

HESPER

...BY...

HAMLIN GARLAND

COPYRIGHT, 1905, BY HAMLIN GARLAND

He stood beside her while she slowly regained a sitting posture. "She belly dangled. Me go tell Munro. She fight-me kick."

The poor creature now seemed dazed and broken and began to weep, and with her tears became as abjectly pitiful, as pathetically tawdry, as she had been hideous and menacing in her wrath. Ann shuddered with a bitter nausea, a disorder that was half physical weakness, half mental repulsion. There was something ghastly beyond words in this creature sitting in utter abandonment in her rumpled finery, which the pitiless sun dissected. Stopping, she took the miserable one by the arm. "Get up. You must not sit there."

Slowly the woman rose, all thought of revenge swallowed up in a wave of mandarin self pity. "You're all agin me—all of ye! I guess you wouldn't like it to have your husband stolen by another woman. You let me alone!" she said to Woo, with a flash of anger. "You pigtail, what business you got to lay hands on a white lady?"

The creature began to pour forth a flood of vile epithets, directed toward the patient Woo, who tried again and again to lift her and was in the midst of a howl of wrath when Matt came round the corner of the house.

"What's all this?" he asked sharply. The woman suddenly rose to her feet, well aware that a man had arrived, and began to mumble and weep again. Nora ran to her husband. "Oh, Matt, drive her away. She tried to kill us."

"Who is she? Who are you, and what are you doing here anyway?" The woman, quite dismayed, began to retreat. "It's all right. She promised. I'm going now."

Woo explained: "She Munro's wife. Belly drunk—alleg same clay. Take um gun—go shoot lady." He pointed at Ann. "Me choke-um. She fall on ground. No get up. Nola catchee gun." Kelly followed the intruder. "You go back to where you came from and stay there or 'twill be the worse for ye, ye murderin' omadhaun."

Ann went to her room and flung herself down upon her bed in such abasement as she had never known in all her life. She could not deceive herself. She had brought this horrible assault upon herself by something more than tolerance of Munro.

The woman's ignorance and tastelessness, her common voice, her badly fitting garments, her incredible baseness of speech, all came back. "Ann Rupert a rival to that being?" Of course she had never for an instant directly encouraged Munro, and yet he had appealed to her and she had listened.

"Rob should have warned me," she complained, her mind going back to the man she could trust. At the moment, she could not see or would not acknowledge that Raymond had ventured as far as he dared in revealing Munro's private life. She was too angry with herself and every one around her to be just. As her flaming wrath died she grew cold and bitter. "This is what comes of going outside one's own proper world. I shall leave the peak at once, and I hope I shall never see it or hear it spoken of again."

CHAPTER XVII.

ANN'S disgust and bitterness of self accusation wore away as she faced the resolving sunlight and measured her scars against the breast of mighty Mogalyon. In the dawn of the second day the incident, having lost much of its shame and terror, was debatable, and under Matt's kindly counsel she reached a certain resignation.

"No one but ourselves need know what took place," he said in conclusion. "Woo is no talebearer, and when the woman herself sobs off she'll not remember a word of it. Furthermore, I warned her that Jack would wring her neck if he knew what she had done. So I wouldn't give another thought of it—not one."

"I'll try to forget it," she promised humbly, but she could not at once put the experience out of mind. She could only wait for that besotted face to fade into a grisly apparition. In the end she pitied the poor woman who loved and was willing to defend her love.

Raymond was chilled by the change in Ann—by a return to the cold aloofness of her manner at Barnett's—and was profoundly troubled by it.

The day following the woman's visit Munro rode down as usual to call and seemed amazed when Mrs. Kelly greeted him coldly. "Ann does not want to see you or any one else this morning—you least of all."

Munro whistled. "Another cold blast. It's sure drafty up here on the side hill, isn't it? What do you suppose is the cause of it?"

From the inner room a clear, low voice, icy as a mountain stream, replied, "Miss Rupert is not receiving Captain Munro today or at any other time."

He took a step toward the door. "What have I done to get a crack like that?"

The door closed with a decided jar and a bolt slid.

Munro bowed. "I understand. I take the hint. But some day when you are feeling jolly I'd like to know what has frosted the air down here among the aspens."

