

**EVERYTHING WAS FAVORABLE**

**SORRY HE DIDN'T MOVE TO WESTERN CANADA BEFORE.**

Mr. Austin was a man who had never had any previous experience in farming, but Western Canada had allurements, and he profited. He got a low-rate certificate from a Canadian Government agent, and then moved. What he says is interesting:

"Banbury, Alberta, May 10-08. J. N. Grieve, Esqr., Spokane, Washington.—Dear Sir: After a dozen or more years of unsuccessful effort in the mercantile business in Western Washington, in August, 1903, decided to come to Alberta with a gentleman who was shipping two cars live stock to Edmonton. I assisted this man with the stock over one hundred miles out in the Birch Lake Country, East of Edmonton. Indeed, how surprised, how favorably everything compared with my dream of what I wanted to see in a new country.

"Had never had any experience in farming, but I was immediately converted into a farmer. And from that moment I have prospered. Selecting a homestead near Birch Lake, I returned for wife and three small children and freighted out from Edmonton in March following year we shoveled a spot clear of snow and pitched our tent and commenced operations, at that time we had no neighbors. Four years have passed, the locality is well settled, two miles from railway station, with churches and schools, telephone and good road accommodations. "We are enjoying the privileges granted to any rural district in Washington. The Birch Lake Country is no exception, this great transformation is rapidly going on in every district in Western Canada.

"I estimate that every quarter section in every direction is capable of producing a comfortable living for a family of ten forever. After paying for two horses and a cow, had just \$10.00 to go on. Did my first ploughing in my life. I was very awkward in my work, but nature was glad and I was abundantly paid for my efforts. Our cattle has increased to about fifty head, which was very profitable on account of the abundance of forage. To farm was compelled to buy about four hundred dollars' worth of farm machinery on time, and the payments fell due last fall, and you may wonder how I expected to pay for them when we had such a bad year. 'Twas a little bad for Western Canada or for a Missourian. But is not 35 or 40 bushels oats a pretty good yield per acre in many States? Then the price of grain went out of sight, so when I had sold my crop I found I was able to make my payments nicely, besides we had lots of feed. No one has any business raising cattle without growing grain, or vice versa. As to the winters, did not feed my cattle, excepting the calves, a fork of hay until in March. Have found the winters much more pleasant than we did in Western Washington. This is strange and hard to explain, but 'tis true, nevertheless, at 40 degrees below zero we have more comfort than you would at 20 degrees above, so still and dry—with bright, sunny days. My wife says that the only regret she has is that we did not come here ten years ago, as we would now certainly have been in a position to retire from hard work. Most women soon become satisfied as neighbors begin to come round them. Have 98 acres in crop this year, besides two acres potatoes, which have always brought me a fair price. We find a ready market for everything we produce. To the Poor Man—Here is a chance to establish yourself. To the Rich Man—Here is a chance to buy land for \$10.00 to \$15.00 per acre which will produce more crops than a half dozen acres of your \$50.00 to \$75.00 per acre land. And if not very much mistaken, this year will prove an eye opener to those who are a little sceptical. The trouble with me is that I have so much to say so favorable to Alberta 'tis hard to be brief. Respectfully, (Signed) "P. S. AUSTIN."

**Silly Question.**

Him—Am I the first man you were ever engaged to?  
Her—Don't insult me. You know perfectly well that I am 25 years old. Do I look like a lemon?

**\$100 Reward, \$100.**

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Take Hall's Family Pills for constipation.

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The hand can never execute anything higher than the heart can aspire.—Emerson.

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And the pretty girl usually has plain sailing.



"Which of You Three is the Quahaug One?"

**MR. PRATT.**  
By Joseph C. Lincoln  
Author of "CAPTAIN ERIC" PARTNERS OF THE TIDE  
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ILLUSTRATIONS BY T. D. MELVILL

**SYNOPSIS.**

Mr. Solomon Pratt began comical narration of story introducing well-to-do Nathan Scudder of his town, and Edward Van Brunt and Martin Hartley, two rich New Yorkers seeking rest. Because of latter pair's lavish expenditure of money, Pratt's first impression was connected with lunatics. The arrival of James Hopper, Van Brunt's valet, gave Pratt the desired information about the New Yorkers. They wished to live what they termed "The Natural Life." Van Brunt, it was learned, was the successful suitor for the hand of Miss Agnes Page, who gave Hartley up. "The Heavens!" near a long story of the domestic woes of Mrs. Hannah Jane Purvis, their cook and maid of all work. Decide to let her go and engage Sol Pratt as chef. Twins agree to leave Nate Scudder's abode and begin unavailing search for another home. Pratt landed safely and a search for the other two revealed an island upon which they were found. Van Brunt rented it from Scudder and called it Ozone Island. They lived on the island until Scudder brought ridiculous presents as a token of gratitude. Innocently, Hurdley and Hopper in search of clams robbed a private "quahaug." Late at night their island home was disturbed by wild sol. Hopper was found in a fright at what he supposed was a ghost and he immediately tendered his resignation. In charge of a company of New York poor children, Miss Talford and Miss Page visited Ozone Island. In another storm Van Brunt and Hartley narrowly escaped being wrecked, having aboard, of course, pigs, etc., with which they were to start a farm.

