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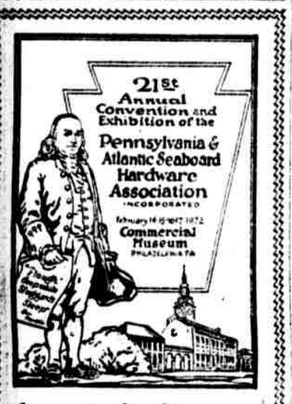

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This firm is an old established one of 65 years' standing, its annual sales amounting to over $400,000.

A lease for 10 years for the buildings will be given to the purchaser.

The stores will close Saturday night, February 18, 1922, at 11 o'clock, and remain closed until after bids are opened on March 1st. During this period an inspection of the stock will be permitted. Sealed bids must be sent, addressed "Sealed bid, B. Rosenour & Sons," care Citizens National Bank, Frederick, Md. They will be opened 12 o'clock noon, Wednesday, March 1, 1922. Certified check for $5000, payable to order of B. Rosenour & Sons must accompany each bid. The right to reject any and all bids is hereby reserved.

Further information can be obtained by calling on or communicating with the undersigned or Leo Weinberg, attorney for the estate, Frederick, Md.

BENJAMIN ROSENOUR,
GERSON ROSENOUR,
Surviving Partners
Frederick, Md.

TANGLED TRAILS

By WILLIAM MacLEOD RAINE
Author of "A Man Four-Square," "Gunsight Pass," etc.

Copyright, 1922, by William MacLeod Raine

THIS BEGINS THE STORY

James Cunningham is rich and ruthless. He turns down the plea of a girl who has a claim on him and kicks out a man who says Cunningham owes him a share on a business deal. She is the sister of Wild Rose, a riding girl, who tells her sister's troubles to Kirby Lane, an upstanding and chivalrous cowboy. Kirby takes up the matter with Jack and James, his two cousins, favored proteges of James Cunningham, who demand to know the name of the girl. When he goes to his uncle's apartment he finds the man chloroformed, bound and dead. The murder had been committed by a left-handed person. On a table is a glove, one he had seen on Wild Rose. Both Lane and Wild Rose are at the inquest, also a woman whose photograph, signed "Phyllis," was in the dead man's room. Lane is arrested for the murder, but released on bail. Rose reveals she also had been in Cunningham's apartment the night of the murder. Hull, the man thrown out of Cunningham's apartment, Jack and Phyllis, a society girl, to whom Cunningham had been engaged, are also known to have been in the room the night of the murder. Lane and his cowboy chum, Sanborn, discover that Olson, a rancher, had been in a room near the apartment. The Jap valet is discovered dead. Esther, Rose's sister, disappears. Lane thinks the elder Cunningham had married her, and that the two cousins had abducted her in order to have her sign away her rights as an heir. He discovers, too, that the younger James Cunningham had married Phyllis, secretly. As the dead man was about to disinherit James, suspicion begins to point at him and Phyllis. An anonymous letter brings Kirby to an out-of-the-way office building, where a mysterious attempt is made to kill him. Sanborn finds and marries Rose's sister after discovering that the younger James was the guilty person, not his murdered uncle.

AND HERE IT CONTINUES

CHAPTER XXXIII
Olson Tells a Story

WHEN Rose heard from Esther next day she and Kirby took the Interurban for Golden. Esther had written that she wanted to see her sister because Cole was going to take her back to Wyoming at once.

The sisters wept in each other's arms and then passed together into Esther's bedroom for an intimate talk. The younger sister was still happy only in moments of forgetfulness, though she had been rescued from death in life. Cole had found her comfortably situated at a farmhouse a mile or two back from the canyon. She had gone there under the urge of her need, at the instigation of James Cunningham, who could not afford to have the scandal of his relations with her become public at the same time as the announcement of his marriage to Phyllis Harriman. The girl loved Cole and trusted him. Her heart went out to him in a warm glow of gratitude. But the shadow of her fault was a barrier in her mind between them, and would be long after his kindness had melted the ice in her bosom.

"We've got it all fixed up to tell how we was married when I come down to Denver last April only we kep' it quiet because she wanted to hold her job a while," Cole explained to his friend. "Once I get her back there in God's hills she'll sure enough forget all about this trouble. The way I look at it she was jus' like a li'l' kid that takes a misstep in the dark an' falls an' hurts itself. You know how a wounded deer can look at a fellow so sorrowful an' hurt. Well, tha's how her brown eyes looked at me when I come round the corner o' the house up Platte Canyon an' seen her sittin' there starin' at hell."

