

THE HEART OF NIGHT WIND

A STORY OF THE GREAT NORTH WEST
By VINGIE E. ROE

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CHAPTER XXIX—Continued.

"You would have followed me across the world upon your knees, and you served me like a slave. And I—I repaid you with a white man's coin! I left you to break your heart among the dusky people who were kinder than I. . . . But the Winds of God blew upon my conscience and my heart and I returned. Your face and your faithful eyes, waiting, waiting, brought me back from the far cities—only to see you die in the lodge of Kolaawmie with my babe on your breast! Or—you say I but dreamed, Kahwanna?"

With falling sight the speaker tried to pierce the mystery, gazing at Siletz. "Did I dream of death and retribution—and of Kolaawmie, who—bent above the babe to put that sign upon her face? I struck his hand away when it had set but a fraction of the fatal bar—the sign that said you were wild, that forbade you to the shallow cities, that made you a white man's toy! You—you—Kahwanna—ah, I have forgot. What is it I would remember?"

The eagerness left the Preacher's eyes, they became suddenly calm and mild. With a cry that cut high above the steady sounds of the wind and the fires Siletz sprang up, a hand flung to her lips, where the sign of the Siletz stood out—broken in its inception!

"My father!" she cried pitifully, "oh, my father!"

Sandry was breathing heavily, a mist in his eyes and a sadness upon his heart. His victory over Hampden had lost its savor. But the past with its pitiful shadows had drifted away from the Preacher or forever and the look of gentle tenderness had returned.

"My daughter," he said softly, "why do you weep? Ah—the night closes down and it is dark. I have lost my way. What is the path?"

His fingers groped blindly for the flute. "What is the way out of the labyrinth of youth—and sin—and primroses? Ah, I have forgot!"

With a sudden inspiration Sandry stopped and picked up the instrument. He had played a bit at college. Softly, silverly, the joyous notes began, "Jesus, Lover of My Soul," to go on to that ancient plea of trusting faith. "Other refuge have I none, Hangs my helpless soul on thee, a strange voice of glory amid the death and danger, the sin and stress of the moment. A holy peace spread on the white features.

"Why, certainly!" whispered the traveler of the hills, "how could I forget! That is the Way out."

And then, "Hush! The murmur of many wings. Ah, it is God's hand! *Et exiit de profundis! Gloria in excelsis!*"

With that last whispered word the wandering player of hymns, the preacher to the irresponsibles and the lover of humanity fumbled stiffly at his habit's skirt. Sandry knelt, found a deep pocket, felt therein and brought out a small Bible of a long-past day. Its edges were thin and frayed and greatly worn. Its stiff back, with the age-black, raised lettering, had long since lost its corners. He knew it instantly for the counterpart of that one on Siletz' stand in the little south room. It and many openings of its own, and it fell apart, first at the spines and then at a passage whose beginning caught his eye as he placed it in the loving hands that made to grasp its familiar bulk—and failed. The stately words whose solemn forecast had struck him once when he sought for some clue to the Preacher's identity now seemed to ring in his ears, a stupendous requiem for the nameless, high-souled, drifter-from-the-ways-of-men who had spent his blameless life in fanciful atonement for a shadowy wrong.

Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart. Who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

The Preacher was of that past which he had so long forgotten and which Destiny had decreed should flash back to him for one revealing moment.

CHAPTER XXX.

"The Night Wind is Not Afraid to Die." Sandry laid the Bible under the lifeless hand, looked about desperately for something to cover the glorified face between its white curls, and finding nothing but the tall ferns gathered an armful which he spread over the body.

Then he faced Hampden in deadly quiet. "I had meant prison," he said, "now I mean the electric chair."

The other laughed. "Mean an' be damned!" he said insolently, "you'll never send me there."

His burning eyes were covering the slump of ferns that held his gun, but Sandry went over and picked it up. He stood a moment considering.

A hot wind was whipping up the dips on every side and Black Bolt was stepping uneasily, pointing anxious

ears this way and that. Coosnah had crawled to where Siletz knelt, weeping, with her hands over her face.

