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"UNTIL THE DAY BREAK"

(By Marian Warner Wildman.)

"Until the day break and the shadows flee away."

-The Song of Songs.

"Everything goes to prove it! The dips so, to the north. The oreboots tend easterly. If the inclination stays the same, we can't be but a little ways from the ledge in the lower adit. I shan't be surprised if must any shot shows up the crevice now.

Barton's middle-aged, gray-bearded face was flushed with excitement as his grizzled head and Phil's dark beat together over the survey ODC maps and blue-print drawings spread out on the table.

They were too much occupied to hear Rose Bennett's quick, impa-tient sigh, as she went silently about her task of clearing away the remains of the evening meal. /

this "The boys had a good break alternoon. Caesar says there's lots of water coming in to-night. He came back to the change-house for his boots and rubber coat, just as I

his boots and rubber coat, just as i was beaving. Doesn't that look as if——" was beaving. Doesn't that look as if——" ally acquired a strange, desultory education from his father and his father's few books. Shakespeare, hands clinched so tight that the nails bit into the flesh; she was trying not to break down while Barton was there.

It was raining gently and she went to the door to feel the damp, cool air on her face. Around her the valley lay in darkness. Great through the mists. No sound and yet he was in some ill-defined hole. broke the stillness except the way much above the other mounc' the rain. A great weight seemed to lie on her breast as she stood more than he ever did. finding human habitation.

woods.

Two years had passed since Phil Bennett brought his bride to this he met Rose and loved her. cottage in the forest-clad mountains. was to be only a temporary home, half aloud. "Poor child!" and she had played at camping out The next day passed wearily en-with light heart and abundant hope. ough for Rose Bennett. She had This was the story. Steve Barton, wakened, much later than usual, he had boundless confidence. Then, room.

D

Californian, with his keen wits and "Forgive me, dear, I have not meant his frank manner, he had offered him to be cruel.' a half interest in the venture, and The mine was more than a mile bris of the last shot was scattered a start of surprise that lover into the far west with blind river valley, and had been hoping himself, safe and sound. confidence, never doubting for an in- ever since to build one for himself No one saw the white figure $(1 + 1)^{1/2}$

town where he had found her. Her little clock struck seven did she feel father would give him work in his at all anxious. Then a panic of store. He supposed he should spend the rest of his life-God help him! -selling calico and ribbons over c counter; he who had been free as a

counter; he who had been free as a bird all these years, drifting from camp to camp, prospecting, mining, blacksmithing, doing whatever came handiest to do, and always winning the liking and respect of the rough, unschooled, intelligent miners with whom he had lived. Phil Bennett's father, a man of good family and education, had drift-

good family and education, had drift- The starlight shone but dimly ed west with the earliest gold-seekers and failing to find the fortune be sought, had never gone back. After turn in the winding road reached, many years he married a pretty Spa-nish girl, who died when Philip was born, leaving the boy only her dark beauty and her warm southern tem-meet the road higher up the mounbeauty and her warm southern tem-perament. The father, discouraged, heart-broken, old before his time, liv-ed till the lad was twenty. The years were spent on a lonely ranch in the Sierras, where Philip ran wild in the forest, hunted deer and quail and grouse with his father's anti-quated fire-arms, fished for trout in the clear water of the snow-fed ri-vers, learned to wash gravel scienti-fically and to know a good prospect fically and to know a good prospect fox was yelping in the dense brush when he saw one, and very incident- below the trail.

manzanita or chaparral, reading Ivan- built over the entrance to the tunhoe and Tom Brown and David Cop- nel, where she knew they had been perfield. Of the writers of the day he knew nothing. Politics was a matter of indifference—the world a vague dream. He had never been she felt for a candle, lighted it at the pines loomed up like ghosts inside a schoolhouse or a church, dying fire, and started into the black through the mists. No sound and yet he was in some ill-defined hole

wehing of the river and the drip tainerers, though they realized it one, with many cross-cuts and short drifts, each the monument of some to lie on her breast as she stood there, trying to realize that one on a wandering life of adventure. to the main adit by following the car might go for miles and miles He saw cities and hated them cor- track, for she knew that increasing straight into that darkness without dially, longing for the freedom of the shortness of funds had necessitated Once he wandered as far the taking up of every foot of rail in east as Kansas, and that was where the deserted branches.

he met Rose and loved her. When he came back to Rose in his and her candle fell hissing into the She had laughed at it then. It had reverie, Philip's mood changed. Some- water of the drain, leaving her in She made one desperate effort to seemed as amusing to her as it did thing bitter and rebellious disappear- that absolute darkness which one realize again his cruelty and her natural to him to be living in two ed from his face, leaving a beautiful needs to go hundreds of feet under unhappiness-in vain. She was quite rooms and a lean-to, without any tenderness behind. earpets on her floors. Of course it "Poor child!" he said to himself, stretched hanhs she groped her way there was something so vast and serthe tunnel, and she stopped short, and out of place. to gazing at the picture in front of her. hard earnings of forty years in a scrawled on a bit of wrapping pa-quartz claim in whose possibilities per lay on the table in the living- in the flickering light of a dozen night was cold, the took a



ton's sanguine expectations

snow, so deep that she had to learn wife. the use of snow-shoes; spring again and summer with the sweet hot smell awake half the night.

