

CHAPTER I.

Christmastide in Old Kentucky

Merrily squeaked the fiddles. Merrily rang the rafters with quip and jest and joyous mirth, with the stamp and swing, and go of the dance. "Right han acrossnow de lef'-dosydo-swing yo' pahdnubsall han's roun'," shouted Harkless, black major domo of Belleview, the doctor's fumous homestead, and there at the sideboard, ladling out eggnog of his own inimitable composition, from the huge silver bowl that had borne for three generathere in dark blue clawhammer, with flat gilt buttons, in waistcoat of buff nankeen and in snowy-frilled cheker, there stood the genial, jovial host himself. In two had no place on earth, no lodgment in the long lines the dancers advanced, retired. balanced and swung-fair, winsome girls of paler ashen green, amid whose curling

mas holiday season and in an old Kendance, had damsel been fairly caught, and for those two Lorna Walton, a bril-Louisville, was rightly chargeable, for her gown was a creation Kate Ray of Lexington gave more thought to than any man in the room could claim. She was gazing at this, thinking only of this, when suddenly swung beneath the en-She laughter, helped her not one whit. flew at him with blazing cheeks and

by which each sought to lure unthinking



MR. J. BURNETT MALLOY

eyes and furlously threatening little hands,

across the Ohio." ling out, even in the midst of a bevy of She was above the middle height, sleader, yet with rarely rounded form. Her hands and feet were long and slim and exquisitely deepest blue, shaded by long, dark, curv-

[Copyright, 1990, by G. W. Dillingham Co.), beauty-the witching beauty-of the soft. sweet mouth, between whose red portals gleamed two rows of snowy, faultless teeth. Set such a head on a full, rounded neck, youd all peradventure that the boy that roomful of borderland beauty, she drill or dress parade, he marched as left father's message, and, while Norman and to see two forms in the conventional even- Norman afoot. Not until they reached the Cerberus, warning off all comers, until the moved in girlish triumph, the belle of a Kentucky ball, and the fair young face was flushed with the consciousness of her power. Barely 17, without a care in the world, brimful of health, content and gladtions the arms of the Holts of Surrey ness, the idol of a proud father, the joy of a devoted mother, she lived and moved as though smiles and sunshine alone could light her pathway, as though sin and sorrow

hearts of those that hung about her. Barely 17, reveling in the delights of a on the one hand, bold, stalwart young gal- protty girl's first season, she had come lants upon the other. Along the walls, on with her parents to be the guest of the masdivans, sofas and chairs, gossiped a dozen ter of Bolleview at this charmed holiday smiling matrons, a sprinkling of elder season and to help celebrate the return of beaux. At every door and window were Norman, his younger son. The friendship kinky, curly or turbaned heads and wide- between the elders was of long standing opened eyes of dezens of darky retain- Hot-headed, impulsive, often at fault, Dr ers, whose nimble feet beat time inces- Helt was none the less beloved by a wide mantly to the stirring music of "Unc" and ever-widening circle, despite the fact Pomp's" black orchestra. Three fiddles, that his occasional quarrels had overrun the wiel, a tambo and bones, all in expert | borders of his chosen state and overflowed hands, threw into the old tunes of "Money into Ohio. McIntyre & Lane, attorneys and Musk" and the "Virginia Reel" a verve counsellors-t-law, had long been his closand vim and spirit that time and again est associates outside the limits of his own set even gray heads to bobbing-even vet- commonwealth. The wife of his youth and eran, gouty toes to tapping in irresistible middle age, his Acvoted helpment, the fond sympathy. Festoons, garlands and wreaths mother of his stationer boys, was McIntyre's of evergreen draped the walls, windows only sister, and all Kentucky knew the and the heavily-framed portraits of by- stanch old squire doctor would never take gone Holts. Silver flagons and tankards another in place of her who for seven years gleamed on mantel and buffet; silver had been sleeping in the peaceful church sconces and candelabra with crystal pen- yard close at hand. A sister, the widow of dant prisms and bristling wax candles a gallant soldier who fell at Buena Vista, shone and jingled on mantel, wall and side- came and kept house for him the year after board; colored, opalescent lights glowed his treasure was taken away, though, for in dim recesses among the greens, glass many moons he had flercely repelled the and gourd both furnishing the enclosing idea of having any one. Time, high health spheres. Foxes' masks grinned above the and the demands of his profession and his broad fireplaces, where the coals of famous neighbors had gradually restored the old bickory logs were still alive. Foxes' gentality and kindliness, but the balance brushes, hunting caps, crops, whips and wheel, the gentle monitor and guide that so spurs hung here and there upon the wall, often and so long had curbed the impetuous Red-berried, sharp-spined, dark-leaved will and unreasoning impulse, was sorely boily stood pert and prim in every nook missed. In more ways than one the proud, and corner, while from the cross-beams high-mettled old gentleman had fallen into overhead in the very center of the big error since her demise and the latest and bay-windowed room hung a single spray worst instance was in the case of Norman -Norman McIntyre as she had fondly leaves peeped tiny globes of creamy white, named him for her beloved father-Norman a sprig that vested the place beneath with whom she had loved with a tenderness unstrange and thrilling interest, a spot to speakable-Norman for whom, despite all be coyly shunned by every maid and ca- his pride in his first born-young "Harry of gerly sought by every man who knew the the West"-the hot-headed sire seemed to saving grace of the thrice blessed mistletoe, hold in especial favor-Norman, chosen career he had practically closed. and brilliant were the device and strategem

