

BURNING DAYLIGHT

By JACK LONDON

AUTHOR OF "THE CALL OF THE WILD," "WHITE FANG," "MARTIN EDEN," ETC.

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SYNOPSIS.

Blam Harnish, known all through Alaska as "Burning Daylight," celebrates his 30th birthday with a crowd of miners at the Circle City Tivoli. The dance leads to heavy gambling, in which over \$100,000 is staked. Harnish loses his money and his mine but wins the mail contract. He starts on his mail trip with dogs and sledges, telling his friends that he will be in the big Yukon gold strike at the start. Burning Daylight makes a sensational trip, rapid run across country with the mail, appears at the Tivoli and is now ready to join his friends in a dash to the new gold fields. Deciding that gold will be found in the upper district Harnish buys two tons of flour, which he declares will be worth its weight in gold, but the big flat desolate. A comrade discovers gold and Daylight reaps a rich harvest. He goes to Dawson, becomes the most prominent figure in the Klondike and defeats a combination of capitalists in a vast mining deal. He returns to civilization, and amid the bewildering complications of high finance, Daylight finds that he has been led to invest eleven millions in a manipulated scheme. He goes to New York, and confronting his disloyal partners with a revolver, he threatens to kill them if his money is not returned. They are cowed, return their stealings and Harnish goes back to San Francisco where he meets his wife, Dede Mason, a pretty stenographer. He makes large investments and gets into the political ring. For a rest he goes to the country. Daylight gets deeper into high finance in San Francisco, but often the longing for the simple life nearly overcomes him. Dede Mason buys a horse and Daylight meets her in her saddle trips. One day he asks Dede to go with him on one more ride, his purpose being to ask her to marry him and they enter away, she trying to analyze her feelings. Dede tells Daylight that her happiness could not be with a money manipulator. Daylight undertakes to build up a great industrial community. He is insistent that she marry him and yet hopes to win her. Daylight falls back into his old drinking ways. There is a flurry in the money market, but Daylight tells Dede to prove to her that he has reformed. Dede and Daylight are married at a little backwoods hotel. He has come back to his simple, natural life, and they go to house-keeping in a spot close to nature.

CHAPTER XXI.

But there came the day, one year, in early April, when Dede sat in an easy chair on the porch, sewing on certain small garments, while Daylight read aloud to her. It was in the afternoon, and a bright sun was shining down on a world of new green. Along the irrigation channels of the vegetable garden streams of water were flowing, and now and again Daylight broke off from his reading to run out and change the flow of water. Also, he was teasingly interested in the certain small garments on which Dede worked, while she was radiantly happy over them, though at times, when his tender fun was too insistent, she was rosy confused or affectionately resentful. It was a few minutes later that Daylight, breaking off from his reading to change the streams of irrigation, found that the water had ceased flowing. He shouldered a pick and shovel, took a hammer and a pipe-wrench from the toolhouse, and returned to Dede on the porch.

"I reckon I'll have to go down and dig the pipe out," he told her. "It's that slide that's threatened all winter. I guess she's come down at last."

"Don't you read ahead, now," he warned, as he passed around the house and took the trail that led down the wall of the canyon.

Halfway down the trail, he came upon the slide. It was a small affair, only a few tons of earth and crumbling rock; but, starting from fifty feet above, it had struck the water-pipe with force sufficient to break it at a connection. Before proceeding to work, he glanced up the path of the slide, and he saw what made his eyes startle and cease for the moment from questioning farther.

"Hello," he commended aloud, "look who's here."

His glance moved on up the steep broken surface, and across it from side to side. Here and there, in places, small twisted manzanitas were rooted precariously, but in the main, save for weeds and grass, that portion of the canyon was bare. There were signs of a surface that had shifted often as the rain poured a flow of rich eroded soil from above over the lip of the canyon.

"A true fissure vein, or I never saw one," he proclaimed softly.

