THURSDAY, JUNE 11, 1914

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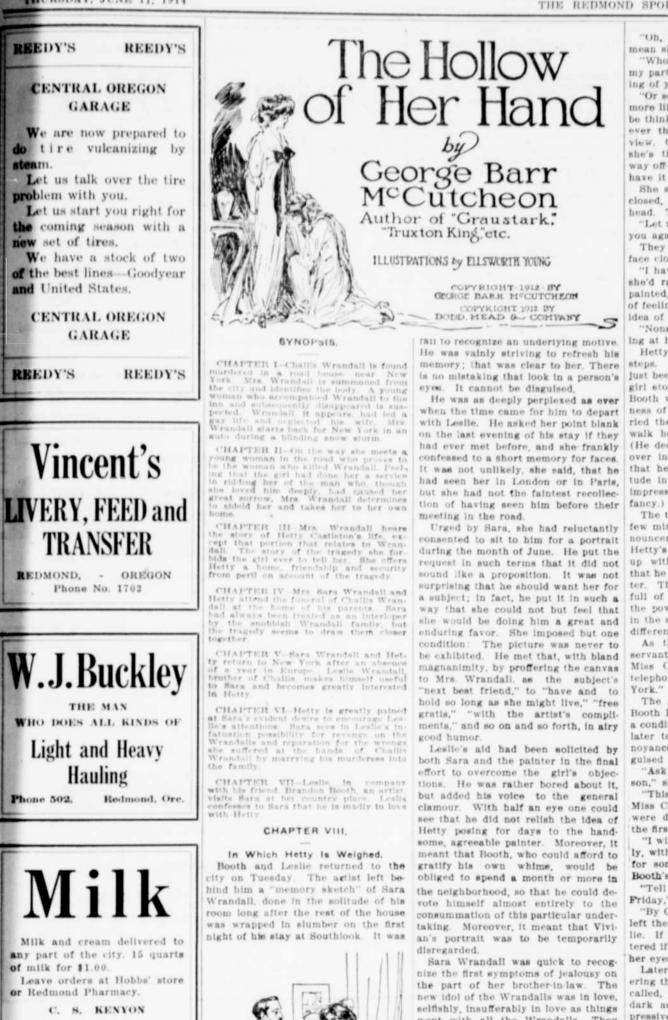
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"Or some chap in old England, that's more like it," he retorted. "She can't be thinking of me, you know. No one ever thinks of me when I'm out of view. Out of sight, out of mind. No; she's thinking of something a long way off-or some one, if you choose to have it that way." She smiled upon him with halfclosed, shadowy eyes, and shook her head. Then she arose. "Let us go in. Hetty is eager to see you again." They started up the terrace. His face clouded.

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"I have had a feeling all along that she'd rather not have this portrait painted, Mrs. Wrandall. A queer sort of feeling that she doesn't just like the idea of being put on canvas."

"Oh, I see," he said slowly.

"Who knows? It was a venture on my part, that's all. She may be think-

mean she's thinking of Leslie."

ing of you, Mr. Booth."

"xou

"Nonsense," she said, without looking at him:

Hetty met them at the top of the steps. The electric porch lights had just been turned on by the butler. The girl stood in the path of the light Booth was never to forget the loveliness of her in that moment. He carwith Leslie. He asked her point blank ried the image with him on the long walk home through the black night. (He declined Sara's offer to send him over in the car for the very reason that he wanted the half-hour of solitude in which to concentrate all the impressions she had made on his The three of them stood there for a

few minutes, awaiting the butler's announcement. Sara's arm was about Hetty's shoulders. He was so taken up with the picture they presented that he scarcely heard their light chatter. They were types of loveliness so full of contrast that he marveled at the power of nature to create women in the same mold and yet to model so differently.

As they entered the vestibule, a servant came up with the word that Miss Castleton was wanted at the telephone, "long distance from New York."

