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SYNOPSIS.

the latter buys Woodhouse's Iroquois stock at a small figure. Henley forces Quinby to let Mark have stock in the Outpy company, through a threat that if he does not he will lose both of them.

CHAPTER XV-Continued.

It was the less satisfying because he

spent himself: in body-he was no

longer capable of long intense appli-

cation, he had fallen back upon the

invalid's last resort, drugs; in mind-

the creative faculty seemed dead, that

very morning a young man in the mills

had announced an important invention

that was to have been 'Truitt's mag-

num opus and upon which his sterile

brain had labored in vain; in soul-

he could no longer dream. And for

reward he had-the dry fact of a tri-

umph he could not sense and the pros-

pect of an empty, useless, discontented

of himself. The world was out of

He was a critic, you see; but not

Passers-by were divorted from their

own cares by the sight of a well-

dressed man stamping his cane on

the pavement and muttering aloud:

"An evil fate pursues me. Other men

do as I do, desire as I desire and find

content. Why can't I be contented-

A thousand faces streamed past him,

future.

joint.

and happy?"

you want to do something, you can lend me a hundred dollars.' "Lend," evidently, was a euphem-

"What will you do-still, that's your business. Of course, I will, I wish you'd asked me something harder. Come along to the bank."

Mark Truitt, encouraged by his sweet-heart, Unity Martin, leaves Bothel, his hative town, to seek his fortume. Simon Truitt tells Mark that it long has been and asks the son to return and build one if he ever gets rich. Mark applies to Thomas Henley, head of the Quinby Iron works, for a job and is sent to the con-struction gang. His success in that work wins him a place as helper to Roman Andregizski, open-hearth furnaceman. He becomes a boarder in Roman's bome and assists Plotr, Roman's son, in his studies, Kazia, an adopted daughter, shows her ratiltude in such a manner as to arouse Mark to collapse and Kazia cures for him. Later Roman also succumbs and Mark gets his job. Roman resents this and tells Mark to find another boarding place. Five years elapse during which in na The bank was a few blocks away. Mark improved the time by asking the details of Roman's circumstances. Piotr, sulfenness not lifted by the prospect of money, answered shortly. It was a pitiable story of descent-of the gradual dissipation of the savings of Roman's active years and the swift failure, through idleness and too much alcohol, of his mental powers, leaving him and Hanka dependent upon Piotr's scanty and uncertain earnings.

mand tells Mark to find another boarding place. Five years elapse during which Mark has advanced to the foremanship, while his labor-saving devices have made him invaluable to the company. Is the meantime Karls has married one Jim Whiling Mark meets with an accident which dooms him to be a cripple for life. He returns to Bethel intending to stay there. He finds Unity about to marry an-other man and wins her back. Unity urges him to return to his work in the city. Mark rises rapidly to wealth and power in the steel business, but the so-rial ambitions of his wife make their mar-ried life unhappy. The big steel interests are secretly anclous to get hold of stock in the Iroquois Iron company, supposed to be worthless. Timothy Woodhouse weeks financial assistance from Mark and the latter buys Woodhouse's Iroquois stock at a small figure. Henley forces "Where," Mark asked, as they entered the bank, "do you live now?" 'Rose Alley.'

"Rose Alley!" Mark stopped short. My God!"

"What does your sort know of it?" "Quite enough. Come along." A few minutes later they were in

the street again, Piotr the richer by the sum he had asked.

They stood facing each other-the strong man who had conquered and the inefficient, one of life's guerrillas, who had just taken of the strong man's largess. But the inefficient was not grateful; a hundred dollars could not conquer his hatred.

"I s'pose," he sneered, "you want foresaw the end of a chapter. He had me to thank you?"

"No." If you need more, come to me. And, see here, Piotr, I want you to get Roman and your mother away from Rose Alley."

"You want-!" The money in his pocket, Plotr threw craft to the winds. What have you to do with us? Do you s'pose we'd let you help us?"

