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TOUGH GIRL

by

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(Onoto Watanna)

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Mamie Tobin was a thorn in the side of Magistrate Emily Jenkins. Thrice she had committed the girl to reform institutions. Mamie was not dishonest; no criminal charge had been preferred against her, and she could hardly be described as vicious or immoral; none the less, Magistrate Jenkins declared she had no hesitation in pronouncing her to be an ungovernable, impertinent, brazen girl--in fact, the toughest girl in Graytown. This was not at all a judicial or temperate statement; but Magistrate Jenkins had dyspepsia and Mamie was openly sneering and jeering at her in her own little court of law.

When the thoroughly infuriated magistrate demanded of the tough girl what she had to say to this latest charge, namely, of striking her own mother in the face, Mamie burst into raucous laughter, and shouted defiantly that her sweet mother gave her a pain in the neck.

For these outrageous words in a solemn court of law, Mamie got a terrific tongue lashing and twelve

months in Petrola. The sentence appeared not to affect the tough girl, who declared, as she swaggered from the court, that she'd "be seeing old Rain, in the Face again--in hell". Nor did she trouble to offer the quite legitimate defense that her mother's blackened eye and bruises were the result of a struggle to prevent the drunken old woman from smashing Mamie on the head with a heavy gin bottle.

Mamie's advent into Miss Trehern's quiet life was a disastrous one, so far as Miss Trehern's trade was concerned. She lost some of her high class customers on the girl's account. This did not seriously affect her, as Miss Trehern was not wholly dependent upon her vegetables. She was known in Graytown as "the Vegetable lady", some stress being laid on the word "lady". She operated a vegetable garden on the edge of the city, which she planted and cared for herself. No one knew her intimately in Graytown, though she had built up a flourishing trade, and was spoken of with respect, despite the curiosity excited by something mysterious about her. All that was known about her in the town was that a few years before she had come from England to Graytown and had bought the old Burton homestead. She had turned the wild gardens into a well ordered and attractive vegetable and fruit farm. Her vegetables were always fresher and better than those to be had elsewhere in the town, and as she never seemed to know the market price of things, one easily got stuff at a lower ^{price} than elsewhere.

Mamie burst into Miss Trehern's quiet life on a sunny afternoon in July. She was, in fact, caught red handed stealing radishes. One of her highly rouged cheeks was still swelling with the radish within when Miss Trehern came down the path.

Since her sojourn at Petrola, the tough girl had surprised probation officers and welfare workers, the police and magistrates by committing no further act that warranted her being haled before her mentors. Undoubtedly Petrola had had a salutary effect upon her. Now, as her glance met Miss Trehern's mild and inquiring one, Mamie's mind leaped back to the ugly institution from which she had recently come.

There was a ^{MW} ~~long~~ of flowering hollyhocks ~~and~~ sunflowers and golden glow along the stone wall. Trees, laden with luscious cherries and plums stood just inside this wall, their fruit loaded tops a never failing temptation to the numerous small boys of Graytown, who at intervals made devastating raids upon Miss Trehern's trees.

Mamie, who was fleet footed and agile as a young acrobat, gave one swift glimpse at the approaching Miss Trehern, then leaped for the wall. Her grasp of a wild cucumber vine broke. She skinned a knee on the stone wall itself, and turned to the nearest tree. A moment later, she was climbing up and out along a limb that hung above the ~~flowering~~ wall. Escape now was merely a matter of dropping upon the wall, and from there down to the street without. Mamie was making electrocally swift progress

to the end of the limb, when she was halted by a sudden crisp shout from below.

"Get down from that tree. Come now! Make it snappy!"

Her first thought was: "The Police?", and it was characteristic of the tough girl to snarl back defiantly:

"Come and make ^{me} if you can!"

The reply was:

"I'll count three. Then I shall be obliged to-- shoot!"

Even a tough girl has no desire to be shot.

Mamie expeditiously jumped down to the ground below.

