

THE HEART OF NIGHT WIND A STORY OF THE GREAT NORTH WEST By VINGIE E. ROE ILLUSTRATIONS BY RAY WALTERS

CHAPTER XXVII—Continued.

Siletz had always ridden bareback, but now, why she did not know, she took down Sandry's saddle and slung it on Black Bolt. Poppy followed her movements, and by the time Siletz had put foot in stirrup and swung up, she had caught up her wide skirt and mounted. Siletz stared around at her and her eyes were beginning to sparkle in a face pale with rage.

Without a word they galloped up across the lonesome valley and took to what had once been a trail in the nodding ferns. Now it was but a slight depression running amid the blackened trunks, the endless neaps of ashes. Poppy Ordway followed Siletz on a chance, a dare, a mere hazard. She did not know the danger, the menace of the hills.

She was saying to herself after her enticing habit of self-communion: "I'll have my precious pocket soon I know I shall. The gods are with me. I feel it."

Once Siletz turned upon her, "Go back!" she cried fiercely, "something is about to happen."

"You're right," said Poppy, and for once the hardness of her nature showed like a rock under waves in eyes and voice and manner, "and I'll be in at the happening."

They spoke no more. Siletz checked Black Bolt in another mile, rose in her stirrups and looked over the appalling spectacle before them. Over and beyond lay the tumbled hills, thick with heavy timber, that ran into the Siletz basin. Somewhere in their fastnesses reared the mighty spine of the Hog Back with its secret trail. And some where up behind the Hog Back was Sandry. Calm as she was by nature, Siletz shuddered as she looked upon the world of flame and smoke. To Poppy Ordway, ignorant of its meaning and its might, it was a splendid spectacle.

Siletz plunged down the ridge on the other side and the woman followed. The shadows of the smoke-filled valley grew into an uncanny twilight. The fire light ashes made slippery going and more than once Black Bolt slipped to catch his footing, catlike. They rode ahead and entered the fire belt itself. The dusk grew denser. The heat by like a tangible blanket in the hollows and dips. Siletz urged Black Bolt. Something was calling out from the gray dimness—chilling her heart, hurrying her progress.

She had ridden for a time in deep thought when a scream from the woman behind drew her up with a start. She turned just in time to see the big bay fall and go tumbling down the mountain. With his feet lurch he had flung his rider out of the saddle and into a pile of ashes. It was true to her nature that the girl, dismounting, ran, not to the woman but down the slope after the horse. She found him prone and groaning in a little trench, his right foreleg doubled back, the white bone piercing the earth.

Poppy Ordway peered fearfully down, her trembling hands gathering her dust-covered skirts.

"Come here!" Siletz cried, commanding: "come here!"

It was the same voice, whimpering with primitive rage, that had compelled that craven "Sandry" from Poppy Ordway's lips that night at the pump; and as the woman had obeyed then, so she obeyed now.

Siletz rose, reaching in the blouse of her shirt, and brought out a gun.

Poppy Ordway shrank back, white as chalk.

"What do you mean?" she cried shrilly, "what are you going to do?" Horror widened her blue eyes grotesquely.

"I never shot a living thing in my life," said Siletz solemnly, "but I've got to kill him. And you stand by to watch—it's your work."

There was a sharp report that did not echo in the fire-drowned hills, and the good horse closed his eyes in sudden death. Siletz turned away to where Black Bolt looked on with wonder, Cossack crouching beside him in a swift reversion she flung the weapon far down the mountain.

She started to mount without a glance at the woman when the other spoke.

"What am I to do?"

"Do! I don't care what you do. Go home. And I hope you never reach there!"

"My God!" cried Poppy Ordway, "don't leave me like this! And look! Look there!"

As if along the valley by which they

had come a lonn, swift drift of smoke was rolling, sent out like a current from some newly fired cross-canyon. Its low-lying fall formed a bewildering mystery to anyone save a native of the hills. A woman on foot would never reach camp through its blinding darkness.

