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William J. Flynn
Recently Retired Chief of the U. S. Secret Service

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THE EAGLE'S EYE

A True Story of the Imperial German Government's Spies and Intrigues in America from facts furnished

BY

WILLIAM J. FLYNN

Recently Retired

Chief of the U. S. Secret Service

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ILLUSTRATED

NEW YORK

PROSPECT PRESS, INC.

186-192 West 4th Street

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YOUNG MEN
TO
SUCCESS

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1919

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THE EAGLE'S EYE

CHAPTER I

THE HIDDEN DEATH

Below the great oil painting of Kaiser Wilhelm, in the Imperial German Embassy at Washington, a slightly wrinkled, nervous man sat at a massive desk, an almost obsolete German dictionary before him, his fingers running the pages, figuring out the numbers, then running them again, his lips repeating the numerals of many a scattered sheet of paper before him, repeating, re-repeating, then matching up those numerals with the page numbers and word numbers of the old dictionary.

Quite still the room was, except for the whirr of the pages and the slight crinkle of the many sheets of papers as he referred from one to the other. There was little need for reference, however, for every page bore the same numerals, the

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same messages written in strange conglomerations of numbers that were apparently meaningless—even to many of the persons who had brought or sent them to this wrinkled, nervous being who sat beneath the painting of the Kaiser. And reason enough—for those pages of numbers, those jumbled sequences of numerals, were nothing more nor less than the smuggled code messages by which Wilhelm Hohenzollern, Emperor of Imperial Germany, sent his daily instructions via the great wireless at Nauen, Germany, to the man who directed his spider's web of spy activity in the United States, Count Johann von Bernstorff, Imperial Ambassador!

Each morning since the war began, Von Bernstorff had received those numeral inscribed pages, caught on wireless outfits owned privately throughout the United States by German spies, who had been placed in America for that very purpose. Each day the instructions had come from Berlin—instructions for the beginning of propaganda campaigns, for connivance against the Allies, for the handling of the thousand and one methods by which Germany sought to strike its enemies through neutral America.

Each morning at 3 o'clock, American time, those messages flashed from the tremendous wireless tower at Nauen, Germany—to find

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spies waiting everywhere in America for them. On interned ships, in shacks, built far from the roar and bustle of the city, even in Fifth Avenue residences, were wireless outfits concealed, each equipped with its Audien detector, so necessary to the catching of wireless waves from a great distance. Nor had the members of the Embassy itself neglected to take a part in the reception of orders from across the sea. Nearly every morning at 3 o'clock found Capt. Franz von Papen, military attache of the Imperial German Embassy, and Capt. Karl Boy-Ed, naval attache, at a secluded part of Long Island, standing beside a racing motor car, to which was attached antennae, detectors and receiving apparatus, that they might personally assure themselves that the code messages from overseas were received and started on their way to Bernstorff, the master spy.

So it was that one day in April, 1915, Count Johann von Bernstorff worked hard at his task of deciphering the maze of numerals that had come to him during the night. One by one he traced out the numbers, matching them first with the page of the old German dictionary, then with the words of the aged book, each of which was carefully numbered for easy transcription. When he had finished, his head bobbed slightly, he

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pressed a button and almost snapped an order at the hurrying man servant.

"Send Dr. Albert in," he announced.

"Yes, Your Excellency."

A moment later a tall, dark-haired man, his left cheek scarred from a schoolday duel at Heidelberg, stepped into the room. He was Dr. Heinrich Albert, fiscal spy for Imperial Germany, master of its exchequer in America, and second only to Bernstorff in what he termed "the battle on the American front." Just a second he hesitated, and then:

"You sent for me, sir?"

"I did. Just got a message from Wilhelmstrasse." Bernstorff was talking jerkily, somewhat excitedly. "The Lusitania must be sunk on its next voyage."

"Yes?" Dr. Albert asked the question with the calmness of a person ordering a cab—or choosing a meal. "Well—all arrangements are made, are they not?"

"As far as the submarines are concerned, yes. The entire Irish coast has been charted into squares, each square carrying the name of some fish indigenous to that region. The moment that the word is flashed that the Lusitania has sailed, a U-boat will be assigned to each one of those squares. Then it will be an easy matter for fish-

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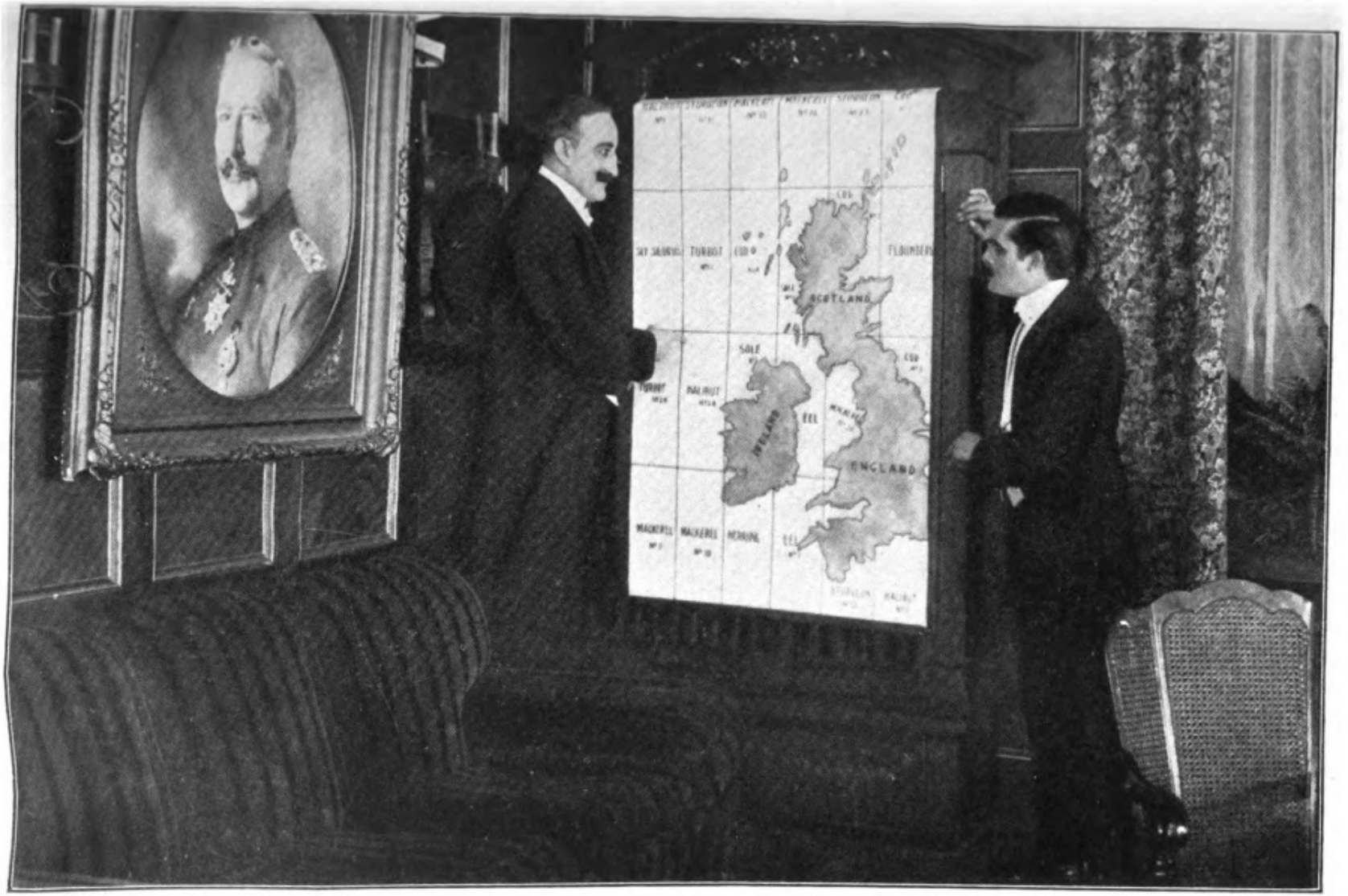

Count Johann von Bernstorff and Dr. Heinrich Albert

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ing smacks, each with a spy aboard, to patrol the coast, and send a message from the nearest wireless station—"

"Something like: 'Shipping ten cases of mackerel,' " broke in Dr. Albert.

"Exactly." Bernstorff looked up with a smile. "You and I have discussed that before, haven't we? I had forgotten Well, you know the rest. No one will pay any attention to the messages except our U-boat captains. They will know by them that the Lusitania is entering the square named after that particular fish. It should be an easy task for them to sink the ship. And it must be sunk!"

"How about the international complications?"

"They must take care of themselves—after we have done all we can do to keep things running smoothly. The point is that the Lusitania must be sunk! We have a lesson to teach America! If we sink a few of their citizens, perhaps they'll be more chary about sending their representatives abroad to sell goods to the Allies. It may make them stop and think awhile before they ship their goods to the Allies too—and that's what we're after."

"Suppose America objects to the loss of its citizens?" Albert was smiling in a quiet, quizzical way.

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"We'll sympathize, of course." Bernstorff looked up with an answering smile. "Really, we'll be very sorry We will mourn for a week —but, in the meanwhile, we also will point to our manufactured fact that the Lusitania carried guns and contraband. That's where you are needed. Take the night train to New York, see Paul Koenig, of the Hamburg American line, and arrange for him to find someone not averse to forging a few affidavits, one to the effect that the Lusitania is loaded with contraband, and another that she carries defensive guns. And be very sure on that point. The rules of war prohibit the sinking of an unarmed ship without due warning. We must have those affidavits."

"Very good, sir."

"And, Albert—"

"Yes?"

"Here"——Ambassador Bernstorff lifted a sheet of closely written paper from his desk—"is an advertisement I have written, warning all American citizens from the Lusitania. See that it is inserted in the New York papers as close to the Cunard Line advertisements as possible. It will be our alibi when the Lusitania is sunk."

"Very good, Your Excellency."

And so it was that with Ambassador Bernstorff at the head of the great spy organization

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which Germany had built up in America, with Dr. Albert, Capt. von Papen, Karl Boy-Ed, Paul Koenig and a half a hundred others working on the various details of the scheme, that the preparations for the sinking of the Lusitania went forth in America.

Day after day passed, while Bernstorff translated his code messages from Wilhelmstrasse and sent replies in the guise of death messages and business telegrams to neutral countries, where they were received by German spies, translated and telephoned by long distance to Germany. Day by day, and then—

It was April 29, forty-eight hours before the sailing of the Lusitania. In the great rooms of the Criminology Club in New York, where cosmopolite members daily gathered to discuss the themes which formed their chief aim in life, the apprehension of the genus criminal, an important meeting was in progress: Harrison Grant, the president and organizer of the great private criminal chasing brotherhood, stood before them, a telegram in his hand.

"Fellow members," he announced, "I have just received the most vital communication that has ever come to this club. It is a telegram from William J. Flynn, chief of the Secret Service, which changes the aims and purposes of our organiza-

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tion to ideals far greater than ever were dreamed of when we banded ourselves together to follow out our individual hobbies in the chase and capture of dangerous criminals. For this telegram pits us against the most shrewd violators of the laws of God and man that ever were known—the paid criminals of Imperial Germany, protected by the power of international law, yet criminals nevertheless!

"All of you know the reason for this telegram. It is in answer to the letter we sent to Chief Flynn at the last meeting of this club, when our various members displayed the evidence that had come to them of the perfidy of Imperial Germany in assuming friendship for this country while seeking to violate our neutrality in its efforts to maim the Allies. More than that, my charge you will remember, was that Germany had considered America also in its aims of conquest, and that it fully believed at the beginning of this war that it would crush England and France easily, then reach forth for our own country. But the danger of active invasion is past now—it stopped at the battle of the Marne. What we must battle against is the more insidious invasion of Germany's spies—and their name is Legion! Therefore, gentlemen, I have the honor to announce to you that Chief Flynn has accepted

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our offer of services and that the Criminology Club is now and henceforth devoted to the defense of America and the outwitting of the paid tools of Imperial Germany who seek to use our nation as a battlefield!"

A cheer that resounded through the great rooms of the Criminology Club echoed Grant's speech. Then the members gathered into little groups to discuss the new development and to plan for the future. As for Harrison Grant—

He shifted from his position and veered toward Cavanaugh, his most trusted operative.

"Billy," he announced, "our first blow in this matter falls to you. You have seen the advertisements in the newspapers advising passengers not to sail on the Lusitania?"

"Of course."

"Very well. I believe that means the beginning of more direct plots against America. There is only one way to learn. Von Papen, Boy-Ed, Dr. Albert, Heinric von Lertz, their unofficial agent in New York—even Ambassador Bernstorff himself—make a habit of lounging at the Hohenzollern Club. We want a dictograph in those club-rooms."

Billy Cavanaugh twisted his already tightly waxed mustache and smiled ever so slightly.

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"I'll attend to the details," he announced quietly.

And while Harrison Grant gave his orders, four men were gathered about the big table in the Imperial German Embassy in Washington. One of them was Bernstorff. Another was Albert, with his ever-present portfolio in which he carried the reports of spies operating in every city of the United States. A third was Boy-Ed and the fourth was Capt. von Papen.

The meeting, incidentally, seemed to have been a happy one. A supercilious smile skimmed the lips of Franz von Papen as he gazed at his co-plotters. He waved his cigar slightly before him.

"These idiotic Yankees will wake up next week," he announced, "it will be something for them to think about."

"It will be something for the world to think about," echoed the fastidious Boy-Ed.

"Do you suppose," Dr. Albert was rummaging in his portfolio, "it could possibly act as a boomerang? America has had its eyes shut, you know. For instance, I think Capt. von Papen recently reported the burning of several million bushels of wheat in its elevators, as well as a train wreck or two that have so far been classified as accidents. Now, my query is: will the deliberate, pre-arranged killing of Americans and the fore-

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announced destruction of American property on board the Lusitania, cause this country to open its eyes and inquire about other things that have happened? Or will it—"

Capt. Franz von Papen smiled with one corner of his mouth.

"If you have ever noticed," he replied, "I have always used the term 'idiotic Yankees.'"

Bernstorff laughed. Albert bobbed his head.

"Quite so," he said finally. "I yield the point. Now, regarding the Lusitania, when is it destined to sink?"

Bernstorff rummaged in some papers, at last to bring forth a code message.

"Potsdam plans the sinking for next Wednesday, May 5. It has already ordered medals struck off to commemorate the victory."

And while the arch-spies of Imperial Germany continued to plot the murder of American citizens on the high seas, a lithe, dark-eyed girl walked to the stenographer's desk of one of the largest hotels of New York City, with apparently no purpose in life save to be pretty and attractive and likeable. Spirited she was, with a dash of animation which caused people to look at her more than once, with a sparkle in those big eyes which told of a love of life and zest for adventure, a tilt to her chin that spoke of determination, a

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smooth grace about her which spelled birth and breeding and aristocracy. Time was—and not so very far in the past—when her name had glittered in the electric lights of Broadway. But the love of adventure had been too strong and Dixie Mason, daughter of Brentwell Mason of Sou' Car'lina, sur, had forsaken the stage to take her place as a quietly commissioned captain of women operatives in the Secret Service. And now—

Now she was walking toward the public stenographer's desk, smiling and speaking to friends in the lobby, apparently thinking of nothing in the world, but in reality straining with every nerve to catch the message in the Morse code that the stenographer was ticking off on the space-bar of her typewriter:

"This .... is .... the .... man .... I .... spoke .... of. .... He .... thinks ....he's .... a .... lady .... killer."