She found herself looking directly at a strange young man, who was leaning negligently against the wall, with his arm still held out, as if he were pointing a gun. There was nothing in his hand but an apple, and the young man was trying to scowl at the culprit as sternly as Magistrate Jenkins herwelf.

In describing him as "a strange young man", it might be explained that Mamie knew by sight at least (if not by more intimate acquaintance) most of the young men of Graytown, but she had never before seen the man who had forced her to jump from the tree. Moreover he did not look at all like a Graytown resident. ~~Nor was his speech of the Graytown type.~~

"Ah hah!" said he. "So you're the one who's been rifling Miss Trehern's fruit trees and bushes".

Mamie gave him a cool, impudent sneer.

"What about yourself" said she, looking

meaningly at the apple he had been biting on.

At this juncture Miss Trehern came swiftly along the path, her basket full of vegetables, and her faded near sighted blue eyes straining toward the girl by the tree.

"What is it, Archie? Who is this girl".

"I just dropped in to buy a few radishes " said Mamie, "and seeing no one around I started to gather some myself, when this bird-----"

Miss Trehern was quite close to Mamie now. She was staring at the girl with a singularly intent and almost startled expression. It discomfited Mamie, and she said roughly after a moment:

"Guess you'll know me when you see me next".

"I did 'nt mean to be rude" said Miss Trehern gently. "I always stare at girls like that. I have to do it. Theres a reason and---who are you my dear?"

She was fumbling for her glasses.

"Does'nt matter who I am" said Mamie roughly. "I told you I just dropped in to buy some radishes".

"Oh I see. I don't blame you for liking radishes. I do myself. When I was a little girl I was particularly fond of them. Theres some fine ones over here---see, the white kind".

Ostentatiously Mamie opened her imitation silver mesh bag.

"How much for this much?" she inquired.

"This much" was the handful still grapped when she had clambered up the tree.

"That's all right. You're welcome to those" said Miss Trehern, smiling.

The young man, who had eaten his apple right down to the core was grinning too. Mamie's pride rose up in arms. Her head went up. She had a curious way of tossing her head, like a young colt, and Miss Trehern was staring wide eyed at her again.

"Listen lady," said Mamie "I guess I can afford to pay for what I buy--see".

"Very well" said Miss Trehern. "Three cents".

Mamie extended a five cent piece. As she held out her hand for the change, the vegetable lady went a pace nearer to her, and stared at the girl with that strangely searching gaze. She said almost breathlessly:

"I feel as if we'd known each other. I'm sure we have".

"Occasionally I pass your place" said Mamie. "Specially when the peaches are ripe".

She laughed then, and her laughter seemed to startle Miss Trehern.

"Don't go yet---don't go--" she said. "Wait a bit.

She had put on her glasses. She put her hand to her forehead and for a moment stood very still, like someone almost in a trance. Mamie felt uncomfortable. ~~Perhaps the old girl was "bughouse", was her thought.~~

The young man had quietly come to Miss Trehern's side and without a word he put his arm protectingly around her thin shoulders.

"Archie, she looks like Miriam?"

"What nonsense. You must not imagine every girl you see resembles her".

"I don't; but this girl is uncannily like her".

"How can you say that?" he demanded, his lowered voice roughly chiding, just as if he were speaking to a child. "Just look at that girl. Don't you see how ridiculous the idea is".

The hot sun beat down relentlessly on Mamie's peroxidized head, mercilessly accentuated the painted cheeks, the blackened eye lashes, the vivid red of her lips.

"I am looking at her" said Miss Trehern, "and I see what you see; but something else too--let me go Archie. I must speak to her".

Impatiently she shook off the young man's grasp and approached nearer to the scowling, now panic stricken Mamie. Mamie didn't know why she was suddenly afraid of this woman. She wanted to take to her heels and put a great distance between them. But, of course, a girl couldn't do that--not with the cynical, almost mocking smile of that fellow bent upon her.

