

Poor Man's Gold

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WNU Service.

SYNOPSIS

Jack Hammond, gold prospector, returns to Prince Rupert after a spree in Seattle and learns that a gold rush is starting as a result of some careless remarks he had dropped at a party concerning a gold discovery. He finds that his partner, McKenzie Joe Britten, has gone on north to protect their claims. Besieged, Hammond decides to tell the would-be prospectors how to reach the new gold fields. Around the World Annie, a frontier dance hall proprietor, has assembled a troupe of girls and is bent on starting a dance hall at the new camp. Jack muses about Kay Joyce, the girl in Seattle whom he loves and to whom he confided the secret of his gold strike. Going to his lawyer's office, he passes a young girl on the stairs. Jack asks Barstow the lawyer about the girl and learns that she is a volunteer client. Jack tells him about Kay. Timmy Moon, a mutual acquaintance, had brought them together. Kay was chilly at first, but when she saw some of his gold nuggets they got along beautifully. He had met her mother and a friend of the family, Bruce Kenning, a geologist. Sergeant Terry of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police joins the gold-seekers on their trip north. Jack encounters the girl, Jeanne Towers, and she asks him to lend her a team of dogs and supplies. He consents. The next day the trek to the new bonanza begins. Later, on the trail, Jeanne is lost and Hammond saves her. The gold seekers arrive and the new camp is soon in full swing. Hammond and Joe have a secret theory that the real gold find will not be on the present site of the Big Moose river but, on its prehistoric bed, which they are seeking. Kenning turns up with messages from Seattle. Springtime comes. Then an airplane arrives bearing Kay, her mother and Timmy Moon, the aviator. McKenzie Joe is moody. While they are eating at the "Slumgullion" Jeanne Towers appears. She and Kay dislike each other at first sight and she sits by herself. Kay urges Jack to take Kenning into his confidence about his operations.

CHAPTER IV—Continued

"Women are right sometimes," Mrs. Joyce added. Timmy fussed with his knife and fork.

"Wish that Yellow Peril would bring on the steak. I'm going to eat the tablecloth in a minute."

"It'll be along," Hammond answered, glad of the change of conversation. "I'll try to get hold of that Chinaman—"

He raised his head, looking about the shabby restaurant, only to pause as the door opened and a young man entered, paused a moment, then started forward at the sight of Hammond's party. He was a man Jack had not seen before, once well built, but now somewhat fallen away, as though his clothing did not fit, or an inactive life had robbed a frame once well filled by the outdoors. The sagging extended to his features, deep lines about his mouth, a thickness of the cheeks at each side of his nose. He raised a cigarette to his lips with a jerky movement, then snapped the arm quickly down at his side. Now he hesitated, as if wondering whether or not to interrupt. At last he decided against further approach and turned again to the door.

Hammond saw him glance toward the corner where Jeanne Towers sat and stiffen as though with surprise. Then he heard a sound from the corner, half gasp, half scream, that was smothered almost before it began. For an instant the two stared, as if each were petrified by the other's presence. Then the young man swung out the door, and Jeanne Towers, fighting mightily to pretend unconcern, returned to her meager meal.

CHAPTER V

An hour later, Hammond saw the man again. The meal was finished and Jack was strolling through the camp with his guests; Kay had announced a tremendous interest in everything about her; she could not wait until morning, she said.

So now, picking their way along the dark passageways and trails which passed as streets, Hammond had done his best to give a picture of the place, its beginnings, its hopes. At last, tired, they had turned homeward, Timmy Moon lagging somewhat in the rear. Glancing back, Hammond saw the dim form of a man follow the aviator for a few moments—at last halting him. Timmy was late reaching the cottage.

"Where've you been?" asked Kay. The pilot grinned.

"A fellow wanted me to make a trip for him."

"That man who came into the Slumgullion?" Hammond asked. Timmy nodded. Kay Joyce shrugged her shoulders.

"How far is it from here to Wrangell?" asked Timmy.

"To where?" Kay was yawning. "Wrangell, Alaska," Jack supplied. "It's about a hundred miles, air line."

"That's okay," said Timmy. "Fifty cents a mile; a hundred bucks for the round trip. Say," he queried, "there's a part of this lake that dips over on the Alaskan side of the line, isn't there?"

"Yes."

"Mind pointing it out to me?"

"Now?" asked Hammond.

"Sure. I'll be making an early get-away in the morning. Let's go outside."

"Well," said Kay, with another yawn, "if there's anything to see, let's take a look at it. Come on, Mother."

Mrs. Joyce laid aside her green cigarette holder and with that queer, coldly acquiescent mood which seemed a part of her, joined the rest of the group on the tiny veranda. The moon had risen, shimmering the great expanse of Sapphire lake, lying now like an irregular plate of silver between rugged mounds of black velvet.

"It's an inlet, over there to the right," Hammond said. "Land on that and you'll be safe."

