

The PRICE

By FRANCIS LYNDE

ILLUSTRATIONS by C.D. RHODES

SYNOPSIS.

Kenneth Griswold, an unsuccessful writer because of socialist tendencies, holds up Andrew Galbraith, president of the Bayou State Securities, in the president's private office and escapes with \$100,000 in cash. He goes aboard the Belle Jubilee, a steamer, and meets Charlotte Farnham of Wahaska, Minn., who had seen him cash Galbraith's check in the bank, recognizes him, and sends a letter of betrayal to Galbraith anonymously. Griswold is arrested at St. Louis, but escapes from his captors. He decides on Wahaska, Minn., as a hiding place, and makes the train. He falls ill on the steamer and is cared for and taken to her home in Wahaska by Margery Grierson, daughter of Jasper Grierson, the financial magnate of Wahaska. Margery finds the stolen money in Griswold's suitcase. Broffin, detective, takes the trail. Margery asks her father to get Edward Raymer into the city and then help him out of it. Griswold recovers to find the stolen money gone. He forms a friendship with Raymer, the iron manufacturer. Broffin comes to Wahaska in search of the woman who wrote the anonymous letter to Galbraith. Margery takes Griswold to the safety deposit vault and turns the stolen money over to him. Charlotte finds out Broffin and Margery begin to watch him. Griswold puts his money in Raymer's plant and commences to rewrite his characters in his book and sends the manuscript to them. Broffin spies on Margery, who throws him off the scent regarding Griswold.

CHAPTER XX—Continued.

"And that was when you began to suspect?" queried Raymer.

"That was when the suspicion began to torture me. I fought it; oh, you don't know how hard I fought it! There he was, lying sick and helpless; utterly unable to do a thing or say a word in his own defense; and yet, if he were the robber, of course, we should have to give him up. It was terrible!"

"I should say so," was Raymer's sympathetic comment. "How did you get it straightened out, at last?"

"It hasn't been altogether straightened out until just lately—within the past few days," she went on gravely. "After he began to get well, I made him talk to me—about himself, you know. There didn't seem to be anything to conceal. At different times he told me all about his home, and his mother, whom he barely remembers, and the big-hearted, open-handed father who made money so easily in his profession—he was the Griswold, the great architect, you know—that he gave it to anybody who wanted it—but I suppose he has told you all this."

"No; at least, not very much of it," Miss Grierson went on smoothly, falling sympathetically into the reminiscence vein.

"Kenneth went to college without ever having known what it is to lack anything in reason that money could buy. A little while after he was graduated his father died."

"Leaving Kenneth poor, I suppose; he has intimated as much to me, once or twice," said Raymer.

"Leaving him awfully poor. He wanted to learn to write, and for a long time he stayed on in New York, living just any old way, and having a dreadfully hard time of it, I imagine, though he would never say much about that part of it. That is why he thinks he is a socialist. At last I felt that I just must know, at whatever cost. One day when we were driving, I brought him here and—introduced him to Mr. Galbraith. I was so scared that I could taste it—but I did it!"

Raymer laughed. "Of course nothing came of it?"

"Nothing at all. And then, right out of a clear sky, came another proof that was even more convincing. Do you happen to know who the young woman was who discovered the bank robber on the steamer?"

"If how should I know?"

"I didn't know but she had told you," was the demure rejoinder. "It was Charlotte Farnham."

"What!" ejaculated Raymer. But he was not more deeply moved than was the man behind the window curtains. If Broffin's dead cigar had not been already reduced to shapeless intillity, Miss Grierson's cool announcement, carrying with it the assurance that his secret was no secret, would have settled it.

"It's so," she was adding calmly. "I found out. How do I know? Because her father bought the draft at poppa's bank, and in the course of time it came back with the Bayou State Security's dated paying stamp on it. See how easy it was!"

Raymer's laugh was not altogether mirthful.

"You are a witch," he said. "Is there anything you don't know?"

"Not very many things that I really need to know," was the mildly boastful retort. "But you see, now, how foolish my suspicions were?"

