

# The Finding of Jasper Holt

BY  
Grace Livingston Hill Lutz

Author of "Marcia Schuyler", "Phoebe Deane", "The Obsession of Victoria Gracen", etc.

He turned at that and the cloud on his face cleared and brightened into a smile that seemed to enfold her in his glance of tenderness, yet he lifted not a finger to touch her.

"I love you! How I love you!" he said, in a low, lingering tone, as if the speaking of the words were exquisite joy that he knew was fleeting and must be treasured.

"I never knew there was a girl like you. I loved you at once as soon as I saw you in the train—but I knew, of course, you were not for me. I'm not fit for you—I'm not in your class at all—and I wouldn't have dreamed of anything but worshipping you, even after these days together—only you care! You trust me! That broke me all up! I'd give anything in this world if I could keep that and take it to the end of the world—to remember that look in your eyes when you said you trusted me—and thought I was good—and all. If you weren't going right where they know all about me and will tell you, I'd never have opened my lips. I'd have stolen this one little bit of trust and kept it for my own; for down in my heart I know it isn't wrong, I know you may trust me. I'd give my life to keep that trust—"

He was looking straight into her clear eyes as he talked and his own eyes were clear and good, showing his strong, true spirit at its best. The appeal in his voice suddenly went to the girl's heart. With a growing uneasiness she had listened to his words, and she felt that she could bear no more. The tears rushed to her eyes and she put up her hands to cover her face.

"Please. Tell me quick!" she breathed softly.

Puzzled, thrilled with the wonder of her tears, and longing imperceptibly to comfort her, he put out his hand awkwardly and laid it on her bowed head bending over her as he might have done to a child in trouble.

"There's nothing for you to feel bad about," he said in a voice of wonderful tenderness. "I'm bearing this circumstance. I just wanted to be the one to tell you myself that I'm not what you think me. I'm not bad, really, the way I might be, but I've not been good, and I'm not a gentleman, not the kind you're used to. Nobody thinks I'm worth anything at all. Your people hate me, and would think it a good thing if somebody would kill me, I know. You see how it is that I can't be like other men who love you. I cannot ask you to marry me; for after you've heard what your family will say about me you won't look at me yourself—and I don't blame you. It's all my own fault, I suppose. I can see it now, though I never thought so till I looked in your eyes on the train. If I had known a girl like you was coming my way I'd have made things different—I'd have been ready—but I didn't know. Nobody ever told me. And now it's too late. I'm not worthy of you."

He took his hand from her head and dropped back against the tree again, a bitter expression on his face. "Oh, don't," she pleaded softly, quick to see his changing mood. "Please don't look like that. Won't you tell me what you have done that makes them all feel so about you?"

There was silence for a moment between them while the twilight grew luminous with the coming of a pale, young moon battling with the dying ruby of the sun. So, in the holy of the evening he came to his confession, face to face with his sins before the pure eyes of the girl he loved.

## CHAPTER VII.

The stars were large and vivid above them, like tapers of tall angels bent to light a soul's confession up to God.

A beautiful silence that brooded over the plain was broken now and again by distant calls of some wild creature, but that only emphasized the stillness and the privacy of the night. The two whose souls were thus come so strangely and unexpectedly into a common crisis of their lives sat awed and stricken before the appalling irrevocability of deeds that are past. Jasper Holt broke the silence at last.

"I was never as bad as they thought I was," he said in a broken voice, though there was no hint in it of attempting to discount his blame. "They laid a lot of things at my door that I never thought of doing—some things I would have scorned to do." His voice was haughty now with pride. "I suppose it was my fault they thought I did them. I let them think so—I grew too glib in their thinking so, and sometimes helped it on just for the pleasure of feeling that they, through their injustice, were more in the wrong than I. I suppose I had no right to do that. At least I see now that for your sake—I should have kept my record clear." He lifted his gray eyes in the starlight to her face for one swift look and then went on:

