



ANNE IVES' MASCOT

H.M. EGBERT

ILLUSTRATIONS BY O. IRWIN MYERS (COPYRIGHT 1913) W.G. CHAPMAN

SYNOPSIS.

Anne Ives, mascot by reputation, starts from Winnipeg for London to attend the coronation of King George. Her father was the Comte d'Yves of France. Following a quarrel with the comte, Anne's father went to America, where he married. At his death he left Anne a key to a strong box in the vaults of Magniff & Co., Paris bankers. The box is said to contain bonds of the defunct French Panama Canal company. On the steamer Anne meets the dissolute son of Banker Magniff, who, not knowing her identity, tells Anne of a proposed scheme to get hold of the Panama bonds and extort money from his father. Anne attends an aviation meet in London, and volunteers to go as a passenger with a French-constituted who wins the prize, but disappears before Anne can learn his identity. Anne is about to give up her attempts to gain admission to the coronation when the aviator and his grandfather appear. The young man invites Anne to accompany him and while entering the abbey she loses her purse.

CHAPTER III—Continued.

While my mind hurriedly ran through all the possibilities of my situation, the elder gentleman bowed Estelle to the seat which the usher offered them and ceremoniously departed, to take up his station at the side of the French ambassador, among a little group of foreign dignitaries near the high altar. He brushed past me in his high buff boots—and, for the present, at least, my purse was lost to me. I prayed fervently that his duties did not call for his kneeling; I would not trust my property even among the peers and their ladies, should it roll out of his boot-tops!

Well, for the present there was nothing to be done. My escort sat between myself and Estelle, who peered ecstatically toward the altar. We two had not a good sight of the proceedings, but we did not care. We were engrossed with the novelty and piquancy of our situation—at least I know I was, even though my hatred for this man was becoming insupportable.

Whether or not I actually saw the crowning of King George I have not the smallest idea. I know the organ pealed and tenor voices sang anthems, and that from time to time we rose upon our feet and then sat down again. In that kaleidoscopic series of changeable coloring, those swaying, moving, loyal crowds, we were as solitary as travelers in a desert of prismatic sands.

"Will you not tell me your name, sun-goddess?" besought my companion. "I sought you everywhere that afternoon; I was disconsolate."

"You sought me?" I answered, sharply. "Why, you had not the common courtesy to wait until I had recovered from my fright."

"Fright?" he repeated. "It was the change of temperature that made mademoiselle faint, not fright."

This was ingenious; in spite of my hate of him, I felt slightly mollified.

"Why didn't you wait?" I asked, and then hated myself for having asked it. He hung his head, quite like a boy. "I'll tell you, sun-goddess," he answered. "The fact is—my grandfather is one of the French military embassy, you know."

So that was his grandfather: I had thought the old gentleman his father. He looked hardly over sixty.

"My grandfather is eighty-four," he said, smiling, as though he read my thoughts. When you have favored me with your name I shall tell you our own; it is a name well-known in the annals of France. On account of some pride of his—sun-goddess—he desired that, if I insisted on flying, I should do so incognito. Besides, though I have no official rank here except that of army captain, I am really here on quite an important mission on behalf of the French foreign office. You will understand, therefore, how essential it was that, on the eve of the coronation, our name should not become the common property of the public. Accordingly, I hurried away to change my clothes after the flight, being sure that when I returned to the grounds, unrecognized, I should find you there and be privileged to offer you my most respectful thanks and homage. Imagine my chagrin, then, to discover that you and your companion had disappeared. I was disconsolate."

"You thought more of your machine than you did of me," I said, and next moment I could have bitten my tongue. I hastened to add that it made no difference to me.

It was bewildering, the medley of emotions that this young Frenchman inspired in me. Hate was predominant, but yet, perhaps because of my own French blood, I found his presence stimulating, inspiring. He was so different from Mr. Spratt!

"And now, you will favor me with your name, that I may present my grandfather, will you not, mademoiselle?" he asked.

"My name," I answered, "is Anne Ives. It is a short one, but it serves all useful purposes."

