



*Eli shivered, "You don't understand; you can't understand, dear Haasji—I am so foolish, so frightened and - and tired! So terribly tired, Haasji!"*

# JOHANN LIND

By Laura Goodman Salverson

Illustrated by J. F. Clymer

## FIFTH INSTALMENT

ALL that backward spring Johann went his uncommunicative way. What his innermost thoughts, what his disillusionment none knew. If he suffered through Sheila's conduct he bore it well enough. Aye, too well, that was Helga's opinion. Such calm wasn't natural. It argued a non-sensitive heart—a nature like Herr Lind's. However, the backward season was in itself cause enough for close absorption. A wretched spring, with scarcely a break in bitter winds blowing the chill of distant icefields. Cold, wet, mud-covered, Johann battled the land and at last the truant sun condescended to shine and the fields lay ready for the seeder.

A hard spring, Helga admitted, even though he had not troubled to plow for the Zakofs; just the same she disapproved such cold-blooded acceptance of a woman's caprice. He might at least have tried to make his peace with Sheila! But Andre's problems were, after all, more to her liking. Andre had no dark impenetrable secrets; his fears and ambitions were commonplace and clear. His dream was to marry Eli in the fall—if the crops were good. Aye, and if the crops were good he meant to build an addition to the house! two large rooms with a sunny exposure. Oh, a host of plans had Andre, if the crops were good!

You may be sure Helga kept an eye on the fields that summer. Of course she had dreamt a different dream of Andre—of her son in the white-collared world of business but, when all was said and done the thoughts of having him always near eclipsed all else.

Lena Berg did not share that happy viewpoint, as Helga discovered one sultry afternoon when her friend stopped for coffee on her way from Hawthorne. "No, I don't think Eli should marry so soon." Right out like that with no polite preamble, came her astonishing statement. Helga set down the coffee pot hastily, staring at her friend as if she doubted her senses.

"What?" said she. "What's that, Lena Berg?"

Lena's rather weak face assumed a mulish expression. "I said I don't think my Eli should marry so soon."

"But why—isn't she eighteen?"

"Yes—"

"Nu, da, is it my Andre you mistrust? He will beat her, I suppose?" This with great scorn.

"Tist! Helga, you know better. God forbid I should say a thing against such a son-in-law but, I don't like it just the same."

"Ja, Lena! To hear such words from your lips! It's an old maid you'd have her—to reproach you on her death-bed"?

Poor Lena, torn between pride and conscience, and above all afraid to offend a precious friend, broke into jumbled utterance: "No, no, Helga, not that! Not anything you think—it's Eli's health. A weak lung, that's what she has. Herre Gud, to think a spot like a quarter makes such mischief! And—you know how it is with Simon. Not that he's bad, Helga, but money, money, that's all he thinks of now. Money, money, till I hate the word! Good food and plenty of rest, that's what the doctor told my Eli—well, figure for yourself how Papa would take it. . . ."

Helga's warm heart responded instantly. "Nu, ja, Lena Berg, isn't it luck then your Eli could get a good husband to care for her? Tish, woman, dry your eyes and be sensible. For a minute I thought maybe Simon put his foot down against my Andre—you make too much of nothing, Lena!"

Lena averted her eyes, sipping her coffee with determined relish. It was no good letting Helga suspect her worst fears, still, honesty compelled her

to add: "Ja, perhaps, but you know how it is with married life . . ." And then out rushed what she had intended to keep back: "It's like this, Helga: Eli needs rest if she's not to fall a burden on your Andre. I've been saving a little from the cream and eggs to send her to Dakota—Ja, she needs a rest, but eggs don't pay much now and Simon has a close eye on the cream."

Helga thought it nonsense. All Eli needed was to get into her own little home where she'd have nothing much to do and joy of life would soon be hers again.

"Ja, maybe," Eli's mother acquiesced docilely, glad for the moment to accept her friend's version though a certain bitter fear kept disrupting that adopted cheerfulness.

Out in the fields with Andre, Eli was trying to make a conscientious confession. He had been speaking of the house he meant to build when the witchery of wheat should provide the fortune. Quite inconsistently Eli's transports changed to swift, soul-shaking fears. For the first time the significance of what he was saying grew clear and personal, disagreeably personal, for he seemed all at once a stranger, this fair young man of glib promises and looseness of mouth that somehow repelled her utterly. And he was proposing to join their fortunes for the whole of life! No, no, it must not be; it would be intolerable for both of them.

Flushed, trembling, Eli caught hold of Andre's arm, transfixing him with desperate eyes. "Andre, Andre, don't let us talk of it . . . oh, please . . . I . . . you—that is, surely you see how silly I am. Andre, I'd never, never make you happy!"

Andre, intrigued by what he supposed an extreme of modesty, caught her in his arms, kissing away her foolishness. "You'll make the sweetest wife, never fear, none sweeter in the whole of Saskatchewan!"

For once she had the courage to disagree. "Oh, you didn't let me finish! But you shall hear the truth. I'm not strong, I'm not worth my keep—papa says I'm useless on a farm—" She might have spared herself, Andre was not in the habit of attaching importance to sentiments not his own.

"If I want you, that's enough," he broke in impatiently, "more than enough, so be sensible and stop this fuss about nothing."

"Andre, I hate the farm! I hate everything about it. I . . . I . . . Oh, Andre, I'm not even sure that I love you!"

"Bravo, Bravo! I didn't think you had it in you, Eli, 'pon my word I didn't. But wait, you shall be punished for that!" He would have kissed her but Eli, caught up on the wings of sudden conviction, wrenched free and bolted for the house. Far from displeased, Andre watched her flying progress, a smile upon his lips, deepened interest in his eyes. So! Eli might be worth the having even after all—even without her father's money!

**VROUW VAN MEIRIS** came puffing up to Helga's one fine afternoon, her round face flushed with heat, ill-concealed excitement aglow in her eyes. Such news! Her sister, married to money, had come to live in Saskatoon. Sure. So much money and a big house and no children; why then shouldn't Haasji come to them to continue her schooling?

"Nu, ja! that's a real sister, Mrs. Van Meiris!" Helga agreed swiftly, thoroughly pleased and scarcely less excited than the visitor. "Ja, a good, good sister. Sit by the window, dear Mrs. Van Meiris; it's cooler. Ja, sure, you stay for coffee. In just a minute the men will come from the field—a surprise, that's what you'll give them!"

She did indeed, and the rich relatives lost nothing in prestige through the re-telling. Five thousand a year, not a cent less—and neither chick nor child had Hoeck! Sure, yes, a brother-in-law of whom to be proud!

Johann, seeing in a flash Haasji's eager young face, thought it truly fortunate. Little Haasji was too imaginative by far to live out life on the farm; she deserved something better. "You'll let her go, of course," he said, greatly enjoying the good dame's self-importance.

"Sure, yes! But not till fall. This summer Papa gets him a garden going, and Haasji must help. In

the fall, sure. Also a little money we could get, but neen, to borrow that is bad."

Herman broached another viewpoint. "This Saskatoon, is it a good place for our Haasji? A young girl, Mrs. Van Meiris, is quickly hurt—"

Helga resented this damper on a neighbor's joy. "Nu, da, Saskatoon is a fine city with stores and schools and churches. Ja, and besides, ain't it her own aunt will have her right under her nose so to speak?"

