

# GIRLS' CRYSTAL

Week  
Ending  
July 26th,  
1920.

AND "THE SCHOOLGIRL"



## The PRINCESS JUNE PROTECTED

The Romantic East Provides The Setting For This Exciting Detective Story, Featuring Ever-popular June Gaynor—Written by PETER LANGLEY

### THE SECRET OF THE LOCKET

"I'm certain I've seen that face before!"

June Gaynor, the girl detective—on holiday in Arabia with her husband, Ned, Harpwood—purchased the locket as she resumed the bustling activity of her stall on the way from the quaint silver locket she was looking. It was a royalist locket, despite the party-decorating veil that shrouded an Eastern girl's face.

June had found the locket lying on the sun-drenched cobble of the busy market-place in Sanaa. She had been spending the morning on her own, shopping in the colorful bazaar and exploring the town.

Ned had received an urgent wire, calling him away on business, and he was not expected back at their hotel in Sanaa till next week, that evening.

After finishing up a romantic little note near the bazaar, June had joined the throng at the market-place—and had nearly trodden on the silver locket. It was extremely scarce and obviously of some value, since from its first gold clasp, the clasp of which had been broken.

But it was the portrait inside the locket that stirred June's interest. This curious, mysterious face struck a chord in her memory.

June let out an exclamation. Of course, she remembered now!

It was a portrait of Princess Yasmin, the attractive and high-spirited daughter of the Emir of Sanaa.

But how did this locket containing the royal portrait come to have been dropped in the market-place?

Oh a splintering bazaar June crossed over to the market of the quaint shops, food and then beneath its arched awning. Behind the low counter, roiled with silks and satins, trinkets and baubles, as before, gazed his owner—a wrinkled,

bearded figure, who regarded the attractive English girl hopefully, and commenced loudly to praise his wares.

Smilingly June made a small purchase, to gain his confidence. Then she produced the locket, explaining that she had picked it up close to the shop, and asking if he knew its owner.

The old man's attitude changed immediately to one of the utmost care as she finished. He started hastily to his feet, stalling ingenuously as he welcomed June to enjoy the shop.

"Come—please!" he murmured. "I will show the way!"

Progress, but rather tardy, June followed him across the sun-strewn a narrowway strewn by a braided carpet.

She passed the mantle on the curtain rail behind her—and found herself in a low-ceilinged room, furnished in Oriental fashion. And there, contemplating her were three figures.

Two of these persons were Europeans—a big, blond-haired man who was seated behind a low table, smoking a cigar, and a younger, dark-haired, slender girl, evidently his daughter. Their companions were native Arab, with a red turban.

"She has brought the locket, didn't she?" declared the bearded shopkeeper.

"—I don't understand!" began June.

With a swift movement the blond man caught at her wrist, twisting the locket from her fingers and snapping it open. A grain of salt-crystal pressed his face.

"Spicacious!" he said. "Hannasch wrote that you would carry the locket, and that we could depend on you. You are ready, I take it, for the work you have been chosen for?"

June tremed. She realized in a moment she had been mistaken for someone these people were expect-

ing someone not known to them by sight.

But who were these strangers in the dimly-lit room? All June's instincts warned her that here was a mystery—and invariably she determined to learn where their game was.

"Of course," she murmured coolly. "I'm ready—no question! But don't you think you'd better explain?"

The blond man nodded, regarding June searchingly.

"To start with, what is your name?" he demanded.

For a fraction of a second the girl detective hesitated; then she smiled.

"Oh, you can call me June," she replied lightly. "It's as good a name as any other!"

"June? That's her name?" The other man laughed. "Assessing."

"You're a cool card. My name's Ned, and this is my father, Carl Harpwood. This—the man with a long, bald head towards the doorway there standing motionless in the shadows—is Hassan, our little shopkeeper in the bazaar."

June's heart missed a beat.

"I have a princess," he declared.

"Her Highness the Princess Yasmin?" suggested Harpwood, a knowing smile curving his lips as he reached for the locket. "The Emir's only daughter—and the light of his eyes. She wishes you are to unlock like an ordinary girl into our world!"

"The story of his death will mean June's quick mind momentarily flashed. But now the incredible truth dawned on her.

If the reverse stroke of fate she had stumbled on a plot to kidnap the young princess! And owing to her chance possession of the locket, she herself had become involved in the plot—and was expected to play a leading part!

June clasped her hands. Her thoughts racing. At all costs the

well to the young princess must be averted. My proposition to fall in with the nefarious plans, she might like to consider a warning to the police, and avert the whole conspiracy.

