



THE LAND OF PRETTY-SOON.

I'm tired and sick of hurrying. Of rushing here and there. To that far land I'd fain take wing...

GAMBLING WITH FATE By WILLIAM WALLACE COOK

CHAPTER IV.—CONTINUED.

"You'll need the marshal or the undertaker," returned Darrel. His voice was of velvet but it cut like steel.

"That shot goes as it lays," returned the incredulous marshal, "but it won't help you."

"I fired that one shot a good many miles from Sandy Bar," said Darrel.

"Stick to it," grinned the marshal; "it's your only hope and it's slim enough."

"When will you hold the inquest?" "To-morrow morning. And here's something you can spread your blankets and go to sleep on, my friend."

"Carry another gun beside this 'un?" asked the officer, his hand on the latch.

"Well, the rest of your belongings you can keep, for the present. It will be morning before I come for you again."

He went out and Darrel heard him rattling the padlock that secured the door. For some time afterward there were sounds suggesting that sentries were being posted about the building, and after that silence.

Darrel's thoughts were not of the brightest and he cleared his mind of them and surveyed the interior of his prison. Every opening that had once served as a window was covered with stout planking, the chinks between the logs were solidly filled and the place was as tight as a drum.

Even had there been no guards on the outside escape from the jail would have baffled the most resourceful prisoner. Darrel yawned, laid the stump of his cigar on the candlestick and crossed the creaking boards of the floor to a cot on the opposite side of the room.

It had been his intention to lie down, but his fastidiousness rebelled at the blankets on the cot. The dirt and the vermin disgusted him and he returned to his chair.

Drowsily he leaned back and through his half closed eyes he saw the shadows of the room taking vague shapes. Stealthily he glided to and fro, now forward, now back and now surrounding him, their gaunt hands clasped and their dance a dance of death.

Out of the spectral ranks came finally the soothsayer who had crossed his path at the Half Way house—a hideous hag who tossed her skeleton-like arms, mocked him with jeering face and pointed towards him a bony and threatening finger.

"You may be honest, but you can never be honorable!" The words pierced him like pointed javelins and he writhed under the smart. Rousing, he brushed a hand across his eyes, laughed at the folly into which the perilous hour had beguiled him and dropped back to be a further prey of his disagreeable reveries.

The queen of hearts tripped through the semi-gloom, but between her smiling countenance and his came the dead face of Sturgis; and when this faded it left the gruesome hand of Death raising five cards for his inspection—three knaves and two sevens, dripping red.

With a sudden movement he threw himself forward in the chair and raised his clenched fist. There was nothing before him, however, except the dull gleam of the candle.

What was wrong with his nerves? This mood was foreign to him and he could not understand it.

Springing up, he tramped the creaking boards for an hour. When he again seated himself he bowed his head on the table in his folded arms. The restless stirring of the guards outside died away in his ears; he slept, and the candle burned to its socket, sputtered and went out.

Some time later—just how long he had no means of knowing—a peculiar sound aroused him. He started up, his eyes peering into the blank darkness.

He still heard the guards; but the noise that had awakened him came from within, not from without.

A labored breath, carefully stifled; the sweep of a hand over a rough surface; a creaking lift of one of the floor boards; a fall of wood, muffled with painstaking care. Then silence again, broken only by the tramp of the armed sentries.

In the opaque gloom, Darrel strained his ears to follow the sounds and couple each with a corresponding movement that must have caused it. He readily gathered that entrance was

being forced into his prison chamber from beneath. Who could it be?

"Darrel!" came a hissing whisper. "Yes?" he returned, in undertone.

"If you would save your life you have not a moment to spare. The marshal has been lured away and made a prisoner and there is nothing to prevent Sturgis' friends from wreaking their vengeance on you. There are a lot of them at Hawkbill's now, getting ready. The guards posted by the marshal are in sympathy with them and—listen!"

The voice broke off, tremulous with excitement. "Do you hear anything? They may be coming this minute."

"No," returned Darrel, after a moment. "It's the watchers outside that you hear. In the first place, who are you?"

"The man whose life and honor you saved at Hawkbill's."

"How have you been able to come to me?" "Through one of the drifts from the creek bank. It was only necessary to dig out a few feet of earth in order to come up directly under this building—but it has taken hours and every hour seemed an age. I was afraid I should not be in time. God knows I could not abandon you after what you have done for me."

"Sturgis' friends would take the law into their own hands, would they?" "They intend to lynch you."

"For a crime I did not commit," supplemented Darrel.

