

The Real Man

By FRANCIS LYNDE

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CHAPTER XVI—(Continued.)

On the day following the hindering concrete failure at the dam, Smith gave still more color to the charges of his detractors in the business field.

"The large lady's accurately penciled eyebrows went up in mild surprise.

"Bad temper?" she queried. "Bad temper, or an acute attack of 'tattletails' you can take your choice.

The fat lady shook her diamonds. "I should say not. They were at luncheon together in the ladies' ordinary as I came down a few minutes ago."

Thus the partner of Crawford Stanton's joys and sorrows. But an invisible onlooker in the small dining room above-stairs might have drawn other conclusions. Smith and the daughter of the Lawrenceville magnate had a small table to themselves, and if the talk were not precisely quarrelsome, it leaned that way at times.

"I have never seen you quite so brutal and impossible as you are today, Montague. You don't seem like the same man. Are you going to reconsider and take me out to the Baldwin ranch this afternoon?"

"And let you parade me there as your latest acquisition?—never in this world!"

"More brutality. Positively you are getting me into a frame of mind in which Tucker Jibbey will seem like a blessed relief. Whatever do you suppose has become of Tucker?"

"How should I know?" "If he had come in last night, and you had met him—as I asked you to— in any such heavenly temper as you are indulging now, I might think you had murdered him."

It was doubtless by sheer accident that Smith, reaching at the moment for the salad oil, overturned his water glass. But the small accident by no means accounted for the sudden graying of his face under the Timanyoni wind tan—for that or for the shaking hands with which he seconded the waiter's anxious efforts to repair the damage. When they were alone again, the momentary trepidation had given place to a renewed hardness that lent a biting rasp to his voice.

"Kinzie, the suspicious old banker that I've been telling you about, is determined to run me down," he said, changing the subject abruptly. "I've got it pretty straight that he is planning to send one of his clerks to the Topas district to try and find your father, in the hope that he will tell what he knows about me."

"Does this Mr. Kinzie know where father is to be found?" "He doesn't; that's the only hitch." Miss Verda's smile across the little table was level-eyed.

"I could be lots of help to you, Montague, in this fight you are making, if you'd only let me," she suggested.

"I'll fight for my own hand," was the grating rejoinder. "I can assure you, right now, that Kinzie's messenger will never reach your father—alive."

"Ooh!" shuddered the beauty, with a little lift of the rounded shoulders. "How utterly and hopelessly primitive! Let me show you a much simpler alternative. I have a map of the mining district, you know. Father left it with me—in case I should want to communicate with him."

Smith looked up with a smile which was a mere baring of the teeth.

"You wouldn't get in a man's way with any fine-spun theories of the ultimate right and wrong, would you? You wouldn't say that the only great man is the man who loves his fellow men, and all that?"

Again the handsome shoulders were lifted, this time in cool scorn.

"Are you quoting the little ranch person?" she inquired. Then she answered his query: "The only great men worth speaking of are the men who win. For the lack of something better to do, I'm willing to help you win, Montague. Most naturally, I am the one who would know where my father is to be found. And I have changed my mind about wanting to drive to the Baldwin's. We'll compromise on the play— if there is a play."

"There is a play, and I have the seats," he announced briefly. "Mercl!" she flung back. "Small favors thankfully received, and large ones in proportion; though it's hardly a favor, this time, because I have paid for it in advance. Mr. Kinzie's young man came to see me this morning."

"What did you do?" "I gave him a tracing of my map, and he was so grateful it made me want to tell him that it was all wrong; that he wouldn't find father in a month if he followed the directions."

"But you didn't!" "No; I can play the game, when it seems worth while."

Smith was frowning thoughtfully when he led her to the elevator alcove. "My way would have been the surer," he muttered, half to himself.

"Barbarian!" she laughed; and then: "To think that you were once a 'debutantes' darling! Oh, yes; I know it was Carter Westfall who said it first, but it was true enough to name you instantly for all Lawrenceville."

CHAPTER XVII.

The Megalomania.

