## HEART OF THE SUNSET

By REX BEACH Author of "The Spoilers," "The Iron Trail, " "The Silver Horde," Etc.

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CHAPTER XIV-Continued. -14-

"Heaven knows! Out in the barn or under the house." Taking advantage of the dressmaker's momentary absence from the room, Paloma continued in a whisper: "I wish you'd talk to dad and see what you make of him. He's absolutely-queer. Mrs. Strange seems to have a peculiar effect on him. Why, it's almost as if-"

"What?"

"Well, I suppose I'm foolish, but-I'm beginning to believe in spells. You know, Mrs. Strange's husband is a sort -of-necromancer."

"How silly!" There was no further opportunity for words, as the woman reappeared at that instant; but a little later Alaire went in search of Blaze, still considerably mystified. As she neared the barn. The figure bore a suspicious reshe followed, he was nowhere to be

"Mr. Jones!" Alaire called. She repeated Blaze's name several times; then something stirred. The door of a troubles of my own." harness closet opened cautiously, and out of the blackness peered Paloma's father. He looked more owlish than ever behind his big, gold-rimmed spectacles. "What in the world are you -doing in there?" she cried.

Blaze emerged, blinking. He was dusty and perspiring.

"Hello, Miz Austin!" he saluted her with a poor assumption of breeziness. "I was fixin' some harness, but I'm right glad to see you."

Alaire regarded him quizzically. "What made you hide?" she asked.

"Hide? Who, me?" "I saw you dodge in here like a-

:gopher." Blaze confessed: "I reckon I've got the willies. Every woman I see looks

like that dressmaker." "Paloma was telling me about you.

Why do you hate her so?" "I don't know 's I hate her, but her and her husband have put a jinx on me. They're the worst people I ever see. Miz Austin."

"You don't really believe in such

#hings?" Blaze dusted off a seat for his visistor, saying: "I never did till lately, awakened, but now I'm worse than a plantation migger. I tell you there's things in this world we don't sabe. I wish you'd get Paloma to fire her. I've tried and failed. I wish you'd tell her those dresses are rotten."

"But they're very nice; they're lovely; and I've just been complimenting her. Now what has this woman done

It seemed impossible that a man of Blaze Jones' character could actually



The Door of a Harness Closet Opened, and Out of the Blackness Peered Paloma's Father.

harbor crude superstitions, and yet discriminating. This had become so eyes are open. I know all aboutthere was no mistaking his earnest- distressing to Mrs. Strange's finer ness when he said:

"I ain't sure whether she's to blame, or her husband, but misfortune has pit for something more congenial, and folded me to herself."

"How?"

"Well, I'm sick." "You don't look it."

I am. I don't sleep good, my heart's Strange was a natural seamstress, and actin' up. I've got rheumatism, my luck had directed her and Phil to a stomach feels like I'd swallowed some- community which was not only in need thing alive-"

aftirmed, with conviction. dignation. With elaborate sarcasm, he covered that Jonesville offered better retorted: "I reckon that's why my best | financial returns to a man of his acme through a ten-acre patch of grass seaside concessions, and therefore he burrs, eh? It's a wonder I wasn't had resumed his old calling under a killed. I reckon I smoked so much slightly different guise. Before long that I give a tobacco heart to the best he acknowledged himself well pleased

Probably it was nicotine poisonin' that upon the figures of her customers than All the same, I'm sure Jose ain't care. man gets for smokin'."

fortunes to Paloma's dressmaker?"

ain't half! Everything goes wrong, confessions of many sorts, I'm scared to pack a weapon for fear I'll injure myself. Why, I've carried but the other day I jabbed myself This fellow, Strange, with his fortunetellin' and his charms and his conjures, has hocus-pocused the whole neighborhood. He's gettin' rich off of the Mexicans. He knows more secrets than a parrot,"

"He is nothing more than a circus fakir, Mr. Jones."

"Yes'm! Just the same, these greasers 'd vote him into the legislature if he asked them. Why, he knows who fetched back Ricardo Guzman's body! He told me so."

"Really?" Alaire looked up quickly, then the smile left her face. After a moment she said, "Perhaps he could tell me something I want to know?" "No, don't you get him started,"

Blaze cautioned, hastily, "or he'll put a spell on you like he did on me.' "I want to know what Ed had to do with the Guzman affair."

