

THE DIM LANTERN

By TEMPLE BAILEY

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THE STORY THUS FAR

Young, pretty Jane Barnes, who lived with her brother, Baldwin, in Sherwood Park, near Washington, was not particularly impressed when she read that rich, attractive Edith Towne had been left at the altar by Delafield Simms, wealthy New Yorker. However, she still mused over it when she met Evans Follette, a young neighbor, whom the war had left completely discouraged and despondent. Evans had always loved Jane. That morning Baldwin Barnes, on his way to work in Washington, offered assistance to a tall, lovely girl in distress. Later he found a bag she had left in the car, containing a diamond ring on which was inscribed "Del to Edith—Forever." He knew then that his passenger had been Edith Towne. Already he was half in love with her. That night he discussed the matter with Jane, and they called her uncle, worldly, sophisticated Frederick Towne. He visited them at their home, delighted with Jane's simplicity. He told them Edith's story. Because her uncle desired it, Edith Towne had accepted Delafield Simms, whom she liked but did not love. She disappeared immediately after the wedding was to have taken place. The next day Jane received a basket of fruit from Towne, and a note asking if he might call again. Mrs. Follette, widowed mother of Evans, was a woman of indomitable courage. Impoverished, she nevertheless managed to keep Evans and herself in comparative comfort by running a dairy farm. Evans, mentally depressed and disillusioned, had little self reliance and looked to his mother and Jane for guidance. Edith Towne phoned Baldwin in answer to an ad. She asked him to bring her pocketbook. Jane calls on Frederick Towne in his elaborate office.

CHAPTER V—Continued

Jane bought modestly and Briggs carried her parcels. He even made a suggestion as to the cut of the steak. His father, it seemed, had been a butcher.

They drove back then for Frederick. Briggs went up for him, and returned to say that Mr. Towne would be down in a moment.

Frederick was, as a matter of fact, finishing a letter to Delafield Simms:

"I am assuming that you will get your mail at the Poinciana, but I shall also send a copy to your New York office. Edith has asked me to return the ring to you. I shall hold it until I learn where it may be delivered into your hands.

"As for myself, I can only say this—that my first impulse was to kill you. But perhaps I am too civilized to believe that your death would make things better. You must understand, of course, that you've put yourself beyond the pale of decent people."

Lucy's pencil wavered—a flush stained her throat and cheeks—then she wrote steadily, as Frederick's voice continued:

"You will find yourself black-balled by several of the clubs. Whatever your motive, the world sees no excuse."

He stopped. "Will you read that over again, Miss Logan?"

So Lucy read it—still with that hot flush on her cheeks, and when she had finished Frederick said, "You can lock the ring in the safe until I give you further instructions."

A clerk came in to say that the car was waiting, and presently Frederick Towne went away and Lucy was left alone in the great room, which was not to her a forest of adventure, as it had seemed to Jane, but a great prison where she tugged at her chains.

She thought of Delafield Simms sailing fast to southern waters. Of those purple seas—the blazing stars in the splendid nights. Delafield had told her of them. They had often talked together.

She turned the ring around on her finger, studying the carved figure. The woman with the butterfly wings was exquisite—but she did not know her name. She slipped the ring on the third finger of her left hand. Its diamonds blazed.

She locked it presently in the safe—then came back and read the letter which Towne had signed. She sealed it and stamped the envelope. Then she wrote a letter of her own. She made a little ring of her hair, and fastened it to the page. Beneath it she wrote, "Lucy to Del—forever." She kissed the words, held the crackling sheet against her heart. Her eyes were shining. The great room was no longer a prison. She saw beyond captivity to the open sea.

Mrs. Allison and the three old ladies with whom Jane was to drink tea, were neighbors. Mrs. Allison lived alone, and the other three lived in the homes of their several sons and daughters. They played cards every Friday afternoon, and Jane always came over when Mrs. Allison entertained and helped her with the refreshments. They were very simple and pleasant old ladies with a nice sense of their own dignity.