Dropping the hammer and pipe-wrench, but retaining pick and shovel, he climbed up the slide to where a vague line of out-jutting but mostly soil-covered rock could be seen. It was all but indiscernible, but his practiced eye had sketched the hidden information which it signified. Here and there, along this wall of the vein, he attacked the crumbling rock with the pick and shoveled the encumbering soil away. Several times he examined this rock. So soft was some of it that he could break it in his fingers. Shifting a dozen feet higher up, he again attacked with pick and shovel. And this time, when he rubbed the soil from a chunk of rock and looked, he straightened up suddenly, gasping with delight. And then, like a deer at a drinking pool in fear of its enemies, he flung a quick glance around to see if any eye were gazing upon him. He grinned at his own foolishness and returned to his examination of the chunk. A slant of sunlight fell on it and it was all aglitter

with tiny specks of unmistakable free gold.

"From the grass roots down," he muttered in an awe-stricken voice, as he swung his pick into the yielding surface.

Sometimes he started small slides of earth that covered up his work and compelled him to dig again. Once he was swept fifty feet down the canyon-side; but he floundered and scrambled up again without pausing for breath. He hit upon quartz that was so rotten that it was almost like clay, and here the gold was richer than ever. It was a veritable treasure chamber. For a hundred feet up and down he traced the walls of the vein. He even climbed over the canyon-lip to look along the brow of the hill for signs of the outcrop. But that could wait, and he hurried back to his find.

He toiled on in the same mad haste, until exhaustion and an intolerable ache in his back compelled him to pause. He straightened up with even a richer piece of gold-laden quartz. Stooping, the sweat from his forehead had fallen to the ground. It now ran into his eyes, blinding him. He wiped it from him with the back of his hand and returned to a scrutiny of the gold. It would run thirty thousand to the ton, fifty thousand, anything—he knew that. And as he gazed upon the yellow lure, and panted for air, and wiped the sweat away, his quick vision leaped and set to work. He saw the spur-track that must run up from the valley and across the upland pastures, and he ran the grades and built the bridge that would span the canyon, until it was real before his eyes. Across the canyon was the place for the mill, and there he erected it; and he erected, also, the endless chain of buckets, suspended from a cable and operated by gravity, that would cross the canyon to the quartz-crusher. Likewise, the whole mine grew before him and beneath him—tunnels, shafts, and galleries, and hoisting plants. The blasts of the miners were in his ears, and from across the canyon he could hear the roar of the stamps. The hand that held the lump of quartz was trembling, and there was a tired, nervous palpitation apparently in the pit of his stomach. It came to him abruptly that what he wanted was a drink—whisky, cocktails, anything, a drink. And even then, with this new hot yearning for the alcohol upon him, he heard, faint and far, drifting down the green abyss of the canyon, Dede's voice, crying:—

"Here, chick, chick, chick, chick, chick! Here, chick, chick, chick, chick!"

He was astounded at the lapse of time. She had left her sewing on the porch and was feeding the chickens preparatory to getting supper. The afternoon was gone. He could not conceive that he had been away that long.

Again came the call: "Here, chick, chick, chick, chick, chick! Here, chick, chick, chick, chick, chick!"

It was the way she always called—first five, and then three. He had long since noticed it. And from these thoughts of her arose other thoughts that caused a great fear slowly to grow in his face. For it seemed to him that he had almost lost her. Not once had he thought of her in those frenzied hours, and for that much, at least, had she truly been lost to him. He dropped the piece of quartz, slid down the slide, and started up the trail, running heavily.

At the edge of the clearing he eased down and almost crept to a point of vantage whence he could peer out, himself unseen. She was feeding the chickens, tossing to them handfuls of grain and laughing at their antics.

The sight of her seemed to relieve the panic fear into which he had been flung, and he turned and ran back down the trail. Again he climbed the slide, but this time he climbed higher, carrying the pick and shovel with him. And again he toiled frenziedly, but this time with a different purpose. He worked artfully, loosing slide after slide of the red soil and sending it streaming down and covering up all he had uncovered, hiding from the light of day the treasure he had discovered. He even went into the woods and scooped armfuls of last year's fallen leaves, which he scattered over the slide. But this he gave up as a vain task, and he sent more slides of soil down upon the scene of his labor, until no sign remained of the out-jutting walls of the vein. Next he repaired the broken pipe, gathered his tools together, and started up the trail. He walked slowly, feeling a great weariness, as of a man who had passed through a frightful crisis. He put the tools away, took a great drink of the water that again flowed through the pipes, and sat down on the bench by the open kitchen door. Dede was inside, preparing supper, and the sound of her footsteps gave him a vast content.