"Perhaps you'd tell me exactly what I'm to do?" June murmured with assumed calmness, though her heart was pounding.

"Carl Orphan granted assent,—"I'm, show her the costume," he ordered.

The girl rose hesitantly and, pulling aside a curtain, drew from a closet a shimmering black and crimson silk, complete with headpiece and veil.

"It will be your task," said Carl Orphan, looking at June, "to persuade the princess to wear this cloak at the Feast of Enlightenment, which it is to be held in the city gardens to-morrow."

June's face was pale as she listened with the keen clarity of the transcendence yet cleverly-stimulated plot.

Like all girls of her age, the young princess loved pretty clothes—and dancing. She had expressed a wish to attend the brilliant Feast of Enlightenment, held once a year in the palace gardens at midnight—where dancing-girls and musicians from surrounding districts delighted the onlookers.

The King had granted his daughter permission to visit the gardens, but on a provision he had ordered that a special cloak should be designed for her to conceal her identity—and its appearance was to be kept secret from all except the king, the queen and the highest court officials.

But the order had been cleverly interpreted by the wretched Harcon, who was sneaking under his royal diadem from the palace.

Instead of procuring a search of a famous firm or English couturier in Stockholm, it had been diverted to old Mustafa's shop in the market-place—and from his stock of costume a cloak had been chosen that would make the princess conspicuous to her waiting entourage.

"And it will be your task, my dear daughter, to make sure that her waiting women this cloak—and no other," advised Carl Orphan. "You will visit the palace as a representative of the English firm, to adjust the princess on her attire. The chief will be watching—his eyes are everywhere—and he will not elude detection!"

"The Chief?" echoed June, her eyes wide with astonishment as the details of the sinister plot became more clear.

"Carl Orphan exchanged a swift glance with his daughter. The treacherous Harcon peered almost nervously over his shoulder.

"It is enough for you," said Carl, his voice suddenly stern, "that he is the Chief and his orders must be obeyed!"

"Tonight," added Mustafa with a twinkling smile, "the chief will visit her Highness at the Palace of St. Karin."

"Tomorrow!" rapped Carl, with a warning frown. "You will arrive your young friend to the palace, Harcon, taking precautions to alter your appearance so that you are not recognized. The rest, young lady, will be up to you!"

#### AT THE PALACE

There could be no drawing back! June's heart had quickly as she waited in that room within the shop of Mustafa, the silk merchant.

She had handed her the dress, most thrilling task in her splendid career—to assist, simultaneously the wretched assassin of a royal Eastern princess.

There was no chance of contacting her uncle—the police. Her companions made it plain that she was not to be allowed out of their sight, and that dangerous business was accomplished.

Harcon departed, and June

watched him pack the crimson cloak covertly into a suitcase. After a while Carl Orphan left the room, beckoning his daughter to follow. June took in her turn in the lock.

Escape through the narrow, barred window was impossible; and the thought did not even enter June's mind. The girl bravely acted bravely, a strong gleam in her eyes.

The alcove from which Irma had taken the crimson robe was a kind of wardrobe for old Mustafa's surplus wares. Swiftly June delved through the perambled shelves and drawers, finally bringing to light a blue velvet wrap with a dairy headpiece and veil to match.

Quickly passing it in several sheets of tissue-paper, she concealed it under the crimson cloak in the case—and only just in time.

A moment later Irma returned with her father, to announce that the car was waiting. Her glance quickened. June picked up the case and followed by the wretched old man, crossed to the luxurious car drawn up outside the door entrance of the shop.

She stepped into the car, and then it was pattering swiftly through the narrow, colorless streets towards the palace.

June leaned back, her thoughts racing. Her first, most urgent precaution was to avert the suspicion of her danger. Her second task was to expose the identity of the second behind the plot—the mysterious figure referred to as the "Chief."

At the gates of the palace the car was challenged by the guards. The driver, a stout man, demanded their business, and learning that they wished to see the prince he suspicious frown deepened. He informed them, surly, that her Highness could not receive visitors in the absence of her father, the King, who was away on State affairs.

But at that instant a benevolent, sympathetic figure, dressed in rich and expensive attire, joined the group.

"Who is the visitor, Sir?" he demanded. "The contents of the parcel hastily snatched, explaining the position. The grand vizier stroked his beard, saying June was waiting."

"Your business with her Highness, young lady?" he demanded.

Impulsively June explained that she had brought the cloak ordered by the princess. The other nodded gravely.