The story was already all over Ken-

tucky, though hardly a fortnight old. The damsels within the enchanted limits, there lad, in his 21st year, was at West Point, to claim and take forfeit of her forgetfulness, for these were the ante-bellum standing well up in his class and wearing days in the borderland of the Sunny South; the chevrons of a cadet sergeant. Eighteen this was an evening in the blithe Christmonths more would graduate and establish him for life in an honorable profession, for which he was eminently fitted, And yet, long after 11 at night, only when he fell out with a senior, a cadet every Kentuckian in the corps seemed to through the forest sizes with Belleview's in the blue, gilt-buttoned swallow tail, the white one minute and flushed the next, was find his soldier station. They rode together fair guests the father and elder son had presentable young stranger in the solemn riding Norman's horse. Malloy, plausible aggressor, and had used his official position | tor strive abling parasite and summarily kissed by was brought to the attention of the com- unseen. Holt noted and thought and bitious, was not a society man, and so ap- passioned gaze of the newcomer. He could Henry Holt, the doctor's eldest, son. That mandant in a way he could not ignore, acted. The pollities he had planned for peared but seldom at the blithe gatherings think of nothing else when, a moment she was shamed, stung and startled, for The regulations were explicit and court- Christmas week were all well enough, but for which the Cucen City in those days later, at his father's summons, he, too, exthe room resounded with applause and martial had to come. The finding was something had to be done at once. Old was famous. Young Malloy had traveled tended a welcoming hand to the unheralded, and the loss of his sergeant's chevrons, chums from early childhood. Lorna and Everybody felt confident that when June Lou had romped, played tag and ridden ficers. Norman himself knew that he had comed them and paid homage to them, but Point, arguing, denouncing, raging. Regulations be d-d, said he. In an affair bewhich every Kentuckian, every southerner, recognize. His son had been put upon and restlessly about his room, and well he insuited by a fellow cadet, no matter what knew what that meant. his battallon rank, and had simply acted as a gentleman in demanding reparation.

and, despite frantic struggles, fairly kissed just decided, had defeated the party to Lancby a very good looking young guest from which they were naturally allied, and, to Judge McIntyre had been unable to join Ohio, a comparative stranger at Belleview. the wrath of the south, had opened the them. Cares had multiplied upon the se-It wouldn't have been so bad, said Miss doors of the White House to a rank aboli- nior partner with advancing years and his Lou, had it been one of their own set, be- tionist, "an obscure rail splitter," "a son health had suffered. Lane, the junior, cause Kentuckians are always, or nearly of the soil, who sprang from a hovel." young still and vigorous, felt a secret always, cousins, and, if not, have known Holt went to denounce and upbraid, but anxiety as to his friend and helper, for each other so long and well they are just found a cabinet that could outdo him at such had McIntyre ever been. He owned as good as related. "But this Mr. Malloy," both. He was stunned by the reproaches to Holt he hated to come away and leave

