

What Happened to Hoag

BY

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A NOVELETTE in a Series of Printed Moving Pictures. The story of how Martin Hoag went up against a Prussian Efficiency System and what happened to him. Last week's series introduced Hoag, Henry Markham, his boss, who believed business was a jungle, and Helen Munro, who believed in Hoag, but got her salary from Markham.

(Continued from last week.)

IV.

GIVING Directions About the New Factory System in the Office of Markhams Ltd.: "Miss Munro, you will work out all the details. See that Mr. Hoag



gets a complete copy. I expect him to put it into effect—immediately."

Each of the final words became a sort of thick scream. Markham was the jungle beast in his behavior about the system. His door and Miss Munro's he purposely kept open so that the staff of girls might hear the great co-ordinator bellowing his orders down to the last detail of a system for the office.

Helen concealed her anger. Markham sometimes treated her as a cog. This time he had a double reason. The system was aimed at Hoag. Helen was a friend of Hoag. She was to work out the details. A characteristic Markham piece of cruelty. She felt glad he was going away for three weeks; to the newspapermen—

"Oh, just a ripshin over the rocks—camp and fish and so on," he said with a heavy laugh. "No inside stories. No business. Just—my holiday. Eh?"

Helen knew differently. It was a mine; a chaos of iron up in the rocks, more to Markham than a million Hoags; a cycle of big interests—ore, a new railroad, ore harbor, ship lines, water-powers, smelters—and he of all men had the audacity to tackle it! She called him an ugly overbearing brute; a merciless master of efficiency. Then she glanced at a map of the north.

She saw in a mental vista—all that wild land becoming a throb of production.

Henry Markham, leather-jacketed, big-booted over the rocks; the co-ordinator; the creator of wealth:

Then she smiled in the glow of the brick fireplace on the Persian rug and the flowers.

V.

ALTHOUGH Markham's estimate of Hoag was that of a hair on a dog, Hoag as he scanned the new office system reflected that he had as much brains as his boss, only a different kind. Everything in the system

was precisely what he had studied to avoid.

"Fact is," he communed with himself in his sentry-box opposite Helen Munro's office, "it would make him feel like a child even to try my way. I succeed where he would fail. He wants me to fail. Hence this card-index."

Scanning the columns up and down and across, with a niche for each girl's name and totals opposite, the grand total at the bottom being the units of energy in letters, invoices, etc., all the girls combined put into a day's work, he restrained himself from crumpling it into a pellet for the waste basket and taking his hat and coat.

"I—Martin Hoag," quoth he, gazing out at his corps of girls, "am to be eliminated. In my place goes a cost-and-efficiency sheet for every day. He sits in there, if he happens to be in town, knowing at a glance the average earning power, cost and net profit of every human soul on his docket."

Savagely as he mumbled Hoag scrawled on a paper some queer kind of totem-pole hieroglyphic, which he smiled to observe resembled rather grotesquely a human face. Not Markham's; not Helen Munro's; not his own. Whose? Oddly impressed with



some almost occult resemblance he took it along with the curve-of-efficiency sheet out among the clacking typewriters. Slowly, moving like a pastor among his flock, he went to a far corner where seeming almost alone, was the desk of a pale little shard of a girl, whose name was Elsie Carnovan.

"Elsie," he said quickly as her machine stopped, "how many letters have you done to-day?"

Big, burning eyes gazed up from a face that seemed thinner than his own except when it was flushed as it was now.

"Forty-one—and seven invoices, sir."

"One of your good days, I see. To-morrow you may do less than half as much. How long have you been here?"

"Seven months next week, sir."

"And you haven't increased your output. No, I never wanted you to. How is your mother?"

"Better to-day, Mr. Hoag. But she's never up more than an hour or two a day."

Elsie's mother was a widow, and Elsie her only child, living in a dingy house over by the tracks and across an overhead bridge. Hoag had been there once. Suddenly he placed on her desk the scrawled sketch he had made. She laughed.

"Surely you didn't mean that to look like me, Mr. Hoag?"

He held up the cost-and-efficiency chart. Shaking his head he turned away; some of the girls giggled, and as he drifted back into his sentry-box he muttered,

"She'll hate it. But the hate won't stimulate her as it will me. She lives on appreciation."

Bells down street. Slowly, some of them lingering at the desks to finish something, the girls went to get their wraps. This hubbub of going home was daily music to Hoag, who knew almost every voice. Usually, the last thing drifting in from the elevator going down was a chorus of "Good-night, Mr. Hoag!" No doubt some of them said "Hoag" when he wasn't listening; he supposed so. But he liked them all just in that old-fashioned Sunday-School way; he knew he was getting an average good day's work out of each of them; and there were twenty-five girls in that crowd ready to ease up the labors of somebody else by doing half an hour or so overtime. So he had taught them.

Silly sentimentalist! Where did he get this notion that work is built on enthusiasm, on music if need be? Not from Markham's, Ltd. And from this day forth that regime was ended. Hoagism to be eliminated, along with Elsie Carnovan, whose phantom form was almost the last to leave, just drifting out—

"Good-night, Mr. Hoag!"

And then he switched off the light.

Hoag was alone with the memory of his girls.

VI.

LOW street sounds came vibrating in along with the shadow of the lights. One room opening off the office was in a warm glow. It was Helen Munro's office.

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