"It was none of their business what I did through, and my theory always,

has been to do as I pleased so long as I lived up to my creed. For I had a creed, a kind of religion, if you want to call it that. Put into a single word, perhaps nine-tenths of my creed is independence. What people thought of me didn't come into my scheme of life. I thought it a slavery to bow to public opinion, and gloried in my freedom. It seemed a false principle without cause or reason. You see I never reckoned on your coming. I thought I was living my life just for myself. I can see now that underneath all the falseness of the world's conventionalities there runs some good reason, and there may be circumstances where some of the things they insist upon are right—even necessary. This is one. I never considered anything like this. I couldn't see any reason why I should ever need to care what people thought of me, or to go out of my way to make them think well of me. I always relied on something else to get me what I wanted, and so far it has not failed. They will tell you that. They will let you know that I have not been powerless because some men hated me—for though they have hated me they have also feared me—"

The girl turned her eyes, tear-filled, and full of amazement, to look at him, studying the fine outline of features against the starlit background of the sky. She could see the power in his face; power with gentleness was what she had seen when she first looked at him; but Hate! Fear! How could men so misjudge him? What was there about him to fear?

He read her thought.

"You don't see how that could be," he said sadly. "I don't look that way to you now. But wait till you hear them talk. You'll get another viewpoint. You won't see me this way at all any more. You'll see me with their eyes—"

"Don't!" she said with a sob in her voice, putting up her hands as if to defend herself from his words.

"I shall not blame you," he said bending tenderly, eagerly, toward her. "It will not be your fault. It will be almost inevitable. You belong with them and not with me, and you cannot help seeing me that way when you get with them. It is a part of my miserable folly. It is my punishment. I have no right to make you think I am better than they believe. It will be easier for you to forget me if you believe what they do—"

"I will never believe what they do!" said the girl vehemently. "I will never listen to their opinion! You may have sinned; you may have done a lot of things that you ought not to have done—I am not wise to judge those things—but you are not bad! I know you are not! And I know I can trust you! I shall always trust you, no matter what anybody says, no matter how things look! I know you are good and true! I know you!"

She put out her hands piteously toward him and her delicate face was lifted with determination and intensity. There was something glorious in the sparkle of her eyes. He took her hands reverently.

"You dear!" he breathed tenderly. "You wonderful woman!"

She caught her breath and her hands trembled in his, but she sat up proudly as if she were defying the world in his defense.

"Now, tell me the rest," she said. "Tell it all! And then I shall believe just what you tell me, nothing more! If they tell me other things, I shall know they are false. I shall not be afraid when you tell me what you have done because you are here and I can look into your eyes and know you are sorry; so tell me the worst. But you needn't ever think I shall listen to them."

So, with her soft small hands in his, and her eyes bright as the stars above them, looking straight into his, he looked back as straightforwardly and told her. All the foolishness, the stubbornness, and independence. All the fight against convention and law. His gambling and wild, rough living. His companionship with men who were outlaws and sinners. His revolutionary methods of dealing with those who did not do as he thought they ought, or who tried to interfere with him. His summary punishment of those who stirred his soul to wrath. He told it in low tones and grave, searching out each confession of his heart as though he would make a clean sweep of it, and lifting his eyes bravely each time to meet the pain he could not help seeing in hers. It was his real judgment, his first sense of shame and sorrow and repentance.

And then when it was told he bowed his head in silence for a moment, still holding her hands, as though there yet remained something more to say. At last he spoke.

"There's one thing," he said, and he lifted his head with a sigh. "Yes—two things, I might say—that I suppose you'll be glad to hear. I haven't been a drinking man! I doubt if many of

your friends will believe that, for I'm often in the saloons, and with men who drink. I haven't noised it abroad that I don't drink, and only those who have been with me a good deal and know my ways, understand it. I simply don't drink because I don't want to. I saw what it did to men when I first came out here. I knew I needed my brains for what I wanted to do, and I didn't like the idea of surrendering them for a few hours' carouse and putting myself even temporarily out of my own control, so I just determined I wouldn't drink and I didn't. But your brother and sister—won't believe that. My reputation is understood to be of the worst, and drinking is a matter of course when one is hard and wild as they think I am. There's another thing, too. I've kept away from women. Some of them hurt me too much when I was a kid, and when I grew a little older, and so I decided against them all. That's kept me clean. I can look you in the eyes and not be ashamed. I didn't do it because I had any idea there would ever be one like you in the world. I did it just because the kind of thing that some men liked, turned me sick to think of. This is probably another thing your people wouldn't believe. They've heard otherwise of me. They've shouldered every crime on the calendar on me. And perhaps they've had some reason for their standpoint. I haven't always tried to make things look right. I didn't care. It wasn't their business. There was a girl came to the Valley once with a traveling show who was all in. She was down on her luck and just about ready to give up and take her own life. I helped her out a bit, paid for her at the hotel a few days till she got rested, and sent her on her way to her father in Missouri; but you ought to have heard the rumpus the town raised! That added to my sorry reputation, you see. Well, I'm no saint, but I've kept clean! So—there you have the worst of me—and the best—but it's bad enough. Your father wouldn't stand for me a minute, and I guess he's right. I don't blame him. I blame myself. As for your sister! Why, if Harrington knew I was out here alone with you he'd bring a posse of men and shoot me on the spot for daring to bring you home. He would. He feels just that way about me."