Miss Trehern spoke somewhat breathlessly. ~~When~~
~~excited her heart somewhat failed her, and even digitalis with~~
~~which the specialists deped her could not always be depended upon.~~

"I once knew a little girl" she said, "Who had eeyes like yours, only they were not blackened, and she had lovely straight brown hair, amd---".

"You mind your own business what I do to my own eyes and hair" returned Mamie fiercely.

The young man behind Miss Trehern frowned, shaking his head at Mamie. He again took Miss Trehern's arm, and said with briskness:

"What say we go to the house. Must be tea time, what?"

"Do leave me alone" said Miss Trehern sharply. "Can't I speak to a girl without your interfering".

She was following Mamie now. The tough girl was walking backward, her pace increasing. Mamie's panic thought was:

"The old girl's bughouse", Withal her alarm she was invaded by an immense feeling that she would have been ashamed to name as pity. She was so sorry for the little woman looking at her with that straining poignant gaze, that Mamie had much ado to hold back the turbulent tears that threatened to burst through.

"Wait--do wait, just a moment. Please do".

Miss Trehern's voice was almost pleading.

"What for?" asked Mamie huskily. "I already paid for the radishes, and I got a date. I got to run".

"But there's no hurry. Is'nt there something else ypu want---do you like cantaloupes?"

Now if there was one thing the fifteen year old tough girl did love it was cantaloupe.

"Sure I like them" she admitted reluctantly, "but I come on out without much dough".

A dimple twinkled for just a moment in Mamie's left cheek, and the row of strong white teeth showed through

her vividly reddened lips. An expression that was singularly mischievous came to the girl's face.

"Of course, you can charge a cantaloupe to my account if you like".

The tough girl's face looked suddenly like that of a child's. A spasm twisted like a freak over the features of the vegetable lady.

"I can't bear it!" she said in a whisper, and sat down weakly on the stump of an ivy covered tree, her face cupped in her hands.

Mamie felt uncomfortable. She did not know what to do or say, and she glared from the crouching little figure on the tree stump to the now no longer smiling young Englishman. His words gave her the clue to what she should do.

"Oh - er-- goodbye Miss---what was the name?"

"Tobin" said Mamie hoarsely. "Mamie Tobin".

It was very quiet in Miss Trehern's garden. She could hear the hum of a bee, the flutter of little leaves astir in the peach tree. Archie Trehern withdrew his two hands which he had plunged into his pockets, and still looking at his aunt, he found his pipe, struck a match and lit it. He spoke casually, very gently.

"Tea? What say?"

Miss Trehern lifted her head absently, sighed.

"May as well" she said. She paused, looking rather wistfully at Archie.

"There was a resemblance Archie. I suppose I did seem silly--but I could'nt help it. I hope she comes back again

don't you?"

"Yes--if you would like it".

She brushed her hand across her eyes, sighed again, then looked up at him somewhat ruefully.

"I'm a nuisance I know, and I'm spoiling your visit".

"Not a bit of it" he denied vigorously.

"The main thing is to make you happy".

"Happy?" she repeated the word wonderingly, almost bitterly. The exhilaration she had felt while the tough girl was there had its reaction. She felt ~~Mc~~ nervated and tired.

"I feel old" she said, leaning on his arm heavily as they moved down the flowering path toward the house.

The Catherwells were highly respected and important people of the City of Graytown. Mrs. Catherwell, whose personality dominated so many ~~of~~ social and welfare clubs of the city, was credited with having "made" her husband. Besides being an esteemed ornament of the legal profession, Norman Catherwell was a member of numerous lodges, fraternal societies and organizations.

They were excellent customers of Miss Trehern's, and they took a personal interest in that "dear little lonely old maid". They had even patronized her to the extent of inviting her to tea at the Catherwell mansion (as the newspapers always referred to the big Catherwell home), and Mrs. Catherwell had been quite piqued with the little Englishwoman for refusing to share in the social activities of the town; especi-

ly so, as like everyone else in Graytown who knew Miss Trehern, she was intrigued by those occasional English relatives of the vegetable lady. Anyone could see they were not ordinary folk. In fact there was a rumor that there was a title in the family. Mrs. Catherwell had very tactfully quizzed Miss Trehern about her family on several occasions, but always unsuccessfully, for Miss Trehern had a trick of turning the conversation always back to vegetables.

