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By The Law of Tooth and Talon

By MERLIN MOORE TAYLOR

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Synopsis of Preceding Chapters. Louie Vogel, a notorious criminal, is offered \$5,000 by Lebrun to kidnap Judge Graham, terror of evil-doers. As Lebrun leaves "Silver Danny's" saloon, he is observed by Ralph Charlton of the Department of Justice who has dubbed him "The Gray Wolf." Vogel takes the \$1,000 given him to bind the compact to Stella Lathrop, a country girl he had found starving in the city and befriended. Stella is now earning honest wages in a factory and refuses to marry Vogel unless he gives up his evil ways. She has, however, fallen a convert to Bolshevism. Vogel carries out his pact. Judge Graham lies bound in a shack some miles out of the city. "The Gray Wolf" demands that the Judge should let certain prisoners off with merely a fine. Threats of death for himself and torture for his son have no weight with the just Judge. Charlton becomes suspicious of "The Gray Wolf" and Vogel. Stella Lathrop joins the Inner Council.

CHAPTER VI. Charlton Gets a Clue.

Charlton found a clue which convinced him he was on the right track the next day. As soon as sleep had restored him, he reported to his chief that he had what he believed was a good line to follow. "Get out and follow it, then," snapped that harassed individual. "You're the fiftieth or the five hundredth man. I don't recall which, who has told me the same thing since Judge Graham dropped out of sight. I've had theories and tips which didn't pan out, dinned into my ears until I'm fairly insane. I don't want to listen to anything except facts. Unless you've got them, go on and work on any line you wish." "I'm to use my own judgment?" "Yes." Then the chief's irritation vanished. He put an arm around Charlton's shoulders. "My nerves are pretty ragged, son. I'm dead for sleep. After I've got them normal again I'll listen to you. In the meanwhile if you think you have a good basis to work on, go to it. If you need help, call me on the private wire to the house. Unless I hear from you I'll take it for granted that you are doing something worth while. In any event, call me whenever convenient, but not until tomorrow. I'm going to sleep the clock around. Now run on."

He playfully shoved the agent toward the door, yawned and began closing down his desk. Charlton departed. Convinced in his own mind that "The Gray Wolf" and "Big Louie" Vogel were in some way connected with the disappearance of Judge Graham, the Government man decided to very carefully lay a trap for one or both of them. He had been given a free hand by his chief and he cast about for the best means of keeping track of his men. He did not know the city's underworld himself. Usually he had been in the habit of getting the assistance of the police where his work called for investigation in the haunts of the city's crooks. So it was to the office of Inspector of Detectives Griffin that he at once turned his steps, certain that from that very clever detective he would obtain every bit of co-operation asked. He had done Griffin a good turn on more than one occasion and he knew the inspector was more than eager to repay him. His card gained him instant admittance to the inspector's office. "Hello, Billy," he greeted the police official. "I've come to you for help. Beg pardon, I didn't know you were not alone." He paused abruptly, for he had discovered a haggard looking, well dressed young fellow slumped into a chair in a corner.

"I wouldn't be surprised that your two visits might be connected," said Griffin. "I want you to meet Judge Graham's son Alfred, Lieutenant Graham of the Aviation Corps. One of the leading aces, you know." "Yes, I have read a great deal about Lieutenant Graham," replied Charlton, touched by the appeal in the young aviator's bloodshot eyes as he rose to shake hands. "And my visit was to do with his father." "Have you any news? My father! Has he been found?" Young Graham seized the agent's hand in a fervid clasp. "Steady, old man," replied Charlton. "We haven't found him, but I think I have a good line. Just a theory, so far, but it will bear looking up."

"Oh, another theory." Alfred Gra-

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ham's voice was bitter. He released Charlton's hand and dropped back into his chair. "I am fed up on theories. My father missing three days and not a single thing to show what has become of him. And you have nothing but theories." Then he recovered himself. "I beg your pardon, Mr. Charlton, and yours, Inspector. I am greatly wrought up over the matter. I didn't mean to infer that you and the others were not doing your very best to find him. I know you are and I thank you. But my father and I are very close. It would kill me to learn that harm had come to him. He is an old man, gentlemen, and God only knows what has happened to him."