At the end of the first year Rose the mine and take her home. games of chance. Phil's father had with a cold breakfast. ism to the whole project, were fast to sing a little to herself. changing a happy girl to a worn and silent woman.

something soon now, and then you'll forget all this waiting."

The eager conversation in the next of canned food, tired of the eternal the gray burro to bring her the mine was utterly gone and she half an hour. felt a dumb fury in her heart at the thought of the wasted time and How interminable the day strength and money.

Phil's chair. Her eyes were full of of anything to say.

He feels quite encouraged by looks of things in Boundary Adit to- er. night. not wonder if we broke into some-er. thing most any-Why, Rose!" mou

vife, white to the lips, shook the the day. tears, from her eyes

'Phil Bennett, I hate your mineshall not speak to you again till you stove. She began to wonder Without waiting for kim to answer, she went into her tiny bedroom, saut the door, undressed in the dark, and lay, with wretched wide-open listening to the monotonous patter of the rain on the roof.

The fire went out in the livingroom and the candle burned to its socket before Philip stirred. He shivered then, for the chill of the spring night had settled in the room. His face had lost its boyish look and grown suddenly careworn and b ad "d. Folding the maps and drawtable drawer. He had come to his decision. To-morrow he would talk it over with his partner, and tell him he had decided to quit. Barwould be angry, disappointed, but

was nothing to one who had spent Month after month had passed. his life among the mountains, but it felt her way back through the black gether in the light of the rising sun. The rains came and the flumes were necessitated his absence at noon, and night of the tunnel. clogged with falling leaves; then the the days were terribly long for his

and Bennett, with their two or three she had not known for weeks. The men, were hunting for the exclusive mountains seemed less oppressive. hateful mine-the thought was un- so utterly at peace-I cannot tell Barton had grown graver, and Life became endurable once more, Phil lost flesh and took to lying and she felt bitterly ashamed of her last night's outburst.

She took a kind of penitent pleashad begged her husband to give up ure in cleaning her little house till She it shone. She planned a better suphad not yet learned the fatal fascina- per than usual for Philip, reflecting tion of this most alluring of all regretfully that he had gone away When evbeen a prospector before him and the erything was done, even to the filling blood of the forty-miners was hot in of a big bowl with sweet wild hyahis veins. Another year had nearly cinths for the table, she dressed herpassed. Hope deferred, increasing po- self in a pretty, long-unused white verty, home-sickness, bitter antagon- gown, and sat down to sew, trying in spite of the heavy, hob-nailed

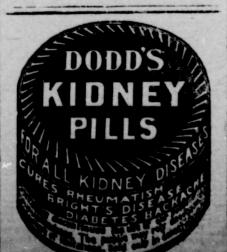
It grew warm as June toward the middle of the day. Little blue but-"Just a little longer, dear," Phil terflies hovered above the drying would say; "We can't help finding mud puddles in the road, and the towhees called softly in the birth thicket

A stranger, coming from the nearleaned wearily against the door post bunch of letters and papers as he looking out into the wet spring night. pa sed, and she read them eagerly, She had suffered patiently so long some of her homesickness coming -she could not bear it any more. back as she lingered over the dear, She was so tired of it all-tired of familiar home details. A boy from the drudgery, tired of the monotony a neighboring ranch came on a liteggs "Wait a little!" Her confidence in and butter and staid to chat for

Still it was only two o'clock. was ! She tried to read, but the silence Roused from her bitter reverie by was so profound that it distracted the sound of a door slamming shut her attention more than a thunderand the splash of feet in muddy pools, storm would have done. She startas Barton picked his way up the ed a letter home, but the only thing mountain road, Rose went back into in her mind could not be written the living room and stood behind and she found it impossible to think