At any rate, they had Jane. Some of the other young people scorned these elderly tea-parties, and if they came, were apt to show it in their manner. But Jane was never scornful. She always had the time of her life, and the old ladies felt particularly joyous and juvenile when she was one of them.

But this afternoon Jane was late. Tea was always served promptly at four. And it happened that there were popovers. So, of course, they couldn't wait.

"I telephoned to Sophy," said Mrs. Allison, "and Jane has gone to town. I suppose something has kept her. Anyhow we'll start in."

So the old ladies ate the popovers and drank hot sweet chocolate, and found them not as delectable as when Jane was there to share them. Things were, indeed, a bit dull.

They discussed Mrs. Follette, whose faults furnished a perpetual topic. Mrs. Allison told them that the young Baldwin had dined at Castle Manor on Thanksgiving. And that there had been other guests.

"How can she afford it," was the unanimous opinion, "with that poor boy on her hands?"

"He's sitting up there on the terrace," Mrs. Allison further informed them. "Do you think I'd better ask him to come over?"

They thought she might, but her hospitable purpose was never fulfilled, for as she stepped out on the porch, a long, low limousine stopped in front of the house, and out of it came Jane in all the glory of a great bunch of orchids, and with a man by her side, whose elegance measured up to the limousine and the lovely flowers.

They came up the path and Jane said, "Mrs. Allison, may I present



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Mr. Towne, and will you give him a cup of tea?"

"Indeed, I will," Mrs. Allison seemed to rise on wings of gratification, "only it is chocolate and not tea."

And Frederick said that he adored chocolate, and presently Mrs. Allison's little living-room was all in a pleasant flutter; and over on Jane's terrace, Evans Follette sat, a lonely sentinel, and pondered on the limousine, and the elegance of Jane's escort.

Once old Sophy called to him, "You'll ketch your death, Mr. Evans."

He shook his head and smiled at her. A man who had lived through a winter in the trenches thought nothing of this. Physical cold was easy to endure. The cold that clutched at his heart was the thing that frightened him.

The early night came on. There were lights now in Mrs. Allison's house, and within was warmth and laughter. The old ladies, excited and eager, told each other in flashing asides that Mr. Towne was the great Frederick Towne. The one whose name was so often in the papers, and his niece, Edith, had been deserted at the altar. "You know, my dear, the one who ran away."

When Jane said that she must be getting home, they pressed around her, sniffing her flowers, saying pleasant things of her prettiness—hinting of Towne's absorption in her.

She laughed and sparkled. It was a joyous experience. Mr. Towne had a way of making her feel important. And the adulation of the old ladies added to her elation.

As Frederick and Jane walked across the street towards the little house on the terrace, a gaunt figure rose from the top step and greeted them.

"Evans," Jane scolded, "you need a guardian. Don't you know that you shouldn't sit out in such weather as this?"

"I'm not cold," she presented him to Frederick. "Won't you come in, Mr. Towne?" But he would not. He would call her up. Jane stood on the porch

and watched him go down the steps. He waved to her when he reached his car.

"Oh, Evans," she said, "I've had such a day."

They went into the house together. Jane lighted the lamp. "Can't you dine with us?"

"I hoped you might ask me. Mother is staying with a sick friend. If I go home, I shall sup on bread and milk."

"Sophy's chops will be much better." She held her flowers up to him. "Isn't the fragrance heavenly?"

"Towne gave them to you?"

She nodded. "Oh, I've been very grand and gorgeous—lunch at the Chevy Chase club—a long drive afterward—" she broke off. "Evans, you look half-frozen. Sit here by the fire and get warm."

"I met both trains."

"Evans—why will you do such things?"

"I wanted to see you."

"But you can see me any time—"

"I cannot. Not when you are lurching with fashionable gentlemen with gold-lined pocketbooks."

He held out his hands to the blaze. "Do you like him?"

"Mr. Towne? Yes, and I like the things he does for me. I had to pinch myself to be sure it was true."

"If that was true?"

"That I was really playing around with the great Frederick Towne."

