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THE REPORT OF THE PERSON NAMED IN

Want to be strong?

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Put up in two sizes, the regular package and the large family size, which is more convenient for those who do not Dive in town. The large package con-Bairs a piece of handsome china for the

SILENCED THE BORE

Let me see, vawned the man wh generally bought a box of matche nd ate a quart of prunes and loafe round the corner grocery an hour am interested in naval affair Which is the strongest fort in you stimation?

'Roquefort,' blurted out the exasp rated grocer, 'Roquefort chees Anything else you would like to kno efore I tap a barrel of herring?

THOSE GOTHAM SHARKS.

? How did your like the town, Hi Hiram Hardapple-'Got bunkeed gosh. Some smart shap said fe quarter he'd direct me to the Flaton building, where they made flat ons, and when I got there I couldn't ouy a flatiron to save me life, be gesh! | Hps.

irst visit to Florida.

'Maud-'How do you know?' Is she lling everybody that she is going to Palm Beach? '

Mildred-'No, she is teiling them that she is going to Fawlm Beach."



father, the crotchety old soldier whose absurd sense of duty and whose elaborate southern courtesy had become a byword in the south. He told her pieces of the Burrell plate, beautiful eirlooms of sentiment that mark the honor of high blooded houses, following which there was much to recount of the Meades, from the admiral who fought as a boy in the bay of Tripoli down to the cousin who was at Annapolis, the while his listener hung upon his words hungrily, her mind so quick in pursuit of his that it spurred him unconsciously, her great, dark eyes haff closed in silent laughter or wide with wonder, and in them always the warmth of the leaping firelight, blended with the trust of a newborn virginal love.

Then he began to laugh silently. "What is it?" she said curiously.

what my straitlaced ancestors would say if they could see me now."
"What do you mean?" the girl asked

in open eyed wonderment.
"I don't care," he went on, unheed-

ing her question. "They did worse things in their time, from what I hear." leaned forward to draw her to

"Worse things! But we are doing nothing bad," said Necia, holding him off. "There's no wrong in loving."
"Of course not," he assured her.

"I am proud of it," she declared. "It is the finest thing, the greatest thing, that has ever come into my life. Why, I simply can't hold it. I want to sing it to the stars and cry it out to the whole world. Don't you?"

"I hardly think we'd better advertise," he said dryly. "Why not?"

"Well, I shouldn't care to publish the tale of this excursion of ours. Would

"I don't see any reason against it. I have often taken trips with Poleon and been gone with him for days and

"But you were not a woman then," he said softly.
"No, not until today, that's true.

Dear, dear, how I did grow all of a sudden! And yet I'm just the same as I was yesterday, and I'll always be the same, just a wild little. Please don't ever let me be a big tame. I don't want to be commonplace and ordinary. I want to be natural-and

"You couldn't be like other women." he declared, and there was more tenderness than hunger in his tone now as she looked up at him trustingly from the shelter of his arms. "It would spoil you to grow up."

"It is so good to be alive and to love you like this!" she continued dreamily, staring into the fire. "I seem to have come out of a gloomy house into the glory of a warm spring day, for my eyes are blinded, and I can't see half the beautifuls I want to, there are so "Those are my arms," interjected the

soldier lightly in an effort to ward off her growing seriousness.

"I've never been afraid of anything, and yet I feel so safe inside them.

The young man became conscious of vague discomfort and realized dimly that for hours now he had been smothering with words and caresses a something that had striven with him to be heard, a something that instead of dying grew stronger the more utterly this innocent maid yielded to him. It was as if he had ridden impulse with rough spurs in a flerce desire to distance certain voices and in the first mad gallop had lost them, but now far back heard them calling again more strongly every moment. A man's honold may travel feebly, but its pursuit is persistent. It was the talk about his people that had raised this uneasiness and indecision, he thought.

Why had he ever started it? "The marvelous part of it all," conthrued the girl, "is that it will never end. I know I shall love you always. Do you suppose I am really different from other girls?"

