

"PAWNED"

An Unusual Romance of People Whose Very Being is Pledged to the Bidding of Ours
By FRANK L. PACKARD
Author of "The Miracle Man," "From Now On," etc.
Copyright, 1922, by Public Ledger Company

THIS BEGINS THE STORY
John Bruce, a young cabinet-maker, was to be married to his little, motherly daughter, who was to be his wife, and he was to be brought up without knowledge of his real father until he was twenty. His father, a man of great wealth, had been killed in a fire, and his fortune had been lost. His mother, a woman of great wealth, had been killed in a fire, and her fortune had been lost. His father, a man of great wealth, had been killed in a fire, and his fortune had been lost. His mother, a woman of great wealth, had been killed in a fire, and her fortune had been lost.



John Bruce made no resistance as the two men jerked him unceremoniously to his feet

AND HERE IT CONTINUES
"Who I am?" he repeated. "What do you mean?"
Crang for the moment was silent. He seemed to be waging a battle with himself to control his passion.
"I'm too clever a man to lose my temper, now I've got you," he rasped finally. "That's about the size of your mentality! The sweet, naive, innocent role! Yes, I said a sniveling hypocrite! You don't eat dough, but perhaps you've heard of a man named Laron—Mr. Gilbert Laron, of San Francisco."
To John Bruce it seemed as though Crang's words in their effect were something like one of those blows the same man had dealt him on his wounded side in that fight of the other night. They seemed to jar him, and rob his mind of quick thinking and vitality—and yet he was quite sure that not a muscle of his face had moved.
"You needn't answer," Crang grinned mockingly. "If you haven't met him, you'll have the opportunity of doing so in a few hours. Mr. Laron will arrive in New York tonight in response to the telegram you sent him."
"I know you said you were clever," said John Bruce shortly. "and I have no doubt this is the proof of it. But what is the idea? I did not send a telegram to any one."
"Oh, yes, you did," Crang was chuckling evilly. "There was something to the effect that Mr. Laron's immediate presence in New York was imperative; that you were in serious difficulties; and in order that Mr. Laron should be no suspicious or anxiously aroused as to his own personal safety, he was to go on his arrival to the Bayne-Miley Hotel, but was, at the same time, to register under the name of H. L. Laron, and to make no effort to communicate with you until you gave him the cue. The answer to the telegram was to be sent to a quite different address, and here's the answer."
His revolver leveled, Crang laid a telegram on the table, and then backed away a few steps.
John Bruce picked up the message. It was dated from San Francisco several days before, and was authentic beyond question. It was addressed to John Bruce in the care of one William Anderson, at an address which he took to be somewhere over on the East Side. He read it quickly:
"Leaving at once and will follow instructions. Arrive Wednesday night. Am exceedingly anxious."
GILBERT LARON.
"This is Wednesday night," sneered Crang.
John Bruce laid down the telegram. That Crang in some way had discovered his, John Bruce's connection with Laron, was obvious. But how—and what did it mean? He smiled sadly. "I guess there was no use in playing the fool by denying any knowledge of Laron. It was simply a question of exactly how much Crang knew."
"Well," he inquired indifferently. "The door was pushed open, and Birdie came in. He carried pen and ink, a large sheet of paper, and an envelope."
Crang motioned toward the table. "Put them down there—and get out!" he ordered curtly; and then as the man obeyed, he stared for an instant in malicious silence at John Bruce. "I guess we're wasting time," he snapped. "I want the telegram to Laron a few days ago, and I know all about you and Laron, and his ring of gambling houses. You talked your fool head off when you were delicious—understand? And—"
John Bruce, his face suddenly white, took a step forward—and stopped, and shrugged his shoulders. Crang's outburst was on a level with his eyes. And then John Bruce turned his back deliberately, and walked to the far end of the little room.
Crang laughed wickedly.
"I am afraid I committed a breach of medical etiquette," he said. "I sent to San Francisco and got the dope on the quiet about this Mr. Laron. I found out that he is an enormously wealthy man; and I also found out that he poses as an immaculate pillar of society. It looks pretty good, doesn't it, Bruce—for you? Two birds with one stone; you for trying to get between me and Claire; and Laron coughing up the dough to save your hide and save himself from being exposed for what he is!"
John Bruce made no answer. They were not so fanciful now, not so unreal and wandering, as those dreams when he had been ill, those dreams in which there had been a man with a quill toothpick, and another with a sinister, loathsome face, whose head was always cocked in a listening attitude.
"Well, I guess you've got it now, all of it, haven't you?" Crang sneered. "It's lucky for you Laron's got the coin, or I'd pass you out for what you did the other night. As it is, you're getting out of it light. There's paper on the table. You write him a letter that will get him down here with a blank check in his pocket. I'll help you to word it." Crang smiled unpleasantly.
"He will be quite comfortable here while the check is going through the bank; for it would be most unfortunate, you know, if he had a chance to stop payment on it. And I might say that I am not worrying at all about any reprisals through the tracing of the check afterward, for if Mr. Laron is paying me to keep my mouth shut there is no fear of his opening his own."
John Bruce turned slowly around.
"And if I don't?" he asked quietly.
Crang studied the revolver in his hand for a moment. He looked up finally with a smile that was hideous in its malignancy.
"I'm not sure that I particularly care," he said. "You are going to get out of my path in any case, though my personal inclination is to snuff you out—and his voice rose suddenly—
"Come you, I'd like to see you dead on the other hand, my business