Raymer nodded. Though he would not have admitted it under torture, the entire matter figured somewhat as a mountain constructed out of a rather small molehill to a man for whom the subtleties lay in a region unexplored. He wondered that the clear-minded little "social climber," as his sister called her, had ever bothered her nimble brain about such an abstruse and far-fetched question of identities.

"You said, a few minutes ago, that Griswold calls himself a socialist. That

"It is wonderful—simply wonderful!" he said, drawing a deep breath; and then, with a flush of honest confusion to drive away the work pallor: "Of course, you know I don't mean the story; I meant your reading of it. Hasn't anyone ever told you that you have the making of a great actress in you, Margery, girl?"

"No—"

She was smiling across at him, level-eyed. "Let me pass it back to you, dear boy," she said. "You have the making of a great novelist in you. It may take years and years, and—and I'm afraid you'll always have to be helped; but if you can only get the right kind of help—" She looked away, out across the lake where a fitful breeze was turning the molten-metal dimples into laughing wavelets. Then, with one of her sudden topic-wrenchings: "Speaking of help, reminds me. Why didn't you tell me you had gone into the foundry business with Edward Raymer?"

"Because it didn't occur to me that you would care to know, I guess," he answered unsuspectingly. "As a matter of fact, I had almost forgotten it myself."

"Mr. Raymer didn't ask you for help?"

"No; it was my own offer."

"But he did tell you that he was in trouble?"

"Yes," hesitatingly.

"What kind of trouble was it, Kenneth? I have the best right in the world to know."

Griswold straightened himself in his chair and the work-weariness became a thing of the past.

"You can't have a right to know anything that will distress you."

"Foolish!" she chided. "You may as well tell me. Mr. Raymer had borrowed money at poppa's bank. What was the matter? Did he have to pay it back—all at once?"

There seemed to be no further opening for evasion. "Yes; I think that was the way of it," he answered.

Griswold expected something in the nature of an outburst. What he got was a transfixing glance of the passionate sort, quick with open-eyed admiration.

"And you just tossed your money in to the breach as if you had millions of it, and by now you've almost forgotten that you did it?" she exclaimed. "Kenneth, dear, there are times when you are so heavenly good that I can hardly believe it. Are there any more men like you over on your side of the world?"

At another time he might have smiled at the boyish frankness of the question. But it was a better motive than the analyst's that prompted his answer.

"Plenty of them, Margery, girl; too many for the good of the race. You mustn't try to make a hero out of me. Once in a while I get a glimpse of the real Kenneth Griswold—you are giving me one just now—and it's sickening. For a moment I was meanly jealous; jealous of Raymer. It was only the writing part of me, I hope, but—"

He stopped because she had suddenly turned her back on him and was looking out over the lake again. When she spoke, she said: "See! The breeze is freshening out on the water. You are fagged and tired and needing a bracer. Let's go and do a turn on the lake in the Clytie."

From where he was sitting Griswold could see the trim little catboat, resplendent in polished brass and mahogany, riding at its buoy beyond the lawn landing-stage. He cared little for the water, but the invitation pointed to a delightful prolongation of the basking process which had come to be one of the chief luxuries of the Mercedes afternoons.

At the landing stage Griswold made himself useful, paying out the sea line of the movable mooring buoy and hauling on the shore line until the hand-

CHAPTER XXI.

All That a Man Hath.

For four entire days after Margery Grierson had driven home the nail of the elemental verities in her frank criticism of the new book, and Charlotte Farnham had chided it, Wahaska's public places saw nothing of Griswold; and Mrs. Holcomb, motherly soul, was driven to expostulate scoldingly with her second-floor front who was pushing the pen feverishly from dawn to the small hours, and evidently—in the kindly widow's phrase—burning the candle at both ends and in the middle.

Out of this candle-burning frenzy the toiler emerged in the afternoon of the fifth day, a little pallid and trembling from the overstrain, but with a thick packet of fresh manuscript to bulge in his pocket when he made his way, blinking at the unwanted sunlight of out-of-doors, to the great house at the lake's edge.