Blaze shook his head slowly. "Well, he's mixed up somehow with Lewis. Dave thinks Tad was at the bottom farm buildings, she glimpsed a man's of the killin', and he hoped to prove figure hastily disappearing into the it on him; but our government won't do anything, and he's stumped for the semblance to Blaze Jones, yet when time bein'. I don't know any more about Ed's dealin's than you do, Miz Austin; all I know is that I got a serpent in my household and I can't get shed of her. I've got a lapful of

"This is too occult for me," she declared, rising. "But-I'm interested in what you say about Mr. Strange. If the Mexicans tell him so much, perhaps he can tell me something. I do hope you have no more misfortunes."

"You stay to supper," Blaze urged hospitably. "I'll be in as soon as that tarantula's gone."

But Alaire declined. After a brief chat with Paloma, she remounted Montrose and prepared for the homeward ride. At the gate, however, she met Dave Law on his new mare, and when Dave had learned the object of Ranger grinned. her visit to Jonesville he insisted upon accompanying her.

Las Palmas; it was nearly midnight when Dave threw his leg across his saddle and started home.

Alaire's parting words rang sweetly in his ears; "This has been the pleasantest day I can remember."

The words themselves meant little, but Dave had caught a wistful undertone in the speaker's voice, and fancied

Jose Sanchez had beheld Dave Law at the Las Palmas table twice within a few days. He spent this evening la-

CHAPTER XV.

An Awakening.

Time was when Phil Strange boasted that he and his wife had played every fairground and seaside amusement park from Coney Island to Galveston. In his battered wardrobe trunks were parts of old costumes, scrapbooks of clippings, and a goodly collection of lithographs, some advertising the supernatural powers of "Professor Magi. Sovereign of the Unseen World," and others the accomplishments of "Mile. Le Garde, Renowned Serpent Enchantress." In these gaudy portraits of "Magi the Mystic" no one would have recognized Phil Strange. And even more difficult would it have been to trace a resemblance between Mrs. Strange and the blond, bushy-headed "Mile, Le Garde" of the posters. Nevertheless, the likenesses at one time had been considered not too flattering. and Phil trensured them as evidences of imperishable distinction.

But the Stranges had tired of public life. For a long time the wife had confessed to a lack of interest in her vocation which amounted almost to a of a certain odium, a suggestion of Is that any way to act?" vulgarity in the minds of the more sensibilities that she had voiced a yearning to forsake the platform and it in for Mrs. Austin." finally she had prevailed upon Phil to make a change.

The step had not been taken without misgivings, but a benign Providence "I don't exactly feel it, either, but had watched over the pair. Mrs of a good dressmaker but peculiarly "You're smoking too much," Alaire ripe for the talents of a soothsayer. Phil, too, had intended to embrace a But skepticism aroused Blaze's in- new profession; but he had soon disteam of mules ran away and dragged cepted gifts than did the choicest of

killed twenty acres of my cotton, too; hanging pythen folds about her own, ing no epitaph for you. From what and maybe if I'd cut out tobacco I'd and he found his own fame growing I've dug out of Rosa, he's acting for a have floated that bond issue on the with every day. His mediumistic gifts third party-somebody with pull and a irrigation ditch. But I was wedded to came into general demand. The coun- lot of coin-but who it is I don't know. cigarettes, so my banks are closin' try-people journeyed miles to consult Anyhow, he's cooking trouble for the down on me. Sure! That's what a him, and Blaze Jones' statement that Austins, and I want to stand from they confided in the fortune-teller as under." "And do you attribute all these mis- they would have confided in a priest The man nodded gloomily. "That did indeed become the repository for tions without evasion and told what

a bowle knife in my bootleg ever since and took little joy in some of the se- men finally parted it was with the unweighed him down with a sense of un- his way.



"Over Her Head Floats a Skeleton-

pleasant responsibility. Chancing to meet Dave Law one day, he determined to relieve himself of at least one troublesome burden.

But Dave was not easily approachable. He met the medium's allusions to the occult with contemptuous amusement, nor would he consent to a private "reading." Strange grew almost desperate enough to speak the ungarnished truth.

"You'd better pay a little attention to me," he grieved; "I've got a message to you from the 'Unseen World.'" "Charges 'collect,' I reckon," the

Strange waved aside the suggestion. 'It came unbidden, and I pass it on It was early dusk when they reached for what it's worth." As Dave turned away, he added, hastily, "It's about a skeleton in the chaparral, and a redhaired woman."

