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ESTATE NOTICE
All persons indebted to the Estate of the late Thomas W. Flett late of Nelson in the County of Northumberland, are required to make immediate payment to the Executrix, Margaret J. Flett. All persons having just claims against the said Estate are required to file the same duly attested with the said Executrix, within three months from his date.
MARGARET J. FLETT
WILLIAM J. FLETT
EXECUTRICES
Nelson, N.B.
April, 9th 1918

"THE FIGHTING TRAIL"
NOW SHOWING AT THE HAPPY HOUR

(Continued)
"He's dead!" Drant muttered curtly.
Von Bleck sat mutely in his chair. He said not a word while Drant made the explanation, but his heavy brows were drawn close together in a frown that signified that he was anything but pleased.
Suddenly, as Von Bleck was peering through the half light at his two companions the three men started to their feet with a jump. Outside in the distance, could be plainly heard hoof-beats of two horses. They were approaching the hut at a gallop, but they were still perhaps a quarter of a mile away. Von Bleck and Drant looked at each other: in the minds of all was a single thought. Gwyn and Nan were returning, possibly with assistance, to get the chart. It was impossible to tell, from the sound of the approaching horses, how many of them there were. The three in the cabin knew that they would be caught if they did not act immediately. They would have to think quick, and move quickly. Drant was the first to awaken to the situation. He ran into the kitchen and returned a moment later with a can of Kerosene oil. Von Bleck watched him almost with dread as he poured the fluid over the floor and furniture, and then went into an adjoining room to which the body of Cordoba had been removed, to sprinkle the oil about there. His motive was obvious—he intended to burn the hacienda to the ground. Although Von Bleck and Rawls knew this much, they did not read all of Drant's dastardly thoughts. When he had poured the kerosene profusely about and emptied the can, he lit it with a candle which had been serving as an illumination. Then, with wave of his hand he motioned toward the kitchen. Von Bleck and Rawls followed him out.
The hoof-beats by this time had grown louder and more distinct. Just as Drant drew the bolt of the door that separated the living room from the kitchen, they stopped suddenly. In another moment the living room door swung open and Gwyn rushed in, closely followed by Nan. They were alone. A glance at the flames which were now leaping high and the odor of the kerosene revealed the truth to them immediately. Gwyn, shouting over his shoulder to Nan, rushed toward the door. He turned the knob and pulled. Then, his face ghastly white in the light of the flickering fire, he turned to Nan.
"It's locked!" he exclaimed, his voice choking, as he feared to utter the words. "They have been here and started the fire—and they have locked us in. It's a trick. We can't get out!"
Gwyn's words were truth. Von Bleck, Rawls and Drant had bolted the kitchen door after they had gone through it. They had run outside by the rear entrance as Nan and Gwyn had entered, and locked the door through which they had come, from the outside. The windows of the hacienda were barred with stout iron imbedded in the sills. This had been a precaution taken by Cordoba when he had flown to the house from Chihuahua. Nan and Gwyn were prisoners in the burning building. Already the heavy smoke caused by the burning oil was filling the little room. They could feel it filling their throats and lungs. Suddenly, Nan was racing frantically about the room beating the flames with a rug, and while Gwyn was vainly attempting to bend the window bars apart the leering, hard countenance of Von Bleck stared at him from the outside. In the raking glare of the fire as it shone through the panes it looked hideous. Von Bleck broke the glass with his fist.
"You might as well give in," Von Bleck announced. "You can't get out until the side burns away and you'll suffocate before then. All we want is the chart—the half you have—and we'll open the door and be your friends. What do you say?"
"All I can say," replied Gwyn, "is that if you want this map you'd better find a more practical way to obtain it. It is in my pocket and it will stay there—if it burns. And then it will be more impossible for you to get it than it ever was."
He turned and left the window.
Von Bleck's face remained at the window for perhaps a minute longer and then disappeared. The agent of the Central Powers realized that what Gwyn had said was true. If he burned to death in the flames, the chart would burn as well.
Meanwhile, Nan had thought of a plan. Taking Gwyn by the arm, and glancing out of the window to assure herself that Von Bleck or his companions were not watching, she led him to a trap door through which Cordoba had brought the cases of dynamite from the cave. With nervous haste, made even quicker by the fact that the room was filled with smoke, almost to the point of suffocation, they opened the door in the floor. Gwyn helped Nan through the opening and then layered himself from view, closing the door after him.
Von Bleck raised his head from his hands and gazed meditatively through the open door. For hours, it seemed, he had been sitting before the hard board table in the mountain abode of Drant and Cut-Deep Rawls, with his head resting in his open palm. He had been staring blankly at the rough wood that served as a table top, and his fingers had drummed nervously against his forehead.
Now, as he raised his head and a breath of cool air swept through the door, he braced himself. He arose, brushed back his ruffled black hair, and strode out to the trail.
For nearly half an hour he wandered aimlessly down the trail, without raising his eyes. Suddenly he started at the sound of a voice. He looked up and glared with an expression mingled with fear and astonishment. Not fifteen feet away seated upon two horses, were the two he had thought dead—burned to death—burned to death in the hacienda of Don Carlos de Cordoba. His first impulse was to turn and run, but the fatality of that occurred to him almost as quickly as the thought. He forced a smile and regained his bearing. In a moment he was again the cool, calculating, wary Von Bleck that had borne successfully the responsibility of the Central Powers upon his shoulders.

