## THE FORTUNE HUNTER By RUBY M. AYRES

Author of "The Bachelor Husband," "The One Unwanted," etc. Copyright by Wheeler Syndicate, Inc.

THIS BEGINS THE STORY

AND HERE IT CONTINUES

HE Fortune Hunter let the horse get The round, catching the flying bridle, run-

Anne hid her face. He would be killed, she thought wildly, and hoped that she would die, too. She could feel the hot breath of the horse, as it snorted past her; afraid now of its own strength; heard the ring of the hoofs deaden again as it crossed the bridge and gained the readway once more, and then suddenly the temped.

would die, too. She could feel the nost breath of the horse, as it snorted past her; afraid now of its own strength; her; afraid now of its own strength; heard the ring of the hoofs deaden again as it crossed the bridge and gained the readway once more, and then suddenly it stopped.

She looked up; the Fortune Hunter had the horse under control; he stood beside it, patting its steaming neck, talking to it soothingly. The man Fernie had slipped to the ground; he was white and shaken; he could not find his voice when Anne rushed to join them. She looked at John. "You are not hurt. I thought—I was afraid you would be hurt." He was afraid you would be hurt." He saked.

She's never done it before:

He wiped his sweating face with a shaking band. "Will you lead her back to the inn for me?" he asked. "I'll to the inn for me?" he asked. "I'll not ride her again." They walked back ever the bridge together, the Fortune Hunter leading the trembling horse, and nething more was said till they reached the inn, then old Fernie, looking up at him, said: "And who have I to thank for—for the fact that I'm still alive?"

His voice was faintly ironical, but his eyes were not unkindly as he looked with her."

Fernie won't do anything to course; they call it Long End age."

"And he lives there alone?"

She looked away from him acreiver.

"It's his own fault." she sa rather a hard voice. "He had a but she ran away from him. I know, but they say he was a cruel to her. At any rate she ran—oh, years ago:—and took thei is eyes were not unkindly as he looked t the young man's flushed face.

Anne came forward. 'This is my fance, Mr. Fernie,' she said quietly, 'Mr. John Smith.' There was a moment's silence, then "Shall we go for a walk?" It was the old man bowed with rather exag-

gerated courtesy.
"I am pleased to meet you, Mr. "I am pleased to meet you. Mr. John Smith had been found. Anne stopped in the entrance with a little stopped

feel that I trust him."
The Fortune Hunter laughed. "Oh,

"Was he? There's something about heart. Was it he for whom she cared seves—" she broke off to add after or the dead man? He put an arm his eyes moment, "don't let us talk about him; around her and drew her to him with

I never meant to upset him. I lost my temper, I admit. I'll find him when we get back."

But Temmy was nowhere about, and after a vain search for him the Fortune Hunter went up to the disused room at be toy of the house where they had arried John Smith's luggage to be out

It stood in a forlorn hear beneath small gabled window, the sunlight, shich had struggled out from behind he rain clouds, shining down on it and tlining the many labels and the dead nan's initials with painful distinct-

One of the boxes had been opened; ts lid was forced back, but none of the hings had as yet been disturbed. There ere a few clothes, some colored shirts bat looked as if they had never been form, and a lot of paners thrown un-idily together. The Fortune Hunter got vague glimpse of them before, with savage gesture, he raised the open lid

slammed it down again. He had no use for a dead man's sings, and a vague wave of superstiswept through him, as he turned back on them and went down the tairs again to his own room.

He felt quieter now and ashamed of

is outburst of temper. He supposed aguely that he had been unwise and ad probably made an enemy for life of nne's brother. it could not be helped. He

rugged his shoulders philosophically. every moment he seemed to be alking more deeply into the mire; the aly thing was to go on until he either nquered it or let it conquer him. The gong sounded, and he went down dinner, to find Anne at the tuble

The Fortune Hunter looked round. Where is every one—your uncle—

ommy?"
"Tommy will not come in to dinner. Tommy will not come in to unner.

is very upset with you, John. He long tyou would be pleased if he manand to onen the box. It was rather

Wherever I may be—
For there's no friend waiting along the highways he Fortune Hunter flushed crimson, Where is the boy? I'll go and find im." He started to the door, but nine stopped him, "No, please, don't. is better left to himself when e is like this. I know him so well; he'll looking into the garden with moody

The Fortune Hunter hesitated, then ok his sent at the table. "Very well. am sorry if I upset him. I am afraid am rather a bad-tempered devil!" voice was rough and ashamed. Anne smiled. "You never used to be.

"No!" he laughed, ruefully, meether eye. "It's not the only way in hich you will find I have changed." he

She got up, came round, and laid we hands on his shoulders, standing be-ind him so that he could not see her

"I don't mind how much you have ged," she said. "It's you I love. turned his head with a quick.

ed movement, and brushed her with his lips. "You're an angel!" said, rather hoarsely.

. Harding came in at that mo-"Late, am I?" he said, briskly. m sorry, my dear. The time flies so a really must forgive me." He looked and. "Where's the boy?"

"He's not coming in to dinner. He is not bungry." It was Anne o spoke, but the Fortune Hunter in-

am afraid he is angry with me. not some keys and opened the my and I snapped his head off. It's ault, I'm sorry."

Harding said "D r me!" very mildly. "Tommy is rather sensitive. You must not take any notice of his little ways," but his eyes sought the young man's face sharply for an instant before he changed the subject.