"And—pardon me if I am presumptuous, mademoiselle—but you are an American, making a journey to England unaccompanied, doubtless in accordance with the customs of your

charming countrywomen? My mother will be delighted with you. Permit me to offer you my card."

He handed me an oblong piece of pasteboard, slightly larger than the cards that our men use, engraved with a long name which I could not at first discern, owing to the dimness of the light after the glare of the hot streets.

But I hardly glanced at it. I had not yet recovered from the sense of humiliation which he had inspired in me; and I thought he needed a further lesson. So I gave him one.

"No doubt such personal interrogations are the custom in your own country, monsieur," I answered him. "Therefore, I will not only tolerate them, but will give you further information." In my agitation I had unconsciously stripped off my gloves, and, as I did so, there flashed upon my eyes Estelle's wedding ring, reposing calmly on my third finger. My companion saw it at the same instant that I did.

"I see," he said, in a voice curiously constrained, "that my use of the term 'mademoiselle' was a trifle premature."

"Monsieur is entitled to draw his own inferences," I answered haughtily.

My triumph was complete. Now for the denouement! What would it be? Should I enlighten him? Of a truth, so bewildered was I by the complexity of my feelings that I did not know what I was going to say or do. I fingered his card idly and waited.

As I did so, for the first time I read his name, and I grasped at the air seeking to save myself from falling. For the name upon the card was that of the Chevalier d'Yves, of Clichy, Normandy, my half-cousin, and his companion was our common grandfather—the man who had turned my father out of his home and sent him to Canada to suffer poverty and despair!

The old hate rose up in my heart again, gripping me so tensely that I could utter no word. I crumpled the pasteboard in my hand and passed out of the pew. I have since come to the conclusion that the archbishop was just then placing the crown upon his majesty's head, for I remember that people looked at me scandalized, as I staggered down the aisle toward the door, and that some cried "Hush!" after me. I remember the blaze of sunlight that beat on me, the eager voices without, the calls for my carriage. Somehow—how I know not—I forced my passage clear of the crowd, seeing and hearing nothing distinctly, crossed Parliament square in the face of a hundred policemen, and at last found myself, at mid-day, in a deserted street close to the Thames embankment.

Even then I did not at first remember that I had lost my purse and key.

CHAPTER IV.

I Sell My Birthright.
(Showing that it is sometimes possible to dispose of what you do not have.)

"Well, Anne," I said to myself, "you certainly have managed your affairs splendidly. Here you are in London, without a penny, and, worse still, without the key to the box in the Paris vaults which contains your fortune."

Angry tears came into my eyes. My scorn for the man who had disinherited my father, and for his grandson, the chevalier, had hitherto supported my spirits; but now, in this realization of my extremity, I felt crushed down by my misfortunes. Oh, why hadn't I taken the advice of my room-mate, Mary Jenner, and waited until we could all make up a party to go to England at the close of the school year!

One thing was clear: I must make my way to Paris at once, key or no key, satisfy the banker Magniff as to my identity, and recover my bonds. Doubtless, at a pinch, he would offer me a fair price for them—enough, at any rate, to make the \$500 that I had lost look small. And—this thought buoyed my spirits wonderfully—I should thereby thwart his scoundrelly son Leopold's scheme and prosecute his own revenge against my relatives.

I made my way back to the boarding house. Estelle had not yet returned. When at last she arrived, several hours later, desperately tired but radiant, she clasped me in her arms in a delirium of gratitude.

"Anne, you have saved my reputation," she exclaimed. "If we had not gotten into the abbey, through the kindness of your mysterious aviator, I should never have gathered courage to face the folks at Cedar Plank, la, again. Oh, Anne, do you know that old man is a real count, and a general in the army? But why did you run away?"

"I had no wish to continue the acquaintance after I discovered who our friends were," I answered coldly. "The count, as you call him, and my father were not on speaking terms. He is my grandfather."

"Your grandfather?" Estelle

"And I have got to start for Paris by the night train," I continued, without leaving her time to recover her breath. "Do you happen to know of a good pawnbroker round this neighborhood?"

