

The Real Man

By FRANCIS LYNDE

Illustrations by IRWIN MYERS

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CHAPTER XXIV—Continued.

“Yes—like fits I will!” retorted the mine owner. “I told you once, John, that I was in this thing to a finish, and I meant it. Go on giving your orders.”

“Very well; you’ve had your warning. The next thing is the auto. I want to catch Judge Warner before he goes to bed. I’ll telephone while you’re getting a car.”

Starbuck had no farther to go than to the garage where he had put up his car, and when he got it and drove to the Kinzie building, Smith came out of the shadow of the entrance to mount beside him.

“Drive around to the garage again and let me try another phone,” was the low-spoken request. “My wire isn’t working.”

The short run was quickly made, and Smith went to the garage office. A moment later a two-hundred-pound policeman stroled up to put a huge foot on the running board of the waiting auto. Starbuck greeted him as a friend.

“Hello, Mac. How’s tricks with you tonight?”

“Th’ tricks are even, an’ I’m tryin’ to take th’ odd wan,” said the big Irishman. “Tis a man named Smith I’m lookin’ for, Mister Starbuck—J. Montague Smith; th’ f-in-nashal boss av th’ big ditch compny. Have ye seen ‘um?”

Starbuck, looking over the policeman’s shoulder, could see Smith at the telephone in the garage office. Another man might have lost his head, but the ex-copwoucher was of the chosen few whose wits sharpened handily in an emergency.

“He hangs out at the Hophra House a good part of the time in the evenings,” he replied coolly. “Hop in and I’ll drive you around.”

Three minutes later the threatening danger was a danger pushed a little way into the future, and Starbuck was back at the garage curb waiting for Smith to come out. Through the window he saw Smith placing the receiver on its hook, and a moment afterward he was opening the car door for his passenger.

“Did you make out to raise the judge?” he inquired, as Smith climbed in.

“Yes. He will meet me at his chambers in the courthouse as soon as he can drive down from his house.”

“What are you hoping to do, John? Judge Warner is only a circuit judge; he can’t set an order of the United States court aside, can he?”

“No; but there is one thing that he can do. You may remember that I had a talk with him this morning at his house. I was trying then to cover all the chances, among them the possibility that Stanton would jump in with a gang of armed thugs at the last minute. We are going to assume that this is what has been done.”

Starbuck set the car in motion and sent it spinning out of the side street,

“You seem to have made a ten-strike with Judge Warner,” the ex-copwoucher remarked, replacing the flash-lamp in its seat pocket.

“Judge Warner is a man in every inch of him; but there is something behind this night’s work that I don’t quite understand,” was the quick reply. “I had hardly begun to state the case when the judge interrupted me. I know,” he said, “I have been waiting for you people to come and ask for relief.” What do you make of that, Billy?”

“I don’t know; unless someone in Stanton’s outfit has wretched. Shaw might have done it. He has been to Bob Stillings, and Stillings says he is sore at Stanton for some reason. Shaw was trying to get Stillings to agree to drop the railroad case against him, and Bob says he made some vague promise of help in the High Line business. If the railroad people would agree not to prosecute.”

“There is a screw loose somewhere; I know by the way Judge Warner took hold. When I proposed to swear out the warrant for Stanton’s arrest, he said, ‘I can’t understand, Mr. Smith, why you haven’t done this before,’ and he sat down and filled out the blank. But we can let that go for the present. How are you going to get me across the river without taking me through the heart of the town and giving the Brewster police a shy at me?”

“This is one of the times when the longest way round is the shortest way home,” Starbuck explained. “The bad news you were looking for ‘has come.’”

“You’ve heard the dope, Jimmie,”

While you were phoning in the garage I put one policeman wise—to nothing.”

“He was looking for me?”

“Sure thing—and by name. We’ll fool around here in the block streets until the judge has had time to show up. Then I’ll drop you at the courthouse and go hustle the sheriff for you. You’ll want Harding, I take it?”

“Yes, I’m taking the chance that only the city authorities have been notified in my personal affair—not the county officers. It’s a long chance, of course; I may be running my neck squarely into the noose. But it’s all risk, Billy; every move in this night’s game. Head up for the courthouse. The judge will be there by this time.”

Two minutes beyond this the car was drawing up to the curb on the mesa-facing side of the courthouse square. There were two lighted windows in the second story of the otherwise darkened building, and Smith sprang to the sidewalk.

