

catch in the matrimonial market. His

dark hair, parted in the middle, was

beginning to thin, and tiny crow's-

feet radiated from the eyes, but he re-

tained the light, slim figure of youth.

It ought not to be hard to love Claren-

don Bromfield, his fiancee reflected,

Yet he disappointingly failed to stir

She smiled with friendly derision.

"Poor Clary! You don't look like a

Vesuvius ready to erupt. You have

His smile met hers. "I can't go up

and down the street ringing a bell like

a town crier and shouting it out to

voice was lifted in tuneless song.

Bull-whackin' for to spurn;

'Tis when I meet a pretty girl, You bet I will or try,

"You see Johnnie isn't ashamed to

shout out his good intentions," she

"Johnnie Isn't engaged to the love-

liest creature under heaven. He

doesn't have to lie awake nights for

fear the skies will fall and blot him

Beatrice dropped a little curtsy. She

As Bromfield turned away, Johnnie

came round a corner of the house,

dragging a garden hose. He was at-

tacking another stanza of the song:

There's hard times on old Bitter Creek

The puncher stopped struptly at

"What did you drink that has made

It Ought Not to Be Hard to Love

Failed to Stir Her Pulses.

she asked lightly.

"You-what?"

poco pronto."

slight claim on him.

will. Y'betcha, by jollies."

came Jenkins some hours later.

"What kind of a person?"

country, I tyke it."

nle?" she asked.

He dia.

yesterday," he beamed.

Clarendon Bromfield, His Fiancee

Reflected. Yet He Disappointingly

you so happy this morning, Johnnie?"

The cowpuncher's secret burst from

"I up and got married day before

"Kitty Mason. We jes' walked to

he church round the corner. Clay, he

stood up with us and give the bride

away. It's me 'n' her for Arizona

Beatrice felt a queer joyous lift in-

side her as of some weight that had

gone. In a single breath Johnnie had

blown away the mists of misunder-

standing that for weeks had clouded

her vision. Her heart went out to

Clay with a rush of warm emotion.

The friend she had distrusted was all

she had ever believed him. He was

more-a man too stanch to desert un-

der pressure any one who had even a

"I want to meet her. Will you bring

His face was one glad grin. "I sure

To Beatrice, busy writing a letter,

"A young-person-to see you, Miss

Whitford." He said it with a manner

so apologetic that it stressed his opin-

ion of the social status of the visi-

"A young woman, Miss. From the

her to see me this afternoon, John-

"And who's the happy girl?"

him. "I done got married, Miss Bea-

一一一一一一一一一一

held out her hand in dismissal. "Till

I'll make her my little wife,

Round the corner of the house a

such remarkable self-control,"

everybody I meet."

Oh, I'm goin' home

Root hog or die.

out before his day of bliss."

That never can be beat

Under every wagon sheet.

We cleared up all the Indians,

It was root hog or die

sight of his mistress.

tomorrow, Clary."

said.

I ain't got a nickel, And I don't give a dern.

her pulses.

CHAPTER XIII Continued "Slim" Jim reached for the door hastily.

A strong, sinewy hand fell on his arm and tightened, slightly twisting the flesh as the fingers sank deeper. Collins let out a yell, "Gawd! Don't

do that. You're killin' me." "Beg yore pardon. An accident. If I get annoyed I'm liable to hurt without meanin' to," apologized Clay, suavely. "I'll come right down to brass tacks, Mr. Collins. You're through with Annie Millikan. Understand?"

"Say, wot t'ell's this stuff you're pipin'? Who d' you t'ink youse are?" "Never you mind who I am. You'll keep away from Annie from now onabsolutely. If you bother her-if anything happens to her-well, you go and take a good long look at Durand

before you make any mistakes." "You touch me an' I'll croak you. See!" hissed Collins.

"A gun-play?" asked Clay pleasant-"Say, there's a shootin'-gallery round the corner. Come along. I wantta show you somethin'." "Aw, go to h-1!"

The sinewy Land moved again toward the aching muscles of the gunman. Collins changed his mind hur-

riedly. "All right. I'll come," he growled. Clay tossed a dollar down on the counter, took a .22 and aimed at the

row of ducks salling across the gallery pool. Each duck went down as it appeared. He picked up a second rifle and knocked over seven or eight mice as they scampered across the target screen. With a third gun he snuffed the flaming eye from the right to the left side of the face that grinned at him, then with another shot sent it back again. He smashed a few clay pipes by way of variety. To finish off with, he scored six center shots in a target and rang a bell each time. Not one single bullet had failed to reach Its mark.