He breathed the balmy mountain air in great gulps, like a diver fresh-risen from the sea. And, as he drank in the air, he gazed with all his eyes at the clouds and sky and valley, as if

he were drinking in that, too, along with the air.

Dede did not know he had come back, and at times he turned his head and stole glances in at her—at her efficient hands, at the bronze of her brown hair that smoldered with fire when she crossed the path of sunshine at that streamer through the window, at the promise of her figure that shot through him a pang most strangely sweet and sweetly dear. He heard her approaching the door, and kept his head turned resolutely toward the valley. And next, he thrilled, as he had always thrilled, when he felt the caressing gentleness of her fingers through his hair.

"I didn't know you were back," she said. "Was it serious?"

"Pretty bad, that slide," he answered, still gazing away and thrilling to her touch. "More serious than I reckoned. But I've got the plan. Do you know what I'm going to do?—I'm going to plant eucalyptus all over it. They'll hold it. I'll plant them thick as grass, so that even a hungry rabbit can't squeeze between them; and when they get their roots going, nothing in creation will ever move that dirt again."

"Why, is it as bad as that?"

He shook his head.

"Nothing exciting. But I'd sure like to see any blamed old slide get the best of me, that's all. I'm going to seal that slide down so that it'll stay there for a million years. And when the last trump sounds, and Sonoma Mountain and all the other mountains pass into nothingness, that old slide will be still a-standing there, held up by the roots."

He passed his arm around her and pulled her down on his knees.

"Say, little woman, you sure miss a lot by living here on the ranch—music, and theaters, and such things. Don't you ever have a hankering to drop it all and go back?"

So great was his anxiety that he dared not look at her, and when she laughed and shook her head he was aware of a great relief. Also, he noted the undiminished youth that rang through that same old-time boyish laugh of hers.

"Say," he said, with sudden fierceness, "don't you go fooling around that slide until after I get the trees in and rooted. It's mighty dangerous, and I sure can't afford to lose you now."

He drew her lips to his and kissed her hungrily and passionately.

"What a lover!" she said; and pride in him and in her own womanhood was in her voice.

"Look at that, Dede." He removed one encircling arm and swept it in a wide gesture over the valley and the mountains beyond. "The Valley of the Moon—a good name, a good name. Do you know, when I look out over it all, and think of you and of all it means, it kind of makes me ache in the throat, and I have things in my heart I can't find the words to say, and I have a feeling that I can almost understand Browning and those other high-flying poet-fellows. Look at Hood Mountain there, just where the sun's



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striking. It was down in that cresset that we found the spring."

"And that was the night you didn't milk the cows till ten o'clock," she laughed. "And if you keep me here much longer, supper won't be any earlier than it was that night."

Both rose from the bench, and Daylight caught up the milk-pail from the nail by the door. He paused a moment longer to look out over the valley.

"It's sure grand," he said.

"It's sure grand," she echoed, laughing joyously at him and with him and herself and all the world, as she passed in through the door.

And Daylight, like the old man he once had met, himself went down the hill through the fires of sunset with a milkpail on his arm.

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IS DEAN OF ALL INDIANS

Sitting Elk, Mighty Warrior Who Never Killed White Man, is Oldest Redman.

Oldest of all Indians in the United States, Sitting Elk, former chief of the Ogallala Sioux, is visiting in Denver, the guest of the white man, against whom he always refused to make war.

For almost a century he has been a leader among his people, but, wiser than other chiefs, he early realized that the red man was doomed and at every opportunity he counseled peace with the palefaces.

He could well afford to do so, for his people knew he was no coward.