Kentucky girl. It was Miss Lane from national history Kentucky was not a name a great deal. to conjure with at Washington. The border "I'll go up and see him after the New And Miss Lane was a damsel many a states had betrayed and knifed the great Year," answered the doctor, heartily, "and in black evening dress, which at that time man would have followed further, a maid democratic party, was the cry, and turned take Norman for a look into Cincinnati was rarely seen in the west or south- refused a broad jump early in the day and many a man would be pardoned for sing- | the nation over to the nigger worshiper. society," and he wondered that Lane should most men wearing a frock coat and shirt taken to the highway. Norman at that time The doctor wanted to fight Ployd, the war say so little to support the plan. He won- collars of remarkable pattern, and not a was well in the lead, guiding Kate Ray, Kentucky women on their native heath. secretary, but found the capitol full of dered more that afternoon at Lane's evi- few still appearing in the frills and wrist- who rode like a bird. Malloy, it was obamazed and disgusted statesmen, in whose dent surprise and even disapprobation over bands that had been the mode of a much served, though a fair rider, and sitting mouths the very names of Kentucky and the coming of a new claimant on the doc- earlier day. Mr. Malloy was taken round one of the best hunters in the Belleview Tennessee were opprobrium. Kinsmen of tor's hospitality. Old Harkless entered the the circle by the beaming host and pro- stables, seemed to care little for any moided. Her hair was almost a chestnut rank and influence surrounded the wrath- library where the two were seated in car sented individually to every mun and honors of the chase that might separate brown, soft, shimmering and gloriously fut borderer and whisked him away, tak- nest chat and, bowing with grave dignity, woman, old or young, in the big, low- him from the girl whose beauty so enabundant, but her face was one no man ing Norman with him. The second week presented on a silver salver a letter to his ceilinged, old-fashioned drawing room, and, tranced him. He, too, flinched at a ditch could look at and forget-oval, delicately in December found him home again, and, master. chiseled, with the softest curves and merriest dimples. Her eyes were radiant, of rage in the joys of hospitality. Then Belleas he scanned the superscription under cordial handshake. Mr. and Mrs. Lane at Daisy's side. From that hour they were view was thrown wide open for the holl- his spectacles. "Introducing Mr. J. Bur- | were civil, were courteous, yet samewhat lost to the rest of the hunt and practically

altren in the army of an obnoxious govthree years before, young Dr. Woodrow succeeding to the good will and the bad lebts. Holt had inherited wealth, a beautiers, dogs by the score and he hardly knew just how many Ethiopians-he never spoke called discipline at that infernal pauper | ner. Know him, Lane?" school on the Hudson. He should look about He should go to college, read law or study hesitated and then spoke. medicine, or stay home and hunt, ride, shoot and be the young squire. But before know them at all." they had been home a week the fond, hothended old father had seen

Malloy, son of my esteemed friend. Hon. T. the fact that her mother had warned her the long, stern chare accused to scout the ernment. Holt had retired from practice M. Malloy, state senator, one of our fore- of his coming. ful home and estate. He had a dozen hunt- bespeak for him the welcome you would ac- fought in vain against that telltale flush as try road bore away for the hills, and as now every invitation to dance. She was and the do-tor picked up the square pastebusiness might bring him to Asholt."

The said last week that the chase was in plain view, it was but still tired, she declared, and unaccountably reasonable to suppose the pair had folstiff and sore. She had been so little in of them or treated them as slaves. He had board. "Glazed!" he exclaimed. "Where'd his boys, Hal studying law with McIntyre be learn that bourgeois business? Mr. J. & Lane at Cincinnati, and Norman-well, Burnett Malloy! Staying at the inn, is it? after the years of iron-clad idlocy they him. We'll call and hid Mr. Malloy to din-

But Lane was already on the move for him and take his choice of a profession. the door. He stopped, half-turned, colored, "Yes-that is, slightly. I wish Mac didn't