Sixty-odd hours before the expiration of the time limit, Bartley Williams, lean and somber-eyed from the strain he had been under for many days and nights, saw the president's gray roadster plowing its way through the mesa sand on the approach to the construction camp, and was glad.

"I've been trying all the morning to squeeze out time to get into town," he told Baldwin, when the roadster came to a stand in front of the shack commissary. "Where is Smith?"

The colonel threw up his hand in a gesture expressive of complete detachment.

"Don't ask me. John has gone plumb loco in these last two or three days. It's as much as your life's worth to ask him where he has been or where he is going or what he means to do next."

"He hasn't stopped fighting?" said the engineer, half agast at the bare possibility.

"Oh, no; he is at it harder than ever—going it just a shaving too strong, is what I'd tell him, if he'd let me get near enough to shout at him. Last night, after the theater, he went around to the Herald office, and the way they're talking it on the street, he was aiming to shoot up the whole newspaper joint if Mark Allen, the editor, wouldn't take back a bunch of the lies he's been publishing about the High Line. It wound up in a scrap of some sort. I don't know who got the worst of it, but John isn't crippled up any, to speak of, this morning—only in his temper."

Williams shook his head. "I guess we'll have to stand for the grouch, if he'll only keep busy. He has the hot end of it. We couldn't very well get along without him, right now, colonel. With all due respect to you and the members of the board, he is the fighting backbone of the whole outfit."

"He is that," was Baldwin's ready admission. "He is just what we've been calling him from the first, Bartley—a three-ply, dyed-in-the-wool wonder in his specialty. He is fighting now like a man in the last ditch, and I believe he thinks he is in the last ditch."

"It will be only two days more," said the engineer, saying it as one who has been counting the days in keen anxiety. And then: "Stillings told me yesterday that we're not going to get an extension of the time limit from the state authorities."

"No; that little fire went out, blink, just as Smith said it would. Stanton's backers have the political pull—in the state as well as in Washington. They're going to hold us to the letter of the law."

"Let 'em do it. We'll win out yet—if we don't run up against one or both of the only two things I'm afraid of now: high water, or the railroad call-down."

"The railroad grab? Have you heard anything more about that?" "That is what I was trying to get to town for; to talk the railroad business over with you and Stillings and Smith. They've had a gang here this morning—a bunch of engineers, with a stranger, who gave his name as Hallowell, in charge. They claimed to be verifying the old survey, and Hallowell notified me formally that our dam stood squarely in their right of way for a bridge crossing of the river."

"They didn't serve any papers on you, did they?" inquired the colonel anxiously.

"No; the notice was verbal. But Hallowell wound up with a threat. He said, 'You've had due warning, legally and otherwise, Mr. Williams. This is our right of way, bought and paid for, as we can prove when the matter gets into the courts. You mustn't be surprised if we take whatever steps may be necessary to recover what belongs to us.'"

"Force?" queried the Missourian, with a glint of the border fighter's fire in his eyes.

"Maybe. But we're ready for that.

Did you know that Smith loaded half a dozen cases of new rifles on a motortruck yesterday, and had them sent out here?"

"No!" "He did—and told me to say nothing about it. It seems that he ordered them some time ago from an arms agency in Denver. That fellow foresees everything, colonel."

Dexter Baldwin had climbed into his car and was making ready to turn it for the run back to town.

"If I were you, Bartley, I believe I'd open up those gun boxes and pass the word among as many of the men as you think you can trust with rifles in their hands. I'll tell Smith—and Bob Stillings."

Colonel Baldwin saw the company's attorney, as soon as he reached Brewster. But Smith was not in his office, and no one seemed to know where he had gone. The colonel shrewdly suspected that Miss Richlander was making another draft upon the secretary's time, and he said as much to Starbuck, later in the day, when the mine owner sauntered into the High Line headquarters and proceeded to roll the inevitable cigarette.

"Not any, this time, colonel," was Starbuck's rebuttal. "You've missed it by a whole row of apple trees. Miss Rich-dollars is over at the hotel. I saw her at luncheon with the Stanton's less than an hour ago."