"Her Highness is expecting you!" he declared, waving aside the guard. "You, follow," he ordered, the wretched Harcon. "My usual position. The young lady will please follow me!"

Harcon handed June the suitcase.

"Remember," he whispered significantly, "even will be watching attentively to you—and see that you do not forget. So beware!"

The water beckoned June to follow him. Across a mosaic floor, between ornamental pillars and past vestibules, she followed the wretched old man accompanied her guide. With a grave smile he passed by a curtained doorway, to pull a silver cord.

Oh, quickly came a soft garden with a door, and June, in the young English lady with an eunuch, followed, please bring her to me!"

June stepped forward, clasping her suitcase.

In a lofty, small apartment, with windows opening on a charming garden, the Princess Yasmin awaited them. She was seated on a throne-like chair—was more vouchsafing spare than her personal attendant, a handsome, dandy of complexion, her smiling eyes revealed a content of high spirits and natural dignity.

With a quaint, friendly gesture she held out her hand to June.

"How do you do?" murmured softly. "You have brought with you the beautiful robe I am to wear to-morrow at the Feast of Enlightenment?"

June nodded, while the grand vizier smiled benevolently.

"You may speak freely to my

presence," he said, taking up his stand near the princess. "In the absence of my royal master, his Highness Yasmin is my nearest confidant."

June swallowed hard. If only she dared impart to her dramatic news there and then, in the presence of the friendly visitor, it could have been the chance of the girl of the post that inspired her!

But they were not alone. Two stout Muslim servants stood with drawn swords at either end of the long carpeted entrance to the doors. There might be other attendants in adjoining compartments, concealed by the swaying silver curtains. She remembered Harcon's warning of watching eyes and listening ears.

She dared not risk being overheard by the conspirators' spies!

"I have the robe here, your Highness," he declared, her fingers protruding stealthily as she bent to unlock the case.

"Pshaw—will you forgive?" exclaimed the princess gaily. "I do not stand on ceremony when I am on my feet. I shall try as grace and worthiness!"

She flashed a coyish smile at the grand vizier.

June smiled faintly as she opened the case. Her eyes depended on her attendant and discreetly to the first few minutes, her own transcendent safety—and the fate of the charming girl she had come to warn. She laid the crimson cloak for the princess' inspection.

"Oh, but it is beautiful!" exclaimed Yasmin delightedly. "This is the robe I am to wear to-morrow—"

Her gray eyes steady, June encountered the other's eager smile.

"You wish for my advice?" she asked.

"Of course!"

"Then, then I shall write down instructions for the correct way to wear the robe and headpiece, and you will study them carefully before setting out this evening. Now, will you let me please, and walk down the length of the robe to save its effect!"

June spoke in a crisp, professional tone that concealed her anxiety. Impulsively the young princess complied, slipping on the robe and headpiece, and then walking down the length of the small room.

The grand vizier watched her, nodding approvingly. The guards also were looking in the direction of the princess.

It was June's chance. Swiftly, unobtrusively, she scribbled on a slip of paper, resting it on the case. If she were seen it would be assumed she was writing the instructions she had mentioned. But what June wrote was a warning:

"For your own sake, Yasmin, wear to-morrow the blue robe and hood that you will find in the parcel. The crimson robe spells peril. I cannot explain here now—but I am your friend."

"Just!"

She slipped the note into the parcel in the case. A moment later the princess started gaily towards her.

"I shall see crimson robe suits me perfectly!" she exclaimed.

Yasmin wanted to continue wearing the cloak, but June impulsively insisted that it must be wrapped up to protect it from dust. Swiftly, while Yasmin was gaily chatting to the vizier, June made the substitution—proceeding, she passed containing the little velvet wrap with the secret note, while the crimson robe was shut securely in the case!

The princess placed the parcel on a table, and June was about to take her leave when there came a signaling interruption.

The curtain revealing one of the doors was torn aside, to admit the bearded captain of the palace guards.

"All!" exclaimed the grand vizier sharply. "What does this mean?"

"It means, sir," pointed the captain, "that you have received amnesty in that jail." She pointed accusingly at June—"Is a spy?"

### THE WRONG CLOAK

WHITE to the lips, June contemplated her adversary. She had been prepared for danger—but not from this source.

Now, when a shadow, she realized that she had the traitor of her accusing story. If she spoke against the pearl necklace the young princess, she would be met with a bullet—perhaps even arrested.

All her efforts to safeguard the young princess and to save all her treasures would have been in vain. "Maddy June denied the captain's accusation. The princess was immediately on her side.

"A spy? But that is too foolish. All," explained Yassin.