Dixie Mason's sense of humor could not resist a trifle of a smile, and quite accidentally, as she smiled, she glanced toward the rather tall, sleek German who stood reading a dictated letter he just had received from the stenographer. The German's eyes rolled. Quite "accidentally" again, Dixie Mason allowed her swagger stick to fall to the floor. An instant later the Ger-

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man had bent forward, started to pick up the stick, and with intentional clumsiness, stepped on it, breaking it. He swept his silk hat in a flourishing bow.

"Dunnerwetter!" he exclaimed, "such clumsiness! And I had such good intentions!" Dixie Mason smiled again. She started to speak—then stopped suddenly as the stenographer's voice broke in.

"I'm sure he is more than sorry," she interrupted. "Miss Mason, this is Mr. Heinric von Lertz. He is *such* a gentleman, and I know that *he is so* sorry!"

Dixie Mason had not placed Molly Farris in that hotel lobby for nothing. Quietly she pressed the "stenographer's" hand and listened to Heinric von Lertz's apologies. With the result that a half hour later found them at luncheon, and with the further result that three hours later found Dixie Mason back in her apartment and smiling to herself as she brought forth an innocent appearing letter from a small filing cabinet. The twinkling little lines of humor gathered about her lips as she scanned the lines:

"My Dear Miss Mason:

"Thanks for your letter. James is doing fine and by hard work has gotten into a position of trust in the private bank of two fine old Ger-

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mans, Schneider and Wurtz. However, he intends to tell no one until he receives his first raise.

"Sincerely,

"Wallace J. Claflynn."

Universal Salvage Sales Co.

RRF-WJC

"Code signal RRF," said Dixie Mason as she looked at the stenographer's signature, then scanned the letters and signals in the cabinet, finally to bring forth a bit of celluloid, perforated here and there with aimless appearing holes. A quick motion and the celluloid had covered the paper. Then the message stared forth:

work into
trust of Ger
mans
tell no one
W J. flynn
U S S S

A low laugh sounded as Dixie Mason returned the code letter and celluloid to its resting place.

"Not bad," she breathed happily. "The Chief sent me that letter four days ago. Already I've taken luncheon with Heinric von Lertz, chief henchman for Bernstorff, Von Papen, Boy-Ed and Albert, and he has asked me to go to the theatre with him tonight. And if I don't con

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tinue to keep in his company, it won't be my fault! I rather think," and Dixie Mason laughed softly, "that .Heinric von Lertz is going to be quite valuable!"

But time was short. Two days later, the great, sleek Lusitania glided out of New York harbor and started upon the first phase of its journey across the seas, carrying with it 1,250 passengers, more than a hundred of whom were Americans, the pride of America's theatrical, editorial and financial worlds; American aristocracy and American common people, but all Americans, all equal in their standing in the light of the Liberty statue, supposedly safe from warring nations, innocents, traveling toward a deliberate German murder.

Too short a time for Harrison Grant and his men to gain their knowledge of what was going on in the Hohenzollern Club. Only that morning, Cavanaugh had reported progress—the assurance that the dictograph would be in the Hohenzollern Club by the end of the next week. Too short a time for Dixie Mason to obtain the confidence of Heinric von Lertz and learn from him the details of the plot against America. Too short a time! The Lusitania was doomed!

The very moment of her sailing, a furtive-eyed

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spy had rushed to a cable office, to send the following cablegram to Europe:

"L. H. Guerz—Amsterdam, Holland.

"Lucy has entered last phase of illness. Doctors say progress until Thursday normal. After that, difficult to diagnose. Therbold."

Already the message was traveling under the sea, while the spy reported to von Lertz, and while another spy in Amsterdam anxiously awaited its arrival. And when he received it, his code-educated eyes read an entirely different message from that of a mere announcement of an illness, a message which thrilled his craven soul with the information:

"Lusitania has sailed. Course until Thursday normal. After that, unknown."

A hurried ten minutes in which the spy turned to a specially installed telephone, sent the message to Nauen and thereby to Cuxhaven and to every other U-boat base of Germany, where waited the scavengers of the sea, Germany's submarines and their commanders. More, from Nauen the message flashed to hundreds of men on the Irish coast, apparently fishermen, who arranged to speed forth as far as possible into the ocean, and to wait day and night for the sight of the vessel, that they might spy it to its doom. Expensive—of course! But all battles are ex-

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This medal, designed to commemorate the sinking of the Lusitania, was distributed in Germany two days before the vessel was torpedoed

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pensive, and Germany was planning the death of women and children in what it would call one of the greatest "victories of the war." Were not the medals that would be issued to commemorate the "victory" already being struck off? And had not even the date been placed thereon in characteristic German "efficiency?" Germany had named May fifth. And May fifth they would be distributed. For where was there a chance for the Lusitania to escape?

Nor did the fact that May fifth passed with no message from the U-boats cause Germany to hold back those medals. On they went to the populace, while flags fluttered in Berlin to announce the "victory" that had not yet happened. Everywhere were the U-boats. Everywhere were the fishing smacks, flashing out the supposed business message that carried the code word of the position of the great ship. Time and again the sleek greyhound of the sea dodged destruction only through her speed. But in the distance more U-boats were lurking. The end was inevitable.

May sixth. Then May seventh. Into the rooms of the Criminology Club hurried Billy Cavanaugh to seek out Harrison Grant and to report with a little smile:

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"There's something interesting for you in a room adjoining the Hohenzollern Club."

Harrison Grant raised his eyebrows.

"Got it fixed, Billy?"

"Yes, sir. Broke a water pipe leading into the club, then hurried for the plumber shop that always attends to their work. Good fellow there—thorough American. He let me fix the leak. And while I was fixing it, I also fixed the dictograph—just behind the picture of His Imperial Majesty, William Hohenzollern."

Harrison Grant laughed happily and reached for his hat. A half hour later he lifted the receiver of a dictograph to his ear. Stewart, the relief operator, watched him.

"I've just been listening," he announced. "Think von Papen, Boy-Ed and Wolf von Igel just came into the club. Couldn't swear to it, though."

Harrison Grant nodded slightly, the dictograph still to his ear. Then he started. Hurriedly he turned:

"Put this down:

"'Paul Koenig has assured us that a man will swear that the vessel carried guns. Also that an affidavit will be given that she was loaded with contraband. Dumba can be counted on to espouse our cause—.'"

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"What does it mean?" Cavanaugh stepped forward. Grant frowned. "Can't tell. von Papen's doing the talking. Now Boy-Ed has joined him:

" 'Surely we should have heard before this. Do you suppose anything could have gone wrong? Surely they were prepared. But today's May seventh, and it should have happened May fifth. If—.' "

"All right. What's the rest?" Stewart looked up from his copying. Grant shook his head.

"They're mumbling—I can't hear. They seem to have all gotten over in a corner with their heads together and are trying to talk so that no one around the club will hear them. But—wait a minute—they're talking louder now—no, they've settled down to that buzzing again—I think I hear a telephone ringing—von Papen has just told Boy-Ed to answer it. Wait now—wait —"

A strange silence in the dictograph room. Harrison Grant adjusted the receiver closer to his ears. He pressed a hand strainingly against it, as though to aid him in the hearing of what was going on over in the next room. But impossible.

And at that moment, out on the open sea, the passengers of the Lusitania were strolling happily about the decks after a jovial luncheon.

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Someone looked at his watch to absently note that the time was 2.32. And as he raised his eyes

---

The deadly, gray serpent-like form of a periscope as it raised itself above the waves. The wake of a torpedo as it hissed its way through the water. Then a great rolling roar, a shock that trembled through the whole vessel, a sickening lurch and plunge, the thunder of an explosion—

Hours later, in the dictograph room, Harrison Grant again leaned forward.

"That telephone again!" he announced. "I wonder what it means? Boy-Ed always answers it. There he goes again. Guess he'll mumble into it, just as he's done all day—no, he's talking louder this time—it's something about a ship—"

His hand clenched.

"I can't get it," he grumbled. "If he'd only talk louder—what's that— the Lusitania?"

"Lusitania?" The two other operatives looked up quickly. Harrison Grant nodded slightly.

"Yes. Heard him say something about the Lusitania. Seems to be getting some kind of a report over the telephone, as though some spy were telling him something that had happened. Now he's left the telephone—he's gone back to the others—good God!"

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The two operatives leaped to their feet at the ejaculation from their chief. Their staring eyes saw that his cheeks were white, that the blood was slowly leaving his lips, leaving them purplish, ghastly.

"They've ordered a toast to the Kaiser!" he announced coldly, "a toast—in commemoration of Germany's 'victory' over the Lusitania! It can mean only one thing—!"

And as if in answer, up from the streets of New York there radiated the shouts of the newsboys, calling the headlines of the first "extra:"

"Lusitania sunk! Lusitania sunk by German submarine! Klein, Vanderbilt, Hubbard and thousand others missing. Extry paper! Extry paper, all about the sinking of the Lusitania!"

So that was the German victory! The Lusitania sunk! Wearily Grant sank into a chair, the dictograph receiver still to his ear. On the other side of the wall three men had raised their steins to the picture of the Kaiser, toasting him for the idea which had enabled the fishing smacks to wireless the news of the Lusitania's course to the waiting submarines, for the distorted brain which had devised the messages of fishermen into instruments of death, for the ungodly, demon-like cunning that had conceived the death of women

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and children to be a German "victory!" Dron-ingly the words come over the dictograph:

"To the Kaiser! May he continue his glorious victories, abroad—and here!"

"Abroad—and here!" murmured Harrison Grant between his clenched teeth. "And 'here' means America!"

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CHAPTER II

THE NAVAL BALL CONSPIRACY

Thus the news of the sinking of the Lusitania came to New York, to throw a saddening cloud upon what was planned to have been the happiest week of many years. For in the Hudson River, great, sleek leviathans of the deep, the sixty-four vessels of the Atlantic fleet had dropped anchor to await the President's review, while the streets, the theatres, the restaurants, bore the glorious flutter of flags and bunting, and the blue and white of the navy uniforms were everywhere.

And now that the Lusitania had been sunk, now that the lives of more than a hundred of America's best citizens had been sacrificed to the lust of Imperial Germany, those big vessels seemed to take on a new meaning, a new significance. In New York harbor primarily only for a review and for a jollification, they now assumed their real proportions in the eyes of the populace, displaying to Eastern America just for what they could be depended upon in case of

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war. And with every day, that danger seemed closer. For America resented the sinking of the Lusitania. The great crowds around the bulletin boards, watching daily the steadily lengthening list of the dead, called for vengeance, for repayment from this monster nation across the Atlantic that could kill women and children and glory in it as a "victory." Every telegram from Washington, every news dispatch, emphasized the gravity of the situation. And no one knew better that gravity than did Harrison Grant of the Criminology Club.

Working day and night with his companions of the Club, Grant had hurried to the uncovering of the conspiracy to present forged affidavits asserting that the Lusitania carried guns and contraband. Clue after clue was run down, while in Washington, the Imperial German Embassy worked just as hard in the opposite direction, covering the tracks of its plotters and its spies, seeking to proclaim to America the sorrow which it assumed over the sinking of the great British liner. To some the sorrow seemed sincere. To others—Harrison Grant among them—that sorrow was known to be only a mask, thrown hastily on to deceive America and to keep America at peace until Germany felt itself able to cope with

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it and strangle it as it sought to strangle the rest of the world.

And so the days went, in moves and counter moves. Day after day the populace, by the hundreds of thousands, gathered on the banks of the Hudson to look at the tremendous battleships and to glory in their power and effectiveness. And while they did so—

Four men were meeting again in the embassy at Washington—the same four who generally gathered there, Franz von Papen, Karl Boy-Ed, Dr. Heinrich Albert and their leader, Ambassador Bernstorff. Point after point they discussed regarding the sinking of the Lusitania and the possibility of war. At last—

It was Dr. Albert who was speaking, pawing through the reports that he had dragged from his beloved portfolio:

"Marsden reports," he announced, "that the feeling in the West is quite strong over the Lusitania. While I believe our foreign office may be able to drag the situation out until the fever heat of war is passed, still I fancy it would not be a bad idea on our part to make such preparations as may be necessary in case the United States should suddenly determine to avenge the death of its citizens. Now—"

Karl Boy-Ed, naval attache, interrupted.

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"I believe we have anticipated you there, my dear Dr. Albert," he said smoothly. "Kindly tell us what you believe to be the greatest defensive and offensive agent which America has against Germany at the present time."

"Why the great Atlantic fleet, of course."

"You mean the one that is in New York at the present time for review?"

"Of course."

"And if my good comrade von Papen and myself should tell you that we have already made arrangements to make this fleet incapable of working either for the defense of America or for an offense against Germany, what would you say?"

Dr. Albert brought his hand down on the desk with a thumping bang. "I should call it a master stroke!" he announced.

Boy-Ed looked at von Papen and smiled. Then he turned to Dr. Albert again.

"Then, my dear Doctor, your mind may rest easy. Capt. von Papen and I have arranged a scheme which will make the great Atlantic fleet wholly useless in event of war. Rather, we have arranged two schemes. One of them is planned for the Naval Ball at the Ansonia Hotel in New York tonight, which will be attended by practically every navigating officer of the fleet. The other is held in reserve in case the attempt to-

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The Ansonia Hotel, New York City

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night fails. It is a trifle more daring—and I might say, a bit more spectacular. Even his Imperial Highness, the Emperor, would delight in seeing it! But of course, we are holding that for the *coup de etat,* as it were, in case the plan tonight fails."

It was as they discussed the details of their plot for the night that Harrison Grant hurried from his office in the Criminology Club in answer to a call from an operative:

"They want you in the dictograph room!"

Ten minutes later, the investigator of crime leaped from a taxi around the corner from the Hohenzollern Club and made his way to the room adjacent to the German meeting place. Stewart and Cavanaugh were awaiting him anxiously.

"Something doing," said Stewart as he raised his eyes to his chief. "I've been catching stuff for the last half hour."

"What about?"

"The Ansonia Hotel."

"The Ansonia?" Grant came forward quickly.

"Yes. Anything special going on there tonight?"

"A good deal," was the quick answer of Harrison Grant. "The Officers of the navy are going to have their review ball there. Why?"

"Because," and the operative leaned closer to

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the dictograph, "the indications are that the Germans intend to blow it up—and our navy officers along with it."

"Impossible!" Harrison Grant's face went white. "Impossible! Why, all the navigating officers of the fleet are to be there tonight—the whole brains of the Great Atlantic Squadron! It would cripple our whole Eastern system of defense!"

"Then you'd better get word to them not to attend" came the cold answer of Stewart, "because the plans are made—to bomb that hotel tonight!"

Harrison Grant's brow wrinkled. He looked hurriedly at his watch.

"We can't get word to them now. Most of them are away from their ships at entertainments—leaving the ships with only skeleton crews. Besides, we can't empty that whole hotel and just let it lie there, a target for some German bomb! No, there must be some other way—but Stewart, are you certain about all this?"

"Here are my notes," came the answer of the operative. "Von Lertz came into the club about a half hour ago. Some old German who seemed to have some decency in his heart, was reading the *Abendpost* and repeating an editorial in it which said that the sinking of the Lusitania

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might cause war with Germany. He appeared to be worried about it and that such a thing would mean the death of all of Germany's ambitions. Von Lertz listened to him for a while and then began to sneer at him. He said that after tonight, it would be impossible for the United States to declare war on anyone. Then—" Stewart referred to his shorthand notes—"he used this sentence:

"'There's the Ansonia, tonight, you know. And there's Kroner, who's finishing his masterpiece in the way of a bomb. And when Kroner makes a bomb it generally destroys what it's intended for. After he pays his little visit to the Ansonia tonight, there'll be no danger of America fighting anyone.'"

"And there wouldn't," echoed Harrison Grant, "not with navy officers dead and no one to handle the navigation of her battleships."

He turned to the telephone. A short conversation and he was facing Stewart and Cavanaugh again.