**CHAPTER X.—(Continued.)**

I rubbed the wet sand out of my eyes. There on a sand hummock in front of us was a girl. A queer-looking female she was, too. Reminded me some of Hannah Jane Purvis, being built on the same spare lines and having the same general look of being all corners. She had on a striped calico dress, stripes running up and down, and her belt went across the middle of the stripes as straight as if 'twas laid out with a spirit level. I couldn't see her face good, for she had on a sunbonnet and 'twas like peeking at her through a nail keg, but she had snapping black eyes and moved quick, which wasn't Hannah Jane's way by a good sight. I stood and stared at her. "I say you're pretty wet, ain't you?" she says again, louder. "Why don't you say something? Are you hard of hearing?"

Before I could get my bearings enough to answer Van Brunt comes dripping alongside. He was still holding the clear stump in his mouth and he had one of the Plymouth Rocks—the rooster, as it happened—squeezed tight under one arm. "Well, skipper," he says, "the Ark has stranded and the animals may now—Hello! What? Who?" He looked at the girl and she at him. Then he says brisk: "Can you cook?"

**CHAPTER XI. Eureka.**

Whatever that girl might have expected from us, I guess she didn't expect that. It set her back so that she couldn't speak for a full minute; which was something of a miracle, as I found out later.

"Can I what?" she says, finally. "Can you cook?" asks Van Brunt again.

"Can I—?" Then she turns to me. "He ought to be attended to right off,"

she says, referring to Van. "Some of that wet has soaked in and he's got water on the brain. Take that poor rooster away from him afore he squeezes it to death."

Van laughed and dropped the rooster. I cal'late he'd forgot that he had it. "Let me explain," he begun. "You see, we—"

Hartley spoke then. "Wait a minute," says he, laughing. "I suggest that we adjourn to the house and get into some dry clothes. Then we can talk business, if the young lady is willing."

The girl looked at him. "Business is what I'm here for," says she. "Which of you three is the quahaug one?"

"The which?" says I; and the Heavens! both said the same. "Which of you is the quahaug one? I've got some business to talk with him."

"Martin," says Van, grave, and turning to his chum. "Are you a quahaug one?"

"I guess he is," says I. I was beginning to see a light. Hartley's clamming cruise was turning out as I'd expected.

"Humph!" says the girl. "Well, you made a clean job, Lys says. About three buckets and a half, wa'n't they?"

You never see a man so puzzled as Hartley, unless 'twas Van Brunt. They looked at each other, at the girl, and then at me. I explained.

"I judge 'twas this young woman's quahaug bed that you and James cleaned out 't'other day," I says. "You remember I told you we'd hear from them quahaugs later."

"Oh!" says Martin. "Awfully sorry, I'm sure. I hope you'll permit me to pay for—"

She bobbed the sunbonnet up and down. "That's what I come for," says she. "They was my brother Lyeurgus's quahaugs. He'd just bedded 'em. Quahaugs is worth a dollar a bucket this time of year. That's three dollars and a half. I won't charge you for the sticks, though what on earth you done with them is more'n I can make out, and Lys says the same."

Van was grinning from ear to ear. "T'other Twin reached into his pocket and fished out a sopping-wet pocket-book.

"Will the three fifty be sufficient?" he asks, troubled. "I'm really very sorry. It was a mistake, and—"

"Oh, it's all right," says the girl. "You didn't know no better. Pa says fools and children ain't accountable. You'd better spread that money out to dry 'fore you pay me with it. And you'd better get dry yourself or you'll catch cold. I can wait a spell, I guess. Why don't you go after your boat, mister?" she says to me. "You'll lose it first thing you know."

I looked where she pointed and there was the skiff stranded bottom up on the tip end of the point flat. I ran after it, waded in and hauled it ashore. The Heavens! hurried up to the house. When I come back the girl was waiting for me.

"I'll walk along up with you," she says. "Say, you're Solomon Pratt, ain't you? I heard about you: Nate Scudder told pa. He said he'd let this place to Sol Pratt and a couple of crazy men from New York. I thought sure you'd swear when the boat upset,

but you didn't. You must belong to the church. What are you—Methodist?"