"I have never killed a white man," he proudly boasts, "but I have fought many battles, and I have done many brave deeds in my long life of ninety-six years. I was but seventeen when I waylaid and killed my first enemy. That was a very brave deed. Since then I have killed many, many enemies."

Sitting Elk is a total abstainer. He smokes cigarettes, but insists he has none of the other bad habits of the white man. He is childless, the last of his line, but he expects to live for many years more—to be hale and hearty long after he has passed the century mark.

Sitting Elk moves tall and stately among his kinsmen, and puffs his pipe with a complacency untroubled by thoughts of any immediate journey to the happy hunting grounds.

Bright of eye, keen of mind, the old warrior dons paint and feathers for his appearance with the younger members of his tribe in the headlong dashes across the amphitheater at the stock yards, and rides with an abandon which defies the spectator to single him from the reckless redskins who have but one-fourth his years to their credit.

Perfect Peace.

"It's so quiet here," wrote a man who was rusticiating in the country. "That I lie and listen to the bedtick-ting!"

ANNUAL FADS IN PHOTOGRAPHY

Innovation of Having One's Likeness Taken in Bed Probably Revival of Style Century Ago.

Paris, France.—Yet they come! What? Why, the photographic fads. One season everybody is photographed with a baby. Another, it's dogs. Last year photographable folk were prone to stand before windows into which the light streamed, and, indeed, that fascinating fad holds yet. Minor tendencies, such as back views, profile views, or full face, come and go. Naturally photographing people divides itself into two sorts; those



Photographed in Bed.

who desire a sensible, ordinary likeness and those who, being photographed often, go in for more or less fancy effects, that is, follow the fad of the day, and, mayhap, go in for creating fads.

The latest fad is to be "taken" in bed.

It began a year ago in Paris, several scenes in successful plays showing the heroine, fetchingly gotten up, on her couch. Or, it may be a revival dating from a century ago, when French beauties, having been powdered curled and bed-jacketed within an inch of their lives, received their friends and posed and flirted to their hearts' content in a day when manners were at their zenith, and the perfect courtier was the hero among men.

We shall hardly take to receiving in bed. One very good reason is that most of the men are engaged in the morning, either professionally or in business. Another is that the girl of today is a doer rather than a poser. Happily, she prefers to be up and doing, golfing, motoring or working for some cause, rather than languidly posing in silks and laces, while her friends come in and pay sentimental compliments. But even this will not prevent femininity from taking a little fling thitherward, and being photographed in her most fascinating nocturnal get-up.

TRIBE HAS ADOPTION DANCE

Writer Tells of Curious Ceremonial of Taking a Child into Shawnee Family.

New York.—The adoption dance is one of the ceremonial dances of the Shawnees. This is quite different from any one of the festive dances. They come many miles around and camp; their faces are painted and their persons are decorated with beads.

They dance all day and night without eating. A bonfire is built in the center of the camp and they dance around this. The fire is kept burning about the same all the time. This serves also as their light.

The adoption dance is rather quiet, more so than the other dances. The women do most of the singing, says a writer in the Red Man, and sing very low. They dance around in a circle in twos. The men dance together in front, and the women together in the rear.

The two leaders in front are usually the ones who are adopting the child. They carry tin pails; in these are rubber balls, which bounce and keep time with the drummers. This is all the music they have to dance by. If a large crowd is assembled they may have two or three drums.

At these dances good order is kept. No drunkenness is allowed. The dance is in a grove, and if one does not behave decently they tie him to a tree for the rest of the dance. After the dance they have a great feast which lasts all day, and visitors, and all others who attend the dance, are invited to partake of the feast.

Prince Recites Shakespeare.

London.—In the hope of making a good public speaker out of his heir, King George has ordered the prince of Wales to recite portions of Shakespeare's plays to his mother.

Operate Twice on Girl.

Baltimore, Md.—Elizabeth Quinn, aged 18 months, has undergone two operations for appendicitis during the last six days.

Auctions His Mustache.

Murrayville, Ill.—George McAllister sacrificed his long, silky mustache for ten dollars, auctioning it to the highest bidder to boost the building fund of the local Methodist church.

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