When, therefore, about two weeks after the advent of Mamie Tobin into the Trehern gardens, the Catherwell sedan stopped in front of the Burton homestead, and not only Mrs. Catherwell, but the distinguished member of the bar himself stepped out, the Vegetable lady hastened down the path smilingly to greet them. She held up a large hubbard squash in her gloved hands. She was very proud of that squash, the first of the season, and unusually firm and large. Miss Trehern, as we have said, was smiling, and her smile was a charming thing to see, despite its poignancy.

"How do you do, Mrs. Catherwell" she greeted them. "Do you know you are just in time. I've a lovely lot of freshly picked Chinese greens. I've been experimenting with them ~~them~~ all summer, and Chum Lee says mine are better than his. My soil's good, ~~very~~ really wonderful, and Oh--I want you to see my vegetable marrows---Mamie!"

Mamie was in the heart of a field of early sweet corn. She had one of Miss Trehern's large cretonne aprons on her. The great pockets in front bulged with the corn Mamie put into them, as she plucked the ears.

Thrusting his head from between the staves of corn, and pausing in his own work Archie Trehern challenged her.

"Tell you what I'll do Mamie. Heres a sporting proposition. I'll give you ten bob straight, if you'll take that stuff off your face".

Mamie's reply was a withering look of scorn. Her peroxided, cheaply permanently waved head tossed back.

"How about it?" demanded Archie pleasantly. "Take me up"?

Mamie invited Miss Trehern's nephew to sit on a tack. Unsquelched, he proceeded with his argument.

"Look here, Mamie, you'd nog be such a tough looking little girl if you took that make up off. What do you put it on for anyway. You don't need it. Makes you look a fright--~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ give you my word it does".

This, according to Mamie's way of thinking, was insulting. She flung an ear of corn at him, and it neatly smashed against his face. He retreated precipitatedly.

"Now a nice girl would'nt have done that" he called at her.

Mamie invited him this time to go to a very ~~warm~~ warm place. She had promised Miss Trehern she'd try not to use bad language, so she used ~~the word~~ ^{said} "H" instead of "Hell" to designate the place where she suggested Archie should go. It was at this juncture that Miss Trehern called her. To Mrs. Gatherwell she said pleasantly:

"Just a minute and I'll have Mamie bring you some to show you. You know Mamie has been helping me now for some time".

Mrs. Gatherwell put up her grey gloved hand expressively. Mamie was coming across, her apron bulging in front, and her arms loaded with corn; but above her loaded arms Mrs. Gatherwell took note of the fact that the tough girl's face was as brazen as ever. It was evident, that ~~even~~ ^{despite} association with as refined a person as Miss Trehern, the tough girl was still unregenerate.

"No--no, dear Miss Trehern. I've not come for vegetables today. I'll send Anna over in the morning for some of those nice butter beans. But to get down to brass tacks---you know my dear we become quite up to date in our slang at the Elite culture club--- well, to get down to brass tacks----"

Her affable expression was undergoing a curious change. Behind Miss Trehern's back Mamie Tobin was making a frightful face at her. In point of fact Mamie, grasping with her elbows the corn, had released one hand to make the unmistakable sign of "bacon" at her nose.

"To put it simply" continued Mrs. Gatherwell, "we have called upon you today as a matter of painful duty. May we see you alone, Miss Trehern"?

Miss Trehern inclined her head politely. Of course, she knew just why the Gatherwells were there. Others had been before them to warn Miss Trehern. It was a great bother and waste of time, but one had to be civil to ones customers.

"Mamie, take the corn to the house, and if you like,

shell some peas for our lunch."

