

# CAPTAIN JIM'S COURTSHIP

By A. E. RICE, Portland.

(Continued from last week)

Annie anticipated the effect of Jim and Smith meeting in the woodshed and made no effort to prevent it. In fact she preferred it there to any other place and the manner it came about well suited her fun-loving disposition. The incident caused her to momentarily forget the rapping on the front door, yet, while immoderately laughing, she turned. The front door opened and a villainous looking man entered.

Her laughter died on her lips. She became speechless with fright. The villainous looking stranger quietly closed the door behind him; Captain Jim quickly disentangled himself from Smith, and scrambling to his feet, rushed back into the kitchen, followed by Smith, who was fighting mad.

Jim saw the villainous stranger near the front door and for a moment thought he was being assailed in front and rear. His limbs trembled some, for while no coward blushed him not his veins, age admonished him not rashly to provoke physical encounters.

Smith angrily said to Jim, "phwat be yees doin', yees miserable tharf?" At that moment he too discovered the stranger and became appalled. "Oh mother of Moses!" he exclaimed in a whisper.

The disfigured and unrecognizable villain, appearing more terrible in the dim light, stood near the front door, a huge pistol in his right hand and a carving knife in his left.

"Whoop! S'blood!" said he, as he flourished the weapons. He wore a soft hat pulled down over a blackened eye. A strip of sticking plaster was fastened on his cheek, and his coat appeared very much crumpled.

The identity of the stranger was, however, cleared up the opportune arrival of Nan and Kitty.

Kitty at once recognized him. "Oh, Frank," she exclaimed, "who did it?" "MacDonald, the red villain," he answered hoarsely. That expression explained Frank's appearance, for Annie then remembered Kitty having told her, while in the wood shed, that Frank was coming with a black eye and scarred face.

"What did he do to you?" asked Kitty of Frank.

"For calling him a muf," answered Frank, "and he said he was going to do Captain Jim Smeets worse than me."

Annie appeared horrified and said, "I am the cause of it all." She sank on the lounge and covered her face with her hands to conceal her laughter which she was unable to restrain longer.

"He's on the war path tonight, and will call here sure," Frank continued. "But you will not meet MacDonald again. You will hide from him, won't you, Frank?" said Kitty, appearing concerned.

"Hide from him. Never," roared Frank in reply, and flourishing his knife and pistol in a most determined manner, added, "as I am a savage, I'll suck blood!" He then deliberately, and in the most suggestive way, drew the back of the carving knife across his throat.

Captain Jim was so amazed at this and so anxious to clear himself, that he at once loftily replied, "me! I reckon you be a-mistaken." He indiscreetly and unguardedly added, "why I was in the bed room, I shud a-think so."

The words were scarcely uttered, when Annie gave a little scream and exclaimed, "oh, good lands!"

There followed full ten seconds of dead silence, in which the tick of the small clock on the shelf seemed to sound like the clang of a cathedral bell. At length the silence was broken by Kitty, who, looking straight at Captain Jim exclaimed in a surprised tone, "bed room?" Nan looked puzzled and followed with the query, "Annie's bed room?"

Captain Jim realized his awkward position, became confused and blurted out, "I was a druy thar."

Kitty smiled and softly asked, "who drove you in the bed room, Capt?" The question was answered by Frank, in a deep, tragic voice, "MacDonald, the villain."

Annie and Kitty looked at each other and smiled, Nan looked severe, while Smith looked meaningfully from Jim to Annie.

Another silence ensued, the answer evidently, not being satisfactory.

At length Annie said, "I told Captain Jim to go in there and keep quiet, as he was afraid of MacDonald."

The explanation dissolved the gathering cloud. Captain Jim breathed easier, feeling that he was exonerated, and Smith settled the matter by abruptly exclaiming, "begorra, it must have been that same rogue that stood up fer'nast me in the shid, bad luck to him."

"I shud a-think so," remarked Captain Jim, in a lofty, self-satisfying manner.

"Wor is the blackguard?" cried Smith. "Shure, I'm the wan as will take some o' the divil out of yees. Plaguin' the darlint of me best frint, God rest his soul."

"Boys," said Captain Jim, knitting his eyebrows and assuming a most determined look, "thet Red MacDonald be a-worrin' Annie most tew death."

"He do, do 'e," said Smith, interrupting Captain Jim and taking off his mackintosh suggestively.

"Yes, and he may be here any minute," said Frank.