Long Siletz sat turned in her saddle and looked at it. Then a thought of Sandry and his standards pierced the emotions that dominated her. There was but one thing to do.

"Come up," she said at last, "I'll have to take you."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Fires Within Fires.

So it was a double burden that the great black horse carried into the mystery of the shrouded country. Hatred was like a wall between them and Poppy's fingers, clinging perforce to Siletz's shirt, twitched with desire. How short a distance to the packet in the bagging blouse!

So they rode with smarting eyes and aching lungs, down into a dim valley and up again, between firs, under mighty, towering trunks, tottering to their fall. They passed the high spine of the Hog Back, a majestic crown against the smoke, and threaded the ruins of the forest. At last they saw great firs ahead and men running among them.

"Where is Sandry?" Siletz asked, unabashed, of a soldier.

"Don't know. Haven't seen him for hours." He hurried on and the girl rode along the line where a hundred men were laboring with ax and spade and blanket. The wind had dropped and they were working north and south, trying to bottle up a roaring cross-cut of a valley. Scattered throughout the hills in squads, obeying the orders sent down from time to time by the ranger and his aids, who patrolled the ridges with field glasses, they worked like a great machine, though they saw no farther than their own trench, their own line of back-fire, their own stretch of felled pines.

But work as they would at the base of the high, massed peaks, destiny was about ready for her grand coup at the fortunes of the Dillingworth, and she snatched a streamer from a cross-canyon and shot it high across line and back-fire and trench into the dry pines on that slope. Also she had



A Tall Lone Spiral Into the Dun Heavens.

sent, an hour before, a tall, lone spiral into the dun heavens from the very heart of the spared timber behind the Hog Back. That spiral had caught the eye of Walter Sandry, working with his waning strength north on the east slope. For how many hours he did not know, he had neither eaten nor slept. But still he went with the spirit that would not quit so long as another stayed at his post.

"If the rains would only come!" he thought as he struggled upward, "it's nearly time for them. If they would only bring their first showers now!"

The roar of the new fire—a solitary pine that went up like a huge, graceful torch—was in his ears, its light before him.

under the farmer's barn to be near his food supply. He can track his prey like a hound. Besides poultry, he has a taste for rats, mice, fish and frogs to add to his bill. The mink has a pair of webbed feet. His sharp claws help him in climbing trees, and sometimes he will attack birds in their nests. He is a little more than twelve inches long, has a dark brown fur and a light spot on his throat. Before he became so popular a single skin of the mink was worth from \$10 to \$12.

Spray Keeps Off Enemies.

Many of the tropical species of a silvicolous mollusk (conchidium), found on the rocks between the marks were the back studied with eyes, and are at the same time provided with a very efficient spraying apparatus which is used with effect to repel the attacks of that very remarkable creature, the walking fish (peripateticus).

With bulging eyes this creature, for several hours daily leaves its native element and bums along the strand for insects and conchidiums. If the latter see him coming they ward off the attack by means of the acid spray.

REALTY MEN AIDED BY WAR

Millions Are Being Spent for New York Rentals in Place of Going to Europe.

After balancing fall rental accounts recently broken throughout the ultra fashionable district estimated that more than \$10,000,000 will be paid for Manhattan homes during the coming season by families that usually make their abodes in Europe, the New York World states. Their aggregate living expenses for the year are placed near \$50,000,000, most of which will be spent in New York.

More than 2,500 such families have rented apartments or private dwellings during the past few months.

The have paid an average of \$4,000 yearly rental, some paying as high as \$25,000. Their competition for luxurious living quarters has forced normal prices to the highest levels on record and old families that have been in the habit of renting costly homes by the year or for the social season, have had to pay fancy figures.

This was illustrated recently when

"Now how under heaven did it get started up in here?"

He had spoken aloud as he wearily skirted a clump of young spruce and the words fell short, abruptly broken as he emerged from their shelter.