"I can tell you," said Nora, with the directness of a woman who has known rough men all her life. "Ann has learned the kind of life you live, and she despises the sight of your face."

For the first time in his life Munro was confounded. He stood for a moment revolving an explanation. At last he said, "You mustn't take an enemy's report of me."

"We do not," said Nora calmly. "Your wife has called on us."

"My wife?"

"The woman who calls herself your wife. 'Tis all one so far as we are concerned."

Munro frowned. "Claire called! Here? Then with a leer that was characteristic of him, he added, 'I hope you had a pleasant chat.'"

"Ask her. She did all the talkin'." Munro became very serious and very winning. "Now, see here, Nora—" "Call me Mrs. Kelly," she interposed shortly.

He was not smiling now. His heart was in his voice. "You tell Ann not to misjudge me. She must give me a chance to square myself. I don't claim to be a saint, but I've been open and aboveboard with every man or woman I've ever had any dealings with. Whatever my past has been, I'm living on a different plane now. I've cut off all my old habits for her sake. I'm trying to live up to her standard of things. I know she's better than I am, but I can climb. My family is as good as hers. I started right, and with the help of a good woman I can get back to where I was. I claim the work I'm doing here is worthy her approval. Ask her to let me see her again."

Nora turned her face toward Ann's door and both waited in silence, but no sound came from the inner room, and Nora, seeing suffering in the lines of his face, said more kindly: "Ye may as well go. The door will not open to you this day nor any other."

Munro turned and went out with bowed head, and Nora could not doubt the sincerity of his pain.

One morning Ann rose to a singular light. In place of the clear, golden sunshine which had so often glorified her room a blue-gray mist lay thick against her window pane. Raising the sash, she put her hand into it—it was like smoke, dry and cold! Dressing hurriedly she entered the sitting room, where Matt was helping his sons to dress.

She stepped to the door and looked out with vague alarm. The vapor had blotted out the world. Nothing could be seen but the faint forms of one or two cabins and a clump of nearby trees, and she went back shivering and a little depressed. "I don't like to leave the peak on such a day," she said at last. "I think I'll stay till the sun comes out. I want to think of it as it has been—radiant and inspiring."

The cloud hung moveless for hours, impenetrable, yet resisting. A hush was in the air as though some disaster, concealed as yet, was about to be discovered. About 10 o'clock as she stood on the steps wondering whether to cross to the bungalow or not Raymond burst from the obscurity.

"Good morning," called Ann. "Isn't this a strange effect?"

His eyes were shining, his face pale and his voice vibrant as he abruptly said: "Come with me; the time has come. I want to talk with you."

"What has happened?" she asked in alarm.

He took her by the arm. "You promised to listen. You are not afraid of me, are you?"

"No, but I do not understand. Where is Louis? Has anything happened to him?"

"Louis is safe with Kelly. I want to see you because things have happened to me. Come, I must see you alone."

They moved off up the path toward the overlook, and notwithstanding her brave words, the girl wavered in the gust of this man's overmastering excitement. The mist closed round them, all signs of other human presence disappeared, and they soon stood alone in a world of gray light wherein neither sky nor horizon line appeared. All that remained of the earth was a little strip of ground beneath their feet.

Raymond stopped at last and held toward Ann a small, irregular piece of rock. "Do you see that?" he hoarsely inquired.

She took it wonderingly. "Is it ore?" "Yes, and it's heavy with gold. Kelly's luck has won again. We've opened a vein that will make us both rich. There was no tremor or doubt in his tone.

"Oh, I'm so glad!" she cried out, with unaffected pleasure. "Now Mrs. Kelly can go to live in the valley."

"Never mind the Kellys now," he cried out impatiently. "I have a great deal to say to you, and I want to say it here. I'm going to try and win you." His manner was exultant, his voice tense with passion. "I am bold to recklessness today."

He had never been humble. Now he rose above her, masterful, an avowed lover, and his eyes burning down into hers made her shrink and shiver as if from cold.

He misread the movement. "Are you warm enough?" he asked tenderly. "I hope you are, for I want to tell you—explain to you—why I am here. Let us sit here." He indicated a flat rock.