Kirby shook hands with him in a sudden stress of emotion. "You'll do to take along, old alkali, you sure enough will."

"Oh, shucks!" retorted Cole, between disgust and embarrassment. "I always claimed to be a white man, didn't I? You can't give a fellow credit for doin' the thing he'd rather do than anything else. But prod a peg in this. I'm gonna make that li'l' girl plumb happy. She thinks she won't be, that she's lost the right to be. She's 'way off. I can see her perkin' up already. I got a real honest-to-God laugh outa her this mo'nin'."

Kirby knew the patience, the steadiness and the kindliness of his friend. Esther had fallen into the best of hands. She would find again the joy of life. He had no doubt of that. Gayety and laughter were of her heritage.

He said as much to Rose on the way home. She agreed. For the first time since she left Cheyenne the girl was her old self. Esther's problem had been solved far more happily than she had dared to hope.

"I'm goin' to have a gay time apologizin' to Jack," said Kirby, his eyes dancing. "It's not so blamed funny at that, but I can't help laughin' every time I think of how he must 'a' been grinnin' up his sleeve at me for my fool mistake. I'll say he brought it on himself, though. He was feelin' guilty on his brother's account, an' I didn't get his embarrassment right. James is a pretty cool customer. From first to last he never turned a hair when the subject was mentioned."

"What about him?" Rose asked.

The cattleman pretended alarm. "Now, don't you," he remonstrated. "Don't you expect me to manhandle James, too. I'm like Napoleon. Another victory like the battle of last night would sure put me in the hospital. I'm a peaceable citizen, a poor, lone cowboy far away from home. Where I come from it's as quiet as a peace conference. This wildest-Denver stuff gets my nerve."

She smiled into his battered face. A dimple nestled in her soft, warm cheek. "I see it does. It's a pity about you. I didn't suppose your cousin Jack had it in him to spoil your beauty like that."

"Neither did I," he said, answering her smile. "I sure picked on the wrong man. He's one handy lad with his dibs—put me down twice before we decided to call it off. I like that young fellow."

"Better not like him too much. You may have to work against him yet."

"True enough," he admitted, falling grave again. "As to James, we'll ride close herd on him for a while, but we'll ride wide. Looks to me like he may have to face a jury an' fight for his life right soon."

"Do you think he killed your uncle?"

"I don't want to think so. He's a bad egg, I'm afraid. But my father's sister was his mother. I'd hate to have to believe it."

"But in your heart you do believe it," she said gently.

He looked at her. "I'm afraid so. But that's a long way from knowing it."

They parted at her boarding house.

A man rose to meet Kirby when he stepped into the rotunda of his hotel. He was a gaunt, broad-shouldered man with ragged eyebrows.

"Well, I came," he said, and his voice was harsh.

"Glad to see you, Mr. Olson. Come up to my room. We can talk there more freely."

The Scandinavian rancher followed him to the elevator and from there to his room.

"Why don't they arrest Hull?" he demanded as soon as the door was closed.

"Not evidence enough."

"Suppose I can give evidence. Say I practically saw Hull do it. Would they arrest him—or me?"

"They'd arrest him," Kirby answered. "They don't know you're the man who wrote the threatening letter."

"Hmp!" grunted the rancher suspiciously. "That's what you say, but you're not the whole works."

Kirby offered a chair and a cigar. He sat down on the bed himself. "Better spill your story to me, Olson. Two heads are better than one," he said carelessly.

"We've come for a settlement," she said. "An' we're goin' to have it right now"

The Swede's sullen eyes bored into him. Before that frank and engaging smile his doubts lost force. "I got to take a chance. Might as well be with you as any one."

The Wyoming man struck a match, held it for the use of his guest, then lit his own cigar. For a few moments they smoked in silence. Kirby leaned back easily against the head of the bed. He did not intend to frighten the rancher by hurrying him.

"When Cunningham worked that crooked irrigation scheme of his on Dry Valley, I reckon I was one of them that hollered the loudest. Prob'ly I talked foolish about what all I was gonna do about it. I wan't blowin' off hot air, either. If I'd got a good chance at him, or at Hull either, I would surely have called for a showdown an' gunned him if I could. But that wasn't what I came to Denver for. I had to arrange about gettin' my mortgage renewed."