"I have reason for my accusation, Highness," declared the captain, eyeing June sternly. "The chauffeur who brought this girl to the palace has been recognized as a spy—she worked at the hotel and dismissed by your father, the Emir!"

The grand vizier, who had been standing quietly in the background, stepped forward.

"Was the accused confessed?" he demanded, turning to the captain.

"No, sir—he remains stubbornly silent." "Ah!" The vizier shrugged, smiling at June. "It is clear what has happened. This young girl has been secretly hired to act as chauffeur to drive to the palace, and the accused Haroun seized the opportunity to straggle himself into the building.

"Oh, Yassin!" exclaimed Yassin delightedly, turning to June.

June gave a little gasp of relief as she returned the other's smile. "She was more than grateful to the grand vizier for coming to her opportunity to her rescue. But for her she might have been turned out of the palace—might have lost the princess' trust—a line which it was vital that Yassin should be guided by her secret instructions.

"The captain, Ali, was obviously not convinced. He stood grimly to attention, eyeing June sternly as the princess drew her disdainfully away.

"You will be at the front this evening?" asked Yassin faintly. "And you will look out for me?"

"I shall look out for you!" promised June, taking the slender hand held out to her so impulsively.

"And remember," she added, "to wear only the cloak I have left on you."

"I will remember," promised Yassin. "And now—you will please accept this little gift to remind you of our so pleasant meeting?"

June caught in her breath at the sight of an exquisite little ivory comb, surmounted by a silver peacock. "The princess thrust it into her hands, waving aside her faltered, grateful protests.

"It will do for your gloves," she said laughingly. "When you use it you will think of me as your friend. For my staying—where?" she asked curiously.

June gave the princess the address of her hotel. Then she took her leave, unimpeded now by the guards as the treacherous Haroun, if he had been arrested by the guard. If all went well, by that evening the other conspirators would share his fate—and the princess' safety would be assured!

Consulting the waitress with the vital contents, the girl detective returned to the hotel where she was staying with Noel.

As was always her practice when called on in case of the Emir's absence, June sat down to make detailed notes for his benefit. She outlined the plot, and the steps she had taken in investigation. She gave full details of the principal players, mentioning their whereabouts behind Mustafa's shop, and the

mysterious place mentioned by Haroun—the Princess of El Kora.

Looking round for a safe place to put the notes, June's glance rested on the exquisite ivory comb on the table—the princess' gift. With a smile she raised the lid and slipped the papers inside.

When she glanced at her watch, it was turned five o'clock, and the entertainment in the gardens would commence at seven. There was no time to lose!

Consulting the waitress, June took out the parcel containing the red robe. Before carrying out her daring plan it would be necessary to contact the police and make all arrangements for to-night, when the watching commenced. Trade the slender figure in the crimson cloak, it would be June herself who would lead them into the trap!

Carrying the precious parcel, the girl detective left the hotel, crawling down a narrow side-street that led to the police headquarters.

At that moment a car pulled up silently at the curb beside her—and a hand reached out, seizing her by the arm. A stifled cry was torn from June's lips as she was jerked into the car.

"Oh, young lady," remarked Carl Geopson's hawk eyes, "you were trying to give us the slip!"



June gave a startled gasp, as she realized that the chief of the kidnapping gang had discovered her identity.

White-faced, June encountered his cold, threatening stare. Irma was by the next minute his.

"What happened?" demanded the man. "We heard that Haroun had been arrested and that you had led the police. Why did you not report back to the shop?"

June, realizing her desperate situation, explained that she had been hiding—would return to shop in case she was followed.

"You carried out our instructions," demanded Carl threateningly. "The princess does not suspect."

June shook her head.

"Her Highness suspects nothing," she replied truthfully. "She will wear the cloak I gave her—as the friend to-night—without fail!"

The man granted approval as he lit a cigar and leaned back.

June gave a sigh of relief. She expected to be taken back to the shop in the market-place, but instead the car was driven through a number of narrow streets, to emerge finally on the outskirts of the city, close to the famous Sarcophag Gardens.

It pulled up in front of a tall, gloomy house standing in a walled garden of its own, and June was led inside.

"You will forgive us if we take certain precautions, young lady," said Carl threateningly. "You are in possession of dangerous information—and you will not be permitted

to leave this house till the princess is safely in our hands."

She glanced out of the window at the falling daylight.

"It is all right, it will be time for us to start, Irma. See that the men receive their instructions. A distraction will be caused during which the princess will be seized and smuggled to the waiting car. The spy will be looked on as part of the general beauties, and a girl's stifled cry will arouse little attention. Impress on them that she will be wearing the crimson cloak!"