"Every member of the Criminology Club will attend the Naval Ball tonight as guests," he ordered. "Chief Flynn is sending fifty men there. The police department will co-operate with a special guard. They'll watch the outside. It will be our duty to guard the interior. Come

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—we'll pick up the rest of the members of the Club."

And as the three men hurried away, a queer appearing, raw-boned scientist hurried about a small workroom in a faraway part of New York. Before him was a heavy thing of steel and springs and clockwork and trinitrate of toluol, the most horrible explosive known. Almost lovingly he fingered it. Then he turned to his assistant.

"See that it's timed for 12.20," he ordered. "That is the time agreed upon. All the German contingent will be at the ball tonight to divert suspicion. When things are moving their best, we will slip in and plant the bomb under the main stairway. That will give it more breadth for destruction when the explosion comes. But be sure—" and he wagged a bony finger—"that it is set for not earlier than 12.20. Our people must have time to leave the ball and be well away before the explosion comes."

"Don't worry," answered the assistant quietly. "I've set bombs before."

But when the Naval Ball started that night, it had more than a hundred guests who had been furnished tickets at the last moment. More than that, every person of German appearance in the great ball room was within the vision of The

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Eagle's Eye, the United States secret service, while outside—

Up Broadway, in platoons and in columns, came hurrying squads of police, to divide suddenly, to take their positions at the doorways, at the hallways, beside the elevator shafts—even on the roofs. Everywhere was Harrison Grant, directing activities.

"Keep your eyes open, men," he announced. "Allow no one in this building who carries any kind of satchel or parcel. Cavanaugh!" he called to his operative, just passing, "how about the cloakrooms?"

"They've all been searched."

"Found nothing?"

"Nothing."

"Good. Take four of these men and put two on each cloak room. Have you attended to searching any new employees who might have taken employment here lately?"

"Yes. All done. The management furnished me a list of everyone they weren't sure of. I looked them all over. Everything's safe there—they're all loyal!"

"Thank goodness for that. They may help us."

"That's been attended to. They all have in-

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structions from Mr. McBowman, the general manager."

Grant smiled.

"You've been on the job, I see," he said. Then he glanced at Cavanaugh's immaculate evening clothes. "Looking the way you do, Billy, I don't think it would be a bad idea for you to see if you can't pick out a nice little German girl to dance with. It might cause her escort some worry." Cavanaugh winked and stepped away. Grant turned once more to a group of policemen whom Stewart was hiding in the palms at the head of the stairway.

"Take no excuse," he ordered quietly. "If necessary, shoot to kill. And in any event, if anything looks suspicious, arrest first, investigate afterward."

Grant turned at a touch on his arm. It was Turner, his operative, assigned to the roof.

"I've placed men all around up there," the operative said. "There were two or three places —at the head of the dumbwaiter and that sort of thing, that would have made good hiding places. So I took no chances."

"Correct. Now pick out a German and trail him."

"Yes sir. And you—?"

"I'll do the same—as well as every other mem-

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ber of the Criminology Club. I want to know every move they are making."

Turner moved away. Harrison Grant stepped forward, chatted a moment with a young woman of his acquaintance—then stared.

Before him, coming toward the young woman at his elbow, was quite the prettiest girl—to Harrison Grant's eyes—that he had ever seen. Vivacious, beautifully dressed, full of the dash and verve that Harrison Grant so admired, quick, decisive in her movements, yet thoroughly girlish, there was an element about her that Harrison Grant had never before noticed in another woman. Something within him seemed to leap, hesitate, then begin to thump with the quickness and persistence of a triphammer. Vaguely Grant knew that it was his heart. And just as vaguely, he knew that he was being introduced to this brown-eyed, smiling little being, whose hand was so small that it seemed almost cruelty to press it—yet with a grasp so firm and steady that it carried with it the sensing touch of a true, strong companion—whose hair was black and yet brown, whose smile was frank and yet elusive, whose whole being was of the sort to enthrall Harrison Grant and to hold him prisoner.

Then a sudden change. The beating of his heart slowed. The sparkle of his eyes dulled.

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The smile faded from his lips—for just behind the girl whose name he had vaguely heard to be Miss Dixie Mason, had shown the figure of her escort, a man whom Grant had come to hate, a man he knew to be responsible for the working out of the plot against the Ansonia Hotel that night, Heinric von Lertz, unofficial agent for Imperial Germany's murderers.

As for Von Lertz, he turned somewhat quizzically toward the policeman at the door of the ballroom, looked at him in a sneering fashion, then with a short nod in acknowledgment of the introduction to Grant, he asked:

"Police? Is it the usual thing in America for them to attend social functions?"

"Not unless they're invited—or needed," answered Harrison Grant caustically.

A quick glance shot between the two men. A moment more and Von Lertz had turned to the ballroom, taking Dixie Mason with him, while Harrison Grant watched after her, wondering what such a pretty, wholesome appearing girl could be doing in the company of a man whose business was the representation of murderers. That she carried a Secret Service commission, Grant did not know. The instructions of Chief Flynn, ordering her to work into the confidence of the Germans without letting even the fellow

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members of the Secret Service know her true purpose, had attended to that. And Grant saw in her only a girl who had chosen as a companion a man who was at that moment plotting the very downfall of America!

However, it was only natural that they should meet again during the evening. And it was only natural that Grant should ask her to dance with him. More, it was only natural that as he looked into her eyes, as he felt the firm swing and graceful lift of her to the swaying music of the fox-trot, that he should wish more than ever that the stain of her apparent friendship for Von Lertz should some day resolve into an innocent one after all. As for Dixie—

As she was swept away again in the arms of Harrison Grant, following the encore, Dixie wished with a sudden impulse that the touch of those arms might some day mean more than the embrace of a dance, she wished that she might tell this man whom she knew to be the president of the Criminology Club that she was really a compatriot, that she was working along the same lines as himself, struggling for the same ideals fighting for—

But one could only obey orders. Besides, the dance had ended, and in the foreground, waiting and fretting, stood Heinric von Lertz.

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A few brief acknowledgments of the pleasure of the dance and they parted, Dixie Mason to take her place at the side of the German plotter, Harrison Grant to hurry forward at the signal of Cavanaugh from the doorway. Grant found him nervous, irritable.

"The dangerous moment has come," he announced shortly. "Look!"

Far at one side of the room stood a tall German, apparently chatting with his fellow country-people as they strolled about after the dance. But as he watched, Grant saw that the conversations were extremely short and that following each one, every German and his companion turned toward the cloakrooms. Billy Cavanaugh's voice broke in once more.

"He's warning them all to leave," said the operative. "He's been doing it for the last five minutes. Half the Germans in the place are gone now. It's nearly time for the attempt."

Harrison Grant bent close.

"Send the men to make the rounds of the patrolmen," he ordered quickly. "Tell them to keep their eyes open wider than ever. Allow absolutely no one to enter this hotel."

"Yes sir."

"Double the guards on every door. What has

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been done in regard to the other searches that I ordered?"

"Everything's been accomplished. The hotel management has made the rounds of the whole place with pass keys. Every piece of baggage that cannot be vouched for has been examined. Nothing has been found."

"Good. Hurry to those patrolmen. I—"

For Grant had seen in the entrance to the cloakroom, the form of Heinric von Lertz, his coat over his arm, waiting impatiently for Dixie Mason. With a sudden determination, he hurried forward, to reach the entrance, just as Miss Mason came forth, adjusting a loose fold of her opera cloak. Grant bowed.

"Not going?" Miss Mason smiled.

"I assure you it isn't my desire," she said quickly. "Mr. von Lertz simply insists on it, though. I never was having a better time in my life!"

Harrison Grant turned, to smile into the face of Heinric von Lertz.

"Surely, you wouldn't spoil the pleasure of anyone so sweet as Miss Mason."

"I can't help it, you know," answered Heinric von Lertz somewhat testily. "My head aches."

"Your head aches?" Grant laughed. "And

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you're going home on account of that? I'd lose my head for a person like Miss Mason!"

"Mr. Grant, you're Irish!" Dixie laughed up at him. Grant smiled again.

"I only wish I were, so I could say the things I'd like to say in the way I'd like to say them. But come now, Mr. von Lertz, you're only joking about leaving. Why it's only midnight."

"Midnight?" Von Lertz started. "Then we must go. It's imperative. That is—"

And while he hesitated and explained, a taxi had driven up outside, at the little triangle which divides Broadway at 72nd Street. From the darkness within, a high cheeked, raw-boned man had started forward, a grip in his hand, only to be halted by a cowering individual who shot forth from a bench at the sidewalk.

"Back in that cab!" he ordered in a whisper. The raw-boned bomb maker started.

"Why—?"

"Don't ask any questions. Back in that cab!"

"But I've got the bomb! Von Lertz said everything would be ready for me. I—"

"Everything is ready—but in a way that we didn't look for," answered the spy on the sidewalk. "Look!"

Quickly and surreptitiously, he pointed upward. Where the flaring sign of the Ansonia

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Hotel blazed out upon the night, was silhouetted the figure of a man. Ten feet away was another —and another—and another. Down on the sidewalk, a solid cordon of police in uniform was drawn about the building. Not a person could approach without being seen—the guarding arm of the police was absolute.

"And that's not all," growled the spy on the sidewalk. "That's just the beginning. There are fifty secret service men scattered about the entrances and the areas. Bluer just signalled me by the electric light code that even the elevator shafts are full of them. I signalled him back to tell Von Lertz that everything is off. As for you—move away from here quick! There'll be twenty policemen on our shoulders in another minute!"

The taxicab turned swiftly. In another moment it had vanished down the street, while in the hotel—

Von Lertz still stood at the entrance of the cloakroom, arguing with Harrison Grant and Dixie Mason, a scant veneer of pleasantness covering his words.

"But I simply can't stay," he was repeating for the fiftieth time, "I tell you my head aches."

And certainly something was causing a pallor to spread over his features, and the cold sweat

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to break forth on his forehead. Harrison Grant knew what it was. From far away, the chimes of a church had sounded midnight and faded away into nothingness. Grant knew what Heinric von Lertz was thinking about—about that bomb and the fact that he was practically the only German left within the confines of the Ansonia Hotel. And so, that he might obtain a trifle of satisfaction against this cowardly plotter of Imperial Germany, he deliberately turned to Miss Mason and began the telling of an incident which could not be interrupted. And Grant knew how the passing of every second ate into the soul of Heinric von Lertz!

Then a movement. Someone passed—and in passing, slipped a bit of cardboard into the cupped hand of Heinric von Lertz. Hurriedly the German shifted his hand to the interior of his silk hat, and under its protection, read the message. Involuntarily, his hands clutched. For there, scrawled on the cardboard, were the words:

"Affair abandoned. Too dangerous."

Von Lertz coughed, and at the sound, Harrison Grant and Dixie Mason turned. The German forced a smile.

"I've changed my mind—er—that is, my headache's better," he announced. "We'll stay."

"Thank you," said Harrison Grant, with

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quietly suppressed meaning, "my hopes are raised on a veritable bomb of happiness. Miss Mason, may I have this dance?"

"Most certainly."

Happily, bouyantly they went toward the ballroom, while Heinric von Lertz stared after them.

"I wonder what that idiotic Yankee meant by a 'bomb of happiness,'" he mused, "Could he have known what I was plotting?"

The thought brought back the memory of that card. Once again he glanced at it, then tore it to bits and stuffed it in his pocket. Then, throwing his coat to the check boy, he strode toward the ballroom.

"At any rate," he growled under his breath, "they haven't stopped preparations at the shack."

And at the same moment, the taxicab containing the old bomb maker had drawn to the curbing, forty blocks away, where another cab stood waiting. A figure came forth from the darkness and peered into the first cab.

"Are you there, Kroner?"

"Yes."

"Alright. Everything's safe. Why don't you hurry?"

"There's no need. I didn't use the bomb."

"You didn't use it?"

"You heard what I said," came testily from

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within the taxicab. "It's up to you to hurry. Get out to the shack and tell those men to work night and day to finish up their job!"

A muffled conversation of an instant more, then the taxis parted. An hour later, as Harrison Grant again danced with Dixie Mason and Von Lertz seethed over the frustration of his scheme, a man hurried into a ramshackle old building on Staten Island, near Fort Wadsworth, aroused the slumbering figures there and pushed them toward a great thing of polished steel, nickel and brass that lay nine-tenths finished before them.

"Get to work!" he ordered. "Is this the way Imperial Germany is to conquer the earth—by sleeping?"

Grumbling the men obeyed. The spy looked about him.

"Where's Schmidt?"

"Here," came a voice from a corner where a man was unrolling himself from a dirty blanket.

"How's that wireless controller?"

"I'm having trouble with it."

"And yet you sleep?" The spy was raging now. "You get up here and find out what's wrong and remedy it. That wireless controller must be in absolute working order—understand? It can't fail! And what's more, it's night and

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day work for every one of you men from now on. This thing must be ready to launch the minute the fleet weighs anchor. The Ansonia plot's failed. Everything depends on us now!"

The men grumbled again in answer. A curse from the spy and they settled down to work—to put the finishing touches on a wireless controller and on a torpedo, large enough and powerful enough to tear even a battleship to fragments!

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CHAPTER III

THE PLOT AGAINST THE FLEET

"What's happening on the dictograph?"

Harrison Grant asked the question as he entered the room adjacent to the Hohenzollern Club and looked anxiously toward Dick Stewart the operative who sat with the receiver to his ear. Stewart shook his head.

"Same old thing. Arguments. Conversation. Jokes. Drinks. Toasts to the Kaiser. That's all I can catch. It's just the same as it's been ever since the night of the Naval Ball. You don't suppose that they could have gotten a tip that we're in here, do you?"

Harrison Grant shook his head.

"Hardly," was his answer. "We would have known something about it. They'd rip that dictograph out so quickly they'd drag you through the hole after it. No—they're simply doing their talking in other places, that is all."

The investigator looked at his watch.

"Nearly midnight," he yawned. "I—"

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"You'd better go home and get some sleep," the operative broke in. "Cavanaugh and I will keep watch—and let you know the minute anything happens. Don't you think that's a wise plan?"

Harrison Grant, with his ever present happy nature, smiled in spite of the fatigue that hung heavily upon him.

"I think you must know how much sleep I haven't had!" was his comment. "And to tell the truth—I haven't had any since the night of the Naval Ball."

He turned to the door, giving his men their final instructions for the night. And as he made his way homeward, the telephone lines were crackling between New York and Washington, Ambassador von Bernstorff at one end and Karl Boy-Ed, Naval Attache, at the other. Nearby sat Capt. Franz von Papen and Dr. Heinrich Albert, waiting for the result of the conversation. At last Boy-Ed turned from the telephone.

"Bernstorff's anxious about our plans for tomorrow," he announced. "I told him not to worry."

"Well, there isn't anything to worry about, is there?" Von Papen hunched forward in his chair.

"Not if everything's all right at the shack," answered Boy-Ed. "That's up to Von Lertz. I

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instructed him to examine the torpedo and to be sure that the men had everything in working shape. Then he was to report to us."

"Wait just a minute—" It was the somewhat plotting, methodical Dr. Albert who had interrupted. "Let me understand this thing clearly: The torpedo is to be fired when the Fleet is going through the Narrows. Is that right? Then what happens?"

"A great deal," laughed Karl Boy-Ed. "The principal thing of which is that the Great Atlantic Fleet will be forced to remain in New York harbor and the United States of America will be taught just how foolish it would appear in a war with a real country like Germany."

Albert bobbed his head.

"I simply wanted to be sure that I understood. Personally, I shall watch the fleet sail with a great deal of interest."

"No doubt." Von Papen turned with a growling laugh, "I will watch it stop with more interest. Now, Boy-Ed, where is Von Lertz to report?"

"At the Hohenzollern Club."

"Then we'd better be strolling over. It's after midnight now. Good night, Albert."