The New York gunman had never seen such speed and accuracy. He was impressed in spite of the insolent sneer that still curled his lip.

"Got a six-shooter-a fohty-five?" asked Clay of the owner of the gal-

"Sorry. I'm not much with a rifle, but I'm a good average shot with a stx-gun. I kinda take to it natural." They turned and walked back to the cab. Collins fell into the Bowery strut

"Tryin' to throw a scare into me," he argued feebly.

"Me? Oh, no. You mentioned soft music and the prescher. Mebbeso. But it's flable to be for you if you monkey with the buzz-saw. I'm no gun sharp, but no man who can't empty a revolver in a shade better than two seconds and put every bullet inside the rim of a cup at fifteen yards wants to throw lead at me. You see, I hang up my hat in Arizona. I grew up with a six-gun by my side."

"I should worry. This is little old New York, not Arizona," the gangman answered.

"That's what yore boss Durand thought. What has it brought him but trouble? Lemme give you something to chew on. New York's the biggest city of the biggest, freest country on God's green footstool. You little sewer rats pull wires and think you run it. Get wise, you poor locoed gink. You run it about as much as that fly on the wheel of yore taxi drives the engine. Durand's the whole works by his way of it, but when some one calls his bluff see where he gets

"He ain't through with you yet," growled "Slim" Jim, sulkily.

"Mebbe not, but you-you're through with Annie." Clay caught him by the shoulder and swung him round. His eyes bored chilly into the other man. "Don't you forget to remember not to forget that. Let her alone. Don't go near her or play any tricks to hurt her. Lay off for good. If you don'twell, you'll pay heavy. I'll be on the job personal to collect."

Clay swung away and strode down the street, light-heeled and lithe, the sap of vital youth in every rippling muscle.

"Slim" Jim watched him, snarling hatred. If ever he got a good chance at him it would be curtains for the guy from Arizona, he swore savagely.

CHAPTER XIV

Johnnie Says He is Much Obliged. Beatrice, just back from riding with Bromfield, stood on the steps in front of the grilled door and stripped the gloves from her hands.

"I'm on fire with impatience, Bee," he told her. "I can hardly wait for that three weeks to pass. The days drag when I'm not with you."

He was standing a step or two below her, a graceful, well-groomed fig-

"She didn't give you a card?" "No, Miss. She came with the person Mr. Whitford took on to 'elp with

the work houtside." "Oh! Show them both up. And have ten sent in, Jenkins."

Kitty's shy eyes lifted apprehensively to those of this slim young patrician so beautifully and simply gowned. Instantly her fears fled. Beatrice moved swiftly to her with both hands outstretched.

"I'm so glad to meet you."

She kissed the young wife with unaccustomed tenderness. For the Colorado girl had about her a certain modesty that was disarming, an appeal of helplessness Beatrice could not resist.

Kitty, in the arms of her hostess, wept a few tears. She had been under a strain in anticipating the ordeal of meeting Johnnie's mistress, and she had discovered her to be a very sweet, warm-hearted girl.

As for Johnnie, he had a miserably happy half-hour. He had brought his hat in with him and he did not know how to dispose of it. What he did do was to keep it revolving in his hands. This had to be abandoned when Miss Whitford handed him a quite unnecessary cup of tea and a superfluous plate of toasted English mumns. He wished his hands had not been so big and red and freckled. Also be had an uncomfortable suspicion that his tow hair was tousled and uncombed in spite of his attempts at home to plaster it down.

He declined sugar and cream because for some reason it seemed easier to say "No'm" than "Yes," though he always took both with tea. And he disgraced himself by scalding his tongue and failing to suppress the oain. Finally the plate, with his mufin, carefully balanced on his knee, from some devilish caprice plunged over the precipice to the carpet and the bit of china broke.

Whereupon Kitty gently reproved him, as was her wifely duty. "I min't no society fellow," the dis-

tressed puncher explained to his hostess, tiny beads of perspiration on his forehead.

Beatrice had already guessed as much, but she did not admit it to Johnnie, She and Kitty smiled at each other in that common superiority which their sex gives them to any mere man upon such an occasion. For Mrs. John Green, though afternoon tea was to her an allen custom, took to it as a duck to water.

Miss Whitford handed Johnnie an envelope. "Would it be too much trouble for you to take a letter to Mr. Lindsay?" she asked very casually as they rose to go.

The bridegroom said he was much obliged and he would be plumb tickled to take a message to Clay.