He stopped and took a nervous puff or two at the cigar. Kirby nodded in a friendly fashion without speaking. He did not want by anything he might say to divert the man's mind from the track it was following.

"I took the room at the Wyndham because the place had been recommended to me by a neighbor of mine who knew the landlady. When I went there I didn't know that either Cunningham or Hull lived next door. That's a God's truth. I didn't. Well, I saw Hull go in there the very day I got to town, but the first I knew yore uncle lived there was ten or maybe fifteen minutes before he was killed. I wouldn't say but what it was twenty minutes, come to that. I wasn't payin' no attention to time."

Olson's eyes challenged those of his host. His suspicion was still smoldering. An unhappy remark, a look of distrust, might still have dried up the stream of his story. But he found in that steady regard nothing more damnatory than a keen, boyish interest.

"Maybe you recollect how hot those days were. Well, in my cheap, stuffy room, openin' on an airshaft, it was hotter 'n hell with the lid on. When I couldn't stand it any longer, I went out into the corridor an' down it to the fire-escape, outside the window. It was a lot cooler there. I lit a stogie an' sat on the railin' smokin', maybe for a quarter of an hour. By-an'-by some one come into the apartment right across the alley from me.

"I could see the lights come on. It was a man. I saw him step into what must be the bedroom. He moved around there some. I couldn't tell what he was doin' because he didn't switch on the light, but he must 'a' been changin' to his easy coat an' his slippers. I know that because he came into the room just opposite the fire-escape where I was sittin' on the rail. He threw on the lights, an' I saw him plain. It was Cunningham, the old crook, who had beat me outa fifteen hundred dollars."

Kirby smoked steadily, evenly. Not a flicker of the eyelids showed the excitement racing through his blood. At last he was coming close to the heart of the mystery that surrounded the deaths of his uncle and his valet.

"I reckon I saw red for a minute," Olson continued. "If I'd been carryin' a gun I might 'a' used it right there an' then. But I hadn't one, lucky for me. He sat down in a big easychair an' took a paper from his pocket. It looked like some kind of a legal document. He read it through, then stuck it in one o' the cubby-holes of his desk. I forgot to say he was smokin', an' not a stogie like I was, but a big cigar he'd unwrapped from silver paper after takin' it from a boxful."

"He lighted the cigar after coming into the small room," Kirby said, in the voice of a question.

"Yes. Didn't I say so? Took it from a box on a stand near the chair. Well, when he got through with the paper he leaned back an' kinda shut his eyes like he was thinkin' somethin' over. All of a sudden I saw him straighten up an' get rigid. Before he could rise from the chair a woman came into the room an' after her a man.

"The man was Cass Hull."

CHAPTER XXXIV
From the Fire-Escape

"The woman—what was she like?"

"She was tall an' thin an' flat-chested. I didn't know her at the time, but it must 'a' been Hull's wife."

"You said you didn't know what time this was," Kirby said.

"No. My old watch had quit doin' business an' I hated to spend the money to get it fixed. The main spring was busted, a jeweler told me."

"Who spoke first after they came into the room?"

"Yore uncle. He laid the cigar down on the stand an' asked them what they wanted. He didn't rise from the chair, but his voice rasped when he spoke. It was the woman answered. She took the lead all through. 'We've come for a settlement,' she said. 'An' we're goin' to have it right now.' He stiffened up at that. He come back at her with, 'You can't get no shot-gun settlement outa me.' Words just poured from that woman's mouth. She roasted him to a turn, told how he was crooked as a dog's hind leg an' every deal he touched was dirty. Said he couldn't even be square to his own partners, that he couldn't get a man, woman or child in Colorado to say he'd ever done a good act. Believe me, she laid him out proper, an' every word of it was true, far as I know.

"Well, sir, that old reprobate uncle of yours never batted an eye. He slid down in his chair a little so's he could be comfortable while he listened. He grinned up at her like she was some kind of specimen had broke loose from a circus an' he was interested in the way it acted. That didn't calm her down none. She rip-r'ared right along, with a steady flow of words, mostly adjectives. Finally she quit, an' she was plumb white with anger. 'Quite through?' yore uncle asked with that ice-cold voice of his. She asked him what he intended to do about a settlement. 'Not a thing,' he told her. 'I did aim to give Hull two thousand to get rid of him. But I've changed my mind, ma'am. You can go whistle for it.'

