

The Hollow of Her Hand by George Barr McCutcheon

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HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

DEMAND FOR BETTER ROADS

No Reason Why Portion of Tax Should Not Be Used in Putting Highways in Better Condition.

There is a growing demand for more and better road making during the autumn months.



A Durable Stone Culvert.

Workmen from a picture dealer's establishment were engaged in hanging a full length portrait in the long living-room of her apartment when she reached home.

INCREASE THE LAND VALUES

Strong Argument in Favor of Good Roads is That They Enhance Value of Bordering Farms.

It takes all kinds of arguments to interest the numerous types of men found in every community in public improvements.

Several real estate dealers in Iowa have begun to advertise land as located "on the Lincoln Highway."

The age is progressive. Fifty or sixty years ago this country began to build railroads, and now we have more than nearly all the rest of the world together.

The spirit of good roads is hereditary. Grazing Pasture Lands. Don't graze the pasture land too hard early in the season.

Place for Lime. The place for lime is in the soil, not on top of it.

Charcoal for Chicks. Keep fine charcoal and grit where chicks may have free access to it.

Best for Sandy Soil. Ground limestone and marl are best to apply to a sandy soil.

CHAPTER XXI.—Continued. "I did not see the register at the inn. I did not know till afterwards that we were not booked.

"He coolly informed me that he knew the kind of a girl I was. I had been on the stage. He said it was no use trying to work the marriage game on him.

"We will spare you the rest, Miss Castleton," he said, his voice hoarse and unnatural.

"You—your daughter? You do believe me?" she cried.

He looked down at his wife's bowed head, and received no sign from her; then at the white, drawn faces of his children.

"I—I think your story is so convincing that we—could not endure the shame of having it repeated to the world."

"I—I cannot ask you to forgive me, sir. I only ask you to believe me," she murmured brokenly.

"I think, Mr. Wrاندall, you will now appreciate my motives in—"

"Pardon me, Mr. Carroll, if I suggest that Miss Castleton does not require any defense at present," said Mr. Wrاندall stiffly.

"There was something tragic in the man's face. His son and daughter arose as if moved by an instinctive realization of a duty, and perhaps for the first time in their lives were submissive to an influence they had never quite recognized before—"

"Mr. Wrاندall laid his hand heavily on his wife's shoulder. She started, looked up rather vacantly, and then arose without assistance.

"You ask us to be your judges?" "I ask you to judge not me alone but—your son as well," said Hetty, meeting her look steadily.

"You know the way into my sitting-room, Leslie," she said, with singular directness.

"There was nothing else left for me to do."



"There Was Nothing Else Left for Me to Do."

room, Leslie," she said, with singular directness. Then she arose and drew her figure to its full height.

They turned away without a word or a revealing look, and slowly moved off in the direction of the boudoir.

Half an hour passed. Then the door was opened and the tall old man advanced into the room.

"We have found against my son, Miss Castleton," he said, his lips twitching. "He is not here to speak for himself, but he has already been judged.

"Oh, God, I thank thee—I thank thee!" burst from the lips of Sara Wrاندall.

"It is not for us to judge you, Sara," said Redmond Wrاندall, speaking with difficulty.

"What's this?" He demanded, sharply, about the office. The clerk dusted an easy chair and threw open the long unused desk near the window.

"We are very glad to see you here, madam," he said.

"I have already done so, Mr. Wrاندall," said Sara.

"You still are Sebastian Gooch's daughter," he said distinctly.

"This last transaction proves it, you would say?"

"I—I wonder if that can be true," she murmured, rather piteously.

"You loved as deeply as you hate, Sara," he said, with a curious twitching of his chin.

"We are ready, father," he said thickly. After a moment's hesitation, he crossed over to Hetty, who stood beside Sara.

"I—I can now understand why you refused to marry me, Miss Castleton," he said, in a queer, jerky manner.

"You ask us to be your judges?" "I ask you to judge not me alone but—your son as well," said Hetty, meeting her look steadily.

CHAPTER XXII.

Renunciation. On the third day after the singular trial of Hetty Castleton in Sara's library, young Mrs. Wrاندall's motor drew up in front of a lofty office building in lower Broadway.

"That's about all, and I'd like to know if I have hit you?" "If that is all, then let me tell you something. You are an acrobat."

"Acrobat!—ha! ha! ha! What makes you think that?" "Because," said the other, as he seized him by the neck and knee and carried him out to the platform.

"You were brought up in the country, as your bow legs tell at a glance. You are something of a sport, as I assured myself when I saw you reading that article about Corbett.

Why She Mourned. "Boo-hoo!" sobbed the lady.

"What are you crying about?" the man asked.

"You know the bread and the jelly I sent to the fair?" "Yes. Didn't it take a prize? Well, cheer up—those judges—"

"But it did take a prize—they both took first prizes—boo-hoo!" "Well, what are you crying about?"

"The bread took first prize as the best specimen of concrete, and the jelly as the best china cement!"

made haste to explain. To the new boy's surprise, the visitor was conducted with much bowing and scraping into the private offices, where no one ventured except by special edict of the powers.