When Clay read the note his blood glowed. It was a characteristic twoline apology:

I've been a horrid little prig. Clay (so the letter ran). Won't you tomorrow and go riding with me?

Colin Whitford had been telling Clay the story of how a young cowpuncher had snatched Beatrice from under the hoofs of a charging steer. His daughter and the Arizonan listened without comment.

"I've always thought I'd like to explain to that young man I didn't mean to insult him by offering money for saving Bee. But you see he didn't give me any chance. I never did learn his name," concluded the mining man, "And of course we'd like him to know that we appreciate what he did for me," Beatrice added. She looked at Clay, and a pulse beat in her soft throat.

"I reckon he knows that," Lindsay suggested. "You must 'a' thought him mighty rude for to break away like you say he did."

"We couldn't understand it till afterward. Mr. Bromfield had slipped him a fifty-dollar bill and naturally he resented it." Miss Whitford's face bubbled with reminiscent mirth. She looked a question at Clay. "What do you suppose that impudent young scalawag dld with the fifty?"

"Got drunk on it most likely." "He fed it to his horse. Clary was

furious." "He would be," said the cattleman dryly, in spite of the best intentions to be generous to his successful rival. "But I reckon I know why yore grandstand friend in chaps pulled such a play. In Arizona you can't square such things with money. So far as I can make out the puncher didn't do anything to write home about, but he

didn't want pay for it anyhow." "Of course, Bromfield doesn't understand the West," said Whitford. "I wouldn't like that young puncher half so well if he'd taken the money." "He didn't need to spoil a perfectly

good fifty-dollar bill, though," admitted

"Yes, he did," denied Beatrice. "That was his protest against Clarendon's misjudgment of him. I've always thought it perfectly splendid in its insolence. Some day I'm going to tell im so."

"It happened in your corner of Arzona, Lindsay. If you ever find out who the chap was I wish you'd let us know," Whitford said. "I'll remember."

"If you young people are going rid--We'd better get started. Quite right, Dad. We're off. Clarendon will probably call up. Tell him I'll be in

about four-thirty." She pinched her father's ear, kissed him on one ruddy cheek, then on the other, and joined Clay at the door. They were friends again, had been

for almost half an hour, even though

they had not yet been alone together,

were a little stiff with each other, not so casual as they had been. A consciousness of sex had obtruded into the old boyish camaraderie. After a brisk canter they drew their horses together for a walk. Beatrice broke the ice of their com-

but their friendship was to hold reser-

vations now. The shadow of Clarendon

Bromfield rode between them. They

monplaces. She looked directly at him, her cheeks flushing. "I don't know how you're going to forgive me, tate of Rose M. Knox, deceased, has Clay. I've been awf'ly small and prig- been filed in this Court and that the gish. I hate to think I'm ungenerous, but that's just what I've been,"

"Let's forget it," he said gently. "No, I don't want to forget-not till I've told you how humble I feel today. I might have trusted you. Why didn't 1? It would have been easy for me to have taken your little friend in and may appear and show cause, if any made things right for her. That's there be, why the prayer of said petwhat I ought to have done. But, instead of that-Oh, I hate myself for the way I acted."

Her troubled smile, grave and sweet, touched him closely. It was in his horoscope that the spell of this young Diana must be upon him.

He put his hand on hers as it rested on the pommel of the saddle and gave it a slight pressure. "You're a good scout, li'l' pardner."

But it was Beatrice's way to step op to punishment and take what was coming. As a little girl, while still alold fing. So there!" Now she was not going to let the subject drop until she had freed her soul.

"No, Clay, I've been a poor sportswasn't there. One hates to be a quit-

Her humility distressed him, though he loved the spirit of her apology. "It's all right, Bee. Don't you worry. All friends misunderstand each day of October, 1922 or said Road will other, but the real ones clear things

She had not yet told him the whole truth and she meant to make clean confession.

"I've been a miserable little fool." She stopped with a little catch of the breath, flamed red, and plunged on. Her level eyes never flinched from his. "I've got to out with it, Clay. You won't misunderstand, I know. I was jealous. I wanted to keep your friendship to myself-didn't want to share it with another girl. That's how mean I am."

A warm smile lit his face. "I've sure enough found my friend again

this mo'nin.' Her smile met his. Then, lest barput her horse to a gallop.

As they moved into the park a snorting automobile leaped past them with



Her Troubled Smile, Grave and Sweet, Touched Him Closely.

muffler open. The horse upon which Beatrice rode was a young one. It gave instant signals of alarm, went sunfishing on its hind legs, came down to all fours, and bolted.