"Good night. Good luck—for Imperial Germany!"

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Meanwhile, Dixie Mason was looking into the eyes of Heinric von Lertz as they hesitated in front of the Midnight Frolic.

"If you don't mind, I'd rather take a trip out in the country somewhere—to the October Farm *or* something like that."

Heinric von Lertz rubbed his chin in thought.

"I'll tell you a better place," was his announcement. "There's the Ten Mile House. Quite racy, it's true, but very entertaining. What do you say?"

Dixie Mason smiled most engagingly.

"Why should I worry—as long as I am sheltered by the protecting arm of Heinric von Lertz? Besides—" and she allowed a bit of unsophistication to creep into her voice, "I'm afraid my education in roadhouses has been too much neglected. It's—it's all right for me to go, isn't it?"

"Oh, of course," Heinric von Lertz drew himself up pompously, "I'll look after you."

A moment later, Dixie settled back in a corner of Heinric von Lertz's machine and smiled in the darkness. She was to have her chance after all—the chance to learn what had been on Heinric von Lertz's mind all evening, why he had been so preoccupied, so nervous, so agitated. Dixie could not see the pictures in the camera of Hein-

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ric von Lertz's brain, she could not see mirrored there—

A rambling shack on Staten Island near Fort Wadsworth. The figures of men as they hurried about the tool-strewn room, one of them working on an intricate wireless controller, the other polishing and fitting the last necessities of a great, shining torpedo, which rested in place to be swung to a manhole connecting with a tunnel below, which in turn ran to a wharf facing almost the Narrows of New York Harbor.

No, Dixie could not see—all she could know was that something was on Heinric von Lertz's mind, that he acted tonight like he had acted the night of the Naval Ball and that she was sure that before morning she would have some clue—some means of knowing what was engaging his attention: And while they rode to the Ten Mile House, the rendezvous of fast society, the sporting element and habitues of the lavender life, two members of the Criminology Club suddenly straightened and listened harder than ever at the dictograph connecting them with the Hohenzollern Club. Dick Stewart turned.

"It sounds like Boy-Ed and Von Papen," he announced. "But they're not talking about anything in particular. They're settled down to a game of cards—and they're acting like they're

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waiting for someone. Maybe we'll get a tip on who it is."

Four hours later, the tip had come.

"Boy-Ed and Von Papen are in there waiting for Von Lertz," announced Stewart as Grant, somewhat sleep-eyed, hurried into the room, following a hasty summons. "They've been in there ever since a little after midnight, playing cards and drinking. Then about an hour ago they began to get nervous. After that, they began to watch the clock and to talk about Von Lertz. I didn't think there was any necessity for waking you up. Then one of them said something about the fleet, and I got nervous—"

"The fleet?" Grant stared.

Dick Stewart nodded his head.

"That's all I could catch. Seems Von Lertz is attending to something about the fleet—but neither one of them has mentioned what it is. Wait a minute—"

The operative leaned forward to the dictograph again.

"They're sending a man to see why Von Lertz hasn't reported."

Grant went quickly forward. He took the receiver from Stewart's head and beckoned to Cavanaugh.

"Take Stewart's place," he ordered. "Stewart,

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you cover that man. See where he goes. Report to me at the club."

A quick movement and Stewart was gone. Five minutes later, Harrison Grant, lingering in the doorway of the building adjacent to the Hohenzollern Club saw the dim figures of two men walking far down the street in the grey light of dawn. One of them was the man who had been sent forth by Von Papen and Boy-Ed. The other was Dick Stewart, member of the Criminology Club, beginning the chase that was to end—where? Harrison Grant wished that he could know!

Nor did Grant know that an ally was working in his behalf, an animated, smiling little ally who stood in the entrance to her apartment, saying goodby to Heinric von Lertz. That person was laughing somewhat thickly—his glass had been filled many times during the night. Dixie Mason extended a hand, but the German plotter waved it aside.

"And you only shake hands with me?" he asked.

"Isn't that enough?"

"Not if you could know how madly I love you, how I adore you, how you fashinate—"

"Fascinate, you mean, don't you?"

"Yesh—yes—of course. What did I say?"

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"Oh, nothing—oh, Mr. von Lertz, *please!*"

For Von Lertz had striven to take her in his arms and was pressing his lips toward hers. As she half struggled with him the German smiled in apology and dropped his arms.

"I just wanted one teeny-weeny little kiss," he announced. "I thought—well, I just thought ——"

"I'm not in a habit of being kissed," answered Dixie Mason, pouting. Von Lertz straightened.

"Goo' little girl!" he praised her. "Goo' little girl! I am now more fashinated than ever! Good night!"

"Good day," echoed Dixie Mason, glancing at the light of dawn without. Then as Heinric von Lertz strode forth, she turned quickly to one side. Hurriedly she opened a little memorandum book that she had extracted from the pocket of the German plotter while she had struggled with him to prevent the kiss that he had sought to implant on her lips. Quickly she scanned the pages, finally to start forward, an involuntary cry breaking from her lips. She glanced hastily down the street toward where Von Lertz's machine was fading in the distance, then ran toward a taxi stand at the corner.

"Follow that machine that just left here!" she ordered, as she hurried into the car. Then, tak-

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ing out her secret service commission and passing it before the eyes of the chauffeur, she admonished:

"The safety of the Atlantic fleet depends on us! Don't lose sight of that machine for an instant! Where it goes—we're going—and the man who is in it must not know we're following!"

"Don't worry, Lady," came the quiet answer of the chauffeur. "I'll keep him in sight."

Dixie Mason leaned back in the machine again. Once more she brought forth the note book. Again she looked at the line which had burned itself into her brain; a line that read:

"Examine torpedo before fleet sails."

A half hour later, Von Lertz's machine was on the ferry, crossing to Staten Island, while Von Lertz himself dozed in the tonneau, little knowing that just behind him, on the same ferry was another machine containing a person very much awake, Dixie Mason, determined to learn just exactly where he was going and who he intended to see there.

So much for the Ally who was working for the said Harrison Grant. And in the meantime, the person upon whom he had really counted was having his difficulties.

Far over on Staten Island, the spy whom Dick Stewart had trailed from the Criminology Club

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had turned into thick underbrush, circled, seen the man behind him, lain in wait, and then, with one powerful blow, felled him, hurrying on toward the shack and workers on the torpedo.

But that delay, while it had placed Dick Stewart in a position where he could no longer follow the spy from the Hohenzollern Club, had saved Dixie Mason from an embarrassing position. For that delay had been just long enough for Dixie Mason to see Heinric von Lertz enter the shack, to watch him leave again, then to allow the little daredevil of the secret service to creep to the shack, ascend an old ladder which she found leaning against the building, and peep through the old trap in the roof. And there she saw——

Two men busily engaged upon the torpedo, which they were making ready to lower through the manhole into the sewer. One of them was talking:

"Von Lertz looked like he'd been out all night ——"

"Yes. That's the way he is most of the time. But that's the way with the ones higher up. They can go out and play—while we do the work. But when the Iron Crosses are distributed, they get them, not us."

A growl from the third.

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"Shut up. You're better off here than you would be in the trenches. This is easy work for you. I get tired hearing you reservists kicking on a little easy campaign work over in this country when you might be handling the minnewerfers over in Flanders. But, let's stop this talking. The fleet will sail in a few hours now. We've got to have this torpedo ready to launch at the flagship."

That sentence was enough. Dixie hurried from her position on the ladder, started down —then winced as she struck the ground. One foot had struck in a chuck-hole, twisting the ankle severely, and slowly and painfully, she limped to her car, where it was concealed in the shadow of a great, dismantled boiler. The driver hurried forward to her aid, assisting her within. At the door of the taxi, Dixie, half turning with the pain of her ankle, failed to notice that her reticule slipped from her wrist and fell to the ground. Nor did the driver. He leaped to his place at the wheel and turned expectantly.

"Where to now?" he asked.

"A telephone—just as quick as you can make it!" Dixie answered. Her voice was faint from the pain of her sprained ankle.

"How about a doctor for that foot?" the driver

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was staring at the expression of agony on the girl's features.

"Never mind that. Where's a telephone."

"In a roadhouse, down the line about three miles."

"Get to it—hurry!"

A moment more and the machine was scurrying along the lonely road, toward the roadhouse and toward the warning that Dixie sought to send the Secret Service. But as the machine roared its way along through the early morning, the spy from the Hohenzollern club entered the shack on Staten Island, his eyes wide with excitement, his voice snapping as he sent the men scurrying faster than ever in their work.

"There's danger! I just knocked a Secret Service man over in the woods. They're after us! Bar that door and barricade it! We've got to get this torpedo into place before they catch our trail. Every minute means danger!"

Slowly the torpedo swung at its fastenings. The spy from the Hohenzollern Club lifted the cover of the manhole. And as the spies in the employ of Imperial Germany started to lower the torpedo into the sewer, Dixie Mason clung grimly to the telephone at the roadhouse, waiting for the answering voice from the other end of the wire. At last it came—the voice of Chief

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Flynn who had just entered the office for the day. His voice went keen and bright as the warning from Dixie came over the wire. Hastily he assembled the facts as she told them. Then:

"A good night's work. Go home to bed. I'll handle everything."

He lifted another 'phone and called the Criminology Club.

"Busy" reported Central. For Dick Stewart was at that moment detailing the story of the assault upon him and the reasons he had failed in his quest. But Chief Flynn was already working on another angle of the protection of the Atlantic Fleet.

A quick call to the Harbor Police. A moment later and with a scurrying rush, the power-launches of the New York Police department, their machine guns ready for instant action, shot forth into the bay. Another call and the Chief gained a clear wire to the Criminology Club. A few crisp orders and Grant and his men were hurrying by motor to Staten Island, to pick up Stewart on the way and rush to the shack that had housed the torpedo. But would they reach there in time? Grant would have given much to know.

Out in the bay, here, there, everywhere, the boats of the harbor police were scattering, up

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toward the great, monstrous forms of the battleships, where, flags fluttering, the preparations were being made for the start of the President's review, searching under wharves, around lighters, hurrying to the protection of the Mayflower, whence the President would review the fleet—honeycombing the harbor in their search for suspicious characters, seeking everywhere for the torpedo that was planned to send a flagship to its doom, block the Great Atlantic Fleet in New York harbor and cripple the defense of the greatest nation in the world.

But so far, the torpedo was safe from their search. In the dark confines of the sewer, it had been lowered and shunted to its mouth, where it lay concealed from view under the piling of an old dock. Back in the shack, Schmidt, the electrician, labored furiously on the last connection that would make the torpedo available for its deadly use—the wireless controller.

Hurriedly he made the finishing touches, while down at the mouth of the sewer, the plotters watched the gathering boats across the way, the waving flags, and bright hued decorations that shone and shimmered with the bright sunlight of morning. From far in the distance came the screaming of sirens and the hoarser-throated sound of hundreds of tugboats, ferries and river

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craft. The review had started. Aboard the Mayflower, the President of the United States was to see the pride of the navy as it steamed forth to the open sea and—

"If Schmidt only gets here with that controller," seethed the spy from the Hohenzollern Club as he watched the fleet in the distance through his binoculars, "If he only gets here!"

"How long will it take to attach it?" Another plotter was staring toward the distance.

"Ten seconds. We've got plenty of time in that way— if he only gets here with it!"

A sound from the tunnel. It was Schmidt, lugging the controller forward. The spy from the Hohenzollern Club turned with a quick order.

"You get back there and guard the shack," he ordered of the third plotter. "We'll attend to things down here."

The German retreated into the sewer. Schmidt began the placing of the wireless controller in its position. The spy from the Hohenzollern Club looked again through his binoculars.

"We'll launch the torpedo just as the flagship rounds the point there. Understand?"

"Perfectly!" Schmidt was testing his connections.

They looked at each other then—and laughed. America was at their mercy, they thought! For

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they did not know that as they gloated over the coming fate of the flagship, Harrison Grant and his men were forcing their way through the doorway of the shack above them!

But only emptiness greeted the members of the Criminology Club as the door crashed open. Harrison Grant glanced about him quickly.

"They're gone—they're already in the sewer!" he exclaimed despondently. "We've got just one chance—to head off that torpedo when it starts! You men hurry to Buffan's landing and get the reserve launch there. I'll investigate here."

"All right," then Stewart turned. "Here's something I picked up just outside. Should have given it to you before—but my brain's working a little slow since that blow on the head."

He passed a reticule to Harrison Grant who stuffed it in his pocket. The men departed. Grant looked hastily about the shack then veered to a corner at a sound from below.

Someone was coming back. There—the sewer manhole moved a little. Then a bit more—then it raised while the figure of a man started upward and through it. Grant crept forward. A quick leap, he seized the plotter by the throat, choking him and at the same time dragging him back on the floor. A moment more and he had bound him, dragged him to a corner and almost thrown

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him there, then started down the manhole. But as he groped blinking through the darkness, Schmidt and the spy from the Hohenzollern Club sighted the prow of the flagship as it rounded the point below them, swung the torpedo into position and shunted it, seething into the water!

A few steps forward and Grant saw what had been done. There were two men, both with their backs to him, one guiding the torpedo with the wireless controller, the other leaning forward, pointing out its course as it made its way, slowly at first, then faster, toward the thundering flagship.

Everywhere was noise, the screaming of whistles, the booming of guns as the battleships fired their salutes before the Mayflower. Harrison Grant crept forward unnoticed.

Ten feet—then six—then three, while the spies stared outward, unaware of the approach of the detective. Harrison Grant gathered his full strength. A tremendous kick and he had sent one of the plotters sprawling into the water. A great lunge and he was at the throat of the spy from the Hohenzollern Club, struggling to drag him from his hold at the wireless controller.

A struggle that seemed destined to fail. With almost superhuman strength the spy fought him off, still clinging to the key of the controller,

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feinting, dodging, squirming in the grasp of the master detective, biting, kicking, butting—but still holding to that key that was sending the torpedo faster and faster through the water, driving it on and on toward the flagship of the great Atlantic Fleet, threatening it with destruction—and the bottling of the entire fleet in the waters of New York harbor.

Doggedly they fought. Again and again Grant's hands closed about the throat of the spy, only to be thrown off. Then slowly, steadily, Grant began to bend the plotter in his grasp.

Closer, closer—Harrison Grant bent his head toward the wrist of the hand that held the key of the wireless controller. Then, a quick motion and his teeth closed upon the flesh, biting into the sinews and muscles, causing the spy to leap from his post with a cry of anguish. But the fight was not over.

"Think you've stopped us, eh?" The spy almost shouted the words. "Well, you haven't. That torpedo's got speed enough now—it'll reach that ship all right. It'll—"

But Grant had swung him about now and was forcing him to the edge of the sewer platform. Closer—closer—the end was inevitable. But would it avail anything? A glance out into the Narrows and Grant saw that the torpedo was

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heading straight on its course now, while far in the rear, the reserve launch, containing his men, was striving vainly to summon the speed to overtake it. On and on it was going—a moment more and it would crash into the side of that massive, thundrous battleship, a moment more—

All the strength that Harrison Grant possessed sped into the sinews of his arm and back. With a great wrench, he freed the grasp of the spy upon him. Then with a tremendous lunge, he literally raised the form of the struggling man, and threw him, high over his shoulders and into the tremendous currents below!