The girl stopped in her tracks. Booth looked at her in mild surprise, a condition which gave way an instant later to perplexity. The look of annovance in her eyes could not be dis guised or mistaken.

'Ask him to call me up later, Watson," she said quietly.

'This is the third time he has called, Miss Castleton," said the man. "You were dressing, if you please, ma'am, the first time-

"I will come," she interrupted sharply, with a curious glance at Sara, who for some reason avoided meeting Booth's gaze.

"Tell him we shall expect him on Friday," said Mrs. Wrandall,

"By George!" thought Booth, as she left them. "I wonder if it can be Leslie. If it is-well, he wouldn't be flattered if he could have seen the look in her eyes.

Later on, he had no trouble in gathering that it was Leslie Wrandall who called, but he was very much in the dark as to the meaning of that expressive look. He only knew that she was in the telephone room for ten minutes or longer, and that all trace of emotion was gone from her face when she rejoined them with a brief apology for keeping them waiting.

He left at ten-thirty, saying good



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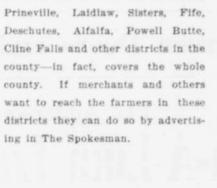
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surprising that he should want her for a subject; in fact, he put it in such a way that she could not but feel that she would be doing him a great and enduring favor. She imposed but one condition: The picture was never to be exhibited. He met that, with bland magnanimity, by proffering the canvas to Mrs. Wrandall, as the subject's "next best friend," to "have and to hold so long as she might live," "free gratis," "with the artist's compliments," and so on and so forth, in airy

Leslie's aid had been solicited by both Sara and the painter in the final effort to overcome the girl's objections. He was rather bored about it, but added his voice to the general clamour. With half an eye one could see that he did not relish the idea of Hetty posing for days to the handsome, agreeable painter. Moreover, it meant that Booth, who could afford to gratify his own whime, would be obliged to spend a month or more in the neighborhood, so that he could devote himself almost entirely to the consummation of this particular undertaking. Moreover, it meant that Vivi-

Sara Wrandall was quick to recognize the first symptoms of jealousy on the part of her brother-in-law. The new idol of the Wrandalls was in love, selfishly, insufferably in love as things went with all the Wrandalls. They hated selfishly, and so they loved. Her husband had been their king. But their king was dead, long live the king! Leslie had put on the family crown-a "little jauntily, perhapscocked over the eye a bit, so to speak

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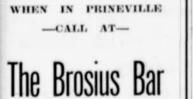


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the touch of inspiration was lacking.

ing the fact.

ure.

his face.

pose of comparison.

first few moments of interest.

too proud to demand it of him.

Sara was delighted. She was flat-

but it was there just the same, annoyingly plain to view.

Sara had tried to like him. He had been her friend, the only one she could claim among them all. And yet, beneath his genial allegiance, she could detect the air of condescension, the bland attitude of a superior who defends another's cause for the reason that it gratifies Nero. She experienced a thrill of malicious joy in contemplating the fall of Nero. He would bring down his house about his head, and there would be no Rome to pay the fiddler.

Brandon Booth took a small cottage terly without the subtle something on the upper road, half way between the village and the home of Sara Wrandall, and not far from the abhorred "back gate" that swung in the teeth of her connections by marriage. tered, and made no pretense of disguis- He set up his establishment in half a day and, being settled, betook himself

The discussion which followed the off to dine with Sara and Hetty. All his household cares, like the world, exhibition of the sketch at luncheon, was very animated. It served to ex- rested snugly on the shoulders of an cite Leslie to such a degree that he Atlas named Pat, than whom there brought forth from his pocket the was no more faithful servitor in all treasured sketch of Hetty, for the pur- the earth, nor in the heavens, for that matter, if we are to accept his own estimate of himself. In any event, he The girl who had been genuinely en-

thusiastic over the picture of Sara, was a treasure. Booth's house was always in order. Try as he would, he and who had not been by way of knowcouldn't get it out of order. Pat's wife ing that the first sketch existed, was covered with confusion. Embarrass. saw to that,

As he swung jauntily down the treement and a shy sense of gratification were succeeded almost at once by a lined road that led to Sara's portals, Booth was full of the joy of living. feeling of keen annoyance. The fact Sara was at the bottom of the terthat the sketch was in Leslie's posrace, moving among the flower beds in session-and evidently a thing to be cherished-took away all the pleasure the formal garden.