"I shall change all that," said Jean with a thrill in her voice, "I shall tell them how mistaken they have been in you. I shall tell them that you were a kind of rough outside that you wore—a mask that hid your inner feelings. I shall make them understand that they have not known the real man you are at all."

"You cannot do that, little girl," said the man, gently leaning toward her. "It would be best for you not to try. I tell you you do not know in the least what the feeling is against me—"

"But you will help to show them, too," said Jean, wide eyed with sorrow. "You will not go on doing those things—those—well—the things that made them feel you were not right—"

She paused in a confusion of words, not liking to voice a thought against him. "You will not do so any more!" She pleaded wistfully like a child. "You will make them see—for my sake if not for your own you will let them see how wonderful you are! How fine you have been to me! You will not let them go on thinking. You will change it all!"

Her voice choked off in a sob and for a moment she dropped her tearful face down upon his hands that held hers. The strong man thrilled and trembled with her touch and it was then he felt the most crucial moment of his punishment.

He sat white and silent for a moment, longing to gather her into his arms and comfort her, to crush her to him; but he would not. The nobleness in him held her sacred because he knew he was unworthy. Then he spoke in a low, grave tone, and his voice had a hollow, hopeless sound.

"I'll change, of course," he said. "I couldn't do otherwise. Did you think I could go on that way after having known you? I never could do any of the things again that I know you wouldn't like. I couldn't, now that you've trusted me. I wouldn't want to. You have made everything seem different. If it'll please you I'll promise anything you like. But of course I know that doesn't matter so far as our ever having each other is concerned. Nothing I can do can make people forget what they think I am. They would never feel differently. They would feel it a disgrace for you to speak to me. They'd always think you'd gone to perdition if you had anything to do with me. I'm not fit for you. I know it and there's an end of it, but I'll spend the rest of my life trying to make myself what I ought to have been, if that will comfort you any."

The girl's hands clung now with almost a painful clasp, and tears were dropping down her face.

"Don't! Don't!" he pleaded earnestly. "Don't take it so. I'm not worth it, really I'm not. You'll find it out when you get to your sister's and hear her talk, and—forget—about this"—his voice broke and he lifted his face, white with sudden realization of what that would mean to him. "Oh, God! What a fool I have been!" The words were wrung from the depths of his soul.

Then the girl spoke, her voice calm with a suddenly acquired strength.

"Listen!" she said, and he wondered at her quietness. "I shall never forget. Never! Nothing that anybody can say will ever make me think as they do of you. I know you—and you have saved my life."

He stirred impatiently, and almost roughly tried to draw his hands away. "Don't talk of gratitude," he said huskily.

"No," she said firmly, taking his hands again and laying her own with in them as before. Then he accepted them as if they were a sacred trust, folding his reverently about them.

"I am not talking of gratitude," she said, and her voice was tense with feeling. "You raved my life and I know what you are, and what you have done for me. Nothing can ever change that, not even what you have done in the past; and nobody can ever make me feel differently about you. I know you, I trust you—I love you!"

Her voice was low and sweet as she said this and she did not lift her eyes. The young man felt his fingers tremble within his own strong grasp, and he looked down wonderingly at the slender wrists and thrilled with holy awe at her words. It humbled him, shamed him, with a pain that was a solemn joy, to hear her. And he had nothing to say. What gracious influence had been at work in his behalf that miracle so great should have been wrought in a pure girl's heart for him; an outlaw—a careless, selfish, wild man who had hitherto lived as he pleased, for himself, caring for nobody, nobody caring for him. He had held his head high and gone his independent way. He had held the creed that the whole world was against him, and his chief aim in life should be to circumvent and annoy that world. Nothing good and holy had ever come into his life before. Knowledge he had, and a certain amount of worldly wisdom learned in a hard school, and well learned; but love, care, tenderness, trust, had never been given to him even in his babyhood. No wonder he was confounded at the sudden treasure thrust upon him.

