

THE MASTER MIND

Novelized by **Marvin Dana**, author of "Within the Law," from the successful play by **Daniel D. Carter**



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CHAPTER XIV.

The Gossips Awake.

BERRIE was frightened for Wayland, and as she thought of the long ride still before them she wrung her hands. "Oh, what shall I do? What shall I do?" she moaned.

Instantly smitten into shame, into manlier mood, he said: "Don't worry about me. Please don't. I can ride. I'm feeling better. You must not weaken. Please forgive my selfish complaints. I'm done! You'll never hear it again. Come! Let us go on. I can ride."

"If we can reach Miller's ranch—" "I can ride to your ranch," he declared, and rose with such new found resolution that she stared at him in wonder.

He was able to smile. "I've had my little crying spell. I've relieved my heart of its load. I didn't mean to agonize you. It was only a slump. He put his hand to his head. "I must be a comical figure."

His sudden reversal to cheer was a little alarming to her, but at length she perceived that he had in truth mastered his depression, and, bringing up the horses, she saddled them and helped him to mount. "If you get tired or feel worse tell me, and we'll go into camp," she urged as they were about to start.

"You keep going till I give the sign," he replied, and his voice was so firm and clear that her own sunny smile came back. "I don't know what to make of you," she said. "I reckon you must be a poet."

It was dark when they reached the village, but Wayland declared his ability to go on, although his wounded head was throbbing with fever and he was clinging to the pommel of his saddle; so Berrie rode on.

Mrs. McFarlane, hearing the horses on the bridge, was at the door and received her daughter with wondering question, while the stable hands, quick to detect an injured man, hurried to lift Norcross down from his saddle.

"What's the matter?" repeated Mrs. McFarlane. "He fell and struck his head on a stone," Berrie hastily explained. "Take the horses, boys! Mother and I will look out for Mr. Norcross."

The men obeyed her and fell back, but they were consumed with curiosity, and their glances irritated the girl. "Slip the packs at once," she insisted.

With instant sympathy her mother came to her aid in supporting the wounded, weary youth indoors, and as she stretched out on the couch in the sitting room he remarked with a faint, ironic smile, "This beats any bed of balsam boughs."

"Where's your father?" asked Mrs. McFarlane of her daughter. "He's over on the Ptarmigan. I've a powerful lot to tell you, mother, but not now; we must look after Wayland. He's nearly done up, and so am I."

Mrs. McFarlane winced a little at her daughter's use of Norcross' first name, but she said nothing further at the moment, although she watched Berrie closely while she took off Wayland's shoes and stockings and rubbed his icy feet. "Get him something hot as quick as you can," she commanded, and Mrs. McFarlane obeyed without a word.

Gradually the tremor passed out of his limbs and a delicious sense of warmth, of safety, stole over him, and he closed his eyes in the comfort of her presence and care. "Rigorous business this life of the pioneer," he said with mocking infection. "I think I prefer a place in the lumber trust."

"Don't talk," she said. Then, with a rush of tender remorse: "Why didn't you tell me to stop? I didn't realize that you were so tired. We could have stopped at the Springs."

"I didn't know how tired I was till I got here. Gee," he said hoarsely, "that doorknob at the back of my head is red-hot! You're good to me," he added humbly.

She hated to have him resume that tone of self-deprecation, and, kneeling to him, she kissed his cheek and laid her head beside his. "You're splendid," she insisted. "Nobody could be braver, but you should have told me you were exhausted. You fooled me with your cheerful answers."

He accepted her loving praise, her clasping arms, as a part of the rescue from the darkness and pain of the long ride, careless of what it might bring to him in the future. He ate his toast and drank his coffee and permitted the women to lead him to his room, and then being alone he crept into his bed and fell instantly asleep.

Berrie and her mother went back to the sitting room, and Mrs. McFarlane closed the door behind them. "Now tell me all about it," she said in the tone of one not to be denied.