compliment of crediting you with a tricking intelligence than you possess! I'll give you thirty minutes alone to think over and figure out where you stand."
Crang backed to the door.
The door closed. John Bruce heard the key turn in the lock. He stared about him at the miserable surroundings. "Thirty minutes! He did not need thirty minutes, or thirty seconds, to realize his position. He was not even sure that he was thankful for the reprieve. It meant half an hour more of life, but—"
Cornered like a rat? To go out at the hands of a degenerate dope fiend out in the name of John Bruce?
"You seem to have taken it for granted that I would agree to your proposal," said John Bruce pleasantly.
"I have," Crang answered shortly. "I give you credit for some respects for not being altogether a fool."
"In other words," said John Bruce, "if I will trap Mr. Laron into coming here so that you will have him in your power, and can hold him until you have squeezed out of him what you consider the fair amount he should pay as blackmail, or what he has earned, perhaps, if he is obstinate, I am to go free and sail for South America tomorrow afternoon, falling free, I am in snuff out—"
"I think you ought to—"
"Other yourself or this gentlemanly looking band of apaches you have gathered around you."
"You haven't made any mistake so far," said Crang evenly. He jerked his hand toward the table. "It's that piece of paper there, or your hide."
"Yes," said John Bruce slowly. "He started for an instant, set-faced, into Crang's eyes. "Well, then, go ahead!"
Crang's eyes narrowed.
"You mean," his voice was hoarse with menace, "you mean—"
"Yes," said John Bruce tersely. "My hide."
Crang did not answer for a moment. The revolver in his hand seemed to edge a little nearer to John Bruce as though to make more certain of its aim. Crang's eyes were alight with passion.
John Bruce did not move. It was over—this second—or the next, Crang's threats were literal. "Claire had said so. He knew it. It was in Crang's eyes—a sort of unholy joy, a madman's frenzy. "Well, why didn't the man fire and have done with it?"
And then suddenly Crang's shoulders lifted in a mocking shrug.
"Maybe you haven't got the straight," he said between closed teeth. "I guess I've paid you the

always turn the sheet and begin at the top on the other side.
Again he began to pace up and down across the soft floor, but now there was a grim smile on his face. Behind Laron and his enormous wealth lay Laron's secret organization, that once set in motion, would have little difficulty in laying a dozen Crangs by the heels. And Crang was yellow. Let Crang but for an instant realize that his own skin was at stake, and he would squeal without hesitation—and what had narrowly escaped being tragedy would dissolve into opera bouffe. Also, it was very nice indeed of Crang to see that the message reached Laron's hands!
And it was the way out for Claire, too! It was Crang who had mentioned something about two birds with one stone, wasn't it? Claire! John Bruce frowned. Was he so sure after all? There seemed to be something unfaithful between Claire and Crang; the bond between them one that no ordinary means would break.
His brain seemed to go around in circles now—Claire, Laron, Crang, Claire, Laron, Crang. "He lost track of time—until suddenly he heard a key rattle in the lock. And then, quick and silent as a cat in his movements, he slipped across the earth-

on floor, and flung himself face down upon the mattress.
A moment more, and some one prodded him roughly. His hair was rumpled, his face anxious and dejected, as he raised himself on his elbow. Crang and two of his apaches were standing over him. One of the latter held an ugly looking stiletto.
"Stand him up!" ordered Crang.
John Bruce made no resistance as the two men jerked him unceremoniously to his feet.
Crang came and stared into his face.
"I guess from the look of you," Crang leered, "you've put in those thirty minutes to good advantage. You're about ready to write that letter, aren't you?"
John Bruce looked around him miserably. He shook his head.
"No—no—I can't," he said weakly. "For God's sake, Crang, you— you know I can't!"
"Sure—I know," said Crang imperturbably. He nodded to the man with the stiletto. "He's more used to steel than bullets, and he likes it better. Don't keep him waiting."
John Bruce felt the sudden prick of the weapon on his flesh—it went a little deeper.
"Wait! Stop!" he screamed out in a well-stimulated paroxysm of terror. "I'll write it."
"I thought so," said Crang coolly. "Well, go over there to the table then and sit down." He turned to the two men. "Beat it!" he snapped—and the room empty again, save for himself and John Bruce, he tapped the sheet of paper with the muzzle of his revolver. "I'll dictate. Pick up that pen!"
To be continued tomorrow

HOWARD VINCENT Pianos Money-Saving Sale

It will pay you to act quickly, as there will be a great rush for these new 88-note metal tube double-action players.

