

Webster=Man's Man

By PETER B. KYNE

Author of "Cappy Ricks," "The Valley of the Giants," Etc.

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"SHE'S THE FUTURE MRS. W."

John Stuart Webster, mining engineer, man's man, 33 years young, boards a train in Death Valley, California, on his way back to civilization after clearing up \$100,000. He is dreaming of cool baths, silk pajamas and ham and eggs. But he looks like a hobo to the porter and the conductor. His way of changing their views gives a hint of the mettle of the man. Then he meets a distressed lady, who makes his heart flop over for the first time in all his days. He eliminates the offending man after the style of the man's man the world over. Being what he is and also glib, he does not take advantage of his opportunity. But he just had to find out who the no-longer-distressed lady is, being determined to hatch up a scheme to meet her again—and marry her. She is Dolores Ruey. Clad in purple and fine linen, John goes to the Engineers' club in Denver, the nearest approach to a home he has known in twenty years. There he is offered a \$25,000-a-year job with the certainty of a fortune by a capitalist friend, Edward P. Jerome. While he is hesitating, being loath to go to work again so soon, he receives a delayed letter from his own particular pal, Billy Geary, asking him to finance a gold-mining proposition in Central America and go 10-10 with him on the profits. Thereupon he turns down the big job and decides to answer the call of friendship and adventure to Sobrante.

CHAPTER II—Continued.

"Well," Webster retorted humorously, "it isn't exactly what you might term a ruling passion. I like to make it, but there's more fun spending it. I've made \$100,000, and now I want to go blow it—and I'm going to. Do not try to argue with me. I'm a lunatic and I will have my way. If I didn't go tearing off to Sobrante and join forces with Bill Geary, there to play the game, red or black, I'd feel as if I had done something low and mean and small. The boy's appealed to me, and I have made my answer. If I come back alive but broke, you know in your heart you'll give me the best job you have."

"You win," poor Jerome admitted. "Hold the job open 30 days. At the end of that period I'll give you a definite answer, Neddy."

"I sniff excitement and adventure and profit in Sobrante and I've just got to look-see. I'm like an old burro staked out knee-deep in alfalfa just now. I won't take kindly to the pack."

"And like an old burro, you won't be happy until you've sneaked through a hole in the fence to get out into a stubble-field and starve." Jerome swore half-heartedly and promulgated the trite proverb that life is just one blank thing after the other—an inchoate mass of liver and disappointment!

"Do you find it so?" Webster queried sympathetically.

Suspecting that he was being twitted, Jerome looked up sharply, prepared to wither Webster with that glance. But no, the man was absolutely serious; whereupon Jerome realized the futility of further argument and gave John Stuart Webster up for a total loss. Still, he could not help smiling as he reflected how Webster had planned a year of quiet enjoyment and Fate had granted him one brief evening. He marveled that Webster could be so light-hearted and contented under the circumstances.

Webster read his thoughts. "Good-by, old man," he said, and extended his hand. "Don't worry about me. Allah is always kind to fools, my friend; sorrow is never their portion. In answering Billy's call I have a feeling that I am answering the call of a great adventure."

He did not know how truly he spoke, of course, but if he had, that knowledge would not have changed his answer.

CHAPTER III.

The morning following his decision to play the role of angel to Billy Geary's mining concession in Sobrante, John Stuart Webster, like Mr. Peppys, was up betimes.

Nine o'clock found him in the office of his friend Joe Daingerfeld, of the Bingham engineering works, where, within the hour, he had in his characteristically decisive fashion purchased the machinery for a ten-stamp mill. It was a nice order, and Daingerfeld was delighted.

"This is going to cost you about half your fortune, Jack," he informed Webster when the order was finally made up.

Webster grinned. "You don't suppose I'm chump enough to pay for it now, do you, Joe?" he queried.

"I'm going first to scout the country and in the meantime keep all this stuff in your warehouse until I authorize you by cable to ship, when you can draw on me at sight for the entire invoice with bill of lading attached. If, upon investigation, I find that this mine isn't all my partner thinks it is, I'll cable a cancellation, and you can tear that nice fat order up and forget it."

From Daingerfeld's office Webster went forth to purchase a steamer trunk, his railway ticket and sleeping car reservation—after which he returned to his hotel and set about packing for the journey.

Old Neddy Jerome, as sour and cross as a setting hen, accompanied him in the taxiab to the station, loth to let him escape and pleading to the last, in a forlorn hope that Jack Webster's better nature would triumph over his friendship and boyish yearning for adventure. He clung to Webster's arm as they walked slowly down the track and pushed at the steps of the car containing the wanderer's reservations, just as a porter, carrying some

labeled by a girl in a green tailor-made suit. As she passed, John Stuart Webster looked fairly into her face, started as if he were stung, and hastily lifted his hat. The girl briefly returned his scrutiny with sudden interest, decided she did not know him, and reproved him with a glance that even passed old Neddy Jerome did not fail to assimilate.