"You haven't seen Smith, have you?" "No; but I know where he is. He's out in the country, somewhere, taking the air in Dick Maxwell's runabout. I wanted to borrow the wagon myself, and Dick told me he had already lent it to Smith."

"We're needing him," said the colonel shortly, and then he told Starbuck of the newest development in the paper-railroad scheme of obstruction.

From that talk drifted to a discussion of Kinzie's latest attitude. By this time there had been an alarming number of stock sales by small holders, all of them handled by the Brewster City National, and it was plainly evident that Kinzie had finally gone over to the enemy and was buying—as cheaply as possible—for some unnamed customer.

"If they keep it up, they can wear us out by littles, and we'll break our necks finishing the dam and saving the franchise only to turn it over to them in the round-up," said the colonel dejectedly. "I've talked until I'm hoarse, but you can't talk marrow into an empty bone, Billy. I used to think we had a fairly good bunch of men in with us, but in these last few days I've been changing my mind at a fox-rot."

The remainder of the day, up to the time when the offices were closing and the colonel was making ready to go home, passed without incident. In Smith's continued absence Starbuck

had offered to go to the dam to stand a night watch with Williams against a possible surprise by the right-of-way claimants; and Stillings, who had been petitioning for an injunction, came up to report progress just as Baldwin was locking his desk.

"The judge has taken it under advisement, but that is as far as he would go today," said the lawyer. "It's simply a bold steal, of course. I'm sworn to uphold the law, and I can't counsel armed resistance. Just the same, I hope Williams has his nerve with him."

"He has; and I haven't lost mine yet," snapped a voice at the door; and Smith came in, dust-covered and swarthy with the grime of the wind-swept grasslands. Out of the pocket of his driving coat he drew a thick packet of papers and slipped it upon the drawn-down curtain of Baldwin's desk.

"There you are," he went on gratingly. "Now you can tell Mr. David Kinzie to go straight to blazes with his stock-punching, and the more money he puts into it, the more somebody's going to lose!"

"John!—what have you done?" demanded Baldwin.

"I've shown 'em what it means to go up against a winner!" was the half-triumphant, half-savage exultation. "I have put a crimp in that fence-climbing banker of yours that will last him for one while! I've secured thirty-day options, at par, on enough High Line stock to swing a clear majority if Kinzie should buy up every other share there is outstanding. It has taken me all day, and I've driven a thousand miles, but the thing is done."

"But, John! If anything should happen, and we'd have to make good on those options. . . . It would break the last man of us!"

"We're not going to let things happen!" was the gritting rejoinder. "I've told you both a dozen times that I'm

in this thing to win! You take care of those options, Stillings; they're worth a million dollars to somebody. Lock 'em up somewhere and then forget where they are. Now I'm going to hunt up Mr. Crawford Stanton—before I eat or sleep!"

"Easy, John; hold up a minute!" the colonel broke in soothingly; and Stillings, more practical, closed the office door silently and put his back against it. "This is a pretty sudden country, but there is some sort of a limit, you know," the big Missourian went on. "What's your idea in going to Stanton?"

"I mean to give him twelve hours in which to pack his trunk and get out of Brewster and the Timanyoni. If he hasn't disappeared by tomorrow morning—"

Stillings was signaling in dumb show to Baldwin. He had quietly opened the door and was crooking his finger and making signs over his shoulder toward the corridor. Baldwin saw what was wanted, and immediately shot his desk cover open and turned on the lights.

"That last lot of steel and cement vouchers was made out yesterday, John," he said, slipping the rubber band from a file of papers in the desk. "If you'll take time to sit down here and run 'em over, and put your name on 'em, I'll hold Martin long enough to let him get the checks in tonight's mail. I'll be back after a little."

Smith dragged up the president's big swivel chair and planted himself in it, and an instant later he was lost to everything save the columns of figures on the vouchers. Stillings had let himself out, and when the colonel followed him, the lawyer cautiously closed the door of the private office, and edged Baldwin into the corridor.

