

The TRAIL OF '98  
A Northland Romance

by ROBERT W. SERVICE WNU Service Illustrations by Irwin Myers

CHAPTER XIII—Continued

But what was this? They had come on a wooden boat that streaked down the slope as straight as an arrow from the bow. It was some other scheme of the tyrant man. Nevertheless, they jostled and jammed to get into it.

The man stood by his water-gun and from its nozzle the gleaming terror leapt. It flew like an arrow from the bow, and wherever he aimed it the hillside seemed to reel and shudder at the shock. Great cataraacts of gravel shot out, avalanches of clay toppled over; vast boulders were hurled into the air like heaps of fecy wool.

The fear deafened the man. He heard the crash of falling rock, but he was so intent on his work he did not hear another man approach. Suddenly he looked up and saw.

He gave a mighty start, then at once he was calm again. This was the meeting he had dreaded, longed for, fought against, desired. Almost savagely, and with a curious blaze in his eyes he redirected the little gun.

He waved his hand to the other man.

"Go away!" he shouted. Mosher refused to budge. His eyes glittered, and he took off his hat to wipe some beads of sweat from the monumental baldness of his forehead. His rich, penetrating voice pierced through the roar of the "giant."

"Here, turn off your water. I want to speak to you. Got a business proposition to make."

Jim was dumb.

"Say, your wife's in town. Been there for the last year. Didn't you know it?"

Jim shook his head. He was particularly interested in his work just then.

"Yes, she's in town—living respectable."

Jim redirected his gun with a savage swish.

"Say, I'm a sort of a philanthropic guy," went on Mosher, "and there's nothing I like better than doing the erring wife restitution act. I think I could induce that little woman of yours to come back to you."

He was sneering now, frankly villainous. Jim gave no sign.

"What d'ye say? This is a likely bit of ground—give me a half share in this ground, and I'll guarantee to deliver that little piece of goods to you. There's an offer."

Again that smug look of generosity beamed on the man's face. Once more Jim motioned him to go, but Mosher did not heed. He thought the gesture was a refusal. His face grew threatening.

"All right, if you won't," he snarled. "Look out! I know you love her still. Let me tell you, I own that woman, body and soul, and I'll make life hell for her. I'll torture you through her. Yes, I've got a cinch. You'd better change your mind."

He had stepped back as if to go. Then, whether it was an accident or not, one will never know—but the little gun swung round till it bore on him.

It lifted him up in the air. It shot him forward like a stone from a catapult. It landed him on the bank fifty feet away with a sickening crash. Then, as he lay, it pounded and battered him out of all semblance of a man.

The waters were having their revenge.

alarm. "What will be think of me, I wonder, poor, ignorant me? I believe I'm afraid of him. I wish he'd stay away and leave us alone. Yet for your sake, dear, I do wish him to think well of me."

"Don't fear, Berna. He'll be proud of you. But there's a second reason."

"What?"

"Oh, my beloved! perhaps we'll not always be alone as we are now. Perhaps, perhaps some day there will be others—little ones—for their sakes."

"He did not speak. I could feel her nestle closer to me. So we sat there in the big, deep chair, in the glow of the open fire, silent, dreaming, and I saw on her lashes the glimmer of a glorious tear.

I kissed away her tears. Foolish tears! I blessed her for them. I held her closer to me. I was wondrous happy. No longer did the shadow of the past hang over us. Even as children forget, were we forgetting."

"Husband, I'm so happy," she sighed.

"Wife, dear, dear wife, I too."

There was no need for words. Our lips met in passionate kisses, but the next moment we started apart. Some one was coming up the garden path—a tall figure of a man. I started as if I had seen a ghost. Could it be—then I rushed to the door.

There on the porch stood Garry.

CHAPTER XIV

As he stood before me once again it seemed as if the years had rolled away, and we were boys together. It all came back to me, that sunny shore, the white-washed cottages, the old gray house among the birches, the lift of sheep-starred pasture, and above it the glooming dark of the heather hills.