"Everything is different tonight—the whole world," he declared impatiently. "I've had a big handicap," she said, but you must help me to overcome it. I want to be like your sister."

He rose and piled more wood upon

the fire. What possessed the girl? It was as if she knew each cunning joint of his armor, as if she had realized her peril and had set about the awakening of his conscience deliberately and with cautious wisdom beyond her years. Well, she had done it, and he swore to himself. Then he melted at the sight of her, crouched there against the shadows, following his every movement with her soul in her eyes, the tenderest trace of a smile upon her

When she beheld him gazing at her she tilted her head sideways daintily, "Oh, my! What a fierce you are all

Her smile flashed up as if illumined by the leaping blaze, and he crossed quickly, kneeling beside ber.

He I'led up a great sweet scented

couch of springy boughs and fashioned her a pillow out of a bundle of smaller ones, around which he wrapped his laced boots and, taking her tiny feet, one in the palm of either hand, bowed his head over them and kissed them with a sense of her gracious purity and his own unworthiness. He spread one of the big gray blankets over her and tucked her in, while she sighed in delightful languor, looking up at him all the time.

"I'll sit here beside you for awhile." ne said. "I want to smoke a bit."

At times a great desire to feel her to his arms, to have her on his breast, surged over him, for he had lived long apart from women, and the solitude of the night seemed to mock him. He was a strong man, and in his veins ran the blood of wayward forbears who were wont to possess that which they conquered in the lists of love, mingled with which was the blood of spirited southern women who had on casion loved not wisely, according to Kentucky rumor, but only too well. Nevertheless they were honest men and women, if oversentimental, and had transmitted to him a heritage of chivalry and a high sense of honor and courage. Her love had placed a barrier between them greater and more insurmountable than her blood,

He gently withdrew his fingers from her grasp and, seeing the other side of the wickiup, covered himself over without disturbing her and fell asleep It was early dawn when Necia crept

"I dreamed you had gone away." she said, shivering violently and drawing close. "Oh, it was a terrible awaken-

"I was too tired to dream," he said. "So I had to come and see if you were really here."

He quickly rekindled the fire, and they made a hasty breakfast. Before the warmth of the rising sun had pen-etrated the cold air they had climbed the ridge and obtained a wondrous view of broken country, the hills alight with the morning rays, the valleys misty and mystical.

"I wish Stark was not one of Lee's party," he said once. "He may misunderstand our being together this way. "But when he learns that we love

each other that will explain everything." "I am not so sure. He doesn't know you as Lee and Poleon and your fa-ther do. I think we had better say

nothing at all about-you and me-to They clung to the divide for several

hours, then descended into the bed of a stream, which they followed until it joined a larger one a couple of miles below, and there, sheltered in a grove of whispering firs, they found Lee's cabin nestling in a narrow, forked val-

"There's no one here." said Necia gleefully. "We've beat them in! We've beat them in!"

They had been walking rapidly since dawn, and, although Burrell's watch showed 2 o'clock, she refused to halt for lunch, declaring that the others might arrive at any moment, so down they went to the lower end of "No Creek" Lee's location, where Burrell blazed a smooth spot on the downon at Necia's dictation. When he had finished she signed her name, and he



witnessed it, then paced off 440 steps, squared a spruce tree, which she marked: "Now you stake the one below

mine," she said. "It's just as good and maybe better. Nobody can tell." But "I'm not going to stake anything,"

"You must!" she cried quickly, the sparkle dying from her eyes. "You said you would, or I never would have

"I merely said I would come with you," he corrected. "I did not promise to take up a claim, for I don't think I ought to do so. If I were a civilian it would be different, but this is governmeat land, and I am a part of the gov-

ermnent, as it were. Then, too, in addition to the question of my right to do it, there would be the certainty of making enemies of your people, old No Creek' and the rest, and I can't afford that now."

All arguments and pleading were in vain. He remained obdurate and insisted on her locating two other claims creeks where they came together above

"But nobody ever stakes more than

one claim on a gulch," objected the girl. "It's a custom of the miners." "Then we'll call each one of these branches a different and separate creek," he said. "The gold was carried down one of those smaller streams, and we won't take any chances on which one it was."