Dave stopped; he eyed the speaker curiously, "Go on," said he.

But a public street, Strange explained, was no place for psychic discussions. Dave agreed. When they were alone in the fortune-telling "parhe had seen in her eyes a queer, half- lor," he sat back while the medium did you know I wanted to see you?" frightened expression, as of one just closed his eyes and prepared to explore she inquired. the Invisible. After a brief delay Phil

woman I told you about, and three borlously composing a letter to his is Mexicans. You're at a water hole man. And now the scene changes. Everything dissolves. I'm in a manskeleton-"

Dave broke in crisply. "All right! your mind, Strange?"

The psychic simulated a shudderthe spirit world. "Eh? What was I-? There! You've

"Did I tell you anything?" "No. But evidently you can."

"I'm sorry. They never come back."

"Rot!" Phil was hurt, indignant. With some stiffness he explained the danger of interrupting a seance of this sort, but Law remained obdurate.

"You can put over that second-sight stuff with the greasers," he declared, sharply, "but not with me. So, Jose Sanchez has been to see you and you want to warn me. Is that h?"

"I don't know any such party." Strange protested. He eyed his caller stant she realized how deathly tired repugnance. Snake-charming, she had for a moment; then with an abrupt discovered, was far from an ideal pro- change of manner he complained: fession for a woman of refinement. It "Say, Bo! What's the matter with possessed unpleasant features, and you? I've got a reputation to protect, even such euphemistic titles as "Ser- and I do things my own way. I'm getpent Enchantress" and "Reptilian ting set to slip you something, and you Mesmerist" failed to rob the calling try to make me look like a sucker.

"I prefer to talk to you when your "You don't know nothing about anything," snapped the other, "Jose's got

"You said you didn't know him." "Well, I don't. He's never been to see me in his life, but-his sweetheart has. Rosa Morales comes regular." "Rosa! Jose's sweetheart!"

"Yes. Her and Jose have joined out together since you shot Panfilo, and they're framing something." "What, for instance?"

The fortune-teller hesitated. "I only wish I knew," he said slowly. "It looks to be like a killing." Dave nodded. "Probably is. Jose

would like to get me, and of course the girl-" "Oh, they don't aim to get you. You ain't the one they're after."

"No? Who, then?" "I don't know nothing definite. In three-year-old buil in my pasture! with the new environment, for his wife this business, you understand, a fel-

Now that the speaker had dropped was scarcely an exaggeration. Phil all pretense, he answered Dave's queshe knew. It was not much, to Dave's Contrary to Blaze's belief, however, way of thinking, but it was enough to Strange was no Prince of Darkness, give cause for thought, and when the I was a babe in arms, you might say; crets forced upon him. Phil was a derstanding that Strange would good man in his way-so conscientious promptly communicate any further inwith it and nearly got blood-poisonin', that certain information he acquired telligence on this subject that came

On the following day Lave's duties called him to Brownsville, where court was in session. He had planned to leave by the morning train, but as he continued to meditate over Strange's words, he decided that, before going, he ought to advise Alaire of the fellow's suspections in order that she might discharge Jose Sanches and in other ways protect herself agrinst his possible spite. Since the matter was one that could not well be talked over by telephone, Dave determined to go in person to Las Palmas that evering. Truth to say, he was hungry to see Alaire. By this time he had almost ceased to combat the feeling she aroused in him, and it was in obedience to an impulse far stronger than friendly anxiety that he hired a machine and, shortly after dark, took the river road.

The Fates are malicious fades. They delight in playing ill-natured pranks upon us. Not content with spinning and measuring and cutting the threads of our lives to suit themselves, they must also tangle the skein, causing us to cut capers to satisfy their whims.

At no time since meeting Alaire had Dave Law been more certain of his moral strength than on this evening; at no time had his grip upon hiraself least reason to doubt her self-control. Dave, to be sure, had appealed to her fancy and her interest; in fact, he so dominated her thoughts that the imaginary creature whom she called her dream-husband had gradually taken on his physical likeness. But the idea that she was in any way enamored of him had never entered his mind. In such wise do the Fates amuse themselves.

Alaire had gone to her favorite afterdinner refuge, a nook on one of the side galleries, where there was a wide, swinging wicker couch; and there, in a restful obscurity fragrant with flowers, she had prepared to spend the evening with her dreams.