"The doctor found the bullet that killed Sturgis and it's a 45. The revolver taken from you by the marshal was also a 45 and one shell was empty."

"Who is the doctor?" "An eastern man and one of the sanest and best men in the camp. He has implored the mob to let the law take its course, but no one would listen to him. But there's no time for talk. You can drop into the tunnel through this hole I have dug, reach the creek and get to a point below the camp under shelter of the bank. My horse is there, saddled, bridled and ready. Come, you must hurry!"

There was not a little feeling manifested in Darrel's voice as he answered: "You have done a good deal for me and I appreciate it. You do not think I killed Sturgis?"

"I haven't stopped to think very much about it. It would be no more than a natural supposition after that row in Hawkbill's—that row on my account."

"Well, I'm innocent of murder, but circumstances have got a grip on me and I shall avail myself of the means of escape which you offer. I can't take your horse, though. That would throw suspicion on you."

"How will you get out of the country?" "With any kind of a start you can trust me for that. Go back through the tunnel, take your horse away and get to your lodging place. I am much obliged to you for the interest you have taken in me. Some time I shall hope to repay you."

"I am already repaid. But I think you should take the horse."

"No." "You won't be long in coming?" "Not long."

"Good-by, then, and good luck to you. Your word that you did not kill Sturgis is enough for me."

"Thank you. Good-by and don't forget that promise."

"God knows I have cause to remember it," came back in a husky whisper. Darrel listened while the young man lowered himself into the tunnel and retreated beyond earshot in the direction of the creek. Then, taking a note book and pencil from his pocket, Darrel wrote a few lines, his pencil point groping over the small page in the dark.

"Mr. Darrel regrets that circumstances over which he has no control compel him to postpone indefinitely his meeting with Mr. Murgatroyd. He begs to assure Mr. Murgatroyd, however, that the meeting is simply deferred and not abandoned."

Tearing out the sheet on which he had pencilled this message, Darrel left it on the table.

CHAPTER VI. DARREL'S FLIGHT.

Old Ab Gryce, under foreman at the War Eagle mine, pulled in his half-broken bronco team at the rear of the Half Way house and rolled off the seat of his mountain wagon.

"When ye take 'em off the pole, Jimmie," said he to the hostler, "don't fool none with the harness. Them bronks kin kick more an' faster than any other critters in these parts."

Jimmie grunted and measured Gryce sharply with his eyes.

"Now," continued the old man, "don't turn your lamps on me like that. Mebbe I did look through the bottoms of a few glasses before shakin' 'out of Anacondy, but it wasn't enough to affect my judgement. Dynamite, thar on the off side, is the original inventor of the bed-post buck, an' he kin be plum scand'rous when he takes a notion. As fer Terror, the nigh hoss, many a time he's kinked himself into a bow knot an' laid out three punchers in the untanglin'." So ef ye—

Gryce was interrupted by one of the cattlemen grouped in front of the hotel, waiting for the Chinese cook to sound the dinner gong. The under foreman was well known and, in spite of his many infirmities, universally liked. By way of greeting, the cattlemen pleasantly drew a revolver and cut the air with a bullet not half a dozen feet from the old man's ear.

With a zipping hiss the missile fanned away into the void directly over the rear of the mountain wagon, so close to a pile of cases roped to the wagon box that Gryce gave vent to a terrified yell.

"Howdy Uncle Ab?" called the cat-

leman. "The sting of a bullet has a mighty queer effect on ye, seems like."

"You, Ben," shouted Gryce, "you stop that. If the pint of that gun had been an inch lower the hull passel of us would have been wiped off the map."

The old man drew a sieve across his forehead. "Glory, man! I'm freighin' 500 o' high explosive, along with caps an' fuse, ter the War Eagle."

The laughing crowd was instantly sobered.

"If the bronks are all you say, Uncle Ab," said Jimmie, "they're altogether too frisky for a load like that."

"I'm less afraid o' the team than I am of some playful fool like Ben, thar. Mind what I say about the critters, Jimmie," and Gryce reached the front of the tavern just as the gong sounded. "Howdy, boys?" he asked, taking in his friends with a comprehensive look. "How's things at Sandy Bar, Cliff?"

"Couldn't be worse," answered Cliff, gloomily. "Jack Sturgis got his ticket across the divide last night."

"Buy it himself?" "Not much! A gambler from Frisco handed it out; a 45, and poor old Jack never knew what struck him."

Gryce swore softly. "Took care o' the gambler, didn't ye?" he asked, significantly.

"Intended to, much as could be," answered Cliff, "but while we were taking care of the marshal so he couldn't interfere and making our plans the gambler got away."