CHAPTER IL

M. Malloy, state senator, one of our foremost men and influential citizens. The
young gentleman is visiting in Kentucky
and as he will be a day or two at Asboit I ing for the late dinner, and the child had

"Did you have any intimation, Daisy?"

or like a rocket, straight for the spire at
Hardin hill, nearly nine good miles to the
side, strange contrast to the girl who had
north. Branching from the pike, a counbeen so radiant the night before, refusing

Norman should have a few months' rest Well, Harkless, tell Mars Henry I want and her mother. Wax candles by the score they had deliberately chosen the byway will be sure to ask for all you can possibly filled the drawing room with soft, yet bril- that led to the long belt of forest? Mrs. give him." Daisy was playing wall flower. liant light, while the library seemed in Lane was looking auxious and annoyed a rele to which she was utterly unaccusshadow. The Rays were full of interest when, after luncheon, she came out and tomed, but men swarmed about and per and sympathy in Norman's West Point joined Norman at the gate. Mr. Lane was sisted in their importunities, especially life-there was a lad at home whose whole cager, she said, to mount and go forth Malloy. Norman Holt alone did not repeat ambition was to win a cadetship—and they in search of them. It was this that de- his request for a dance. Even as midnight were listening in absorbed attention to his termined Norman Holt. "Tell him I'll go, description of barrack days, when suddenly and at once," said he. "They have possihe saw their eyes wander to the other bly got bewildered in Buford woods." His Father Christmas, there were men who And yet it was a very presentable young room, and then almost instantly, in surprise, fresh horse was ready, and he was away hovered about her chair and begged that above pretty, sloping shoulders, all dazzling was already repenting his action and man, well garbed and groomed, who came and surely not in less than three minutes. They heard she reconsider. Seeing this, with an odd, white and there is witchery enough to com- pining to be back at the Point. Never in instantly to meet his callers at the inn. There was something so significant in the him winding his hunting horn, faint and semi-possessive manner. Malloy placed himpel the regard of an anchorite, if ever his life had Norman been happier, despite The doctor had had no opportunity to draw glance that pussed between mother and fainter as he sped northeastward, and that self at her side and, despite averted looks such a being existed, and to try the asceti- the monotoneus routine, than in the au- from Lane the reasons for his reluctance. daughter that Norman turned instinctively was all until nearly 6, when the watchers cism of St. Anthony. This night, even in tumn days just gone by, when, on battalion lifeary had come at once in obedience to his to note the cause, and turned just in time saw the trio coming slowly in together,

It so happened that at the moment of lowed, yet men and women who took that saidle since the spring. "If you dance Malloy's entry Norman Holt was in an route declared to the contrary. Was it tonight with one," her mother had said. adjoining room, the library, with Miss Ray possible, then, that, preferring to be alone, "you cannot refuse others, and Mr. Malloy

reasonable to suppose the pair had fol- stiff and sore. She had been so little in

undauntedly, a sort of single-headed midnight hour chimed from the old Dutch clock in the broad hallway, glasses in hand, the whole assemblage gathered about the glad, genial host There were men that night who spoke of it before they sought their rooms and thought of it again and again in the years that followed. Never had the master of Belieview seemed in blither, gayer mood his ruddy face wreathed in smiles, his kindly eyes twinkling in joy and hospitality and benediction on all around him. Even the servants had been summoned in, Harkless at their head, and in broad, black circle, turbaned poll and kinky crown, encompassed round about the bevy of fair women and brave men. To each was given a brimming glass of the doctor's famous mixture. Its fragrance arose to the very rafters and then all other sounds were hushed as the doctor, beaming on them, lifted up his glass and voice. Only three days before had come the startling news that South Carolina, spotled and petted child of the family of states, had declared all bonds annulled, all ties severed, and acclaimed its secession from the union. No man could tell to what it might lead. No thinking man could fall to see that, grave and momentous, a crisis had come in the onward sweep of our national life. Even here, in the midst of all the Christmas joys at Belleview, there had been grave faces among the few elders, but tonight the old doctor's was unclouded. "Friends and kindred," he began, "old friends and new, good friends all; so long as I have lived here in the heart of our beloved commonwealth has it been the boast of Belleview that no living soul, white or black, failed of welcome and of our good cheer on this thrice-blessed anniversary. 'Peace on earth, good will to men' has been the motto over our hearthstone from the day these doors were opened. 'Peace on