A great leap. Harrison Grant was at the key of the wireless controller. Quickly he reversed it, sending the current crackling out over the Narrows. But would the effect come in time? Would the electric current swerve the course of that torpedo soon enough to save the great battleship before it from destruction? Gasping and panting, Harrison Grant watched for the result, his soul agonized, his heart pounding with aching severity. A second—and the torpedo had not moved from its course. Another—Harrison Grant bent forward happily. Out there in the choppy waters of the Narrows, he believed he had seen the torpedo swerve slightly—yes, there it had moved a full three feet from its course—

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Now ten—look! The men on the reserve launch were waving their arms and clambering to the top of the launch as it sped along. The torpedo had moved more in its course—now it seemed to be turning—it *was* turning! A great, glad cry broke from the lips of Harrison Grant. The torpedo was making a full semi-circle in the water now—on the roof of the reserve launch a Criminology Club detective was preparing to dive into the water for the desperate purpose of kicking the wireless antennae from the explosive monster and making it useless, while on beyond, there where the guns were booming, where the flags were flying and the bands were playing, the Great Atlantic Fleet, safely, triumphantly, was sailing through the Narrows, out to the freedom of the open sea!

Harrison Grant watched happily for a moment, then turned to make his way back through the tunnel and to the interrogation of the captured spy. It was then that he noticed that his brow was covered with a cold perspiration, that his collar was wilted—in spite of the almost cold day—that he was shaking and trembling from the excitement of the chase. He reached for his handkerchief, then hesitated at the touch of the reticule in his pocket. Wonderingly he brought it forth and examined it.

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"A woman's party chatalaine," he mused. "Some spy that's mixed up in this thing, I guess. Dropped it coming from the shack. I wonder if there's anything in it to give a clue to her identity."

He pulled open the bag. He stared a moment at the initials of the card case which lay within, then opened it feverishly. The wondering expression of his eyes changed to grimness. His lips resolved themselves into a straight line. Slowly they repeated the name on the card:

"Miss Dixie Mason!"

The battleships in the distance seemed to fade. The sound of the sirens, the booming guns, all drifted into nothingness. Dully, monotonously, the lips of Harrison Grant framed the words:

"Dixie Mason! So she was the one! Dixie Mason—a spy!"

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CHAPTER IV.

VON RINTELEN—THE DESTROYER

Months of apparent calm followed the plot against the fleet—a calm, however, which existed only on the surface, for beneath the veneer of friendliness for America, Ambassador von Bernstorff and his aides, Capt. Franz von Papen, Capt. Karl Boy-Ed and Dr. Heinric Albert still were scheming and working for the downfall of America in their insatiable desires to defeat the Allies. More, they had received aid from abroad, in the person of an intimate friend of the Crown Prince of Germany, Franz von Rintelen, sent to America for the ostensible purpose of promoting friendliness between Germany and America, but in reality with a bank account of more than fifty million dollars, to spend on any form of death and destruction that he might see fit—as long as it harmed the Allies. And whether the harming of the Allies also brought its attendant injury to America, made little difference to Franz von Rintelen or his cohorts. The

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United States had been described by Dr. Heinric Albert as "the American front," and so they regarded it—as a battlefield upon which to make their advances and counterthrusts against the Allies, regardless of the consequences to the land for which they professed such friendliness and such regard.

So it was, that in the spending of that fifty million dollars, Franz von Rintelen had built himself up practically a separate organization with which he preyed upon shipping, industry and manufacture. River pirates who swarmed the Hudson to scuttle lighters, to start fires in cargoes, to cut hawsers and mangle the steering apparatus of tugs that they might crash into each other and sink with their cargoes; so called "Peace Councils," which strove for the spreading of propaganda on any kind of peace at any price—as long as it was favorable to Germany; alleged "Embargo Conferences," the sole object of which was to spread a feeling throughout America that it was wrong for the United States to manufacture arms and ammunition which could be sold to the Allies—all these things lay within the province of Franz von Rintelen, to handle as he chose, with only an occasional conference with Ambassador von Bernstorff at which he told of his progress, and laid forth his expense

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accounts for the official signature of the head of Imperial Germany's spy system in America. And so quietly had his organization been built up, so thoroughly had Franz von Rintelen concealed himself behind a cloak of supernumeraries and "straw bosses" that even the cleverest of the members of the Secret Service had failed as yet to gain a clue to his real activities. But there were suspicions—and among those who held them was Dixie Mason.

"No Mamette," she was saying as she stood by the window of her apartment, watching the sunset and talking to her negro maid, "I have no positive evidence against Franz von Rintelen. I doubt if I ever will. I only know that there is something about him which makes me believe that he is at the head of the river pirates and commerce destroyers who have sprung up around the harbor recently. But I can't be sure."

"How about Mista von Lertz?" Mamette spoke the name with a tinge of hatred. For Mamette, black though she was, could see only three colors, the red, the white and the blue. Dixie smiled at her tone.

"I've tried—and tried hard. But Von Lertz seems afraid to tell me much about him. The best clues I've gotten have been through Agnes Taylor, who is working on the switchboard at Von

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Lertz's apartment. She has reported several conversations between Rintelen and Von Lertz, but they have been generally meaningless. I—"

The tingling of the telephone had interrupted. Dixie answered, to hear the voice of Agnes Taylor, the operative who had been placed at the switchboard of Von Lertz's apartment house.

"Miss Mason?"

"Yes."

"Do you know—" the voice was low, guarded — "anyone named Walter Schleindel?"

"No—why?"

"He works in some bank. Reports to Paul Koenig of the Hamburg American line who pays him for information. From what I can gather he steals information from manifests and bills of lading coming into the bank for payment."

Dixie Mason smiled.

"So that's the way they know just when to rob freight cars in the yards and when to sink lighters, is it? I'll telephone the Chief. How did you learn?"

"Some man just called Von Lertz. Told him that Schleindel had reported 3,000 head of horses just received at the Allied barns at Jersey and to go at once to the shack at Crow Crossing—"

"I know where it is." Dixie Mason's eyes had narrowed. "Just above the old rock crusher on

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the Vernon road. What was Von Lertz to do there?"

"I couldn't catch all of it—I heard something about the 'tools' and to 'use the new methods.' I couldn't recognize the voice."

"It wasn't Paul Koenig?"

"No, nor Bernstorff, Von Papen or Boy-Ed."

"Then it must have been Rintelen."

"I couldn't be sure—he changes his voice so often."

Dixie smiled again. Then she turned from the telephone.

"Mamette," she called. "Get me out a plain dress of some kind—something that I can 'rough it' in."

"Yes, Missy—but Laws, yo' ain't goin' to stick your head into danger, is yo,' Missy?"

"I'm going to find out what's happening at Crow Crossing," said Dixie with quiet determination. "Hurry, please, Mamette."

And while she made her preparations, Harrison Grant stood in the dusk, talking to the watchman of a stevedoring plant on the Jersey side of the Harbor.

"I'm from Chief Flynn's office," he was saying, "I received an order to—"

"I know all about it," the watchman answered. "The foreman left instructions for me. We're

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crating automobile ambulances for shipment to France. I want to show you something that we found today."

He led the way into the stevedoring shop, there to point out the axle of a great chassis—and to swear quietly as he looked at it.

"German spies done it!" he announced. "Nobody else would have been so dirty and low. These are ambulances, y' know—ambulances for use on the battlefields. And you know what'd happen if that ever got on a shell-torn field."

He pointed to the axle of the car. There, where the putty had been removed by the workmen who had discovered it, was a great, jagged hole in the steel of the axle, a hole burnt by an acetylene torch, converting the axle into a weak, shallow shell, doomed to break with the first holting strain. Grant frowned as he looked at it.

"So that's the game, eh?" he said. "That's why so many ambulances have been breaking down in France! That's why—"

He turned sharply, the watchman with him. Far at one side of the opposite dock they had seen the shadow of a man as it slunk along, hiding behind the boxes and bales as he made his way from light to darkness. Grant sped forward, the watchman beside him. A moment more

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and the shadow leaped forth, to seek escape in the maze of shipping on the docks.

But impossible. Headed off by closed doors, he veered, dodged, swerved in his course and leaped past the guard of an interned liner, seeking to spring from it to the next in his effort to escape.

An effort that failed. Blocked again, he veered once more, crashed his way through the door of the ship's wireless room, then whirled, a chair lifted high over his head. But the blow did not descend. The tactics of the football field had come into play for Grant—and with a quick motion he had blocked the blow of the spy, disarmed him and forced him against the wall. Fifteen minutes later, he was listening to the confession, forced in jerky sentences from the spy's lips:

"A guy gave me $100. to set fire to the docks," he was saying. "That's all I know. He was some fellow who worked around the waterfront here. I'd gotten a lot o' money offen him and I wanted more. I belonged to his magneto and axle gang."

"His what?" Harrison Grant bent forward.

"His magneto gang. We'd steal the magnetos offen automobiles that was goin' to France.

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He'd give us five dollars for every one we stole—then let us have 'em to sell."

"Another little system of harming ambulances, eh?" said Grant slowly. "What about the axles?"

"We burned 'em with an acetylene torch—so they'd break down when they hit the battlefields —"

"So they'd break down, when they were filled with wounded!" The words came from Grant's lips in scathing denunciation. "And you confess to it—you mongrel!" His hands clenched—it was all he could do to keep them from the throat of the craven being before him. "Now you tell your story and tell it quick!"

Ten minutes later Harrison Grant turned to the guard of the interned ship, meanwhile eyeing the detectors, the batteries and sending apparatus of the wireless in the room.

"This wireless in working order?" he asked sharply.

"Yes."

Harrison Grant stepped toward it quickly. A moment more and he was sending forth the code-call of the Criminology Club. For the spy, while not able to tell the names of the directorate of those who engineered the heinous business of disabling ambulances, at least had given informa-

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tion that was more than valuable—the fact that a "burning party" had been scheduled for that night—and naming the location and the freight yards.

Again and again Harrison Grant sent out the call—at last to receive an answer. Then his message snapped over the airlanes to the city beyond:

"Criminology Club:

"Meet me Stevens Point quick. Come armed.

"Harrison Grant."

And while Harrison Grant waited, Dixie Mason, her automobile hidden in the shadow of the old rock crusher, crept to the side of the little shack at Crow's Crossing. The sound of voices came from within, low, indistinct. Again and again Dixie strove to hear what was being said—but only failure greeted her. Then—

A pine knot, half hinging in its receptacle, caught her glance. Stealthily she wormed it loose, to peer within. Men were there, men who were pouring gasoline into small fuzeed, metal containers, men who were making their preparations for hurried flight, and receiving orders as they did so. Already two of them were at the doorway.

"Take the shortcut to the Allied stockyards,"

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one of them was saying. "We'll burn the barns —you look after the other part of the yards. Now hurry!"

They were gone, while Dixie cowered in the shadows. Stealthily she watched them cross the patch of snow and ice before the cabin, then disappear, unable to move for fear of detection, her brain seething with plans and hopes. But they were faint! The spies had taken the "short cut" —one that Dixie did not know.

The telephone? There was none The police? There was no way to reach them. Only one thing remained for Dixie Mason to do—to scramble as fast as possible to her machine and to race across country to the Allied horsebarns. But would she be able to reach there in time?

The battle of wits and courage was on! Over at Steven's Point, Harrison Grant had leaped to the running board of a motor car as it had rounded a corner and shouted to the chauffeur:

"Faster, old man! They're destroying Red Cross supplies in the railroad yards!"

Then as the machine spurted forward, the president of the Criminology Club leaned toward his men.

"See that your revolvers are in working order. Spies are burning the axles of ambulances. We have every right to shoot to kill!"

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The men nodded. Cavanaugh opened a new box of cartridges. The machine sped on through the semi-darkness toward the railroad yards. As for Dixie Mason—

Veering into the stockyards district of New Jersey, she raised in her machine and waved madly to a crowd of horse wranglers, just coming forth from a pool hall.

"Quick!" she called, "there's danger at the horsebarns!"

Then, driving harder than ever, she sped forward, in a last vain attempt to reach the barns before the spies could light their bombs.

Before her loomed the shadows of the barns, with their thousands of animals within. And scrambling up a telephone pole toward a window showed the form of a German fire-fiend.

Harder than ever pressed the foot of Dixie Mason against the accelerator of her car, while her soul raged within her. Not content with sinking the ships that carried innocent horses and cattle to France, not content with filling their oats with steel barbs, painted yellow and designed to be eaten by the unfortunate animals, not content with poisoning the water of these beasts who were a part of the war only through the will of others, Imperial Germany now was resorting to worse measures to gain its "vic-

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tories," the horror and agonizing torture of fire! Dixie's lips pressed firm. Then, her anger drowning all thought of danger, she skidded her machine until it almost overturned as she veered from the stockyards alley into the areaway of the horsebarns, made her way through the great doorways, then sent her automobile thundering up the runway to the second floor—there to leap forth and run toward the form that had just entered the haymows. But too late!

Already the tool of Imperial Germany had touched a match to the gasoline filled container. Already the fuse was spluttering, while with a great, sweeping motion, the spy threw the bomb far into the loose hay and hurled his gigantic form toward the struggling Dixie. A moment more and he had felled her, then scrambled into her machine, reversing it and sending it at perilous speed down the runway and out through the opposite doors, bowling over two of the rustlers as they strove to make their way through the already heavy clouds of smoke, and tearing on toward freedom. And in the loft of the mammoth barn, Dixie Mason lay unconscious, the fire gaining greater and greater headway all about her, where the gasoline discharge had fired the conflagration everywhere!

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Imperial Germany had succeeded in a part of its scheme at least. But in another—

Out in the railroad yards came the crackle of a revolver shot as Harrison Grant and his men surprised two men in the interior of a box car, hard at their task of burning the axles of an auto with an acetylene torch. A spy fell maimed, while from seemingly everywhere, other spies broke from the cars and sought safety.

But safety that was far away. For the members of the Criminology Club had spread themselves in the lanes between the great masses of box cars, to leap forth as the spies ran aimlessly about in their search for shelter, to seize them, to shackle them. Atop a box car where he had climbed after the first onslaught, Harrison Grant moved swiftly here and there, shouting his orders to the operatives below. In ten places at once, the battle was mounting to the proportions of a life and death struggle—with the members of the Criminology Club in the ascendancy. But at the horsebarns—

Up in the loft, Dixie Mason stirred to consciousness as the flames ate closer. Down below, where the maddened animals were screaming and stamping in their fright, came the sounds of shouts, of curses and yells as the horse wranglers, summoned from every part of the yards, strug-

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gled to release the flame-frightened animals. Through a chink in the frame wall of the building, Dixie could see another red glare, starting in the distance—then the forms of thousands of beasts as they sped forth to safety, freed by the men who had rushed to their assistance the minute the alarm had been given by Dixie. Everywhere was the milling rush to save—save—save, while men risked their lives that the lives of horses and cattle might be spared, while men took risks and men braved death—and while Dixie Mason struggled impotently to fight her way through the ring of fire that seemed to have closed all about her.

The smoke ate its stinging way into her cringing lungs, choking her, gagging her. She sought to scream—but the screams were lost in the wild conglomeration of noises from below, the shrieks of fear maddened horses, the surging work of rescue. Here, there, back again she struggled, only to face everywhere a wall of fire that inch by inch was eating toward her—a lining, writhing, all consuming circle of death!

The flames had eaten their way through portions of the roof now and were spreading the flare of their flames against the sky. Over in the railroad yards, Harrison Grant, receiving the reports of his men as they checked up the list of

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captured spies, glanced into the distance, started, then whirled to the members of the Criminology Club.

"Shackle those men together!" he ordered sharply. "Leave them in charge of Sisson—he can handle them. Then everyone come with me —there's a fire at the stockyards!"

Quickly the orders were obeyed. Quickly the men swept forward under the leadership of Harrison Grant to aid the hundreds of horse wranglers and cattlemen in their maddened efforts to release the flame threatened animals. And as they did so, Dixie Mason was making her last desperate effort at escape.

Death in the flames or death in a leap—Dixie Mason chose the chance of the latter. She had fought her way forward, beating out the flames that caught her dress, smothering her free hand against her nostrils to shut out the paralyzing effect of smoke and gasoline vapors, seeking from the sounds from below to ascertain an area into which she might leap with some opportunity for safety.