"That's all right, Lieutenant," soothed Griffin. "I'll admit that we haven't learned very much, but something must turn up soon, and I have no doubt we will find your father not harmed in the least. Now, my advice to you would be to go home and have a good rest. We will notify you promptly if we learn anything."

"No, No," the young flier protested. "First I must know what Mr. Charlton has that is promising." "Very little, I am afraid," admitted the Government man and proceeded to give them the reasons why he suspected Lebrun and Vogel of knowing something concerning Judge Graham. "It isn't very much," agreed Griffin when he had heard the story. "What's your plan, Ralph?" Graham had not commented upon the matter. "If you can spare a few men I want two things done, said Charlton. 'I want every effort made to learn where Vogel has gone, where he has been for several days and I want Lebrun shadowed night and day. By the way, he has a motor car, a rakish looking roadster and the very devil for speed. It would be my tip to have a motorcycle man planted around the corner to trail him when he drives it. But that motorcycle man must be fast if he keeps up with this bird.'"

"All right," the inspector of detectives promptly agreed to the plan. "You don't want either of them pinched, I suppose?" "No. But I want Lebrun watched closer than any man has been watched in this town for a long, long time. And if Vogel is found, I want him shadowed just as closely. I'll keep in touch with you and in the meanwhile I'll drop around and see what I can find out about 'Red Stell.'"

"I'll go with you," offered Graham, leaping to his feet. "This inaction is killing me." "I am afraid you'll not find tramping around with me very much more to your liking," objected Charlton. "Suppose you take the inspector's tip, go home and rest. I'll promise to call you up the minute anything develops and then I'll be only too glad to have you with me."

"I have a very fast car outside," said Graham. "Can't I drive you to wherever it is you are going?" "No, you take that car and go home. Perhaps later we can use it and use it to good advantage and you will want to be fresh and able to drive it safely. Your nerves are not in shape to do that. You cannot help now."

"I'll do it," said Graham; he shook hands with the two of them and a moment later through the window they saw his car threading its way past the traffic in the street outside. Charlton left shortly after he had heard Griffin give instructions for the shadowing of Lebrun and Vogel. Charlton had little difficulty in finding Stella Lathrop. Overwhelmed by doubts and fears as a result of her initiation into the Inner Council, she had remained in her room at the hotel trying to reconcile her views with what she had learned of the plans for casting the nation into turmoil. Stella had bought the newspapers to see if they had anything to say about Vogel. Now she turned to the columns which contained Russian news and perused them avidly. In one of them she found a lengthy dispatch which gave her a decidedly new viewpoint on Bolshevism. Taken in connection with what she had heard Lebrun and the fat man say at the Inner Council meeting, she began at last to discover that the rosy dreams of the radicals whose words she had swallowed as truth were mere camouflage to cover up the desire for turning the world into a pig pen with every one fighting for the front place at the trough.

plain with impunity. The ethics of the Bolsheviks are the ethics of the jungle. Assassination, arson, loot are all permissible in their minds. Schools, churches, governments may be destroyed; banks looted, property and all industry seized, private and public debts repudiated, marriage outlawed and free love become the rule."

"Why that is just what the old fat greaser was saying we would do," exclaimed the girl to herself. "Why he isn't no better than a common thief and murderer. I wonder if they all believe like that. That ain't what I believe. I wonder if I'm a sucker?" Her reflections were cut short by a rat-tat-tat at the door. Dropping the paper to the floor, she jumped from the bed where she had been lying and scurried to the door. For a moment the thought had flashed through her mind that it was Vogel, come to explain his delay. Then she remembered that he had told her once never to open her door without ascertaining who was outside. He had explained that her beauty and the fact that she lived alone might tempt some unscrupulous man. She knew that it was not Vogel who had knocked, so she paused in the act of opening the door and demanded to know who stood without.

