


FRIDAY, THE 13th

By Thomas W. Lawson

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CHAPTER I.—Continued.

"It's this way—her father, who knew Randolph & Randolph through your father's handling of the Seaboard's affairs, learned of my connection with the house, and gave her a letter, asking me to do what I could to help his daughter carry out her plans. She wants to get a position with us, if possible, in some sort of capacity, secretary, confidential clerk, or, as she puts it, any sort of place that will justify her being in the office. She tells me she is good at shorthand, on the machine, or at correspondence, also that she has been a contributor to the magazines. If this can be arranged, she says she will on her own responsibility select the time and the stock, and hurl the last of the Sands fortune at the market, and, Jim, she is game. The blow seems to have turned this child into a wonderfully nifty creature, and, old man, I am beginning to have a feeling that perhaps the cards may come so she will win the judge out. You and I know where less than sixty thousand had been run up to millions more than once, and that, too, without the aid she will have, for I'll surely do all I can to help her steer this last chance into spongy places."

Bob in his enthusiasm had completely lost sight of the fact that he was endorsing a project that but a moment previous he had pronounced insane, and with a start I realized what this sudden transformation betokened. Inevitably, if the project he outlined were carried out, Bob and the beautiful southern girl would be thrown into close association with each other, and further acquaintance could only deepen the startling influence Beulah Sands had already won over my ordinarily sane and cool-headed comrade. As I looked at my friend, burning with an ardor as unaccustomed as it was impulsive, I felt a tug at my heart-strings at thought of the sudden cross-roads of his life's highway. But I, too, was filled with the glamour of this girl's wondrous beauty, and her terrible predicament appealed to me almost as strongly as it had to Bob. So, although I knew it would be fatal to any chance of his weighing the matter by common sense, I burst out:

"Bob, I don't blame you for falling in with the girl's plans. If I were in your shoes I should, too."

Tears came to Bob's eyes as he grabbed my hand and said:

"Jim, how can I ever repay you for all the good things you have done for me—how can I!"

It was no time to give way to emotional outbursts, and while Bob was getting his grip on himself, I went on:

"Come along down to earth now, Bob; let us look at this thing squarely. You and I, with our position in the market, can do lots of things to help run that sixty thousand to higher figures, but six months is a short time and a million or two a world of money."

"She knows that," he said, "and the time is much shorter and the road to go much longer than you figure," he replied. "This girl is as high-tensioned as the E string on a Stradivarius, and she declares she will have no charity tips or unusual favors from us or anyone else. But let us not talk about that now, or we'll get discouraged. Let's do as she says and trust to God for the outcome. Are you willing, Jim, to take her into the office as a sort of confidential secretary? If you will, I'll take charge of her account, and together we will do all that two men can for her and her father."

CHAPTER II.

The following week saw Miss Sands, of Virginia, private secretary to the head of Randolph & Randolph, established in a little office between mine and Bob's. She had not been there a day before we knew she was a worker. She spent the hours going over reports and analyzing financial statements, showing a sagacity extraordinary in so young a person. She explained her knowledge of figures by the hand-work she had done for the judge, all of whose accounts she had kept. Bob and I saw that she was bent on smothering her memory in that antidote for all ills of heart and soul—work. Her office life was simplicity itself. She spoke to no one except Bob, save in connection with such business matters of the firm's as I might send her by one of the clerks to attend to. To the others in the banking house she was just an uncon-

ventional young literary woman whose high social connections had gained her this opportunity of getting at the secrets of finance, from actual experience, for use in forthcoming novels. It had got abroad that she was the writer of great distinction who, under a nom de plume, had recently made quite a dent in the world's literary shell—a suggestion that I rightly guessed was one of Bob's delicate ways of smoothing out her path. I had tried in every way to make things easy for her, but it was impossible for me to draw her out in talk, and finally I gave it up. Had it not been that every time I passed her office door I was compelled by the fascination which I had first felt, and which, instead of diminishing, had increased with her reticence, to look in at the quiet figure with the downcast eyes, working away at her desk as though her life depended on never missing a second, I should not have known she was in the building.



"Jim that little lady can give us a handicap and beat us to a standstill at our own game."

My wife, at my suggestion, had tried to induce her to visit us; in fact, after I let her into just enough of Beulah Sands' story so that she could see things on a true slant, she had decided to try to bring her to our house to live. But though the girl was sweetly gentle in her appreciation of Kate's thoughtful attentions, in her simple way she made us both feel that our efforts would be for naught, that her position must be the same as that of any other clerk in the office. We both finally left her to herself. Bob explained to me, some three weeks after she came to the office, that she received no visitors at her home, a hotel on a quiet uptown street, and that even he had never had permission to call upon her there.

