

The Man From Yonder

By HAROLD TITUS

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SYNOPSIS

Ben Elliott—from "Yonder"—arrives at the little lumbering town of Tincup accompanied by Don Stuart, old, very sick man, whom he has befriended. He signals his coming by defeating Bull Duval, "king of the river," and town bully, in a log-birling contest. Nicholas Brandon, the town's leading citizen, resents Stuart's presence. He tries to force him to leave town and Elliott, resenting the act, knocks him down. Elliott is arrested.

CHAPTER II—Continued

"Are you guilty or not?" Able repeated and Ben Elliott who had stood at ease before him, slouch hat in his great brown hands, now gave his head a grave twist.

"Well, if pitching a man off the sidewalk into the mud is called assault and battery in Tincup, then I'm about a hundred per cent guilty," he said.

A stir in the room followed and Able frowned, a convincingly judicial frown.

"Guilty, eh?" He cleared his throat at length. "Now how about this disruption of the peace, anyhow?"

The sheriff spoke:

"You see, Able, 'twas this way, Mr.—"

"Now just a minute, Art. This accused has pleaded guilty, as I understand it. I don't see any need of anybody else saying anything. He's thrown himself on the mercy of this court, you might say, and it's regular and proper and according to the spirit of the statute that I question him before passing sentence. Besides," he added, with a twinkle at Brandon, "I'm a little curious."

The sheriff sniffed and subsided. Clearly, there was little friendship between him and the justice.

"Now, Mr. . . ." Able glanced at the complainant again. "Mr. Ben Elliott, how come that you go about the country tossing reputable citizens into the mud?"

"Why, he was trying to make a friend of mine do something he didn't want to do. That's all. I butted in, I guess; he got hard and so,"—shrug—"I lost my head for a minute and put him in his place."

"In the mud, you mean?"

"Yeah. In the mud."

"Well, go on; go on. Go back to the beginning. I want to know all about this affair."

Elliott drew a long breath.

"I started for Tincup several days ago. I was a long ways off, over in Minnesota. This morning I got down to the junction west of here and while I waited for my train got talking to this old timer, Don Stuart, who was in the station. Maybe you know him, Judge. Other folks here do." Able blinked twice; hard. "The old fellow is about all in, I'd say. He's got it into his head that he's about to die and probably his guess isn't such a bad one. Seems this used to be his stamping ground, that he's been away a long time and that

Able asked and the look in his eyes was much less severe. "So you'd heard about Tincup and started for it from a long ways off and . . . Now this matter of nuts: You like all kinds?"

"Not all nuts; no." The steel-gray eyes were a bit narrowed, now, as Elliott tried to plumb the old man's mood.

"Well, for instance: like peanuts?"

"No. Can't stand 'em."

"Not at all? Almonds, then?"

A twinkle was surely coming to life in the court's eyes but, seeing it, the defendant only frowned.

"Can't vote very strong for almonds."

"Or English walnuts or pecans?"

"Never did hold them to be what you'd call irresistible, either."

"Hum-m. . . . How about black walnuts?"

"Now," declared Elliott with a nod, "now, you're getting into real classy nuts!"

Men in the crowd looked at one another, not knowing what to make of this.

"Well, if you like black walnuts, would you say they were your favorite?"

The other considered this question with great, if not wholly genuine, seriousness.

"No, not exactly. I'd put black walnuts high up in the list, all right, your honor, but since you're interested about my preferences in nuts, I'd say that the best nut that ever hung outdoors or offered itself for the cracking was a good old hickory nut."

"Real tough ones, eh?"

"Real tough ones, yes."

Able wiped his face with a palm and wet his lips. The two looked long at one another and that spark passed which will jump from man to man, carried sometimes by a deed, often by a word, frequently by only a glance; that message which says as plainly as though inscribed in black characters against white background: "I like you; I am your friend!" It went from the old man to the young and back again from young to old. Nicholas Brandon understood and the lightnings in his dark eyes played more briskly, more ominously.

"And so you'd figure Tincup as a sort of hickory nut?"

"I had. Tincup has a reputation all through the Lake states. Wherever you go you'll hear it talked about as a hard camp. I'd heard so many times that a good man with ideas of his own, with independence and, maybe, with ambition had better keep away from here that I found myself hankering to get a look at the place."