"Oh, she'll be all right, that young spitfire," contributed Andre, tossing a doughnut to the dog beside the door.

"A good child, my Haasji." Vrouw Van Meiris seemed unnecessarily emphatic. "A good child. And a strict woman her aunt. Sure, yes, always she made her cheese perfect, even before she married.

Johann found the parallel delightfully amusing. "But my dear Mrs. Van Meiris," he teased her gaily, "aren't young ladies apt to be more troublesome than cheeses?"

"Ach, you should know my Haasji!"

"True," he assented wickedly. "Cheese is cheese, and Hasaji is Haasji."

But Vrouw Van Meiris matched him swiftly: "Sure, yes," said she, with a toss of the head, "and a good cheese goes the way it's started — sure, daughters and cheeses it's all the same, Min Heer!"

So the days sped on, enlivened for the Van Meiris' by dreams of Haasji's future and for Helga by plans of Andre's wedding. A quiet, soul-satisfying time except for a sudden madness on the part of Johann. What could have prompted it Helga failed to see. Indeed, who could? Surely only a madman—or a Lind, would set to work destroying that bit of parkland lying between them and the Van Meiris' fields! The one beauty-spot on the whole quarter! Andre espoused his mother's indignation.

"What the devil's the idea," he demanded tartly of his close-mouthed brother.

Johann shrugged, his voice soft as velvet. "You've forgotten, Andre, this quarter happens to be mine."

Andre, brick-red, kicked at a newly-felled tree lying at his feet. "Damn it, Johann Lind, you carry this independence poise too far!"

But the sharp sound of an axe biting deep in willow roots was all the answer he got. It was maddening, to say the least.

An opinion seconded heartily by the nonplussed Helga. It was enough to drive one to despair! The complexities of the Lind nature evidently increased with the years. Aye, that was it—the mad streak must have outlet some way! Ole took fire at their tireless criticism. "By jiminy, to hear you talk that bit of scraggy bush was worth a million!"

Helga assumed an aggrieved expression. "Nu, ja, if you're going to uphold him—"

"Why shouldn't I uphold him," Ole roared, growing angrier each passing moment. "Why not? Tell me that, dum-heads? Ain't it his land? Ain't he working it for you? Ja, if you ask me, that's where the madness comes in—year in year out working the damn land with never a Port-of-Pleasure for the doing! Ja, you bet I'll uphold him! What's more I'll have an end of black looks and nagging. Peace and quiet, that's what I'll have—one way or another!"

Helga shooed her son from the room. "Nu, nu, Ole," she purred placidly, "you've got it mixed as usual. Andre wants a pretty place for Eli, that's all. And Johann had to take that silliness into his head."

Ole stumped the room like a restive ox, from stove to washstand and washstand to door. "Wants! wants! Ja, always he wants, that son of yours!" he flung at her fiercely. "A pretty place for Eli—bah! I'm sick to hear it. Girls! girls! girls! since he first put on long pants! Ain't that silliness to shame you? Nu da, you make me tired, Helga Boen!"

Meanwhile, unconscious of the furore, he had caused, Johann worked on, black fury possessing his soul. Willow, poplar, shining birch, all must go—nothing must remain of their taunting loveliness! Yet, each time a clinging fibre wrenched free of the soil, something gave way in his heart. For this was hallowed ground. Here he had sat with Sheila times without number. Not a shrub but recalled

her; not a cluster of leaves but whispered her name. Aye, here he had offered up his heart on the high altar of his graces, and here she had beguiled him with her clever insincerities. The memory of that impertinence must go—struck out with the willows that still murmured of it!

Whenever work permitted Johann made a point of visiting the Zekofs. He was determined Anton should get to school. To which end he coaxed and wheedled the reluctant parents until at last they stood convinced of the wisdom of such procedure. At any rate, whatever their hidden doubts, they understood that Barin Johann had set his mind upon it. And that, so please you, was the end of the argument. Why not? In the Baltic where Zekof was little more than a serf, to bow to the will of the over-lord was part of existence. And was not the Barin master of their destiny? Had he not steered them out of many a difficulty—had he not smiled on them alway? If, then, he wanted Anton's very soul, should they refuse?

It is true Daria tortured herself into an ecstasy of doubt and fear. Books were such dangerous things! Much learning such a treachery! Horspidy, yes! That was the way rebels and revolutions were made—and rebels were always hung! On the other hand to the meek and obedient a place of refuge was promised.

But Johann found a way of soothing all these fears and Anton began attending the little school built that spring two miles west of Simon Berg's quarter. And this child of illiterate parents grew enamored of knowledge. His bright mind observing everything, making note of everything; nothing too insignificant or dull. True, numbers were not so entralling but geography charmed him. To put one's finger on a chart where the mountains spanned Africa, that was wonderful! And to see on that funny green globe where Africa sprawled made him feel so certain of it! The world apart became a reality, and the knowledge swelled his pride tremendously. The little Zekofs hung upon his words in worshipful admiration, and sometimes his parents paused in the midst of work to listen to him. Already they had begun to accept him as simple folk accept the clergy; he was of them and yet apart. With his young friend thus engrossed, Johann saw less of him, thought less of him and the Zekof problem in general. From early dawn till dark he went about his work and of work there was no end. Between haytime and harvest he added a new wing to the barn (he had bought blooded stock the previous season) built another pen for Helga's Yorkshire pigs and, as if that weren't enough, repainted old Herman's bedroom. A misplaced zeal in Helga's opinion, who fancied help towards Andre's proposed addition had been more acceptable; though she knew better, after Papa's ruckus, than voice the criticism openly. He was queer, that lad, and no mistake; but then, what could you expect of Johann Lind!

In town men got short shrift from him. Ha! cried the scandalmongers, he had turned bitter after all! His high-handed independence had not saved him the pain of lesser mortals. Well, he'd learn like the rest of them! Still, zealous though they were for his education in these matters they left him severely alone. His reputation was another matter. As the general merchant put it to Simon Berg over a keg of nails: "You can't expect honest folk to believe that tale about driving twenty miles in the dead o' night just for a priest. It don't stand to reason!"

Simon shifted his snuff carefully before speaking. Very jealous of words was Simon; of words and of dollars. He had never liked Johann, resenting in him strength equal to his own stubborn will, but until lately he hadn't troubled to give the matter thought. Now it was different. Thanks to Andre he understood the young tyrant better. But for Johann's monopoly of farm affairs Andre was free to plan for Eli's pleasure. Ja, Johann could build a barn for blooded stock but Simon Berg's daughter had to wait upon the caprice of the seasons for a home and husband!

"No sir, 'taint within the bounds of reason," the merchant reiterated. "Now, if there had been a girl—"

Simon spat disdainfully: "Ja, there's more to a bird than pin-feathers. But about girls—don't be too certain. Sly, that's what they are, the creatures." And off he went nodding sagely as much as

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## Local Women Say New Method Ends Superfluous Hair

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to say, if you knew what I know, the goose would soon be plucked! Thus, through the charitable contributions of one and another, Johann's supposed pecadoes assumed alarming proportions. The dissecting of which kept the good folk of Hawthorne in a lively state of expectation.