"Boys," continued Captain Jim, "I'll give any man one hundred dollars, who'll lam him high onto death."

Frank spat on his hands, flourished his knife and roared, "that's my contract, a-blood, satisfaction, whoop."

These words were scarcely uttered when several knocks on the front door sounded with startling effect.

Frank struck a tragic attitude and exclaimed with a wild laugh, "ha, ha, he comes, he comes."

About the same time, Captain Tom, having recovered from his fright and finding himself not pursued, made bold to again peep in the woodshed. After listening, he cautiously entered, leaving the door wide open for a hasty retreat, if necessary. He poked the air with his club, as he advanced, step by step, toward the kitchen door, now listening to indistinct words uttered in the kitchen, and again advancing.

"I jest want one look at him unbeknownst, an' then I'll fetch him." On reaching the door, he squinted through the keyhole, and saw a man standing a few feet distant, "that's him, the damned rascal." Captain Tom straightened up and seized the door-knob with his left hand, then looked behind. The door was open. The way appeared clear for swift retreat. "Now is my chance to get even." He raised his club aloft with his right hand, then suddenly pulled open the door.

In the meantime, Smith having grasped a chair, exclaimed, "the dirty spalpeen, come on," stationed himself near the front door.

Frank flourished his pistol, and shouted, "hurrah, whoop."

Captain Jim was also infected with excitement, and seizing a chair, said, "this is my opportunity tew, boys," and stood beside Smith.

"Let us put the strokes on 'im outside, an' not disgrace the house with his groans," whispered Smith.

"Let 'er go Gallagher, whoop!" replied Frank, and he laughed a low demoniacal laugh.

Smith exclaimed "come on," unlocked and opened the front door and rushed out with a yell, followed by Captain Jim.

Frank, however, did not follow them. He slammed the door shut and commenced to laugh. He laughed immoderately, and without any intention on his part, and while reeling about and holding his sides, arrived close to the kitchen door, leading to the shed. In fact, he undesignedly stood facing it and looking straight at it, the very moment Captain Tom opened it.

The sudden and most unexpected appearance of Captain Tom, menacingly holding aloft a club, was as startling to Frank, as Frank's villainous appearance was to Captain Tom.

Frank fell back astonished, all the laugh taken out of him, and Captain Tom was so terrified at Frank's appearance and armament that he ejaculated, "hell fire," and back through the open shed door he bolted again.

In order to explain those particular knocks on the front door, and which caused the war-like "sortie" by Smith and Captain Jim, it will be necessary to go back a little.

Barbara proceeded on her mission for the brandy, stopping now and then to look at the display in some of the store windows. She felt more than usually light-hearted and gay, for she had four bits, the gift of Captain Jim, which she could call her own. Many things she would like to buy for herself, but her two little sisters must have something, too, and Annie also, for the child, with all her tom-boy manners, neglected education and severely practical disposition, loved her mother and little sisters with an intense love.

She passed the drug store, intending to call for the brandy on her return, and had looked in different windows along First street, for something she was thinking about, meanwhile softly humming a few notes of some familiar ditty. She was possessed of that faculty, common to her sex, the faculty of observing and remembering everything coming within the range of her vision. While standing in front of one of the best display windows of a notion store, between Alder and Washington streets, and thoughtlessly humming a few notes of that quaint and delightful old melody, "Comin' Thro' the Rye," she noticed a man slowly pass, and she noted, too, that he was looking at her, and that he at one moment almost halted, turned, and halted again. He was a man fully six feet in height, well built and clad as a typical miner. His hair was a dark brown, full beard, bushy eyebrows and glittering blue eyes.

He smiled and softly exclaimed, "Barbara."

"How did he know my name? Who is he?" She looked hard at him, as these thoughts swept through her brain.

She was surprised, puzzled, dumfounded. At length, recovering herself, she turned full upon him and indignantly asked, "who air you, a-calls 'in' Barbara? You've a good deal o' cheek my old friend," and then added, "I don't know yer."

"Yes you do," replied he.

"Oh, do I," she quickly rejoined, "perhaps if I do, Tim, you'll lend me a couple o'bits, jest tew prove it."

"I'll give you a couple of bits and more," said the stranger smiling. "But my name is not Tim, it is Jack." He laid particular stress on the last word.

"It may be Jonas fer all I know," she replied, "so yer kin jest like it," and she turned to leave him.

"Barbara!" he called, a tinge of authority in his tone. "you must draw it a little milder with me, I want to talk with you."