"But you took-

Piotr chuckled-a chuckle of triumphant malice. "Did you think it was for us?" The chuckle grew into a laugh, as though he pondered some mammoth jest. "You-you-have just paid for the next issue of the Outcry!" He wheeled and went haltingly

away. Mark watched him until he turned a corner.

"Poor devil!" Mark shook his head pityingly. "He's mad."

It was not Mark's habit to waste precious hours wandering the crowded city streets in introspective meditation. He now went to the appointment with his lawyer to keep which he had left Henley.

It was a long and tedious consulta-

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Piotr.'

as a lawyer, however. Think of it," Mark smiled wryly, "as a gentlemanif the word means anything to you."

"It's your case," Shirley repeated. 'But my notion is, people will think you don't want the publicity-for social reasons. That sort of talk-" Mark rose abruptly, "I can't help," he replied, with an impatient frown, "what people think, can 1? Fix it up as soon as you can.

But the day's adventures were not ended. The ghost of Timothy Woodhouse could not oust Rose Alley from

Mark's mind. The blacks, ordered by telephone, waited him. Swiftly, Mark holding the

reins, they were guided across a bridge, along rough-paved, tumbledown streets, into a guarter such as their aristocratic feet had never trod. Grimo and decay were everywhere. It was 15 years since he had seen

Rose alley, but he found the way as though he had taken it but yesterday.

He drew up at the mouth of a narrow shallow court, and giving the reins to his man, got down from the trap

A few children-dirty, sallow, undersized-had been playing in the court. With difficulty, for they had not his tongue and were afraid of the stranger, he learned from them in which tenement Peter Anderson lived. He groped and stumbled up two flights of stairs that groaned protestingly under his tread. He found a door and knocked. It opened. .

For a full minute, speechless, he stared at the woman who stood on the threshold.

CHAPTER XVI.

Glowing Embers.

The figure silhouetted in the doorway was one to make men dream, full curved, strong with the strength of women whose forbears have always toiled, yet without heaviness; it was the strength that lies in quality, not in bulk.

She looked at him steadily, showing no surprise. And by that he read that she had learned to take life, its coincidences and its climaxes as they came, calmly, without loss of poise. She spoke first, in a low even voice that hinted even less than her manner at inner excitement. "I thought it was Plotr. Your step sounds like his." They might have been daily familiars.

"Yes," he flushed. "I am somewhat in his case."

He almost missed the swift glance she cast toward his cane. But he was grateful that she had no comment for his injury. In the presence of her splendid perfections his own physical shortcoming seemed almost cause for shame.

"How do you do, Kazia?" he said gravely. "I didn't expect to find you here.

took it, neither hastily nor reluctantly, for a brief meaningless clasp. "I am here sometimes. Will you

come in?" She stood aside and he entered, trying to overcome his limp. It was the kitchen, which in Rose alley-as he

"For one thing," she returned quietly, "the Matka loves her son. I'll ask her.' She turned to Hanka and for several

minutes the two women talked earnestly in their native tongue. Hanka shook her head continuously. "She says," Kazia returned to Mark, 'My Plotr wouldn't like it.' ' Hanka interrupted, laying a hand on Kazia's arm and looking anxiously toward the door. Kazia nodded.

"She says also," she interpreted again, "that we'd better go. It's most time for Plotr to come home., She's right. "I think," Mark answered, "I'll stay,

since I'm here, and have this out with 'You'd better not." Her swift glance seemed to measure his physical frailty. 'Piotr's temper is uncertain. He found me here once and drove me out. It-" The gloom could not quite hide the color that surged into her cheeks. "It wasn't nice."

"I'm sorry for them, but just the same, since I've started. I'll see this through and wait for Plotr.'

"No, you'd better not," she repeated with cold emphasis. "You can prove your inflexibility in some other way. Piotr is apt to have been drinking and if his temper is stirred up, he'll make them suffer." She nodded toward Hanka and Roman. "Really, you're quite helpless in the matter." "I seem to be." He laughed shortly,

to conceal a disappointment as undefined as the emotion set stirring by the sight of his old friends. "But, at least, I can leave some money."

