



# The GIRL in the MIRROR

By Elizabeth Jordan

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THE GIRL IN THE MIRROR  
WNU Service

even drawing, against these odds, on the savate he had learned in Paris. Blood flowed from his nose, his ear and his lip. Shaw's face was bleeding, too, and soon one of the Italians had joined the sleek young secretary in his slumbers on the floor. Then Laurie felt his head agonizingly twisted backward, heard the creak of a rusty bolt, and, in the next instant, was hurled headlong through the suddenly opened door, to the snow-covered veranda. It was not thus that the woman he loved should look at him.

She did not move, but gave him a look that made him thoughtful. It was an odd, sidelong look, frightened but watchful. He remembered that once or twice before she had given him such a look. More than anything else that had happened, this glance chilled him. It was not thus that the woman he loved should look at him.

Suddenly he heard her gasp, and the next instant the silence of the room was broken by another voice, a voice of concentrated rage with a snarl running through it.

"So you're here, are you?" it jerked. "By G-d, I'm sick of you and of your god-dam interference!"

He turned. Shaw was standing just inside the door. But he was not the sleek, familiar, torpid figure of recent encounter. He seemed mad clean through, fighting mad. His jaws were set; his sleek head and heavy shoulders were thrust forward as if he were ready to spring, and his protuberant eyes had lost their haze and held a new and unpleasant light.

But angry though he appeared, Herbert Ransome Shaw was taking no chances in this encounter with his undesired guest. Behind him shone the now smug countenance of the blond secretary, and on each side he was flanked by another man. Powerful fellows these two seemed, evidently Italian laborers, gazing at the scene incomprehendingly, but ready for any work their master set them. In stupification, Laurie stared at the tableau, while eight eyes unwinkingly stared back at him. Then he nodded.

"Well, Bertie," he said pleasantly, "you're outdoing yourself in the size of this delegation. Four to one. Quite some odds." His voice changed. "You contemptible coward! Why don't you take me on alone? Have you got your chloroform cone?"

The complexion of Shaw, red with cold, darkened to an apoplectic purple.

"You'll soon find out what we've got," he barked, "and what's coming to you. Now, are you going to put up a fight against four, or will you go quietly?"

"I think," said Laurie thoughtfully, "I'd rather go quietly. But just where is it I'm going?"

"You'll soon know." Shaw was carrying a coil of rope. Light but strong, and now he tossed it to one of the Italians.

"Get him up," he curtly ordered.

"Oh, no," said Laurie, taking a step. "Not until I wouldn't advise that. I really wouldn't. It would be one of those rash acts you read about."

Something in his voice checked the forward stride of the Italian with the rope. He hesitated, glancing at Shaw. With a gesture, the latter ordered the two men through the door.

"Wait just outside," he directed.

He turned to Laurie. "Out you go!" he ordered brusquely.

Laurie hesitated, glancing at Doris, but he could not meet her eye. At the window, with her back to the room, she stared out at the storm. Even in that moment her attitude stunned him. Also, he felt an unconquerable aversion to anything in the nature of a struggle before her. Perhaps, once outside the room, he could take on those ruffians, together or in turn.

Without another word, he crossed the threshold into the hall. Before him hurried the two Italians. Behind him crowded Shaw and the secretary. He walked forward six strides. Then, as the side railing of the stairway rose beside him, he saw his opportunity. He struck out right and left with all

his strength, flooring one of the Italians and sending the second helpless against the wall. In the next instant he had leaped over the slender rail of the stairway, landed half-way down the stairs, and made a jump for the front door.

As he had expected, the door was locked. Shaw, if he had entered that way, had not been too hurried to attend to this little detail. Laurie had just time to brace his back against it when the four men were upon him.

If he could have taken them on one by one he could have snapped their necks in turn, and he would have done so without compunction. As it was, with four leaping at him simultaneously, he called on all his reserve strength, his skill in boxing, and the strategy of his football days.

His first blow sent the blond secretary to the floor, where he lay motionless. After that it was hard to distinguish where blows fell. What Devon wanted and was striving to reach was the throat of Shaw, but the slippery thing eluded him.

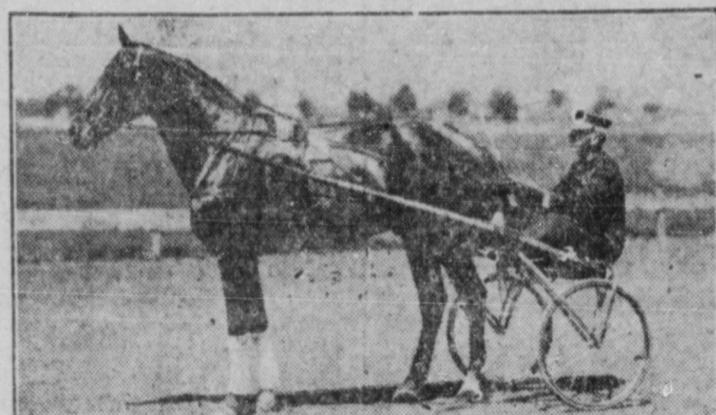
He fought on with hands and feet,

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