He crouched low to the ground and laid his heavy muzzle against her boot, whining dolorously.

Suddenly, in the momentary silence, Poppy Ordway spoke. Her face was flushed like an April dawn. Chance and the courage of the last throw lent it the last touch of ravishing charm.

"Kismet!" she said, "I am the only one who wins in this game! Hampden, you're right. I've bought you with your own coin. And let me tell you Hampden, that you were disgustingly easy."

The timberman winced at the brutal words. His florid face darkened with rage. "Ah, yes! So you won his love with your pretty detective work! You'll marry him an' settle down."

Thus was the crucial moment presented to Poppy Ordway all suddenly, and she recognized it instantly. It sent a chill to her daring heart, then fired it with that love of chance, that ability to cast great stakes on a single throw, which in a better nature would have made her great.

She felt with a flash of her genius the drama of the situation, the tense readiness of the moment for wild, fantastic things, and accepted it at once.

"Yes!" she cried, "yes! I offer Sandry you—and myself!"

With a beautiful gesture she stepped toward Sandry and held out both hands, her golden head up, her slumbrous blue eyes sensuous and black with excitement, her whole exquisite body a lure with the mighty abandon of her passion and her reckless gift.

"Walter," she said tremulously, "I have said there is no law for a genius I say it again. I can save your future—and I give you myself along with it, because I love you! Oh, you can never know how I love you!"

Her golden voice rose with the force of the emotion that shook her, broke and failed, and she stood panting.

"Will you not take my hands, Walter?" she almost wailed, "I have done it all for love of you!"

Sandry, his eyes upon her face, as if in fascination, did not move. It was as if he could not, though every fiber in his jaded body answered to her call.

"For love!" breathed Poppy Ordway, "for great love!"

Across her words there cut a shrill cry. "She lies!"

Siletz had sprung to her feet, both hands feeling wildly in her empty blouse. Miss Ordway swung heavily toward her.

"Hush!" she said warningly. She slipped a hand inside her own gown and showed a corner of the soiled packet of proofs that Siletz had

guarded for so many days, the packet that she knew instinctively meant harm to Sandry, that must never go east!

It was then that Sandry was to behold the iron in this creature of softness, of faithfulness and of service. With a cry that chilled his blood in its savage wildness, the girl leaped across the silent form in the shabby habit, tore Sandry's gun from his hand and fired twice before he could seize her and wrest the weapon from her. Both shots went wild.

"What would you do?" he cried aghast. Siletz fought for the gun like a wild thing. Then, as he held it high above her reach, she fell on her knees, clasping his limbs, her face upturned and transfigured with the lust for blood.

"Kill them!" she panted desperately, "kill them both! Blood for

Preacher and she would ruin you! Shoot them, Sandry, shoot them—or give me the gun!"

Shuddering, Sandry covered her savage eyes with his hand. Their reversion sickened him. But she shook him loose, crying for death. "Kill them both, for they will ruin you if they go free! She's got the packet. Kill her and get the packet!"

"What's this?" he cried hoarsely. "Things she has written about you—a letter to a man by the name of Musseldorn!"

Slowly Sandry's face went white beneath its grime as he raised his eyes and looked at Poppy Ordway. She returned his gaze.

Then—"True," she said, "that's why I went east. I cannot lose you, Walter. There was danger from that wild creature there, though you did not know it, and I was determined to make sure. Fair means or foul—I must win. And there's no law for a genius. I know and you know that you are!"

"Guilty!" he said, throwing up his head. Then Sandry dropped his eyes to Siletz and spoke as if he obeyed some compelling power, some urge to justify himself before her.

"I answer to the Right Law. I obeyed the ancient Right Law, little Siletz, and I have no regrets."

"I know!" cried Siletz, "I know!" the smoke was so dense that the actors in this drama could scarcely see each other's faces, but they took no note of it. The climbing roar had shut them apart in a sound-made silence and they did not know it. Only Hampden, edging sidewise, was alive to the possibilities of the moment. He saw the gun hanging in Sandry's hand, forgotten. He saw Siletz devouring his face with her blazing eyes of passion. He saw his moment and took it.