**I**N THE meantime Johann watched his crops with grim patience for this was a contrary summer. Nothing went right. When the earth was already sodden with rain the rain still continued in a tireless deluge. And, when the sun showed his face at last it was to pour forth such blistering rays of fiery heat that the like had not been known for years! Ah, there would be a bumper crop! That was the first thought. A crop to put them squarely on their feet! But the terrible rays bored deeper each succeeding day. The tough prairie grass withered brown, leaves hung curled and limp on every bough and the fields of precious grain rustled dryly in the hot winds.

Stooped, leaf-withered, old Herman stood beside Johann gazing over the fields and up at the sky with its round red sun. "Unless we get rain the crops are done for," said Johann in a hard, even voice.

"Aye, aye," Herman nodded, turning his eyes skyward again. "Ja, but there will be rain." And that night Johann wakened with the wind whipping dankly against the walls and the patter of heavy drops on the low-slanting roof. What relief! What re-birth of strength and endurance! Never a blue sky so welcome as this gray sheet overhanging the parched and panting earth!

But again they had too much of it! Hour upon hour, day after day the rain descended with never a rift in the clouds. To bespeak a well-ordered Providence whilst witnessing this caprice of creation was to raise grave doubts. Such was Helga's sinful surmise. It was a gloomy time. The men, dogged as the weather, went about the chores in drenched clothing and the house had about it an endless reel of drying socks and mackinaws. Not a whiff of cheerfulness anywhere.

"If this keeps up it will drown out the crops; beat them to nothing." That, the new cry echoing over the countryside. "Still—" And again it seemed hope might prevail. The sun once more turned prodigal; the harvest might not measure to their first expectations, but for all that, be fair returns for labor.

Helga took heart of grace from the garden. Her potatoes, and the queer marrows and broad beans Vrouw Van Meiris had insisted on her planting, were coming on famously. Ja, a garden was great comfort; she understood that now. Just the same, it was ridiculous for Van Meiris' to plant such wide fields in nothing but garden stuff. They'd never eat the half of it!

"Sure not," her neighbor agreed. "Sure not, Vrouw Boen. Such a pile of stuff with my Haasji not at home even ain't sense. Neen, neen! My Peter sells to the city—you wait, one day we get us a market garden paying good. Sure, yes!" Already things were looking up for them. There was the young cow with milk yellow as butter, and that other heifer soon to freshen! Vrouw Van Meiris bared her healthy white teeth in a cheerful grin. Sure, yes, things were going good, and one day there would be cheeses also!

Pure nonsense, of course, thought Helga. No one could make a living on a garden and cheeses. The poor Van Meiris' had a great deal to learn! An opinion, slightly reversed, shared with like fervor by the thrifty Netherlanders.

Then came that chill week in August when every eye watched the heavens in fear and trembling. Would it turn colder? Would it . . . would it freeze? Herrre Gud! Would it freeze on top of what had gone before? No! No! not while the clouds hung heavy. Not with such a lowering sky . . . but, if it cleared . . . That was it—if it cleared! How many haggard faces peered forth at dawn, fearful to look at yesterday's fields, yet driven like the prisoner watching the building of the scaffold that will end suspense forever.

## Johann Lind

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Came at last, that night when the air had a tang of new wine about it and the steel-grey sky glittered with cold white stars. A night to make the city dweller breathe deeply rejoicing in the call of life. A crisp, clear, invigorating night . . . And, on the morrow a great red sun shone warmly down on sagging stretches of yellow grain rolling horizonward, a sea of dead hope.

Studying that sore destruction, a grim smile curling his lips, Johann decided that human unreasonableness was even harder to bear. Hunched beside the wood-box Helga sat weeping, her reproaches falling lead-like on his burdened conscience. He was the cause of their misfortune. He had dragged them into Saskatchewan to face ruin and defeat. Yea, that he had, and the catastrophe affected him but little!

He clenched his teeth on the retort he longed to make. Not so was her song of yesteryear. Fortune smiling, she nor any of them had entertained regret for a played-out homestead! Strange how small a part reason plays in human conduct. Pitiful, too, than conquest, the love of overcoming, should bring no transport to the struggle—Ah, poor old mother, she was grown too old for such high-hearted comfort.

André, not she, was the real grievance. To hear him rave was to suppose the whole of life lay shattered around him. He was broken, beaten, done, and the devil might have the Saskatchewan for all of him! Despite which noisy vehemence Johann knew him to be far from the discouragement affected.

As a matter of fact André played for sympathy. Now if ever, the old mother must acknowledge the wisdom of leaving the farm. Of course he had dreamt of entering business with something in pocket but at the worst city life had its compensations. Nonetheless he was much too clever to declare his purpose yet. In the grip of overwhelming disappointment Helga would be sure to tighten her hold—refuse to let him go. He must make her sensible to the folly of courtting future disaster and he must do it by espousing all her predilections, anticipities, displeasures.

Had he known it, so much effort was wasted genius. In her rosiest moments Helga had always visioned her son in easier circumstances, in the enviable environment of an Herr Lind. And here was the joke of it: whilst the poor boy fell so depressed she hadn't the heart to suggest his going!

True to self Ole turned his back on the whole sorry business. Like Pilate, washing his hands, though squirming inwardly at having fathered such a palavering idiot. Ja, he left them to their foolishness and spent what time he dared playing whilst with old Herman.

Johann still hoped the oats might prove their salvation, but rain and heat had done its work too thoroughly—rust ruined the most of it. And now that the final blow had fallen Helga made up her mind to be done with regret. Ja, the past could not be remedied but her dear



Andre should court a better future! Thereafter all her talk tended cityward, its opportunities and pleasures. Opportunities, that is, for smart young men. To which sly André pretended to turn a dull ear.

But what could you expect? Were not his thoughts centred round Eli and their marriage now out of the question? Why out of the question? The unsympathetic Ole barked at her peevishly. "Can't they begin simple like the rest of folk?" To think how they all misunderstood her André! Papa, the quibbler; Johann, the cold-hearted, and lastly Simon. Simon Berg with, no one knew how much money banked, never offering a penny to the lovers!

Poor Lena, no less distressed, drifted about the house innumerable doubts and misgivings her inseparable companions. And Eli, the dread of immediate marriage effectively removed, began to dwell with increasing dismay on a lifetime of slavery in her father's household. He had been harsh before; he could scarcely bend to leniency now with fresh reverses troubling his acquisitive soul.

Cheek-to-cheek they clung sometimes, those two, saying nothing, but each conscious of the others' sympathy. Lena suffered the more having to relinquish the dream of winning rest for her daughter. She could never get through the work alone with twelve cows to milk and the young stock, not to mention the chickens and pigs, to care for besides. And Simon, true to avarice, would never hire a girl so long as Eli wasn't actually sick; nor was he likely to favor a vacation in the wake of crop failure. Thanks be, Eli wasn't really sick—no, but she had an irritating cough that Lena dreaded to hear, and heard so often in the dead of night.

Johann had his secret bitterness as well, touched hands with despair in ploughing down his beaten grain. To trample, tear, annihilate what had been rich with promise, that hurt. Aye, even the horses hung their heads as the bruised and broken grain rustled under their feet and the black earth yawned behind them. Thankless toil but for the hope of distant spring.