Margery was waiting for him when he rang the bell; he guessed it gratefully, and she confirmed it.

"Of course," she said, with the bewitching little grimace which could be made to mean so much or so little. "Isn't this your afternoon? Why shouldn't I be waiting for you?" Then, with a swiftly sympathetic glance for the pale face and the tired eyes: "You've been overworking again. Let's sit out here on the porch where we can have that little air there. There must be a storm brewing; it's positively breathless in the house."

Griswold was glad enough to acquiesce; glad and restfully happy and mildly intoxicated with her beauty and the loving readiness with which she pushed him into the easiest of the great lounging chairs and took the sheet of manuscript away from him, declaring that she meant to read it herself.

When it was over; and he could not tell whether the interval should be measured by minutes or hours; the return to the realities—the hot afternoon, the tree-shaded veranda, the lake dimpling like a sheet of molten metal under the sun glare—was almost painful.



"I've Got Him!" He Cried.

FISH ALMOST A CLEAR WHITE

Remarkable Specimens of Albino Trout That Are on Exhibition in New York Aquarium.

Among the interesting exhibits at the New York aquarium is a collection of albino trout. These creatures, which are all of a clear cream white, including their fins, with no color about them except that of their characteristic bright ruby-red eyes, are most striking and curious in appearance.

As an exchange says. In its natural coloring the lake trout shows on its upper body white or grayish spots on a brown background. On the large albino lake trout the spots can be discerned, appearing as very faint spots of the same color, but of a different weave in a woven fabric. These spots show so faintly that they would never be noticed by one unfamiliar with this species and its markings. To the casual eye these fishes present bodies of solid unbroken white.

Delicious Wild Strawberry. Speaking of the beautiful-flowered, toothsome-fruitful wild strawberry, Isaac Walton, the patient fisherman, is said to have declared: "Doubtless

God could have made a better berry, but doubtless he never did." And those who have tasted the wild strawberry will agree that cultivation has added nothing to its flavor, however it may have increased the size. The duke of Gloucester, who became Richard II, had a weakness for the wild strawberry. It is said that in 1482, as certain great lords were sitting in council arranging for his coronation, the duke came in, "saluting courteously, said to the bishop of Ely: 'My lord, you have verie good straw-

beries in your garden at Holbourne; I require you to let me have a mess of them.'

Stage Humor Has Changed. Stage humor today isn't quite as outlandish as it used to be fifteen or twenty years ago. Charles H. Hoyt once wanted a certain type of comedian and, hearing of a team called Coyne and McGee playing in an upstairs theater on Third avenue, went to see them. The Coyne was Joe Coyne, now a great favorite both here

and in London. McGee began telling Coyne about a chance he had to make a lot of money. "All I need is a stake," said McGee. "That's easy," replied Coyne. With that he took a piece of beef from his pocket, stuck it on his cane and broiled it over the gas footlights—New York Letter to the Pittsburgh Dispatch.

Lightning Rod Indorsed. The United States government has vindicated the lightning rod by rigid tests.

And, anyway, it's the nearest place, and you said there was no time to lose."

Griswold helped the bearers lift the blanketed figure out of the Clytie's cockpit, and while he was doing it, the steel-gray eyes of the rescued one opened slowly to fix a stony gaze upon the face of the man who was bending over him. What the thin lips were muttering Griswold heard, and so did one other. "So it's you, is it, ye murdering blue-eyed devil!" And then: "Eh, man, man, but I'm sick!"

Griswold walked with Margery at the tail of the little procession as it wound its way up the path to the great house.

"You heard what he said?" he inquired craftily.

"Yes; he is out of his head, and no wonder," she said soberly. Then: "You must go home and change at once; you are drenched to the skin. Don't wait to come in. I'll take care of your manuscript."

CHAPTER XXII.

The Valley of Dry Bones.