"Two thousand! Did he say two thousand?"

Kirby leaned forward eagerly.

"That's what he said. Two thousand," answered Olson.

"Then that explains why he drew so much from the bank that day."

"I had it figured out so. If the woman hadn't come at him with that acid tongue of hers he'd intended to buy Hull off cheap. But she got his gorge up. He wouldn't stand for her line of talk."

"What took place then?" the cattleman questioned.

"Still without rising from the chair, Cunningham ordered them to get out. Hull was standin' kinda close to him. He had his back to me. Cunningham reached out an' opened a drawer of the stand beside him. The fat man took a step forward. I could see his gun flash in the light. He swung it down on yore uncle's head an' the old man crumpled up."

"So it was Hull killed him, after all," Kirby said, drawing a long breath of relief.

Then, to his surprise when he thought about it later, a glitter of malicious cunning lit the eyes of the rancher.

"That's what I'm tellin' you. It was Hull. I stood there an' saw just what I've been givin' you."

"Was my uncle senseless then?"

"You bet he was. His head sagged clear over against the back of the chair."

"What did they do then?"

"That's where I drop out. Mrs. Hull stepped straight to the window. I crouched down back of the railin'. It was dark an' she didn't see me. She pulled the blind down. I waited there awhile an' afterward there was the sound of a shot. That would be when they sent the bullet through the old man's brain."

"What did you do?"

"I didn't know what to do. I'd talked a lot of wild talk about how Cunningham ought to be shot or strung up to a pole. If I went to the police with my story, like enough they'd light on me as the killer. I milled the whole thing over. After a while I went into a public booth downtown an' 'phoned to the police. You recollect maybe the paper spoke about the man who called up headquarters with the news of Cunningham's death."

"Yes, I recollect that all right."

Kirby did not smile. He did not explain that he was the man. But he resolved to find out whether two men had notified the police of his uncle's death. If not, Olson was lying in at least one detail. He had a suspicion that the man had not given him the whole truth. He was telling part of it, but he was holding back something. A sly and furtive look in his eyes helped to build this impression in the mind of the man who listened to the story.

"You didn't actually see Hull fire the shot that killed my uncle, then?"

Olson hesitated a fraction of a second. "No."

"You don't know that it was he that fired it."

"No, it might 'a' been the woman. But it ain't likely he handed her the gun to do it with, is it? For that matter I don't know that the crack over the head didn't kill Cunningham. Maybe it did."

"That's all you saw?"

Again the almost imperceptible hesitation. Then, "That's all," the Dry Valley rancher said sullenly.

"What kind of a gun was it?" Kirby asked.

"Too far away. Couldn't be sure."

"Big as a .45?"

"Couldn't 'a' been. The evidence was that it was done with an automatic."

"The evidence was that the wound in the head was probably made by a bullet from an automatic. We're talkin' now about the blow on the head."

"What are you drivin' at?" the rancher asked, scowling. "He wouldn't bring two different kinds of gun with him. That's a cinch."

"No; but we haven't proved yet he fired the shot you heard later. The chances are all that he did, but legally we have no evidence that somebody else didn't do it."

"I guess a jury would be satisfied he fired it all right."

"Probably. It looks bad for Hull. Don't you think you ought to go to the police with your story? Then we can have Hull arrested. They'll give him the third degree. My opinion is he'll break down under it and confess."

Olson consented with obvious reluctance, but he made a condition precedent to his acceptance. "Le' 's see Hull first, just you 'n' me. I ain't strong for the police. We'll go to them when we've got an open an' shut case."

Kirby considered. This story didn't wholly fit the facts as he knew them. For instance, there was no explanation in it of how the room where Cunningham was found murdered had become saturated with the odor of chloroform. Nor was it in character that Hull should risk firing a gun, the sound of which might bring detection on him, while his victim lay helpless before him. Another blow or two on the skull would have served his purpose noiselessly. The cattleman knew from his observation of this case that the authorities had a way of muddling things. Perhaps it would be better to wait until the difficulties had been smoothed out before going to them.

"That suits me," he said. "We'll tackle Hull when his wife isn't with him. He goes downtown every day about ten o'clock. We'll pick him up in a taxi, run him out into the country somewhere, an' put him over the jumps. The sooner the quicker. How about to-morrow morning?"

"Suits me, too. But will he go with us?"

"He'll go with us," Kirby said quietly.

To be continued tomorrow

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