That Johann should even hint of another spring Helga accepted as further proof of callousness. It was true—he was like Herr Lind as two peas. Never a man so insensible! Well, let him pursue what course he would, André no longer must suffer chance endeavor. She had a small sum put by for the wedding, and besides she could easily dispense with a cow or two.

Andre pretended felicitous reluctance. Oh, he saw the wisdom of it, but there was Eli—Well, Eli could wait, said his mother; indeed, should delight in waiting so conscientious a lover. A proposal Eli seconded weekly when he came to take his farewell. She would miss him, for winter stretched ahead in a dreary interlude, but by springtime doubtless he'd send for her.

"There's a wise girl," said he absently, busy with the unpleasant discovery that Eli seemed strangely altered, and not for the better. "Yes, of course," he repeated lamely. "By spring I'll have my bearings—nothing lasts forever!"

Poor Eli! Now he was going she lost sight of former antipathies, remembering only the pleasures he had brought to an intolerable existence. "Andre! Andre!" she cried, her face rose-pink with sudden sweet confusion, "I shall miss you so! You have been kind—Oh, Andre, say that you still love me a little?"

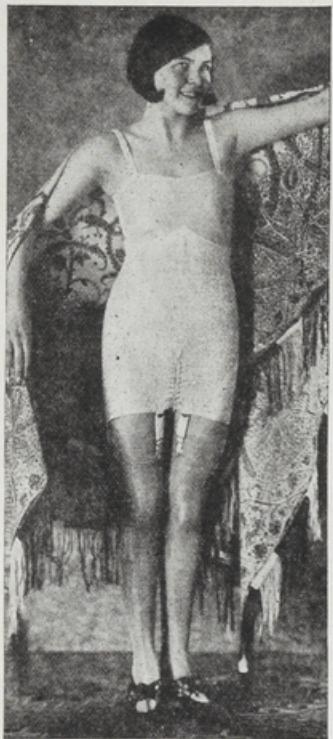
His laughter, as he caught and kissed her, had a chilling effect on the timid Eli. "Love you?" he mocked her, pinching her scarlet cheeks, "Why else should I go to the city?"

"But I am stupid, Andre. And—not even pretty!"

"If I want you, that's enough," he told her again, frowning impatiently. "Come, for pity's sake, don't let your father find you in tears!"

Eli caught her breath sharply, smiling as best she could. "No, dear Andre, of course not. I'll not be so foolish as that." Indeed, when a moment later Simon approached them, his bristling red hair on

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# Johann Lind

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end, a heavy scowl on his face, she managed her greeting brightly: "Dear Papa, Andre is going tomorrow... He thinks it's best... he thinks we'd better wait—"

Simon laughed gruffly. "Less fool he! But don't expect too much once he's gone to the city."

Eli shrank back, nervous as a wounded bird, an unfortunate habit that never failed to madden Simon. A fine pass, thought he, when a man couldn't make free with his child! Well, since she found him such an ogre he'd not trouble to disillusion her. Close-set eyes like bits of cold glass in his face, he leered at his daughter. "No, don't expect too much, my filly... when a man breaks loose with the wedding fixed—it's better not, my creature."

Pale, shaken, but suddenly determined to ignore a cruel humiliation, Eli faced him smiling: "Now, papa, it's not nice to talk like that. Andre might think you meant it... Besides, there's always Alex Hoag!"

Too surprised for words, Simon rolled his snuff, wondering if by chance he heard right. The little hussy! Sly, that's what they were—but it pleased him. "Ha! you hear?" he chuckled knowingly, "What'd I say; women's sly, the creatures!"

So, after all, the parting was effected pleasantly; Simon even hinting that should Andre prove his mettle, and Eli behave herself the winter something might be done about the wedding. "But mind, now," he reiterated gruffly, "don't expect too much—of anyone."

"No, dear Papa. No, no, of course not," said Eli. But, no sooner was Andre gone than she began to dream, and the dream, strangely enough, had nothing to do with her lover.

THAT winter Johann led the life of a recluse; his one confident old Herman who, despite seventy-odd years still retained an alert and cheerful mind; his only diversion in occasional visit to the Zekofs or a chat with Peter Van Meiris. Peter Van Meiris was friendly enough but the Zekofs warmed him with their lusty welcome. Horspisy! the Barin had no rival in that house. Forever proven, so please you, by the new baby named for the Barin. Johann Nickolas Zekof—a name that for luck!

Sometimes a dull day was enlivened by a letter from Haasji. Oh, she was very gay, so she wrote Min Heer, and as full of learning as a river of water. Still, of knowledge there seemed no end. High school over, Min Heer Uncle proposed the University. Ach! so much learning made a muddle in the head! There were deeper joys; she was not so fat. Neen, neen, not by half! And she had discovered poetry!

She had discovered poetry and, enslaved herself, sent Min Heer a leather-bound copy of the Rubaiyat for Christmas. "You will like it," she wrote him; sure, yes, he had a joy in him that Omar like blackbirds on the wing—Min Heer would understand. To which she longed to add, had he lived in Naishapur he, too, had written poetry!

With the return of spring hope soared high in every heart, gloom and past misfortune fading shadow-swift from memory. On every hand came sounds of busy toil, whirr and whirl and metallic rattle, the ever-welcome music of the patient husbandman. With everyone employed and the weather of the best time sped by unnoticed. In a single bound, so it seemed, black fields waved green, the new crop thick and even, and the meadows lay lush in prairie grasses. Aye, overnight the busy haytime was upon them! When, to his mothers' everlasting satisfaction, Andre came home on a vacation. Ja, after a winter's slaving in a department store and business college nights didn't hurry home to help in haytime? Ole hoped she was right, but hinted broadly at other motives.

"Of course there's Eli," Helga admitted crossly.

"Ja, you bet," said Ole, "there's Eli, and besides, maybe, something to get from his mamma."

Helga took fire at once. So! He was taunting her with the brindle cow. "Nu, da, Ole Boen, I can't give my child a cow

to buy a little learning? I that raised the creature from a puny calf!"

"Right your course, right your course!" he bawled, no whit contrite. "It's not the cow—by jiminy, since when did I love a cow? It's just I like to see a man stand up water alone—some time!"

But at that he did his son grave injustice. Andre had a way, all his own, and a zeal to get on in the world he coveted. Indeed, what better proof of the success ahead than that on his return in the fall he was to enter the employ of a real estate firm known throughout the province. Bursting with pride, Helga sped to Hawthorne that the delectable news might circulate the town. Postmistress Jensen, fat, slightly deaf, helped considerably in the happy ministry. What Helga might have whispered to an ear less dull she was compelled to shout for everyone to hear.

"Think of that!" shrilled Dame Jensen, all agog. "Think of that—and Eli goes with him, I suppose?"

Helga shook her head. "Not yet, Mrs. Jensen. A house bought and paid for, and furnished to her liking, that's what the boy wants for his wife! But in a year, give good luck, I'll not be holding first place in his heart."

"Ja, that's the way of things, Mrs. Boen. Children's an affliction one way or 'nother. Ja, as I say to Jens—thank God our two's in better hands—it's terrible hard to be a mother!"

Helga's healthy spirit balked at such unnatural philosophy but pity for a bereaved woman induced patience. Childless and old, how should poor Mrs. Jensen know the raptures that repay maternal anxieties?