The cyclonic summer storm had blown itself out, and the clouds were beginning to break away in the west, when Griswold, obeying Margery's urging to go home and change his clothes, turned his back upon Mercedes and his face toward a future of thickening doubts and unnerving possibilities.

Griswold had not deceived himself, nor had he allowed Margery's apparent conviction to deceive him. The old man's mind had not been wandering in the eye-opening moment of consciousness regained. On the contrary, what he had failed to do under ordinary and conventional conditions had become instantly possible when the plunge into the dark shadow had brushed away all the artificial becloudings of the memory page. What action he would take when he should recover was as easy to prefigure as it was, for the present at least, a matter negligible. The dismaying thing was that the broad earth seemed too narrow to hide in; that invention itself became the clumsiest of blunders when it was given the simple task of losing a single individual among the millions of unrelated human atoms.

Thus the threat of the peril which might be called the physical. But beyond this there was another, and, for a man of temperament, a still more ominous foreshadowing of evil to come. Of some subtle, deep-seated change in himself he had long been conscious. Again and again it had manifested itself in those moments of craven fear and ruthless, murderous

promptings, when kindness, gratitude, love, all the humanizing motives, had turned suddenly to frenzied hatred, and the primitive savage had leaped up, fiercely raging with the blood-lust.

For a long time after he had reached his room, and had had his bath and change, Griswold sat at his writing table with his head in his hands, thinking in monotonous circles.

The tiny chiming clock in his dressing case in the adjoining bedroom had tinkled forth its 10 tapping hammer strokes when he heard voices in the lower hall, and then a man's footsteps on the stair. To a hard-pressed breaker of the traditions at such a moment an unannounced visitor, coming up in the dark, could mean but one thing. Griswold silently opened a drawer in the writing table and groped for the mate to the quick-firing pistol which had put aside to dry.

The visitor came heavily upstairs, and Griswold, swinging his chair to face the open door, saw the shadowy bulking of the man as he came through the upper hall. When the bulk filled the doorway it was covered by the pistol held low, and Griswold's finger was pressing the trigger.

"Asleep, old man?" said the intruder in Raymer's well-known voice.

There was a sound like a gasping sob, and another as of a drawer closing softly. Then Griswold said: "No; I'm not asleep. Come in. Shall I light the gas?"

"Not for me," returned the aedtime visitor, entering and groping for the chair at the desk-end, into which, when he had placed it, he dropped wearily "I want to smoke," he went on. "Have you got a cigar—no, not

the pipe; I want something that I can chew on."

A cigar was found, in the drawer which had so lately furnished the weapon, and by the flare of the match in Raymer's fingers Griswold saw a face haggard with anxiety.

"What is the matter, Edward?" he asked.

"A mix-up with the labor unions. It's been brewing for some little time, but I didn't want to worry you with it. Unless we announce a flat increase of 20 per cent in wages to-morrow morning, and declare for the closed shop, the men will go out on us at noon. I've seen it coming."

If the god of mischance had chosen the moment it could not have been more opportune for the fire-lighting of malevolence. Griswold's swing-chair righted itself with a click.

"We'll see them in hell, first, Raymer! The ungrateful beggars are merely proving that it isn't in human nature to meet justice and fairness and generous liberality half way. If they want a fight, give it to them. Hit first and hit hard; that's the way to do. Shut up the plant and make it a lockout."

"I was afraid you might say something like that in the first heat of it," said the young ironmaster. "It's a stout fighting word, and I guess, under the skin, you're a stout fighting man, Kenneth—just like I'm not. Where are your convictions about the man-to-man obligations? We've got to take them into the account, haven't we?"

"Damn the convictions!" snapped Griswold viciously. "If I've been giving you the impression that I'm an impracticable theorist, forget it. These fellows want a fight: I say give them a fight—all they want of it and a little more for good measure."