"What do you want a pawnbroker for?" she inquired, staccato.

"To raise the fare," I answered. "My purse was stolen today, and so I want to pawn my watch."

"But you can't go to a pawnbroker," she cried, still more staccato than before, and eyeing me as though I were some new species of animal. "Where are you going to stay?"

"Unless I pawn my watch, you may address my letters to the third bench inside the main entrance to the Bois de Boulogne," I answered, calmly.

"But I'll lend you the money, dear," said Estelle, her mind at once diverted to this new problem. "I've got ten pounds I have no use for." Already she was unlocking a drawer of the secretaire. She took out two five-pound notes and thrust them into my hands. "You must take them, Anne," she insisted. "We don't go back on one another in Cedar Plank. And it's only fair payment for getting me into the abbey and saving my reputation at home."

"You dear thing!" I said, pocketing the bills. "When I get my bonds from the Paris bank I shall return this promptly."

"Where are you going to stay?" cried my companion, branching out along another trail of speculation. "Do you know what a dreadful city Paris is? No single woman should go there, nor any married one, either, until she's thirty-five, at any rate."

"How old are you, Estelle?" I asked.

"Thirty-five," she said, innocently. I went into hysterics quite suddenly; I suppose it was the reaction from the strain of the morning.

"Now, dear, if you go to Paris, do go to the Pension Anglais," she insisted, when she had shaken and slapped me into sanity, and bathed my face with eau de cologne. "Promise me that and I know you'll be well looked after and come to no harm."

"I—I promise," I gasped weakly. "But one thing I won't do," I continued, pulling off her wedding ring. "I won't wear this."

And then I realized that, instead of laughing, I was crying. And for my life I couldn't tell why, unless it was with anger against the man who had humiliated me.

I had the greatest difficulty in persuading her to let me depart. Especially she insisted that the wearing of her wedding ring would be necessary to my safety in the French capital, of which, not having yet been there, she entertained exaggerated and, I secretly believe, delightful fears. But somehow I eluded her well-meant intentions of detaining me, and eight o'clock found me at Charing Cross station, waiting for the Dover train.

I had ten minutes leeway, and strolled idly up and down the platform, watching with interest the various traveling types. There was a party of Frenchmen on their way home after the coronation who interested me in particular. The faces of more than one seemed familiar to me, and especially I found myself regarding a tall Englishman, immaculately attired, who, evidently in the guise of interpreter, went busily from one to another, settling difficulties, labeling baggage, and generally smoothing away the little troubles of their journey. Turning suddenly as I was passing, he almost ran into me, stopped dead, and lifted his hat. Then I knew who he was, and who those others were. They were aviators and their friends, and he was the chief steward, with whom I had exchanged words at the aviation meeting the week before when I volunteered to ascend with the Chevalier d'Yves (then unknown to me) in his monoplane.

"My dear madame, why in the world don't your husband call for his prize?" he ejaculated, pulling out his pocket-



"My Husband?" I answered, Feeling the Blood Run into My Face.

book. "I've carried it with me ever since, trusting to run across him. And do you know that to this day I haven't learned your name? Ah! that was a spectacular flight of yours. And clever—decidedly clever!"

"My husband?" I answered, feeling the blood run into my face in the most embarrassing manner.

"But didn't you know that he failed to claim the prize of five hundred pounds that he won by his remarkable flight?" he asked. With that he extracted an envelope from his pocket-book, which he handed to me with a formal bow. "With the compliments of the committee," he continued.

"And now, if you would enlighten me as to the identity of your delightful husband—"

"But he isn't my husband," I panted, terrified. "My name's Anne Ives, if

you want to know, and it's no business of mine who he is, because I never saw him before in my life."

But he absolutely declined to believe me.

"Oh, oh, madame," he said, smiling and shaking his finger at me. "It was a deucedly clever scheme to pretend to be strangers to one another. It made your flight look so much more spontaneous. Of course, I shall not press you."

"Won't you please take back this money?" I pleaded. "Indeed, you are under a misapprehension."