"What's your line of work?"

"I follow the timber. . . . Anything."

"Well, just what, for instance? What are some of the jobs you've held?"

Elliott smiled a bit.

"Good many. I was a chore boy once; another time I was a road monkey. I've teamed and saved, worked as millwright and on rivers. Once or twice I've run a camp or two."

"But your avocation, I take it, is looking for hard nuts?"

Brandon spoke now:

"Your honor!" His voice was well modulated and yet in its quality was something which suggested iron covered with velvet. "As complaining witness in this case, may I suggest that we are beginning to waste time? This young man has pleaded guilty. Of course, I do not want to be put in the light of one who attempts to dictate to a court of law, but I have pressing matters to attend to and if we can get on. . . ."

Outwardly this was only a suggestion, a plea; really, though, it was one way of demanding, of giving an order.

"Yes, you're a busy man, Nick," Able said and nodded. "I'd sort of figured being busy here today, myself. Sort of wondered if somebody wouldn't bring in Bull Duval on a charge of assault and battery. He trimmed my man Harrington so badly that he's gone and my operation's without a boss today. I sort of thought, being interested as you are in law and order, that Duval might be brought in."

"That is something I know nothing about," Brandon said severely.

"Likely not. You can't be expected to keep as close track of the men who work for you as I do of mine. That is, it isn't reasonable to think a man of your caliber would."

He spoke drily and Elliott, watching the two, could see that his words stung Brandon. The justice straightened in his chair, however.

"But maybe we are delaying things. Now, Mr. Elliott, don't you think it a little out of the way to come into a town, a total stranger, and upset all that town's precedents? If you, instead of one of Mr. Brandon's hired men, had cleaned up on my man Harrington, for instance, it might not have been such a grave offense. But here you come and pick out the one man in Tincup who hasn't been struck or even threatened in longer than I can recall—a man who is regarded here about like most folks would regard a baron of the Middle Ages—and toss him out into the mud! Why, Elliott, that's not ever happened before!"

"Probably it didn't hurt Nick much, but there are his feelings to consider. Aren't you ashamed of giving people a chance to jeer at Mr. Brandon?"

Elliott looked at Brandon, then, deliberately, carefully, inspected him from his glossy black hair to his muddied breeches.

"It wasn't a very smart thing to do, I guess," he admitted. "It's not likely now, that I'll even get a chance to see how hard a nut this town really is."

"And no worse than you deserve!" Able said sharply. "You know better than to carry on that way, Elliott. I've got to give you a fine commensurate with your offense. I'll fine you a dollar and seventy-five cents for costs or send you to jail for a day."

In the rear a sacrilegious titter or two. From the sheriff, a grunt; from Nicholas Brandon a breath of offended dignity and a look that scorched. But on Ben Elliott's face only appeared a foolish smile.

"That's reasonable enough," he said. "but the joker is this: I haven't even got the dollar!"

"Well, our jail's real comfortable, I'm told. A day there'll let you think over the advisability of going around the country muddying up the pants of respected citizens!"

Elliott, though, faced even so short a jail sentence with anything but relish. "I can get the money easy enough," he said. "That is if you, your honor, or somebody else'll send a wire for me."

"That might be arranged. Where to?"

"Here—" He reached for a sheet of paper and pencil lying on the table. Swiftly he wrote the words: "Badger Forest Products company, Beech Ridge, Wisconsin." He handed it to Able. "Will you wire them for twenty-five dollars and sign my name? Send the message collect."

"That's a big outfit," the judge said. "You figure they'll do as you ask?"

"Well, they never have turned me down for anything I've asked. Of course, there's always the first time. If you'll do that . . ."

"Until that gets back, Sheriff, I suppose it's me for the brig. . . . Is that right, Judge?"

Able was studying the address and when he looked up and grunted an affirmative reply his gaze was far away. Far, far away.

For a considerable interval after his court room had emptied, Able Armitage sat motionless in his chair. His eye still held that far-away look, staring into space, and now and again he picked up the scrap of paper bearing the address young Elliott had written and scanned it closely.

"By cracky!" he said, an hour after being left alone. "By cracky—by jing! It might be, you know. . . . It may be, possibly, perhaps might be!"

Thereupon he rose, went to a wall telephone and put in a call for Nathan Bridger, general manager of the Badger Forest Products company, of Beach Ridge, Wisconsin.

