

Carmen's Messenger
By Harold Bindloss

Then Foster forgot his perplexities as he took out the letter. The first was from Lucy Stephen, who said that the doctor had visited Lawrence and was satisfied with his progress. She added that Foster knew Lawrence disliked writing letters, and she wanted to reassure him and wish him good luck. The note was short, but seemed to put Foster on a footing of intimate friendship that he was grateful for, and he thought Lucy had written with his object.

This other was from Alice Featherstone and his heart beat as he studied it. She did not say much; they had still no news of Lawrence and his father was very restless and anxious, while she feared her mother felt the suspense. But she knew Foster would make every effort and would not fail them; there was nobody else who could help. All she said struck a note of quiet confidence in her faith was unshaken; she trusted him.

Foster thrilled and his weariness and dejection vanished. Alice would have got Lawrence's telegram soon after she wrote and she had proof of his honesty now. Still, he had only kept half his promise, and although he had undertaken a task that needed abilities he doubted if he possessed, he meant to keep the other half. He was hemmed in by difficulties and might make mistakes, but somehow he was going to make good.

For a time, he sat in a corner, recalling what Alice had said in England and how she had looked. He pictured her standing in the dark-panelled library at the Garth with eyes that sparkled as she spoke in his defence, sitting with a smile in the half-light by the big hearth in the hall and in the garden in the orchard. She moved through all the scenes with the same calm grace; even in her anger—and he had seen her angry—there was a proud reserve. But Alice stood above all other women; there was nobody like her.

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follow. His brain had been unconsciously occupied with a description Lucy Stephen had given him. The man who had gone into Telford's room was Walters.

CHAPTER XXVII
When Foster was thinking of going to bed, he remembered that his boots were very wet.

"It's a bit outside, isn't it? I've been paddling in the snow," he said, and with the poacher's instinctive caution, put his feet out of sight beneath a chair.

"Where have you been in the dark?" Foster asked. "I thought I'd maybe better watch the bridge over you bit creek."

Foster pondered. He knew that gambling on unused land was popular in Canada, in spite of taxes planned to prevent it, and while there are respectable, real-estate agents, the fringe of the profession is occupied by sharpers who prey upon what is fast becoming a national vice.

Confiding strangers with no means to invest are often swindled, and there was no reason to suppose Telford's trying to enthrall his acquaintance. On the whole, however, he did not think the fellow meant to victimize him in this way, though he was willing that Foster should suspect him of such a plan if so, it might be better to indulge him.

In a general way, I have a use for all the dollars I've got," he said. "Still, I could find a lot that was bound to go up."

The other followed the lead and the development of the neighbouring land. He seemed to know his subject and Foster was beginning to think his suspicious mistake when Telford carelessly interpolated a few adroit questions about his usual occupation. The questions were difficult to answer without telling more than it was advisable that the other should know or that was equally to be avoided, showing that Foster was on his guard.

He was now nearly sure that the fellow was an accomplice of Daly's, and the line he had resolved on would be difficult. He had to deal with a clever rogue who probably knew something about him and meant to find out more. In consequence, there was no use in trying to pose as an unscrupulous simpleton; he must, so to speak, play along to the fellow and persuade him that any suspicions he entertained were about the latter's designs upon his money. With this object, he dispensed some of Telford's opinions and presently proved a statement of his wrong.

Telford looked embarrassed, and Foster thought he did it very well. "Perhaps I was putting it a bit too high, but the deal ought to turn out a snar for you to wait a while," he said and laughed. "Anyhow, I've got to give you bedrock facts after the way you caught me out. Say, you're pretty smart!"

Pete's not showing he understood and Foster moving toward the window, stopped again for a moment at the mouth of the adit. Pete had vanished, but could be trusted to watch the mine as a terrier watches a rat-hole and Foster knew that if he was tackled and overborne his hands would not escape. A grey sky hung over the black tops of the firs and the wet snow threw up a curious vivid light. It was an unpleasant raw morning, and Foster felt half daunted.