"Will not madame keep it and hand it to monsieur, if she should happen to encounter him?" asked the secretary, blandly.

Evidently he refused to believe that I was not the wife of the chevalier—the very man whom I hated more bitterly than I had ever dreamed I could hate anyone. The very mention of the hateful word indicating the relationship in which he thought we stood filled me with loathing. I should have flung the money into his face, but suddenly bells rang, and there was a concerted rush for the train. The guard was already signaling to the engine-driver. I dashed into a compartment just in time; the wheels began to revolve, and I sank down into my seat, still clutching the envelope. I looked inside; there were five bank notes, of the value of one hundred pounds apiece. I thrust them into my handbag.

Estelle had packed my suitcase for me, and when I opened it, a little later, what do you suppose I found on top of everything? Nothing else than that horrid little Mr. Spratt's book on the Code Napoleon, which he had so eloquently presented to me at the moment of my departure from Winnipeg. Poor little Mr. Spratt! The sight of it recalled to my mind vividly Mary Jenner, my best friend, and the life which now seemed so infinitely far away. And it was only two weeks before that I had been teaching a class of overgrown boys and girls the principles of arithmetic! If they knew of my subsequent adventures! I smiled, and then I felt the moisture in my eyes. I thrust the envelope containing the money into the cover of Mr. Spratt's book and gave myself up to somewhat painful meditation until I reached Dover.

The night passage was calm and I slept well until awakened at Calais, where we re-trained for Paris, reaching there at an unearthly hour in the morning. Through the kindness of an old gentleman aboard the train—you know those old gentlemen who are bubbling over with altruism toward the stranger—I eventually found myself knocking wearily at the doors of the Pension Anglais. I was assigned a room by the sleepy night clerk and tumbled into bed without even troubling to undress. When I awoke it was past twelve o'clock, and the noise and stir of the great city was in full swing beneath my windows.

I couldn't bring myself to the performance of my mission for a couple of days. I inspected the cathedral, the Louvre, the shops; I reveled in my surroundings. Indeed, the fascination of the French capital so overwhelmed me that I doubt whether I should ever have brought myself to carry out my purpose of visiting the banker but for a serious incident which suddenly recalled me to a sense of duty.

I was in the Louvre for the third or fourth time, reveling in the beauty of the sculpture there. I had paused before a statue of Praxiteles, an exquisite piece of work depicting the ideal of beauty, the Greek Hermes. I fell into a train of speculation. Were the modern Greeks, I thought, of the same physical type? I mused; had I ever seen a Greek? There must be Greeks in Winnipeg, but . . . And suddenly I felt a pair of eyes regarding me from across the gallery. I looked up with a start, to see a man in a slouch hat, attired like a guide, and yet evidently not one, since he lacked the official badge, regarding me with intense penetration.

It was the Greek Zeuxippe, the hanger-on of villainous scoundrel Leopold Magniff!

But was it? Was not I, rather, the victim of an overweighted imagination? As I stared at him in consternation he moved with stealthy, gliding steps into another chamber. When I had recovered my self-possession and followed him, he was nowhere to be seen.

The shock of this incident recalled me to the duty that lay before me. If indeed I were under espionage, it was my task to obtain my bonds with the least possible delay. I should never feel satisfied until I had disposed of them and taken the train and boat back to England. For the first time I regretted Estelle's absence. My loneliness was appalling; I felt as though some dark, ominous cloud of danger hung over me.

Early the next morning I sought admission to Leopold Magniff, senior, in his banking house upon the avenue. I had anticipated some difficulty in seeing him, but for some reason or other I was admitted almost immediately to the inner room in which he sat alone, surrounded by ledgers and account books. He was evidently tolling as industriously as any of his assistants, for he looked up, nodded the barest greeting, and went on writing.

Five minutes later he put down his pen.

"Now, mademoiselle, I am at your service," he said.

And I told him my story, to which he listened with an impassive face. I had not thought before of the improbabilities in it. Yet, even as the words left my mouth, I found myself stumbling for explanations and halting like some conspirator concealing a clumsy fabric of falsehoods. In-

stead, when I desisted at last, confused and stammering, there was the ghost of a smile upon the old banker's face.