But she shut him off from this, too. 'No. What money they can use with-

passage, that he might not have to look longer, and there awaited her. When she came, he led the way down the rickety stairs and out into the foul smelling court, lighted up now by a

"One would think," he blurted out, you wanted to stay there."

"I'm glad you can't. It's no place ating wrench. "I'm a little awkward.

'Many people have lived here."

lived here once myself, before-" He with Roman."

"You're thinking my going there Big ones, too, sometimes."

Why else should you have gone there?"

might have had several other reasons -but didn't. At least I did you no

"One doesn't like to think of one's he saw her cool impersonal regard self as reduced to even a harmless change, become questioning. And the nonentity. Still, most of the virtues dark shadow again-as though she

"I'm sorry. Which seems all I can hours by driving through the parks. do about it. You and Piotr and Hanka seem in a conspiracy to teach me that for regrettable things we can pay The nights, when he lay sleepless, only with regret. But I promised to save you time."

Darkness had fallen when they drew up before the hospital. Mark descended painfully to help her downa rather superfluous courtesy, since than was he. "You're in good time. I hope?"

"Oh, yes. Thank you for the ride." They exchanged a conventional hand clasp. She moved toward the steps leading to the hospital door. He began to climb back into the trap.

But the restive horses started too soon, while he was balanced on the little mounting step. His foot was dislodged. He would have fallen, perhaps been dragged, had Kazia not sprung forward, and catching the reins, brought the horses sharply to a stop.

"You are hurt?"

"No," he lied through set teeth, as he pulled himself up to the seat. His



hip, in fact, had received an excruci-

This is one of the things I can't get

"I supposed it was only temporary."

He shook his head briefly, as though

"Another-you probably won't be-

"At least, encourages. But I," he

smiled unpleasantly, "am subject to

regrets. And equally unprofitable im-

pulses. Of course," with obvious irony,

She was standing between two bal-

ustrade lamps. In their bright glow

cruelties whereof he spoke. Her lips

odd little gesture of repression she

turned and slowly mounted the stairs.

"Good night," she repeated. "And

He dined alone at his club that

night. The events of the day had left

him depressed and strangly restless

"this is very interesting to you."

'You say-requires?"

quite used to."

They were long tedious hours, as drearly empty as he had forecasted. fighting an incipient craving, were longer and drearier. Thus it was that he had leisure to think of Kazia Whiting, though at some loss to explain why the reappearance of one whom in his receded youth he had treated badly she was better able to alight alone should command so much of his interest. Nor did he admit a design when

his drives took him almost daily past the Todd hospital. Nevertheless the sight of that institution was enough to evoke a faint thrill of excitement not to be laid to its barrack-like architecture, followed by a more emphatic disappointment as the neighborhood was . left behind. One afternoon Kazia, in company with another young woman, emerged from the grounds as he was passing and gave him a cool impersonal nod. He guessed that it was her recreation hour and marked the time. The quick leaping interest should have been a warning to him. Perhaps it was, for:

"I'm making a fool of myself," he growled. "What do I know of this woman?

On the third day thereafter, at the same hour, he passed the hospital. This time Kazia appeared alone. She gave him again the cool impersonal nod and would have passed on. But he drew the horses up sharply and called: "Kazia!"

She paused, hesitated a moment, then went over to the curb.

"Will you drive with me for a while?"

"I ought to walk," she answered. "Please, Kazia." It did not seem, absurd to him that he pleaded.

She hesitated again, then-

"Yes," she said.

He would have alighted to help her to the seat, but she forestalled him.

"Don't get out." And she was beside him.

He touched the horses with his whip and they sprang forward.

"You aren't well," she said abruptly. And he, ascribing to that fact her unexpected compliance, was at the moment almost glad of his disability.

"Is it obvious? I believe I'm not. In fact, my doctor has ordered me to get out and play-I find it very hard work. That's why-that's one reason why-I asked you. I needed company. The circumstance," he smiled, "ought to appeal to you professionally."

"Nurses are notoriously hardhearted."

"Yes? Then I can't work on your sympathies. On the whole, I'd rather have it so. You'll have to admit it took courage to ask you to play with me, because-you'll admit again-you weren't exactly cordial the last time." "What did you expect?"