Beatrice kept her head. She put her weight on the reins with all the grip of her small, strong hands. But the horse had the bit in its teeth. She the road at incredible speed. Bushes and trees, the reeling road, a limousine, a mounted policeman, all flew by her with blurred detail.

She became aware of the rapid thud of hoofs behind, of a figure beside her riding knee to knee, of a brown hand taking hold of the rein close to the bit. The speed slackened. The horses pounded to a halt.

The girl found herself trembling. She leaned back in a haze of dizziness against an arm which circled her shoulder and waist. Memory leaped across the years to that other time when she had rested in his arms, his heart beating against hers. In that moment of deep understanding of herself, Beatrice knew the truth beyond any doubt. A new heaven and a new earth were waiting for her, but she could not enter them. For she herself had closed the gate and locked it fast. His low voice soothed and comforted

"I'm all right," she told him. Clay withdrew his arm. "Td report that fellow if I had his number," he said. "You stick to yore saddle fine. You're one straight-up rider."

TO BE CONTINUED

NOTICE OF HEARING

In the County Court of Lincoln County, Nebraska. In the matter of the Estate of Rose

M. Knox, Deceased. To the Heirs and all persons interest-

ed in said Estate:

Notice is hereby given that a petition for the appointment of Vivien M. Bonham as administratrix of the essaid petition will be heard before the County Court of Lincoln County, Nebraska in the Courthouse in the City of North Platte in said County on September 11 at 10 o'clock a. m. at which time any person interested, ition should not be granted.

Dated at North Platte, Nebraska, August 16, 1922.

WM. H. C. WOODHURST, (SEAL) County Judge

EXTENSION ROAD NO. 107.

To whom it may concern:

The special commissioners appointed to locate a public road as follows: Commencing at a point on the section most a baby, she had once walked up line between sections 9 and 16, where to her mother, eyes flashing with spir- Public Road oN. 11 intersects said it, and pronounced judgment on her- section line, running thence west on self. "I've tum to be spanked. I broke the section line between sections Claire's doll an' I'm glad of it, mean 9 and 16 and 8 and 17 to the intersection with Road No. 77 all in township 14 range 30, said road to be 66 feet wide, has reported in favor of man. When my friend needed me I the establishment of the same, all failed him. It hurts me, because-oh, objections thereto, or claims for damyou know. When the test came I ages by reason of the establishment

of the above described road must be Ex-Government Veterinarian and exfiled in the office of the County Clerk assistant deputy State Veterinarian. of Lincoln county Nebraska, on or before 12 o'clock noon of the 9th be allowed without reference thereto. Witness my hand and official seal

this 27th day of July, 1922. A. S. ALLEN

(SEAL)

Beeler Crosby & Baskins, attys NOTICE OF FINAL REPORT

Estate No. 1868 of Jane James, deceased in the County Court of Lincoln County Nebraska,

The State of Nebraska, to all persons interested in said Estate, take notice that the Administrator with the will annexed has filed a final actount and report of his administra riers fall too fast between them, she tion and a petition for final settlement and discharge as such Administrator with the will annexed which have been set for hearing before said court on September 1, 1922, at 10 Office 340 o'clock a. m. when you may appear and contest the same.

> Dated August 7, 1922. WM. H. C. WOODHURST, County Judge.

William Stuart, attorney

NOTICE OF FINAL REPORT

Estate of Alfred Peterson, deceased in the County Court of Lincoln County, Nebraska.

The State of Nebraska, to all persons interested in said Estate take notice that the Administrator has filed a final account and report of his administration and a petition for final settlement and discharge as such Administrator, which have been set for hearing before said court on Aug. 29, 1922, at 10 o'clock a. m. when you may appear and contest the same.

Dater Aug. 7, 1922. WM. H. C. WOODHURST, County Judge.

Halligan, Beatty & Halligan. Attys. NOTICE OF PETITION

Estate No. 1902 of Marta Koester, deceased in the County Court of Lincoin County, Nebraska.

The State of Nebraska. To all persons interested in said Estate take Office Phone 241 notice that a petition has been miled for the probate of the last will and testament of said deceased and for the appointment of Herman C. Koester felt herself helpless, flying wildly down as administrator with will annexed of said estate, which has been set for hearing herein on September 1, 1932 at 10 o'clock a. m. Dated August 4, 1922.

Wm. H. C. Woodhurst

(SEAL) County Judge

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