"Did he have help?" "It's the general verdict that he did it himself; pulled up a board in the floor and dug down to a drift that led out on the creek bank."

"That's plagued rough," muttered Gryce. "You'll get 'im, though, won't ye?"

"If we can. Several parties are out combing the hills and I'm expecting some fellows this way before long. Murgatroyd has offered \$1,000 to the man who brings Darrel in."

"Darrel! I've heard o' him, but he's somethin' of a stranger on this part o' the range. Come in to the bar, Cliff, an' we'll crook elbows to your success in baggin' Darrel. Can't eat, anyhow, till I put an edge on my appetite. Any the rest o' you care ter jine us?"

The invitation was eagerly accepted. During the meal that followed Cliff aired the whole matter connected with the killing of Sturgis in detail.

His recital was punctuated with angry comments on the part of the listeners. Sturgis was known to be a gambler and a hard citizen, but the manner of his taking off, together with the escape of Darrel, appealed strongly to the latent sympathies of the rough and ready frontiersmen.

[To Be Continued.]

AFTER LONG ILLNESS.

Familiar Objects Take on an Unrecognizable Guise to the Recovering Eye.

"The plates on the table looked strange to me, though I have used them 40 years. The pictures on the walls seemed to hang in new places. The very carpets had a novel coloring, as if they had been at some magic cleansing and dyeing establishment."

Dear Aunt Mary was telling her favorite niece her "queer" feelings after long illness. She was unconscious that she was repeating the story that has been told by convalescents from the time of Hazlitt till the present day, says Youth's Companion.

Familiar things take on a disguise to the recovering eye. Even the face of a friend bears a new depth of meaning. "Did she use to look at me with such intensity of gaze? Did she clasp my hand so warmly? Was her voice so gentle and her word so full of hope and courage before I was sick?"

To the human creature just returning to life after lingering for days at the gates of death, the whole world assumes a new aspect. Even inanimate objects seem to say: "You came near leaving us forever. No wonder you forget our shapes and colors!" And the warm, conscious, loving friend bends over us and with eye and voice says: "See, I love you more truly than before I knew how I should miss you!" So after long sickness, as after a hard, cold winter, the world breaks into a new and blossoming spring.

AN AUDIENCE OF ONE.

Near-Sighted Clergyman Preached to His Driver Whose Time Was Going on.

The chapel of a northern fishing village used to depend for its services on the occasional help of the clergy of the nearest town. One very wet Sunday, relates London Tit-Bits, the clergyman who volunteered to do the duty drove over in a fly.

Tolling the chapel bell himself, he announced his arrival to the natives, but for a long time no one appeared.

At last one solitary person came in and took a seat at the very back of the chapel. The clergyman then found his surplice and conducted the service. That ended, he remarked to his audience of one that perhaps a sermon was superfluous.

"Oh, please go on, sir," was the flattering reply, and the clergyman mounted the pulpit.

In the course of his address he expressed the fear that he was wearying his hearer and was gratified to be told that he could not be too long. The sermon, consequently, was lengthened out to some 40 minutes.

When it was ended the preacher expressed a desire to shake hands with a gentleman who had listened to him with such evident appreciation. Imagine his consternation at discovering on a nearer view (for he was somewhat short-sighted) that he had been preaching to the driver of his fly, who was all the while charging overtime!

SAFE PLACE TO DRAW IT.

College Professor's Sword Was Drawn Without Danger to Anyone's Cuticle.

Prof. E. G. Dexter, of the University of Illinois, whose interesting investigations have proved football to be a harmless game, is popular on account of his geniality, says the New York Tribune.

After a certain football victory Prof. Dexter entertained one night a group of students at his residence.

A magnificent sword hung over the fireplace of the library, and during a space of silence Prof. Dexter took down this sword and brandished it impressively.

"Never will I forget," he exclaimed, "the day I drew this blade for the first time." "Where did you draw it, sir?" a freshman asked, respectfully.

"At a raffie," said Prof. Dexter.

Economy in Threshing.

The fact that there is more grain put into the straw stack than there should be, is something that merits the earnest attention of the up-to-date farmer.

It is not possible to save the wastage of grain and time which attends the use of old-style machinery! This is something that should command the careful consideration of every farmer.

In line with the thought we call attention to the ad. of Nichols & Shepard Company, Battle Creek, Michigan, found in another column.

It would seem that the time has come when this great channel of wastage on the farm should be eliminated.

And, as if the army of kissing relatives were not enough, Russian officialdom had to put up its lips at the railway station for General Kouropatkin to salute. The idea gives us a new light on the meaning of General Sherman's imperishable remark about the hellishness of war.—N. Y. Press.