After this he stood for a time in the front window, peering out into the street. A man came along the sidewalk, a man of about Able's years, bearing a limp and rusty bag which stamped him as a physician. He waved a hand to Able and then, as on sudden impulse, changed his course and approached the entry.

"Big day, Able,"—as the justice opened the door.

"Yeah. Big."

"Old Don's back."

"So I heard."

"Bad shape, too."

"I heard that. Real bad, Emory?"

Emory Sweet nodded gravely.

"Heart's like a sponge. He can't last long. . . . Nick was all for sending him back to Hemlock but I told him it would be murder to move him now."

"Oh, Nick showed up, did he?"

"Came right from here. Said he'd been providing for Don for these last years and wanted him with somebody or other in Hemlock who'd see he didn't get hold of hooch again. Was quite provoked when I opposed moving him."

"Nicholas doesn't like the notion of Don's being in this vicinity."

"It's about as popular with him as smallpox. When I'd prevailed on him to let Don alone I told him the truth: that he can't last more than a few weeks and Nick looked like a man who . . . well, like one who's heard good news."

Able nodded. "Safer for Brandon to have him in his grave. But when old Don goes, seems like the last chance of ever clearing the thing up's gone too."

"Looks that way. Unless he'll talk before he dies."

"Even so, it wouldn't amount to much. He's an old bum; he was a knowp drunkard at the time. It happened so long ago, and with the courts controlled by who they are . . ."

"All but yours."

"And mine without any jurisdiction in sure-enough trouble."

The doctor started out but halted in the doorway.

"Hear Harrington's gone."

"Yeah. The Bull ran him out of town."

"Brandon?"

"Don't be simple, Emory. Who else?"

"He certainly can't forget the Hoot

Owl, can he? What are you going to do now, Able?"

The other shook his head gravely.

"I wish I could give you an answer . . . or myself an answer. All forenoon I've had a feeling in that palm,"—extending his creased right hand, "as if the end of a rope were slipping through it."

"Tough," muttered the doctor as he went out.

An hour later Able Armitage left his office. He moved with great alacrity for one of his years and stopped only once and that was to draw Bird-Eye Blaine from the throng of onlookers that lined the sidewalk.

"Got your car in town, Bird-Eye?" he asked. "Have? Will it still run?"

"Run!"—as though insulted. "Say, Able, that car may not be so foxy lookin' as some, but she's got a heart av gold 'nd—"

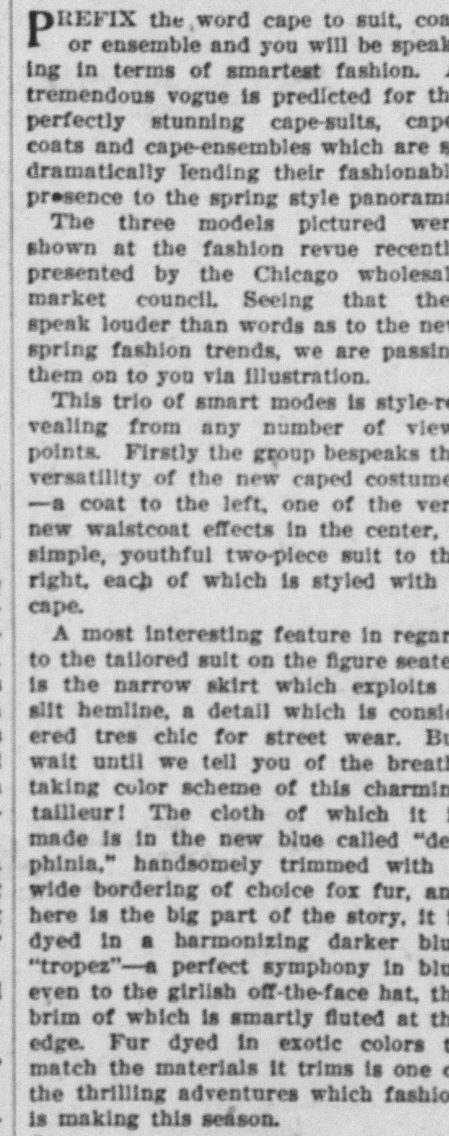
"All right. Run her around by the jail, will you? Might need you; again,

PREFIX the word cape to suit, coat or ensemble and you will be speaking in terms of smartest fashion. A tremendous vogue is predicted for the perfectly stunning cape-suits, cape-coats and cape-ensembles which are so dramatically lending their fashionable presence to the spring style panorama.

