

Then Austin let his eyes wander past Stubbs to look instead at the tall young man who was hunting for a vacant table. He would have taken a seat at a table near the door, but when Stubbs whispered, "That guy's lonesome," he looked up quickly, hesitated, and finally walked across and dropped into a seat near Austin. The incident amused Austin, for he knew they didn't think he had overheard. It put him on his guard. What did they want with him anyway?

The newcomer began to talk immediately. "Been in Cochrane long?" he inquired pleasantly.

"A couple of weeks."

"Thought you must be a stranger—for I think I know most of the fellows around here." Then, as Austin sat moody and silent, "How are you liking it?"

"Rotten hole!" burst out Austin, with a vehemence which surprised himself; for if anyone from back home had asked him how he liked the North, he would have said, "Fine and dandy!"

The other was quick to argue the point. "Oh, but this is going to be a big town—"

"I guess so," languidly; "but I'm not interested in going-to-be's."

"What's your line?"

Austin felt his face go red. It gave him quite a hustle to tell what his line really was. Up until a month ago it had been going to school, fooling around having a good time on his dad's money, and living in a fine house in Toronto. "I'm connected with the railroad," he explained at last.

His companion looked puzzled, but tactfully turned the subject. "My dad's in the pulp and paper business," he offered. "We've been here a long time. My name's Hunt—Bob Hunt." Then he drew from his vest pocket a small, square card, which he fingered thoughtfully and finally passed across the table.

"What's this?" inquired Austin, a bit ill-humoredly. "Ticket for some show?"