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Gwyn dismounted and approached him.
"I'll trouble you to come with me," he said calmly. "I could cause your immediate arrest and conviction on the charge of attempted murder, but I have better use for you."
Von Bleck made no reply. He turned and followed, quietly as Gwyn again mounted and rode slowly along the trail in the direction from which he had just come. Nan walked her horse behind, so that the agent of the Central Powers was between her and Gwyn.
For several minutes they travelled thus, until Gwyn finally drew to a halt beside a clearing. A barn, dilapidated and dirty, stood a few feet in from the road. Into this Gwyn led Nan and Von Bleck. There were no signs of life about the place, and an old box, standing on end, was its only furnishing. Gwyn moved it to the side of a post that ran to the roof and motioned to Von Bleck to sit on it. Then, without speaking a word, he proceeded to tie his captive to the post with a rope he had taken from his saddle. Then, with a stick he made a tourniquet of a piece of the rope and drew it tighter and tighter about Von Bleck's arm until the latter winced with pain.
"There will be no bush-beating," Gwyn announced firmly. "Tell me where the other half of the chart is or I'll break your arm. You are a sensible enough person, Von Bleck, to know when you are beaten. You have the country and the law against you. You can't go on acting like a cheap outlaw and kecer on getting away with it. The cards are against you and you might as well give in. Where is the other part of the map?"
"Cut-Deep Rawls has it," he said slowly. "He will be at the hotel in Lost Mine some time to-day. I was to meet him there."
Gwyn smiled as Von Bleck spoke. He could see from the defeated look upon the Central Powers' agent face that he was telling the truth. Taking the coveted half of the chart which he held from his pocket, he gave it to Nan with his revolver.
"I am going back to Lost Mine to get the rest of it," "I'll leave this with you. I might get into a fight and lose it. I don't think you'll have any trouble with our friend here, so just keep him covered with the gun until I get back." He went out, mounted his horse and rode away toward the town.
As soon as the clatter of hoofs died to silence in the distance, Von Bleck began to plead with Nan. He complained of a stinging pain in his arm, and induced her to look at his hand. The sight of it made her shudder. It was wet with blood that had been flowing from the bullet wound made by Yaqul Joe in the fight at the hacienda. At first Nan refused to listen to his pleading, but finally, giving way to her sympathies, she loosed the rope that bound the wounded arm of Von Bleck, as she did so, reeled backward against the post in apparent exhaustion. Nan watched him for a moment to see if he would recover, but, when he did not, she became frightened and rushed out for some water, which she obtained in a gourd that lay beside a well but a few feet from the barn.
(Continued next week)

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