earth, good will to men' remains its watchword today, and such, please God, shall be its watchword through generation after generation long after I am laid beneath the sod. We rejoice, my sons and I, in your presence here tonight. We pledge you with full hearts and brimming glasses. We drink to Christmas past, to Christmas present and to Christmas to come. May another year bring us all-all who are here tonight-again within these walls, then, as now, to drink to each other's health and peace and happiness, and to say, in the words of Tiny Tim, God bless us, every

tipped to induce him to go with all speed

to Belleview.

The moment that followed, first of murmurous applause, then of silence as glasses were raised to answering lips, was rudely closed. Sudden and imperative, somebody was knocking at the outer door. (To be Continued.)

CHRISTMAS AT BELLEVIEW

the secretary of war commuted it to con- was small chance for sentiment-there selcame around Norman Holt's name would double with him time and again and were who went wild in his wrath, who had hur- were in saddle every morning. They ried on to Washington and thence to the chased the fox by day and danced by night, tween gentlemen the only regulations gov- bave taken his boy to his heart and probed ing. erning the case were those of the code, his soul in search of symptoms of reviving

And this was the state of things at the opening of Christmas week and then came waking hours with us." "I'd have disowned him if he hadn't. He the Lanes from Cincinnati, and then a Mr. Burnett Malloy, in expressing his The doctor looked for triumphant acquittal, son that he should neglect none of his a fine set of teeth. He arrived just ex-He would have considered even official father's guests-that even old chums like actly at the appointed hour and appeared commendation only right and proper under Lorna and Lou should have just as much the circumstances. He listened in amaze of his time and attention as those who to the order promulgating the findings and were later arrivals. The old-fashioned sentence and then in an outburst of rage. hostelry in the village, too, was filled with ordered his son to write instantly his friends who could not be housed under resignation, and Norman, smarting under even the spreading roof of Belleview the lash of the implied reprimand, yet Henry's room was given over to Mr. and secretly reluctant and doubting, obeyed Mrs. Lane and he had doubled up with father's mandate. In vain Norman. The register at the Asholt into did the commandant, himself a gallant and was filled with names the nation knew distinguished southerner, try to reason with and all Kentucky loved. Holt and his the irate Kentuckian. Holt would have stalwart sons had every moment occupied fought Hardee right then and there, and and the father noted with joy the passing only a limited few at the officers' mess of that shadow that fate, not he, had were aware how narrowly a meeting was thrown about his younger hope, his pride averted. They got the fire eating physician his little Benjamin. It was half a week away from the Point and "on to Washing- before he fathomed the explanation and on" where, rabid old whig that he was, then he hailed it in exultation and rehe more than relished the opportunity of joicing. One thraldom had succeeded anbut he was long and lithe and an expert having it out with the Virginia democrat other. The bondsman to soldier servidodger. "Ah'll pay you some day, Misth who signed the order that swept the chev- tude of the months gone by had sur-Harry Clay Holt," had to be her sole satisfaction for the time being. Nor was she mark and influence was Dr. Holt in the dreams of military honor and glory were mollified when, hardly twenty minutes border states, but Kentucky and Tennessee, banished by one overpowering dream of later, and possibly through the same cause, by presenting candidates of their own for love. The lad, almost from the moment pretty Lou Ward was trapped and pinioned the presidency in the momentous election of her arrival, had met his fate in Daisy

said Lou, "isn't one of us at all. Besides of the president's backers and advisors, the elder man, but the judge had insisted. anybody could see, any girl at least, that The president himself he could not see at McIntyre's investments had gone wrong, what brought him to Belleview was no all. He found that for the first time in said Lane, and he was brooding, worrying