But from the day she came to occupy her desk in our office, Bob was a changed man, whether for better or for worse neither Kate nor I could decide. His old bounding elasticity was gone, and with it his rollicking laugh. He was now a man where before he had been a boy, a man with a burden. Even if I had not heard Beulah Sands' story, I should have guessed that Bob was staggering under a strange load. While before, from the close of the stock exchange until its opening the next morning, he was, as Kate was fond of putting it, always ready to fill in for anything from chaperon to nurse, always open for any lark we planned for a Bohemian dinner to the opera, now weeks went by without our seeing him at our house. In the office it used to be a saying that outside gong-strikes, Bob Brownley did not know he was in the stock business. Formerly every clerk knew when Bob came or went, for it was with a rush, a shout, a laugh, and a bang of doors; and on the floor of the stock exchange no man played so many pranks, or

filled his orders with so much jolly good-nature and hilarious boisterousness. But from the day the Virginian girl crossed his path, Bob Brownley was a man who was thinking, thinking, thinking all the time. It was only with an effort that he would keep his eyes on whomever he was talking with long enough to take in what was said, and if the saying occupied much time it would be apparent to the talker that Bob was off in the clouds. All his friends and associates remarked the change, but I alone, except perhaps Kate, had any idea of the cause. I knew that two million dollars and the coming New Year were hurdling like kangaroos over Bob's mental rails and ditches, though I did not know it from anything he told me, for after that talk on the upper deck of the Tribesman he had shut up like a clam.

He did not exactly shun me, but showed me in many ways that he had entered into a new world, in which he desired to be alone. That Beulah Sands' plight had roused into intense activity all the latent romance of my friend's nature, did not surprise me. I foresaw from the first that Bob would fall head over heels in love with this beautiful, sorrow-laden girl, and it was soon obvious that the long-delayed shaft had planted its point in the innermost depths of his being. His was more than love; a fervid idolatry now had possession of his soul, mind and body. Yet its outward manifestations were the opposite of what one would have looked for in this gay and optimistic southerner. It was rather priest-like worship, a calm imperturbability that

and did not even ask my opinion. In both cases I thought the operations were more the result of a wakeful night, and an I-must-do-something decision than anything else, and I tackled both with a shiver; but when she told me to sell them out at a time I thought they looked like going higher, and the next day they slumped, I could not help thinking about the destiny that shapes our ends."

On my part I tried to help. On one occasion, without consulting her, I put her account in on a sure thing underwriting, wherein she stood to make a profit of a quarter of a million, but when Bob told her what I had done, she insisted with great dignity that her name be withdrawn. After that neither of us dared help her to any short cuts. Bob was deeply impressed by her principles, and, commenting on them, said: "Jim, if all Wall street had a code similar to Beulah Sands' to hew to in their gambles, ours would be a fairer and more manly game, and many of the multi-millionaires would be clerking, while a lot of the hand-to-mouth traders would come down town in a new auto every day in the week. She does not believe in stock gambling. She has worked it out that every dollar one man makes, another loses; that the one who makes gives nothing in return for what he gets away with; and that the other fellow's loss makes him and his as miserable as would robbery to the same amount. Yet she realizes that she must get back those millions stolen from her father, and is willing to smother her conscience to attempt it, provided she takes no unfair advantage of the other players. The other day she said to me: 'I have decided, because of my duty to my father, to put away my prejudice against gambling, but no duty to him or to any one else can justify me in playing with marked cards.' Jim, there is food for reflection for you and me, don't you think?"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

PONCE DE LEON'S SPRING.

Woman Has Refused to Sell the Property for \$45,000.

There are ten acres of ground surrounding the spot where Ponce de Leon, on his second visit to what is now St. Augustine, discovered youth. History tells that he failed to locate it on his first visit from Spain to this section, but that on a second trip, in 1513, he was more successful. The property, called Neptune springs, is owned by a widow, who, with her daughter, stands at the old-fashioned well affair, and sells the water to tourists who visit her in great numbers. The water is the purest kind of lithia, cool and pleasant to the taste. Recently she was offered \$45,000 for Neptune springs, which has other good springs aside from Ponce on it. It is located a short distance from the ruins of the old stone wall and gates of the city of St. Augustine, used when this was a province of Spain and when a Spanish governor general occupied as a residence the building now used by Uncle Sam as a post office. Not far away are the ruins of the old Spanish Fort Marion, wrecked and ruined by shell from the gunners who fought under the stars and stripes. Ponce de Leon's find is now well within the confines of the city. The widow thought it too valuable to dispose of. So she refused the offer of \$45,000 and goes on lading out water from Ponce's well as though she had not tossed aside a small fortune.

Capital "Society" Busy.