"This is our only opportunity. No one

will know—no one can see us. Will you listen?"

"I will listen," she said quietly and took a seat, drawing her cloak about her.

He took a seat a little in front, so that he could see her face, which was radiant as a rose in the mist. "I've been trying to write you a letter ever since you came. I wanted to set myself right with you on Louis' account. I love the lad, and I wanted you to know that I was trying to do him good."

"I know that. I trust you now."

"That assurance is sweet to me, but I want to tell you now that the only mystery in my life is this: I am a West Point cadet—I mean, I was—"

"Were you, really?" She looked at him with such unmistakable relief and gladness that he faltered.

"Wait. I was only there two years. I was court martialed for breach of discipline and gross insubordination at the beginning of my third year."

He hastened on. "You mustn't judge me hastily. It came on my return after furlough. That's the time when the routine and discipline pinch hardest on the men. After two years of grind that I hated I had a visit home—a delicious free time—and to get back into school, back into those cold, gray barracks, was like going into a strait-jacket. The first few weeks after the vacation are times of disorder, a period of boyish devilry, and I took my share in it. My breach of discipline was nothing more than a boy's frolic. I should have been punished for it, and that would have ended it, but I hated one of the officers, the disciplinarian, and when he rounded me up he rasped me till I lost my head. Being a quick tempered youth, I answered him. He abused me shamefully, and I struck him in the face, and that ended my stay at West Point."

"Oh, how foolish! How wrong?"

"No, it was not wrong. I would do it again. The small sneak used a tone in addressing me which no man has a right to use to another. You wouldn't suppose a tone could hurt, but it did. It cut like a lash. Well, that ended my career as a soldier. My home was on the Ohio river, not far from Cincinnati, and my family still lives there. Our whole country is rich in traditions of General Grant, and my father had selected me out of all his sons to be the soldier of his family. You know how some men try to map their sons' careers. Don't you see, I couldn't go home?"

"Yes, I can see it was hard for your father. Was your mother living?"

"Yes, she's living yet. I write her every week, but not one word has passed between my father and me since my dismissal. Naturally enough, I drifted west and into cattle ranching. I liked the excitement of it, and I'd been trained to ride and to shoot. I gradually became cow boss and foreman, and so you found me, with a few thousand dollars saved up. Your coming changed every current in my life. I became ambitious to do something, to be rich. I came here, I bought this mine, and there shines my gold." He held it toward her again. "Now I can go home. My court martial becomes a joke. Don't you see? My father is human. He would not receive me poor and disgraced. With a big mine behind me the case will be different."

"Are we all purchasable with gold?" she asked.

His high mood sank a little. "Don't misjudge me. It's not so clear in my mind as when I met you at the door. Money does help—you know it does. It extends a man's power; it makes him effective for good, if good is in him. I was a rancher when you met me; we stood in a different relation from that which we occupy now. Isn't that true?"

"Yes," she slowly answered, "but it isn't because of your mine."

"What is it because of?"

"It is because you have been kind and considerate of my brother."

He looked disappointed. "Is that all? I hoped you liked me for myself."

"I do like you," she answered.

"Can you not love me?"

"Do not press me." She spoke sharply, a flash of resentment in her eyes.

"I didn't intend to do so," he humbly replied. "I fear I've made a mess of it, just as I have with all the rest of my life. But this morning when we uncovered that vein it seemed as though I had a chance to recover my place in the world. I've wasted ten years of my life masquerading here and there, but that is finished. Since I saw you life began to be serious business with me. You smile, but you know what I mean, and if you would only give me time I would make you proud of me."

He paused and looked about him. The mist seemed lightening, as if infiltrated with a golden vapor. It was in motion also, and far to the westward small patches of blue sky showed momentarily. "It is clearing," he said in a quiet voice, though his eyes were wet. "The west wind is setting in."

The beauty of the girl as she faced him there in the mist was shining, all conquering in its pulse and glow. "I love you, and I want you to know it. Some time I will ask you to be my wife."