"But I expected nothing," he retorted. "I didn't know you would be at Roman's. Why, I hadn't even heard of you for-I've been counting it up-14 years. That isn't gross flattery, is it? But, of course, you aren't the sort of woman that likes flattery. Are you?"

"Then you're not so sure, after all? But I do like it."

out Piotr's knowing of it, I can furnish. He limped stiffly toward the door, more hurt than he was willing to admit to himself by the rebuff and the failure of his impulsive mission. He went quickly out into the dark

swaying are lamp.

"Do you find that so wonderful?"

for such as you."

"But not from choice. I know. I hesitated a moment. "I left it to live

the topic were distasteful. She made no reply. He stopped, facing her and blocking her egress. lieve this-is an existence that continually requires little cruelties of one.

was to the advantage of no one but myself?"

"That's almost cynical, isn't it? I

He held out an uncertain hand. She harm. "Neither harm nor good."

his hat.

are negative, I believe. Though I'm had seen and known to the full the vain enough to wish I could have been

unrecognized and unrecognizing. Then, at a corner where two currents dammed each other, appeared one that seemed oddly familiar. It was of an undistinguished homeliness, pasty pale, morose, matching well the general shabbiness of its owner. At first Mark, confused by the dirty brown beard, did not recognize him.

The man had no doubts. At sight of Mark an evil glitter sprang into the sullen eyes.

'You!"

By the hate that had lived through fifteen years Mark placed him.

"Plotr Andzrejsski!" "Peter Anderson," the man cor-

rected him.

"That's a good American name. I'd forgotten you had a preference." Mark miled and held out a friendly hand. "How are you, Peter Anderson?"

The hand was ignored. When Peter Anderson sneered, his homeliness became almost grotesque.

"Since you're so interested, I manage to keep alive."

"How do you manage it?"

"I'm a compositor on the Outerywhen there's any money for an issue."

"The Outery?" "You'll hear of it yet. It's the paper

of our Cause."

Mark knew of but one cause that employed the capital. "Socialism, I suppose." He smiled indulgently. "I hope it's in funds sufficiently often." "I look it, don't I?"

"The answer was so obvious that Mark avoided it. "How," he asked hastily, "is Roman?"

"He breathes and sleeps and eats But he's dead."

"Is that a Socialist parable? I'm not a Socialist, so you'll have to explain."

"His mind's gone. It began to go soon after you stole his job. But probably you've forgotten that, too."

"I have no recollection," said Mark coldly, "of any such occurrence." With a curt nod, he passed on.

He had gone but a few steps when he balted and looked back. Peter, unmindful of elbowing pedestrians, was

still at the corner, glaring at him Impulsively he turned and retraced

his steps. "See here, Pietr," he said. "Let us not use hard names. There are a good many things we'd never agree on. But we can agree on this-you're hard up. E've been luckier than you. What can I do to help you?"

Plotr's lips formed a surly, "Nothing." But the refusal did not fall. A look of transparent craft displaced malevolence.

"Do you mean that?" he asked sup piciously.

"I'm not in the habit-"

"I don't care about your habits," Pietr interrupted ungraciously. "11

tion, having to do with a big real estate deal in which Truitt had shown his customary shrewdness. He displayed little interest. More than once Shirley, the lawyer, had to recall his straying attention. Shirley was astonished at this; his client was notable for his concentration on the matter in hand. He would have been even more deeply astonished, could he have looked upon the picture that lured



She Looked at Him Steadily, Showing No Surprise.

Shirley, the name of Rose Alley would have raised to life no dead memories. Shirley's astonishment, however, reached its climax at the close of the consultation.

"It's a good deal," he remarked, "for vou."

Mark answered with a nod and opened another subject. "I don't suppose Timothy Woodhouse left much." "Practically nothing."

"How does our case stand?" "We'll win it." "You're sure of that?"

"Absolutely. His estate will never push it to trial."

"Then settle it." Shirley whistled his surprise. "Has

the philanthropic bee stung the whole Quinby concern?" he grinned. ··I be an admission. As a lawyer, I

couldn't advise-"I don't ask advice. Settle it."