The adit was dark; he was embarking on a rash adventure, and wondered with some misgivings what would happen before he came out again. He heard nothing, and it was rather curious that he could not smell smoke, but bracing himself he stooped and crept into the dark hole.

The floor sloped, following the inclination of the Bedouin, and he had to be strenuous with fallen stones, but he had put on rubber shoes and made very little noise. He did not want to attract attention, and he had heard that such success as he had was rather due to luck than ability.

"Well," he said, "what did you see there?" "To begin with, the man we followed on a shoop; and I thought I might keep something I wanted. He bought a basket."

"A basket," said Pete. "One of them baskets they put groceries in when ye go gang by train."

Foster nodded. On Canadian railways, economical second-class passengers often carry provisions instead of using the mess-tables. "I bought some canned meat and biscuits," Pete resumed. "There's some tea and a wee spirit-stove."

"There's no train until tomorrow and I imagine the fellow wouldn't be satisfied with canned meat, so long as he could get something better when the cars stopped."

Pete grinned. "I'm no saying he meant to take the train. It looked like he was going to picknick in the woods."

"He had to go," said Foster abruptly. "I suppose you followed the man." "Far enough to see him take the train. Then I came back. Ye see, I kept where he was going."

"I made a sign of agreement with him," said Foster. "Anyhow, because it was obvious that Telford was going to the shack at the mine. He understood how the fellow had got out without his seeing him, since it is usual in Canada to have a separate entrance to a hotel bar and he had stupidly been watching with watching the hall."

them with him. "Well," said Foster thoughtfully, "I don't see why the other fellow brought him provisions 'he didn't need."

"Maybe something happened since he brought the basket," Pete suggested. Foster pondered. It was possible that something had happened at the hotel after Telford's visit that had altered the accomplices' plans, or that it was easier for Daly to get away; but if this were so, Telford must have gone back to the mine. He might have done so, but Foster thought Daly had perhaps not taken his confederate altogether into his confidence and had changed his plans without waiting him. Foster might not tell what chance the fellow had of stealing away, but as he had left the basket, and only taken some biscuits, it looked as if he did not expect to go very far on foot.

"We'll get out and try to find my way by a gone," he said. "It was foolish to remain in the open air and they carefully studied the sloppy snow. Foster knew something about tracking elk and moose, and Pete had a poacher's skill, but the fellow knew who he was and that the marks they found had blurred the foot-prints they found. However, Telford had returned to the mine since his visit on the previous evening."

Then they searched about the foot of the rocks and presently found marks that showed where somebody had climbed. Getting up, they followed the marks to a beaten trail that ran along the hillside from the town nothing to be learned here and Foster went back dejectedly to his hotel. Dinner was being served when he arrived, but he did not see Walters and felt annoyed when Telford stopped him as he was coming out. "I didn't see you since last night and thought you might have had a game," he said. "Where have you been all morning?"

"I didn't come here to play pool," Foster replied. "There was something I had to see about." "Then you found business to do?" Telford remarked with a quiet smile that Foster found disturbing. "I do blame you. You let the guide get drunk and left Lawrence on the couloir. Then you were a long time coming back, when you knew the danger he was in."

"Well," said Walters in an apologetic tone, "I suppose all this is true, but I must point out that when we slipped down the gully it was impossible to get up again. Then there were some big crevasses in the glacier and I had a half-drunk man to help cross; I really didn't know he would drink too much when I gave him the flask. However, although perhaps I was rather careless, I hope you won't forbid my seeing Lawrence."

"I couldn't forbid your seeing him, as you must know." "You couldn't, in a sense," Walters agreed. "Still, of course, you wish me to go long way with him, and I imagine he is what one might call amenable."

"I don't understand that," Walters smiled. "I always found Lawrence good-humoured and it would surprise me if he did anything you didn't like. I don't know that I can go farther without venturing on an open compliment. But I'm anxious to know how he is."