"The story went along very smoothly till the girl came to the second night in camp beside the lake. There her



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voice faltered, and the reflective look to the mother's eyes deepened as she learned that her daughter had shared her tent with the young man. "It was the only thing to do, mother," Berrie eagerly said. "It was cold and wet outside, and you know he isn't very strong, and his teeth were chattering he was so chilled. I know it sounds strange down here, but up there in the woods in the storm what I did seemed right and natural. You know what I mean, don't you?"

"Yes, I understand. I don't blame you—only if others should hear of it—" "But they won't. No one knows of it being alone there except Tony and father."

"Are you sure? Doesn't Mrs. Belden know?" "I don't think so—not yet."

Mrs. McFarlane's pertness grew. "What you must do on this trip, if the Beldens find out you were alone with Mr. Norcross they'll make much of it. It will give them a chance at your father." Her mind turned upon another point. "When did Mr. Norcross get his fall?"

"On the way back." Here Berrie hesitated again. "I don't like to tell you, mother, but he didn't fall; Cliff jumped him and tried to kill him."

The mother doubted her ears. "Cliff did? How did he happen to meet you?"

Berrie was quick to answer. "I don't know how he found out we were on the trail. I suppose the old lady phoned him. Anyhow, while we were camped for noon yesterday—her face flamed again at thought of that tender, beautiful moment when they were resting on the grass—while we were at our lunch he came tearing down the hill on that big bay horse of his and took a flying jump at Wayland. As Wayland went down he struck his head on a stone. I thought he was dead, and I was paralyzed for a second. Then I threw at Cliff and just about choked the life out of him. I'd have ended him right there if he hadn't let go."

Mrs. McFarlane, looking upon her daughter in amazement, saw on her

face the shadow of the deadly rage which had burned in her heart as she clutched young Belden's throat.

"What then? What happened then?" "He let go, you bet." Her smile came back.

"When did this take place?" "Yesterday about 2. Of course Wayland couldn't ride, he was so dizzy and kind of confused, and so I went into camp right there at timber line. Along about sunset Nash came riding up from this side and insisted on staying to help me, so I let him."

Mrs. McFarlane's tense attitude relaxed. "Nash is not the kind that tattles. I'm glad he turned up."

"And this morning I saddled and came down."

"Did Nash go on?" "Yes, Daddy was waiting for him, so I let him go along."

"It's all sad business," groaned Mrs. McFarlane. "and I can see you're keeping something back. How did Cliff happen to know just where you were, and what started you back without your father?"

For the first time Berrie showed signs of weakness and distress. "Why, you see, Alec Belden and Mr. Moore were over there to look at some timber, and old Marm Belden and that Moore girl went along. I suppose they sent word to Cliff, and I presume that Moore girl put him on our trail. Leastwise that's the way I figure it out. That's the worst of the whole business."

She admitted this with darkened brow. "Mrs. Belden's tongue is hung in the middle and loose at both ends—and that Moore girl is spiteful mean." She could not keep the contempt out of her voice.

"Oh, I wish you hadn't gone!" exclaimed the worried mother.

"It can't be helped now, and it hasn't done me any real harm. It's all in the day's work anyhow. I've always gone with daddy before, and this trip isn't going to spoil me. The boys all know me, and they will treat me fair."

Yes, but Mr. Norcross is an outsider, a city man. They will all think evil of him on that account."

"I know. That's what troubles me. No one will know how fine and considerate he was. Mother, I've never known any one like him. He's a poet; I don't care what people say of me if only they will be just to him. They've got to treat him right," she added firmly.

"Did he speak to you—are you engaged?"

Her head drooped. "Not really engaged, mother, but he told me how much he liked me, and—it's all right, mother. I know it is. I'm not free enough for him, but I'm going to try to change my ways so he won't be ashamed of me."

Mrs. McFarlane's face cleared. "He surely is a fine young fellow and can be trusted to do the right thing. Well, we might as well go to bed. We can't settle anything till your father gets home," she said.

Wayland rose next morning free from dizziness and almost free from pain, and when he came out of his room his expression was cheerful. "I feel as if I'd slept a week, and I'm hungry. I don't know why I should be, but I am."