guide of the left flank company, wherein the other young knights were galloping ing garb of two distinct epochs-his father door were matters understood. Dalsy, manner of the corps, challenged and fought for hours each day, father and son, and driven into Asholt, close at hand, to honor black, with white, ecclesiastical-looking and smiling, was explaining what had haphis adversary, who, in truth, had been the by every means in his power did the dot- the judge's bote. Henry had met both tie. It was at the instant when Mr. Malpened, and Norman, without a word to any-aggressor, and had used his official position tor strive to reconcile the boy and to divert Malloys, the state senator and his heir, yet loy was bowing low over Daisy Lane's half- body. was leading to the stables Daisy's to vent a personal spite. There was a his thoughts. Norman rode as do many knew them only slightly. The former, he extended hand, it was the instant when pretty mare, which had gone suddenly, ungirl at the bottom of it all. There gen- Kentuckians, as though born to the saddle, said, was frequently closeted with Judge that telltale blush suffused her levely face, accountably, pitiably lame. erally is. The sympathy of the battalion, but he couldn't be in saddle forever. The McIntyre. The latter belonged to a young and, looking back from her to him, the almost to a man, was with the Kentuckian. long winter nights were on them now, and and lively set, with whom Henry had little Jealous eyes of the young soldier noted but, as ill-luck would have it, the affair there were hours when he could mourn in common. Henry was studious and am- unerringly the eager, joyous, almost imguilty, the sentence dismissal, but it was friends were the Waltons of Louisville, the abroad-something few Americans could yet evidently expected stranger. The eyes coupled with the unanimous recommenda- Rays of Lexington, and they were begged say two generations ago-and had abundant of the two met in straightforward, steady tion of the court for elemency, based on to come without delay, and come they did means and fair manners. The elder struck gaze, the soft, dark brown of the Kenhigh character and soldierly record," and and much they made of Norman, but there Henry as being coarse and pushing, but tuckian, the steely gray of the guest, and polish was not to be looked for in the pro- the hands seemed at first to miss each other, finement to barracks for a brief period dom is where lad and lassie have been fessional politician. Henry was not in the somehow, and, when they met, the sturdy confidence of Mr. Lane, and, therefore, clasp of the northerner found only faint could not say how he regarded the Malloys, response. but thought it possible the junior partner again stand high on the list of cadet of- too near his own age. Loyally the boy wel- disapproved of the son, on general principles, as a possible sultor, for Henry regotten off easily. It was the old doctor every Kentuckian would do that. They were in saddle every morning. They was deeply smitten with Daisy's beauty. Miss Lane, Mr. Malloy," gave his to Mrs. she came down, and every woman present And then came the youth himself to greet Lane, and Norman fell in toward the rear but when the girls and their mammas were them, and to accept, with evident pleasure, of the column escorting Lorna Walton, deaf gone to bed and the doctor would fain the doctor's cordial bid to dinner that even-

"Sorry we haven't a room for you at content Norman would steal away, but not Belleview, suh," said the Kentuckian, "but superb-fine, clear and with a frosty rime buoyant and debonair, dancing assiduously every man except a base born mudsill must to sleep, for Holt could hear him moving the women folk are there in force, and several of our guests have to put up here. If they give you a comfortable bed it's all you'll need. We expect you to spend your

served the scroundrel perfectly right, suh." change. Duty as host demanded of the thanks, displayed much gratification and



DAISY LANE.

days. Norman should be welcomed by the neft Malloy. I don't like that new-fangled constrained and distant. Daisy gave him to the world. Not a soul had seen them. brows of deeper brown than her glossy hair. The nose, straight and small, one never seemed to see simply because of the Kentucky gentleman and no starving sub-

Then Harkless threw open the folding doors and with his elaborate bow announced that dinner was served. Then the even to her joyous prophesy of a splendid run for the morrow.

