, if it made to him an appeal totally different from the altruistic, he was able to conceal the fact—from himself at any rate—in the depths of a soul where much that was vital to the man was always held in subliminal darkness. It disturbed him, then, to have Drusilla Fane rifle this sanctuary with irreverent persistency, dragging to light what he had kept scrupulously hidden away.

Having found her alone in the drawing-room, drinking her tea, he told her at once what he had accomplished in the way of averting the worst phase of the