"You talk as if he were conferring a favor."

She had her coat off now and her hat. She came and sat down in the chair opposite him. "Evans," she said, "you're jealous."

She was still vivid with the excitement of the afternoon, lighted up by it, her skin warmed into color by the swift flowing blood beneath.

"Well, I am jealous," he tried to smile at her, then went on with a touch of bitterness, "Do you know what I thought about as I sat watching the lights at Mrs. Allison's? Well, as I came over today I passed a snowy field—and there was a scarecrow in the midst of it, fluttering his rags, a lonely thing, an ugly thing. Well, we're two of a kind, Jane, that scarecrow and I."

Her shocked glance stopped him. "Evans, you don't know what you are saying."

He went on recklessly. "Well, after all, Jane, the thing is this. It's a man's looks and his money that count. I'm the same man inside of me that I was when I went away. You know that. You might have loved me. The thing that is left you don't love. Yet I am the same man—"

As he flung the words at her, her eyes met his steadily. "No," she said, "you are not the same man."

"Why not?"

"The man of yesterday did not think—dark thoughts—"

The light had gone out of her as if he had blown it with a breath. "Jane," he said, unsteadily, "I am sorry—"

She melted at once and began to scold him, almost with tenderness. "What made you look at the scarecrow? Why didn't you turn your back on him, or if you had to look, why didn't you wave and say, 'Cheer up, old chap, summer's coming, and you'll be on the job again?' To me there's something debonair in a scarecrow in summer—he dances in the breeze and seems to fling defiance to the crows."

He fell in with her mood. "But his defiance is all bluff."

"How do you know? If he keeps away a crow, and adds an ear of corn to a farmer's store—hasn't he fulfilled his destiny?"

"Oh, if you want to put it that way. I suppose you are hinting that I can keep away a crow or two—"

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"I'm not hinting, I am telling it straight out."

They heard Baldy's step in the hall. Jane, rising, gave Evans' head a pat as she passed him. "You are thinking about yourself too much, old dear; stop it."

Baldy, ramping in, demanded a detailed account of Jane's adventure.

"And I took Briggs to market," she told him gleefully, midway of her recital; "you should have seen him. He carried my parcels—and offered advice—"

Baldy had no ears for Briggs' attractions. "Did you get the things Miss Towne wanted?"

"We did. We went to the house and I waited in the car while Mr. Towne had the bags packed. He wanted me to go in but I wouldn't. We brought her bags out with us."

"Who's we?"

"Mr. Towne and I, myself," she added the spectacular details.

"Do you mean that you've been playing around with him all day?"

"Not all day, Baldy. Part of it."

"I'm not sure that I like it."

"Why not?"

"A man like that. He might fill your head with ideas."

CHAPTER VI

Baldy Barnes faring forth to find Edith Towne on Sunday morning was a figure as old as the ages—youth in quest of romance.

It was very cold and the clouds were heavy with wind. But neither cold nor clouds could damp his ardor—at his journey's end was a lady with eyes of burning blue.

People were going to church as he came into the city and bells were ringing, but presently he rode again in country silences. He crossed the long bridge into Virginia and followed the road to the south.

It was early and he met few cars. Yet had the way been packed with motors, he would have still been alone in that world of imagination where he saw Edith Towne and that first wonderful moment of meeting.

So he entered Alexandria, passing through the narrow streets that speak so eloquently of history. Beyond the town was another stretch of road parallel to the broad stream, and at last an ancient roadside inn, of red brick, with a garden at the back, barren now, but in summer a tangle of bloom, with an expanse of reeds and water plants, extending out into the river, and a low spidery boat-landing, which showed black at this season above the ice.

For years the old inn had been deserted, until motor cars had brought back its vanished glories. Once more its wide doors were open. There was nothing pretentious about it. But Baldy knew its reputation for genuine hospitality.

He wondered how Edith had kept herself hidden in such a place. It was amazing that no one had discovered her. That some hint of her presence had not been given to the newspapers.