Mrs. McFarlane met him with something very intimate, something almost maternal in her look, but her words were as few and as restrained as ever. He divined that she had been talking with Berrie and that a fairly clear understanding of the situation had been reached. That this understanding involved him closely he was aware, but nothing in his manner acknowledged it.

She did not ask any questions, believing that sooner or later the whole story must come out. The fact that Sierra Moore and Mrs. Belden knew that Berrie had started back on Thursday with young Norcross made it easy for the villagers to discover that she had not reached the ranch till Saturday. "What could Joe have been thinking of to allow them to go?" she said.

"Mr. Nash's presence in the camp must be made known, but then there is Cliff Ford's assault upon Mr. Norcross. Can that be kept secret too?" And so while the young people chatted the troubled mother waited in fear, knowing that in a day or two the countryside would be aflame with accusation.

A long day's rest, a second night's sleep, set Wayland on his feet. He came to breakfast quite gay. "Barring the hickory nut on the back of my head," he explained, "I'm feeling fine, almost ready for another expedition. I may make a racer yet."

Berrie, though equally gay, was not so sure of his ability to return to work. "I reckon you'd better go easy till daddy gets back, but if you feel like it we'll ride up to the postoffice this afternoon."

"I want to start right in to learn to throw that hitch, and I'm going to practice with an ax till I can strike twice in the same place. This trip was an eye opener. Great man I'd be in a windfall, wouldn't I?"

He was persuaded to remain very quiet for another day, and part of it was spent in conversation with Mrs. McFarlane, whom he liked very much, and an hour or more in writing a long letter wherein he announced to his father his intention of going into the forest service. "I've got to build up a constitution," he said, "and I don't know of a better place to do it in. Be- know of a man beginning to be interested in the scheme. I like the supervisor. I'm living in his house at the present time, and I'm feeling contented and happy, so don't worry about me."

He was indeed quite comfortable, save when he realized that Mrs. McFarlane was taking altogether too much for granted in their relationship. It was delightful to be so watched over, so waited upon, so instructed. "But where is it all leading me?" he continued to ask himself, and still that wall of reserve troubled and saddened Berrie.

Mrs. McFarlane, looking upon her daughter in amazement, saw on her

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On the fourth morning the phone rang, and the squawking voice of Mrs. Belden came over the wire—"I wanted to know if Berrie and her father got home all right?"

"Yes, they arrived safely."

The old woman chuckled. "Last I see of Cliff he was hot on their trail—looked like he expected to take a hand in that expedition. Did he overtake 'em?"

"I don't hear very well. Where are you?" "I'm at the Scott ranch. We're coming round 'the horn' today."

"Where is the supervisor?" "He headed across yesterday. Say, Mrs. Belden was mad as a hornet when he started. I'd like to know what happened."

Mrs. McFarlane hung up the receiver. The old woman's nasty chuckle was intolerable, but in silencing the phone Mrs. McFarlane was perfectly aware that she was not silencing the gossip. On the contrary, she was certain that the Beldens would have a trail of poisonous comment from the Ptarmigan to Bear Tooth. It was all sweet material for them.

Berrie wanted to know who was speaking, and Mrs. McFarlane replied, "Mrs. Belden wanted to know if you got through all right."

"She said something else, something to heat you up," persisted the girl, who perceived her mother's agitation. "What did she say—something about me—and Cliff?"

The mother did not answer, for Wayland entered the room at the moment, but Berrie knew that traducers were already busy with her affairs. "I don't care anything about old lady Belden," she said later, "but I hate to have that Moore girl telling lies about me."

(To Be Continued.)

Wall Paper Clearance Sale; 25 and 40 per cent reduction. Gering & Co.

An Obliging Newspaper.

The Roumanian excellent newspaper, "Romanul," mailed us the following letter, already translated into English: "I live here, with my whole family, and we are all very well pleased with Triner's American Elixir of Bitter Wine. My stomach was in such a bad condition that it would not keep anything. I was using your Elixir for ten days and then felt better. Now, whenever we do not feel right, we take at once Triner's Elixir of Bitter Wine. With best regards, Geo. Lantz, Haydenville, O."