I grinned. "So you think a ducking like that would be apt to make a man swear, do you?" says I.

"Yup, if he hadn't got religion, Pa'd have cussed a blue streak. You'd ought to hear him when he has his nervous dyspepsy spells. Did you say you was a Methodist?"

"No-o, I guess I didn't. Let's see. Did you say your name was Dusenberry?"

She stopped and kind of fizzed, like a teakettle bling over. "Sakes alive!" she snaps. "I hope not! Do I look as if I was carrying a name like that around? My name's Sparrow—Eureka Florina Sparrow. What's the matter—anything?"

"No, not special. You kind of fetched me up into the wind, striking me head on so, unexpected. Just say that again and say it slow. Eureka Peruna—what was it?"

She switched around and stared at me hard. "Eureka—Florina—Sparrow," says she, slow and distinct. "Want me to spell it for you?"

"No, thanks. You might mix me up some if you did. I had to leave school early. Any more in your family?"

"Yup. Seven of us, counting me—and pa makes eight."

"What's their names?"

"Well, there's Lyeurgus and Editha and Ulysses and Napoleon and Marguerite and Dewey—he's the baby. Great names, ain't they? Pa's doings, naming 'em that way was. Pa says there's nothing like hitching a grand name to a young one; gives 'em something to live up to, he says. His own name's Washington, but he ain't broke his back living up to it, far as I can see; and ma used to say the same afore she died."

"O-o-h!" says I. "I see." I know who she was now, I hadn't lived around Wellmouth so very long, but I'd heard of Washington Sparrow. He lived in a little slab shanty off in the woods about a mile from Scudder's, and had the name of being the laziest man in 'town.

I reached the house by this time and I left Eureka Florina in the kitchen and went to my room to change my duds. When I come down the Twins was in the kitchen, too, and I could hear the Sparrow girl's tongue going like a house afire. Martin had just paid her for the quahaugs and she was telling how scarce they'd got to be in the bay, and how her brother had worked to get a few bedded and how he'd sold a couple of quarts to the Baptist minister's wife and what she said about 'em and so on. The Heavens! seemed to be enjoying every minute of it, judging by the way they laughed.

"Introduce us to the lady, skipper," says Van, when I come in.

I done the honors. "She's one of Washy Sparrow's tribe—I mean family," says I. "They live over in the woods herabouts."

"I guess tribe'll do," says Eureka, cutting in quick. "There's pretty near enough of us to make a town, seems sometimes. You'd think so if you had to get the meals for 'em, same's I do."

"You!" says I. "Do you cook for all that gang? How old are you?"

"Seventeen last March. Cook for 'em? Guess I do! And scratch to get things to cook, too; else we'd have to live on salt air pudding with wind sassa. I take in washing, and Lyeurgus he goes fishing and clamming and choring around, and Editha helps me iron, and we all take watch and watch looking out for the young ones."

Hartley spoke then. "We're looking for a cook," he says. "Will you come and cook for us, and help about the house here? Mr. Pratt finds the job too big for one man."

She bobbed her head. "Yup," says she, dry as a chip. "I should think he might, judging by what I've seen. No, I can't come. I've got to stay home and look out for the folks."

"Why can't your father do that?" asks Hartley.

"Who—pa? I guess you ain't heard about pa. He's sick. Got his never-got-over, he says. Pa's had most every kind of symptom there is; phthisic and infuency and lumbago and pleurisy. Now he's settled down to consumption and nervous dyspepsy. Afore ma died she used to try to cure him, but the doctor and pa had a row. The doctor said pa didn't have consumption nor nothing else; what he needed was hard exercise, such as work. Pa said the doc didn't know his business, and the doc said maybe not, but he knew pa. So pa told him never to darken our door again, and he ain't—except to come around once in a while and collect something from me on the bill."

"Well," says I, "maybe you know somebody else that would do for us. Who's a good cook and general house-keeper that would be likely to hire out?"

She thought for a moment or so. "I don't know," she says. "Most folks in this neighborhood is too high toned to go out working. They'd rather stay to home and take boarders. Mrs. Hannah Jane Purvis is about the only one, and you've had her."

Martin made a face. "We have," he says.

"Yup," says Eureka. "She told Mr. Scudder that you was crazy as all get out, and sunk in worldly sin besides. She said you'd get your pay hereafter for treating her the way you did."

"We hope to," says Van, cheerful. "Now, Miss—er—Sparrow, we want you to come and help us out. We're Crusoes on a desert island and we need a Man—I should say Woman—Friday. We'll pay you so much," he says, naming a price that made even my eyes stick out, and I was used to high prices by this time.