Shirley waved a concessive hand. 'It's your case, of course. For how much? They'll take any figure."

"For whatever you think fair. Not not?"

remembered-had to serve as living room as well. It was clean, but bare; pitifully bare.

By the stove stood a little faded woman, much stooped, her hair white and thin, her pale lack-luster eves for the moment brightened by a startled question. He went over to her and took her hand. She shrank away from him.

"It is Mark Truitt, Matka," said Kazia in Polish. "Don't you remember?"

Hanka said something in the same tongue.

"She says," Kazia interpreted, "they have never forgotten."

Their eyes met again. . . His turned away quickly and went to the other occupant of the room. He sat in the only armchair, a huge mass of inert flesh, head slouched forward and fingers playing aimlessly with the long unkempt beard that reached half-way to the bulging waist. Mark laid a hand on his shoulder. Roman looked up. But Roman saw as the new-born babe SCOR.

that drew the heavy traffic of the The grasp on his shoulder tightened. street. They were on the bridge be-'Roman, don't you know me? I'm Mark-Mark Truitt, you remember."

The shoulder stirred a little under the tight grasp. Roman's head slouched forward again and he began once more his aimless twisting of the long beard. "How long," Mark's voice had become sharp, "has he been this way?" "Almost three years:"

"And here?"

"A year longer."

Kazia's eyes said: "What is that to you?" Why," he demanded, "didn't you let me know about it?"

She smiled-contemptuously, as it seemed to him.

"We must get them out of here," he went on hastily.

"We can't. Piotr won't let us." "He must," Mark declared curtly. "He will not," she repeated.

"I saw him today. He's crazy." "He is. He's a good compositor and could make enough to keep them at least decently. But he prefers to work for the Outcry-for little or nothing. Generally it's nothing. He says it's for the cause."

"But that's no reason why he shouldn't let me help them."

She shrugged her shoulders, "To Piotr it is. I know, because I've tried." "Then," he said, "we'll take them

away and settle with Plotr afterward." He said it crisply, with the assured wouldn't do that, though. It would air of fortune's darlings who, having made their resolve, take its consummation for granted. Her faint smile

showed again. "It isn't so simple as that. They won't go."

"They won't gol" He stared, "Why

a positive influence in the making of parted. But no words fell. With an the woman you've become. It's rather remarkable, Kazia."

At the top she paused for an instant. "It isn't remarkable-or excuse for vanity." thank you again."

She had not winced, nor had her steady gaze wandered. But for just an instant a fleeting somber shadow had rested in her eves.

"Can't I set you home?" Mark ven-

tured, not at all sure that she would

She glanced at a little watch she

wore. "I go to the Todd hospital, and

He helped her up to the seat. The

horses sprang forward, swung into the

car tracks and quickly left the tene-

ment neighborhood behind. For a time

Mark gave his attention to guiding

their swift course around overtaken

cars and the slow lumbering teams

"You said, to the hospital," he be

"You're a nurse, then? I remember

you had a knack for that sort of thing.

"I haven't seen him for 12 years."

"Kazia," he asked gravely, "will

"There is nothing to tell-any more

"That is, you're not interested in

"Because a chance has thrown us

together for an hour is no reason for

us to pretend an interest neither of

what has happened to me. You're

Your husband-er-I hadn't heard-"

gan suggestively. "Do you-

you tell me about yourself?"

than there is about you."

frank."

"I'm on a case there."

I've overstayed here a little."

fore either spoke.

accept. But she affected no reluctance.

and with a strong distaste for com-"I must go," she said. panionship. They walked in silence to the mouth of the court. At their approach Mark's man got down from the trap, touching

CHAPTER XVII. Fanned into Flame.

"I'd better quit thinking of her," Mark told himself.

A virtuous and a wise resolution. forsooth! And one strangely hard to keep. The thought-of a woman of the people, dwelling in a fine strong body whose splendid perfection the toil of the people could not diminish. whose flame it could not quenchnever withdrew entirely, at most retired into ambush whence to spring out upon him at unguarded moments, with ever increasing potency to stir his jaded imagination.