With one great bound he flung himself high in the air, leaped the space between and came down with his great weight upon the shoulders of the other man, clenching for back and throat, drawing the one to him in a grip of iron, pushing the other away.

Sandry went down like a reed, and as his knees buckled under him there was an ominous snap. The bone of his right leg, newly healed and fragile, gave way under the strain.

As the two men fell, both guns, the one in Sandry's hand and the one in his trousers band, tumbled loosely apart. Siletz, clinging still to Sandry's knees, was borne down with them. As they rolled over she tore herself from under them and with two sweeps of her outspread arms gathered the guns. Then she sprang up, drawing back a pace, her eyes like fire, and deliberately sought for a chance to kill Hampden.

"Sandry," she cried, "lie flat! Lie flat!"

From under Hampden's arm that was choking the breath from his lungs the owner saw that slim figure of doom and strove to cry out. At last he got his voice for a moment.

"Siletz!" he rasped, "don't shoot. I command you, don't kill!" But the bark of the gun drowned his words. She was firing around them.

With the first shot Hampden, remembering the guns that he had failed to get, felt his flesh rise on his body and he loosened his hold, shook off Sandry and got to his feet, panting, fighting mad, his eyes red and awful.

With the courage of the raging bull he made straight for Siletz, who fired point blank at him. He took the ball in his shoulder and spun half round. The girl pulled the trigger again, got an empty snap, threw the weapon away and raised the other.

"Siletz!" shrieked Sandry from the ground, "for my sake stop!"

It was a command, a cry of ownership, and it went straight to that part of her nature which had obeyed for generations. She hesitated, holding the man across the barrel.

As for Hampden, he stood, wavering drunkenly, chuckling in his throat, a thing of horror in his malevolence. "Well," he rasped dryly, "I guess it's just as well. I'll leave you to yer pleasant dreams. I sail for Panama—Hawaii—the Yukon. I'm done."

He turned on his heel, to stride away into the pall of smoke toward the north. In one moment he came rushing back to run down to the west.

For the first time the three people left together remembered the fires, saw the thickened smoke, heard the roar that had made them scream their tragic words, unconsciously, for the last half hour.

It was all around them, that pouring mass of smoke, and it was black, as if the fires were near. Hampden's huge figure rose past them toward the narrow point of the ridge, then came lurching back, a long red streamer staining his bedraggled shirt.

"My God!" he shouted hoarsely. "We're hemmed in! It's on every side! We'll burn like rats!"

He flung a tragic arm to the dusky heavens. Poppy Ordway found her voice. She darted forward and pounced upon him, again with that subtle suggestion of the feline race, gripping his arm with fingers of steel.

"What do you mean?" he cried. "I mean that we've been playin' our own little game out to its conclusion like fools, while a bigger one has been playin' itself out. We're in a cup-waitin'."

There was something sinister about that last word. "When this damned wind sucks up a little harder it'll draw th' fires together an' we'll roast alive."

He ceased, panting, moistening his lips. Then presently a hideous grin distorted his features. "Who wins now?" he said. "Brains—brains! An' ex'cutive ability—an' cunning! I guess I win at last!"

ering canopy a rumbling thunder drowned his words, as if all the rocks of the tortured hills were split asunder in the heat. When it had died away he turned to Sandry where he sat, pale under his grime, a prey to a thousand feelings.

"I've hated you like poison ever since I first clapped eyes on your Johnny Eastern face. You thought you had me beat—and so did she," he jerked his head at Poppy, "but I'm too great a force for both of you. She's the greatest woman in all th' world an' I'm glad I seen her like—that I loved her."

There was infinite pathos in his heavy voice for the moment. "But th' play's over. Th' curtain'll drop in thirty minutes—forty or fifty at most—an' I'm the winner at last! You'll never marry her! But how I had you on th' hip—eastern lawyers an' all!"

