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"Tut, tut, Earl," protested Rhineland-  
er. "That's no way to talk."

"We will fight," echoed Capello,  
equally wrought up. "Seagrue is right.  
If we are to be treated in this way  
we'll parallel your tracks!"

Rhineland, Holmes and their as-  
sociates tried in vain to pacify the  
two; their efforts were useless.  
Hard words passed and more threats  
were uttered; the meeting broke up in  
disorder.

Seagrue and Capello retired to an  
adjoining room. Helen passed before  
them down the hall. Capello glanced  
at her and looked toward Seagrue. His  
face stretched into one of his hollow  
grins.

"Bad business for you, Seagrue," he  
said to his companion. "If you can't  
unload your Colorado and Coast hold-  
ings, this thing will put you pretty  
near out of the game."

"Unload," snorted Seagrue, wrath-  
fully. "When that cut-off is announced  
Colorado stock won't sell for waste  
paper."

Helen repassed the hall. Capello  
nodded toward her. "There's your best  
bet, Seagrue. Holmes would give his  
son-in-law anything."

Seagrue looked glum. He hinted he  
had already tried that out, and fruit-  
lessly, but spurred by his friend's sug-  
gestion, he determined on a further ef-  
fort. After luncheon he attempted to  
renew his addresses.

But there seemed about the self-  
willed girl a certain barrier of inde-  
pendence, which, try as he would, he  
could never penetrate. "What's the  
matter, Helen?" he demanded at last.  
"You seem to take everything I say  
as a joke."

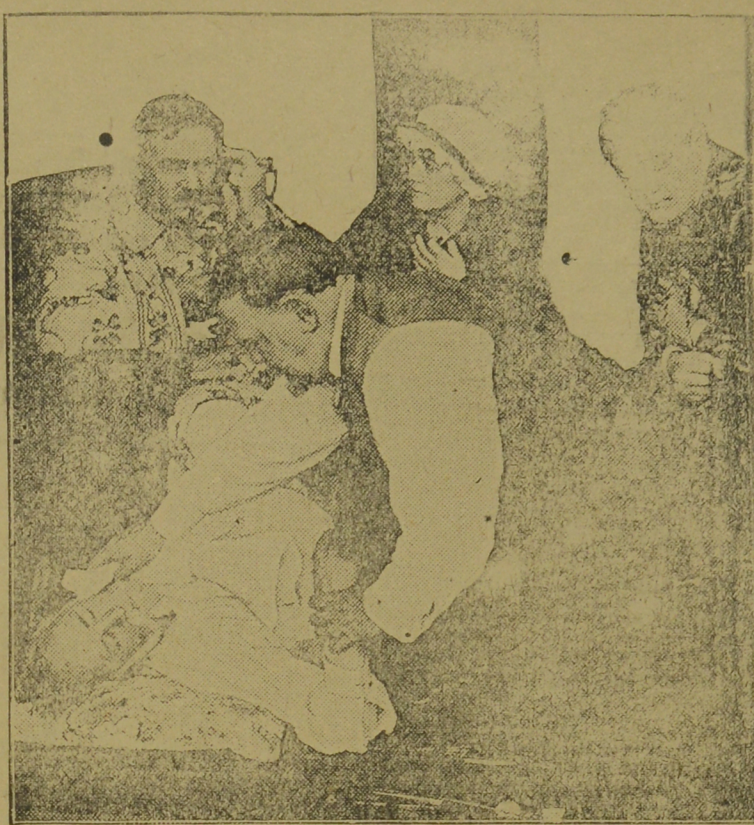
She repressed a little bubble of  
laughter. "That's the spirit it's meant  
in, isn't it?"

He was too irritated to be patient.  
Toward evening he assayed to be se-  
rious again; again she lightly evaded  
his advances.

Late in the day, when walking past  
the doors of the library, he saw  
Holmes finishing a conference with  
Rhineland, once more roll up an im-  
portant document and place it within  
his safe, set inside the library wall.  
Seagrue knew too well what it was—  
the survey of the cut-off, the building  
of which, by crippling him financially,  
was likely to wreck his hopes of a  
career.

It was in this sullen mood that Ca-  
pello, a few moments later, encoun-  
tered him. They had been partners in  
more than one unscrupulous enter-  
prise and had learned to set value on  
audacity. A guarded discussion fol-  
lowed. Seagrue moodily rejected one  
after another of the suggestions of  
the resourceful Capello, until one start-  
led him into anger. He barked inco-  
herently. "I won't stand for safe bol-  
lowing," he muttered.

"Nothing of the kind suggested," re-  
turned Capello, undaunted. And with  
the whining smile that marked his  
face in argument, he continued: "I'll  
have two good men here by 11:30 to-  
night, if you say the word. One of  
them can open a safe by the mere  
click of the tumblers. All we want  
out of it is a copy of the cut-off sur-  
vey. If we can get hold of that we  
can get hold of their right of way—  
most of it must come from Washing-  
ton—before Holmes knows what's go-  
ing on. I'll make the copy of their  
survey myself and return the original  
to the safe before morning with no



Thus Perished the First Man Who Discovered the First Railroad Pass Over  
the Continental Divide.

one a bit the wiser. Why, see here! You're staying right in the house. All you have to do is to let them in to-  
night. Are you game? Or are you a whipped dog right now?"

Seagrue listened with set face. The low-toned conference lasted longer. At its close the two separated. Short-  
ly afterward, Capello, in Seagrue's motor car, started rapidly for the city.

At nearly twelve o'clock that night—  
some time after the house was quiet—  
Seagrue, leaving his room, went down  
to the library. He unlocked the ter-  
race doors. Capello's men were out-  
side. They entered and Seagrue led  
them before the safe. The criminal  
expert of the pair made hardly more  
than a pretense of dropping the tum-  
blers for an opening. He had come  
prepared for any eventuality, and the  
moment he saw the mechanism of the  
lock was unassailable he directed his  
companion, Hyde, to connect up the  
drills: his orders from Capello were  
to open the safe.

Upstairs, Helen, in slumber, was  
half-awakened by a whistle signal.  
Storm was bringing a freight train  
down the hill to wait for the midnight  
flyer. The rumble of passing trains  
rarely disturbed her. This night a  
much lighter but an unusual sound

woke her completely. She sat up a  
moment, listening. It seemed close—  
someone was in the house. Turning  
on a light and dressing hastily, Helen  
opened the hall door of her room.

She had been careful not to make  
the slightest noise in her movements.  
Unfortunately the light behind her sil-  
houetted her figure on the floor at the  
foot of the broad flight of stairs  
Spike, keen-eyed, in the library, saw  
it. He touched Hyde. "Douse it!"  
he muttered. Hyde extinguished the  
light. The two paused, listened, walked  
into the hall and paused again. Then  
they started noiselessly up the stairs.

Guarded as they had been, Helen  
felt their presence. With fast-beating  
heart she ran to her window. Out in  
the night she could see the light of  
a torch. It was Storm's light, car-  
ried as he worked around his en-  
gine. Catching up a small serving  
bell she ran out on her balcony and  
tying the bell to the telephone wire  
that connected with the main line  
wires, she started the jingling mes-  
senger of danger.

(To be continued.)

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