gathering. were broad, some fences far too high for the previous eve. all but the most daring and skillful, it had resulted that "the field" split up into a dozen little parties dispersed all over the country. It followed that toward 3 in the afternoon, when almost all the riders had returned to Belleview, there were still four guests abroad. Hounds and huntsbedraggled and disappointed, had come trotting back by an hour after noon. The elder women, who had driven out in open carriages to see what they could of the sport, had long since returned to the solace of tea. Miss Walton and a cousin. Louisville girls, had ridden in with Henry Holt and Mr. Goodlee, just ahead of the hounds. Norman, guiding Lou Ward by short cut across the fields, had reached home earlier still, and was striding about the premises from gate to stables, still in riding dress, and obviously nervous and Four of the party only were missing, but had it been only one, and that one Margaret Lane, so far as Norman was concerned, the rest had returned in vain. At I o'clock a belated darky huntsman reported that he had seen Marse Blanton and Miss Ray at the ford of the Middle branch. Miss Ray's horse had cast a shoe and they would stop at Sparrow's to have another set. That would account for them. but who had seen Miss Lane and Mr. Mal-

Unaccustomed to cross-country riding. though a graceful horsewoman, Dalsy had after the kindly manuer of the day, by men his hunter could have cleared at a bound,

clusion of their room. Daisy had slipped out of saddle even before Mr. Malloy could leap from his and assist her to dismount. With flaming cheeks she had burried up the steps to the broad-colonnaded portico. forcing a smile for the benefit of the women thronging to meet her, yet hastening past them to her mother, who, at the library door, where she had been in anxious conference with the doctor, stood waiting, and at once led her to the stairway. Not until late in the evening did the child reappear. Dinner had been sent to her that she might rest and be in readiness for the event of the holiday season-the Belleview ball. But knew she had been weeping. Norman, too despite the demands upon him as host, was far from being his usual self-was fitful, nervous, absent-minded. Malloy, It was a splendid run! The day had been however, seemed thoroughly at his case, that lent exhibaration to every hour in the with one girl after another and striving open air. And now Christmas eve had to be agreeable to all, to all at least until come and a second dance and even a larger Daisy's late appearance. The thing that Time and again during this observant women could not fail to note evening that followed the splendid run of was that Norman Holt never once addressed the day laughing girls and gallant men him during the entire evening and spoke found themselves comparing notes and only awkwardly and with cold restraint going over and over again the stirring when compelled to answer his remarks, vents of the chase. Whether because he It was long after 10 when Mrs. Lane and had grown unusually wary, thanks to such her daughter finally joined the party in frequent hunting or because of the nipping the ball room. The mistletoe bough still frost. Reynard had proved a teaser, hung conspicuous and threw its potent Hounds, huntsmen and the merry party had spell on all beneath, but maids and matrons run long miles in vain, and as some brooks were shy and guarded now, and mindful of

With every appearance of frankness, with every expression of proper regret, Mr. Malloy had told the story to man after man, and to the women who witnessed their return-told practically as he had told it to Norman, when that keen young scout and rider came upon them in the depths of the Buford wood. He declared he had heard the distant bay of the hounds coming from over the tree tops, indicating that Reynard had turned sharply eastward when near Hardin hill, and, in his inexperience, as he frankly said, he reasoned that the fox was now making for the woods. Why not ride directly thither and be foremost in the hunt Miss Lane evidently longed to be up at the front again, but could not take the higher fences. He persuaded her to gallop, as he said, in the direction of the sound, and away from the trailing fieldwithin the wood the bridlepath became crooked, narrow, intricate. The sounds were deadened, and in less than half an hour he found himself bewildered. Then in crossing a shallow ditch, Miss Lane's pretty mount strained her off hind leg in some mysterious way, and, evidently in great pain, could not set foot to earth Malloy found a seat for his partner on a fallen log and followed a path to the open fields to the north, hoping to see something of the hunt, but succeeded only in hailing a negro, who promised to go at once to Belleview, seven miles away, and bring the phaeton for Miss Lane. Then he rode back to her and waited-waited long hours-and strove to comfort her by the assurance that aid must soon come. Not until after 3 did they hear the mellow notes of a hunter's born winding through the forest, and Malloy's shout in answer brought Mr. Holt to their ratreat, and Mr. Holt could tell the rest. It seems that Mr. Holt had stripped off the saddles, reset Miss Lane's on his own fresh horse and started them home while he followed afoot, leading poor hobtling Nellie Gray. It was most unfortunate. but nobody, said Malloy, was to blame

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