"An' old Frazer—clumsy fool! Found your East Belt deed unrecorded, didn't you? Laid it to him. Why didn't you lay it to Hampden, who had th' brains an' the power of the whole country? It was recorded all right, but I owned th' recorder same as I owned th' commissioner. Fools, fools, all of you! An' I win at last!"

It was again the East and the West that Sandry saw with aching eyes in the two women who took Hampden's

you your wicked life. Give me the packet."

The woman tore the papers from her breast, thrusting them in frenzy at the girl and again tried uselessly to mount Black Bolt. Hampden came forward, lifted her gently in his strong arms and set her upon the horse. She leaned down and smatched at the reins, but Siletz held them away.

"Quick!" screamed Poppy Ordway, "do you want me to burn, you squaw?"

In silence the girl snapped her fingers to Coosnah and the mammoth mongrel crept to her feet. She tied the end of the long reins securely to his collar. Then she turned to Hampden.

"Go," she said, "get up. He will carry you both and you must hurry. Coosnah knows the secret trail. Urge the horse and he will take it. Don't look down; and hold her, or she will surely go over. Go now."

Sandry, raised on his one knee, beheld this thing aghast. "Siletz!" he cried, "you disobey!" She shook her black head.

"I send her out. I stay. It is my great privilege."

She laid slim fingers against the broken sign beneath her lips. "A woman serves and is faithful—if she loves," she said softly, "and I am your woman."

For a precious moment Hampden stood in indecision. But the lure of the woman, the glimmer of distant shores, mayhap with her—who knew?—was strong. He turned from the two and leaped up behind the saddle, striking a heel into the flank of the mettled black who bounded forward, dragging the dog.

But Coosnah hung back upon the rein, turning anguish, adoring eyes to his one idol. The girl stooped and caught his long ears, lifting his wrinkled face.

"Go home!" she cried, commanding. "Coosnah! Go home!"

"As you love me, go!" she finished in jargon, and the huge, shambling, faithful creature turned from her into the smoke to disappear toward that secret trail which only they knew and which led afar over the fearing spine of the Hog Back. He strained at his tether to obey and Black Bolt broke into a stumbling, hurrying gait, overburdened, half-blind with smoke.

And the girl turned to the despairing man upon the ground. "The Night Wind is not afraid to die," she said gently, "and she is Sandry's woman."

"Oh, my God!" groaned the man. "what have you done!"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

news of their fate. Miss Ordway raised palsied hands and let them drop while she stared with eyes of frightful horror. Siletz moved never a muscle.

"I told you to go back!" she cried, "that big things were about to happen, and you would not. Now I shall pay you for all things—for what you would do to Sandry. Also I pay him for that." She pointed to the still form under the ferns.

"There is a way out—the secret trail which only I know and which we take."

She sprang and caught Black Bolt's bridle, dragging him with one motion to Sandry's side. She bent to him with arms of loving service, exerting all her strength.

"Climb!" she commanded, "climb quick! We can make it yet!"

But Sandry looked into her blazing dark face that was like the peaks in storm, so wild was it, so thrilling, so beyond comprehension, and shook his head.

"What would you do?" he asked. "Do? Go down the trail across the Hog Back. There is room for a horse, if he is sure-footed, and Black Bolt will go where I put him. Come! He's jaded a bit but he'll carry us both."

"And—they?"

She flamed from brow to throat with unholy joy.

"Leave them!" she cried savagely, "leave them to burn with their proofs and their schemes and their wickedness! It is the right law!"

"No," he said, "it cannot be. If there is a way you must go—you are a woman—and you must take her with you."

"What?" cried Siletz in anguish. "That is the way of the outside world, little Siletz—the way of honor."

He saw the fires leap and flicker in her eyes, felt the tension of her hands upon his arms. Here was a force as wild and erratic as the great fires in the forest, and he knew not how to handle it. Then came the words of the Preacher like a way out of his difficulty.

"The three bars—of Bondage, of Faithfulness, and of Service."

"You are my woman," said the young man sternly, "is it not so?"

"Yes," answered the girl simply, "I am your woman."

"Then I command you to go—and take her with you."

The girl dropped his shoulders and arose.

"I will obey," she said.