June's hands clenched tightly. So everything had been planned for Yassin's capture. Thank goodness she had substituted the cloak in time!

Irma and her father left the house shortly afterwards, locking the door of June's room. But the girl detective heard the grating of the key which a maid, who had already examined the possibility of escape from the window—and had noticed a balcony outside, from which masses of flowering creepers hung in trailing tendrils almost reaching the ground.

The conspirators had left her the parcel she had brought with her, supposing that it contained her own things. Her heart beating quickly, she knelt on the floor to unwrap it.



The fatal crimson robe that was to have ensnared the princess would be the means of trapping her captive!

June's eyes shone restlessly as she tore apart the wrappings; then a stifled cry escaped her lips.

For she was staring at the crimson cloak, but in the blue velvet wrap that she had smuggled to the princess with her warning message!

An evil grin flashed upon her face as she examined the parcel. An unsuspecting Yassin would wear the fatal crimson robe in the gardens that night!

### JUNE'S RECKLESS ROLE

MOMENTARILY stunned by the dreadful discovery, June stared at the contents of the parcel. Who could have made the treacherous exchange—and when? It must have been some time before she left the palace, for the parcel had not been out of her keeping for a lengthy time then.

Possibly it had been done during the confusion caused by the entry of the captain of the bodyguard with his startling news. An alarm must certainly have been sounded in the room—perhaps concealed by the silver curtains.

June pulled herself together. At last Yassin must be warned before it was too late!

Suddenly June went rigid. What

was that? It had sounded almost like somebody knocking on the pane outside the door.

Stretching the blue dress from the case, she moved to the window. In another moment she was on the floor, leaning and listening swiftly about the window frame.

Overhead she heard the creak of an opening door—the swift padding of footsteps across the room.

June crossed the hall on the creeps and crossed her hair loosely by the door. Goodness, the next instant she was on her feet, darting across the scented garden towards a low wall. Quickly she climbed over it and thrust her body safely among the trees bordering the spacious Saracens' Gardens.

Pausing only to slip on the blue velvet cloak she sped along the winding paths, to strike with the lightning, occasional things which had come to enjoy the festivities and to watch the dancing.

What she felt able to warn Yasmin in time!

Then suddenly she saw her— a lively, unmistakable young figure, hurrying along a path, and followed at a respectful distance by two of the select guards.

Yasmin had obediently donned the crimson robe—and it made a vivid splash of color against the dark background of the garden.

She was plainly out for enjoyment, untroubled of any lurking peril.

She paused to watch some dancing-girls—graceful figures, moving to the rhythmic wail of pipes and the clashing cymbals.

June hurried towards her, dreading every minute to hear a stifled cry, a swift scuffle in the shadows, a faint "ah-hai!"

"Yasmin!"

The young princess heard her. She turned quickly, reading a slender hand instinctively to her veil.

"Who is it, Highness? Yasmin—a name I never see," June gasped.

"There is danger—"

"But—what can that? Laughing broadly, the young princess turned to look back, calling to one of her charming attendants for assistance. You have so little time with me—"

"I'm not joking, Yasmin," declared June, stepping with a sudden bound towards the shadowy building. "Please give me your cloak—the crimson robe—and take mine!"

June's words, whose tone and earnestness impressed the young princess. Flushing, reluctant, she allowed the girl detective to remove the crimson cloak from her shoulders and substitute the blue. She even, as the exchange was made, June heard the pattering footsteps of the anxious attendants.

She dared not wait to explain. If the guards recognized her as the girl who had vanished with the concealed Haroun, they would have to the natural conclusion that she was engaged in some plot against the young princess. And the ensuing investigation might attract the lurking enemy to the spot—and give them an opportunity to attack!

"Yasmin, there's danger!" she whispered urgently. "Come so quick to the palace with the guard, and tell me everything! But please—please don't leave your escort for a moment!"

Breaking away from the bewildered girl, June darted into the shadow of the bushes—pausing only long enough to catch the princess overlooked by the faithful escort.

June's purpose was now clear. If the escort had been attracted to the spot, for a moment must be lost in detecting the situation!

Whispering the crimson cloak round her, she hurried boldly along a winding path, in the opposite direction from that taken by the princess and her escort.

Now and again she paused to glance over her shoulder, her heart beating rather quickly as she trusted she could hear stealthy footsteps among the bushes. She

felt almost certain that she was being followed.