But Mrs. Jensen scarcely needed pity. Hers was an engrossing business. Inquisitive by nature, though without malicious bent, she made an admirable public servant. Everything and everybody roundabout for miles was known to her. The blacksmith hadn't a letter today from Rosebury? Of course not! Anna had missed the mail. Mrs. Jensen had expected it for Oliver Hugdal's Hulda had told her that Peter Olsen's second wife, Tilly, was giving a house dance Monday. Right there and then there'd be no letter for Anna's papa the blacksmith. "That girl won't get the Tuesday post that she's dancing till daylight!" That's what she had said, and that's how it turned out!

Indeed, it was queer doings, if Mrs. Jensen couldn't tell the why of it. Though sometimes, owing to her little infirmity, things got slightly twisted. But in the general Dame Jensen was a great comfort to the villagers.

Nor was she backward in repeating Helga's news. In no time Hawthorne knew that Andre was all that the most exacting mother could desire, and not a woman with a marriageable daughter but began picking flaws in Eli.

What such a boy, smart, handsome, ambitious, saw in a girl like Eli they failed to understand. A good little thing yes, and agreeable, but so retiring—some said weakly. A real pity, for everyone knows that to succeed a man should have a wife to push and prod him. The idea of Eli's pushing and prodding anyone seemed comical indeed. Comical, that is, to the mothers of strong-minded young ladies.

Eli wasn't worried about her deficiencies in that respect. Graver fears troubled her gentle spirit. Deep once more in the ever-increasing summer duties, she felt herself failing in strength and courage, and this feeling of encroaching

weakness induced a pitiful melancholy Simon interpreted as wilful peevishness, or silly pining after a remarkably cool lover.

However, with Andre home again existence grew less dull, though to tell the truth their meeting had been far from lover-like. Oh, he still loved her, so he said, but she had surprised a look of disappointment in his face that went far to fix her secret fear. That night she studied herself in the mirror. It was true! Dark lines circled her eyes and the shell-pink once so native to her oval face had given way to a waxy pallor. Indeed, she was very different from the jubilant Eli Andre had admired on the way from Hawthorne station that happy day long since.

Blushing scarlet poor young Eli let slip the nightgown from her modest shoulders. She was thinner; much thinner. Oh, yes, but—the shameful deed done, her courage revived—her skin was soft and white... soft and white—and pretty! Pshaw! that cough of hers was nothing after all. Papa was right, she doubtless worried needlessly, encouraging the dizzy spells that frightened her so much. She'd have to pull herself together, for Andre's sake regaining the vim and comeliness he missed.

This happy resolution together with the occasional leisure Andre's coming brought her, had its good effect and, to Lena, at least, it seemed the little Eli was fast regaining health. Simon had his own opinion of wasting precious hours in the midst of summer work but now that Andre was heading toward big business it wouldn't do to alienate his affections. Plainly that would be killing the goose before it laid a single egg. Simon was a farmer now, but he had been a townsman formerly—he knew a thing or two, did Simon! Ja, for instance he knew that Winnipeg was verging on a boom; a tidal wave of fortune to the wise. To the foolish—but Simon wasn't foolish... Andre, his son-in-law, in the real estate game—he, Simon, with money to invest... No, Simon wasn't foolish—Let Eli dawdle through the haytime; he'd see that she paid him for the leisure!

DURING the holidays Haasji saw very little of Eli for the Van Meiris had joined forces to redecorate the house. Painting and varnishing till you saw yourself in each door and lintel! But it would never do to leave for the city without visiting old friends. Ach, no, Haasji knew better! But once at the Bergs she wished herself away. Lena bore traces of recent tears and that restraint of manner marking forced hospitality. The Vrouwe was sick? or maybe Eli—or the crops bad?

Lena looked into the glowing face of the eager girl before her and heaved a sigh of mingled gratitude and pain. No, she wasn't sick, but Eli had been taken with another spell from the lungs. Ah, she hadn't the strength to work as Simon demanded. God knew she hadn't! But Papa couldn't see it. All through haytime she had toiled beyond endurance and last night—

Haasji found it hard to grasp such parental strictures. What father could wish to harm his own child? It made a madness to think of it! That Simon was a mean pig! Understanding what was passing in her mind Lena hastened to excuse her husband. "Papa, don't mean to be hard—it's his ambition—our welfare... Ja, and he don't spare himself, either."

"Where is Eli now?" Haasji demanded as lightly as she could.

Lena fetched a sigh. "My poor Eli! Like as not in the woodlot weeping her heart out... she and Papa near had words...."

Weeping? Ach! well, Haasji'd soon cure that. "Sure, yes. You wait, Mrs. Berg, such a gayness I put in that Eli no Papa takes out again!"

Leaving the house, Haasji turned her steps to the pasture, a triangular patch of land peppered in birch and young willow. She knew that Eli had a predilection for the great slough that, winter and summer sufficed the stock, and was her father's boasted pride. Yes,

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# Johann Lind

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there she was crouched under the nearby willows, a red-eyed little heap of human misery.

Swiftly compassionate, Haasji slipped an arm around her friend's shoulders. "Ach, now! To weep, Eli Berg, with a lark singing like a lover makes a shadow on the sun. You should know better!"

"But I'm such a goose, Haasji . . . I can't help it." Eli did her best to smile while Haasji dabbed at her eyes, scolding like an irate little hen.

"Sure yes." Implacable Dutch honesty prompted. Such a goose, Eli, to let folks run you. It makes for you a misery."

"Oh, but Haasji, you don't understand . . . you don't know——"

"Papa!" supplied Haasji sharply. "But sure—selfish old pig of a papa! Such a papa now, what good to please him?" In her indignation Haasji forgot the benefits of Mevrrouw Hoeck's careful pruning. "Poof! a papa like that is just a wind in the rafters what for should it make you a pain to let him roar?"

Eli shivered. "You don't understand; you can't understand, dear Haasji . . . I'm so foolish, so frightened and—tired! So terribly tired, Haasji, and of course I should work for my keep."

"Ach!" cried Haasji, "you make for me a pain to hear you talk! What for that papa shouldn't keep you? Mevrrouw my aunt, her cook works for keep—sure, yes, with money besides! Eli . . . why don't you go to the city?"

Indeed, Eli had thought of it, but there was no money. She had no money, Lena had no money—since the new drivers Papa took the eggs and cream to town himself.

"What! he takes the house money? And you make yourself a misery over such a papa!"

"Oh, Haasji, I know it's silly but what can I do? It's too late . . . I'd not be strong enough to work . . . like that lucky cook. It's true, Haasji, I'm sick and . . . the harvest ahead of me!"

Haasji knew what it meant to have the threshers at the Bergs, and poor Eli looked far from adequate to the task. Neen, it wouldn't do; that mountain of cooking for hungry threshers was too much! But for all her sympathy Haasji assumed her best city-fed severity: "Now, Eli, be sensible and listen to me. Threshing, you should know, makes for me no trouble at all and a few days from school—poof! like a kiss at sunset. Sure, yes, Min Heer Uncle will be mad, and when the madness is out I get a little present. To make a man mad, Eli, is what you call good business——"

Eli wouldn't let her finish. "No, no, Haasji, it wouldn't be right. I couldn't let you do all that work for nothing—and Papa so cross in harvest."