"Safe?" broke in Kay, with a little laugh. "From whom?"

"The Mounties. This is a booze trip, isn't it?"

Kay faced the aviator. "Timmy! You haven't gone in for bootlegging already?"

The tone was jesting, but Timmy was tired.

"It isn't against the law to bring liquor from American territory to American territory. I'm not sneaking anything into Canada."

"Who's this fellow who hired you?" Hammond asked. Curiosity pulled hard at him; he was sure



"I'm Making an Early Get-Away in the Morning."

it was the man who had frightened Jeanne Towers. Timmy rubbed his round face.

"Damned if I know. He said his name was Lew Snade. I think he works for Around the World Annie."

Kay laughed, somewhat harshly.

"So that's what becomes of our darling Timmy. He comes into the new, unfettered North and immediately becomes a bootlegger."

It was badly timed. Timmy Moon's nerves were raw, from a long session at the stick.

"Well, at least I'm honest about it. I'm not being a damned pretender!"

"Why, Timmy," asked Kay, with an air of amazement. "Who's pretending?"

"We've all been pretending," said Timmy Moon. Jack caught the scent of liquor on his breath; and evidently Lew Snade, whoever he was, had been generous. "And I'm sick of it. We're up here and let's be honest as to why we're here."

"Timmy!" in the reflected light of the doorway, Hammond saw that the girl's face had gone white; there was rage in her eyes. The aviator did not notice.

"Don't Timmy me!" he exclaimed. "We're all broke and we might as well say we're broke and be done with it!"

"Perhaps you'd better go to bed," said Mrs. Joyce icily.

"I think that's a good idea," Hammond took him by the arm. "Time for us to go, Timmy—"

"Oh, all right." The round little pilot was grinning again. "I didn't mean to start any fireworks."

Hammond pulled him off the veranda and with an effort at a joking good-night to the two women, led him down the trail.

"Sorry I can't put you up in my cabin," he apologized, when they were well along toward town. "But we've only got two bunks there."

"Oh, I couldn't go, anyway. I've got to get out too early." Timmy rubbed his hands over his face. "Wow, how a couple of shots can hit a fellow when he's tired."

"You rather spoke out of turn up there at the house," the miner suggested.

Timmy raised his head, pulling hard for air.

"Yeh, I guess I did," he confessed. "Kay will hate me for that. They've been trying to keep it dark that they haven't got a cent. But everybody in Seattle knows it. If it wasn't for the money that Bruce Kenning slips them, they wouldn't have a thin dime."

Hammond gasped.

"But they've always been the rich people of Seattle!"

"Yeh, with their heads in the air. But they can't hold 'em up any longer down there—that's why they were so glad to get out."

A certain grimness came into Hammond's features.

"Kay doesn't need to worry."

"Sure, not with you."

"Then let's drop the subject," the miner said quietly. "Besides, here's your flop joint."

Timmy Moon hiccupped.

"God!" he exclaimed, looking at the outlines of the log-cabin bed-house, with its bear-tallow candle flickering behind a mosquito-net window.

Hammond slapped him on the shoulder.

"Get to bed, Timmy!" he commanded. "You've had a long day."

Then lonely, puzzled, a bit depressed, he went onward toward his dark cabin, where snored McKenzie Joe. This night of nights had not turned out at all the way he had hoped for it.

Morning, however, brought a spirit of gaiety; everybody had been tired and excited the night before, Hammond told himself. Nevertheless, on his way from breakfast, he could not help turning toward the cabin-store of Jeanne Towers; nor could he conceal a certain expression of concern as she began what was meant to be a sprightly conversation about Hammond's guests. Then she turned to the subject of Timmy Moon's airplane.

"It's changed the whole camp!" she exclaimed, rearranging a few containers of dried food on the almost empty shelves. "Everybody's been asking me when I intended to lay in new stock."

"Buy me some tobacco that isn't half hay when you do," Hammond ordered, with a grin. "That's McKenzie's I've been using—he could smoke moose hide."

Jeanne got out a pencil and a sheet of paper; already there was the beginning of quite a list.

"I can't get it for a week or so," she said. "Mr. Moon is booked up until then. I was up early—but the Slumgullion people and the flop-house and the hotel were already ahead of me."

"What's a week?" asked Hammond. "You'll be the merchant queen of Sapphire lake first thing we know."

"I'm afraid I'm getting as bad as you prospectors," came with an uneasy laugh. "I've been wishing for another mining rush."

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She shrugged her shoulders. "Oh, I don't know—the excitement, I guess, the thrill of going somewhere." Then, "I'm sorry. That doesn't sound grateful."

"But this camp hasn't really gotten started." Quickly he asked, "Jeanne, what's bothering you?"

"Spring, maybe."

"Sure?"

She fenced. "What else?"

"Who was that man in the restaurant last night?"