June's eyes shone with mingled triumph and anxiety. She had succeeded in hoodwinking the enemy—in leading them away from their real quarry. But her own path had become untraced. Her original plan to contact the police had been frustrated.

Her one hope lay in her own nimble wit and agility. If she could dodge the enemy's search, she had a very open part of the program, she might yet be able to warn the police and leave the conspirators untraced.

In a sudden flash she was crouching closer. June started to run, barred a hand—and ran full-tilt into a bulky, bearded figure.

She heard a triumphant shout. A choking cry escaped her lips as she was seized in powerful arms and something dark and muffled was being over her head.

What she had taken to be the hands of the enemy!

### THE SILVER PEACOCK

HELPLESSLY June was accosted out of a cove, following a night-mare fantasy that seemed to have faded for hours.

After her first involuntary cry for help, and her instinctive, desperate struggle, she was conscious, had recognized the failure of trying to resist.

Before her masters took their course—and keep the enemy guessing! The longer time that elapsed before they discovered their mistake, the greater accident would be their confusion. If then the mistake would be solely due to the palace, and it would be too late for them to suspect Yasmin!

June refused to think of her own peril—though she had ample proof of the ruthless nature of the enemy into whose hands she had fallen.

She was hustled forward now by Carl Gardner and his daughter. The nothing scar was removed from her neck, though her face was still shadowed by the hood of the crimson cloak.

She found herself in a little, vaulted apartment, that had the appearance of a terrace, but the stone walls were hung with silken tapestries, and the floor was richly carpeted in an ornate, Eastern fashion.

A lamp, suspended by a silver chain from the roof, threw a subdued light on the baroque scene.

"We've got her, Chief! Do you wish to question her now?"

It was Carl Gardner who spoke. And suddenly June found herself confronted by a tall figure dressed in luscious Eastern robes. He held his hand over his face so that his features were concealed.

June clenched her hands as she faced him. So this was the mysterious chief—Yasmin's anti-escort!

Suddenly he gave a harsh cry.

"You're kidding, you fool!" he said, his voice cold and sharp as steel. "You're blind!" This girl is not her Highness!

"But—but—I don't understand what you mean," she stammered, as the hood was scooped back from June's face.

There came a furious exclamation from the bulky conspirator—a muffled cry from his daughter.

"It's that girl, June! Give her, her voice shaking. "She's tricked us, after all!"

June stood there blankly.

And there's nothing we can do about it!" she declared, with a resolve that she was far from feeling.

"The princess is safe, and when my features are recovered, my uncle will have the town surrounded by men!"

"Who—who are you?" snarled Eric.

The figure in which was staring at her unconsciously, his dark eyes narrowed.

"I thought the girl's face seemed familiar," when she visited the palace, he said coldly, "and now

I am certain. She is June Carter, the assistant of the British officer, Lord Haroun, at present staying in Saracens'!"

June's eyes started exclamation into Carl Gardner.

"What shall we do with her, Chief? This girl is dangerous!"

"She has chosen to cross my path," interrupted the other coldly. "and for that, she may choose her life!"

June's blood ran cold, but pitifully she forced herself to meet his stare.

"You haven't carry out your threat," she challenged.

"A thin smile curved the officer's lips.

"In this bedroom, outside the city boundaries, there is no fear of a search," he said harshly. "and your eyes would not be heard! But I am prepared to deal with you presently—to allow you to return to your friends—"

—on one condition.

"—do you wish to?" croaked June, wary of a trick.

"Then you write to the princess," came the cold reply. "I will see that your note is safely delivered. You will write to her as a friend—asking her to meet you secretly in the courtyard at the Garden of El Kora, a short three days hence."

A figure refused to see June's eyes, but hastily she checked her lips and her hand, unheeded by her plot, flashed a glimmer of desperate hope!

She lowered her eyes, her lips tightened.

"If—I refuse?" she asked, playing for time while her reckless palm gradually took shape.

"If you refuse, came the slow, cautious reply, "we shall deal with the princess in some other way—and you will meet with the fate that is deserved by a spy!"

June was a little shakier, a look of her condition showed in her eyes.

"I'll—I'll write—as you say!" she whispered unhesitatingly.

A triumphant smile curved the officer's lips as he motioned papers to be brought pen and paper. The girl complied, passing them on a low table.

Her hand trembling, June wrote her letter, while the others looked on.

"Your Highness," she wrote, "I am in great distress and wish to see you. I cannot explain in this letter, but I long of you, in the name of the Friendship you promise to meet the so-much-needed marriage at the Garden of El Kora, on the outskirts of the city—"

"You will give the time," interrupted the Chief, "and wish her to write more, apart from the chauffeur of her car. You will beg her, her full name, not to hesitate a second to return about this morning—and you will add some personal message to disarm her suspicion. Write!"