Haasji tossed her golden head. "You should care! A cross papa makes for me no difference. And such pies I make with very little fat!"

"But I'd never be able to repay you——"

"Ach! you talk like that and I get in me a big madness. Eli Berg, what for is a friend if not a little help in trouble?" Then, mischievously recalling certain covert overtures of Andre's, she added merrily: "Sure, yes, you repay me. At the wedding Haasji Van Meiris makes a sweet bridesmaid—Min Heer Andre will like it, you bet!"

That settled, there still remained Simon, and Haasji knew better than expect Eli to break the plan to him. She'd have to do it herself and might as well do it at once. Ach, yes, but he seemed very dour and unapproachable as she crossed the green meadow to hail him. Like a cinnamon bear in an empty peeeve. But pound though her heart did, Haasji smiled broadly, cheered brightly: "Mr. Berg! such horses you got! Big, strong, shiny—like a parade in a circus."

"Best in the district," growled Simon, "raised right here on the farm."

"But yes. A smart man Simon Berg, Min Heer Papa said so always," added the flatterer, edging nearer to pat the great creatures whose excellence served her so well.

Simon replenished his snuff, beady eyes the while on the girl's happy face. Now why in tarnation wasn't Eli like that? Bright, strong, fearless; a pretty bag of tricks . . . Haasji decided the opportune

moment had come. "Ach, Mr. Berg, such foolishness I got in me, you would laugh to hear. A bridesmaid, that's what I want to be—but Eli, neen, she likes a black one best; and besides, maybe Min Heer her papa can't afford it. Poof! I know better. Simon Berg don't have a daughter married like a serving girl!" Smiling divinely, Haasji assumed a comradely confidence: "A big silliness, sure yes. But now I make with you a bargain. In threshing I work for you—for nothing, and at the wedding Haasji Van Meiris is bridesmaid."

Simon suspected a trick but on second thought, Haasji looking so guileless and innocent, concluded the girls had been quarreling. Whatever it was none, surely, would benefit more than he. "Well, if you're set that way I'll not stop you," he spat out gracelessly. "But mind, don't expect too much. Women has their tricks, the creatures."

THAT Simon should lose a valuable colt the day he paid the threshers made life no easier for his women-folk. No, sir, if they'd been worth their salt the thing hadn't happened. A roan filly that's what it was; and Simon counted on his ten stubby fingers the increase it had meant in five, six, eight years! Herre Gud! And his women-folk were to blame for it, always idling over the stove and the dishpan—not to mention moping for a lover erratic as the wind. Well, he'd teach them. He'd make them pay for that neglect and loss! He'd not hire Anton Zekof as usual to get in the potatoes. No sir, Eli could do it and toughen up for matrimony!

"But, Papa," poor Lena pleaded in despair, "Eli has such a cough——"

"Well, she don't cough with her hands," snapped Simon. "Less coddling and coffee and you'd spare your pity! No woman of mine hangs round idle."

Far from it! Day in and day out Eli followed Simon in the potato patch, bobbing, bending; hands and feet numb from biting wind and waterlogged earth; filling sack after sack. Shivering always, save only when those fire-hot flushes swept her tender flesh painting their dire signals in either pale young cheek. Sickening moments when vision blurred, and the tired hands fumbled clumsily.

Ja, what else but clumsiness that Eli should fail to see the spade across her path—should sprawl like a cow on ice in the potato patch? So thought Simon when the girl fainted; as none but a ninny would have fainted from a sprained wrist. Bah! he had a good mind to spank her, the idiot; falling down like that on a job half done! Nor did his choleric lesson when, next morning, Eli rose with arm and hand so swollen that field work was out of the question. Lena was at her wits' end, living in constant terror of a definite break between the two; trying her utmost to pacify Simon and wedge Eli into a brighter mood. But Eli, suffering in mind and body, would not be wheedled. Daily her fear of Simon increased, amounting at last to dementia, his step on the sill enough to send her scurrying to cover.

Just such a foolish scurry precipitated the dreaded clash. It was evening and Eli, turning the separator, had failed to catch the sound of Simon's approach. When he flung in, stamping the mud from his heavy cowhide boots, she screamed and, like one devil-pursued, fled towards her room.

Cold, tired, and, if the truth be told, troubled in conscience, Simon felt that scream like a lash on raw wounds. Maddened, bawling a curse, he sprang after the terrified girl, catching her back from the door and shaking her soundly. That might have been the end of it had something, primitive, fierce, strong as life itself, not leaped to sudden power in mild man-eated Lena Berg. Tiger-swift she caught up on brimming jar of rich, sweet cream and flung it at her husband's flaming face.

Petrified, the breath sticking in his throat, Simon mopped the greasy mass from eyes and beard. Herre Gud! what had struck him? What—what? Blowing like a badger he turned on her, fist upraised. But Lena was high above fear,

uplifted by the exultation of a first successful blow. "Ja, hit me, Simon Berg," she shrilled. "Hit me . . . Kill me, I ask no better favor!"

But Simon did not hit her; he left the house instead. Then came reaction. Like phantom haunted children they clung together, those two man-subordinated women, listening feverishly for every sound. Eli wept noiselessly, and Lena, heart-sick, stared dry-eyed into the gathering dark. If Andre were only less ambitious! What good this ruthless ambition?

Ambition had made of Simon a soulless, insensible monster—and he had once been kind . . . Eli stirred restlessly in the maternal arms: "Oh, if I could only get away! I'm sure I could do something — anything would be better than this!"

Lena's righteous indignation boiled over. "Nu, ja, Eli, it's true—you should not have put up with this . . . you should be safe in your husband's house——"

"Mama, please don't! Don't begin that again . . . if Andre don't want me——"

In her anger Lena approached truth. "Oh, he wants you, never fear—you and the money he thinks to have from Papa . . . Herre Gud! what am I saying—what have I said of Helga's boy?"

Incredible or not, the idea was new to Eli who, in an extreme of humility never thought of herself as possessing any coveted gifts. But now, in a flash she saw how true it was, wondered how she could have been so blind before. And it brought strange relief. Andre might not love her but he wanted her—needed her.

"Mama," she cried eagerly, "it's true! It's true! Andre wants money for houses; it's all they talked of, papa and he . . . Oh, if we could only find a way to ask——" Scandinavian propriety permitted no more. To voice what the heart understands is folly.

"Tist!" cautioned Lena suddenly. Isn't that Papa's step? Ja, ja. To bed, my little Eli; he mustn't see you now. Tomorrow, God willing, we find a way out."

ON THE morrow Simon went to town and Lena, tearing through her thousand tasks, decided to make a flying visit to the Boens. An ill-starred choice, for Helga had lost two handsome geese to the coyotes that night, and was suffering from neuralgia. Consequently, Lena discovered a friend little inclined to optimism.

Ja, it was a queer world where things were always going wrong. The red heifer had a rip on her belly to haunches, the new rooster was dead and the coyotes had her Christmas geese! A queer world—but some had it easy. Dame Peterson vowed for truth that the new minister's wife walked in silks on week days. Ja, and here was she, Helga Boen, cheated of the linoleum and the knitting machine she wanted, thanks to a second crop failure. And her poultry and geese got stolen! But worse than all, she couldn't help her son and he was so eager to get on.