She did not hear Dave's automobile arrive. Her first intimation of his presence came with the sound of his heel upon the porch. When he appeared, it was almost like the materialization of her appermost thoughtquite as if a figure from her fancy had stepped forth full-clad.

She rose and met him, smiling, "How

Dave took her hand and looked down at her, framing a commonplace reply. "I see a great many things—that But for some reason the words lay unspoken upon his toague. Alaire's inmen. One of 'em is you, the other two formal greeting, her parted lips, the welcoming light in her eyes, had sent friend and patron, Gen. Luis Longorio. in the mesquite. Now there's a shoot- them flying. It seemed to him that the ing scrape; I see the body of a dead dim half-light which illumined this nook emanated from her face and her person, that the fragrance which came sion; and the red-haired woman comes to his nostrils was the perfume of her toward me. Over her head floats a breath, and at the prompting of these thoughts all his smothered longings rose as if at a signal. As mutinous Let's get down to cases. What's on prisoners in a jail delivery overpower their guards, so did Dave's long-repressed emotions gain the upper hand a painful contortion, such as anyone of him now, and so swift was their might suffer if rudely jerked out of uprising that he could not summon

more than a feeble, panicky resistance. The awkwardress of the pause which broke the connection," he declared. followed Alaire's inquiry strengthened the rebellious impulses within him, and quite unconsciously his friendly grasp upon her fingers tightened. For her part, as she saw this sudden change sweep over him, her own face altered and she felt something within her breast leap into life. No woman could have failed to read the meaning of his sudden agitation, and, strange to say, it worked a similar state of feeling in Alaire. She strove to control herself and to draw away, but lustend found that her hand had answered his, and that her eyes were flashing recognition of his look. All in an inof her own struggle she had become, and experienced a reckless impulse to cast away all restraint and blindly meet his first advance. She had no time to question her yearnings; she seemed to understand only that this man offered her rest and security; that

in his arms lay sanctuary. To both it seemed that they stood there silently, hand in hand, for a very long time, though in reality there was scarcely a moment of hesitation on the part of either. A drunken, breathless instant of uncertainty, then Alnire was on Dave's breast, and his strength, his ardor, his desire, was throbbing through her. Her bare arms were about his neck; a sigh, the token of utter surrender, fluttered from her throat. She raised her face to his and their lips melted together. (TO BE CONTINUED.)

Cossack Superstition.

Among the numerous superstitions of the Cossacks there is a belief that they will enter heaven in a better state of moral purity if they are personally clean when killed in battle.

Style in Emotion. "Now some scientific sharp says there are styles in emotions." "I be-Woll I smoked him to death, all right. was far happier in draping dress goods low has to put two and two mosther, ways wear their signity ruffled." lieve it. I know some women who al-

SITE MATTER OF IMPORTANCE

Should Be Selected by Home Builder Only After Many Things Are Taken Into Consideration.

Selection of the proper site, the one most adapted to the style of structure contemplated, is a question of great Importance to the prospective home builder. Many features should be considered in choosing the location. All of the reasons why much care should be exercised in picking the right situation have an important bearing on the enfoyment of the home by the occupants.

Proximity to the business of th head of the house and to transit facilities, schools and church should be ascertained before a site is decided upon Other features to be considered are advantages from a public-facilities viewpoint-good streets, drainage, gas and water supplies and sanitation Healthiness and beauty of location street lighting, privacy and genera character of the neighborhood are other features to be investigated.

Relation of the site's value and sur roundings to the proposed cost of the contemplated home should be considered. Size of the lot should also creatly influence the style of building The type of the home should be deter mined by definite conditions, in which the character of the site and surround ngs are of predominating importance

While a prospective builder may have in his imagination an adaptation or reproduction of a period design, it seemed firmer. Nor had Alaire the Is very frequently unwise to permit such an imagination to be the deciding factor as to what design a home should represent. Errors in construction are often made through placing a repro duced design in an inappropriate set ting, where a uniquely constructed dwelling is entirely out of place with its surroundings.

CITY PLANTS SHADE TREES

Women of Oakland, Cal., Aid Superin tendent of Parks in Beautification of Residence Streets.

