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SASKATOON

**Watrous Next--!**

By C. SMITH, JR.

IF one had told George Weston that he was bored he would never have admitted it. Nevertheless, he was bored, and considerably so, in spite of the fact that this was his first venture of the city for almost six years. And that is probably why he would not admit it, but the truth of the matter was that, being a lonely young man, enthusiasm had worn off with the first three hours in the train.

Stifling a yawn with some effort, he gazed languidly through the car window and strove to be pleased with the country scenes through which the Continental Limited rushed. Here and there a patch of green crop, only recently persuaded by the June sun to show above the surface of the greyish loam, broke the landscape, and the traveller looking through the train window saw nothing more exciting than an occasional farmer wishing eternal perdition on a team of tardy plow horses.

George Weston had his fill of the scenery for another hour to come, and turned sadly back to the gaudy magazine he had dropped on the opposite seat. The long trip was all in the game, but he would never do it on his lonesome again. Which sounded rash as a resolution to make, for George was a bachelor without any immediate prospects of becoming otherwise.

For the first time since leaving Saskatoon he glanced down the aisle of the partly filled coach, and his eyes fell on the girl who had taken the seat across from him just before the train had interrupted a hurried farewell party at the depot.

This much George would have admitted, that the girl, with her large hat removed, showing a veritable jungle of hair, reddish at that, interested him considerably. Which, for George, was admitting a great deal.

The girl was looking through the opposite window, also somewhat listless, he thought. She had an indefinite prettiness about her, although Billy Darwin, back at the office, would have declared at once that it was the boyish figure that made her attractive and pleasant to look at. She looked as if she might be a good sort of a pal for a man to know, George thought.

His view of the wild-haired one was unexpectedly blocked by the burly figure of a negro porter, on whose heels followed a newsy, laden with eatables. The girl made some remarks George strove in vain to over-

hear, and in a moment the boy returned with a stack of reading matter. George had a full view of the proceedings this time, and he caught himself wondering what the girl would choose to read.

She picked a novel, some western story, and after a struggle with a refractory purse, produced a bill.

"'Fraid I can't make a twenty, miss," muttered the vendor, dipping deep, the look of optimism fading on his face. Efficiency was one of George's weaknesses, and he jumped into the breach with the quickness of an insurance cashier.

"I guess I can help you," he said, half afraid the girl would notice how little time he had lost in grasping his opportunity.

The deal completed, George prepared to give the landscape another chance. But the girl across the aisle apparently had no intention of allowing him to bestow his attention on the fitting prairies again. Instead of opening the book she smiled encouragingly in his direction.

"Kind of lonesome, travelling alone," he ventured, returning the smile. "Think I'll be good and tired of it by the time I reach the old St. Lawrence. Next time I go on a holiday trip, believe me, I'm going to have company, or there won't be any trip at all."

"Oh, you you're on vacation too!" the girl exclaimed. "Why, I'm just starting my annual two weeks myself," she laughed, shaking the mop of hair until it took on an even more frenzied appearance.

"That's a wonderful bunch of hair you have there," he declared, surprised at his own boldness. Ruefully, half apologetically, he ran his fingers through his own depleted stock.

"If you knew what a time I have with it you might not think it was so wonderful," she answered him, unoffended, as she laid the new book on the seat beside her.

It was as if she defined his thought. "Mother would think it awfully indiscreet, but since we're going to be travelling companions for a while, I think we should introduce ourselves, don't you?"

"That's just what I was thinking," George told her. He supplied the desired information. "George Weston," she repeated softly after him. "But you haven't told me about yourself yet," he reminded her.