"I am only a very young girl," Jean's voice went on. "I know you are right that I must not do anything to distress my father and mother. They love me very much and I love them. You and I can go our separate ways if we must, but nobody can hinder me from trusting you. It is right I should. I owe it to you for what you have done for me—and my love I could not help giving you. I know you are going to be right and true forever; I know you will not do those things any more that have made people think you were not good—I know you will always be just what I think you are now, won't you?"

His voice was low and solemn, and his eyes held depths of sincerity as he lifted them to her pleading ones and answered:

"I promise you."

"And I promise you that I will trust you always," she said, and thus their covenant was made.

For a long moment they sat with clasping hands, unaware of the beauty of the evening, aware only of their own two strident, suffering spirits, that had found and lost each other and learned the consequences of sin. They did not seem to need words, for each knew what was in the other's heart.

He raised her at last to his feet and, bending low, whispered:

"I thank you."

He stood a moment hesitating, then gave her hands one quick pressure again and turned away.

"I was going to ask something," he said, "but I guess that isn't square."

And she stood pondering what it might have been.

Silently he helped her on the pony and without words they rode away into the moonlight.

There were tears in the girl's eyes when she lifted them at last and asked:

"And won't I see you at all? Won't you ever come to the house?"

There was a sound almost of tears in the man's voice as he answered:

## I. W. W. Against Labor Unions.

In the United States the preachers of discontent say, "All shall share equally." In Russia, it was found that this could not be. Lenin in his speech in April, 1918, published by the seditious Seattle Union Record, said: "At present, when the epoch of the necessity of 'Red Guard' attacks (which means organized assassination) is in the main completed and completed victoriously, it is becoming urgent for the proletarian state authority (Lenine) to make use of bourgeois specialists."

"The specialists are inevitably bourgeois." "We have not yet created an environment which would put at our disposal the specialists." "We were forced now to make use of the old bourgeois method and agreed to a very high remuneration for the services of bourgeois specialists." "This is a defection of the Paris Commune and of any proletarian rule which demand the reduction of salaries to the standard of remuneration of the average workers."

"Attracting-bourgeois specialists by extremely high salaries is a defect." "Let us assume that these great star specialists must be paid 25,000 rubles each, or perhaps 50,000 rubles, or even made four times as large." "We must have a thousand first class scientists and specialists to direct the work of the people."

This is from Lenin's own speech. He admits that uniformity of pay is impossible. He admits that he has murdered to terrify. He admits that he does not allow free speech. He admits that the equality of pay cannot be put into effect. He recommends hiring at enormous salaries the old managers of business. He admits the failure of his government.

In other parts of his work he admits that the system of accounting and production is a joke and convicted out of his own mouth on every page, points out unconsciously a warning to the real liberty loving people of the world. He admits that he is an autocrat; that his government cannot live if the wishes of the whole people are consulted. He admits starvation and suffering and want, and goes on to say:

"No transition without compulsion and dictatorship." "Speaking of the instability of his government he says, 'It takes time and an iron hand to get rid of this.'"

Despite his admission of thousands of murders, he says, "And our rule is too mild, quite frequently resembling jam rather than iron." "People who believe differently must be combated by compulsion." "In other words, Russia has no government, but the government of an autocratic murderer. Some of this same crowd of aliens have come to our shores and actually have a dream that the workmen of the United States will join in any such half-brained undertaking."

Of course, a number will, just as sure as there is a God in heaven, they will be deported; just as sure as this is a real 'the man's' country, those who try force and violence, will be incarcerated and punished. Labor will form the main guard against the red menace in this country, if labor is true to its traditions. Some bolshevik leaders such as a number in Seattle and Tacoma, Washington, have proven traitors to the A. F. of L., but over this whole land, of course, these Judases are very few.

The I. W. W.'s are not a labor union. The I. W. W.'s are opposed to all labor unions. Their policy is the destruction of all industries and the overthrow of all government. They do not strike and quit the job; they strike on the job, against the job, and against the employer. If conditions do not suit the union labor man he goes on strike, leaving industry idle until someone takes his place or until he returns to work. The I. W. W. does not strike for better wages or better conditions. The I. W. W. strikes on the job, doing what injury he can, such as putting emery dust in machinery, spikes in logs, etc., in order that industry may be made unprofitable.