"Who was it?" he asked, in some awe, of a veteran stenographer who came up and sneered at him.

"Mrs. Challis Wrاندall, you little simpleton," said she, and for once he failed to snap back.

"It is of record that for nearly two whole days, he was polite to every visitor who approached him and was generally worth his salt.

"Thank you." He disappeared. She relaxed in the familiar, comfortable old leather-cushioned chair, and closed her eyes.

"They will be properly filled by tomorrow."

"Thank you." He disappeared. She relaxed in the familiar, comfortable old leather-cushioned chair, and closed her eyes.

"This is an—unexpected pleasure, Sara," he said perplexed and ill-at-ease.

"I came down to attend to some business, Mr. Wrاندall," she said.

"Business?" he repeated, staring.

"I intend to dispose of my entire interest in Wrاندall & Co.," she announced calmly.

"What's this?" he demanded sharply.

"We may as well speak plainly, Mr. Wrاندall," she said.

"I believe that Vivian and I could—but no! I won't go so far as to say that either. There is something genuine about her. Strange to say, I have never disliked her."

"If you had made the slightest effort to like us, no doubt we could have—"

"My dear Mr. Wrاندall," she interrupted quickly.

"I believe you mean it, Mr. Wrاندall," she said, a note of gratitude in her voice.

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He hesitated a moment, opened his lips as if to speak, and then abruptly left the room.

"Many minutes passed before the two Wrандalls put in an appearance. She understood the delay. They were telephoning to certain legal advisers.

"What's this I hear, Sara?" demanded Leslie, extending his hand after a second's hesitation.

"I don't know what you've heard," she said pointedly.

"His slim fingers went searching for the end of his moustache.

"Why—why, about selling out to us," he stammered.

"I am willing to retire from the firm of Wrандall & Co.," she said.

"Father says the business is as good as it was a year ago, but I don't agree with him," said the son, trying to look lugubrious.

"Then you don't care to repeat your original proposition?" "Well, the way business has been falling off—"

"Perhaps you would prefer to sell out to me," she remarked quietly.

"Not at all!" he said quickly, with a surprised glance at his father.

"You forget that my name is Wrандall," she rejoined.

"Our original offer stands," said the senior Wrандall stiffly.

"And I to sell. Mr. Carroll will meet you tomorrow, gentlemen. He will represent me as usual.

"I have no real feeling of hostility toward you, Sara," said Leslie nervously.

"I am afraid you don't mean that, deep down in your heart, Leslie," she said, with a queer little smile.

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She caught her breath. There was an instant's hesitation on her part before she replied.

"You have never been very smart at making love guesses, Leslie," she said.

"Following her into the corridor outside the office, he pushed the elevator bell for her.

"I meant what I said, Sara," he remarked, somewhat doggedly.

"You ought to get married. Chal didn't leave much for you to cherish. There's no reason why you should go on like this, living alone and all that sort of thing. You're young and beautiful and—"

"Oh, thank you, Leslie," she cried out sharply.

"You see, it's going to be this way: Hetty will probably marry Booth. That's on it, I take it. You're depending on her for companionship. Well, she'll quit you cold after she's married. She will—"

She interrupted him peremptorily.

"If Challis did nothing else for me, Leslie, he at least gave me you to cherish. Once more, good-bye."

The elevator stopped for her. He stroled back to his office with a puzzled frown on his face.

The angry red faded from her cheeks as she sped homeward in the automobile. Her thoughts were no longer of Leslie but of another—

Workmen from a picture dealer's establishment were engaged in hanging a full length portrait in the long living-room of her apartment when she reached home.

Passing the open library door, Sara paused for an instant to peer within. Then she went on down the hall to her own sitting-room.

She threw aside her furs, and, without removing her hat, passed into the bed-chamber at the left of the cozy little boudoir.

Her own was directly opposite. On the girl's dressing-table, leaning against the broad, low mirror, stood the unframed photograph of a man.

With a furtive glance over her shoulder, Sara crossed to the table and took up the picture in her gloved hand.

For a long time she stood there gazing into the frank, good-looking face of Brandon Booth.

She breathed faster; her hand shook; her eyes were strained as if by an inward suggestion of pain.

She shook her head slowly, as if in final renunciation of a secret hope or the banishment of an unwelcome desire, and resolutely replaced the photograph.

"He belongs to her," she said, unconsciously speaking aloud; "and he is like all men. She must not be unhappy."

Presently she entered the library. She had exchanged her tailor-suit for a dainty house-gown.

Coming softly up from behind, Sara leaned over the back of the chair and put her hands under her friend's chin, tenderly, lovingly.

"Oh, Sara, how cold your hands are!" She grasped them in her own and fondly stroked them, as if to restore warmth to the long, slim fingers which

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"Because I Love You So Deeply," Said Sara.

gave the lie to Mrs. Coburn's declarations.

"I've been thinking all morning of what you and Brandon proposed to me last night," said Sara, looking straight over the girl's head, the dark, languorous, mysterious glow filling her eyes.

"It is good of you both to want me, but—"

"Now don't say 'but,' Sara," cried Hetty. "We mean it, and you must let us have our way."

"It would be splendid to be near you