The three models pictured were shown at the fashion revue recently presented by the Chicago wholesale market council. Seeing that they speak louder than words as to the new spring fashion trends, we are passing them on to you via illustration.

This trio of smart modes is style-revealing from any number of viewpoints. Firstly the group bespeaks the versatility of the new cape costumes—a coat to the left, one of the very new waistcoat effects in the center, a simple, youthful two-piece suit to the right, each of which is styled with a cape.

A most interesting feature in regard to the tailored suit on the figure seated is the narrow skirt which exploits a slit hemline, a detail which is considered tres chic for street wear. But wait until we tell you of the breath-taking color scheme of this charming talleur! The cloth of which it is made is in the new blue called "delphinia," handsomely trimmed with a wide bordering of choice fox fur, and here is the big part of the story. It is dyed in a harmonizing darker blue "tropic"—a perfect symphony in blue even to the girlish off-the-face hat, the brim of which is smartly fluted at the edge. Fur dyed in exotic colors to match the materials it trims is one of the thrilling adventures which fashion is making this season.



DARK ACCENTS
By CHERIE NICHOLAS



With the pastel costume, dark accessories are considered good style. The outfit pictured shows what can be done with this theme. A cloth frock in a subtle soft pastel green is artfully contrasted with a scarf of plaided taffeta in rich deep green and golden yellow. Note the modish calf bag which perfectly the color scheme in that its dark green catfurskin is enhanced with a diamond cut-out bar of gold finished metal. Or if you prefer to think of this costume in tones of blue the gown of pale blue would call for the scarf in navy and a lighter blue taffeta with thin white lines in its plaided design. The calf bag of course would be in navy. Which reminds us that the widespread flair for navy extends to footwear and that all the leading booteries are making a big display of navy blue shoes.

SPRING FASHIONS ARE INTERESTING

Rare color combinations, unique types and arrangements of trimmings, and tricky fabrics are doing their best to attract women's attention to the new spring fashions. The alliance of tomato red and chardreuse is one of the most arresting of the colors that you'll see but no more impressive than the use of red and yellow. A woolen jacket costume of a porous, honeycomb woolen appears in the chardreuse shade but adds a stomach-acher of the tomato colored crepe.

One evidence of the discard of the red and yellow rule is a yellow knitted frock trimmed with bright red buttons. These buttons fasten the shirtwaist front, the composition of which they are made being duplicated on the red leather belt. A silk scarf that is striped with alternating bands of the two colors is tied carelessly around the neck.

Brown Woolly Tweed Now Combined With Taffeta

Tweed and taffeta meet today on a common footing. Marcelle Dormoy combines them in a coat adequately named "Riviera" in a brown woolly tweed with a scarf collar-tie in solid brown taffeta.

The coat is three-quarters, flaps open in front from where the taffeta makes a crisp bow near the throat. It has that wide back flare that is so good now, and the sleeves are rather baggy but close in around the wrists.

Jenny contributes a smart redingote in black faille worn over a dress in white silk pique.

Chamois Colored Shoes

Smartest among the new sports shoes now being shown for resort wear are chamois color, trimmed with brown, with black or white. They can be worn with all light clothes.



"Guilty, Eh?"

he'd started back to finish his days here where he could see some old friends. He went broke on the way and was just sitting there this morning waiting for something to happen. I happened. I wasn't any too well heeled myself, but I had enough for his ticket so I brought him along.

"As luck would have it, I got a chance to pick up a few dollars of Tincup money as soon as we got in and I had to have it, with the old timer on my hands. While I was busy getting this cash this man Brandon evidently saw my buddy and started rushing him back to the depot to take the next train back to where he came from. I didn't like that so well. I tried to talk him out of it but Mr. Brandon isn't a great talker. That's all. . . . Here I am!"

"Guilty as charged, eh?" Able fumbled with the papers. "What brought you such a long ways into Tincup, anyhow?"

"Because I'd heard Tincup was a tough nut to crack."

A stir in the crowd, then a sharp look from Brandon to Elliott.

"Oh. . . . Fond of nuts, are you?"