Many thanks to "Romanul." Triner's American Elixir of Bitter Wine is a well known preparation used for relief in diseases of the stomach and the bowels, especially in constipation and its complications and in weakness. Price \$1.00. At drug stores, Joseph Triner, Manufacturer, 1333-1339 S. Ashland Ave., Chicago.

People working in moist places should always keep on hand Triner's Liniment to rub the body with as soon as any stiffness or pains are noticed. Price 25c or 50c, postpaid 35c or 60c.

Suffering From Stomach Trouble.

From Wednesday's Daily.

For the past few days Uncle Jesse McVey has been decidedly under the weather at the Perkins House, where he is living. He seems to be suffering from an attack of stomach trouble and for a day was confined to his room, but is now up and around, although still far from well, but it is to be hoped that he will show improvement in a few days and be among his friends, who have missed him very much.

William Childers returned home last evening from the western part of the state, where he had been spending the past few months with relatives and friends.

Calvin Atwood came up this morning from Kansas City and departed for Cedar Creek to look after some matters at the stone quarry there for a few hours.

Mrs. W. R. Bryan departed this afternoon for Fort Collins, Colorado, where she will spend two or three weeks visiting with her daughters in and near that city.

Frank Downing departed yesterday afternoon for his home at So. Joseph, Missouri, after a visit here at the home of his wife's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Chris Wohlfarth.

Cameron Cathey and Morris Lloyd of near Murray, drove in this morning from their country homes and were passengers for Omaha, where they will spend the day.

Mrs. N. P. Schultz and two daughters, Nellie and Alice, departed this afternoon for Omaha, from where Nellie will go to Missouri Valley, Iowa, for a visit with her aunt.

County Commissioners C. E. Heebner and Julius A. Pitz were passengers this morning for Omaha, where they will visit for a few hours, looking after some matters for the county.

Mrs. William Holly and daughter, Miss Elizabeth, departed yesterday afternoon for Lincoln, where they will visit for a short time at the home of Mrs. Holly's sister, Mrs. John Buttery and family.

Local News

From Tuesday's Daily.

Oscar Gopen was in the city today for a few hours looking after some trading and braving the rainstorm.

P. A. Meisinger and family spent Sunday in this city with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Conrad Meisinger.

Mrs. T. B. Line of Omaha arrived here today for a short visit at the home of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. C. Tyler, in this city.

Adam Meisinger of near Cedar Creek was here today for a short time looking after some matters of business with the merchants.

Col. J. B. Seybolt of Murray was among those going to Omaha this afternoon to visit for a few hours, looking after business matters.

C. F. Valery, road overseer of district No. 1, was in the city yesterday for a short time looking after some matters in regard to his road work.

W. M. Richards of near South Bend was in the city today for a few hours, coming down to meet his wife, who is returning home from Peru, Neb., where she has been visiting for a few days.

Major Isaac Hall left this morning for an extended visit with relatives and friends in Scotts Bluffs county, Nebraska, and while there will look after the putting up of the hay on their ranch near Minatare.

Mrs. David Ruebush of Macomb, Illinois, who has been here visiting her niece, Mrs. James McKinney and family, departed this morning for Omaha to visit her sister, Mrs. Mary James. Mrs. McKinney accompanied her to Omaha.

Mrs. Don Bagnall of Lincoln and sister, Miss Lorene Johnson, of Omaha, were in the city yesterday for a few hours visiting at the home of their grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Johnson, and departed yesterday afternoon for their home.

R. L. Ponsler, manager of the Nebraska Lighting company, was a passenger this afternoon for Omaha, where he goes to meet a sister, who is en route from her home at Iola, Kansas, to South Dakota, and will visit in the metropolis with her brother for a few hours.

Mrs. Andrew Campbell and son, Oscar, and father, J. W. Wood, drove up this morning from their farm home east of Murray and departed on the early Burlington train for Randolph, Neb., where they will visit at the home of Mrs. Campbell's daughter, Mrs. W. P. Hutchison and family.