"He is getting better, but must be kept quiet for some time. But why did you come here?" "It ought to be obvious," Walters replied in a tone of mild protest. "You blame me for my friend's illness, and though I don't know what I left undone, I am, in a sense, responsible; any way, I was with him. Well, I found I had to go east, and determined to put off my business for a day or two so I could step over and see how he is getting on."

"You may see him," Lucy replied. "But you must remember that he isn't strong and needs quietness." "I'll be very careful," Walters said with a grateful look. "May I take it that your consent is a sign that you'll try to forgive me for my share in the accident?"

to the glass front and watched him with keen curiosity. He vanished among the trees where the road curved and when he came out not far off she saw her lips. It was Walters and her vague fears were realized, but he would not reach the hotel for a few minutes and this gave her time to brace herself.

Lucy, who scarcely heard, sent the page away. Walters would arrive in a minute or two, and now she had warned Foster she thought she had better not avoid him. If he hid her distrust, she might find out something and she would sooner be saw her before he met Lawrence. There was nobody else in the veranda since Walters came in with a smile that somehow intensified her animosity, but she waited calmly, although she did not give him her hand."

"It looks as if you were rather surprised to see me," he remarked. "I am," said Lucy. "Perhaps that's not unnatural." He laughed and since she did not suggest his sitting down, remained standing in a rather graceful pose. She meant to hide her real feelings if she could, but as she had been angry when he left it was better that he should think her angry now. A marked change in her attitude would be illogical and might excite suspicion.

"I suppose that means you blame me for Lawrence's illness and haven't forgiven me yet?" he suggested. "I do blame you. You let the guide get drunk and left Lawrence on the couloir. Then you were a long time coming back, when you knew the danger he was in."

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CHAPTER XXVIII
Lawrence had gone to his room to rest and Lucy Stephen was sitting alone in the veranda when she heard the roar of an east-bound train coming in the valley. It stopped, which did not matter, as she had not opened her book and looked out at the opening in the pines that led to the track. The smoke that rose in the valley, cold air began to move, and just stopped long enough for passengers to alight. Although the train had been generally full in summer, there was only a few other guests, and quiet peace reigned. Walters had made and, as his acquaintance had been disturbed, he was getting better. He was getting better, but must be kept quiet for some time. But why did you come here?"

large dining-room, and the waiter sent him to Mrs. Stephen's. Lucy wondered whether Walters had arranged this with the man before, but it gave her an opportunity of watching him and she did not object. She admitted that he had served and tact, for although she had served him and her mother shared her distrust, he was able to banish the constraint both felt and amuse the waiter. Lucy could not tell what Lawrence thought, but he laughed at the other's stories and now and then bantered him.

After dinner Walters left them and when they went to Mrs. Stephen's sitting-room, Lucy remarked rather sharply: "You seemed to find Walters amusing?" "He is amusing," Lawrence answered. "In fact, the fellow puzzles me."

"You mean he couldn't talk in that good-humoured, witty way he had plotted to leave you on the couloir?" "Well," said Lawrence, "I suppose I did find something of the kind." "I don't know the fellow," said Lucy. "You agreed with Foster's conclusions when he was here."

"I did, to some extent. The way Jak Walters put the matter made things look pretty bad for me." "But they look better now Walters was talking to you in your room?" "He didn't say much about our climbing that word, and two of regret for his carelessness in not seeing what had happened to the guide."

"Words that were very carefully chosen, no doubt?" "Well," said Lawrence, "I'm frankly puzzled. The more I think about our adventure, the harder it is to decide how much one could hold Walters accountable for. It was difficult to throw me up the rope with a small, projecting rock, which he might have broken his bones with if he had stillrogan to the bottom. If he had stillrogan to the bottom, he would have been killed."

"Walters wouldn't hesitate about a risk. It might have looked like an accident if you hadn't heard Foster's story." Lawrence knitted his brows, rather impatiently. "After all, Jake's a romantic fellow, and his explanation's theatrical."