“Go now and find Harding, and have him bring one trusty deputy with him; I’ll be ready by the time you get back,” he directed; but Starbuck waited until he had seen Smith safely lost in the shadows of the pillared courthouse entrance before he drove away.

CHAPTER XXV.

A Race to the Swift.

Since Sheriff Harding had left his office in the county jail and had gone home to his ranch on the north side of the river some hours earlier, not a little premons time was consumed in hunting him up. Beyond this, there was another delay in securing the deputy. When Starbuck’s car came to a stand for a second time before the mesa-fronting entrance of the courthouse, Smith came quickly across the walk from the portal.

“Mr. Harding,” he began abruptly, “Judge Warner has gone home and he has made me his messenger. There is a bit of sharp work to be done, and you’ll need a strong posse. Can you deputize fifteen or twenty good men who can be depended upon in a fight and rendezvous them on the north-side river road in two hours from now?”

The sheriff, a big, bearded man who might have sat for the model of one of Frederic Remington’s frontiersmen, took time to consider. “Is it a scrap?” he asked.

“It is likely to be. There are warrants to be served, and there will most probably be resistance. Your posse should be well armed.”

“We’ll try for it,” was the decision. “On the north-side river road, you say? You’ll want us mounted?”

“It will be better to take horses. We could get autos, but Judge Warner agrees with me that the thing had better be done quietly and without making too much of a stir in town.”

“All right,” said the man of the law. “It that all?”

“No, not quite all. The first of the warrants is to be served here in Brewster—upon Mr. Crawford Stanton. Your deputy will probably find him at the Hophra House. Here is the paper: It is a bench warrant of commitment on a charge of conspiracy, and Stanton is to be locked up. Also you are to see to it that your jail telephone is out of order, so that Stanton won’t be able to make any attempt to get a hearing and bail before tomorrow.”

“That part of it is mighty risky,” said Harding. “Does the judge know about that, too?”

“He does; and for the ends of pure justice, he concurs with me—though, of course, he couldn’t give a mandatory order.”

The sheriff turned to his jail deputy, who had descended from the rumble seat in the rear.

“You’ve heard the dope, Jimmie,” he said shortly. “Go and get His Nobs and lock him up. And if he wants to be yelling ‘Help!’ and sending for his lawyer or somebody, why, the telephone’s takin’ a lay-off. Savvy?”

The deputy nodded and turned upon his heel, stuffing the warrant for Stanton’s arrest into his pocket as he went. Smith swung up beside Starbuck, saying: “In a couple of hours, then, Mr. Harding; somewhere near the bridge approach on the other side of the river.”

Starbuck had started the motor and was bending forward to adjust the oil feed when the sheriff left them.

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“You’ve heard the dope, Jimmie,”

Starbuck’s answer was wordless. With a quick twist of the pilot wheel he sent the car skidding around the corner, using undue haste, as it seemed, since they had two hours before them. A few minutes farther along the lights of the town had been left behind and the car was speeding swiftly westward on a country road paralleling the railway track; the road over which Smith had twice driven with the kidnapped Jibby.

“I’m still guessing,” the passenger ventured, when the last of the railroad distance signals had flashed to the rear. And then: “What’s the frantic hurry, Billy?”

Starbuck was running with the muffler cut out, but now he cut it in and the roar of the motor sank to a humming murmur.

“I thought so,” he remarked, turning his head to listen. “You didn’t notice that police whistle just as we were leaving the courthouse, did you?—nor the answers to it while we were dodging through the suburbs? Somebody has marked us down and passed the word, and now they’re chasing us with a buzz-wagon. Don’t you hear it?”

By this time Smith could hear the sputtering roar of the following car only too plainly.

“It’s a big one,” he commented. “You can’t outrun it, Billy; and, be-

“You’ve heard the dope, Jimmie.”

been three-quarters of an hour of skillful driving over a bad road to come between Smith’s remark and its reply, but Starbuck apparently made no account of the length of the interval.

“You’re aiming to go and see Corry?” he asked, while the car was coasting to the hill bottom.

“Yes.”

With a sudden flick of the controls and a quick jamming of the brakes, Starbuck brought the car to a stand just as it came into the level road.

“We’re man to man here under the canopy, John; and Corry Baldwin hasn’t got any brother,” he offered gravely. “I’m backing you in this business fight for all I’m worth—for Dick Maxwell’s sake and the colonel’s, and maybe a little bit for the sake of my own ante of twenty thousand. And I’m ready to back you in this old-home scrap with all the money you’ll need to make your fight. But when it comes to the little girl it’s different. Have you any good and fair right to hunt up Corry Baldwin while things are shaping themselves up as they are?”