He found her in a quaint sitting-room upstairs. "I think," she said to him, as he came in, "that you are very good-natured to take all this trouble for me—"

"It isn't any trouble." His assurance was gone. With her hat off she was doubly wonderful. He felt his youth and inexperience, yet words came to him, "And I didn't do it for you, I did it for myself."

She laughed. "Do you always say such nice things?"

"I shall always say them to you. And you mustn't mind. Really," Jane would have recognized returning confidence in that cock of the head. "I'm just a page—twanging a lyre."

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ADVENTUROUS AMERICANS

By Elmo Scott Watson

Long-Haired Sheriff

COMMODORE PERRY OWENS, born in Tennessee in 1852, went to Texas in the early seventies and spent 11 years there as a cowboy before becoming foreman of a cow outfit in New Mexico. He wore his hair long—almost to his waist—and carried his six-shooter on his left side, the butt pointing forward. Old timers in the Southwest were doubtful whether such a "show-off" had "real sand."

They found out he did have when, singlehanded, he killed three Navajo Indian cattle thieves. Then the people of northern Arizona decided he was the man to clean up the outlaws in their section and elected him sheriff of Apache county in 1887.

He broke up a band of 16 cattle rustlers after killing Ike Clanton of Tombstone fame and two others and capturing his brother, Finn Clanton, leader of the gang.

But his greatest feat was his single-handed fight with four members of the Eblevans gang, one of the factions in the famous Pleasant Valley war. In this fight, which took place in Holbrook, Perry killed three of the four, including Andy Cooper, one of Arizona's most dangerous gun-fighters. It was one of the most desperate encounters at close quarters in the history of the state, not even excepting the famous fight at the O. K. corral in Tombstone.

Refusing re-election as sheriff, Perry became a special agent for the Santa Fe railroad, later express messenger for Wells-Fargo and then a United States marshal. He gave up his man-hunting work in 1900 and became a business man in Seligman where he died in 1919.

First in Yellowstone Park

WHAT an adventure it must have been for the first person who saw the Yellowstone! John Colter, who for three years had served in the famous Lewis and Clark expedition, was the lucky man. He had just left the party and established himself with the expedition of Manuel Lisa from St. Louis who traveled up the Missouri river to trade with the Indians.

A fort was established at the Big Horn and John Colter was sent ahead to notify the red men. With courage typical of that period, he began his lone expedition into territory never before trod by even the most courageous trappers and pioneers of the time.

Informed by the Indians that ahead lay a territory that was bedeviled and that they would not penetrate it, his curiosity and his adventurous spirit impelled him to explore it. He was well rewarded for records show that, in 1808, he went through and then completely encircled what is now Yellowstone national park.

Alone, he saw before any other person, the boiling springs, towering geysers and strange mineral deposits. Not only was he a pioneer among white men, but more adventurous than even the red men, being years ahead of them in risking existence in a land where the earth trembled and groaned, spouted fire and hissed steam.

When Colter returned, he told such an amazing story of smoking pits and the smell of brimstone that the men of the fort laughed at him and told others what they thought were ridiculous stories of "Colter's Hell." It was several years before anyone else had the courage to verify his discovery.

First Arctic Explorer

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN is famous for a long list of achievements but one more should be added to the list—that of patron of the first American voyage of Arctic exploration.

Early in the Eighteenth century the English parliament offered a reward of 20,000 pounds to anyone who proved the existence of the fabled Northwest Passage to Asia. A British expedition set out in 1740 and was gone for a year and a half but failed to find it.

Then Franklin became interested in the project. He helped outfit the 60-ton schooner, Argo, which set forth in 1753 under the command of Capt. Charles Swaine. Sailing in March, the Argo encountered ice off Cape Farewell, but finally succeeded in entering Hudson's strait in the latter part of June.

Here the ice packs were so high that Swaine was forced to give up the attempt to penetrate further westward and to turn back to the open sea again. He then carefully examined the coast of Labrador before returning to Philadelphia where he arrived in November.

The next year he made a second voyage of discovery in the same vessel. Again he was unsuccessful and returned