Washing Machine Only \$2.70.

Save your wife's health and daughter's beauty by using our great Star Washing Machine—Worth its weight in gold. Price only \$2.70; with wringer \$3.00. John A. Salzer Seed Co., La Crosse, Wis.

Mr. Plane (who is fond of dogs)—"Miss Waite, don't you think you ought to have an intelligent animal about the house that would protect you and—" Miss Waite—"Oh, Mr. Plane! This is so sudden."—Philadelphia Press.

A scientist claims that he has discovered that fish can talk. Good gracious, what lies they might contradict!—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Putnam Fadesless Dyes do not stain the hands or spot the kettle, except green and purple.

It is not helps, but obstacles; not facilities, but difficulties, that make men.—Matthews.

King Edward studied medicine and surgery a good deal while prince of Wales.

BLOOD POISON

Bone Pains, Itching, Scabby Skin Diseases, Swellings, Carbuncles, Scrofula

Permanently cured by taking Botanic Blood Balm. It destroys the active poison in the blood. If you have aches and pains in bones, back and joints, itching scabby skin, blood feet hot or thin; Swollen Glands, Blisters and Bumps on the Skin, Mucus Patches in Mouth, Sore Throat, or offensive eruptions; Copper-colored spots or rash on skin, all run-down, or nervous; Ulcers on any part of the body. Hair or Eyebrows falling out, Carbuncles or Boils, take

Botanic Blood Balm, guaranteed to cure even the worst and most desperate cases where doctors, patent medicines, and hot springs fail. Heals all sores, stops all aches and pains, reduces all swellings, makes blood pure and rich, completely changing the entire body into a clean, healthy condition. B. B. B. has cured to stay cured thousands of cases of Blood Poison ever reaching the west coast.

Old Rheumatism, Catarrh, Eczema are caused by an awful poisonous condition of the blood. B. B. B. cures Catarrh, stops Hacking and Spitting; Rheumatism, with Aches and Pains; heals all Scabs, Scales, Eruptions, Watery Blisters, with Itching and Scratching of Eczema, by giving a pure, healthy blood supply to affected parts.

Cancer Cured Botanic Blood Balm Cures Cancers of all Kinds, Suppurating Swellings, Eating Sores, Tumors, ugly Ulcers. It kills the Cancer Poison and heals the Sores or Ulcers Cancer perfectly. If you have a present Pimple, Wart, Swelling, Shooting, Stinging Pains, take Botanic Blood Balm and they will disappear before they develop into Cancer. Many apparently hopeless cases of Cancer cured by taking Botanic Blood Balm.

OUR GUARANTEE—Take a large bottle of Botanic Blood Balm (B. B. B.) as directed on label, and when the right quantity is taken a cure is certain, sure and lasting. If not cured your money will promptly be refunded without argument.

Botanic Blood Balm (B. B. B.) is Pleasant and safe to take. Thoroughly tested for 30 years. Composed of Pure Botanic Ingredients. Strengthens Weak Nerves and Stomach; cures Dyspepsia. Sold by all Druggists, \$1. Per Large Bottle, with complete directions for home cure. Sample sent Free by writing Blood Balm Co., Atlanta, Ga. Describe your trouble, and special free medical advice. Write your case, will be sent in sealed letter.

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A reputation extending over sixty-six years and our guarantee are back of every garment bearing the SIGN OF THE FISH. There are many imitations. Be sure of the name TOWER on the buttons. ON SALE EVERYWHERE. A. J. TOWER CO. BOSTON, MASS., U. S. A. TOWER CANADIAN CO. LIMITED, TORONTO, CAN.

CASTORIA For Infants and Children Bears The Signature Of Chas. H. Fletcher. Use For Over Thirty Years The Kind You Have Always Bought

Save Your Thresh Bill The average old-style small cylinder threshing wastes enough grain and time to pay your thresh bill. Why not save the grain ordinarily put into the straw stack? Why not save the time which the ordinary threshing outfit wastes for you? This can be done by employing the RED RIVER SPECIAL. It has the Big Cylinder, with lots of concave and open grate surface. It does most of the separating right at the cylinder. Besides these, it has all the separating capacity of other machines. It runs right along, saving your grain and saving time, regardless of conditions. There have come improvements in threshing machinery the same as in everything else. NICHOLS & SHEPARD CO., Battle Creek, Mich. 50 YEARS IN BUSINESS. BRANCH HOUSES AND AGENTS EVERYWHERE.

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