And it was but three years ago. How life had changed! Fortune had come to me, love had come to me. I was no longer a callow, uncouth lad. Yet, alas! I no longer looked forward with joy; the savor of life was no more sweet. It was another "me" I saw in my mirror that day, a "me" with a face sorely lined, with hair gray-flecked; with eyes sad and bitter. Little wonder Garry, as he stood there, stared at me so sorrowfully.

"How you've changed, lad!" said he at last.

"Have I, Garry? You're just about the same to me, by all that's wonderful, what brought you here?"

His teeth flashed in that clever, confident smile.

"The stage. I just arrived a few minutes ago, and hurried here at once. Aren't you glad to see me?"

"Glad? Yes, indeed! I can't tell you how glad. But it's a shock to me your coming so suddenly."

"It was a sudden resolve; I should have wired you. However, I thought I would give you a surprise. How are you, old man?"

"Me—oh, I'm all right, thanks."

"Why, what's the matter with you, lad? You look ten years older. You look older than your big brother now."

"Yes, I daresay. It's the life, it's the land. A hard life and a hard land."

"Why don't you go out?"

"I don't know, I don't know. I keep on planning to go and then something turns up, and I put it off a little longer. I suppose I ought to go, but I'm tied up with mining interests. I'm making money, you see."

lowed mine. They rested on the curtains and the strong, stern look came into his face. Yet again he banished it with a sunny smile.

"Mother's one regret was that you were not with her when she died. Do you know, old man, I think she was always fonder of you than of me? She missed you dreadfully, and before she died she made me promise I'd always stand by you, and look after you if anything happened."

"Now you must come home. Back there on the countryside we can find you a sweet girl to marry. You will love her, have children and forget all this. Come."

I rose. I could no longer put it off.

"Excuse me one moment," I said. I parted the curtains and entered the bedroom.

She was standing there, white to the lips and trembling.



She Was Standing There, White to the Lips and Trembling.

the lips and trembling. She looked at me silently.

"I'm afraid," she faltered.

"Be brave, little girl," I whispered, leading her forward. Then I threw aside the curtain.

"Garry," I said, "this is—this is Berna."

There they stood, face to face at last. Long ago I had visioned this meeting, planned for, yet dreaded it, and now with utter suddenness it had come.

The girl had recovered her calm, and I must say she bore herself well. As she gazed at my brother there was a proud, high look in her eyes.

And Garry—his smile had vanished. His face was cold and stern. No doubt he saw in her a creature who was preying on me, an influence for evil, an overwhelming indictment against me of sin and guilt. All this I read in his eyes; then Berna advanced to him with outstretched hand.

"How do you do? I've heard so much about you I feel as if I'd known you long ago."

She was so winning, I could see he was quite taken aback. He took the little white hand and looked down from his splendid height to the sweet eyes that gazed into his. He bowed with lip politeness.

"I feel flattered, I assure you, that my brother should have mentioned me to you."

Here he shot a dark look at me.

"Sit down again, Garry," I said. "Berna and I want to talk to you."

He complied, but with an ill grace. We all three sat down and a grave constraint was upon us. Berna broke the silence.

"You will stay with us for a time, won't you?"

"Well, that all depends—I haven't quite decided yet. I want to take Athol here home with me."

ADMITS STAGING FAKE HOLDUP TO COVER STEALING

Philadelphia City Hall Robbery Cleared Up by Confession.

Philadelphia.—Director Samuel S. Schofield of the department of public safety announced that a "daring city hall holdup and pay roll robbery" was a fake, staged partly to cover up alleged embezzlements of Alexander Hamilton, assistant paymaster of the department of public works, who told of being waylaid at pistol point, Hamilton was said to have confessed.

Hamilton's story was that bandits entered an elevator in city hall and rode up past police headquarters, on up past the detective bureau, and stepped out on the seventh floor.