Attainment of the partnership had indeed proved to be the climax of his career with the Quinby company. Followed quickly the long imminent collapse. There was no specific ailment, save a heavy stubborn cough and the constant ache in his injured hip, which were really symptoms. It was rather a general failure of his powers. He was no longer able to whip flagging energies to the day's tasks. The cool, clear, incisive brain that could grasp a multitude of details and yet not lose sight of result and purpose had become cloudy, vacillating and wandering, a poor tool for the direction of a huge, intricately organized plant operating under tremendous pressure. He was subject to attacks of profound melancholy. He could not sleep without the aid of drugs. Worst of all, the will to endure, to mock pain and weakness, had broken.

"What's the matter with me?" he demanded of his physician.

"Burnt out," was the succinct reply. "What can I do?"

"Nothing. And quit taking drugs." "But," habit protested, "I can't do nothing."

"It's your life," interrupted the doctor. "But you've consulted me and I propose to earn the stiff fee I'll charge you. Drop everything, go to the country or to the end of the earth-personally, I'd advise the end of the earth, because it's farthest away and newest to you. Forget work, play a while."

Mark asked and received from the directors a six months' vacation. But, although he formulated no reason, he did not at once leave the city. When the weather permitted he filled in the

"I must remember that." He chuckled, "Playing becomes distinctly easier. Isn't it lucky I happened along by the hospital just when I did?"

"But I thought-" She almos! smiled. "I thought it was a habit."

"So you've seen me? Now you mention it, I may as well confess that this isn't luck, but the result of a very clever plot. I've been driving past the hospital almost every day in the sneaking hope that just this would occur."

"You say, a sneaking hope-?" "You see," he confided, "I'm easily frightened. How could I know that I'd find you so-so beautifully human?-

Are you preparing to snub me for that?" "I am considering it." The smile was unmistakable now. "But I won't, because today is one of the days when I can't help being beautifully human. I'm so healthy that sometimes I just have to take a vacation from myself." "And I'm so unhealthy that, though I'd like to, I can't give Truitt the slip for even an hour. He's a persistent beggar-as you may have noticed the last few weeks."

They laughed.

It was a clear afternoon, beautiful with the mellow radiance of autumn sunshine. But the wind that swept sky and air clean was crisp and penetrating. To her, superbly healthy, it gave only a rare tinge of color that enhanced her charm, gave the last needed softening touch. His wasted body, despite the heavy overcoat he wore, could not resist the chill breath. But, though he knew he would probably pay later for the exposure, he would not by so much as a minute curtail the hour.

"I haven't had so pleasant-it's a puny word, but let that go-so pleasant a time in years," he declared.

"I see," she laughed, "you have taken me at my word."

"But I mean it," he protested. "I'd like you to believe that I mean it." He became grave.

"Since that day at Roman's I've been thinking a good deal of what we said-about my having harmed you, If regrets-but there's nothing so useless. That sort of thing isn't easily

forgiven, is it?" "Oh, very easily."

"You are thinking that I give too much significance to our little affair. I do not-"

'No, I mean I have never blamed you. Of course, we were too young for it to have any lasting significance. And, if I remember aright, I invited it-and so put you in what must have seemed a very tragic quandary at the The most critical ear could time." have discerned nothing ungenuine in her rippling laugh.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

us can feel." "You may speak for yourself, please. At least, we can oil the wheels of circumstance by going through the polite forms. You could smile very graciously on my man Felix, but to me-He broke off with a short laugh. "History has a way of repeating itself. I remember saying something of the you've forgotten." "I forget-nothing." "Ah!" He turned quickly to her

again. "Then I did do you harm." "I can't see-"It follows," he interrupted. "If I

sort to you once before. Of course,

had done you no harm, you would remember charitably, not coldly or worse, and you would be at least as

cordial to me as to my groom.' 'Now it is you," she answered after a thoughtful pause, "who will not let me oil the wheels. Probably what you

say is right. I haven't thought much about influences-I haven't had time."