When dinner was ended the Fortune Hunter made another attempt to find

When dinner was ended the Fortune Hunter made another attempt to find Tom. "Let me go and look for him. Where is he likely to be?"

Anne shook her head. "I don't know. He wanders off by himself for hours at a time. Let've him alone, John," she smiled, suddenly. "If you want to be particularly nice to him when he be particularly nice to him when he comes in hunt up the bearskin."

The Fortune Hunter flushed and frowned, but he answered quietly enough: "Very well, if he really wants it."

They wandered out into the garden together again, and sat down on the narrow steps that led down to the river.

"It's very dull here in Somerton,"
Anne said suddenly. "I wonder how soon you will be tired of it, John?"

"When you are tired of me, perhaps."

for uncle and go about with Tommy,

hurt. I thought—I was alread would be hurt."

He laughed. "It was nothing!" He tuned to Fernie. "What frightened the poor brute?" he asked.

Ternie found his voice with an effort. "There's a little cottage on the bank about half a mile along. It's a tumble-down place, but rather picturesque. Fernie won't do anything to it, of sourse; they call it Long End Cottage."

She looked away from him across the

river.

"It's his own fault." she said, in rather a hard voice. "He had a wife, but she ran away from him. I don't know, but they say he was awfully cruel to her. At any rate she ran away -oh, years ago -and took their child

with her."
"Well, you can hardly blame her when you look at the old man," the Fortune Hunter admitted whimsically. He rose to his feet.

the village and past the wood where John Smith had been found. Anne

man was. Fortune Hunter laughed. "Oh, He gianced down at the pretty face beside him—grave now and a little and—and a throb of jealousy touched his

and, John—

"If you—if you could make it up with Tommy." Her voice was hesiwith Tommy." Her voice was hesiwith a moment, nonindex of the man you thought I was—all those years ago?"
She looked up, flushing sensitively;

then her eyes feil. "I think it's you, she said at last, "because since you've been here somehow I seem to have forgotten all that happened-all those years ago.

"I wish you could forget utterly." he said; then he let her go, and his face

was moody as they walked on.
He tried in vain to shake off his melancholy, but it clung like a mantle; he was bitterly angry with himself to that little scene with Tommy; he liked the boy, and had not wished to hurt him, apart from the tactlessness of such

"Does Tommy often stay away like this?" he asked abruptly, and Anne admitted that he had done so before.
"I wish he would come home, though," she added uneasily: "I daresay he's down at Long End Cottage with Fernie. He has a wonderful collection of curios there, you know, and Tommy loves them.

"He doesn't share your dislike of Fernie, then?" the Fortune Hunter said dryly. Anne shook her head. "No,

they are quite triends."

They went back through the garden and into the drawing room. Anne walked over to the plane and sat down. idly turning over the pages of a song that stood on the rack.

The Fortune stanter stood at the open window, smoking, and watching her across the room.
"A penny for your thoughts," he

said suddenly. As she did not answer he moved across and took the song from her hands, reading the words on the open page aloud:

"When you're jog, jog, joggin' along the white road With your luck all upside down. Well, you don't much care if you're

When you're bound for nowhere 'I'm just as happy in the byways, my

He laughed, shrugged his shoulders, and laid the music down again on the piano. "It might have been written about me." he said unthinkingly, and went back to the window

eyes. What was he doing here when the road was his place—the road where, in spite of many hardships, he had known much simple happiness during

his wanderings?
"What are you thinking about. John?" Anne asked. She was watching him across the room with troubled eyes. He turned abruptly, not daring to trust himself to look at her. thinking that I must get Tommy's bearskin," he said.

He went upstairs to the attic, where the moonlight was poking inquisitive fingers among John Smith's boxes, the words of the song ringing in his ears: "For there's no friend waiting along

the highway For a vagabond like me."

Would that be true of him again he wondered. It almost some day? he wondered. It almost seemed as if it lay with him at this moment to choose, as he stood there, hesitating to open the closed lid of the box before him; then, suddenly he moved, stooped and flung back the lid, and, going down on his knees on the wooden floor, began slowly to take out the contents.

Clothes; most of them new, and apparently unworn; a few books; a few photographs of towns and wide stretches of prairie, a number of letters and a diary on loose sheets of paper.

CONTINUED TOMORROW



NO! I'LL FOOL HER- I'LL CALL UP FRANK BENRING AND
I'LL GET A RESERVATION - I'LL GET
THE BEST TABLE IN THE HOUSE -I DON'T CARE IF IT TAKES THE FAMILY JEWELS - I'M GONNA BUST LOOSE FOR ONE NIGHTI'LL SHOW THAT OLD KANGAROOF
THAT HE CAM'T STICK MY
FAMILY IN DRY DOCK ON NEW YEAR'S EVE-By Hayward



The Young Lady Across the Way

The young lady across the way says the weather bureau is almost always wrong and here it reports only one inch of rainfall when many of the puddles were four or five

THE SUBMARINE ATTACK By FONTAINE FOX AFTER HIS EXPERIENCE IN THE BATH TUB THE OTHER MORNING ... THAT EVEN A MAMUHAN

SCHOOL DAYS WELL IM GOHNA TRY HOT TO DO NOTHIN THE PLL HASE TO SWEAR OFF CH HEXT WHATCHA SONNA 1.1 THOUGHT SWEAR OFF ? QUIT MURDER TRAIN ROBBIN 5 YEAR-LIKE GOOD INTENDERS -2