At last it came. A lull in the milling rush from below. Dixie fought her way to a railing, swung under it, hung there for one, long, trembling instant, then, just as a whirling rush

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of horses cleared the way beneath her, she dropped.

The fall stunned her for a second. Then the roaring sound of plunging animals brought her to her senses, just in time to enable her to scramble out of the way of a flame crazed group of horses as they surged past her, then reeling, to seek through the smoke the freedom of the open air.

Someway, somehow, she managed to waver to the outer doors of the big barn, there to gasp at the cold, life-giving atmosphere that surged into her lungs—then to run forward whitefaced at the sight before her.

Everywhere was fire—fire which raged about the sheds, fire which licked its way along the railings of the cattlepans, which ate at the chutes and connections, fire which seethed and spit and crackled. From far in the distance came the clanging of bells and the hissing of steam—the hastily called fire apparatus of twenty stations, fighting against the flames—but fighting a losing fight. Dixie's hands clenched.

"The cowards!" she exclaimed, "the fiends!"

"Look out there, Miss!" It was the friendly shout of a horse wrangler as he pushed her aside. Down the alleway sounded a thundering roar as twenty shouting men drove before them a great

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mass of wild-eyed, galloping horses. The wrangler shouted happily as they passed him.

"That's the end of 'em," he said heartily, "we were luckier'n we thought."

"The end of them?" Dixie Mason turned hopefully. "Then you managed to save——"

"Most of 'em Miss. We got some help from an unexpected quarter. Bunch of Secret Service men who were over in the yards chased over here and took the load off our minds o' loosenin' the cattle in the south end. That let us put all our work on the dangerous part of the yards."

"Secret Service men?" Dixie Mason started. "Do you know any of them——"

"Nobody. A fellow gave his name as Grant, but——"

"Harrison Grant?"

"Think so."

Dixie Mason turned sharply. Harrison Grant must not see her there—it would mean the necessity for explanations—explanations which might not be easily forthcoming. From far away came shouts—the shouts of men approaching through one of the alleys which as yet had been untouched by the flames. Dixie hardly heard. All that she knew was that she must leave the vicinity of the fire as soon as possible—content in the knowledge that her work had not gone for

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naught after all. Most—if not all—of the horses and cattle had been saved. Imperial Germany had destroyed American property in the shape of barns and pens—but it had at least failed to destroy the lives of the innocent beings against which it had plotted.

Almost aimlessly she turned to the railroad yards to escape the roaming droves of horses and cattle that were swirling everywhere. On she went, crossing track after track, as she sought the streets and the open. The light of the fire flared higher—and with it a slight exclamation came into Dixie's throat at the sight of a man before her.

Hurriedly she swerved, leaped between two closing box cars of a flying switch, and then, as the man pursued, jumped across the track upon which was approaching a rapidly traveling train, hurrying on to where her deserted automobile showed its dull form, where it had been abandoned by the fire fiend. Once she looked back—to discern the fact that the man still watched her beneath the long train. Then she hurried on again.

Back in her apartment, she reported to her Chief, to give the name of Walter Schleindel and her suspicions against Franz von Rintelen. An hour more went by and the telephone rang to bring the news of Schleindel's arrest, and his con-

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fession, of how he had used the bank as a clearing house for German spydom, stealing the information of the manifests and bills of lading of Allied shipments which came in there for collection by the consignors, then in turn, selling this information to Paul Koenig of the Hamburg American line. Dixie smiled happily.

"How about Rintelen?" she asked. A slight ejaculation of disgust came over the wire.

"My men failed to find him. Someone must have notified him of the arrest of the auto burners in the railroad yards. At any rate he has left his hotel, without giving an address."

All of which was correct. For Franz von Rintelen was at that moment telephoning to Bernstorff, and announcing to him that in future, his name would be E. V. Gates and that his 'business' would be that of a 'purchasing agent,'—but that Imperial Germany's work of destruction would still continue.

And meanwhile also, at the Criminology Club, Harrison Grant, tired from his labors of the night, hesitated at the doorway to call an operative.

"Bailey," he said, "I want you to take a skirmish around and see what you can learn about a girl named Dixie Mason."

"Who is she?"

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Harrison Grant smiled grimly.

"I'd give a good deal to know. Apparently she's an ex-actress. At least, that's what her friends tell me. Time was too, they say, when she was very communicative and friendly. Now she tells no one of her plans or of her activities. And strangely enough, my path has crossed hers twice in places where only the agents of Imperial Germany could consistently be. She was at the fire tonight."

"At the fire?" Bailey stared. "Are you sure?"

"I have a good pair of eyes." said Harrison Grant, "I saw her there—not fifty feet away. I chased her—but a train cut me off."

Bailey raised a hand to his hat.

"I'll see what I can find out," he said quietly and left the building. But Grant continued to stand there, staring at the floor—wondering—wondering what this woman whom circumstance again and again gave the accusation of being a German spy, could have played in this latest evidence of Imperial Germany's ghoulish cruelty!

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CHAPTER V.

"THE STRIKE BREEDERS"

It was late at night. In his private office, Harrison Grant was puzzling over a report by Tom Bailey, an operative, announcing a condition rather unpleasant for the president of the Criminology Club. For the letter simply announced:

"Harrison Grant,

Criminology Club.

Dear Sir:

Beg to report that all I can learn about Miss Dixie Mason is that she is almost constantly in the company of the Germans, particularly Heinric von Lertz.

Yours truly,

Bailey,

Operative."

Thereby, for Harrison Grant, a mystery remained unsolved, a mystery which nettled him, angered him. It had been weeks—months—since he had first met Dixie Mason, months in which he had constantly seen her in suspicious surroundings—yet never in a position to betray her.

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Once he had even gone so far as to send a special report on her to Chief Flynn—a report which the Chief naturally received with a hidden smile and the announcement that he would have the affair investigated from his office, that Grant allow her activities to pass unnoticed in the chase for bigger game. But when a man is hovering between love and suspicion, he is not likely to allow every opportunity to slip. Hence the private investigation which Grant had ordered to be made by his operative, Bailey, with the resultant report. Half angrily Harrison Grant filed the report in his cabinet and returned to his desk, moody, silent——

Not knowing, of course, that in a faraway part of the city, Dixie Mason was reading for the twentieth time, an excerpt from the evening paper containing an interview with Harrison Grant, and musing over the visualized features of the man she loved, brought before her eyes by the cold, staring type of the interview. Naturally Grant could not know that—and Dixie could not tell him the secrets that she must tell no one, the secrets that she must hold against the inclinations of her heart, that the battle against Imperial Germany might be won.

And that the battle still was imminent, was more than apparent in the stooped, bearded fig-

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ure of a man who stood fumbling at the lock of an office in one of the biggest buildings of lower New York. He had kept in the shadows on his way to the office. He had shielded his face in the elevator—and for a reason. Franz von Rintelen, arch plotter for Kaiser Wilhelm, friend of the Crown Prince, and special Emissary to the United States with more than fifty million dollars to spend on destruction, was living under an alias. He had shifted his office since the capture of his river pirates by Harrison Grant, changed his name to E. V. Gates, and even had resorted to the melodramatic level of false beards and disguises that he might carry on his devastations.

And just how far he went in this regard, was exhibited later, when Rintelen sought to flee America on a forged passport, only to be caught at Falmouth, England, and returned to the Tombs in New York, where he recently was sentenced for his activities against America. In his trunks at that time, were found more than thirty suits of clothing, each designed to give him a different personal appearance, each built in such a way that they would make him seem a different appearing man with every suit he donned. His wigs and beards he left in America, to be discovered by the members of the Secret Service who searched his office.

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But this narrative must tell the activities of Rintelen in America, not of his flight. And while Harrison Grant sat musing in his office, Franz von Rintelen removed his false beard, divested himself of his coat with the humped shoulders, then turned happily at the sight of a shadow on the door. A moment later and he was chatting with Dr. Heinrich Albert, chief fiscal spy for Imperial Germany in the United States, and disburser for every fund except the activities of Franz von Rintelen. Dr. Albert held forth a telegram.

"I suppose you received one also?" he asked.

"From Bernstorff?" Rintelen looked up quickly. "Of course. I heard from Captain von Papen and Captain Boy-Ed also. They will be here. Did Bernstorff's message to you name a time?"

"No——" Dr. Albert had removed his overcoat, displaying the usual immaculate evening clothes, "he simply told me to meet him here tonight for an important conference. By the way, is Von Lertz coming?"

"I told him. He should be here now."

But instead, Heinric von Lertz was attending to another angle of Imperial Germany's campaign against America. He was then standing in the half light of an old attic, where, tucked away

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from observation a German scientist, imported by Von Rintelen, had taken his quarters that he might prepare for future disease raids against American workmen in case the plans of Germany in other directions failed. With Von Lertz was Madam Augusta Stephan, chief of Germany's women spies in the United States—and together they were plotting the death of Harrison Grant and his members of the Criminology Club.

"You must remember," Von Lertz had just said, "the death of any American Secret Service man is a distinct victory for Germany 'The Eagle's Eye,' I think some of these newspaper men have called it—and it has its eye on us too frequently. Now, Meyerson, what's the danger of this affair?"

"Danger?" the old scientist looked up with a little smile. "None, that I see. I know enough about germs to take care of myself. All I have to do is to approach the club from the next roof, raise a window an inch or so and inject this. That's all there will be to it. The circulation of the air will take care of the rest of the plan."

He held up a cotton-plugged tube from which Madam Stephan recoiled. Typed on the tube were the words:

"Cholera Bacilli."

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Heinric von Lertz smiled cynically.

"Good enough," he announced. "But be careful regarding yourself. We may need you in case this 'longshoremen's plot fails." The old scientist's head bobbed.

"I know how to use care," he answered. "You may count on that."

And while Von Lertz accompanied Madam Stephan to her apartment, the members of the German contingent were gathering for the "important conference" in the office of E. V. Gates. Franz von Papen and Karl Boy-Ed were already there, gathered around the desk with Franz von Rintelen and Dr. Heinrich Albert. Only two more remained to come—Heinric von Lertz and Count Johann von Bernstorff, Ambassador from Imperial Germany to the United States of America. Franz von Rintelen slid forward in his chair.

"Why is His Excellency so worried?" he asked.

"It's about the 'longshoremen's strike," answered Dr. Albert once more thumbing his telegram. "By the way, Rintelen, has there been any progress?"

"Nothing but retrogression," came the answer of the arch-plotter. "From what the papers say tonight, there is danger of failure. All the 'long-

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shoremen are very loyal and the paid agitators that I have sent to work among them have accomplished nothing. They did succeed at one time by working the 'longshoremen up over the cost of living, but that was met by a prompt raise of wages on the part of the shipowners—with the result that all our money spent for agitation in that way, went for nothing. However ——"

There was a sound at the door. A moment later and Heinric von Lertz entered the office. Then a sudden movement, a sudden circle of bows, a sudden outburst of greetings. Count von Bernstorff had arrived.

There was a moment of silence as he faced his assistants. Then slowly he looked toward Rintelen and held forth an evening paper.

"I am sure you will pardon my transgression in your field of endeavor," he announced, "but this news is exceedingly disconcerting."

"No more to you than to me, Your Excellency," came the smooth answer of Von Rintelen. "I appreciate very much your coming tonight—and I would appreciate even more any suggestion that you might be able to make."

"How about bribery?"

"Of the Union officials?" Von Rintelen laughed slightly and held up his hands. "I have

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tried that—with most unfortunate results. Through outside sources, I caused an offer of $10 a week for every striking 'longshoreman, the amount to be paid for five straight weeks. The offer was made to Kelly, Butler and O'Connor, the leaders of the 'longshoremen. They also were made to understand that the money would be paid to them—totalling $1,035,000—and that there was no anxiety over what happened to it after it went into their hands—meaning of course, that they could walk away with all of it if they so desired, providing they called the strike."

"Well?" Bernstorff raised his eyebrows.

"They reported the matter at once to Secretary of Labor Wilson that someone was seeking to cause disruption in the labor ranks. I think that, more than anything else, caused the breach that was being made by my agitators, to be closed more quickly."

Bernstorff took a quick breath.

"There wasn't any mention of Germany in all this?"

"Certainly not. The offer came through a former 'longshoreman who has carefully concealed his pro-German leanings. He let them think that the whole thing was a matter of revenge on the shipowners and that he had power-

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ful commercial friends who would be willing to pay for that vengeance."

Bernstorff breathed easier.

"Very good," he announced. "Then that does not hurt our cause—providing we can find some way of creating a strike. And understand," he clenched a hand and faced his colleagues, "this strike must go through! It means more to Germany than a victory at the front! When the 'longshoremen strike, it means that the ports of the East must inevitably be tied up. Not a ship will move. Industries will be paralyzed—and consequently the Allies will be deprived of the necessities of war. Of course," he added with a quiet smile, "It will be hard on America, but ——"

"These idiotic Yankees deserve something like that anyway," growled Captain von Papen. However, Bernstorff had turned his attention to Rintelen.

"You say that agitation has failed. Attempted bribery has failed. Then, some other means must be attempted."

Rintelen was pacing the floor. Suddenly his hands clasped.

"I have it." he announced. "I know the way! There is nothing that angers a man so much as depredation against his property. That's what

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our spies must commit—and then we must fasten the blame on the 'longshoremen. It will create a breach that nothing can close."

Hurriedly they gathered for conference. And while they plotted the stagnation of all Eastern America——

Harrison Grant rose from his desk and turned with a little sigh to look into the grinning face of Pat Hennessy, the Irish caretaker of the club.

"Guess you're waiting for me to close up shop?" the master detective asked a little wearily.

"It seems betchune time I'm waitin' f'r somethin' like that, Y'r Honor," answered the grinning Pat.

"Everything locked up?"

"Yes sir."

"By golly—no!" Pat clasped a hand to his head. "If it ain't me that's always forgittin'. I ain't fixed the bur-r-rglar trap!"

Harrison Grant smiled, then stood watching while Hennessy moved the firing pins of the club's burglar protection into place at the windows. One by one, the triggers of the concealed revolvers were cocked. Then Hennessy, with a little nod, started toward the stairway, Harrison Grant following. A moment later they hesitated at the door, while Hennessy fished for his keys. Then——

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The crashing detonation of a revolver shot—from upstairs! Then another and another and another! The men turned. They rushed up the stairway and toward a half open window, through which could be seen the figure of a man, writhing in the agonies of death.

Old he was and bearded, the nostrils covered by a germ mask, his hands protected by rubber gloves. Beside the convulsing figure lay a "pump-gun" or air-injector, and Grant knew the contents—deadly germs!

Out the window went the master-detective, and to the side of the dying man.

"Careful now!" he ordered. "Search him—but look out for cultures and bacteria!"

A moment later and Harrison Grant was in the possession of the thing he sought—a card, carelessly left in the old scientist's pocket in his surety of success, a card which gave his name and address and which sent Harrison Grant scurrying forth to pick up Billy Cavanaugh, one of his favorite operators, and to hurry across town in search of the laboratory that he felt sure the dead bacteriologist had maintained.

But in the meanwhile, things had gone well for Imperial Germany in the office of "E. V. Gates." Only Franz von Rintelen and Heinric von Lertz remained. The others had gone to the

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Hohenzollern Club for a last toast to the Kaiser and a quiet chat regarding their plans—too quiet even for the concealed dictograph of the Criminology Club to detect. All the work had been left for Rintelen and Von Lertz and they were making plans hastily.

Papers were piled high on the desk of Rintelen, papers which formed reports from spies everywhere, from the thugs employed by Paul Koenig of the Hamburg American line, from spies scattered among railroad men, among the 'longshoremen, among the workmen of practically every industry in the country. Rintelen was speaking:

"From what I can gather by the reports of Schleindel, the bank spy, shipments of automobiles have been very heavy in the Jersey yards recently. Here is information that a lighter containing 150 of them will cross the river tomorrow for shipment to France. I would suggest that you choose that as your part of the plan."

