

The Root of Evil

By THOMAS DIXON

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SYNOPSIS

Stuart, southern lawyer in New York, is in love with Nan Primrose. His friend, Dr. Woodman, who has a young daughter, is threatened with the loss of his drug business by Bivens, whom he befriended years before. Stuart visits the Primroses.

Nan wants Stuart to accept a place with Bivens' chemical trust. He dislikes Bivens' methods and refuses. Bivens cautions him.

Bivens is in love with Nan. Stuart refuses the offer, and Nan breaks her engagement with the lawyer. Bivens asks Woodman to enter the trust.

Woodman will not yield and sees Bivens' company. The promoter tells the doctor he and Nan are engaged. Harriet Woodman is studying music. Stuart takes Nan for a day in the country.

Stuart pleads with Nan to give up Bivens, but the spell of millions is on her and she yields to it.

Nan becomes Mrs. Bivens. Harriet loves Stuart, but he does not know it. Nine years pass. Stuart becomes district attorney. He investigates criminal trusts. Nan asks him to call.

Stuart wants Woodman to end his suit against Bivens, but the doctor stands firm. Bivens aids Stuart in his investigation of crooked financiers.

Stuart's revelations aid in bringing on a crisis. Bivens promises to aid the Van Dam Trust company, which is in trouble. Woodman needs money badly.

In the stock market slump engineered by Bivens, Woodman and many others lose all. The trust company fails because Bivens, at command of the money king, breaks his word. Stuart faces his critics in front of Bivens' bank.

The mob attacks Stuart and injures him slightly. Nan sees it and reveals her love. Bivens piles \$50,000.00 on a table and calls Stuart to see the money to refute rumors of his financial weakness.

Stuart is tempted to join Bivens as his confidential man. He accepts an invitation to visit the Bivens house and is received by Nan.

At a meeting of the discontented, at which Bivens is denounced, a bomb thrower is killed by his own missile. Woodman decides to continue his fight against Bivens.

Stuart's plea with Bivens for Woodman is in vain, and the lawyer refuses to join in the millionaire's plans. Woodman leads gully and Stuart, who has resigned as district attorney, defends him. Sentence is suspended. Bivens is ill. At his insistence, Stuart accompanies him and Nan on a duck hunting trip to Virginia, although Stuart fears Nan's presence may tempt him beyond his strength.

CHAPTER XIX.

The Devil Smiles.

STUART returned with renewed energy and enthusiasm to the practice of law. The wide fame he had achieved as district attorney brought him the best clients and from them he was able to choose only the best cases which involved principles worth fighting for. His spare time he gave in a loving effort to restore the doctor to his old cheerful frame of mind. He had returned Bivens' money, in spite of his protest and made his old friend a loan sufficient for his needs, making his personal note for security. He had no difficulty in learning the progress of Bivens in his search of Europe for health. The daily cables reports to New York always gave his condition as better. But Stuart knew the truth. He received two or three letters a week from Nan. She had told him in full detail the little man's suffering, and at last of his homesickness, fast developing into a mania. He was not surprised at the end of five months to hear her familiar voice over his telephone.

"Yes, we've returned, Jim—called indignantly to escape the reporters. He is very feeble. We haven't been in the case three hours, but he has asked for a dozen times. Can you come up once?" Stuart hesitated, then, "I'll come," he answered slowly. He lost all sense of danger in the warmth and tenderness of Nan's greeting. He not only forgot his fears but approached himself for his low estimate of her character in supposing that she would allow herself or permit him to cross the line of danger. Her solicitude for Bivens seemed deep and genuine.

Bivens' joy at meeting Stuart was pathetic, and moved him deeply. He was surprised to find him so strong, parently, in body and yet so broken spirit. The little shrunken hand clung to a friend's. "You know, I felt the thing creeping me for the past two years, but I didn't let up. That's why I tried so hard to put some of the load on your shoulders. At least you can help me get well. To the devil with the doctors! I'm tired, too, of all the sycophants, liars and fools who hang round. I didn't mind 'em when I was ill. But they get on my nerves now. The doctors kept dining into my ears that I've got to rest and play, and all one old duffer over in France. I got an idea into my head that brought me back home to see you. He told me to get on a small boat with a single man and a congenial friend, get away from land, cut every telephone and

telegraph line, get no mail, and shoot ducks all winter, and he'd guarantee I'd be a new man next spring. I've sent for you to accept the invitation you gave me to shoot ducks with you down in Virginia."

"What invitation?" Stuart asked in surprise.