"You must not do that," she cried out. "You will only lead up to disappointment. Don't you see how impossible it is? You are of the west, I am a city dweller. I am not fitted to help you. My whole life and training have been such that I am totally unfitted for the life you would lead. Please do not misread me. It is not a question of your wealth or your poverty. It's my own way of life, my own mind. I don't want to hurt you, but I must tell you that it is impossible to think of—quite impossible!" and she turned away toward the cabin, now half disclosed.

The door was open and Kelly and the two lads were on the floor picking at a small sack of ore. Mrs. Kelly looked up at Ann, laughing, with tears on her cheeks. "I don't believe it, not one word of it, and if it were true, Rob

I want you to keep it for us."

"Yes," said Kelly, "I've been of use to you in finding it; now do you be of use to me in keeping it."

"I will, Matt," said Raymond, and the two men shook hands on a new compact. Both Matt and Nora were too engrossed with their new found riches to observe the deep sadness of Raymond's face.

"Now," said Kelly, "watch out for Curran. He'll bate us out of it if he can. I depend on you to stand off the lawyers and the gamblers."

"The mist is rising," called Ann



"I love you, and I want you to know it," from the doorway.

As she spoke a tremendous report arose from the obscurity where the fog still clung.

"Now, what was that?" queried Matt, and all stood transfixed with surprise and vague apprehension.

Another and duller report followed—one that shook the ground. Kelly rushed to the door just in time to see a vast balloon shaped cloud of smoke rise majestically above the mist, bulging into the blue sky above.

"Now they've done it!" he called in a curiously reflective tone that was almost comic.

"What was that?" asked Ann.

"Some crazy devil under cover of the mist has dynamited the Red Star shaft house."

Even as they waited, listening to faint cries, the wind swept the hillside clear, and Kelly's fears were verified. Mist has dynamited the Red Star shaft house and mill lay scattered over its dump, and toward it the whole camp seemed hastening.

"Oh, the unholy jackasses!" muttered Kelly. "They've opened the door to the witches now. Come, Rob. We may be the next to suffer."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE blowing up of the Red Star mill and shaft house shook the entire district with its possibilities of further violence and concealed beneath its dust and smoke the rich discovery in the Kelly mine. The partners had time to calculate chances and plan for the buying in of the property.

The din of controversy was deafening. The labor leaders disclaimed all knowledge of the outrage and roundly condemned it for the foolishly destructive act it really was. Kelly marched in among them like a grizzly bear and stormed thunderously. "You are responsible," he growled. "You sit here and send out appeals to the world while these hounds work their will. Where was Munro and his regulators?" "They can't be everywhere," explained Carter. "No one supposed such a thing could happen in the daylight."

"Ye're all a set o' chicken heads. Ye've created a power ye can't control. I give ye notice that if ye don't go after the thieves that did this work I'll organize a vigilance committee and take charge of the whole gang of ye." And he strode out of the room, leaving the officers of the union disgraced and angry. He confessed to Raymond on his return that it was a foolish action.

"It was, Matt. You couldn't have done a worse thing. A large number of these dago miners already consider us their enemies, and this will confirm them. We might as well take steps to night to get our party of the third part in some sort of organization."

All this excitement and worry aided Raymond in tiding over the day, but when midnight came and the committee had slipped away into the night his sense of loss and a feeling of loneliness took possession of him. Ann had announced her intention to return to the Springs at the end of the week, and though she had vaguely promised to visit the peak again, Raymond was not deceived.

"She's quite right," he admitted to his better judgment. "A mining camp is no place for her or for Nora. Since the destruction of that mill it is even less desirable than before as a place of residence."

While on his way to the bungalow the following afternoon he met Munro accompanying a stranger, a big, blond, handsome fellow in a gray traveling suit and soft hat. His face was plump and his brown beard close clipped, and, though he realized that he was more or less in durance, his eyes were smiling.

Munro called out, "Rob, do you know this chap?"

"I do not."

Munro turned to his prisoner. "I thought you were lying."

The stranger remained untroubled. "I didn't say I knew Mr. Raymond. I merely said that I wanted you to take me to him."

Wayne Peabody, an old time friend of Miss Rupert. Will you please explain to this knight of the hills that I am in nowise interested in his strike?" Raymond looked at him keenly. So this was the eastern lover—this fat, fair man. "I think I have heard of you," he began slowly.