Von Lertz rose.

"I know the man who can handle it for me," he said. "I'll see him at once. Goodnight."

"Goodnight," answered Rintelen. Already he was reaching for his coat and hat, even forgetting his inevitable disguise in his hurry to

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foment another part of the great scheme against New York's 23,000 'longshoremen.

But while they plotted and schemed, Harrison Grant and Billy Cavanaugh were making their way up the rickety stairway that led to the bacteriologist's laboratory in the attic of a ramshackle building on Avenue A. A quick twisting of the knob and it yielded. Harrison Grant and his operative fumbled a moment in the darkness, then finding the switch of a table light, began their search.

Desk by desk, drawer by drawer. Papers, musty old books on the development of cultures, newspaper clippings on the progress of the war, letters from Germany and at last——

An ejaculation from Harrison Grant.

"Just what I thought!" he announced as he opened a small memorandum book. "The attempt against us tonight was an afterthought. A sort of a vacation of death, as it were. This man was brought to this country from Germany for one purpose—the propagation of germ cultures to be used against American workmen in munition factories, steel-mills, mines and other industries furnishing supplies to the Allies!"

"Impossible!" Billy Cavanaugh's eyes went wide with horror. Harrison Grant pointed.

"There's the evidence," he answered as he

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pointed to the notes of a memorandum book he had brought from the desk. "Let's see what the rest of it has to offer."

A long silence, except for the crinkling of the pages as Harrison Grant read the notations in the old book. A long silence then——

"Careful there!"

"What's the matter?" Harrison Grant paused with a finger in the air. Billy Cavanaugh reached forward, and taking the finger in his hand, lowered it.

"Nothing—only you were about to touch that to your lips—and there's no telling how many different kinds of germs are on the pages of that book."

Harrison Grant smiled.

"Thanks, Billy," he said softly, then turned to his work again. A moment more and he had risen, his eyes wide, excited.

"Get a telephone, quick!"

"What's Up?"

"A good deal. Wasn't there something in the paper tonight about trouble with the 'longshoremen?"

"Yes—but it's all settled up. That is, the indications are that it will be settled. Why?"

"Because it's far from settled. Look here!"

A finger pointed to a scrawled line in the old

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memorandum book. Slowly the words were translated:

"Special notation—germs for 'longshoremen if agitation fails."

"And agitation has failed!" Harrison Grant said quickly. "Agitation has failed—and that means some other attempt against the 'longshoremen. It means——"

"But the bacteriologist is dead. He won't carry out his orders."

"Imperial Germany only begins its real deviltry after it's been blocked!" said Harrison Grant. "It's first and second line of offences have already failed in this campaign against the 'longshoremen. But you can count on it, Billy, that there's a reserve somewhere—and that the blow is going to fall and fall quick! Get to a telephone as quickly as you can! Notify every member of the Criminology Club to seek work at the docks as 'longshoremen. Tell them to keep their eyes and ears open for everything that sounds like German propaganda!"

"Nothing there that will tell what they're planning?"

"No—only the indication that they are planning something and that they'll keep on working in spite of the death of this man. What they intend to do is for us to find out—and we've got to

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find out quick! So hurry to the telephone. The docks are open day and night now, you know. Every member who can spare the sleep must find employment tonight. The rest of them will get jobs in the morning—we'll work in day and night shifts!"

But even as Harrison Grant gave the order, Heinric von Lertz was laying his plans for the first blow, as he talked to a furtive eyed spy in the back room of a Hoboken saloon.

"Here's the number of the lighter," he was saying. "I just got it from one of Paul Koenig's men. It will leave the Jersey side about 10 o'clock in the morning."

"Got the number of the freight cars?"

"The ones that contain the autos? Yes."

"Better give them to me. I can trace the stuff better that way. That lighter might make another load with something else. Don't guess it makes much difference though—just so we sink some stuff."

"Except," said Heinric von Lertz, "if we can strike a double blow, it's all the more to our advantage. A hundred and fifty auto ambulances laying at the bottom of the river won't do France any good, you know. So sink these cars if you possibly can."

Von Rintelen also was busy in his scheme of

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destruction. Far down in the lower end of New York, the arch-plotter, his hand covering his face as he talked, to prevent recognition by any possible roving Secret Service man or detective, his eyes moving constantly, his whole, hunted being nerved and ready for instant escape, had sought out the German foreman of one of the largest docks in New York and was giving him orders in the name of Imperial Germany.

"First of all," he was asking, "who am I—in case you are caught?"

"Gates is the only name I know."

"You don't know any address?"

"No."

"Good. Remember—if forced to it, Germany expects you to confess and to submit to the punishment. But we who direct you must be protected! Understand?"

"I am a German reservist," answered the foreman.

Rintelen bobbed his head slightly at the assertion. Then he leaned closer.

"Are your men experienced in the loading of a ship?"

"No—I've been working with practically new crews for the last three or four weeks."

"None of them are especially sharp—as concerns the right and wrong way of loading?"

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"They all follow my orders. Besides, a number of my men are pro-Germans. I imported them for emergencies."

"Good. Be sure they are all at work in the morning. What's the boat at the docks now?"

"The *Arsulus*. Freighter. 2,400 tons."

"Big boat." Rintelen nodded his head with satisfaction. "How long would it take to load that boat in such a way as to make it capsize?"

"Twelve hours 'll do it."

"All right, start in the morning. See that everything heavy is piled on one side, so that it will overturn the minute the hawsers are loosened. Do you understand?"

"Perfectly."

"Very well." Rintelen looked hastily around to see that he was not watched, then rose cautiously. "I shall expect you to be working for Imperial Germany in the morning!"

But when morning came, there were others at work also, not for Imperial Germany, but for the Stars and Stripes of the United States of America—Harrison Grant and the members of the Criminology Club, seeking to ferret out the trouble they knew to exist about the docks, seeking to learn what this German contamination was which they felt sure was gnawing apart the

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bonds that held the shipowners and the 'longshoremen in unison. But it was a hard task.

More than that, the doomed freight shipments of automobiles already had reached their lighters and were starting down the river, while concealed behind the freight cars were two of Rintelen's paid agents, waiting for the time to strike.

And that time came. Far out into the river swung the lighter. The workmen were gathered at the other end of the long, traveling track. Everything was clear. Hurriedly, the spies ran to the end of the freight cars, where they had been blocked and snubbed. Quickly the ropes were loosed. The brakes were released. A few quick movements of a pair of pinch bars and the cars had been started toward the river. And in a moment more—

A resounding, crashing splash, which seemed to echo from one side of the Hudson to the other. The boxcars, with their precious autos, had been sent, careening and bobbing, to the bottom of the river, and already a spy was on his way to a telephone to report:

"Hello, Mr. Gates? Those cars have been accounted for."

"Good!" Franz von Rintelen, alias E. V. Gates, hung up the 'phone, then turned to write a scrawling letter which read:

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"Say, you shipowners. Either you give us 'longshoremen what we want or you'll get worse than what happened when we turned over those boxcars.

The Committee."

Into a mailbox went the letter, to reach the shipowners by special delivery, just as they were considering the granting of every demand of the 'longshoremen. But that letter changed their attitude entirely.

"Call up Union headquarters and tell them that all negotiations are off," roared the president. "If those 'longshoremen think they can bully us, they're badly mistaken. We'll give them nothing!"

The message reached Union headquarters. And the reply flashed back over the wire:

"We don't know anything about the sinking of your lighter. But if you can't take our word for it——"

"We have your word—the confession that you sank the lighter, signed by the men responsible," was the rejoinder.

There was only one answer for the men at Union Headquarters to make, and they made it.

"Then our only reply must come in the form of a strike. We are sorry."

Then, throughout the city the word radiated,

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the word that the final breach had been reached between the 'longshoremen and the shipowners that a strike had been called and that within another twenty-four hours, the docks of the east would be silent, the trucks motionless, industry paralyzed! In a private room of the Hohenzollern Club, Von Rintelen, Albert von Papen and Boy-Ed received the information and rose to drink a toast to the success of the strike. Down at the docks, Harrison Grant paled at the news, then sent his men scurrying about in a last effort to gain some information that would give him a positive clue to work on. But there was none.

And in her way, Dixie Mason also was working, for she had met Heinric von Lertz and had gone with him to the Ten Mile House, a fast roadhouse just outside the city where she might ply him with wine and seek to gain the secrets that she knew he carried concealed about him.

At Union Headquarters, arrangements were being made for the strike meeting, while other officials were making a last effort to reach the shipowners and to seek to prove to them that the depredation committed against them had not been done by 'longshoremen. But the task was almost hopeless.

Besides, Imperial Germany still lurked in the shadows with its greatest blow still unstruck, the

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blow that would cost the shipowners millions of dollars, that it hoped would end forever any conciliatory relations between the shipowners and 'longshoremen. And when that end came—it meant the stagnation of the industry of all Eastern America!

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CHAPTER VI

THE PLOT AGAINST ORGANIZED LABOR

As the day wore on members of the Criminology Club, in their assumed capacity of dock hands, heard with irritating frequency the announcement of the strike meeting called for that night. The sudden change of attitude of the shipowners toward the 'longshoremen was startling and puzzling. Harrison Grant confessed his bewilderment to himself even as he tried to dispel it by joining the small groups that gathered here and there, listening for the meager information their conversation contained. The talk was mostly of an argumentative nature, discussion rising magically over the soaring cost of living, their long hours, and the wrongs, fancied or otherwise, heaped upon them by the shipowners. In each little group, Grant noticed, when excitement lagged or one more cool-headed than the rest counselled less haste and more caution, less hot-headed talk and more cool thought, that at least one of the group was ready to stir them up

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into argument again. But in these troublesome agitators, neither Grant nor his confreres could recognize any of the paid agents of the German government known to them.

The sinking of the lighter had become the main topic of conversation. During the noon hour excitement and agitation ran high. The 'longshoremen resented being accused of sinking the lighter. Vehemently group after group disclaimed any such guilt. And while one group, hot in its denials, still seemed to believe that the shipowners would listen to their denials of guilt, time and again Grant heard references to the sinking of the lighter as though it had been the work of the 'longshoremen and as such was a commendable act in view of the wrongs done them. These agitators he knew were a foreign element.

The air was permeated with the strike fever, and the fever was fed by remarks, actions, hints, constantly passing among the workmen but none of them traceable to men of known German leanings. Passing Billy Cavanaugh, Grant signalled to him to stop a moment, and, while he mopped his perspiring forehead, confided his doubts to him.

"Strike meeting tonight and they don't know the real reason for their strike! And we've got to find out for 'em and put a stop to it today."

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Billy stared at him hopelessly. "What are you going to do? Germany is behind this but she is hiding so tight we can't find her." The Criminology Club could see hidden in this wild maze of misunderstanding the hands of Von Rintelen, Von Bernstorff, Albert, Von Papen, Boy-Ed and Von Lertz as the 'longshoremen could not; they could see the hands, but could not shackle them.

The German dock foreman, upon whom Von Rintelen had called the night before, was rushing his inexperienced crew. The work of loading the *Arsulus* had gone forward with a rush. Burly laborers, ignorant of the crime in which they were being used as tools, loaded crates and boxes of produce into the hold of the *Arsulus* Reinforced here and there by men with whom the foreman was familiar, and who were well aware of their share in the crime, driven and roared and cursed at by the foreman, the laborers bent to their task. And the cargo of the *Arsulus* piled high against the hold on the water-side of the vessel. Her hawsers were pulling at their moorings. She creaked and rattled with the wash of the current, and listed slightly in her slip. But in the seething maelstrom of activity these things passed unnoticed.

Toward the end of the afternoon, Grant picked up the word that the men at Union Head-

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quarters had taken up the question of a strike with the shipowners once more. That they were seeking to convince them that there should be one more conference before the strike was called. And at last word came that the shipowners had consented to their pleas and would confer with them.

The quitting bell clanged and the men of the day shift dropped their trucks. For a brief space comparative quiet reigned where all had been noise, clatter, ear-splitting crashes, combined with shouts of men in a fever heat of excitement.

Grant, Cavanaugh, Sisson and Stewart of the Criminology Club joined the hurrying ranks and wedged themselves into the hall where the Union meetings were held, amid a crowd of perspiring, cursing, excited 'longshoremen.

The chairman of the Shipowners Committee was speaking. As his voice was raised a silence fell upon the crowd.

"Men, we want to be fair. You say that the 'longshoremen did not sink our lighter. We will grant that there may be some mistake here. We received your letter of last night and acted as we saw best. Your chairman and others here assure us that they sent no letter; if this is the case we will listen to you. Now talk quickly. State your demands."

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Instantly the hall was a bedlam of noise. Men shouted, trying to make themselves heard. Grant saw the men who had been foremost in spreading agitation among the groups on the docks now striving to add to the confusion and clamor by hurling epithets at the Shipowners Committee and urging the men at their sides to increase their demands.

Disgusted, and seeing no solutions here to the problem that absorbed their minds, Grant signalled to Cavanaugh.

"Get Stewart and Sisson and get out of here. We'll get back to the docks. This is likely to last all night and then not amount to anything."

Grant slipped out hurriedly, knowing that the others would follow him. Ahead of him slouched two men. As he passed, one stopped to scratch a match against the building. It's flare lighted a face strongly Teutonic, and as the match died down and was tossed away Grant slowed up in the darkness and strained his ear to catch their conversation.

They spoke in German. "We did good work at our dock today." Out of the darkness on the cool night air the words came clearly, though gutturally, to Grant's ears.

"Yes? What kind?"

"Loading cargo. Dock Fourteen."

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They passed out of earshot. A moment later Grant heard the quick steps of Cavanaugh and the other two operatives, and soon they were swinging along to the dock. That there had been a note of pride or at least boastfulness in the voice of the man he had heard speaking by the wall, Grant was not slow to discern. To see that a man of his type, whom Grant classed with the agitators of the day on the docks, would not feel any great pride over the loading of a ship's cargo, did not take great powers of discernment. Grant with a mind trained to pick up the faintest clue leaped to the conclusion that here was a thread that led to something which could be grasped. Evidently something had taken place that day on the dock which the Criminology Club had overlooked.

"Dock Fourteen" he announced briefly to the others and silently they followed him. The great hulk of the *Arsulus* reared itself into the darkness of the night above the brightly lighted dock.

"Wait here unless I call," said Grant. He scrambled aboard and peered down the hatchway. His eyes swept the dark interior of the hold. One side was black, but in the side toward the water piles upon piles of packing boxes, baskets and clean-crated produce showed dimly.

A voice at his elbow startled him.

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"Anything wrong here?" To Grant the figure of the dock foreman, shock-headed, heavy-jawed, with heavy arms swinging loosely, was typically bestial. With a quick sense of distaste he straightened.

"Wrong? Somewhat! Unless this is a new style of loading a vessel. How long since they have been loading the cargo on one side? Looks like incompetence or—" but the foreman seemed indisposed to listen to Grant's ideas on the matter, for a second later Grant had crumpled under his heavy fist and was sliding down the steep stairway.

The foreman leaned forward and surveyed the three figures of the Criminology Club men on the dock. Picking up a balehook he laid it within easy reach, then cupping his hands about his mouth he called in a somewhat subdued but clearly audible voice, "Help. Help!"

He saw the three men leap forward to the ship's side. He flattened himself against a pile of boxes. A moment more and the men had passed him and were clambering down the hatch. As the last one disappeared he sprang to the hatchway and battened it. Grant, Cavanaugh, Stewart and Sisson were prisoners.