With tragedy staring her in the face Lena had small pity to waste on such as this. "Ja, you have lots to grieve you, Helga Boen, with a good husband and better sons! Crop failures? Herre Gud! There is worse—there are losses nothing can repay. The death of a child, for instance . . . And Andre, strong, ambitious—" Lena bit out the word—"why should he need help I ask you? Ja, you should grieve to help a horse—forsaken, and my little Eli dying by inches for need of rest! My little Eli with a lover selfish as Absalom caring not a fig! Ja, stare, Helga Boen, stare; that's what you've made of Andre with your flattery and pampering, a heartless mercenary; even Simon had better thought of me than Andre has of Eli."

The heavens fallen, Helga had been less shocked . . . round-eyed, thunderstruck, she stared at Lena an incredulous moment. But, thanks to maternal conceit, soon saw the rights of it. Poor Lena was approaching the danger-line; Simon's meanness was driving her mad! She'd have to forbear those hard words; that unjust criticism; in her right mind

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## Johann Lind

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Lena would never say such a thing. Indeed she'd not—she'd thank God instead that such a smart boy coveted Eli. Ja, and pressed to it, she couldn't blame Andre for postponing nuptials that, like as not, might end in a funeral. That little Eli had a weakish look of late—"Nu, da, Lena Berg," she chided, reaching across the table to pat her friend's work-worn hands, "we shouldn't begin to quarrel at our age. It's that Simon needs a jouncing—driving you so hard . . . As for Andre—" To save her life Helga couldn't repress a sharp inflection here,—"he's modern, Lena; a wife don't mean just a drudge to him. A nice house for a nice wife to queen in—now I ask you, is that an insult to Eli?"

"Ja, well, perhaps you are right," muttered Lena, no whit convinced but dreading to further wound her friend. "I shouldn't have said so much—it's not your fault, I know."

Helga laughed with relief. Of course Lena didn't mean it! Poor dear Lena, these many years her friend! Look now, she proposed eagerly, "why not write your sister; she'll understand how it is with Eli?"

"You forget Paul. He'll not take kindly to Eli's coming . . . they have young children, Helga, and you know how it is with lung trouble. Besides, why should Paul, with nothing between him and the weather, send money for Eli when Simon has plenty?"

Helga got up and set the kettle on the fire with great clatter. "Ja, I said it was Simon," she repeated fiercely. "Simon's money! Simon's money! Lena Berg; it makes me sick to hear it. What of your money? You — keeping boarders five years in Winnipeg to give that man a start!"

Lena covered her hot face with knotted yellow hands, pathetic witness to the truth of Helga's statement. "Ja—ja! What good to think of it," she moaned, "A man should work for money, a woman just for love! Love! Love! Herre Gud, Helga Boen, how much safer is that money—ja, for money my Eli could get her rest, and maybe too, a little happiness!"

But, unsatisfactory as this visit proved it bore unexpected fruit. Helga failing them Eli poured out her despair to Haasji, and Haasji with no compunction inflicted the whole of it on Min Heer and Mevrouw Hoeck.

"Very sad," pronounced Aunt Grietje. "Very, very sad," echoed uncle Hendrik.

"Sure, yes, but to wag the head does little good," said Haasji critically.

"Haasji Van Meiris!" Aunt Grietje spoke sharply.

"My dear—" uncle Hendrik intruded swiftly, "let's hear the child through. Well, Miss, what do you suggest? Cut with it, little minx, I see you've something up your sleeve."

Haasji kissed the top of his head, where the Angel Gabriel could attack the counting of hairs with least difficulty. "Min Heer so wise Uncle, you should know it makes for me a pain—"

"Haasji, Haasji, watch your English!"

"Ach, sure, Min Heer Hoeck. But that English is a language with a stick up its back; always it gives me—Poof! Aunt Grietje, I get it straight yet—Look now, my so dear Uncle, the most generous Mevrouw promised me a silk dress for Christmas if my chemistry improved. Ach, why I should like to know—but already that so terrible stuff goes better—but now I got no favor in me for a dress. Neen, another dress with already a closet full is like a new baby with the cradle crowded."

"To the point! To the point!" interrupted Min Heer Hoeck with a fine show of impatience.

Haasji twitched his ear, puffing out her cheeks with simulated cholera. "Ach, you are rude, Min Heer, very, very rude. To interrupt a pretty young lady is horrid—sure, yes, Miv Vrouwe my aunt can prove it!"

"Don't waste your uncle's time, Haasji," the Mevrouw interceded, a wrinkle of vexation appearing on her placid brow.

"Ach, why not?" laughed shameless Haasji. "Of time there is no end. But now I get me to the point, Min Heer, that dress Mevrouw my aunt would give

me I trade you for a little money—for Eli's fare to Winnipeg, Min Heer."

Uncle Hoeck and Aunt Grietje exchanged glances, Min Heer's eyes very soft. "But, Haasji," the more prudent Mevrouw objected, "how can you be sure helping her to Winnipeg is best? Has she work in sight, friends or relatives?"

"Sure, yes! Her Andre is there—ach, I should have said her promised husband is there."

Min Heer Uncle picked up his ears at that. "Haasji, you're not supporting an elopement, I hope?"

Haasji broke into peals of gaiety. "Ach, Min Heer, to speak of an elopement and Eli Berg makes a brass dog laugh. And Andre—Poof! To run off with that wise one, Queen Wilhelmina would have to give a guarantee. But of course Eli has friends—she must have, the Bergs lived in Winnipeg many years, Min Heer."

"In that case," said Min Heer Hoeck, smiling fondly, "I'll give you the money tomorrow."

AFTER a somewhat strenuous consultation with Ole, Johann decided to accept a position in Selkirk for the winter. Hans Christians needed a man to take charge of his general store while he went up the lakes trading with the breeds and Indians. "Ja, we need the money all right," Ole agreed sulkily, "but spit me for a cat if I'll go milking cows or set my course to the stomach of a horse!"

Accustomed to Ole's bluster Johann only laughed, handing him at the same time a balance sheet eloquently supporting his plan. Nonetheless, it is doubtful whether the battle had so soon been won but for Anton's dashing in just then. A jubilant Anton, aglow with creative fervor. Horspidy! yes, could the Barin believe it, the good Father from Penton had bought his carving—the little bowl for holy water with the doves on it. And he had ordered an ikon for the church—think of it, he, Anton Zekof, the little immigrant, to make a holy image for the church!

Johann's ready laughter banished the derogatory afterthought. "Bravo!" said he. "The Father has a nose for young talent. Anton, boy, some day the finest cathedrals will clamor for a Zekof ikon."

"Barin, Barin! I will work so hard. Horspidy, yes! Already I have copied all your models. I'll do everything you say tell me, Marin. To learn; to teach; to go away to school—everything you say to make me the good Canadian!"

"Careful, Anton, careful! I'm in a bit of a mess just now and might take advantage of your wholesale promises—"

"Barin! You mean it? You mean there is really something I could do for you?"

"Well, rather! And make no mistake about its being a little thing. Anton, I've got to go away for the winter—"

Anton interrupted, parrot-bright. "Horspidy! I know. It is the cows. Papa Boen hates the cows . . . he will not call them: 'pooky! pooky! pooky!' sweet like my mother. Oh, I know, and to milk—" Anton pulled a doleful face and burst into laughter.