"I congratulate mademoiselle upon her perfect knowledge of French," he answered, and took up his pen again.

"Well, monsieur—" I stammered.

"Pardon me?" he responded, looking up as though I had just stated a new proposition to him.

"You will let me have my bonds?" I asked.

He smiled again; then frowned slightly.

"I am very busy, mademoiselle," he answered. "Why do you not see my friend, Baron Rothschild?"

I felt the color blazing upon my cheek.

"You don't believe me?" I cried, angrily. "You think I am an impostor?"

"My dear mademoiselle!" he protested. "Do you mean seriously to press this ridiculous claim on me—me, Leopold Magniff, with fifty years' experience of men and women?"

"I certainly intend to obtain my property," I answered.

He pressed the tips of his fingers together and looked at me thoughtfully.

"If mademoiselle insists upon my investigating this claim, the consequence may be serious to her," he



"You Really Are an Extraordinary Young Woman," He Said.

answered. "Frankly, I have no money for you. It is too fine a day to spend indoors. Go see the wild geese in the Bois."

I strode forward and stood at his side, quivering with anger.

"Listen to me, monsieur," I cried. "You think me an impostor. Very well, investigate my claim. If I prove fraudulent, hand me over to the police. If I speak the truth, give me my bonds."

"My dear mademoiselle," he protested, "let us assume, then, for the moment, that your story is true. Can you produce anyone who is able to identify you here?"

I shook my head; I was too much enraged to speak. Yet he spoke fairly enough.

"Good. You say that you have come from Canada to claim your bonds. From Canada, observe—a week's journey by a fast steamship. You have no references, no papers. And you have not even the key," he repeated. "And you say the key was stolen from you at the coronation?"

He seemed about to burst into a fit of laughter, repressed himself with difficulty, and suddenly turned to me.

"What is the number of the safe in which your bonds lie?" he asked.

"No. 667," I answered promptly.

He rose, took down a book from a shelf, and studied it for a moment, turning the pages swiftly. Then he returned and seated himself beside me again.

"But, mademoiselle, do you not see what difficulties lie before you in attempting to establish your claim?" he demanded. "First, you must prove your identity indisputably. And then—even if you establish this—we must have a duplicate key manufactured. Our strong boxes do not open so readily as you seem to believe."

"Tell me, monsieur," I hazarded, as a new thought crossed my mind, "if one had the key—would it be feasible to enter the vault and take one's property from the safe?"

"Entirely feasible," he answered.

"That is, by day. By night none can pass the watchman at the steel gates under any circumstances. But so secure are our locks, so impossible is it to manufacture a key which will fit any of them, that any person having a key and knowing the combination could unlock any box by day—always provided he had the key. By the way, what is your combination?" he asked, keenly.

"It is printed upon the key," I answered. "No. J1025 P. That means MWRO Clichy."

He collapsed in his seat as though he had been shot, and began to eye me furtively—morosely.

"You really are an extraordinary young woman," he said. "Be frank, mademoiselle. You wished to show me that you have knowledge of part of our cipher. You wish to sell your knowledge."

"For the last time," I screamed, in exasperation, "I am neither a thief nor an impostor. I want my bonds."

He looked at me as though he could hardly believe the evidence of his ears.

"I know what agitates you," I pursued, seeing my advantage. "It was the mention of the word Clichy. It recalls to you the home of the unhappy victims of your revenge."

"Mademoiselle!" he cried, starting up, only to sink backward again.

"Listen, monsieur, and let me explain to you," I said. "During the voyage

to England, I made the acquaintance of your son, who was a passenger on the same steamship. Not knowing who I was, he made to me the proposal that I should join him in a scheme to obtain these bonds—from myself! That we should procure them at a nominal price by deceiving the victim as to their value; then, that by threatening to dispose of them at a moderate rate to the comte, or in some manner to place him in possession of them thereby enabling him to pay off the mortgage you hold over him, we should force you to purchase them from us at an enormous rate, or lose your mortgage, and, with it, your hold over your enemy. Yes, he told me everything."