CHAPTER VIL

THE MAGIC OF BEN STARK. EFORE the party came in sight the sound of their voices reached the cabin, and Burrell rose nervously and sauntered to the door. Uncertain how this affair might terminate, he chose to get first look at his enemies, if they should prove to be such, realizing the advantage that goes to a man who stands squarely on both feet. Then he heard

"Well, I'll be d-d! Somebody's

-We've been beaten!" growled Stark anerily, pushing past him and coming around the corner, an ugly look in his

"Good afternoon," Burrell nodded pleasantly.

Lee answered him unintelligibly. Stark said nothing, but Runnion's ex-

clamation was plain. "It's that cursed blue belly!" "When did you get here?" said Stark

after a pause.
"A few hours ago."

"How did you come?" asked Lee.
"Black Bear creek," said the soldier curtly, at which Runnion broke into

"Better hush." Burrell admonished "There's a lady inside." And at that instant Necia showed her laughing face under his arm, while the trader uttered her name in amaze-

"Lunch is ready," she said. "We've been expecting you for quite awhile. "Ba gar! Dat's funny t'ing for sure," said Poleon, "Who tol' you bout dis strike, eh?"

"Mother. I made her," the girl an-"Take off your packs and come in,"

Burrell invited, but Stark strode for-"Hold on a minute. This don't look good to me. You say your mother told you. I suppose you're Old Man Gale's

Necla nodded. "What time of day was it when you learned about this?" "Cut that out!" roughly interjected

Gale. "Do you think I double crossed The other turned upon him. "It looks that way, and I intend to find out. You said yesterday you

hadn't told anybody."
"I didn't think about the woman,"

said the trader, a trifle disconcerted, whereupon Runnion gave vent to an

"But here's your girl and this man ahead of us. I suppose there's others on the way too."

"Nonsense!" Burrell cut in "I call it sleeck work," chuckled the Canadian, slipping out of his straps. "De nex' tam' I go stampedin' 1 tak'

you 'long, Necla."
"Me, too," said Lee. "And now I'm goin' to tear into some of them beans

I smell a-bilin' in yonder." The others followed, although Stark and Runnion looked black and had little to say. It was an uncomfortable meal. Every one was ill at ease. Gale in particular was quiet and ate less than any of them. His eyes sought Stark's face frequently, and once the blood left his cheeks and his eyes blazed as he observed the gambler

boldly eying Necia. "You are a mighty good looking girl for a 'blood,' " remarked Stark at last, "Thank you," she replied simply, and the soldier's dislike of the man crystallized into hate on the instant. There was a tone back of his words that seemed aimed at the trader, Meade thought, but Gale showed no sign of it, so the neal was finished in sitence, after which the five belated prospectors went out to make their locations, for the fear of interruption was upon

them now. First they went downstream, and, according to their agreement, the trador staked first followed by Poleon and Stark, thus throwing Runnion's claim more than a mile distant from Lee's discovery. From here they went up the creek to find the girl's other locations, one on each branch, at which Stark sneeringly remarked that she ad pre-empted enough ground for a full grown white woman.

utterings, addressing himself to l'oleon and Stark while the trader was out of enrebot.

This affair don't smell right, and I still think it's a frame-up."

"The old man sent the girl on ahead of us to blanket all the good ground, That's what be did!" "Wait wan minuit," interrupted Po-

leon, his voice as soft as a woman's. "I tol' you dat I know all bout dis Black Bear creek too. You member, ch? Waal, mebbe you t'ink I'm traitor too? W'at? W'y don' you spik out?' The three of them were alone, and only the sound of Gale's ax came to them, but at the light in the Canadian's face Runnion hastily disclaimed

Stark shrugged his denial.

There are men quite devoid of the ability to read the human face, and Runnion was of this species. Moreover, malice was so bitter in his mouth that he must have it out. So when they paused to blaze the next stake he addressed himself to Stark loud enough for Poleon to hear.