"Wow, wow!" he murmured. "The next time you try that, Johnny Webster, be sure you're right—"

"Good land o' Goshen, Neddy," Webster replied. "Fry me in bread crumbs, if that isn't the same girl! Let me go, Neddy. Quick! Good-bye, old chap. I'm on my way."

"Nonsense! The train doesn't pull out for seven minutes yet. Who is she, John, and why does she excite you so?"

"Who is she, you ancient horse thief! Why, if I have my way—and I'm certainly going to try to have it—she's the future Mrs. W."

"Alas! Poor Yorick, I knowed him well," Jerome answered. "Take a tip from the old man, John. I've been through the mill and I know. Never marry a girl that can freeze you with a glance. It isn't safe. By the way, what's the fair charmer's name?"

"I've got it down in my memorandum book, but I can't recall it this minute—Spanish name."

"John, my dear boy, be careful," Neddy Jerome counseled. "Stick to your own kind of people— is this a—er—a nice girl, John?"

"How do I know—I mean, how dare you ask? Of course, she's nice. Can't you see she is? And besides, why should you be so fearful?"

"I'll have you understand, young man, that I have considerable interest in the girl you're going to marry. By the way, where did you first meet this girl? Who introduced you?"

"I haven't met her, and I've never been introduced," Webster complained, and poured forth the tale of his adventure on the train from Death valley. Neddy was very sympathetic.

"Well, no wonder she didn't recognize you when you saluted her tonight," he agreed. "Thought you were another brute of a man trying to make a mash. By thunder, Jack, I'm afraid you made a mistake when you shed your whiskers and buried your old clothes."

"I don't care what she thinks. I found her. I lost her, and I've found her again; and I'm not going to take any further chances."

The porter, having delivered his charge's baggage in her section, was



"I'm Old Enough to Be Your Father."

returning for another tip. Webster reached out and accosted him.

"Herey," he said, "where did you stow that young lady's hand baggage?"

"Lower Six, Car Nine, sah."

"I have a weakness for colored boys who are quick at figures," Webster declared, and dismissed the porter with the gratuity. He turned to Jerome. "Neddy, I feel that I am answering the call to a great adventure," he declared solemnly.

"I know it, Jack. Good-bye, son,

and God bless you. If your fit of insanity passes within 90 days, cable me; and if you're broke, stick the Colorado Con. for the cable tolls."

"Good old wagon!" Webster replied affectionately. Then he shook hands and climbed aboard the train. The instant he disappeared in the vestibule, however, Neddy Jerome waddled rapidly down the track to Car 9, climbed aboard, and made his way to Lower 6. The young lady in the green tailor-made suit was there, looking idly out of the window.

"Young lady," Jerome began, "may I presume to address you for a moment on a matter of great importance to you? Don't be afraid of me, my dear. I'm old enough to be your father, and besides, I'm one of the nicest old men you ever met."

She could not forbear a smile. "Very well, sir," she replied.

Neddy Jerome produced a pencil and card. "Please write your name on this card," he pleaded, "and I'll telegraph what I want to say to you. There'll be a man coming through this car in a minute, and I don't want him to see me here. Please trust me, young lady."

The young lady did not trust him, however, although she wrote on the card. Jerome thanked her and fled as fast as his fat old legs could carry him. Under the station arc he read the card.

"Henrietta Wilkins," he murmured. "By the gods, one would never suspect a name like that belonged to a face like that. By Jingo, it would be strange if that madman persuaded her to marry him. I hope he does. If I'm any judge of character, Jack Webster won't be cruel enough to chain that vision to Sobrante; and besides, she's liable to make him decide who's most popular with him—Henrietta or Billy Geary. If she does, I'll play Geary to lose. Well! Needs must when the devil drives." And he entered the station telegraph office and commenced to write.

An hour later Miss Dolores Ruey, alias Henrietta Wilkins, was handed this remarkably verbose and truly candid telegram:

"Miss Henrietta Wilkins, Lower 6, Car 9, on board train 24.

"Do you recall the bewhiskered, ragged individual you met on the S. P., L. A. & S. L. train in Death valley ten days ago? He lifted his hat to you tonight, and you almost killed him with a look. It did not occur to him that you would not recognize him disguised as a gentleman, and he lifted his hat on impulse. Do not hold it against him. The sight of you again set his reason tottering on its throne, and he told me his sad story."