Smith met the shrewd inquisition fairly.

“Give it a name,” he said shortly. “I will; I’ll give it the one you gave it a while back. You said you were an outlaw, on two charges: embezzlement and assault. We’ll let the assault go. But the other thing doesn’t taste good.”

“I didn’t embezzle anything, Billy. I thought I made that plain.”

“So you did. But you also made it plain that the home croup would be likely to send you up for it, guilty or not guilty. And with a thing like that hanging over you . . . you see, I know Corry Baldwin, John. If you put it up to her tonight, and she happens to fall in with your side of it—which is what you’re aiming to make her do—all hell won’t keep her from going back home with you and seeing you through!”

“Billy, I may never see her again. I said I wouldn’t tell her—that I loved her too well to tell her . . . but now the final pinch has come, and I—”

“And that isn’t all,” Starbuck went on relentlessly. “There’s this Miss Rich-acres. Your hands ain’t clean, John; not clean enough to let you go to Hillcrest tonight.”

Smith groped in his pockets, found a cigar and lit it.

“Pull out to the side of the road and we’ll kill what time there is to kill right here,” he directed soberly. And then: “What you say is right as right, Billy. Once more, I guess, I was loosed for the minute. Forget it, and while you’re about it, forget Miss Richlander, too. Luckily for her, she is out of it—as far out of it as I am.”

CHAPTER XXVI.

Freedom.

On the northern bank of the Timanog the Brewster street, of which the wagon bridge is a prolongation, becomes a country road, forking a few hundred yards from the bridge approach to send one of its branchings northward among the Little Creek ranches and another westward up the right bank of the stream.

At this fork of the road, between eleven and twelve o’clock of the night of alarms, Sheriff Harding’s party of special deputies began to assemble. Under each man’s saddle flap was slung the regulation weapon of the West—a scabbarded repeating rifle; and the small troop bunching itself in the river road looked serviceably militant and businesslike.

An automobile rolled silently down the mesa road from the north and came to a stand among the horses. The sheriff drew rein beside the car and spoke to one of the two occupants:

“Well, Mr. Smith, we’re all here.”

“How many?” was the curt question.

“Twenty.”

“Good. Here is your authority”—handing the legal papers to the officer.

“Before we go in you ought to know the facts. A few hours ago a man named McGraw, calling himself a deputy United States marshal and claiming to be acting under instructions from Judge Lorching’s court in Red Butte, took possession of our dam and camp. On the even chance that he isn’t what he claims to be, we are going to arrest him and every man in his crowd. Are you game for it?”

“I’m game to serve any papers that Judge Warner’s got the nerve to issue,” was the big man’s reply.

“That’s the talk; that’s what I hoped to hear you say. Was Stanton arrested?”

“He sure was. Strothers found him in the Hophra House bar, and the line of talk he turned loose would have set a wet blanket afire. Just the same, he had to go along with Jimmie and get himself locked up.”

“That is the first step; now if you’re ready, we’ll take the next.”

Harding rode forward and the advance began. For the first mile or so the midnight silence was unbroken save by the subdued progress noises and the murmurings of the nearby river in its bed. Once Smith took the wheel while Starbuck rolled and lighted a cigarette. It was Starbuck who harked back to the talk which had been so abruptly broken off.

“Let’s not head into this ruction with an unpecked bone betwixt us, John,” he began gently. “Maybe I said too much, back yonder at the foot of the hill.”

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Its Merit.

“You call this portrait of your wife a beautiful work of art? I must say it is not a speaking likeness of her.”

“That’s the beauty of it.”

AID FARMING BY INSTITUTES

Big Part Agriculturist Is Asked to Take in War Increases General Interest.

TO USE MOTION PICTURES

Will Illustrate Various Phases of Farm Work and Special Lectures to Be Given—Big Attendance Is Expected at the Gatherings.

—Harrisburg. The annual farmers’ institutes under the auspices of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture will open on November 13 in Wayne county and during November, December, January, February and part of March the most important series of meetings ever held in the interest of agriculture in the State are being planned.

Special importance hinges on the institutes during the coming season on account of the big part that the farmer is being asked to play in the war by producing maximum crops of farm products. Special stress will be made to encourage greater acre yields and the wants of the farmers will be carefully tabulated in order that the department may be better enabled to help with timely problems next spring.