At the sound of his footsteps on the she may have experienced during the gravel, Sara looked up and instantly Booth caught the angry flash in her smiled her welcome.

"It is so nice to see you again," she eyes, preceding the flush and unaccountable pallor that followed almost said, giving him her hand.

"'My heart's in the highlands,'" he immediately. He felt guilty, and at the same time deeply annoyed with quoted, waving a vague tribute to the Leslie. Later on he tried to explain, heavens. "And it's nice of you to see me," he added gracefully. Then he pointed up the terrace. "Isn't she a but the attempt was a lamentable fail-She laughed, not unkindly, in picture? 'Gad, it's lovely-the whole effect. That picture against the sky-" Leslie had refused to allow the He stopped short, and the sentence sketch to leave his hand. If she could

was never finished, although she waithave gained possession of it, even for an instant, the thing would have been ed for him to complete it before retorn to bits. But it went back into his marking "Her heart is not in the highlands." commodious pocketbook, and she was

mean-something's gone "You She became oddly sensitive to wrong-

Booth's persistent though inoffensive "Oh, no," she said, still smiling; 'nothing like that. Her heart is in scrutiny as time wore on. More than once she had caught him looking at the lowlands. You would consider her with a fixedness that betrayed per- Washington square to be in the lowplexity so plainly that she could not lands, wouldn't you?"

night to them on the terrace. Sara walked to the steps with him.

"Don't you think her voice is lovely?" she asked. Hetty had sung for them.

"I dare say," he responded absently. "Give you my word, though, I wasn't thinking of her voice. She is lovely.' He walked home as if in a dream. The spell was on him.

Far in the night, he started up from the easy chair in which he had been smoking and dreaming and racking his brain by turns.

"By Jove!" he exclaimed aloud. "I remember! I've got it! And tomorrow I'll prove it.'

Then he went to bed, with the storm from the sea pounding about the house, and slept serenely until Pat and Mary wondered whether he meant get up at all.

"Pat," said he at breakfast, "I want you to go to the city this morning and fetch out all of the Studios you can find about the place. The old ones are in that Italian hall seat and the late ones are in the studio. Bring all of them.

"There's a divvil of a bunch of thim," said Pat ruefully.

He was not to begin sketching the figure until the following day. After luncheon, however, he had an appointment to inspect Hetty's wardrobe, ostensibly for the purpose of picking out a gown for the picture. As a matter of fact, he had decided the point to his own satisfaction the night before. She should pose for him in the dainty white dress she had worn on that oc casion

While they were going over the extensive assortment of gowns, with Sara as the judge from whom there seemed to be no appeal, he casually inquired if she had ever posed before.

He watched her closely as he put the question. She was holding up a beautiful point lace creation for his inspection, and there was a pleading smile on her lips. It must have been her favorite gown. The smile faded away. The hand that dangled the gar ment before his eyes suddenly became motionless, as if paralyzed. In the next instant, she recovered herself, and, giving the lace a quick fillip that sent its odor of sachet leaping to his nostrils, responded with perfect composure.

"Isn't there a distinction between posing for an artist, and sitting for one's portrait?" she asked.

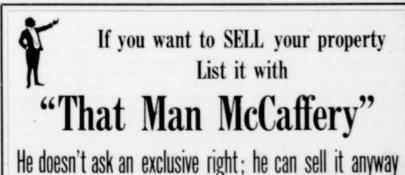
He was silent. The fact that he did Continued on Page 4

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