At last she gave up trying to emtears, but he did not look up. "Where were you, Rose?" he asked. ploy herself, and sat waiting, lis-"Barton left his good-night for you. tening to the ticking of the clock the and the rushing of the swollen riv-The minute hand crept twice Country rock's changing - around the dial. The sun had reachdrilling much easier. Look here, dear ed the tops of the pines across the "he was pointing on the survey river. Now it was glowing redly map-"there's a little seam of behind the woods. Now it was be-Now it was glowing redly quartz coming in on the left here, low the hill-crests, and the valley maybe a stringer to the vein. Should lay in shadow. The air grew cool-not wonder if we broke into some er. The shadows crept up the mountain sides till only a circle of He had looked up suddenly. His sunlight, far above her, remained of

Rose lighted the fire in her kitchen and began to prepare her suphate it-I hate it! You care more per, listening for Philip's step the for it than you do for me. I've while with a fast-beating heart. It waited two years with you and ev-ery day you have told me that the Still he did not come. Supper was next day would end the waiting. I ready and everything drying on the what



one heard her as she turned and

endurable!

Adit that night. She must take the trail again, for if she went around morrow, if you like, Rose.

and reach the cottage first. But where was the trail? Surely that they are!" she should have reached it before this. Ah, here at last is the familiar opening between two big manzanitas ! hand on his arm: fore. Things began to s.em unfa-miliar, but she laid it to the dark- Together, silently ness. stop! lay the huge dead trunk of a tree!

have got far below the road.

steps. mountain unfamiliar to her.

Rose had a clear head, and, oremotions, utterly without landmark to guide her, and with no light but here." Philip said. that of the stars, it was not strange farther from the right way. At to the ground. first she hurried on rapidly, confithat awful silence.

For hours she wandered. It must self, breathless, exhausted, sobbing gold-cups. on the ground.

ormous evergreens. The wind brought the pungent odor of tarweed "les under her face and hands. Gra- night!" dually fright and despair yielded to the mental and physical weariness

that overcame her. She lay quite still, listening to the gentle, wild music of the light wind in the ever-How the stars shone and ite spreading roots.

"After all." she mused drowsilv. "what can harm me here? I will

In the violent reaction from her ter- know why, but last night I learned

ror, all the dead pain and resent- to love the woods and the mountains Rose's passionate despair had van- ment of the night before leaped to as I never did before. They and I with the wilderness of rare flowers, ished with the night, and the return life again in her heart. That Phi- have been like strangers all these of blue sky and sunshine filled her lip had utterly forgotten her - had months, even when I saw their beauof the pines in the air. Still Barton with new courage and a cheerfulness leit her to her loneliness and anx- ty, but last night they seemed to iety, oblivious of everything but that take me close to them, and I felt

mountain boots she wore, her feet where we will build our house some slipped again and again. The trail day. I know it's miles from) the had never been half so steep be- mine and from water and everything

Then-she came to an abrupt They were standing on the broad Directly across her pathway level crest of the mountain. Below room came to her disjointedly as she est town, stopped to hand her a Where was she? She stooped and long, gentle slope, carpeted with the felt the ground. It was covered with dull green of the tar-weed, and flushpine-needles-no sign of the rocky ed here and there with rose-pink cluspath. Bewildered, the sat down on ters of wild phlox. Brakes were the log to think. Yes, she must have unrolling their pale green fronds evmissed the trail, but she could not erywhere, under the great trees that

The rise was considerable, fires. Here and there an oak, hung and she was soon out of breath; with balls of mistletoe, was burstbut still she pushed on, growing ing into leaf. To the right, bemore and more confused as she climb- tween the trees, shone the far-away ed higher and higher up the slope snowy heights of the upper Sierras. without finding the road. In fact To the left, one wooded range sucshe had passed just outside the arc ceeded another, growing bluer and of one of its sudden turns, and was dimmer in the distance, till they slopnow far above it, on a part of the ed down to the broad valley of the

dinarily, a strong sense of locality; like a low bank of clouds, hardly but to-night, dazed by conflicting distinguishable above the horizon.

that she wandered ever farther and Rose stopped suddenly, and stooped

dent of finding the road directly; ing, yet with a depth of passionate then misgivings assailed her and earnestness in her voice, "what does she stopped, undecided, only to plunge it matter if we never find the gold recklessly on again, thinking any- that's inside the earth, when it waits thing better than to stand still in outside for our gathering, whole

have been long after midnight when childish delight, one of those exoui-she finally stopped, and threw her site little tulips of the hills called

It was an open, park-like place stretched hand, looked at it thoughtwhere she had reached, entirely free fully, and thrust it carefully into a from underbrush, but shaded by en- buttonbole of his woollen blouse. say that you will take me home !" wis keeping him, but not until the to her nostrils, and she could feel "I had quite forgotten to tell you, the dry smooth carpet of pine-pee- we struck the ledge in Boundary last

rest and wait for Philip to find me." Philip! The name recalled the whole miserable series of events to ber mind. She had forgotten every-to the task of performing a make