Before him, in a small cleared space, stood Hampden of the Yellow Pines. His back was toward Sandry and he carried in his hand three candles. He was nearly as black and disreputable as any scarecrow down among the firs. He was intently watching something at the foot of a second pine. Softly Sandry moved until this object was in his line of vision.

Bedded high in a pile of tinder-dry needles a fourth candle glowed brightly in the smoky gloom. With utmost cunning it had been set close against the tree where a long branch of pitch trailed down the rugged bark from far up among the branches. When the candle burned down to the resin-steeped needles—and a man might travel far in the meantime—the unpleasing flames need only to flick that banner to rush with lightning speed to the awaiting, inflammable top.

For a long moment the Easterner stood, lost in wonder. Then the whole thing burst upon him and he knew, Hampden of the Yellow Pines was the power behind the holocaust!

As this stupendous knowledge forced itself into his weary brain, the other man turned and strode swiftly away among the boles. The wearying climb had taken the breath from Sandry's lungs and he drew a pistol from his belt and fired over Hampden's head. Like an animal the man whirled, hand to hip, and faced him.

"I've got you at last!" Sandry panted. "I've got you at last!"

Hampden's heavy lips curled venomously from his short, curved teeth. "You!" he breathed, "you! You damned Easterner! You lily-handed tenderfoot!"

Sandry smiled grimly. "This is just about the blackest spot in your crooked career, Hampden," he said at last, "the blackest and the biggest blunder. I can't see why you did it."

"You can't!" snarled Hampden. "oh, you can't! Well, by God, you will before I'm done with you. You didn't know what you were gettin' up against—you and your—your—Poppy Ordway. You made your fight, an' you thought you'd won! But you reckoned without me. I'm makin' mine, an' it's a hummer."

He glared savagely along the gun into Sandry's bloodshot eyes, and at this moment Black Bolt heaved up through the ferns. Siletz peering eagerly along his straining neck, and the face of Poppy Ordway at her shoulder. The girl slid out of the saddle and ran to Sandry.

"What is it?" she cried, "what is it?"

Sandry pointed to the burning candle at the pine's foot and instantly she sprang forward and snuffed it out with thumb and finger.

Mia Ordway slipped down from the foamy, steaming lips of the horse, to stand leaning against him, her bright eyes beginning to sparkle with the tension of the moment. At sight of her Hampden's face grew gray beneath its grimace. She was smiling with that pleasure which she always found where men fought, or engineered dramatic coups, or worked out clever schemes, and her beauty was never so maddening to him in all his knowledge of her. His one pure dream had, in truth, reached a sorry ending.

"Sandy," said Siletz simply, "I came to you. There's danger somewhere—I don't know where or what—but there's something in the shadows."

A vagrant wind fanned up long sheets and whistling banners that hurried up to leap into the moaning canopy behind the Hog Back. The actors in this little drama were too intent to hear the heightened note.

"So you come to be in at the death!" said Hampden at last, his eyes on Poppy in anguished fury, "you done me to death an' you want to see me die! Oh, th' game's up and I don't care a damn! I'm th' smartest one of this bunch yet. An' fer th' fact that you've got them two letters you stole from the commissioner and th' account book with the records of our deals an' rake-offs and so on, I'd a had a chance to fight an' win yet! But I know you, Poppy—oh, how damned well I know you!—an' I know I'm whipped. But I'm makin' a fight—you're damned right I am!"

He waved an eloquent arm around at the appalled, shrinking country which seemed to crouch in its nakedness under the shrouding smoke.

"But th' thing that cuts is knowin' that you done it all fer him! A feeble drivelin' thing from th' East! An' they say you'll marry him! Well, go to it! He'll have to move out, fer there won't be any more Dillingworth Lumber company in twenty hours. I'll be behind bars, all right, but I've cleaned him out."

As he finished with a reckless laugh Sandry turned amazed eyes to Poppy. She was pale with anger and she avoided his glance. This was the last thing she wanted—that Sandry should

know of her attempt to forestall him in the "getting" of Hampden. She saw her chance to gain his gratitude by her gift drifting away. Also the revelation of her lawyer's perfidy was a mighty blow.