"Why, the one you used to reproach me for not accepting. Will you go with me now?" Stuart shook his head. "I can't go," he said slowly. "I can't go," he said slowly. Bivens hadn't said Nan must go on that trip, but in a flash of warning intuition he knew it. The danger of such a situation on a yacht would be real and only a fool would rush into it.

"Can't go? Why?" the financier asked in tones of genuine distress. "I've important legal business. There's no use in my going. I can tell you exactly where to go, the guides, to get and the kind of boats you'll need. You'll get along better without me." "I won't go without you," the financier said peevishly. "You know the place, you know all about the birds, you can teach me the ins and outs of the business and I can trust you. I know that you won't try to worm out of me any information my enemies would like to know. I appeal to the boy I used to know at college, the fellow who fought for me one day."

Stuart hesitated and looked at Nan, who had stood motionless while Bivens spoke.

"Well, if that's the way you put it, I'll take a vacation and go with you for a month."

Bivens seized his hand and pressed it gratefully.

"Best medicine I've had in weeks." Nan walked slowly across the room, looked into his eyes and said, with emotion:

"Thank you, Jim."

In five days the party had completed all preparations and Bivens' big steamer, the Buccaneer, slipped quietly through the Narrows and headed for the Virginia coast, towing a trim little schooner built for cruising in the shoal waters of the south.

They had scarcely put to sea when Stuart began to curse himself for being led into such a situation.

Bivens had insisted with amateurish enthusiasm that they begin the cruise on the little schooner—with her limited crew and close quarters—at once, and use the Buccaneer as her tender. The moment they struck the swell outside Sandy Hook the financier went to bed and the doctor never left his side until the trip ended.

Nan was in magnificent spirits, her cheeks flushed and her eyes sparkled with the joy of a child. Stuart watched her with growing wonder at her eternal youth.

The night was one of extraordinary springlike air though it was the 15th of December. A gentle breeze was blowing from the south and the full moon flooded the smooth sea with soft silvery radiance. Nan insisted that Stuart sit on deck with her. There was no help for it. Bivens would allow no one except the doctor in his room, and so Stuart resigned himself to the beauty of the glorious scene.

"Jim," she said, softly. "I don't like your attitude, and I think we'd



"Best medicine I've had in weeks."

better fight it out here and now in the beginning of this trip. It's useless to deny it. You hesitated to come on deck with me in the moonlight this evening. Your assumption of such chilling virtue is insulting. I wish an apology and a promise never to do so again."

"Have I really made you feel this?" he asked contritely. "You have and feel it keenly. Let's come to an understanding. You and I both live in glass houses set on a very high hill. No matter what may be the secrets of my heart, I'm not a fool, and you can trust my good sense."

Stuart pressed her hand and said gently:

"I'm awfully sorry if I've made such an ass of myself that you have received this impression."

"Then I forgive you!" she cried, with a laugh, releasing her hand and rising, "but on one condition."

"Name it."

"That from this hour you be your old self without restraint and let me be mine."

"I promise faithfully."

stagger and dangerous he felt his position. At last he squarely faced the fact that his desire for Nan had increased a hundredfold by the fact that he had lost her.

As he sat in the darkness in his stateroom he could hear every sound in the adjoining one which she occupied as plainly as if the thin panelling of wood were not between them.

He was a fool to be caught in such a trap. His love had been too big and serious a tragedy to end in a vulgar intrigue. He made up his mind to cut his trip short on some pretext, and in the meantime he would devote himself faithfully to an attempt to start Bivens on the road to recovery.

At 8 o'clock the next morning the black nose of the Buccaneer slowly felt her way into Hog Island Inlet, on the shores of old Virginia, and dropped her anchor in the deep waters of the channel back of the sand spit.

As Stuart stepped on deck a cloud of black ducks circled gracefully overhead and slowly spread out on their feeding grounds. His heart gave a throb of primitive joy. He was a boy again and the world was young.

"Confound them!" he cried. "I'll show these ducks a trick or two before this trip is over."

He was glad he came. Bivens had put him in command of the little schooner, and he gave orders at once to lower a tender and tow her to an old anchorage he knew in a little cove behind Gull marsh. And then his trouble began with Bivens.

"Let 'em fly if they want to; I'm not going to budge. Go yourself, Jim."

"Go myself! What do you suppose I gave up my work and came down here a month for? I came to try to teach you how to live, you fool, and I'm not going without you. Get into your togs! The guides are here and ready. The tide waits for no man, not even a millionaire; it's ebbing now."

"Well, let it ebb. I don't want to stop it!" the sick man snarled.