"We've mighty near got a madman to deal with in there, colonel," he whispered, when the two were out of earshot. "I was watching his eyes when he said that about Stanton, and they fairly blazed. He's going to kill somebody, if we don't look out."

Baldwin was shaking his head dubiously. "He's acting like a locoed thoroughbred that's gone outlaw," he said. "Do you reckon he's sure-enough crazy, Bob?"

"Only in the murder nerve. This deal with the options shows that he's all to the good on the business side. That was the smoothest trick that's been turned in any stage of this dodging fight with the big fellows. It simply knocks Kinzie's rat-gnawing game dead. If there were only somebody who could calm Smith down a little and bring him to reason—somebody near enough to him to dig down under his shell and get at the real man that used to be there when he first took hold with us—"

"A woman?" queried Baldwin, frowning disapproval in anticipation of what Stillings might be going to suggest.

"A woman for choice, of course. I was thinking of this young woman over at the Hophra House; anybody can see with half an eye that she has a pretty good grip on him. Suppose we go across the street and give her an invitation to come and do a little missionary work on Smith. She looks level-headed and sensible enough to take it the way it's meant."

Stillings was a lawyer and had no scruples, but the colonel had them in just proportion to his Southern birth and breeding.

"I don't like to drag a woman into it, any way or shape, Bob," he protested; and he would have gone on to say that he had good reason to believe that Miss Richlander's influence over Smith might not be at all of the meliorating sort, but Stillings cut him short.

"There need be no 'dragging.' The young woman doubtless knows the business situation; she evidently knows Smith a whole lot better than we do. It's a chance, and we'd better try it. He's good for half an hour or so with those vouchers."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)



"I'm Going to Hunt Up Mr. Crawford Stanton."

CHARGED MOTHER LOST CRIPPLED BOY

Brooklyn Woman Is Accused in Court of Abandoning Four-Year-Old Son.

New York.—Before Magistrate Doyle in Yorkville court were brought two persons. One was Mrs. Agnes Cusick, twenty-four years old, of No. 225 Eighth street, Brooklyn, charged with abandonment of her four-year-old son. The other was the little boy, a victim of last year's infantile paralysis epidemic and still hobbling about on a leg brace. It was his picture, which was published in a newspaper



"Did You Make Any Effort to Find This Boy?"

June 26, which led to the discovery of the mother by an agent of the Children's society.

The only information which the boy could give when found on June 21 was that his name was "Jimmy," and that he is a "very, very good boy."

"Did you make any effort to find this boy?" Magistrate Doyle asked the mother.

"I looked about the neighborhood where I lost him," she said. It was her story that she lost him in a crowd and did not abandon him.

"A dumb animal would have done more than that," exclaimed the magistrate. "A dumb beast would have looked everywhere for her lost. Here is a cripple that requires a mother's care and love, and you made no effort to go to a police station or to make inquiries for him."

"I did all I could," sobbed the woman.

Upon testimony, however, that when first shown the photograph of the little boy she had denied being his mother, the woman was held in bail for trial.

BEST JOB IN THE WORLD

Youth Makes Love to Mine Officer's Daughter at \$4.50 Per Day.

Keewala, Minn.—According to one man here, there is a job in a local mine which need never be filled with a strikebreaker.

The man who makes the assertion is a little bit peeved about something, but he declares that among the mine employees are five boys. One of them has "the job."

"He makes love to an officer's daughter," says this man, "and he gets \$4.50 a day without doing anything; he just makes love."

Oh, you job!

MOTHER STOLE TO AID BABIES; FINED 1 CENT

New York.—The lowest fine in the history of the Brooklyn federal court was imposed by Judge Chatfield in the case of Mrs. Mary Purcell, on trial for forging a pension voucher that had come to her home in the name of her mother after her parent had died.

She took the money, she told the judge, for her babies, for they had no food. When the fine of 1 cent was imposed she was unable to pay it. Attachés of the court not only handed over the cent necessary to keep her from jail but made up a good-sized purse for her.