"I want to ask you about Louie," said an unknown voice. Without quibbling she dropped the chain and turned the key in its lock. But when she saw Charlton, and not a man she knew to be Vogel's friend, she closed the door again. "Don't be alarmed, Miss Lathrop," said the Government man, striving to win her good graces. He made no move to prevent her from closing the door and this in a measure reassured her. She waited to see what he would say.

"I want to ask you if you know where Louie is," he went on. "It is very important that I find him and he seems to have disappeared. I was down at 'Silver Danny's' when you telephoned yesterday and I dropped in here now to see if you had got any trace of him yet."

"What do you want with him?" she demanded. Without quibbling she dropped the chain and turned the key in its lock. But when she saw Charlton, and not a man she knew to be Vogel's friend, she closed the door again. "Don't be alarmed, Miss Lathrop," said the Government man, striving to win her good graces. He made no move to prevent her from closing the door and this in a measure reassured her. She waited to see what he would say.

"That," he replied easily, "is for his ears. I am afraid that you wouldn't be interested, anyhow. By the way, didn't I see you down in St. Louis about two years ago?" Charlton had learned that it never paid to press an unwilling witness on a subject and that often it was easy to get the information he sought by changing the topic of conversation.

"No, I never was in St. Louis," was her answer. "I was born and raised in the mountains. The Cove it is called, and Jasper is the only city I ever was in before I came here. Are you a cop?" "Lord, no. I'm no policeman," laughed Charlton. He threw open his coat, bare of star or shield, and was grateful for the fact that he carried his badge in a vest pocket. "Well, I ain't seen Louie for several days and I don't know where he is, but I wish to God I did," she said, and for a moment Charlton thought she was about to burst into tears.

"You're his girl, aren't you?" he asked quickly. "Is this his room?" Instantly she flared up. "The room is mine," she cried, hotly. "I could be Louie Vogel's girl if I wanted to. He would marry me if I said the word. But the room is mine. He never set foot in it, neither did no other man. I'm not that kind of a girl. Good-bye." The door slammed in Charlton's face. "Little firebrand," he murmured softly. "Temper goes with that kind of hair and it's some hair. Anyhow, I think you told the truth and that wherever Vogel is keeping himself, you don't know where it is." As he turned away down the dark hall he almost collided with a man pussyfooting down it. "I beg your pardon," said the startled Charlton. "And I yours," was the reply in a voice that thrilled the Government man. In the dimly lit hallway he had been unable to distinguish the features of the other man, but the voice was that of "The Gray Wolf."

(To be continued.)

About the House

Five Kitchen Helps.

Throw away your blackening brush and try this simple plan of caring for your range. If your range is not a new one, and has had many coats of blackening, first scrub it all over with hot suds; dry, and apply with a flannel cloth a mixture of equal parts of linseed oil and kerosene. Afterwards polish with another cloth. By going over the range once a week, and using the polishing cloth on top of the range after each meal, you can keep your stove in fine condition. It will have a dull glow, much more attractive than the usual shiny polish. It is easier to apply and cheaper.

use one I fasten it to the inside of my left forearm. It is always clean and saves me running from one side of the table to the other to see what to add next.

It is impossible to do the weekly wash without getting one's apron and dress wet, and the damp spot so quickly becomes soiled. Why not make a bib-shaped apron of oilcloth, bind the edges with tape, fasten a piece of tape to each corner of the bib, to slip over the head, and attach a piece of tape to each side to tie in the back? Splash all you want to, your clothing will keep dry.

One of the most useful things I have ever seen in a home is a small platform on rollers, made as follows: Take a board 18 inches square and 2 inches thick for the top. Finish the edges with a narrow strip of molding. Under two ends nail a piece of wood 4x2x18 inches, and place a caster in each corner. Finish with a coat of paint. This movable platform is easily pushed with the foot from place to place, even when it holds such articles as a mop pail full of water, a heavy coal scuttle, oil heater, or, in fact, any household article that you desire to move.

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