"This man, John Stuart Webster, is wealthy, single, forty, fine and crazy as a March hare. He is in love with you. You might do worse than fall in love with him. He is the best mining engineer in the world, and he is now aboard the same train with you, en route to New Orleans, thence to take the steamer to Buenaventura, Sobrante, C. A., where he is to meet another lunatic and finance a hole in the ground. I do not want him to go to Sobrante. If you marry him, he will not. If you do not marry him, you still might arrange to make him listen to reason. If you can induce him to come to work for me within the next 90 days, whether you marry him or not, I will give you \$5,000 the day he reports on the job. Please bear in mind that he does not know I am doing this. If he did, he would kill me, but business is business, and this is a plain business proposition. I am putting you wise, so you will know your power and can exercise it if you care to earn the money. If not, please forget about it. At any rate, please do me the favor to communicate with me on the subject, if at all interested."

"Edward P. Jerome, President Colorado Consolidated Mines, Ltd., Care Engineers' Club."

The girl read and reread this telegram several times, and presently a slow little smile commenced to creep around the corners of her adorable mouth.

"I believe that amazing old gentleman is absolutely dependable," was the decision at which she ultimately arrived, and calling for a telegraph blank, she wired the old schemer:

"Five thousand not enough money. Make it \$10,000 and I will guarantee to deliver the man within 90 days. I stay on this train to New Orleans."

"HENRIETTA."

That telegram arrived at the Engineers' club about midnight, and pursuant to instructions, the night porter read it and phoned the contents to Neddy Jerome, who promptly telephoned his reply to the telegraph office, and then sat on the edge of his bed, scratching his toes and meditating.

"That's a remarkable young woman," he decided, "and business to her finger tips. Well, I've done my part, and it's now up to Jack Webster to protect himself in the clinches and breakaways."

About daylight a black hand passed Neddy Jerome's reply through the berth curtains to Dolores Ruey. She read:

"When you deliver the

goods, communicate with me and get your money.

"JEROME."

She snuggled back among the pillows and considered the various aspects of this amazing contract which she had undertaken with a perfect stranger. Hour after hour she lay there, thinking over this preposterous situation, and the more she weighed it, the more interesting and attractive the proposition appeared. But one consideration troubled her. How would the unknown knight manage an introduction? Or, if he failed to manage it, how was she to overcome that obstacle?

"Oh, dear," she murmured, "I do hope he's brave."

She need not have worried. Hours before, the object of her thought had settled all that to his own complete satisfaction, and as a consequence was sleeping peacefully and gaining strength for whatever of fortune, good or ill, the morrow might bring forth.

CHAPTER IV.

Day was dawning in Buenaventura, republic of Sobrante, as invariably it dawns in the tropics—without extended preliminary symptoms. The soft, silvery light of a full moon that had stayed out scandalously late had incised imperceptibly into gray; the gray was swiftly yielding place to a faint crimson that was spreading and deepening upward athwart the east.

In the patio of Mother Jenks' establishment in the Calle de Concordia, No. 19, the first shafts of morning light were filtering obliquely through the orange trees and creeping in under the deep, Gothic-arched veranda flanking the western side of the patio. Presently, through the silent reaches of the Calle de Concordia, the sound of a prodigious knocking and thumping echoed, as of some fretful individual seeking admission at the street door of El Buen Amigo, by which euphonious designation Mother Jenks' caravansary was known to the public of Buenaventura. In the second story, front, a window slid back and a woman's voice, husky with that huskiness that speaks so accusingly of cigarettes and alcohol, demanded:

"Quien es? Who is it? Que quiere usted? What do you want?"

"Ye might displease wit' that parakeet conversation whin addressin' the likes av me," a voice replied. "'Tis me—Cafferty. I have a cablegram Leber give me to deliver."

"Gawd's truth! Would yer wake the 'ole 'ouse with yer 'ammering?"

"All right. I'll not say another word!"

Without the portai stood Don Juan Cafetero, of whom a word or two before proceeding.

To begin, Don Juan Cafetero was not his real name, but rather a free Spanish translation of the Gaelic John Cafferty. Mr. Cafferty was an exile of Erin with a horrible thirst. He had first arrived in Sobrante some five years before, as section boss in the employ of the little foreign-owned narrow-gauge railway which ran from Buenaventura on the Caribbean coast to San Miguel de Padua, up-country where the nitrate beds were located. Prior to his advent the railroad people had tried many breeds of section boss without visible results, until a Chicago man, who had come to Sobrante to install an inter-communicating telephone system in the government buildings, suggested to the superintendent of the road, who was a German, that the men made for bosses come from Erin's isle; wherefore Mr. Cafferty had been imported at a price of \$ a day gold. Result—a marked improvement in the road bed and consequently the train schedules, and the ultimate loss of the Cafferty soul.