She flashed a defiant glance at him and saucily said, "you've plenty o'

nerve, you have."

"And so have you, Barbara," he replied as he kept pace beside her, "but I have my share."

"Your share," she exclaimed, "oh, it's the hull cheese, it is, or full half and two quarters, an' no flies on it nuther."

"You're a little gay tonight," he then muttered to himself, "it shows she is not a fool anyway."

"Jest you be off, an' don't bother me," said the child, as she turned short up Washington street. "You show that you air a fool a follerin' a bit o' a gal like me."

"I am following you for a good reason. I have seen you before," he said, with a smile.

"Seen me before," she exclaimed, then turning to him, asked "where?"

"Where? Why my—er—" checked his utterance, "why here in this town."

Barbara coolly surveyed him from head to foot. "Wot," she exclaimed, "ere in this town? Walker," and turned on her heel to retrace her steps.

"Barbara." He caught her by the sleeve and turned her face to him. "I want to speak with you about your mother and little sisters."

"Then you jest won't," she replied, drawing away from him, "you ain't after no good, I'm sure."

"Don't be a fool, child," said he, a little annoyed.

"I don't mean tew, so yer kin jest hike it, or the fust cop I comes tew 'll hang on tew yer collar."

"Now don't be angry, Barbara," he said coaxingly, for he saw the child must be led, not driven. "Just take a good look at me." He turned her face to him and smiled.

"I sees yer," replied the unromantic and undaunted little maid "yer long-shanked, giddle headed Jackie."

He looked at her in pained astonishment, and then, standing well under the light of a street lamp, a pace or two from her, reproachfully said, "Barbara cannot you remember me?"

"No," she replied with asperity, "no, I minds nothin', I doesn't want ter."

She yet failed to recognize him, though he was indeed her father, Jack Walker.

His mining prospects had carried him northward into the Coeur d'Alene country, at that time a wild, unsettled region of Northern Idaho.

He had written several letters to his wife, but not one of them had reached her, and of course, no word from her had reached him, and when about to abandon his mining schemes, in order to turn his anxious footsteps homeward, he struck it rich. It delayed him until he sold his claim, then hurried south and arrived in Portland Christmas Eve.

He had made some reasonable purchases for his family, and had arranged with Smith to deliver them secretly, at his house, in advance of his arrival. And then he met Barbara, in the manner we have related.

Her saucy, defiant attitude caused him to realize the importance of prompt, yet kindly action. He thereupon, took from his pocket a small package, deliberately unwrapped it, and lifting the lid of a little square box, revealed a ladies' small gold watch and chain.

She became interested.

Holding it to her view, he at length said slowly, "what did father promise his little Barbara four years ago?"

The child looked up at him. A new light dawned in her eyes. She then remembered his last words, the promised watch, and gradually recalled his voice and features, made somewhat strange now by his heavy beard.

Her voice trembled, "God forgive me, I didn't know you." Then she seemed to suddenly become excited, for she almost shouted, "oh, dad!" and flung herself in his arms. "Ha, ha, I know yer now. God love yer old heart, I do, I do." Then the straits of her excitement gave way, her pent up feelings loosened, and she sobbed as if her heart would break.

Clasping her little form close to him, he gently kissed her forehead, and as the tears welled up in his eyes said, "close to my heart, my poor child, I knew Barbara would be glad to see her old dad home again."

She looked up. He saw the tears streaming down her cheeks, he felt the convulsive throb of her heart; he saw the glad expression of countenance; he saw the lips move, and again stooping down, received a kiss that came from the child's soul.

"And you still love your old dad?" said he.

"Lor bless yer, dad," replied she, between her sobs, "I do, an' alius will, an' says I tew mas, says, I, sometime we shall see a party wots been afar off, a hangin' 'bout our house agin, 'deed we shall."

It was arranged that Barbara should enter the house first, in order to give her time in her own way, to break the news of her father's return, and to hand back to Captain Jim the money he gave her. Walker was to appear some ten minutes later.

Upon arriving home, the child turned the knob of the front door, and finding it locked, vigorously knocked. It was these loud knocks which Captain Jim and Smith believed were given by MacDonald. So when the warriors sallied forth, and Frank immediately closed the door upon them, they were in total darkness, and coming suddenly from light into darkness, it appeared all the more dense to them.