Nan came in, pressed Stuart's hand as she passed, nodded good morning and joined her voice to Stuart's.

"Come; you must go, Cal. It's a glorious day."

The doctor slipped in a word too. "By all means, Mr. Bivens, get your hand in the first day."

Bivens lifted himself to a half sitting posture, glared at his physician and yelled with fury:

"Get out—all of you—and let me alone!"

The doctor and Nan left on tip toes, but Stuart folded his arms and looked at Bivens.

"Oh, come now, this is too ridiculous, a quarrel the first day of our shooting. But you'll have to get one thing fixed in your head once for all; you don't run the entire world. The telephone, telegraph and mail service have been suspended. The Buccaneer has put to sea for New York. You're on a little eighty-foot schooner, anchored in a bay ten miles wide and a hundred miles long and I'm in command. I won't stand any nonsense from you. Come down off your perch, quick!"

Bivens started to swear, caught the expression of Stuart's face and suddenly extended his hand.

"I'm sorry, Jim; you must not mind my foolishness. It was awfully nice of you to come. I'll stay in today, but you go and get some ducks for dinner, like a good boy, and say—take Nan along and teach her to shoot. It's getting to be the rage among the high flyers for the women to shoot."

"Please do, Jim!" Nan cried from the door. She had listened outside to the duel in the stateroom.

"All right," he answered.

For five days Bivens stuck to his bed with dogged determination, and each day Stuart went out with Nan. Never had she been more resistlessly charming. Each day their association grew in tender intimacy and every fear that had stirred his heart at first was lulled at last to sleep.

On the sixth day Bivens rose early and declared that he would try the ducks. The barometer was falling, and dark, snowy looking clouds were piling up on the western horizon. A breeze came stealing out of the cloud banks with the chill of snow in its breath.

Bivens insisted on going out at once, against the advice and the protest of the guide. He not only insisted on going after the ducks, but what was worse, swore that he was going to get his mail and telegrams from the shore. Stuart protested vigorously.

"I've told you that the guide is the only man who can run that tender over the crooked course to the mainland, and if he goes away we'll have no one to take us out."

"What do you need a guide for? It's not a half mile to those blinds. I've seen you every day go back and forth in plain view of the yacht. Nan could row out there and back by herself. Send him ashore. Don't you know how to put out your own decoys?"

"If a strong blow comes we'll need two strong men to handle the boat."

"Rot!" Bivens cried. "We've got two tenders. Send your guide ashore with one of the sailors to run his engine. The other man can tow us out and back."

(Continued in Friday's Issue.)

The Richest Street.

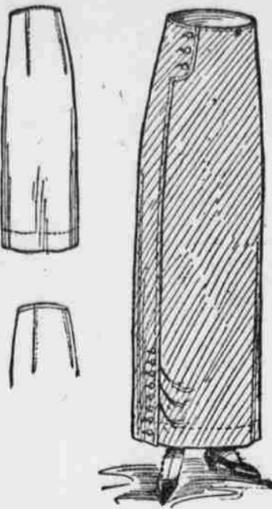
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NOTICE is hereby given that an application will be made to the Governor of Pennsylvania and to the Water Supply Commission of Pennsylvania on Thursday, the twenty-fourth day of July, 1913, by J. R. Guckes, H. M. Long and Jacob Reeb, Jr., under the Act of Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, entitled "An Act to provide for the incorporation and regulation of certain corporations," approved April 23, 1874, and the supplements thereto for the charter of an intended corporation to be called Manchester Water Supply Company, the character and object of which are the supply, storage or transportation of water and water power for commercial and manufacturing purposes in the Township of Manchester, County of Wayne, State of Pennsylvania, and for these purposes to have, possess and enjoy all the rights, benefits and privileges of the said Act of Assembly and its supplements. REEB, GILL & LINN.

NOTICE is hereby given that an application will be made to the Governor of Pennsylvania and to the Water Supply Commission of Pennsylvania on Thursday, the twenty-fourth day of July, 1913, by George H. Stein, Bruce A. Metzger and Alex. R. Cheston under the Act of Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, entitled "An Act to provide for the incorporation and regulation of certain corporations," approved April 23, 1874, and the supplements thereto for the charter of an intended corporation to be called Narrowsburg Water Supply Company, the character and object of which are the supply, storage or transportation of water and water power for commercial and manufacturing purposes in the Township of Damascus, County of Wayne, State of Pennsylvania, and for these purposes to have, possess and enjoy all the rights, benefits and privileges of the said Act of Assembly and its supplements. REEB, GILL & LINN.

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