"A month?" she says, staring at him.

"A week," says he. She had a queer way of doing everything by jerks, like as if she was hung on wires and worked with a string. Now she straightened up out of her chair so sudden you almost expected to hear her snap.

"A week?" she sings out. "Oh! Then she looked at me. "Oh, it's so, if he says so," says I, resigned like.

"Land sakes! A week! I never—but it ain't no use. What would become of pa and the children?"

"Couldn't you come over for the days, at least?" asks Martin. "You might go home nights, you know."

And that's the way it ended, finally. The Twins had made up their minds, and when that happened, heaven and earth wouldn't change 'em. At last Eureka said she'd talk it over with her folks and Van Brunt said we would come over to her house next day and get the decision.

"There!" says he, when the Sparrow girl had gone. "Skipper, the cook question is settled."

"Maybe 'tis," says I. "Looks to me as if you'd settled it the way the feller settled the coffee, by upsetting it. For chaps that pine for rest and quiet you two do queer things. Do you realize what getting mixed up with that Sparrow gang is likely to mean?"

"If the whole flock is like the specimen bird we've seen," he says, "it'll mean joy. If there was one thing needed to make Ozone island a delight, a gem of purest ray serene, that original would be the thing. She's a circus in herself. I shall dream to-night of pa and the doctor. Ho, ho! By the way, what's her Christian name?"

I told the name—the whole of it. How then Heavens! did laugh.

"Eureka!" says Hartley. "Splendid!"

"Eureka!" says Van. "We have found it! Sol, let's have lunch."

I got 'em something to eat and then the three of us put in the afternoon chasing the wild animals. The chickens was fairly easy to get hold of; I laid a trail of corn up to the door of the henyard and trapped the most of 'em that way. But the pig was a holy terror.

I'd had his experience with Ozone islanders that morning and he didn't want any more. Up and down that blessed sand bar we chased him, getting upset and tiring ourselves out. The pig race over to Eastwich wa'n't in it. I did most of the chasing; the Heavens! superintended, as usual, and gave orders and laughed. They pretty nigh laughed themselves sick. Finally the critter bolted into the woodshed and I locked the door on him. It was six o'clock when I dumped him into the sty. Of all the Natural Life days I'd had yet this one was the liveliest and most wearing. A week like it and my natural place would have been the burying ground. I cal'late I lost three pound that afternoon. I was getting so thin that when I fell down my legs made grooves in the sand.

The next forenoon me and Hartley went over to close the cook trade. Van wouldn't go. He said the gardening and the shipwreck and the steeplechase—meaning the pig hunt—had given him sensations enough for a week or so; he had some of 'em with him yet. So Martin said he'd go, for my sake. I borrowed a couple of spare oars from Scudder, when he arrived with the morning's dose of skim-milk and cream and butter, and, as I took care to row the skiff this time, we made the passage all right. Then we walked up to the Sparrow's nest.

'Twas a pretty shabby-looking shack, now I tell you. Shingles dropping off, and fence falling down, and a general shortage of man's work everywhere. But there was a bed of bachelor buttons and old maid's pinks under the front window, and the windows themselves was clean and bright. Eureka had done her best to make the place homey; you could see that.

She let us in when we knocked at the kitchen door. Her sleeves was rolled up and there was a big basket of clothes by the steaming washtub. Editha, the 12-year-old, was grinding at the wringer and Dewey, the baby, was setting on the floor playing with a rag doll. The rest of the tribe—except Lyeurgus, who had gone peddling clams—was off playing.

Eureka, she apologized for things being so upset, but there wa'n't any need for apologies. The house was plain and poor—you could see that it took a mighty lot of stretching to make both ends come in sight of each other, let alone meet; but 'twas clean as a whistle. Even the baby was clean, all except his face and hands, and no healthy young one ought to have them clean.

"Good morning," says Hartley. "Have you decided to cook for us?"

She bobbed her head over the wash-tub. "I've decided it, if pa has," says she. "He ain't made up his mind yet. He wanted to sleep on it, he said. I guess he's done that. Anyhow he's just got up. Step right into the dining room and talk to him. You'll have to excuse me; I've got to get this washing done afore noon, somehow."

So she pitched into the scrubbing, bending in the middle exactly like a jointed pocket rule, and the Twin and me went into the dining room.

**(TO BE CONTINUED.)**

**As It Shouldn't Be.**

"No," remarked the man who seemed to be talking to himself, "it isn't right."

"What isn't right?" queried the party who overheard the remark.

"The wasting of so much money on cake frostings at a wedding, considering the future unceasing appetites of the happy couple for plain bread," explained the noisy thinker.

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