"Miserable scoundrel!" cried the old banker, in amazement. "And you told him, mademoiselle—"

"I characterized him precisely as you have done," I answered.

"He was my pride, the apple of my eye," Magniff moaned. "I made him a generous allowance, even after he had disappointed my hopes of some day seeing him succeed to my interests. But he was wayward from birth. He could not run straight. He is a forger, a thief, a trickster. He has been the despair of my life, the curse of my old age. And now he plans to blackmail his own father!"

His outburst was so sincere, so genuine, that my anger evaporated; I could only feel conscious of a wave of vast pity for the old man, so miserable, in spite of all his wealth.

"Monsieur," I said, presently, "you doubtless are acquainted with the circumstances that drove my father into exile."

He nodded. "I have been your grandfather's banker for forty years," he answered. "It was unjust; the whim of an ancient aristocrat who placed his own pride before his son's happiness. He drove him from his house because they differed in politics. Ciel! What a cause! What a cause for dishonoring one's own son! He could never have done so under the law, mademoiselle, but unfortunately some of the old estates are still controlled by the old feudal customs of the Bourbons—notably in your part of France."

"Then you will understand," I pursued, "that I do not harbor any goodwill against my grandfather or his grandson."

He looked up at me hopefully, as though he found cause for rejoicing that anyone should share his hatred.

"You would gladly see them dispossessed—disinherited, as they disinherited your father?" he asked, eagerly.

I nodded. Something within me seemed to rise in protest on behalf of them: I saw the proud old aristocrat in the abbey, I thought of his four and eighty years, destined to end so miserably; then I remembered my father's wrongs and steeled my heart.

"Your revenge shall not be long in carrying," cried the old man, bringing down his fist upon the table. "For years I have woven my net around them. I was slow, mademoiselle, but very sure. I have them now. In two weeks—unless they meet the interest on the mortgage—they lose Clichy. And they cannot meet it, the dogs! Twelve thousand francs of interest!—and their castle stripped as bare as a hound's tooth. They live like rats in the ruins of their magnificence. And even if they meet this interest it will be their last. No, mademoiselle, have no fear. Their day is done."

He started and looked keenly at me. "Mademoiselle," he said impulsively, "either you are indeed the owner or you are the cleverest impostor in Paris. You are ready to make an affidavit?"

"Assuredly," I answered.

"There will be much—what you call 'red tape.' It will be necessary to manufacture a new key. Then an official of the government must be present when you recover your bonds from the interior of the safe. Return three weeks from today, and the safe shall unlock for you."

"Mademoiselle," he continued, "do you know why I am willing to gamble upon your honesty thus? It is not sentiment—it is pure business. It is because, in the working out of my plans, the possession of these bonds is essential to me. And so I will risk the loss of what I offer you for them—50,000 francs."

"Ten thousand dollars!" I exclaimed. (I think I mentioned that I specialized in arithmetic.)

"And," he resumed, "you will here and now execute an agreement to sell me the bonds for that amount. Otherwise—why, mademoiselle, I fear that you will never be able to establish your identity."

"But it is a prodigious sum!" I cried, foolishly.

"They are worth that to me," answered the old banker, quietly. "Are you ready to sign, mademoiselle?"

He brought in a couple of secretaries and dictated the draft of the agreement. In consideration of the transfer of the bonds, I was to receive the sum of 49,274 francs, payable three weeks from that day.

"The deficit is to cover the unpaid rental of the safety deposit box," he explained, suavely.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Mustache for Young England.
Is the mustache coming into fashion again? One will have observed that five of the Oxford crew wear decorations on the upper lip. Cambridge has only one example. That, however, makes six out of eighteen, surely an unusual average today among men who are not long out of their "teens." Leaving the army, in which "face fungus" is compulsory, apart, common observation leads one to the conclusion that about eighty per cent of the male population in England are today clean-shaven, while the majority of the others do not shave at all.