Washington society people are plunged into a mad struggle for pleasure. Even Sundays are overworked. Admiral Dewey gives things at the Country club on Sundays—the best in days and everything else is good enough for the admiral—and the John M. McLeans have turned on their brilliant Sunday luncheons to society in edition de luxe, at their fascinating "Friendship." But even the unexpurgated and the great unwashed are welcome every day to the splendid grounds of "Friendship." Unless you are an automobile or a dog, against which there is special discrimination, the McLeans place no restrictions upon the public enjoyment of their vast acres, the most beautiful sweep of land near Washington, baronial in its extent. The quaint old house itself, once a monastery, is surrounded by a "monk's walk," outlined in box bushes. There is a long pergola, wistaria laden, an ancient fountain and other poetic accessories that inspire.

The Beautiful Soul.

The colored sunsets and the starry heavens, the beautiful mountains and the shining sea, the fragrant woods and the painted flowers—they are not half so beautiful as a soul that is serving Jesus out of love in the wear and tear of common, unpoetic life.—Exchange.

Japan Takes to Horse-Racing.

Seventy-two horse-racing clubs have been organized in Japan. Most of them, the Japan Mail says, were established for gambling purposes only.

THE SIN OF NADAB AND ABIHU

Sunday School Lesson for Aug. 11, 1907

Specially Prepared for This Paper

LESSON TEXT.—Lev. 10:1-11. Memory Verse 9.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."—Prov. 20:1.

TIME.—April B. C. 1490 (common chronology); on the afternoon (Lev. 10:12, 13) of the first day that the priests entered upon the regular sacrifices of the tabernacle (Lev. 8:33; 9:3), eight days after the completion of the tabernacle, our last lesson. Nearly a year after the exodus.

PLACE.—In the tabernacle near Sinai.

Comment and Suggestive Thought.

The Situation—Everything was nearly prepared for the onward march toward the promised land. There had been nearly a year of instruction and training in the wilderness experiences and at Sinai. The tabernacle had been set up on the first day of the first month. The priests had been prepared and trained in their duty of leading the people in true worship. In 40 days, the 20th of the second month, they were to break up their long encampment and begin their journey (Ex. 40:17; Lev. 9:1; Num. 10:11-13). The moral law had been given. The ritual law had been announced and taught. The divine fire shone over the Holy of Holies, like the sun,—light, peace, comfort, brightness, beauty, life to those who use it aright, but a consuming fire to those who despise and misuse its power. The divine fire had kindled the fuel on the altar; a perpetual flame (Lev. 6:13) "to be continually fed with the fuel especially provided by the congregation, and with the daily burnt offerings." "Tradition assures us that it never was quenched till the destruction of the temple by Nebuchadnezzar." — Dr. Ginsburg. The ceremonial of religion as appointed by God, to continue as the best method of worship and religious education of the people, was begun.

V. 1. "Nadab and Abihu, the Sons of Aaron." His eldest sons (Ex. 6:23,) just inducted into the exalted office of priests, next to their father, the high priest, in the line of succession to the highest office of religious leadership and influence in the nation. A glorious opportunity was before them.

They had passed through three great portals of usefulness and happiness. (1) Their parentage was a fine advantage. Moses was their uncle. Their exalted family had given them great privilege of association with the best in the nation. (2) Their education was remarkable. They had spent a year in God's wilderness training school, receiving the lessons of the riven rock, the quails, the manna, the law written on the tables of stone. Moreover, they had had the exalted privilege of beholding with their own eyes the glory of God upon the holy mount (Ex. 24:1, 9, 10). (3) They had passed through the portal of a glorious calling. They had been dedicated to a secret and most honorable trust. They wore the garments that separated them, in the eyes of all men, to the priest's life of holiness and obedience. Before each of them was even the thrilling possibility of becoming high priest some day.

Their sin was a direct, public, inexcusable disobedience to their God and leader. It partook of the nature of treason. They doubtless did it thoughtlessly, but there are occasions when thoughtlessness is a crime.

The Necessity of the Punishment.

It was the same as the necessity for all punishment,—in its justice, in its measurement of the evil of the sin, and its prevention of crime. No government of imperfect people can exist or does exist without it. "As has just been pointed out, the ritual system had been inaugurated on that very day. All was new and strange, easily dislodged, depreciated, or corrupted, and therefore needing special guarding. The bud needs, and has protection from rough husks, which the flower can do without. This swift death of offenders against the new order has its parallel in the swift death of Ananias and Sapphira, which is to be vindicated on similar grounds. There, too, the necessity was stringent for instant removal of a springing root of bitterness, by which many might be defiled, and for saving the young life of the community from disease, which, unchecked, might infect its whole future.

One Cause of the Tragedy.—Vs. 9-11.

9. "Do not drink wine nor strong drink." The nearness of this injunction to the story of Nadab and Abihu implies that their sin was due, partly, if not wholly, to intoxication. "The Palestinian Chaldee adds here, 'as thy sons did who died by burning fire.'" —Ginsburg. "When ye go into the tabernacle."

The reasons given for this prohibition are two: (1) The tendency of wine drinking is to obscure the (v. 10) "difference between holy and unholy" or common; and (2) they would be better prepared to (v. 11) "teach . . . all the statutes."