"Oh, that!" she exclaimed, with a smile that for the moment disarmed him. "It was all too silly. I could have sworn I knew him—a boy I'd gone to school with up in—back home!"

"It was a mistake then?"

"Oh, yes. I'd looked up hurriedly—it was just like seeing a ghost. Did you hear me? I almost shrieked. The poor fellow must have thought I'd gone crazy. I did feel like an idiot."

Hammond agreed that it was indeed a silly feeling. Soon he went onward, again to take the trail up to the cottage. But he carried with him an uneasy presentiment that Jeanne Towers had not told the truth.

Kay was waiting for him, as well groomed as if she had come from a beauty parlor. Hammond watched the sun play on her hatless head, as with her mother, they went down the trail. Then at last, on the banks of Loon creek, the man pointed out the claim which he had saved for her, a stretch of gravel extending along the stream near where upturned stones and earth told of the workings held by McKenzie Joe and himself.

"I got them as near mine as I could," he announced.

"And is this a claim?" asked Kay. "Why, it's just the bank of the stream!"

"Look," Hammond answered. All along the creek were evidences of labor. Here and there, disregarding the high water, men labored at the shoveling of earth into long, wooden sluice boxes which, picking up the water from a flume running from a higher point in the stream, carried it downward on a slow decline.

"You just wash it through and it becomes gold?" Kay said curiously. "Isn't that cute?"

"It looks like a day laborer's job to me," her mother reflected.

A shout answered her, from upstream, where the raw-boned Olson and two partners were working. Instantly labor stopped elsewhere. Heads craned. Heads appeared above the higher portions of earth, where the stream temporarily ran between cut banks. Then men began to converge upon the sluice box.

"Let's go up," Hammond exclaimed. "Olson's found something in the clean-up."

"The clean-up?" Kay asked, hurrying beside him. Mrs. Joyce followed somewhat in their wake, glancing acridly about her, a woman who seldom smiled, who seldom gave interest, yet who seemed always to be weighing everything within her range. Hammond turned to explain.

"Yes, the clean-up. You see, those long wooden chutes are called sluice boxes. They've got cleats across the bottom, called riffles. The dirt is shoveled in at the top and is carried along by the water. The dirt and light gravel flow on out. Anything heavier settles behind those riffles."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Detection of Virus Is an Aid in Fight on Colds; Coloring Makes Germs Visible

An important step toward conquering the common cold is reported to have been made by Dr. Kurt Herzberg, of Dusseldorf, writes a Berlin United Press correspondent in the Philadelphia Inquirer.

For the first time, it is said, the infinitesimal virus bodies causing colds, influenza, smallpox and other diseases have been photographed, after Dr. Herzberg succeeded in making them visible by coloring them with blue. Thus it has been made possible to study the activities of the virus bodies.

By his coloration method, Dr. Herzberg has discovered that the virus bodies are so small that they can slip through a cell wall, after which

they multiply rapidly into thousands. Eventually the cell becomes overloaded and bursts, the bodies spreading into other cells of the body and continuing their unhealthy work.

It further was discovered that influenza was caused by the presence of both virus bodies and a certain bacillus. The bacillus must be surrounded by virus bodies before it is effective in causing disease.

Scientists had isolated this bacillus found in influenza patients, but were baffled by the fact that the transmission of these bacilli to other people did not convey the sickness.

Smiles

Knowingly?

"Does your husband talk in his sleep?"
"No, and it's terribly exasperating. He just grins."—Omaha World-Herald.

Hardening Him

"What's the idea of poking the broom in the baby's face this morning?"
"I just wanted him to get used to kissing his grandfather."—The Kablegram.

SO THEY GET ALONG



Bragga—Does your wife use your razor to open cans?
Docio—Oh, yes, of course, but I use her best powder puff for a shoe polisher.

Soldiers make good husbands, says Sergeant-Major Sam; they're trained to be tidy. Then why is their dining room always a mess?

Subtlety

A customer sat down at a table in a smart restaurant and tied a napkin around his neck. The scandalized manager called a waiter and instructed him: "Try to make him understand, as tactfully as possible, that that's not done."

Said the thoughtful waiter to the customer: "Pardon me, sir. Shave or haircut, sir?"—The Kablegram.

That Depends

"So you plan to have a little change next summer?"
"If I have a little change next summer."

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One today is worth two tomorrows.—Benjamin Franklin.

Sentinels of Health

Don't Neglect Them!

Nature designed the kidneys to do a marvelous job. Their task is to keep the flowing blood stream free of an excess of toxic impurities. The act of living—life itself—is constantly producing waste matter the kidneys must remove from the blood if good health is to endure. When the kidneys fail to function as Nature intended, there is retention of waste that may cause body-wide distress. One may suffer nagging backache, persistent headache, attacks of dizziness, getting up nights, swelling, puffiness under the eyes—feel tired, nervous, all worn out.

Frequent, scanty or burning passages may be further evidence of kidney or bladder disturbance.

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