"Hampden," she said unsteadily, "you're the coarsest beast I know!"

"All right. But ain't that what it's all fer? To lay me as a burnt offerin' at his feet—a sacrifice to win his mincin' love? Didn't you say you'd marry him? Ain't I heard it right an' left?"

"No!" cried Poppy, red with rage under Sandry's astounded eyes, "no! I never did!"

"Yes!" cried Siletz ringingly, "you did! You said when Sandry was dyin' that you were his promised wife."

In the hush that followed, intensified by the dropping brands from the huge pine which was now but a blackened, pronged shape in the thickening smoke, there fell upon their ears a sound as incongruous with the strained moment as could be imagined.

It was a shower of notes, high, sparkling, thrilling, that seemed to fall like drops of diamond through the murky canopy. They came up from



The Gesture Came Too Late.

the west, mysterious, martial, joyful, and their burden was "Lead, Kindly Light, Lead Thou Me On!"

"The Preacher!" whispered Siletz, "oh, the Preacher!"

And presently through the dim dun-white of the smoke that crept with portent between the crowding pines, there merged the familiar, erect form. With one accord they turned to him as he approached and Sandry for the one moment left Hampden unguarded.

It was all that was necessary. Quick as light the hand that had first instinctively sought his fist sought it again. There was a flash of metal, dim in the dim effluence, a straightening of the heavy arm that bled it, a spurt of flame, a shot.

But quick as the timberman had been, another was quicker. With one leap as Hampden reached for his gun the Preacher reached Sandry, snatched him aside and flung himself before him, his fute raised high in protest, in command. But the gesture came too late.

The bullet meant for the Easterner found lodgment in the gentle breast of the wandering player of hymns, and he sank down in Sandry's arms.

CHAPTER XXIX.

The Sign of the Siletz.

It was Poppy Ordway who struck the gun from Hampden's hand, sending it flying among the ferns.

"We'll have no murder here!" she cried.

Sandry looked at Hampden for one fleeting second as he laid his gun beside him.

"If you move one muscle," he rasped harshly, "I'll kill you on the spot."

Then he eased the slight form of the Preacher down upon the deep pine needles.

Just above the heart blood was pouring from the shabby habit, Sandry tore it away, to find a clean small hole in the white skin, which was fine and delicate as a woman's. The ball had gone straight through, tearing a huge ragged aperture where it emerged in the back from which the red stream flowed in a flood.

"Cloth!" cried Sandry, "give me cloth!"

His voice broke the spell that bound Siletz and she sprang forward, tearing her garments, ripping out of her breast some mysterious womanly vesture that was white and soft.

"Oh, my God above the sea!" she was crying with gasping sobs, "Lord of the heavens! Spare him! Spare him!" And only Poppy Ordway saw the packet which tumbled unheeded to the ground. With one catlike, graceful movement she threw herself forward, snatched it up and hid it in her own bosom.

Mrs. Nelson W. Aldrich, wife of the late senator from Rhode Island and closely related by marriage to the Rockefeller family, paid at the rate of \$100 a day, more than \$20,000 a year, for Mrs. Kingsland's furnished home on the northeast corner of Fifth Avenue and Forty-sixth street, for the winter season. Mrs. Kingsland herself leases it under long-term contract from William Waldorf Astor. A similar rental is being paid for the Judson Todd house.

Tree Owns Itself.

There is a tree in Athens, Ga., which owns itself. It has a deed to eight feet of ground on all sides of its trunk.

The tree formerly was owned by W. H. Jackson. To prevent its ever being cut down, Mr. Jackson executed a deed making the tree owner of the ground around it.

This deed is on file in Athens, it is the only one of its sort in the world.

A French scientist has invented a microscope using X-rays.