Barbara was surprised, but being accustomed to the darkness, easily dodged the assailants. Watching her opportunity, she picked up a bar of one of the broken chairs, and struck Smith on the leg. It produced a yell. It was followed by more blows and more yells. Captain Jim got a hard one on the leg, too, and then Joe appeared on the scene.

Smith rushed back into the house, followed closely by Barbara. "Enough, enough!" Smith exclaimed, "shure, an' it's the divil, for yees can't see it at all. Oh, my leg, bad luck to ye," said he as he limped about in his effort to escape those painful blows.

"Thet's four," exclaimed Barbara,

"git a club Annie, git er club, lam him with a poker," and she struck Smith again. At this time Captain Jim, with a wild look, bounded into the room. He was followed by Joe, who shut the door and proceeded to take off his coat. Captain Jim gripped the back of a broken chair with his left hand, producing his pistol, determined to defend himself. He stood erect as he confronted Joe. "Drat my skin, you caint worrit me no more," he excitedly exclaimed.

At that moment the front door opened and Jack Walker entered. He closed the door behind him and stood quietly gazing on the scene.

A hush fell over the party, broken by Barbara, who exclaimed, "Dad, I forgot all er'bout it."

Annie recognized him at once, and her laughter ceased instantly. A deadly pallor overspread her face. What thoughts flew through her brain at that instant may only be conjectured. What we do know is, that she was a woman of wonderfully quick perception, and it is possible the thought of her surroundings may have caused a fear to come over her, the like of which she had never before experienced. And it flashed through her mind that it was Jack, and not Captain Jim, who sent Smith with the Christmas box. She loved Jack, loved him as a wife who is devoted to her husband, and that love never faltered through all the years of his absence. Twice he was reported dead, and once that he had abandoned his wife and family for another woman; but she would not believe it, and though comparatively young, had been true to him, faithful to her vow made at the altar of her wedlock. For four years she had struggled on alone to provide for herself and three helpless children. True, her brother Joe was a source of protection, but little help she derived from him. She was never without hope, always cheerful, though oftentimes with aching sides and smarting eyes, and still never a word did she receive from him. Her belief, that he would some day return to her and his children had never been for one moment shaken. And now he had come. Now that he stood within the portal of their home, without warning, for as we have seen, Barbara had entirely forgotten to carry out her part of the program, at a moment when the scene presented, must necessarily convey a bad impression, an impression of unfaithfulness, of abandonment; the thought of that impression dashed her. It was therefore, with blanched face she at length, gasped his name, "Jack," and staggered toward him.

He stopped her with a slow, but meaning gesture of his right hand, while his other pressed tightly against his left breast, as though something hurt him there. His stern, dignified appearance awe'd even that wayward child, Barbara, into silence.

It was at this dramatic juncture, that Captain Tom thrust his head in the still open kitchen door, menacingly flourished his club, and shouted out in the profound stillness of the room, "I'm a live corpus, yet, yer bloodthirsty villain, shure I am. Come out." No answer to his challenge being made, he was about to act on the offensive, when his eye rested on Walker. He was surprised at seeing a stranger there and all silent before him, but his surprise quickly gave way to amazement on recognizing his old friend, and he impulsively ejaculated, "snags a-boomin', it's Jack, ex shure o' I'm a kicker." He had known Walker intimately for a number of years and when Jack left to try his luck at mining, Tom would not believe he ever intended to desert his family, and so stoutly did he entertain that belief that for the space of three years of Jack's absence any one hinting "desertion," met with the lie direct, and an invitation to fight unless immediately retracting the calumny. But the fourth year shook Captain Tom's faith in Jack's return.

The situation had begun to take on a serious form by the sudden appearance of Walker, who was a man of prompt action. Fortunately, however, Captain Tom's exclamation of amazement had the effect of starting a thaw in the frigidity of Walker's demeanor. Jack had confided his desire that they, the Webbs, keep an eye on Annie and the children during his absence. His misgivings were allayed some by seeing Nan there, and his eyes rested on Smith, and upon Joe, his wife's brother, surely all of a reassuring nature.

Yet, there stood that villainous looking stranger (Frank) armed with deadly weapons, and the half frightened old man, a stranger too.

What could it all mean? His face began to take on a troubled look, and then Annie appealed to him, in a low and tender voice, full of pathos, "Jack, Jack, don't think evil of me. Don't deny me, after all these years, or my heart will break." Words wrung from a young, high spirited and handsome woman.