Mamie did not answer. Her face had darkened and she moved away sullenly. Not till she was out of sight did Mrs. Gatherwell relieve herself. Her husband meanwhile stepped down between the rows of berry bushes, poking his stick here and there, snipping off pods of young peas, which he ate raw; sampling ripe gooseberries; also gorging on black raspberries and red currants. Though he had accompanied his wife upon this righteous expedition, he preferred to remove himself from the immediate war zone. His had been the dubious task at one time to appear in behalf of the frail culprit, now, to use his wife's term, "hiding behind the respectable skirts of an innocent and unsuspecting lady. However, Gatherwell felt far from comfortable. In fact, as with the dignity of a young queen Mamie passed by him and cast a look of withering contempt upon him, the lawyer became irritably conscious of certain depths of meanness in his system.

His wife was still talking volubly:

"So you see, my dear, we felt we owed it to you let you know all of the facts and details in the case. Mr. Gatherwell and I have done our very best in the poor creature's behalf. I myself stood by her side, when the last sentence was passed upon her. I even accompanied her in the police car, receiving for thanks only the grossest kind of insult and impudence."

Mrs. Gatherwell's face purpled in painful recollection. She moistened her dry lips.

"If she were actually trying to lead a decent life, I would be the very last to discourage her; but, my dear, a "Leopard cannot change its spots" and you cannot make a sow's purse out of a silk ear -- I mean a silk purse out of a s^ow's ear---you know the proverb. The main thing is, we have before us a case of hopeless unregenerate---words fail me. I have come to you, dear Miss Trehern as a matter of duty. Our boys-- I have a son myself of a very impressionable age-- should be protected from girl's of her sort, and from our own personal experience-----"

Mrs. Catherwell stopped abruptly, overwhelmed by the curious act of the Vegetable lady. Without saying a single word Miss Trehern suddenly turned her back directly upon Mrs. Catherwell, and moved slowly away from her down the garden path to the house.

Inside the house Miss Trehern found Mamie. The tough girl's head was down, her face hidden on top of the mass of peas she had been trying to shell. No one had ever heard the tough girl cry. She was sobbing temestuously gasping between her sobs oaths and words of fury and rage. Mamie's handkerchief was sopping wet, and she used it to mop up her angry tears fiercely and wildly.

Standing by the door, in incoherent discomfort, his hands in his coat pockets, his pipe in his mouth was Miss Trehern's nephew.

"She better look out for her own girls" raged Mamie "She need'nt come tattling on me. I know a thing or two about those two snoots worse'n they know about me, and as

for her little squirt of a son, I'll paste him in the eye next time I see him. I'll----"

Miss Trehern's thin little hand smoothed Mamie's dyed hair.

"Now Mamie' don't cry. There's nothing to cry about".

Mamie still had her face covered, and her muffled voice came forth stormily.

"They're all damned cats---I mean D cats. I hate them. I wish they were all dead. That's what we get for living in a bum town like this. Everybody lying and hating. Oh, I wish I had never been born. I wish I was dead. I wish I had the nerve to kill myself. I'm sick and tired of everything. There's no fun in living anyway, when everyone's down on you. I have'nt any friends at all".

"I'm your friend" said Miss Trehern stoutly.

"I don't care what anyone says about you. You remind me of a little girl I loved with all my heart. So don't worry about anything Mamie. We're your friends---are 'nt we Archie?"

Archie cleared his throat.

"But they'll take their dirty trade from you. I'm ruining your business".

"No you're not. We're not dependent on our vegetables, and we don't have to stay here. I only took up gardening to have something to occupy my mind, while we were prosecuting a search. *over* You know Mamie I was in very great trouble --Oh most dreadful trouble, and I had to work at something, or I think I would have lost my mind. So I took up garden

up gardening. You see flowers and vegetables are like children---they have to be cared for and handled properly. I tried to make them take the place of something I had lost. ~~two~~ years ago, Mamie, I lost the only thing I loved on earth".

"That must've been the year we come out here" said Mamie, still mopping the vanishing tears.

