EVENING PUBLIC LEDGER-PHILADELPHIA, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 29, 1921

THE FORTUNE HUNTER By RUBY M. AYRES

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AND HERE IT CONTINUES

HE past-well, we'll agree to wipe

THE past-well, we'll agree to wipe I it out. You made atonement, and ''You'll excuse me if I run away.'' be said. "See you at lunch; and, by the way. Anne, if Foster calls this norning tell him I want to see him, will you?''

be sat motionless, his eyes on Mr. Harding's carnest face, listening inand it was only when he saw the color and it was only when he saw the color flarding's carnest face, listening in-tently. There was a moment of silence, then the elder man asked sharply: "Well, But for the moment he had quite fortentis.

There was a moment of ellence, then the elder man asked sharply: "Well, what have you got to say?" The Fortune Hunter roused bim-self with an effort. "Only that I give my word I will do my best," he said. Mr. Harding said "Humph!" and added half in fun, half seriously: "And rour best, and my best, will only be half good enough for her. She's an ideal-ter you know. Of course, you know that my word I will do my best," he said. Mr. Harding said "Humph!" and added half in fun, half seriously: "And rour best, and my best, will only be half good enough for her. She's an ideal-ist, you know. Of course, you know that all along she has believed in your in-mocence."

But when Tommy proposed calling The Fortune Hunter nodded : he could The Fortune Hunter nodded : he could the gardener in to lend a hand in moving the boxes upstairs the Fortune Hunter agreed readily and bimself unstrapped the old man went on :

the old man went on: "Tou know, too, that she bas money" The Fortune Hunter opened his lips to say, "I don't want her money." but to say, "I don't want her money, the plexity." "Dashed if I know." he said. He

words stuck. But tonight his thoughts were in a whirl. He did not understand himself, could not analyze his emotions; he only heav that for the first time in his life he was ashamed that he had not played with this boy's eagerness. "And now where are the keys?" the game better. Mr. Harding tilted the shade of the

Tommy urged. The Fortune Hunter plunged a hand amp suddenly, letting its piercing light fall full on the Fortune Hunter's face. A haggard face it looked—a weary The Fortune Functor punged a pane into his pocket; he tried every pocket in his coat. "I must have lost them," he said. The excuse was more than wel-come, though to satisfy Tommy he took young face-during the brief second before he got control of himself and

off his coat and turned every pocket in-"You're tired," Mr. Harding said side out, abruptly, "and I'm keeping you up; "They abruptly, "and I'm keeping you up shuptly, "and I'm keeping you up istening to things that can easily be said."You probably dropped them yester-"You probably dropped them yester-"

walked out of the room.

awoke and tortured him.

abruptly, "and I in accurate asily be istening to things that can easily be said during the next few days. You'll be glad to go to bed." He held out his Land. "Good night, John!" But now the Fortune Hunter could not meet his eyes, and his reply was not meet his eyes, and his reply was turned and turned and turne its fretful, peevish lines.

But the boy's face had taken again into its fretful, prevish lines. "Something always happens to spoil my fun." he complained. "Are you sure they're not downstairs in your , He went upstairs to his room, feel-ing like a thief. He was dog-tired,

but he never closed his eyes all night. Contrience, which had for so long lain "Quite sure." formant that he had believed it dead. Tonimy grunted something inaudible

and slipped away, and the Fortune Hunter looked at Anne. "And now what do we do?" he asked. When it began to get light he got



When it begah to get light he got ur and sat down by the window, watch-ing the gray mist slowiy lifting from the garden and river and the first streak of sunshine creeping wanly through. "I will go away." he told himself. "And now what do we do?" he asked, trying to speak naturally. He had a painful feeling that no matter who else he was successful in deceiving, before long Anne would find him out. "Let's go out." she said. "I want "Let's go out." she said. "I want to talk to you, and there are lots and lots of things I want you to tell me." Then went down together into the market The thing is impossible. I will not 810 7

And yet when he was dressed and out in the garden, walking about among the flowers, his resolution garden. "Not here-I'm going to take you over to the island." she told him. waverad.

