

THE DAGGER

TURQUOISE-STUDDERD and gold-inlaid,
Exquisite handle and blue-white blade,

How you glitter and gleam and shine,
Here in the moonlight, dagger mine!

Over my heart you used to lie;
Far it was in the days gone by.

Beautiful days were they, and fair;
Love and Laughter and Life were there.

Exquisite handle and keen, blue blade,
Love has wounded, and Life betrayed.

Ah, how the memories burn and blend!
You at last are my only friend.

Lovely bauble of gold and blue,
She is faithless—but you are true.

Under the virgin moon they came,
Lips a-hunger and hearts aflame.

There came I, with my soul astir,
Mad of my ravening love of her.

Beautiful thing of blue and gold,
Love is eternal; and hate is cold.

All my loving has come to this—
They shall die; and for that one kiss!

Clear her eyes as a morning star,
Blue are they as the deep seas are.

Lips that often my own have pressed,
Milk-white shoulder and dove-soft breast,

Arms that round me were wont to twine—
Kill her tenderly, knife of mine!

When yon crescent has sunk to sleep
They their pitiful tryst will keep.

Sighs the wind . . . and the moon is low . . .
Dagger, my dagger, 'tis time to go!

ANNE TOZIER PRINCE.

THE WOMAN FROM TOWN

By G. Vere Tyler

A SIMPLE farmhouse, square, homely, old. At one of the second-story windows a woman. By the window a magnolia tree, white with half-open cups that catch the drizzling rain. In the yard below old-fashioned roses in bloom. Above the roses humming birds; above the humming birds song birds; above the song birds an atmosphere of smoked pearl.

The woman at the window was not touched by these things, beautiful as they were. She had been in the country two weeks, and they no longer interested her. With hands clasped wearily at the back of her head, she peered past them vacantly, while the sun, that had been obscured for two days, burst through the clouds and enveloped her. The magnolia leaves caught the sudden glory, and gleamed. The roses lifted their heads and smiled, and the pebbles in the path that led from the high gate to the house, through ancient cedar bushes, shone like jewels. A man cast in coarse mould, with a sluggish form, that he bore, however, with grace, appeared simultaneously with the sun and stood in the gateway. To the woman this joyous expression of nature, as well as its more rugged expression in the man, were alike intended for her benefit. Indifferent to one, she instinctively studied the other, observing minutely the carriage of the head, the length of limb, the splendid proportions of the man.

He wore a blue cotton blouse that, partly open, exposed his thick, sun-burnt neck and hung loosely on his shoulders. Drab-colored trousers were stuffed rudely into clumsy, high-

topped boots. His eyes, heavy-lidded and dull, were the color of the blouse; his hair, thick and curly, was the color of the trousers. Occasionally his countenance lighted up with intelligence; usually it betrayed but the dull contentment of a healthy animal.

"A field god!" the woman thought, smiling inwardly, "a god of the fields!" Then with a shade of impatience, she added, aloud: "How long have I been likening ordinary men to gods, and adoring them to their ruin! And now this one!" A momentary feeling of disgust swept through her. A pill was to be swallowed for the sake of the effect. As this thought trailed through her mind, a girl, half-child, half-woman, bounded from the porch to the man's side.

She was his wife, Molly.

"Fools in a fool's paradise!" the woman muttered. It irritated her that this slip of a girl, redeemed from plainness only by a pair of innocent eyes and a wealth of silky black hair, should be the possessor of this splendid creature who attracted her attention—this enormous, stupid George—who, when she passed him sitting on the porch in the evening, inspired in her a desire to run her fingers through his hair, as one would caress the head of a Newfoundland dog. Apart from the robust personality of the man there was an atmosphere of refreshing cleanliness about him, more invigorating to her than the country air she had come to seek. Once she heard him say that every day when he left the fields he went to the river and plunged in. He was "too big," he had added, laughing, "for basins, or—"