This New 88-Note Player \$289

Sold on Terms

SALE PRICE NOW \$52

We have hundreds of used uprights taken in exchange, also many new pianos and player-pianos which must be sold at once to make room for our newer models which are arriving daily from the factory.

FREE We are giving away one \$150 talking machine for the best written story regarding Howard Vincent Pianos. Guaranteed 25 years. Contest expires April 25th, 1922. Address all answers to Dept. O.

YOUR OLD PIANO TAKEN IN EXCHANGE
Open Monday, Wednesday and Friday Evenings During This Sale

HOWARD VINCENT
836-838-840-842-844-846 NORTH SIXTH ST.

Still Two Days

Today and tomorrow are still open for you to visit the National Business Show.

"Next week" will be too late! Don't put off this wonderful opportunity to bring your business into line with the latest modern developments.

There is an experienced specialist in every branch of business administration ready to explain fully everything you want to know.

Make a note now.

Any time between 1 and 10 p.m. today or tomorrow.

The National Business Show is not a sales organization but an Exposition of the latest and best ideas in business efficiency and economy.

Go to the **National Business Show** COMMERCIAL MUSEUM, PHILADELPHIA.

1 to 10 P.M. Daily all this Week

The right letter to increase sales

YOUR sales letter to be effective must carry a direct, well-told message—and carry it well.
Writing the message is your work. The carrying of it—which depends on good paper and good printing—is a job for your printer. And he has many sources of practical help in direct selling.
When he prints your sales letter on Danish Bond, you may be sure it's a paper worthy to represent you. Your printer will tell you that Danish Bond is a mighty good rag paper—with a crackle and "feel" that you know for quality. Danish Bond fulfills many requirements—letter-heads, announcements, envelope inserts, folders included. Water-marked in white and 10 colors. Ask your printer to see samples. This superior bond paper is one of the line water-marked Danish. Also Danish linen, ledger, cover and pasted and index Bristol.
Printers: We will be glad to send you samples of Danish Bond at your request.

DANISH BOND
ONE OF THE LINE OF DANISH WATER-MARKED PAPERS
Made in the hills of Berkshire County
By the B. D. RISING PAPER COMPANY
Housatonic, Mass.
And sold by GARRETT-BUCHANAN COMPANY, Philadelphia, Pa.

Skin unsightly caused by errors of diet

Fleischmann's fresh yeast corrects the cause

A well-known skin specialist says that skin disorders are "signal flags of danger," often indicating errors in diet. Indeed skin eruptions are so frequently associated with faulty habits of eating and improper indigestion that the first thing to do is to see that our food is right. Fresh yeast is a wonderful corrective food for these skin disorders. Fleischmann's Yeast is rich in the elements which improve appetite and digestion and which keep the intestines clean of poisons. Physicians and hospitals all over the country are recommending Fleischmann's fresh yeast for skin eruptions and boils. It gets right at the basic cause of these complaints. Eat 2 to 3 cakes of Fleischmann's fresh yeast daily before or between meals to keep your skin healthy. Place a standing order with your grocer.

The familiar tin-foil package with the yellow label is the only form in which Fleischmann's Yeast is sold.

The tire mileage is unusually high

Dodge Brothers Sedan

Sedan, \$1440 Coupe, \$1280 Touring Car, \$880 Roadster, \$850 Panel Business Car, \$980 Screen Business Car, \$880 F. O. B. Detroit

THORNTON-FULLER AUTOMOBILE COMPANY
Parkway, East of 18th St. Phone, Spruce 1040

Lemon PUDDINE

Think of it! A wonderful cream, never fudged with sugar, a truly lemon taste. You need only take the first spoonful to be convinced of its deliciousness. There are seven other flavors. Recipe folder on request.

At All Grocers, 10c, 15c
Fruit Pudding Co., Baltimore, Md.

AMERICAN STORES CO. AMERICAN

Interesting Facts about Coffee

From the countries of production, the coffee comes to us in a raw or green state. The berries originally are red, then turn a greenish shade. It is the roasting process that turns them brown and brings out the aroma.

Great care must be taken in transporting the coffee here from the tropics. It is consequently packed in heavy bags and every precaution exercised in stowing in the vessel's hold to insure freedom from contact with any foreign substance that would mar its delicate flavor.

This is watched closely and looked after very carefully by expert stevedores, so that our coffee comes to us in all its virgin purity.

More interesting facts about coffee next Friday!

ASCO Coffee 25c lb

"You'll taste the difference!"

Sold only in Asco Stores, located all over Phila. and throughout Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware and Maryland.