June obeyed, her face very pale, she hesitated for a moment over the last message, but finally, with apparent conviction, she added:

"For my sake, Yasmin, do not hesitate to follow these instructions. Through the silver peacock you see, and word that this letter is written by your friend,

"June."

"The Silver Peacock" repeated from satisfaction.

A little he to her Highness, bearing no message," said June simply. "She will be able to deliver it with the handwriting on the letter."

The Chief nodded, evidently satisfied as he scrutinized the letter closely.

"See that this is safely delivered to the palace," he said, handing the letter to Carl Gardner. "This young woman will remain here until her message—the princess arrives."

June was hustled into another room—a small, simple apartment, with a barred window, and containing only a few rough chairs and a couch.

"You should feel honored to sleep in a room prepared for a princess!"

(Please turn to the back page.)

## THE PRINCESS JUNE PROTECTED

(Continued from page 212.)

remarked June, with a cynical smile. "Possibly, your spreading letter should bring me happiness into the world."

"And with a mocking laugh she left June on her own, closing and locking the chamber door.

"Why little seem came to the girl despite the fact that she had risked everything on a desperate little plan that might come to nothing. If that was fate—"

"June was awakened at length from a dream-land slumber to find the door flung open into her well-lit room.

Irina brought her some breakfast.

"Hello!" she said. "You are so accustomed to the idea of your admirer's admiring—so welcome your dear princess!"

Half an hour later June was bundled into a car, a short drive taking her to a hotel for her calling card help. Irina and her father sat on either side of her, and the sinister figure of the chief, still wearing his mask, crouched in beside the driver. A search party, made up of the grounds of the terrace brought them up the picturesque grade on the road to Sarakani.

"As this time in the morning it was decided to take this drive in the car," said June, the three men crowded themselves in the grotto, keeping watch on the road.

June walked in—said something—said something else—Yasmin looked indignantly and her nose, without suspecting its hidden warning. She—"

Her heart missed a beat as she saw the man forward. A suspended car had appeared round a bend on the level road and was slowly approaching the grotto. It pulled up—stopped—and a clatter, a rattling of wheels from June's line as she saw it, filled the air in the grotto, with only the cautious observation seated impressively at the wheel. Yasmin had some indignantly in answer to her remark—"I run suspiciously into the hands of my enemies!"

With sudden desperation June acted. Muzzling herself from

Irina's hold, she saw the seal from her mouth slip loose out of the car.

"Yasmin—look out!" she cried loudly. "I have a plan!"

The next moment she was seized by Carl Olafsson, while the driver of the car covered the princess' chauffeur. The chief stepped from the spot, a mocking smile on his thin face as he watched the princess' car slip loose from the drive.

"Your Highness, he began suavely, "resistance is useless. You will consider yourself my prisoner—"

The words landed never in a moment about, and a cry of alarm went from June's lips. The wild figure rose suddenly to his feet, never in a moment. At the same instant two sharply hurled blades came from the back, striking where they had been crouching, attacking themselves at the seventh—"

"Hold him, Ali!" rapped a deep, guttural voice. "It is—"

"Watch!" cried June incredulously, as the tall figure in the car snatched off the velvet hood—revealing a face Yasmin revealed as Nook's assassin.

Before Carl Olafsson could drive his revolver, he was seen sprawling into the road with a crashing noise to the joy of the bodyguards who had, when all struggled with the sinister chief.

June crouched in her nook, looking up into his pale, mirrored face.

"Thank heaven you're safe my dear princess," said Nook hastily. "I was almost afraid you would get away. You failed to return to the hotel by the road, I made inquiries in vain. It was only when a phone call came from the palace early this morning, that Mr. Robinson's presence, because that began to realize the truth!"

June's eyes flashed.

"Then Yasmin understood my message—after all!" she whispered, her eyes shining as she looked at Nook's countenance, because the silver forehead-grooving that it must have left, suggested some of importance?

Nook declared a glimpse of admiration in his eyes as he said:

"I found your sister, June, and the mission of the Princess of El Karri, I immediately made arrangements

with the Emir, who had returned to the palace, to borrow the royal car with two members of the princess' household—"

"And you arrived in the nick of time, Nook," breathed June. "But that dreadful man—the princess' enemy—who is he?"

"Regarding the silver Carl and his cunning daughter, Nook strove across the hot desert figure of the chief crouching in the iron grip of the level Ali.