Something in the climate of Sobrante must have appealed to a touch of laissez faire in Don Juan's amiable nature, for in the course of time he had taken unto himself, without bell or book, after the fashion of the proprietor of Sobrante, the daughter of one Esteban Manuel Enrique Jose Maria Pasqual y Miramontes, an estimable peon who was singularly glad to have his daughter off his hands and no questions asked. Following the fashion of the country, however, Esteban had forthwith moved the remainder of his numerous progeny under the mantle of Don Juan Cafetero's philanthropy, and resigned a position which for many years he had not enjoyed

—to wit: salting and packing green hides at a local abattoir. This foolhardy economic move had so incensed Don Juan that in a fit of pique he spurned his father-in-law (we must call Esteban something and so why split hairs?) under the tails of his camisa, with such vigor as to sever forever the friendly relations hitherto existing between the families. Mrs. Cafferty (again we transgress, but what of it?) subsequently passed away in child birth, and no sooner had she been decently buried than Don Juan took a week off to drown his sorrows.

In this condition he had encountered Esteban Manuel Enrique Jose Maria Pasqual y Miramontes and called him out of his name. In the altercation that ensued Esteban, fully convinced that he had received the nub end of the transaction from start to finish, cut Don Juan severely; Don Juan had thereupon slain Esteban with a .44-caliber revolver and upon emerging from the railroad hospital a month later had been tried by a Sobrante magistrate and fined the sum of \$20,000, legal tender of the republic of Sobrante. Of course, he had paid it off within six months from his wages as section boss, but the memory of the injustice always rankled him, and gradually he moved down the scale of society from section boss to day laborer, day laborer to tropical tramp, and tropical tramp to beach-

comber, in which latter condition he now existed for several months.

To return to Mother Jenks. Before Don Juan could even utter a maternal greeting, Mother Jenks laid finger to lip and silenced him. "Go back to Leber's and return in an hour," she whispered. "I've my reasons for wantin' that bloomin' cablegram delivered later."

Don Juan hadn't the least idea what Mother Jenks' reasons might be, but he presumed she was up to some chicanery, and so he winked his blood-shot eye very knowingly and nodded his acquiescence in the program.

When he had gone, Mother Jenks went behind the bar and fortified herself with her morning's morning—which rite having been performed, her sleep-bummed brain livened up immediately.

"Gord's truth!" the lady murmured. "An' me about to turn him adrift for the lawst fortnight! Well for 'im 'e allers admired the picture o' my sainted 'Enery, as was the spittin' image of his own fawther. 'Eings! 'E'll's bells! But that was a bit of a tight squeak! Just as I'm fully convinced 'e's beat it an' I'm left 'oldin' the sack, all along o' my kindness of 'eart, 'e gets the cablegram 'e's been lookin' for this two months past; an' 'e allers claimed as 'ow any time 'e got a cablegram t'd be an answer to 'is letter, with money to foller! My word, but that was touch an' go!"

Still congratulating herself upon her good fortune in intercepting Don Juan

CHAPTER IV.

GIVEN HIGH PLACE

International Honors Awarded Western Canada Products.

Proof of What Can Be Done, With Intelligence and Industry, on Good, Low-Priced Land.

The 1920 International Live Stock show at Chicago was probably the best that has ever been held, and as is pointed out by a Canadian newspaper writer, the number and quality of the exhibits "indicated a new milestone on the road of progress." This year it was truly "International." The part that Canada took showed a spirit of friendliness on both sides of the line that was highly pleasing.

Six provinces of Canada were represented in varying degrees, and when the handsome share of the prizes that were carried off by our northern neighbors, achieving phenomenal success in view of tremendous competition, is considered, there is reason to hope that in the minds of these people there will grow an esteem for the International that will be helpful to both countries.

Canada won a number of championships, not the least of which was the sweepstakes carried off by Mr. J. C. Mitchell, of Dahinda, Saskatchewan. In this award may be seen an object lesson, going to show that it is not always the man born with a silver spoon in his mouth to whom the greatest degree of success will attach. It will be interesting to relate that Mr. Mitchell, the recipient of these great honors, came from the manufacturing city of Manchester, England, unacquainted with farming, but with the lure of the land upon him. Because he had been told of the success that followed the tiller of the soil of Western Canada, fifteen years ago he decided to make his home in Canada, and selected as a homestead the land upon which he grew the wheat that has brought him a world's championship. It is true he had his ups and downs, but he continued and is now enjoying the fruits of his labor and the experience gained in a manner of life that was enjoyable. But he is still a simple farmer and will continue growing grains that, with the knowledge he possesses, industry that is essential, and above all, a soil and climate that are favorable, will secure many more world's championships.