All of the big residential streets it Oakland are to be planted with shade trees, according to Lee S. Kerfoot, superintendent of parks. He will be as sisted in the matter by local society

The plan had its inception at afternoon teas and other social gatherings where society women met. The subject of lining the residence streets with trees of uniform growth and species was often discussed, and a committee appointed to take the matter up.

According to the park superintendby the city in its conservatories in Lakeside park. Poplars, willows and eucalytus will probably be used, and no two varieties will be planted or any one street.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\* Ain't It So?

If you want to live in the kind of a town Like the kind of a town you

You needn't slip your clothes in a grip And start on a long, long hike.

You'll only find what you left behind.

For there's nothing really new. It's a knock to yourself when you knock your town, It isn't your town-it's you.

Real towns are not made by men afraid Lest somebody else ahead;

When everyone works and nobody shirks You can raise a town from the

dead. And if you can make your personal stake,

Your neighbor can make one, Your town will be what you

want to see: It isn't your town-it's you. Dotted Line.

\*\*\*\* Getting Privacy About Home. Within the last few years Ameri-

cans have begun to discover that the land about their house should be treated as a part of the home and that it should have the charm of intimacy and privacy. They have reverted to the ways of the early Colonial days, when the fence was not only a protection but an ornamental part of the grounds. Some of the fences around the old houses in Salem, Mass.; in Charleston, S. C., and elsewhere bear witness to the state and dignity of the persons who lived behind them, and through the gates one still gets glimpses of charms that would lose by half if they were not secluded and kept for the persons who live in the houses of which they form the setting.

We are even borrowing the foreign dea, hesitatingly, of turning our houses about, with their backs to the street and their fronts to a garden of lawn and flowers which may be as fully and freely enjoyed as the most comfortable living room in the house.



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Constant Attendant at Play Was Bound to Be on Hand When Erring Wife Was Caught by Husband.

A problem play was being produced in Chicago. One evening it was discovered that a certain man, evidently from the rural district, had attended the play six nights in succession and always sat well down in front. Each night he leaned forward eagerly in his seat and drank in the words of the

These facts were communicated to the theater press agent, who scented a good story. Approaching the interested spectator between the acts, he apologized for his intrusion and said: Would you mind telling me just why you are so interested in this play? Do you know some member of the

"Nope," said the man from the outlands. "That ain't it. But I'll tell you about it. You know the scene in the private room of the restaurant. where the dark man and the other man's wife get up and leave by the left-hand door just a moment before the woman's husband enters by the right-hand door?"

"Yes," said the press agent expect-

antly. "Well," said the interested spectator, "some night the husband's going to come in before they leave."

Sociable.

An orderly chosen from among the student officers at Ft. Harrison sits daily outside Brig. Gen. Edwin F. Glenn's office door. A different man is chosen each day, and the other day the post fell to the lot of Charles E. Shafe of Indianapolis, says the Indianapolis News. Shafe went on an errand for the general, and returned just ent, the plan is to use trees grown after the general had wished to speak to an officer in one of the other rooms and there being no orderly to summon him, had gone after the man himself.

> "By George," Shafe commented to the camp adjutant's orderly, a Tenth infantryman, fresh from five years in Panama, "the general did some of my work for me."

"Yeh, ain't that nice, now!" the adjutant's orderly returned. "Why don't you go in there now and do some of his work for him, just to be sociable?"

Quite Happy.

Through the wild ways of her goodfor-nothing husband, a hard-working charwoman had to remove to a little two-roomed cottage, where there was scarcely space to sneeze without shaking the ornaments from the mantel-"It's hard lines for you to be brought

down like this, after what you've been accustomed to," said a sympathetic neighbor. "I don't doubt you feel very miserable, Mrs. Jones." "No. I don't," the charwoman stout-

ly denied. "I'm happier here by a long way than I used to be in the old place. For one thing, when my husband comes home in a brute of a temner, he can't throw me down the cellar steps, as he used to do, 'cos there ain't none now!"-Pearson's Weekly.

The True Word.

Two elderly New York clubmen who have retired spend much of their time gazing out upon the Fifth avenue throngs from their leather rest chairs at a club lounge window.

them the other day. A very stunning woman of middle age passed in a handsome turnout. "I wonder how old she is?" said one.

Charles B. Towns was scated near

"Woman is as old as she looks," was There was a pause. "And man is not old until he quits looking," said

the first-and both resumed their gaz-

Southern states contain 777 cotton mills, valued at \$225,000,000.