Louis' arrival relieved the awkwardness of the moment. "Hello, Mr. Peabody, how did you get here?"

Peabody caught at the boy's hand. "Well, well, Louis, I'm glad to see you. You saved my life. How is Ann?"

"Fine! You ought to see her work. She's brown as oak. Come on, I'll take you to her. Gee, she'll be glad to see you!"

As Peabody excused himself and made off, Munro, with a world of meaning in his voice, softly swore. "Well, if I'd known that, I would have killed him and laid him away under a little rock. She turned me down flat the other day, and it hurt. It hurts worse now that I've seen the other man. I really hoped you were the winner."

"She's out of our world, Jack," replied Raymond, and a large part of his resentment of Munro's impertinence vanished with the knowledge that he was a fellow sufferer in despair.

Munro went on gravely: "She had me going, sure thing. Why, I stopped drinking—just as I told you I would—and I cut off Claire— Say, boy, that was a severe job! She raised dust for a day or two, but when the queen of heaven gave me my jolt I said, 'What the good?' and slipped into my old ways. Think of us strutting around the parade ground in front of 'the seats of the visitors' with intent to beat out old Grant, and here we are! I'm policing a mining camp, and you're pawing dirt like a woodchuck. 'What a fall is there, my brother!'"

Raymond did not enjoy Munro's tone and changed the subject. "What are you going to do now?"

Munro ceased to laugh. "I am going to cinch this whole camp a little tighter from this on. I'm going to turn back every nonunion miner. All you fellows who are friendly can go on working just the same, but your men must put themselves on record."

Raymond's face settled into stern lines. "Jack, I don't want to be mixed up in another man's fight. We are on good terms with our hands—they're a lot of cantankerous American citizens anyway and can't be coerced. I warn you not to monkey with our plant."

Munro laughed. "I'll fight shy, old man, so far as I'm concerned, but these dagoes and Poles are getting watch eyed, and if they stampede they'll run over somebody. You don't believe in me and my cowboys, but the time may come when you'll see that I'm about the only commander in this camp."

"I see that now, Jack. That's why I'm talking to you. But you've started on a line of action that means war with organized society. You had no call to join those jackasses who ran Mackay out of camp. It was none of your funeral—had nothing to do with the question of wages."

Munro grinned. "He was such an ape."

"Yes, but it started you wrong. Now, I don't know who blew up the shaft house, but if you do your best plan is to cut those outlaws out and turn them back to the authorities."

"I don't know a thing. Of course the union had nothing to do with it. It was done by a few hotheads full of peaches. These mine owners have got to give up their nine hour scheme. We've got 'em dead to rights, for I can drive every nonunion man out of camp if necessary, and my advice to you is, have your men march up and sign our rolls double quick."

"They can do as they please about that. I will bring no pressure to bear on them, but I'd like to ask you as a friend not to make it any harder than you can help for Kelly & Raymond. We've got all we can stagger under now, and the worst thing that can happen to us is delay. We've opened our vein, and we're going to buy in our mine inside of six weeks if nothing prevents."

Raymond walked on to his cabin with a heavier heart than he had carried since he left Barnett's home. Part of this was due to Munro's warning, but the larger part of it sprang from his meeting with Peabody, who was not at all the sort of citizen he had expected Ann's eastern lover to be. He was a man of power, dignity and decision, not an erratic idler like Barnett, and his air of quiet authority sprang from a strong personality securely placed in the world.

Louis came back to the cabin with a sly smile on his face. "What did you think of Mr. Peabody? Darn him, he's here to get Ann to go back to New York. I don't go, I tell you that!"

"Maybe she won't go?"

"I'm afraid she will," the boy gloomily replied. "He's got some kind of a 'drag' on her. He's been trying to get her, oh, a long time."

Raymond's voice was calm as he asked, "What is his business?"

"Lawyer. He's rich too. Ann wants us both to come over to the Kellys' to dinner. I don't want to go. Do you?" "She's the captain," answered Raymond. "I reckon we'd better spruce up a bit."

"It makes me tired," the boy went on. "I wanted her to marry you, and then we could all live out here."

A half hour later Ann knocked. "Is any one at home?"