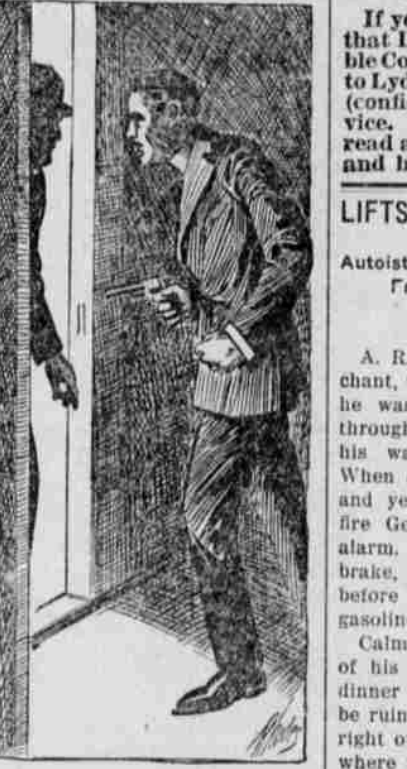
Raymer did not reply at once. This latest Griswold was puzzling him, and with the puzzlement there went sorrowful regret; the regret that has been the recanter's portion in all the ages. When he spoke it was out of the heart of common sense and sanity.

"I know how you feel about it. I don't dare to pull down a fight which may not only shut us up for an indefinite time, but might even go far enough to smash us."

Griswold took his turn of silence, rocking gently in the tilting chair. When the delayed rejoinder came, the harshness had gone out of his voice, but there was a cynical hardness to take its place.

"It's your affair; not mine," he said. "If you've made up your mind not to fight, of course, that settles it. Now we can come down to the cause. You've been stabbed in the back. Do you know who's doing it?"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)



When the Bulk Filled the Doorway It Was Covered by the Pistol

Reason Enough. "Been on your vacation yet?" "No, the people next door haven't returned from their's yet."

"Well, what in the world does that have to do with it?"

"Oh, nothing much, only they borrowed our trunk before they started and sent for our golf sticks and tennis rackets afterward."

Ominous. "My son's bought an auto and he's got a garage."

"Good gracious! Who's the grudge against?"

Not Yet. Mrs. Tally—So the turkey trot is out of favor now. Mr. Bored—I wish the hen gabbles was, too!

Most white men are against mob violence if the victim is a white man.

British naval and military forces in Hongkong actually number 7,000 men.

FARMER'S WIFE TOO ILL TO WORK

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If you have the slightest doubt that Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound will help you, write to Lydia E. Pinkham Medicine Co. (confidential) Lynn, Mass., for advice. Your letter will be opened, read and answered by a woman, and held in strict confidence.

LIFTS FIRE OUT OF HOUSE

Autoist Rescuer Also Saves Dinner From Blazing Stove in New Jersey Town.

A. R. Gerber, a local clothing merchant, was the hero at a fire to which he was called as he was passing through Hartford in his automobile on his way home from Philadelphia. When a woman ran from her house and yelled that her kitchen was on fire Gerber didn't need any second alarm. Slamming on the emergency brake, he jumped from his machine before it was stopped and found the gasoline stove ablaze.

Calmly moving some furniture out of his way and taking the woman's dinner from the stove so it would not be ruined, he pulled the blazing stove right out the back door and landed it where it could do no further damage except to itself.—Mount Holly (N. J.) Dispatch Philadelphia Record.

Makes Rapid Headway

Kidney disease often advances so rapidly that many a person is firmly in its grasp before aware of its progress. Prompt attention should be given the kidney symptoms of kidney disease. If there is a dull pain in the back, headache, dizzy spells or a tired, worn-out feeling, or if the kidney secretions are offensive, irregular and attended by pain, use Doan's Kidney Pills at once. No other kidney medicine is so well recommended.

A Pennsylvania Case

Harry House, 30 Bound Ave., Milton, Pa., says: "My back was weak and hurt me when I was working. The kidney secretions passed too frequently and I had to get up at night on this account. I gradually got worse until I had to quit work and go to bed. My neck grew stiff and sore and I had terrible headaches and dizzy spells. After doctors' medicine failed, I got Doan's Kidney Pills and they restored me to good health."

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