The holdup men were said to have made their way to the office of the paymaster of the department of public works. A few minutes later a man on duty in the detective bureau, two flights below, nearly fell from his chair when a stuttering voice came through the telephone earpiece:

"We've been held up—quick—send cops! This is the paymaster, depart-

ment of public works, up on the seventh floor, room 785. Hurry, will you?"

To Excited to Talk.

The corridors of the city hall were filled in a moment with detectives who dashed up the only available staircase to find Alexander J. Hamilton, the assistant paymaster, dashing about the office and pointing to a large steel cabinet of the type used for hanging clothes.

It was a few moments before he could be calmed sufficiently to explain how two young men had entered his office ten minutes previously, had locked him in the cabinet and escaped with a payroll which he estimated at about \$15,000.

Locked in Closet.

"One of them grabbed me by the back of the trousers while the other pointed a gun at me, and they shoved me, virtually head first, into that closet, then banged and locked the door," Hamilton said. "I was almost stifled."

The official was able to kick and push the door open in a few minutes and he found most of the payroll money gone. A two hour checkup showed the loss to be \$13,245.53.

The police disbelieve Hamilton.

Vienna Savant Sure World Will Starve

Berlin.—The world will starve in 300 years.

This is the gloomy prediction of the great Viennese physiologist, Doctor Durig, who declares that on the basis of careful researches he has come to the conclusion that the earth will not yield sufficient food to feed mankind within 300 years.

Professor Stoklosa, of Bruenn, speaking before the Czechoslovakian academy of agriculture, upholds the theory of Doctor Durig, but says mankind can save itself by intensive cultivation of the earth.

He says that at the present time there are about two billion people on earth but that at the end of 100 years there will be six billion.

Professor Stoklosa suggests as a means of saving mankind the intensification of agriculture by radium.

Cat Saves Three Lives

Middletown, N. Y.—Three persons were saved from suffocation in a fire here through the efforts of a pet cat. While Frank Hassen, proprietor of a grocery, was sleeping in the rear of the building in a room with his two brothers, the cat leaped with its two brothers, walking back and forth until Hassen was awakened.

The three escaped. The building and contents were badly damaged.

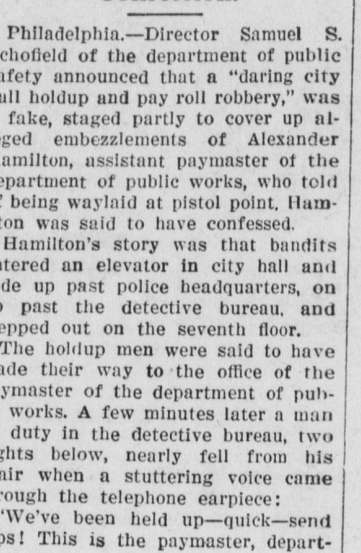
Dog Disarms Bandit

New York.—Shep, a collie dog belonging to Policeman Leo Williams of Brooklyn, was credited with the capture of a bandit suspect. The prisoner is accused of a delicatessen store hold-up.

He was chased into an alley by Williams and was leveling his pistol at the policeman when the dog leaped, closing his teeth on the fugitive's arm and knocking the gun from his hand.

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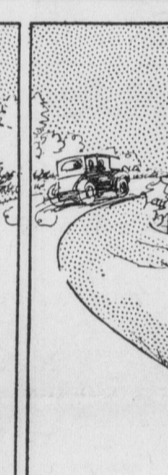
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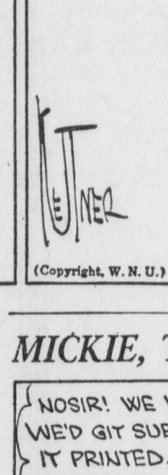
THE FEAT



MICKIE

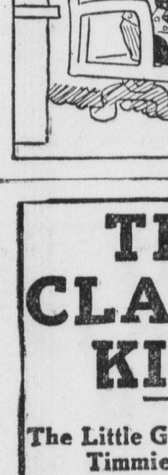


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THE CLACK KI

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By PERCY