Raymond flung open the door. "We are all at home."

Ann introduced Peabody, who stood by her side, and the two men shook hands rather coldly while she said to Raymond: "Can you take care of Mr. Peabody for the night, and will you come over to dinner? You need have no more scruples, now that Woo is with us."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Many a tongue shakes out its mas-

CANDIDATE FOR SPEAKER

Mr. R. S. Whaley of Charleston Has Announced Himself.

A special to the State from Charleston last night says: "Hon. R. S. Whaley announced his candidacy today for speaker of the house of representatives. He has been a member of the house for six years. During the last session he was chairman of the judiciary committee, accounted by many the most important in the body. Mr. Whaley has taken a prominent part in legislation since he entered the legislature."

Mr. Whaley is a graduate of the University of South Carolina and has a great many friends in Columbia.

The Demands of the Negroes.

At the recent annual meeting of the "Niagara Movement," held at Harper's Ferry the negro leaders issued what they called an address to the American people, outlining their demands. Among these demands are abolition of the Jim Crow Lawgwypp equal rights, manhood suffrage without discrimination, the abolition of the Jim Crow car laws and better education for their children in the South, for which, of course, the whites are expected to stand the expense. The leaders of the "Niagara Movement" also resolved to "re-consecrate themselves and their honor on the scene of John Brown's martyrdom to the cause of negro rights" and concluded with the declaration that the negroes "are not more lawless than the whites, but more often mobbed." In commenting on the demands and the resolutions the Philadelphia Ledger, says:

"On the day that the address was issued a negro who made an atrocious assault on a little white girl in South Carolina was shot to death by a mob in spite of the authority of the Governor of the State. Within the past few days two other brutes met the same fate in the same State in the face of Governor Heyward's most active efforts. Within the confines of the city of Atlanta half a dozen negroes made like hideous attacks on defenseless women and children within a few weeks, and the lynching mob has been busy. In the meantime Hoke Smith has won the fight for nomination to the Governorship by an overwhelming majority on the platform of negro disfranchisement and discrimination against the race.

"Moreover, the chronicle of negro attacks on women from other parts of the South is becoming an alarmingly large part of the daily record of events."

"It is futile to aver that these reports of atrocities are the inventions of negro haters, fabricated for the purpose of fanning prejudice into flame. They are hideous facts, to which bear witness the Governor of South Carolina, the authorities of Atlanta, the ruined homes of innocent men and the dangling bodies of negroes riddled with bullets.

"The men of the Niagara Movement," says the Chattanooga Times, "are not the negro hater has been too active in the past year. There is a feeling that the Niagara Movement's address was incomplete, and in its incompleteness fails to take the measures calculated to put the rabid negro hater out of court."

It is a notorious fact which has attracted the attention not only of the Philadelphia Ledger, but other leading Northern newspapers that there was not in the address of the leaders of the "Niagara Movement" a single word of denunciation for the hideous crimes of the negro race that cause lynchings, and is causing all negroes to be hated and disturbed. There was no pledge or promise made in the address to consecrate the intelligent men of the negro race to the work of eradicating the great evil which is the prime source of the prejudice of the whites against the negroes.

It may be that when intelligent negroes such as those who are the leaders of the "Niagara Movement" manifest a sincere desire to deal with the "new negro's crime" in behalf of both races, their demands will be received with more consideration than they are at the present time.—William Star.

There is more Catarrh in this section of the country than all other diseases put together, and until the last few years was supposed to be incurable. For a great many years, doctors pronounced it a local disease and prescribed local remedies, and by constantly failing to cure with local treatment pronounced it incurable. Science has proven catarrh to be a constitutional disease and therefore requires constitutional treatment. Hall's Catarrh Cure, manufactured by F. J. Cheney & Co., Toledo, Ohio, is the only constitutional cure on the market. It is taken internally in doses from 10 drops to a teaspoonful. It acts directly on the blood and mucous surfaces of the system. They offer one hundred dollars for any case it fails to cure. Send for circulars and testimonials.

Address, F. J. Cheney & Co., Toledo, Ohio.

Sold by Druggists, 75c.

Take Hall's Family Pills for constipation.