Well, then, too, there was born at Stratford, Ontario, a boy named Lucas, now of man's estate. Although a town boy he always had a desire for farming. He moved to Alberta to the neighborhood of Cayley, and those who have had no idea where Cayley is will know now, for Mr. Lucas has placed it "on the map." He had some of his 49.2-lbs.-to-the-bushel oats at the International, and with 240 competitors against him he took the championship and sweepstakes. This was a notable achievement. As has been said, when he was a boy he took a liking to farming, but the greatest obstacle in the way of realization of his dreams was the practical impossibility of a man without a large amount of capital purchasing the high-priced farm lands of the settled parts in the neighborhood he lived in. However, after leaving school he heard of the low-priced lands of Western Canada. This was his opportunity, and he embraced it. Beginning at 15 years of age with 160 acres of virgin prairie, and with no practical farming experience, he has now, by perseverance and industry, increased his holdings to nearly 1,000 acres. Such is the brief history of the man who carried off the championship for the best grown oats, and it is also an example that might well be followed by many who are struggling today against the prices received for the produce grown on high-priced land, or to those who, as was the case with Mr. Lucas, had little means but an abundance of energy and a flood of ambition. Nowhere are there offered inducements such as are offered in Western Canada.

There were 25 prizes offered in the class for hard spring wheats and 20 of them went to Western Canada.—Advertisement.

Woman's sphere nowadays seems to be the big round earth.

ASPIRIN

Name "Bayer" on Genuine

Take Aspirin only as told in each package of genuine Bayer Tablets of Aspirin. Then you will be following the directions and dosage worked out by physicians during 21 years, and proved safe by millions. Take no chances with substitutes. If you see the Bayer Cross on tablets, you can take them without fear for Colds, Headache, Neuralgia, Rheumatism, Earache, Toothache, Lumbago and for Pain. Handy tin boxes of twelve tablets cost few cents. Druggists also sell larger packages. Aspirin is the trade mark of Bayer Manufacture of Monaceticacidester of Salicylicacid.—Advertisement.

Love of money is the root of all evil—and of some good.



"Chop Your Spoonin', Willie."

Cafferty, Mother Jenks proceeded upstairs to her chamber, clothed herself, and adjourned to the kitchen. After giving orders for an extra special breakfast for two, Mother Jenks returned to her cantina, and formally opened the same for the business of that day and night.

To her came presently, via the tiled hallway, the object of her solicitude, a young man on the sunny side of thirty. He was thin for one of his height and breadth of chest; in color his countenance resembled that of a sick Chinaman. His hair was thick and wavy, but lusterless; his dark blue eyes carried a hint of jaundice; and a generous mouth, beneath an equally generous upper lip, gave ample ground for the suspicion that while Mr. William Geary's speech denoted him an American citizen, at least one of his maternal ancestors had been wooed and won by an Irishman. An old Panama hat, sad relic of a prosperous past, a pair of soiled buckskin pumps, a suit of unbleached linen equally befoiled, and last but not least, the remnants of a smile that much hard luck could never quite obliterate, completed his attire—and to one a stranger in the tropics would appear to constitute a complete inventory of Mr. Geary's possessions.

"Dulce corazon mio, I extend a greeting," he called at the entrance "I trust you rested well last night, Mother Jenks, and that no evil dreams were born of your midnight repast of frijoles refritos, marmalade, and art-an-art!"

"Chop yer spoonin', Willie," Mother Jenks simpered. "My heye! So I'm yer sweet'art, eh? Yer wheedin' blighter, makin' love to a girl as is old enough to be yer mother!"

"A woman," Mr. Geary retorted sagely and not a whit abashed, "is at the apex of her feminine charms a thirty-seven."

He knew his landlady to be not a day under fifty, but such is the case with which the Irish scatter their blarney that neither Billy Geary nor Mother Jenks regarded this pretty speech in the light of an observation immaterial, inconsequential and not germane to the matter at issue. Nevertheless, there was a deeper reason for his blarney. This morning, watching the telltale tinge of pleasure underlying the alcohol-begotten hue of the good creature's face, he felt at most ashamed of his own heartlessness—almost, but not quite.

"Gor, Willie, I ain't respectable. She's comin' to see me—an' I caw'n't let 'er."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Jud Tunkins.

Jud Tunkins says everybody admits that honesty is the best policy, only a lot of folks differ as to this precise definition of the word.

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