Sandry hastily made compresses and bound them upon the wounds. He tore off what was left of his tattered shirt and added it. He took handfuls of leaves from the hazelbrush and padded the compresses, binding them tighter and tighter. But it was heart's blood that was loosened and each effort to stop it was futile.

It was soon evident that the feet in their heavy shoes had gone their last journey upon the hills, that the triumphant fute had piped its last song of victory.

"My children," said the Preacher, "I promised to come when you should need me. I have served a need. You are young, my son, and the path of youth is fair. There are too many primroses thereon to sacrifice one year of it. I am old—old."

Here Siletz flung herself upon her knees beside him, unable to control herself, rocking to and fro after her fashion, her braids swaying and a terrible anguish upon her face.

The handsome blue eyes turned wonderingly upon her.

"Daughter—little one of the tender heart—hush! I hear strange sounds and I would listen."

He closed his eyes and lay for a time in silence, the delicate tracery on his face emerging more clearly as a pallor spread beneath it. It was the divine record of years spent with his God in the high places, though here and there a drooping line bespoke a vague, forgotten sadness.

Presently he murmured:

"The Winds of the Mighty One are upon the sounding board of the hills! Ah!"

Again a silence and he opened his eyes with a return to earth. But in them had come the dimness of dreams, and half-remembered years and times and places.

They gazed wonderingly into the dark, tar-blinded ones of Siletz bending above. For a long time the old man lay, staring up with that look of wonder. Then a great joy broke on his face with a shining smile, and he struggled to raise himself on an arm.

"Kahwanna!" he cried, "Kahwanna!"

It was a call from a far-distant past. It thrilled that little company of listeners with its ecstasy.

"Why—why—What have I dreamed, my princess of the hills, that you have seemed so far away? What was it—Ah, I have forgot! But you are here at last!"

He raised palsied, trembling arms to the girl's neck.

"You are back from the gates of death that I fancied had closed upon you! You are back. . . . And there is forgiveness in your dark eyes. Oh, my love, there is forgiveness!"

His lips quivered a bit and he went on.

"Did I dream of the great wrong I did you, Kahwanna? Oh, have you forgiven?"

The blue eyes were tragic in their puzzled wonder, their shining joy, and the voice was desperately earnest.

For a moment Siletz checked her anguish and strove to understand. Then something, some divine instinct, seemed to give her wisdom and she smiled tremulously.

"All is well," she said pitifully, "I have forgiven."

"Thank God!" cried the old man sharply, "oh, God, I thank thee! The way is light at last!"

He tried to raise himself on an elbow again.

"But how does it happen? I saw you die in the lodge of Kolawmie with the babe that you bore me for love on your breast—and yet—yet—I have you again! Did I dream, oh, my princess of the little tribe?"

"A dream," sobbed Siletz softly, "only a dream."

He looked long into her half-frightened face.

"I have searched the world for you, my maid of service with the gentle eyes—eyes like a deer's for softness. Oh, Kahwanna! I have chanted the marriage service, that I never said for you in the days of my youth, a thousand times among the hills! I have mated you in heaven throughout the years wherein I lost you! I have wept for the Primrose that I crushed, at dawn and dusk! I have tried to atone."

There was a pathetic, eager justification in the weakening voice and the others, all aware that they witnessed the last act in some forgotten tragedy of the Preacher's life, stood in silence, unconscious of the darkening smoke clouds, the menace of the rising roar.

"You bore on your face the sign of the Siletz women—the three bars of Bondage, of Faithfulness and of Service—and yet you were not of their blood, but of my own. Only Kolawmie knew how you came among them, a wee, dark child, how they took you in and gave you a name, and he never told. You were red to me, Kahwanna—a soft-eyed creature of the wild—and you were my woman, bought with a white man's kiss!"

Here Sandry shrank as if at a blow, drawing in his breath with a sigh. But the Preacher hurried on as if to tell all that had lain upon his heart these many years.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

"Metaphysicians."