In that appeal, uttered in tones that went straight to his heart, he saw portrayed, her life, unblemished and devoted to him. He stretched forth his arm and exclaimed, "Annie, my darling." In another instant they were folded in each other's embrace. Barbara suddenly commenced to execute a "hoe-down," at which she was quite an adept, and gleefully sang, "Rum-a-tum tidy, O, Jack's got the widdy, O." Then rushed into the bedroom to tell her two little sisters the good news.

While the handshaking and congratulations were going on, Captain Jim quietly stole away, unperceived, through the wood shed. He and the Webbs never speak now, he firmly believing it was their purpose to victimize him out of a considerable sum of money. He never inquired after Red MacDonald either.

"Jest drap the hul business, an' believe myself lucky in gettin' out'n the breakers without much hurt. I shud a-think so."

THE END.

## NEW COALING STATION.

Admiral Dewey Recommends One for Dutch Harbor, Alaska.

Washington, May 27.—Admiral Dewey, as president of the General Board, has made a report to Secretary Moody, recommending the immediate establishment of a coaling station at Dutch Harbor, Alaska, and the erection there of a coal depot with an initial capacity of 5,000 tons. The estimated cost of the work is about \$51,000. The money is now available. Believing that the establishment of a coal depot at this strategic point will strengthen the United States on the Pacific Coast, the President has heartily approved the plan, and preliminary steps in the work have been taken already.

Dutch Harbor is located on one of the Aleutian Islands, and is on the direct commercial route between the ports of Behring Sea and Southern Alaska and the Pacific Coast of the United States. It is also in the line of steamships passing through the Unalakleet, Pass, most of which make Dutch Harbor a port of call. Its use as a coal depot site was first recommended by Rear-Admiral Bradford, Chief of the Bureau of Equipment. His recommendation was referred to the General Board, and is now about to be executed according to his plans.

Dutch Harbor will form the fifth in the chain of coal depots along the Pacific Coast, which will begin at San Diego and include San Francisco, Puget Sound and Sitka. Honolulu is the sixth in the chain, and Guam probably may be added to the list.

## FIRE LOSS A MILLION.

A Large Philadelphia Warehouse Is an Entire Loss.

Philadelphia, May 27.—Fire this evening in the building of the Front Street Warehouse Company caused a loss estimated at \$1,000,000. The building which was three stories high on Front street and five in the rear, with two sub-basars, containing merchandise of a general character. One floor was packed solidly with matting and there was 1600 rolls of carpet, 500 barrels of molasses, a carload of wines, and other liquors, a carload of matches and much machinery. Everything in the building was destroyed either by fire or water.

The fire started in the basement and was not discovered until the center of the first floor was in flames. The character of the goods in the building made it an easy prey to the flames, and the whole structure was soon ablaze. The contents of the building were owned by many firms and individuals, and it is not known tonight what amount of insurance was carried.

## UNIONS DON'T UNDERSTAND.

Energy Must Be Properly Directed if They Would Live.

Chicago, May 27.—Clarence S. Darrow, who was chief counsel for the miners in the recent arbitration growing out of the strike in the anthracite coal fields, delivered an address to the Henry George Association here today on the "Perils of Trades Unionism." The general tone of his talk was that "labor unions do not understand the principles upon which they are founded and along which they must work if they are to continue in existence." He said in part:

"Men catch trade unionism, speculation, combination, as they catch the measles or the mumps. Capital has caught the fever of combination until it has gone mad over corporations and trusts. Likewise, labor has caught the fever of trade unionism and without knowing what it means or realizing how it may be of real service to the world, has turned its power and energy in the direction of building up organizations.

"Unless this force is turned to political power or substantial methods for bettering industrial conditions then all this great movement must be for naught."

## Great Irrigation Dam.

Washington, May 27.—The Geological Survey has prepared a model of the extensive dam to be constructed on Salt river, 65 miles above Phoenix, Ariz. This dam will be among the first and also among the largest irrigation enterprises to be undertaken by the Government under the new law. The exact proportions of the dam are 188 feet thick at the base, 830 feet long at the top and 250 feet high. It will contain 11,600,000 cubic feet of masonry. The reservoir to be constructed will drain over 6000 square miles of territory.

## Butchery By Turks.

London, May 27.—The Sofia correspondent of the Morning Leader telegraphs that the Macedonian committee reports that the Turks have burned the village of Banizit, near Seres. Only 48 of the 500 inhabitants escaped and many women and girls were outraged and murdered and their bodies cast into the water.