"You don't like theatrical things," Mrs. Stephen interposed. "You must admit that they happen, but you feel it's ridiculous that they should happen to you." "I imagine I do feel that," Lawrence agreed with a smile. "When they happen to somebody else they're no unnatural."

Lucy tried to preserve her self-control, but her tone was stern as she said, "Then you feel inclined to forgive Walters the pain and illness he caused you?" "It would be harder to forgive him your anxiety," Lawrence rejoined, and his face set hard. "I know he really had plotted the thing—"

He paused and resumed: "One would be justified in killing a brute who could do what you imagine, but there's a difference between treating a crime and punishing the man accused of it before you have proved his guilt. In the meantime, I'm trying to keep an open mind."

"But you will be careful and not trust him far," Lucy urged. "Lucy said no more. Lawrence was not well yet and sometimes got obstinate. If one argued with him, she thought he would be proud and she was comforting to remember that she had telegraphed for his comrade. Unfortunately, she did not know that a message was then in the page's pocket. He had waited some time for Walters' telegram, and when he reached the station found the agent gone. In consequence, fearing a reprimand, he resolved to send the message straight to Lawrence, and being nothing about the matter, he had been with bright sunshine on the snow, and Mrs. Stephen agreed when Lawrence insisted on going for a short walk to the veranda, and some of the guests, Walters' roses were being brought to the table, and although Lucy tried to leave him behind, and they leisurely climbed a winding path among the pines. The wind was thin and crisp beneath the trees, and the air was clear and fresh, though it opened the eyes of the guests of assured glaciers, rocks that glistened in the steady light, and majestic glittering peaks. The pines were straight and tall, and the great soft-coloured trunks rose like long, climbing ranks against the blue shadow on the snow."

Magistrate Hastings, of Cuyuga, gives his verdict in a case involving a total abstemiousness.

RAPSO T. DENIES A "TOWNRIE"

Magistrate Hastings, of Cuyuga, gives his verdict in a case involving a total abstemiousness.

LAW AND ORDER IN CUYUGA

Although Total Abstemiousness Would Not Force Prohibition Dry

CAYUGA, March 11.—The jury in the case of the defendant, J. J. Hastings, Magistrate Hastings testified that he had never favored any individual in discharge of his duties.

He resented the charge as an anti-prohibitionist which could be interpreted as a slur on his character. He was not a prohibitionist, but was not opposed to it, although there are two of the act he considered too harsh.

He favored temperance, but prohibition, and by the way, he meant self-control. Although a total abstemiousness would not force total prohibition, he believed a better system of the restriction of liquor than that now in vogue could be established. His testimony was in connection with the charges two, three, five, six and seven.

The witness said he had been in party politics since appointed a magistrate.

Norman Garfield Guilty of Murder

WOODSTOCK, March 11.—Norman Garfield was found guilty of the murder of Ben Woodstock on January 20. Mr. Justice will pass sentence today. De field found guilty yesterday, slaughter, will also be sentenced today.

The jury in the Norman case was out about two hours, having retired at 11:30, returned to the court room with the verdict.

The court room was jammed with spectators, and the doors and windows were crowded with people. Justice Kelly entered the court at 8:30 and at 8:42 the jury returned with the verdict.

The jury is unanimous in its verdict of murder. "The jury is unanimous in its verdict of murder."

A hush fell upon the court room and his girl wife. She showed no outward appearance of distress as the fatal words spoken, and soon after smilingly shook his hand. His audience many women went to the young wife and some of their sympathy and some of the hand of the condemned man.

It was a scene being enacted for the first time in thirty years ago. Woodstock, the bringing in of the verdict of guilty against a man, thirty years ago.

Mobilize Voters In Upper Silesia Like Army

BERLIN, March 11.—The action of the men and women of Upper Silesia plebiscite yesterday in twenty of the largest cities. Special trains were being sent to the plebiscite with instructions urging generally to the salvation of Upper Silesia. Bands played patriotic music.

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