The German dock foreman uttered a shrill

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whistle. It was answered in a moment and a figure joined him hurriedly.

"Wait until I'm off the dock and safe. Then cut the hawsers" It was the foreman who spoke and the other nodded. His huge figure disappeared down the length of a warehouse. The man he had left reached for an axe which lay on a pile of boxes. There was no sound except a straining and creaking as he hacked at the hawsers of the *Arsulus*. Grant and his men inside the hatchway were beating at the door in an effort to break it open. Suddenly they felt the movement of the vessel as it listed sharply. They heard the clattering and crashing of trucks, benches and tools falling from their places sliding over the floor of the hold. The vessel trembled as the last hawser parted and with a sudden lurch the *Arsulus* capsized, carrying with her to what seemed certain death the four members of the Criminology Club.

Perhaps to death, but a death they would fight to the last! Boxes and bales tumbled and crashed about. A porthole on the underside burst under the pressure of water and a geyserlike stream spouted up. The men knew that the water was flowing in, that it was only a matter of a short time before the vessel would be submerged and

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that to the chill shadows of the hold would be added the shadow of death! Scrambling from one box to another they eluded the ever-rising wave of water. At last they had reached the highest point of vantage they could find. And for a short time at least the waters seemed at a standstill. Above them was the cold steel side of the vessel. Below them the churn and rush of water.

While Harrison Grant and his friends fought for their lives in the hold of the wrecked *Arsulus*, the conference at the Headquarters of the Union proceeded. Order was being formulated out of chaos, the 'longshoremen's demands were being gathered into shape, and it seemed that a settlement agreeable to all was about to be reached. Suddenly the telephone on the table jangled. One of the Union officials answered it, then turned it over to the Chairman of the Shipowners Committee.

"It's for you."

There was a moment's silence while he fumbled with the receiver, his greeting, and then another silence while the voice of the speaker at the other end of the line came to their ears in squeaky accents.

As they watched him, the Chairman's face hardened.

"Here, say that over again. No! Well they've

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reached the limit. This means the end." The receiver banged into its socket and the chairman faced the group of tense men at the table.

"Gentlemen, the *Arsulus* has just been sunk at its dock. You were warned that if another depredation occurred we would lock you out whether you struck or not." His fist crashed to the table. "That ship was loaded so it would capsize. A million dollars worth of property has been destroyed. You will see that we can take no other action. Negotiations are at an end. We will fight you now to the finish. I must bid you good evening." Calmly and coldly he threaded his way through the crowds of 'longshoremen into whose minds the greatness of this new blow, just struck, was beginning to penetrate.

There was a sudden burst of sound as men tried to make themselves heard, seeking for recognition, yelling, shouting. Again and again the gavel crashed to the table for order. Finally, reluctantly it came.

The president of the 'Longshoremen's Union looked down at the upturned faces of his men.

"Boys, this meeting is not of our choice. Strange things have happened. We must remember, however, in our excitement and resentment that in the past the shipowners have treated

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us with a large measure of fairness. Now we must face these new problems. The Chairman of the shipowners' committee has just announced to us that they will refuse to treat with us——"

"Then let's strike. Give them their answer. Strike!"

It was the German dock foreman who had leaped to his feet and was striding up and down the aisle in defiance of the gavel beating for order. One after another the 'longshoremen joined in his cry, hypnotized by his apparent earnestness, eager to follow his evident leadership.

"Strike, Strike! We'll bring these shipowners to their senses. What have they done for us?"

In the overturned hulk of the *Arsulus*, still fighting the death that seemed imminent, the members of the Criminology Club racked their brains for a means of escape from the waters threatening to engulf them.

Grant reached out a hand in the darkness and encountered a clenched fist. "Cavanaugh, is that you?"

"Yes," the reply bordered on a gasp.

"Some kind of crating here. I've got a balehook I picked up somewhere."

"A balehook? Give it to me."

Cavanaugh handed the implement to Grant,

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who dragged himself to the pinnacle of the debris and began a systematic tapping on the steel hull of the vessel with the handle of the heavy hook.

In a moment the operatives deciphered the message he was sending in Morse Code.

"Send help! Send help!" he signalled over and over, and when his arm was about to fail, Cavanaugh scrambled to his side and took up the tapping. How long they waited they could not tell. Time dragged and the waters began to rise again while the splashing about of floating boxes, drifting among the debris drowned out the outside noises. Grant, reaching up with the bale-hook to begin his signalling once more was startled to see a tiny spot of red glowing above his head in the darkness. A moment more and the spot changed to white and he lurched sideways as a hissing drop of molten steel sung past his ear and dropped into the water with a burst of steam.

A greenish flame showed through the steel, the flame of an acetylene torch, lighting the watery, floating hold like a glint of summer lightning. And as they watched it, the hole grew and grew. At last a mass of steel dropped into the water and through the widened hole, Grant caught a glimpse of the stars twinkling in the sky. A shadow fell across the opening and they heard a

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voice bellowing to them above the sound of the water.

"Who's there?"

"Harrison Grant, Cavanaugh, Stewart, Sisson!" Four masculine voices shouted the necessary information.

"Oh, all right, gentlemen! Hold tight until the edges have cooled. Just a minute now."

Five minutes later the four members of the Criminology Club, bruised and battered, wet and ragged, stood upright on the hull of the capsized vessel, under the bright stars, with the cool breath of the river blowing into their grateful nostrils. The lights from the docks glinted on the buttons and stars which adorned the coats of their rescuers. Grant leaned forward and peered into the face of one of the patrolmen.

"Leary! So you're the one who does the Desperate Desmond act and rescues gentlemen in distress?"

"Yes Mr. Grant. And do you feel like answering any questions?"

"If they are necessary."

"They're necessary all right. If you'll just come over here on the dock, please. Muldoon's got a prisoner. Saw him running away from the dock here and tripped him up. He'll confess, all right."

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Grant followed the patrolman into the warehouse. Muldoon clutched a cringing form. "That's no one I know, Muldoon. He is probably a confederate."

"He said he did it all, Mr. Grant."

"A favorite tale with these German spies, Muldoon. Here you!" He grasped the spy suddenly. "I want you to tell the truth and to tell it quick. Where's the foreman of this dock?"

The spy swallowed with evident effort, and then gasped out:

"Gone to a labor meeting."

"He gave you orders to cut those hawsers didn't he?"

The spy's eyes wavered, and then, held by Grant's glance, came back:

"Yes."

"Why?"

The spy shrugged his shoulders. "He had orders to sink the ship."

"From whom?"

"I don't know. He wanted them to think the 'longshoremen did it."

"And bring about a strike? Very simple. Now we'll go over to the labor meeting and you can tell the people you see there this same little story."

The spy with a sudden jerk tried to free him-

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self, but Muldoon's burly fist clenched on his shoulder.

The 'longshoremen's meeting had reached its climax, and now a quiet had fallen. Human nature cannot keep itself at a high pitch of excitement indefinitely. The reaction had come. Silence reigned as Grant and his companions, and the two policemen, leading the ashy-faced prisoner, entered the hall. The voice of the clerk was raised as they took places against the back wall of the room.

"And now that the speeches have been finished, it is moved and seconded that a vote shall be taken to determine whether a general strike be called by the 'longshoreman against the shipowners of——"

A shout from Grant brushed the droning voice of the clerk aside.

"Stop! No vote must be taken until this man tells his story."

As though stirred by a giant hand, the assemblage recoiled. Men rose from their seats to see the person whose temerity thus interrupted the vote of their Union. Down the aisle the German dock foreman, whose vociferousness of a short time before had helped to keep the evening in an uproar, passed a hand over his face and slid into his seat again.

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With dragging feet the spy was roughly shoved down the aisle by the two policemen, followed by Grant. They climbed to the platform and faced the listening mass of men.

For a moment Grant looked down on them in silence. Then he spoke:

"You men are laboring under a delusion. I am here to prove it to you, and this—gentleman," he ironically waved a hand toward the spy, "will help me." He turned to the spy. "Where is the man who gave you orders to turn that boat over? Remember, I know who he is. I want you to tell them."

The prisoner glanced over the audience fearfully. He lifted a limp hand and pointed.

"There!"

Halfway down the hall the huge form of the dock foreman rose and started with a rush toward the door. But his path was blocked. Hands shot out to seize his and pinion them, struggling, to his sides. Fighting and cursing they carried him to the platform and faced him toward the spy.

Ten minutes of excited talking followed, hot with denials and accusations bandied between the foreman and the spy. Suddenly the dock foreman turned to his audience.

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"He's right! I told him to cut the hawsers to sink the vessel!"

The president of the 'Longshoremen's Union broke into the silence that followed the confession.

"Phone the shipowners at once!" he called to his secretary.

The dock foreman was talking again.

"It was the intention to fasten the blame for the depredation on the 'longshoremen. We knew if that ship was turned over nothing could stop a strike. And we want a strike."

"Who hired you?" Grant cut in sharply.

"A man named Gates."

"First name?"

"I don't know."

"Address?"

"I don't know."

"No I don't suppose so." Harrison Grant smiled sarcastically. It was not the first time that he had questioned a German spy—only to find out that he knew nothing and that he was willing to confess and accept blame that the higher powers of Imperial Germany might continue their work of devastation and strife.

"All right. You've told enough. Now Mr. President, you undoubtedly have some action to

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take." Grant bowed to the president of the Union and stepped down from the platform.

The president took the floor. Relief was written large on his smiling countenance.

"Men, we must declare ourselves. This man has confessed that an effort has been made to make us allies of Germany in an attempt to tie up shipping and paralyze American industries. Do you consent to be tools of Imperial Germany or do you prefer to be free Americans?"

In a moment the hall resounded with shouts.

"Americans! Americans!"

The president turned as his secretary touched him on the elbow. He took a slip of paper handed him and raised his hand for silence.

"The shipowners announce that because of the removal of this very serious charge against you, they are willing to grant the demands of the 'longshoremen!"

It was as though a whirlwind had struck a forest. The mass of men went wild. Shouts resounded while men tossed their hats into the air, slapped each other on the back, wrung each other's hands. Grant watched them for a few moments, smiling. Another blow by Germany had been averted. It was worth the horror and danger of the last hour. His work for the night was over. He turned to go.

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With thoughts free from the 'longshoremen and their difficulties settled, his mind reverted to the subject nearest his heart, and one which even in moments of greatest danger and suspense or wildest excitement, he was ever conscious of. Dixie Mason's dark eyes seemed to look wistfully at him from the darkness.

Dixie's little jaunt to the Ten Mile House with Von Lertz had almost proved highly worth the necessity of enduring his attentions for several hours. They had danced and dined and danced again, and Von Lertz had ordered many drinks. As he imbibed drink after drink he became with each one a little less careful, a shade more loquacious. But he dropped no word of proceedings that she recognized as of any importance. Dixie grew a little discouraged and tired as the time passed. She was about to suggest the necessity of returning to the city when a door slammed noisily. In a state of nervous tension, Dixie started, upsetting the small glass of cordial that had been served to her. The bright colored liquid ran in a quick stream toward the edge of the table, toward her. Dixie drew back.

"Wipe it up quick! I don't want it to get on me!"

There was no waiter near. Von Lertz whipped

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out a clean handkerchief from his pocket. Unnoticed by him a small leather-colored booklet slipped from his pocket with the handkerchief and dropped to the floor. Dixie's quick eyes saw it and while she thanked Von Lertz with a gratitude that, under different circumstances, he would have thought somewhat profuse for the service rendered, Dixie slipped her foot over the little book.

The slamming door had admitted two newcomers, a man and a girl. The girl Dixie recognized at once as a member of the Secret Service and catching her eye, she signalled to her to come over.

Von Lertz, ever on the alert for new conquests, lost no time in asking the girl to dance with him. Dixie had known this would happen. As the girl and Von Lertz circled away from the table, she excused herself to the girl's escort, leaned over, picked up the little note-book and left the room. A moment later in the dressing-room she started wide-eyed and with quickening breath at a report in which were jotted down items, all planning death and destruction and horror of a vastness beyond comprehension.

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CHAPTER VII

THE BROWN PORTFOLIO

No one passing with the crowds that thronged Fifth Avenue at all hours would have singled out the great stone house that stood flush with the sidewalk near Fifty-second Street. Its great doors with their outer gates of iron bars were flanked on each side by anemic box trees which bravely struggled for a living amid the dust and grime of the city. Its closely curtained windows presented an impression of cold aloofness. To the passerby there was nothing to indicate that its air of ancient respectability was but assumed. It's door swung into an entrance hall whose gloomy grandeur was lightened by the subdued light of wall brackets with colored shades. Broad stairs led to the upper floors. At one side of the hall beautifully panelled oak doors opened into a long room, whose wall, hung with tapestry and great paintings, and giant fireplace gave to the interior an air of baronial splendor.

Amid this quiet luxury and display of royal

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grandeur the German government had established its headquarters for the system of espionage it had introduced into a peaceful country. This room was the meeting place of the chief agents of the German government. To it came Von Lertz of the susceptible heart, most recently lost to Dixie Mason; here came Boy-Ed and Von Papen, Von Rintelen of many disguises and Von Bernstorff, the German Ambassador, for conferences with Dr. Albert, paymaster for the Kaiser's spy army in America. And that their movements might be directed with greatest secrecy and expediency wireless messages were received here direct from Nauen, Germany, through the huge antennae which could be stretched upward from the chimney of the house and through the great detectors concealed behind the massive oil paintings adorning the walls.

The room was quiet save for the continuous shuffle of papers slipping and sliding into neat piles under the quick hands of Dr. Albert and the crackling of the log in the fireplace, now almost smoldering into ashes. He laid the reports from spies in all parts of the country into one pile. The most important of these were carried in the brown portfolio which lay on the table and which he kept continually in his possession.

Now he thrust into it a report from Captain

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Portfolio secured from Dr. Albert containing documents relating to official German intrigue

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Franz von Papen, suggesting that a shipment of liquid chlorine which had been ordered by the Allies be stopped by blowing up the factories in which it was being manufactured. Thus the Germans would be given a new advantage in the field by an absolute monopoly of this gas. This report was followed by another from the same source calling the doctor's attention to the possibility of obtaining the patents of the Wright aeroplane by trickery, cheating the Wright brothers out of the result of years of labor, and cornering the aeroplane market in America. A quietly personal letter from Von Rintelen advising him of the various aliases and describing the disguises under which he intended to travel for the next few weeks; documents regarding the Embargo Conference, with its membership of misguided Americans, conceived and designed to bring political influence to bear upon the munitions industry, thus enabling Germany to obtain all the arms it needed and the Allies none; letters and reports on crop conditions, telegrams suggesting means by which Germany could handle the various U-boat controversies in a way to blind the Administration and yet commit murder on the high seas, plans for buying newspapers and the dissemination of spy propaganda —prospectuses, plans and other matters of im-

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portance which came daily to the hands of this mysterious, seemingly all-seeing financial agent of the German Government, were slipped into the brown portfolio.

He started suddenly as the panelled doors creaked open to admit a visitor. His piercing eyes turned to a person advancing toward him jauntily, but with an air of familiarity that was disarming. In a moment the look of alarm on Albert's face changed to one of relief as he recognized his visitor and nodded curtly.

"Ah Von Rintelen, glad to see you. In the future kindly have yourself announced."

"As what? Would it make it any easier to have Smith, or Gates or Levinsky or some such personage announced? Would it make this place easier of access to me?" Von Rintelen swung his cane over the back of a chair, hung his hat over the same piece of furniture and stood rolling his immaculate chamois gloves from his hands. This done, with a care and precision that seemed to make each movement a ceremony, he removed the brown Van Dyke beard that had adorned his countenance, and stood revealed to his confrere in his true personage. Stepping to Albert's side he said in lowered tones:

"You say you are glad to see me; you may feel differently when I tell you the news I bring."

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