Mary Mitford appears to have had a weakness for coining words with unnecessary female terminations. On one occasion she writes about "a young creature full of grace and beauty living in London like a hermitess and teaching her little brothers Greek" and elsewhere she tells of "a most elegant young woman, negotiatress of the forgeries." Worst of all is a passage in a letter to Sir William Eford, in which she says: "I believe, my dear Sir William, that you will not need one to come from the grave to inform you that I am a metaphysician (is there such a word?)"

Territory Unexplored.

In Arabia there is a tract of unexplored territory nearly five times the area of Great Britain, while nearly a quarter of Australia awaits the investigation of civilized man.

Women Executives in Sweden.

Fifty women take an active part in the municipal government of Swedish cities. Seven of them are busy in Stockholm.

PLEASED THE WOODPECKER

Bird Takes Kindly to Tin Barricade Erected Against Its Peckings.

Mrs. John Poser of Main street, Newton, N. J., feared that a fine shade tree on her lawn would be killed by a woodpecker that appeared there every day and pecked away at a hole which he was making larger and larger. Therefore she had her husband tack a sheet of tin over the hole when the bird was absent.

Refusing to be discouraged and pretending he does not know the difference, the woodpecker now goes to the tree every day and pecks away like a trip hammer on the tin sheet. The neighbors are nearly crazy with the noise, and there is a law against killing woodpeckers.

Why Not?

"Why did you strike this man?" asked the judge sternly.

"He called me a liar, your honor," replied the accused.

"Is that true?" asked the judge, turning to the man with the mussed-up face.

"Sure it's true," said the accused. "I called him a liar because he is one, and I can prove it."

"What have you to say to that?" asked the judge of the defendant.

"It's got nothing to do with the case, your honor," was the unexpected reply. "Even if I am a liar I guess I've got a right to be sensitive about it, ain't it?"

She Didn't Smile.

The young woman had spent a busy day.

She had browbeaten 14 salespeople, bullied a floorwalker, argued victoriously with a milliner, laid down the law to a modiste, nipped in the bud a taxi chauffeur's attempt to overcharge her, made a street car conductor stop the car in the middle of a block for her, discharged her maid and engaged another, and otherwise refused to allow herself to be imposed upon.

Yet she did not smile that night when a young man begged:

"Let me be your protector through life!"—Philadelphia Public Ledger.

Thrashing Them Out.

Mrs. Boardman Harriman said at a mother's meeting in Brooklyn:

"I am opposed to parental cruelty. Childhood's spirit should not be crushed. But I am opposed to child spoiling, too."

"In short, I believe that, if a son begins to sow wild oats, his parents should begin thrashing."

Her Reply.

"We started housekeeping on fifteen dollars a week."

"If you were to try that now, ma, you and pa would starve to death before your honeymoon was over."

A woman's idea of wasted energy is

telling a secret about a person no one is interested in.

Musical apparatus within the hands

of a new fan plays as the fan is waved.

Nothing to Lose.

"I suppose you are planning to go to Europe, like everybody else, after the war is over?"

"Well, no, I haven't made any such announcement to my friends."

"Why don't you? It won't cost you any more than it will two-thirds of the other people who say they are going to Europe after the war is over."

Purity and Grime.

"This is a striking piece of sculpture. Let's see what the title is."

"Well!"

"It's called 'Purity' and is dated '1906!'"

"That isn't complete."

"No!"

"The full title should be, 'Purity, As She Appears Under Ten Years' Accumulation of Soft Coal Soot.'"

A woman will believe anything a

man tells her if he puts it in a letter.

GALL STONES

ELIMINATED

Nine years ago while under treatment of my physician, he advised me that it would be necessary to perform an operation for Gall Stones, or I would never get well. I procured Dr. Kilmer's Swamp-Root and after taking eight bottles was entirely cured. Am glad to say that I have never had a return of the trouble and would gladly recommend Swamp-Root to anyone so troubled.

Yours truly,
JAS. G. INGRAM,
Cordele, Georgia.
Sworn to