With a jerk, he stretched off the man's mask—and a cry of amazement escaped June's lips.

"For the sinister 'Chief' was some other than Yassin—the imprisoned grand vizier!"

SULEIMAN's disaster plot was revealed for real meaning. When June and Nook visited the palace, to be warmly received by Prince Yassin and the Emir himself.

The grand vizier had made a full confession of his cunning conspiracy—a plan to kidnap the princess as a hostage to force the Emir's abdication in favour of a distant nephew, with whom Yassin was secretly in league.

The die, however, had worked against the scheme, as that first plot in the conspiracy would never have been discovered—but for the unexpected intervention of the girl princess.

The girl took who had been sent to play the part of a decoy had lost her nerve and thrown away the silver basket—the basket that had brought June into her most amazing adventure.

"And that," stated Prince Yassin smiling, as she looked her sister hand through June's arm, was mere child's play for Sarakani and for me all!—she turned an imperious but roguish glance towards the faithful captain of the guard, who stood stiffly as attention—"in future, Ar, when you come to the palace, do not trust in the guard who has her all respect—for she will come to my beloved guest!"

(End of this week's story.)

THE GOD THEY WOULDN'T GIVE UP THAT IS THE GOD OF SAINT FRISBY'S ATTRACTING LONG CRABBLE STAY. ORDER YOUR GILTS CRYSTAL NOW.

## THE ELUSIVE GREY GHOST

(Continued from page 219.)

while he, for the Head couldn't occur from the shadow."

"But you said Crombie lost the boy," said Bugh.

Penelope checked.

"Leave that to me," she said. "I'll fix it somehow."

"But—" began Bugh, but Penelope would not let him finish.

"No argument, Bugh," she said. "You have to get out the head. What for me in the case where we found the letter-out. If all goes well, I'll take you in coming back here. If I don't turn up, let him, then you must go off on your own, O.K."

She flushed there an eager smile. For a second to take the head been fixed, then Bugh gave a deep nod. "I'll take you in coming back here. If I don't turn up, let him, then you must go off on your own, O.K."

She flushed there an eager smile. For a second to take the head been fixed, then Bugh gave a deep nod. "I'll take you in coming back here. If I don't turn up, let him, then you must go off on your own, O.K."

"Well, but, see my work?" he said. Penelope checked for a moment to return, and spoke with real feeling.

"Oh, Mr. Crombie, I—I think it was the most wonderful thing I've ever seen—travelling!"

He grinned unrepentantly.

"Well, you see, I—see, you're saying—travelling, but I don't see it so in unadvised. That's what I'm worried for. I'm going to get the Head and make certain—now!"

He made to stride off. Aloudly Penelope touched his arm.

"You've—you've got the key safe, Mr. Crombie? I mean," she asked anxiously, as he turned and looked at her. It would be worth it just now, and she wouldn't let those awful boys out."

"What a little see you are!" he said lightly. "I've got the key in the lock. They can't turn it from inside, can they?"

"And you're not. How silly of me to worry."

But Penelope's heart had given a jump for her. No need now to think of some way to get the key from Crombie, she had to get the key to slip down into the valley and rescue it from the lock!

"I—I—think I'll see now, Mr. Crombie," she murmured. "I don't think I'll see those awful boys brought out. But that's just what you're allowing me to watch you at work!"

And with a denture smile, she turned, put her back to her pocket, and looked calmly at Crombie, who stared after her, stretched and hurried at the opposite direction.

Once he was out of sight, Penelope waited and ran hard—through the belt of trees, hither-yither down the slope.

She reached, breathlessly, the head of the valley. There she stooped a little, listening. There was no sound from the shelter.

She crept towards it.

Although Mr. Gilbert Widdowson was a thin prisoner inside, nevertheless she was conscious of a quivering outline of a man, breathing as if afraid the Head was a daring thief to do!

"But there's no risk, now!" she murmured. "He'll never move."

Quickly she moved along the edge of the shelter.

There was the big key, slender to the lock. Very carefully she worked it out, till it was in her hand.

"Now to slip the lock! Now for the key safe!" Now to investigate what would be found on the wrinkle line.

"Most interesting, Mrs. Cartwright," she murmured.

She whispered, as she heard the colour leaving her cheeks.

For there, some distance from the shelter, watching her intently, was the gaunt figure of her man who thought to be a prisoner inside.

Mr. Gilbert Widdowson! The Head himself!

How had the Head escaped? And how will Penelope be able to prevent him from receding the truth about her self? See next Friday's exciting installment.