"That lieutenant is more of a man

than I thought he was."
"How so?" inquired the older man. "Well, it takes nerve to steal a girl for one night and then face the father, but the old man don't seem to mind it any more than she does. I guess he knows what it means, all

Stark laughed raucously "That's probably how Gale got his squaw," concluded Runnion, with a

It seemed a full minute before the Frenchman gave sign that he had heard; then a strange cry broke from his throat, and he began to tremble as if with cold. He was no longer the singer of songs or the man who was forever a boy. The mocking anger of a moment ago was gone. In its place was a consuming fury that sucked the blood from beneath his tan, leaving month twitched and his head rolled slightly from side to side like a palsied old man's. But evidently Poleon meant no violence, for he allowed the passio to run from him freely until to

spent its vigor, then said to Runnion; "Semebody goin' die for w'at you say tus' now. Mebbe it's goin' be you m'sieu; mebbe it's goin' can't tell yet, but I'm hope an' pray it's goin' be you, biccause I t'ink w'at you say is a lie, an' nobody can spik

dose kin' of lie 'bout Necia Gale.' He went crashing blindly through the underbrush, his head wagging, his shoulders slumped loosely forward like those of a drunken man, his lips framing words they could not understand.

When he had disappeared Runnion drew a deep breath. "I guess I've framed something for

Mr. Burrell this time." "You go about it queer," said Stark.
"I'd rather tackle a gang saw than a mau like Poleon Doret. Your frame-

"Huh! No chance. The soldier was out all night alone with that half breed girl, and anybody can see she's crazy about him. What's the answer?' Have you got your eye on her too?"

"Sure! Do you blame me?"
"No, but she's too good for you. Better stay out," the gambler advised. As a matter of fact, I don't like her father any better than you like her

"Wet:, it's mutual. I can see Gale

hates you like poison." "and I don't intend to see him and his tribe hog all the best ground here-'They've already done it. You can't

stop them.

"Yes, I can stop them," said Stark. "I want the ground that girl has staked, and I'm going to get it. next to Lee's, and it's sure to be rich. Ours is so far away it may not be worth the recorder's fees. This creek may be as spotfed as a coach dog, so I don't intend to take any chances.'

"She made her locations legally," said Runnion. "You leave that to me. When will

the other boys be here?" "Tomorrow morning. I told them to follow about four hours behind and not to run in on us till we had finished. They'll camp a few miles down the

creek and be in early." "You couldn't get but three, eh?" "That's all I could find who would

agree to give up half." "Can we count on them?" "Huh!" the other grunted. "They worked with me and Soapy Smith on

the Skagway trail." "Good-five against three, not counting the girl and the lieutenant," Stark mused. "Well, that will do it." He outlined his plan; then the two returned to the cabin to find Lee cook-

Poleon had finished several pipes and after supper sat in the shadows in the open doorway apparently tired and dejected, though his eyes shone like diamonds and roved from one to the other. Half unconsciously he heard

Stark saying: "This girl was about your size, but not so dark. However, you remind me of her in some ways. That's why it puts her in my mind, I suppose. She was about your age at the time-nine-

"Oh I'm not eighteen vet." said Ne-

"Well, she was a fine woman anyhow, the best that ever set foot in Chandon, and there was a great deal of talk when she chose young Bennett over the Gaylord man, for Bennett had been running second best from the start, and everybody thought it one. However, they were married

The story did not interest the Cana-Runnion's displeasure was even more dian. His mind was in too great agiopen, and he fell into foul mouthed tation to care for dead tales. His tation to care for dead tales. His heart burned within him too fiercely, and be felt too areat a desire to put his hands to work. As he watched Carrell and Runnion bend over the table looking at a little can of gold fust that Lee had taken from u is bunk his eyes grew red and blood-hot beneath his but brias. Which one of the two would it he? he wondered. rom the corner of his eye he saw e rise from Lee's bed, where he Let biretched thuself to smoke, and take his six absoler from his belt, then remove the knotted bandanna from his neck and begin to clean the his head lowed over it earnestly. is face in the Fladow. He had ever

d and Letherland man-(Note continued)