It was Fate that had thrown him She looked at him shyly. "You know

here, and he believed in Fate. He would stay yet a little awhile and the island where I often used to write my letters to you. Somehow I never thought I should ever show it to you, sk what happened. It was Heaven to be treated once more as a gentleman John, though you were so sure." They untied the punt from the moorand to see love in a woman's eyes. If

he went now it would hurt these people ing at the bottom of the garden and for more than if he stayed. pushed out into the stream. So he argued with bimself, knowing

"Do you know," the girl said sudhe argument to be false. And then, from one of the upper denly. And then, from one of the upper friendly with any one as he has been PETEY-A Great Life with you?"

called to him, smiling down with the The sunshine in her eves and upon her hair, grimace The Fortune Hunter made a little

and the heart of the Fortune Hunter "Really! I should not have thought beat fast as he called up to her rather that he has shown me any great mark unsteadily : "Come down-you're so far of favor.

away up there-come down." "Oh, but he bas," she urged. "As She joined him in the garden almost a rule, he won't speak to any one. He t once, slipping a hand shyly through used to bate all my-any men who came here.'

'Your would-be lovers, you mean,' "You're still here then ! You're real ! When I woke this morning I was half afraid that I should find it all a dream, he interposed ruthlessly. She lcaned over and laid her hand on

bis, "You need not be jealous: there has and that you had gone." The Fortune Hunter smilled wryly remembering his resolution of the night. "You slept well, then," he said. She was never any one-there never has been-except you."

Sughed and flushed "Some day not worth loving," he said steadily. "I never closed my cycs." said the She haughed. "Shall T? I haven't She haughed. "Shall T? I haven't realized it during the last ten years, He caught her fingers and held them. "I never closed by "My guilty realized Fortune Hanter grimly. "My guilty new anyway. T suppose." Her fingers anyway. "And

"I will not let you say that. You promised me that there was to be no past-no looking back." "It's not so easy to hill the past as you.

"Indeed they do not that the answered rather dared say one single word-not that dared say one single word-not that would have mattered whatever they

She interrupted swiftly. "But it is killed-it is dead! The past cannot come back; don't think of it. I won't. I'm going to look forward had suid. "I dare say they thought the more." She moved, coming to sit beside him at the end of the punt, letting it drift now-only forward. with the stream. "You know, John." she said quietly,

The Fortune Hunter made no reply. but he thought of the foxy eyes of the man Fernie whom he had seen last man Ferric whom he had seen last night, and a breath of apprehension "I think I must be a very painfully faithful sort of woman, because even swept through him. "And that's breakfast." Anne said as right from the very first there has never

drearily.

bell rang through the house. "Are you hungry? I am-and here's "Are you "Yes," he prompted gently as she Tommy. paused.

She laughed rather shakily, turning her face away. "It's you who ought to be saying Tommy waited for them at the house r; be looked at the Fortune Hunter

these things to me," she said, with a little harsh note in her voice. He put his arm round her, drawing

be said.

with chagrined eyes. "We shan't have to go to London after all," he snid, "to fetch your bag-sage. I mean." He turned and indicated her close to him. "If I don't say them, if I can't put what I feel into words." he said des-perately, "it's because 1-because I feel perately, "it's because I am. It's because pile of boxes in the hall. close to him. a pile of boxes in the hall. "It's all just come up from the station," he added disgustedly. The Fortune Hunter flushed crim-500. When he had mater

When he had first entered upon this adventure it had been more in the spirit of a joke which would last only for the moment than the manifold day.] tragedy into which it was slowly evolving. He looked at the rather bat tragedy into which it was slowly volving. He looked at the rather bat-tered and much-labeled luggage with desperate eyes. "The initials "J. S." were painted

The initials "J. S." were painted amateurish large letters on the side each box, and hore beside the label a well-known cross-Atlantic steam-lip, on which he himself had once orked a puscease house house himself had once worked a pussage home. He smiled bitterly at the irony of it all. "Breakfast is ready." Anne said "Don't. I hate to hear you say

"Breakfast is ready." Anne said suddenly. She had been standing by silently, and now she turned and led the way into the dining room. vay into the dining room. Mr. Harding was already seated. He awake at night and imagine all panners greeted the Fortune Hunter cheerily.

"You won't mind my beginning—I'm inquiry this morning about that poor fellow we found in the wood last night." awake at night and imagine all panners of frightful things. At first I thought you would die in—in—""Prison," the Fortune Hunter added grimly as she faltered and stopped.

ght from the very first there has never GASOLINE ALLEY-Time for Mother to Learn

COME ON WALTER! YOURE MOTHER SUCH A TEASE! how unworthy I am. It's because He let her go abruptly. "Some be said, "you will realize that I'm not worth loving." There was a

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By King