"Ja, you bet," Ole boomed in, "that milk-maid business ain't for Ole Boen. By Jiminy, no! Not while I remember the sound of wind in the rigging . . . Ja—but if the boy milks, Johann, and helps Mama with the pigs I'm not saying the horses will suffer. Nu, da, after a ship maybe a horse comes next. Between us, Herman and I can see to the horses."

That settled, Johann went ahead with his plans, but owing to Helga's unfortunate habit of worrying did not confide them to her until the day he was leaving; an omission doing little credit to him in her eyes. But for all that, the offence might have passed without further significance hadn't Eli, frightened as a chased rabbit, boarded the same train at Penton. Yes, indeed—as Tom Higgins getting off at Stacey, immediately telephoned his sister at Hawthorne—there was something queer about that. At the last minute Johann comes dashing aboard at Hawthorne, making straight for Eli's coach. Yes, sir, hang him for a snipe if he didn't!

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What's more, Eli bore all the signs of coercion. Poor frightened little thing, weeping right on Johann's shoulder!

Charitable Tom's sister, bosom friend of Sheila Patrick's, lost no time in passing on the spicy message. A kindness which, unreasonably, sent that heady young person to her room in a huff. Some while later, finding her niece in tears, good Aunt Katie offered fitting consolation according to her less complex nature. "Now, dearie, I'd not take on. He's handsome—maybe handsomer than Herbert" (Herbert was the new doctor), "but looks don't make a husband, Sheila."

Sheila lifted a tousled head from a rumpled pillow to fire her response: "Don't be a fool, Aunt Katie. What's he to me, that—that country gawk! I've had a beastly day, that's all, and my head aches—"

Meanwhile on the eastbound train Johann was doing his best to make head and tale of Eli's incoherent story; the one thing clear so far her intention to find work in Winnipeg, and the certainty that back of it lay Simon's unparental harshness. Seeing her so little, so porcelain-frail and so indubitably a pawn in her father and Andre's mercenary ambitions roused his deepest pity though no hint of it colored voice or manner. Lightly he put his question: "How long since you heard from Andre?"

Peony-red, she whispered back: "I haven't really heard at all—not this fall; but last week Papa had a letter."

"Last week?" Johann's enigmatic smile flashed across his lean dark face with lightning brilliance. "Last week—and did he seem satisfied?"

"Oh, yes, wonderfully! That is, Papa said he was getting on splendidly buying and selling and, and . . . that's about all," she finished lamely. "Papa won't

tell us much; he doesn't believe in gossip."

Johann's swift laughter had the sting of sea-wind about it. "In that case," said he, "let's take heart. If Papa extends that disbelief a bit—"

"What do you mean, Johann Lind?" Eli broke in nervously.

He smiled into her frightened eyes. "Surely you saw what an interested audience we had from Hawthorne to Stacey"?

"Tom Higgins? But what did he see—what could he see? Why, there ISN'T anything TO see!"

"Depend upon it," he told her quietly, "what that young man saw was an extremely agitated young lady joining company with Johann Lind—you know, I suppose, what people say of me?"

Something warm and exultant coursed through Eli's breast. "Oh, yes, I know, I know; and I don't believe a word of it. Oh, why do people make the worst of everything! But as to that, Tom or no Tom, they'll have to believe the truth this time. I couldn't say home any longer Johann, it was killing me — besides, Haasji thought I'd do better in town."

"Haasji advised you to go?"

Eli's pale, ethereal face lighted with gratitude. "Yes, Johann Lind, she did, and she sent me the money—to help me live my own life, not be run by Papa or Andre, or anyone at all!"

"In that case," laughed Johann, "it's best to give the wish its head. I'll not dare make suggestions, I'll only ask where shall I take you when we hit the big town?"

Eli laughed too, greatly enheartened, childishly a-dream with better things to be. "To Aunt Emma's. She doesn't know I'm coming, but I'm sure she'll take me in."

(To be continued)

## Modern Progress Displaces Paris Antiquities

*Continued from page 20*

mistress: bits of bronze, old pottery, unconscious of their real value; or, again, some ignorant persons parts with some old heirloom without realizing its great worth. Very often even the junk collector does not know he has purchased a treasure. And these things find their way to the Flea-Market. It is through such happenings that expert seekers have come upon wonderful finds in the past. From such discoveries the Flea-Market gained its reputation. And so to it informed visitors from North America have for many years been going with high hopes of finding things worth while.

But time marches on with firm face and callous to the ways of olden days. Even Paris, the last stronghold of the past, where ancient things too often are treasured merely because they are old, and neither useful nor beautiful—even Paris has begun to yield to the onward strides of progress. This was perhaps most strongly marked by the tearing down of the scores of miles of ancient walls which once defended the city. The last remnant of these has just yielded to the pick and powder of the demolishing contractors, and much of the stone has been used for the basements and first storeys of huge apartment blocks now raised on the site of the fortifications. Only remains the grass-grown moat, a mute, gaping emblem of olden days and war. Farther and farther have the houses spread in recent times. And while Paris cannot exactly be said to have had a real estate "boom" in the same sense of the word as it applied to such transactions as take place in North America, the demand for land for building purposes has increased enormously in the last few years until the city officials turned desiring eyes upon the region covered by the shanties, the streets, squares and impasses of the "Flea-Market," this historic place which stoutly had remained untouched for 700 years. They decided it must yield to the demands of progress.

Then the city, guided by all the cunning of lawyers' wiles, set about forcing out the inhabitants in a manner fully legal, and this by the most amazing (for France) of methods. The "Flea-Market" has for a very long time been held on Sunday and Monday. But the big day,

the only day, in fact, worth while, has been Sunday, a time when so many people had leisure to visit it. But in Paris there is a law called the "Sabbath Closing Law," which is respected by all the big stores. And so, the lawyer for the city argued, the "Flea-Market" also should respect this law. The magistrate upheld the city's plea. And so the Market must go, despite its 700 years of tenure, and despite the decree of King Louis Ninth, which decree the market owners put forward as permitting them forever to here carry on their business. Progress will have its way. The happy hunting-ground of the antique collectors, this sprawl of shabby buildings, must give place to huge apartment blocks and a military barracks trim and precise, and 700 years of history will be wiped out forever.

### Blossom-Time

By Mary Matheson

"Come out, come out," said the crocus gay,  
"For the Springtime's here—away, away  
Over the hills and down the dale  
Where the violets lift their faces pale  
And the bluebells ring in a merry chime—  
"Come out, come out," it is blossom-time."

"Come out, come out where the river sings  
And the first young greybird tries his wings  
And the curious sun peers into nooks,  
That were hidden away by teasing brooks,  
Where the banks are washed of their snowy  
grime—  
Come out, come out, it is blossom-time."

"Come out, come out, said Youth to his  
Maid,  
"No blast of Winter made me afraid,  
So bold I've grown I'll shout my love  
To the earth below and the skies above."

But he only whispered, "Be mine, be mine,  
When they roamed together—in blossom-  
time!"

### The Answer Is, Most Likely, No

Will the nice gentleman who bumped into the editor's old car radiator and left his deep imprint when he wasn't watching, please come in and give him a news item about how the accident happened?—Cobalt Northern Miner.



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