"So you understand that we're the best of friends, Mamie. Its because you remind me of the little girl I lost".

Mamie gulped, and a huge tear rolled down her cheek. Captain Trehern tramped up and down restlessly. He glared out through the window at the departing Gatherwell's.

Mamie said with a quivering lip:

"I'm not good enough to be your friend. You don't know all the things I've done. I guess Magistrate Jenkins was right, and I'm just no good---I'm a bad one. Any one'll tell you that in Graytown. I'm no-notorious--thats what I am"

"Poof! No girl of fifteen is notorious, and it does'nt matter what we have been that counts anyway. Its what we are. Besides we all make mistakes. We all do wrong, Mamie. None of us have a corner on goodness. When I was a very young girl --not much older than you, Mamie, I was a very wild girl. Do you know what I did? I ran away from home with a married man. I did'nt know it at the time, and when I found out that he had a wife already --it was too late. I was afraid to go home. I had ^a terribly stern father. I had to hide among strangers --anyone--anyhow --and then my little baby came, and I went back to my father. But I did'nt

dare to take my baby with me, and first thing I knew they-- the terrible people I had left my baby with--found out, and they began to blackmail me. I used to give them every cent I could lay my hand on. I sold my things--I begged--I even stole from my father, but they wanted more and more, and then--to frighten me, they took the baby away ---she was not quite ~~three~~ then, Mamie---just a little darling thing---and they said if I didn't get them a certain amount of money I would never see her again. So then, because I was desperate, I told my father---I confessed everything. And what do you think he did? He called in the police. Think of that! He set the police on those terrible people--and--that was the last I ever saw of them ---and I never saw my baby again. Now you know all about me Mamie".

The words had poured from the vegetable lady in a fevered torrent. Captain Trehern could not bear the scene. He went out on to the verandah, tramped up and down, and came back again into the kitchen and stood his back against the wall, watching his aunt and Mamie.

Miss Trehern was sitting on the chair opposite Mamie. The latter was gulping noisily.

"I'm awfully sorry for you" said the tough girl. "I wish I could do something to please you---can't I, Miss Trehern?"

Miss Trehern smiled brightly. An idea came to her.

"Yes indeed you can, Mamie. Take all that make up off your face--won't you, and let your hair come back to its right color. I know its brown, isn't it".

"Yes it is, Miss Trehern--dark brown, and its straight. See the roots with the dark hair is growing in".

Mamie was holding back ~~the~~ fringe of hair from her forehead. Miss Trehern was looking at her fixedly steadily. her eyes widened and bulging. The tears had washed away the black from Mamie's mascaraed eyes. The tears had washed away much of the makeup and rouge from Mamie's cheeks. Where the hair was pushed back, on the left side of Mamie's forehead an odd little cowlick curled above a small brown mole. Something in the expression of the girl's deep blue eyes; something in the motion of her pleading lips--that white forehead, the cowlick and the small mole in conjunction --these held the woman spellbound. She put out her hands wildly, caught the girl's face between them and gazed long and deeply. Then suddenly Miss Trehern cried out violently:

"Oh my God!"

Mamie broke away from her, frightened, apprehensive. Captain Trehern tried to come between them, but Miss Trehern blindly pushed him aside.

"Miriam!" she cried. "I'm your mother--- you're my little girl. I know you. I know you!"

Trehern's thought was: "Good God! she's gone out of her mind", and Mamie expressed the same idea in her rough slang.

"Say--have you gone bugs" ? she said hoarsely.

"No---but I've been blind---stone blind" said Miss

Trehern. "How could I have had you with me day in and day and not have known you for my very own".

Chills and shivers were running up Mamie's back. Her mind was working with lightning swiftness. Suppose it were true. Suppose this dear woman was her own mother. Suppose she had been stolen as a child. Her supposings brought elements of forboding and terrors. She, Mamie Tpbm, had been reared in the mud! She was unfit to be the child of this gentle woman. A great gulf lay between them - a gulf filled to the brim with poor Mamie's sins. Slowly she backed to the wall and faced the woman who claimed her as her child. Her head went back with that characteristic motion of the young savage colt.