From Wednesday's Daily.

C. A. Troop was a visitor in Omaha today for a few hours looking after some matters on the live stock exchange.

P. A. Meisinger was among those braving the wet weather and muddy roads to drive in today to look after some trading with the merchants.

Edward Leach, from near Murray, was here for a few hours yesterday attending to some matters at the court house in which he was interested.

William Rothman departed this morning for Burnham, Neb., where he will take up employment and expects to be there for the next six months at least.

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Points About Plattsmouth

The following facts about Plattsmouth are published in pamphlet form and used for publicity purposes by the Commercial Club.

They are reprinted here for the benefit of the Journal readers. The pamphlets may be had for mailing purposes by any person who may apply to either R. B. Windham or A. L. Tidd of the Publicity Committee:

Has 5,000 population. Is situated on the great Missouri River in the richest agricultural and fruit growing districts in the United States.

Work on reopening the Missouri River for navigation between Sioux City, Omaha and Kansas City has been begun.

Is on main line of C., B. & Q. R. R., and on main line of Mo. Pac. R. R. from St. Louis.

Thirty minutes' ride from Omaha, the state metropolis. Fifty-five miles from Lincoln, state capital.

Has gas works and electric light system. Paved business streets. Ten miles cement walks.

Court house costing \$90,000. A three-story grade school building and one-story High school building. Seven ward school houses.

Thirty teachers and over 1,000 pupils enrolled in the public schools. Ten church edifices and Catholic academy.

Opera house costing \$30,000. Three hotel buildings, one costing \$80,000. Masonic State Home, buildings costing over \$100,000.

One of the best flouring mills in the west. Olson Photograph Company is the largest Kodak finishing plant in the middle west.

Five cigar factories. One pop factory. One broom factory. One modern laundry. One beautiful city park.

Railroad bridge across Missouri River, cost \$800,000. Great C., B. & Q. railroad shops, estimated investment \$2,000,000, normal pay roll 600 employees. Monthly pay roll about \$40,000.

Over 100 brick business houses. About 50 palatial homes and a city of substantial home-like cottages. Splendid telephone system.

Thirty fraternal societies. Two loan and building associations. Three banks—two state and one national.

One local insurance company. Daily and semi-weekly newspapers. Brass band free weekly concerts during season.

Plattsmouth Roller Mills. Commercial club. Real estate exchange. Taxes 1914 on full assessment about 1 1/2 per cent.

The C., B. & Q. R. R. has recently established an electric lighting plant in their shops and expended a large sum of money in cement work, doubled their yard trackage.

Recent Achievements. M. E. Smith shirt and overall factory, capacity fifty employees, which will be increased to two hundred as fast as help can be had.

Two concrete and cement works. The Olson Photo Machine Company. Western Machine and Iron Works. Government building and improvements, \$80,000.

A \$20,000 wagon bridge across the Platte River, just finished, putting Plattsmouth on the great Overland Automobile Highway from Omaha to Kansas City.

Six blocks of brick paving. Modern Woodman building just completed. Large sums being spent in putting in modern fronts and otherwise improving many of the business houses.

Substantial improvements going on in the residence district. Location of government rifle range just north of the city on 800 acres of land purchased by the government, and contract has been let for improvements.

The C., B. & Q. shops have expended over \$25,000 on improvements during the past year. Over \$100,000 improvements in Plattsmouth during year of 1914-15.

New Modern brick steam laundry building. Burlington station enlarged and re-modeled. Permanent base ball park established. New \$15,000 county jail.

Substantial improvements planned at Nebraska Masonic Home. Many new modern residences constructed during the past year, and many now in process of construction.

Elks' Home, a \$15,000 building. A new \$8,000 garage and skating rink just completed. City purchased grounds and fitted up new city hall.

New \$15,000 Carnegie library building in process of construction. New \$15,000 artificial ice plant. New sewerage construction on the avenues. About two miles curbing and guttering.

Substantial improvements at Missouri Pacific station. Two moving picture shows. One Air Dome. Seven blocks of alley paving under way.



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