Special lectures in potato culture, dairying, poultry husbandry and soils will be a feature in the five sections in which the State has been divided for the carrying on of the institutes. In addition there will be instruction on apilary work in the bee sections or in the sections where much fruit is grown and the bee is needed for pollination. There will be a new move in the introduction of moving pictures to show the various phases of successful farming and bee keeping. At the various institutes the Pennsylvania Commission on Public Safety and Defense will have speakers to talk on food production and conservation.

Five Section Leaders.

The section leaders will be William M. Patton in the southeastern counties, Sheldon W. Funk in the western and southwestern district, J. T. Campbell in the northern section, D. H. Watts in the eastern section, and J. Stuart Groupe in the central and southwestern section. Mr. Groupe is a new section leader, succeeding E. S. Dorsett. All of the section leaders and the majority of the institute lecturers are practical and successful farmers, and will talk on subjects which cover their successful practice on their own farms.

Among eastern county dates are these: Berks—Rehobersburg, February 18-19; Berks—Pottsville, February 20-21; Berks—Pottsville, February 22-23; Geisgstown, February 18-19.

Carbon—Wetherly, December 5; Big Creek, December 6; Mahoning, December 16-17.

Center—Port Matilda, February 8-9; Center Hall, February 11-12; Spring Mill, February 13-14.

Chester—Cedarville, February 27-28; Beyer, March 1-2; Doe Run, March 4-5; March 6-7.

Columbia—Millville, February 4-5; New Media, February 6-7.

Northumberland—Hogestown, December 2; Centre, December 4-5; Newburg, December 6-7.

Dauphin—Linglestown, January 14-15; Gratz, January 16-17; Fishersville, January 18-19.

Lebanon—Gradyville, February 27; Concordville, February 28; Village Green, March 1-2.

Lancaster—Fannettsburg, January 7-8; Marion, January 9-10; Wayne Heights, January 11-12.

Lackawanna—Daleville, November 21-22; Thompkinsville, November 23-24; Bald Mount, November 25-27.

Lancaster—Birkwood, November 19-20; Lampeter, November 21-22; Paradise, November 23-24; Blue Ball, November 25-26; Newburg, November 28-29; Litzitz, November 30-December 1.

Lebanon—Annville, February 11-12; Jonesboro, February 13-14; Schaeffersville, February 15-16.

Lehigh—Zionville, December 17-18; Allentown, December 19-20; Egypt, December 21-22.

Luzerne—Nesquehock, January 11-12; Town Line, 14-15; Orange, January 16-17.

Luzerne—Warrenville, February 4-5; Montgomery, February 6-7; Hughesville, February 8-9.

Northumberland—Northumberland, February 20-21; Urban, February 22-23.

Philadelphia—Bustletown, March 4-5.

PENNSYLVANIA BRIEFS

Lancaster Y. W. C. A.’s 49 apartments for roomers were rented before the building was finished.

The attendance at the 14 playgrounds in Harrisburg during the season just closed totaled 248,000, according to the report of Supervisor Earl C. Ford.

Larksville’s dysentery epidemic has killed two more victims.

Falling headlong over a rug at her parents’ home in Vulcan, Helen Stevens, 4, broke her neck and died later.

A State collection of farm enemy bugs is to be sent to various county fairs and agricultural exhibitions to be held in Pennsylvania this fall.

Six hours after returning from Ashland, where she received treatment at the hands of a so-called “divine healer,” Mrs. John Conejak, of Drifton, fell dead.

Governor Brumbaugh has appointed Miss Elizabeth Lowry, Berwick, and Miss Ella Greene Stewart, Orangeville, as members of the Board of Mothers’ Pension Trustees for Columbia county.

A Pottstown foundry company is trying to procure young women to learn coremaking.

Frank Coogan, of Collegeville, caught a 32-inch carp weighing 28 pounds in the Perkiomen.

Over 700 ears of corn were eaten at a supper held by the Ladies’ Aid Society of St. James’ Lutheran Church, Pottstown.

Hamburg dealers are paying only 75 cents a bushel for potatoes, while those in the Lehigh region pay 90 cents f. o. b. cars on the Reading-Slatington branch.

Because of over 200 new voters whose political affiliations are an unknown quantity, coming to town under industrial expansion, Pottstown politicians are up to a tree as to how “the cat will jump” at the November election.