"What do you take me for anyway? My own mother's good enough for me and I'm the dead spitting image of her".

As if she had not spoken at all Miss Trehern continued.

"Miriam, I've been all over the world looking for you. We spared nothing in money or effort. Then my agents traced you to America---to this very town. I came out here. I used to look into the face of every girl I met, and the first time you looked at me directly, something happened to me---rose up in me just like a tidal wave. Oh I felt --I knew----"

"You keep away from me" said Mamie roughly. "Get out of my way I say. I'm going home!"

"This is your home!"

"Like fun it is" shouted the girl wildly, and head down, she plunged toward the door.

Once in the street, the tough girl ran as if she were pursued; as in fact she was. Captain Trehern was trailing the fleeing girl.

Mamie could not have analysed the tumultuous stirrings of her heart. She had but one blind instinct. To save Miss Trehern from herself. On and on she went; past rowdy boys and girls with whom she once ^{had} consorted so dangerously; down wide tree-ed streets, where girls of her own age, but not her own kind, in cool summer organdies or sports clothes were on the verandahs of the "swell" houses, or sprang back and forth over the tennis courts; girls who glanced at the tough girl askance and then looked away; girls whispering and laughing with the smartly dressed youths who knew Mamie well enough to hug her in some dark lane or on nocturnal joy rides, but were ashamed to tip their hats to her before their girl friends. On and on went Mamie, till presently she came to narrow, dingy streets--the streets of the slum section of Graytown, and at last the one roomed shack, unpainted and bleak that was the toughgirl's "home". Muddy curtains stirred slothfully in tatters from their cords in the feeble breeze. A fetid rancid breath smote her as she entered, and the groaning flight of flies hummed angrily above and about her. Mamie looked about her, mechanically moving her hand to brush away the flies that crawled up the sides and stuck to the cork of the bottle of gin that was propped in the loose lap of the drear eyed drowsing woman.

The hot air, the suffocating atmosphere of the filthy place nauseated her. She turned desperately back to the

to the door and jerked it open. On the steps stood Captain Trehern. Mamie cried harshly:

"What d'you want here? Spying on my folks are you?"

Chosh line
 "Listen Mamie" said Trehern. "I'm your friend. I know--I understand exactly why you ran away. You thought you were not good enough for Miss Trehern--that was it, wasn't it? And you are, Mamie. That act marked you as a thoroughbred. Now look here---no use bluffing, Mamie. It won't go. We know who you are. I've suspected for some time, as a matter of fact. Now look here, Mamie --I came here to Graytown, *all* the way from Kent--thats in England--especially to look for and to find you."

He reached out, caught Mamie's futile little fist in his and held on to it firmly.

"In, your friend, understand. We're related--distant cousins, and I want you to look upon me as a sort of brother, will you Mamie. Why youngster, you can say anything to me---you can even cry if you want! There---blubber all you want, little girl. You can't carry a cup brimful".

Miss Trehern stood on the street corner, turning her head from side to side. An automobile came purring down the wide asphalt paved avenue. Miss Trehern stepped out in front of it, held up her hand. The car came to a stop.

"Whats the trouble?" asked the driver.

"Would you give me a lift" asked the bareheaded

little woman standing at the curb. Her cheeks were as red as apples and her eyes were shining.

"Sure thing. Get aboard".

He made room for her beside him.

"Where you want to go, Miss Trehern? You're Miss Trehern, are'nt you?"

"Yes, thats my name. I want to go --" Miss Trehern was choosing her words slowly -- "I want to go to Police headquarters. I want to go to the office of the Chief of Police" she said.

The driver whistled and peered down at her strangely lighted face.

"Anything wrong?"

"Oh no " said Miss Trehern softly. "Everything's quite all right. A smile irradiated her thin features. She said impulsively to the startled man beside her:

"Is'nt it a perfectly beautiful day!"