DOG LEADS HER PUP ASTRAY

Owner Is Fined Two Dollars for Each Dog in Court in Brooklyn.

New York.—It cost a mother dog just \$4 here to lead a pup astray from the narrow path. The case came up before Magistrate Naumer when James Pescene of No. 630 Grand avenue was charged with having two dogs unmuzzled.

"It's the mother, your honor," he explained. "These two dogs are mother and son and the mother leads the son astray, doggone it." "I hate to do it," said the judge, "but two dollars fine for each dog."

BIG CROPS IN WESTERN CANADA

Good Yields of Wheat, Splendid Production of Pork, Beef, Mutton and Wool.

The latest reports give an assurance of good grain crops throughout most of Western Canada, where the wheat, oats and barley are now being harvested, about ten days earlier than last year. Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta are all "doing their bit" in a noble way towards furnishing food for the allies.

While the total yield of wheat will not be as heavy as in 1915, there are indications that it will be an average crop in most of the districts.

A letter received at the St. Paul office of the Canadian Government, from a farmer near Delta, Alberta, says harvest in that district is one month earlier than last year. His wheat crop is estimated at 35 bushels per acre, while some of his neighbors will have more. The average in the district will be about 30 bushels per acre. Now, with the price of wheat in the neighborhood of \$2 per bushel, it is safe to say that there will be very few farmers but will be able to bank from forty to fifty dollars per acre after paying all expenses of seeding, harvesting and threshing, as well as taxes.

The price of land in this district is from \$25 to \$30 per acre. What may be said of this district will apply to almost any other in Manitoba, Saskatchewan or Alberta. Many farmers have gone to Western Canada from the United States in the past three or four years, who having purchased lands, had the pleasure of completing the payments before they were due. They have made the money out of their crops during the past couple of years, and if they are as successful in the future as in the past they will have put themselves and their families beyond all possibility of lack of money for the rest of their lives.

It is not only in wheat that the farmers of Western Canada are making money. Their hogs have brought them wealth, and hogs are easy to raise there—barley is plentiful and grass abundant, and the climate just the kind that hogs glory in. The price is good and likely to remain so for a long time.

A few days since a farmer from Daysland, Alberta, shipped a carload of hogs to the St. Paul market, and got a higher price than was ever before paid on that market. Two million three hundred and seventy-seven thousand two hundred and fifty dollars was received at Winnipeg for Western hogs during the first six months of this year. 181,575 hogs were sold at an average price of \$15 per cwt., and had an average weight of 200 pounds each. The raising of hogs is a profitable and continually growing industry of Western Canada, and this class of stock is raised as economically here as anywhere on the North American continent. There is practically no hog disease, and immense quantities of food can be produced cheaply.

It has been told for years that the grasses of Western Canada supply to both beef and milk producers the nutritive properties that go to the development of both branches. The stories that are now being published by dairymen and beef cattle men verify all the predictions that have ever been made regarding the country's importance in the raising of both beef and dairy cattle. The sheep industry is developing rapidly. At a sale at Calgary 151,453 pounds of wool were disposed of at sixty cents a pound. At a sale at Edmonton 60,000 pounds were sold at even better prices than those paid at Calgary. The total clip this season will probably approximate two million pounds. Many reports are to hand showing from six to eight pounds per fleece. 35 carloads were sent to the Toronto market alone.—Advertisement.

Fruit Production. The production of apples in this country during the last six years has averaged over 60,000,000 barrels. The estimated value of this apple crop for 1915 was \$145,000,000. The product of peaches in 1914 was estimated at 64,000,000 bushels, and of pears for that year 11,000,000 bushels. Considering all of the hardy fruits of the North and the tropical fruits of the South, what a vast bulk is gathered every year. Surely famine and starvation cannot come to a country thus supplied.

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Majesty of the Law. "You're under arrest," exclaimed the officer with chin whiskers, as he stopped the automobile.

"What for?" inquired Mr. Chug-gins.

"I haven't made up my mind yet. I'll just look over your lights an' your license an' your numbers an' so forth. I know I can get you for somethin'."