The first doctrine a new member is taught, is the doctrine of cowardice. He is taught to destroy what he can; to burn all he can, but to protect himself in all emergencies, and thus it is that this organization has in its membership, cowardly assassins and destroyers of life and property.

The I. W. W. decided long ago, after consultation and under the direction of bolsheviks from foreign lands, that the best way to overthrow our government was to gain possession of the labor movement in this country. I might say in passing that I am not particularly popular with the I. W. W., but the head of the American Federation of Labor, Samuel Gompers, is very much more hated.

Britons' Liberal Leader. Canada Seeks New Emblem. From the Christian Science Monitor. Probably feeling that now is a good time to bring a national symbol up to date, the Canadian government is considering the adoption of a new coat of arms. A committee has been appointed to pass judgment on the designs that may be submitted, and a good deal of study is doubtless going forward to create one which will eventually meet the approval of the English College of Heralds and the final authorization of a royal warrant declaring it the official arms of Canada. The present coat of arms was adopted in 1858, and includes the four provinces of Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick. To these provinces the new coat of arms must add Prince Edward Island, British Columbia, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta; so the forthcoming design will provide something of a problem for the designer whose solution of it must be approved by the royal marshal, three kings at arms, six heralds, and three pursuivants, who make up the College of Heralds.

The Lowest Depth. From the Chicago Tribune. A dispatch from Fort Leavenworth describing the activities of William D. Hayward and other I. W. W.'s now confined there says "the average criminal hates an I. W. W. and a conscientious objector." We think there could hardly be a more striking commentary on the remark with which the "C. O." and the I. W. W. are regarded in America. When even our criminals look upon them as traitors there is not much more to be said. After all the average criminal is less subversive of civilization, and he has a right to think there are depths to which he has not fallen.

The National Outlook. From Forbes Magazine. A trip to middle west and talks with all sorts and conditions of people yields the following impressions and conclusions:

First—In most districts, including even the larger cities, work is available for every man who wants it. Indeed, the almost universal complaint is that capable, steady workers cannot be had.

Second—There is a veritable housing famine in nearly every city, including such diverse centers as Chicago and Indianapolis, a famine as acute as in New York city.

Third—Active preparations are under way to launch what promises to prove an unprecedented building boom, the conclusion having been reached by architects, builders and others that the cost of materials is not likely to drop drastically in the near future.

Fourth—Retail business is reported as quite active. Although most manufacturers find that buyers are holding off wherever possible.

Fifth—The country's supply of food animals is the largest in its history, and farmers are waxing rich from the unparallel prices they are receiving for hogs and cattle, as well as for their wheat and other grains. Everywhere the agricultural communities are evidencing signs of their great prosperity.

The New Spring in Flanders. The spring that comes to Flanders Goes by on silent feet, Lest they should wake, remembering How once the spring was sweet.

And streams that flow in Flanders Are silver streams and shining, But thoughtful streams and still.

The wind that blows in Flanders Across the listening air, Is gentle with the grasses That bend above them there— And rain that falls in Flanders Is tender as a prayer.

—David Morton.

Burgoyne's Drums. From the Indianapolis News. If any one has the drums of the Royal Scots Fusiliers, thought to have been lost in this country in 1778, when that ancient regiment came over on the business of the king, the regiment will very much appreciate news concerning their whereabouts. Officers of the regiment have sought through official channels to learn from the war department to the fate of the drums. Tradition says that the drums were lost when the regiment, then known as the North British Fusiliers, fell a victim to the superior fighting ability of an American colonial force in the revolutionary war.

Evidence that international marriages do not go one way is the fact that Mrs. Clinton Bidwell, of Buffalo, N. Y., was born Countess Marie Louise DuPlessis, of France, daughter of the archduke of Vienna, niece of ex-Empress Franz Joseph, of Vienna, and cousin of ex-Empress Charles, of Austria. At present Mrs. Bidwell is in charge of an institution in Buffalo for the prevention of tuberculosis among children. She is a graduate nurse, and during the war she put on overall the commission of revenue. Jewish families in the American occupied zone have learned that the Yanks are keen about having their shoes shined, and many Henies are now raking in the coin polishing the boots of the doughboys.