A change was working in her. The singing in her ears was growing fainter. She was coming into the open country where Sandry lived his life, even as he had gone for a moment into the fastnesses where hers was laid.

"Come," she said to the staring woman, "there is a way out. You need not die."

As the words forced themselves into the swaying brain of the other they stripped her of every rag of civilization. With a shriek she threw herself forward, caught at the saddle, claved at its trappings like one demented.

But Siletz flung her back. "A gift for a gift," she cried, "I give

HE HAS HAD GRAND CROPS

And Likes the Laws in Western Canada.

"I lived near Leo, Illinois, for 45 years. I came to Saskatchewan in the spring of 1912 and bought land near Briercrest. I have farmed this land, 1650 acres, ever since. I have had grand crops. In 1914 I had 100 acres of wheat that yielded 40 bushels to the acre. I sold this wheat at \$1.50 per bushel. I like the country and my neighbours. My taxes on each quarter section (160 acres) are about \$32 a year. This covers municipal tax, school tax, hail insurance tax—everything. There is no war tax so-called. I like the laws in force here. There is no compulsion to me in any way. I am just as independent here as I was in Illinois, and I feel that my family and I are just as well protected by the laws of the province as we were in our old home in Illinois. What I earn here is my own. I have seven children and they take their places at school, in sports and at all public gatherings the same as the Canadian born.

(Sgd.) M. P. Tysdal, "February 9th, 1916."

We reprint the following article, complete, without comment, from the latest number of the "Saskatchewan Farmer," an agricultural paper published at Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan: "The attempt to check emigration from the United States to our prairie provinces by publishing alarming statements about the enormous war taxes that are being paid here—\$500 on a quarter section yearly—about forcing young men to enlist for the war; about the cold, no crops and any old story that by its extravagant boldness might influence men and women from venturing north to Canada, is really in the list of curios to our people. Knowing the country, we can hardly take it seriously. Our governments, however, dominion and provincial, are taking steps to expose the false statements that are being made, and thereby keep the channel open for continuing the stream of settlers that has been flowing to us for the past decade.—Advertisement.

Few women can serve style and comfort at the same time.

Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets are the original little liver pills put up 40 years ago. They regulate liver and bowels.—Adv.

Another Good Place. "We can't all dwell on Easy street." "No, but we can all live on the square."

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Lad of Seven Saves Sister's Life. The presence of mind of Archie Burkett, seven years old, in throwing a piece of carpet over his sister, Laura fourteen years old, probably saved her life recently when he found her clothes a mass of flames. The girl's injuries were not serious. The boy explained that he did just what his mother had told him to do in a case like that.—Pittsburgh Gazette.

STOP EATING MEAT IF KIDNEYS OR BACK HURT

Take a Glass of Salts to Clean Kidneys if Bladder Bothers You—Meat Forms Uric Acid.

Eating meat regularly eventually produces kidney trouble in some form or other, says a well-known authority, because the uric acid in meat excites the kidneys, they become overworked; get sluggish; clog up and cause all sorts of distress, particularly backache and misery in the kidney region; rheumatic twinges, severe headaches, acid stomach, constipation, torpid liver, sleeplessness, bladder and urinary irritation.

The moment your back hurts or kidneys aren't acting right, or if bladder bothers you, get about four ounces of Jad Salts from any good pharmacy; take a tablespoonful in a glass of water before breakfast for a few days and your kidneys will then act fine. This famous salts is made from the acid of grapes and lemon juice, combined with lithia, and has been used for generations to flush clogged kidneys and stimulate them to normal activity; also to neutralize the acids in the urine so it no longer irritates, thus ending bladder disorders.

Jad Salts cannot injure anyone; makes a delightful effervescent lithia-water drink which millions of men and women take now and then to keep the kidneys and urinary organs clean, thus avoiding serious kidney disease.—Adv.

Repertee. "Beauty is only skin deep," she sneered. "Yes, my dear," retorted the other, "but wouldn't you like to change skin with me?"



Spread Ferns Over the Body.



"Who Wins Now?" He Said. "Brains—Brains!"