

fist into an open paim. "You never

can tell about those things until you try. When do you take office?"

"Then if you're still willing to stick

to your offer, I'll be glad to take the

CHAPTER VI

The New Marshal

Rogers stopped short as he left the

tiny building which had served for

years as Bellaine's combination city

hall, jail and "police department." He

had just received the administration

of his oath of office, and Bart Rogers

could not evade the realization of the

had metamorphosed to a mustiroom of

thousands. Canvas dance halls and

softest thing served was three-day-old

"mountain dew," were on nearly every street corner. Kalsomined women leered and smirked in the crowds of

the street-the world had turned new

and raw and unwholesome with the

influx of a nation's offal, swooping

down upon a place that oil had turned

into a new frontler and where the

Pitted against this was the feverish

activity of another set of bbomers-

the legittinate followers of the gusher;

men in corduroy, clothing and high-

topped boots, who went about their

business in a quiet, orderiy, deter-

might be the persons to aid in a new

flow of the black liquid, the first to

Already just outside the village

limits, the first of a forest of derricks.

had appeared, while, under hard-work-

ing, shouting foremen, the work of

installing machinery and the prepara-

tions for drilling were hurriedly under

way. Whistles tooted from steaming

botlers. Sledges clanged against steel.

The prophecy of a bedlam had come

And this was the thing which Bart

Rogers had taken upon his shoul-

ders-to recreate into an orderly,

hard-working, law-abiding town. Now

as he looked at it, he realized in a

small measure his rashness, and the

hopelessness of his task. The city

ordinances-and he had studied them

with fervent hope-gave to him one

Not that he did not intend to try

Bart Rogers was bitter with the bitter-

ness of enmity and of indignation. In

the week which had passed, he had

it had not been "Bull" who had prof-

who perhaps had suggested the bar-

seen to it that the whole tricky ar-

Twice had Bart Rogers seen Old

Jim and Anita Franniston during the

week that had passed. Both times the

girl had appeared frightened, excited,

nervous. As for Old Jim, his lips were

his eyes was the look of a haunted

man about to gaze upon a ghost he

had feared for years. What it all

meant, other than what he had heard

week before in the hallway outside

Franniston's office, Bart could not tell.

But this he knew-tragedy was stalk-

ing in the footsteps of a girl and a

Franniston himself? Bart had seen

prematurely aged men.

paid deputy, no more.

carry the news of another gusher.

drink partors.

about.

true.

mob, by its strength, might rule.

soft drink" emporiums, where the

From a village of hundreds, Bellaine

toughness of his job.

It was seven days later that Bart

job-of cleaning up this town!"

"A week from today."

Bart then moved slowly down the sidewalk, brushing past men with keavy satchelk; others with canvas bags on their shoulders; women in

loud raiment. A hazy idea was in his mind-he had sought to the last mement to doubt the word of "Bull" Franciston and of Lawyer Leon Barrows. He had falled, and through some sense of justice, he felt that it was necessary to tell them so.

With this thought he made his way up the broad, wooden staircase to the office of Leon Barrows, there to knock upon the door and await an answer in vain. Evidently the attorney already. had departed for Mannington to probate the will and semewhat unwillingly, Bart turned down the street toward the ramshackle, two-story building which housed the office of "Bull'

Franniston. He mounted the stairway, only to halt as he circled the banister and started toward the grimy door of the little office. Voices were coming from within-the voices of two men, "Bull" and Old Jim. The voice of the latter

was pleading "Bull," he was saying, "you're going too far. I've stood to see you beat her, I've stood to see you mistreat her, I've steed for pretty near everything in the world, figuring that the worst you could do would be better than what would happen if I'd ever force you to come out in the open and lay your cards on the table. But-"

"Wate just a minute, Jim!" The rumbling voice of the other man had cut in sneeringly. "You're always talking about what I've got up my sleeve. Have I ever told you that I knew anything about you? Or what-

"No, but you know that I know ityou don't have to tell me that the name of Leon Barrows is a fake name: Or that what you're always so careful to keep locked up in that safe isn't what-what I think it is!"

"You'd better be quiet, Jim," answered Franniston.

There was a queer, implied threat in the voice-and one which met with in-

stant response. "I-I didn't mean it, 'Bull'" The old pleading had returned. "But, G-d, 'Bull'-just think how it would be if you were in my shoes! Think how you'd suffer if you saw some one throwing her directly in the path of are flooding in here now!"

They're my friends. I'm looking to them for my living." That's no reason you should make

Anita associate with them."
"Isn't it? If they're my friends,

they've got to be her friends.' "I hate to think it, Bull," swered Jim. "I-I don't know which would be worse, for her to have to live in this atmosphere or-or the other one that she'd be up against if-if I'd have to come out in the open.'

"Suit yourself." The announcement had a sneer in it. "Do what you please about that. In the meanwhile, get out! I've got work to look after."

The last announcement meant discovery for Bart Rogers if he lingered. Hurriedly he turned for the staircase, and was far down the street when, looking over his shoulder, he saw the bent form of Old Jim leave the building. Bart's heart was thumping strangely. Again had he come face to face with the mystery in the lives of Bull" Franniston, his daughter and Old Jim

Suddenly Bart Rogers stopped short. If it was certain that Franniston was to be the king of the gambling element and the dance halls, it was certain also that "Bull" Fransiston did not care what became of his own daugh-

"Not it I can stop it!" he thought grimly. "I may be one man against a multitude, but I'll make the fight, He wheeled suddenly and hurrled up the street toward the wide, rambling home of Tom Jordan, mayor-

"Mr. Jordan," he said, when the gesial old ex-cattleman had answered his ring at the bell, "you offered me a job a couple of days ago."

That's what I did, boy. "Things have changed a good deal since then. I just wanted to ask one question: "Have you any objections

"Lord, no! I want it clean. Although-" and he rubbed his chin-as he looked down toward the main street, with its tents, its crowds, its covered wagons and dust-caked auto mobiles, its flamboyant signs advertising this, that and the other mushroom stock-"it looks like an awfun lot of polishin', 'll have t' be done to "Maybe so." Bart Rogers patted a

and prove I'm all right.

Whereupon he hurried down the street, while Bart Rogers, with a new confidence, went on toward his selfappointed duty. Soon he was on the main street, and at the first "emporium" he turned in.

"I want the proprietor," he announced to the be-aproned person behind the bar. "I'm him. What'll you have?"

"What are you selling here? Hard stuff?" Bart had hidden his badge. The bartender grinned and nodded. "Sorry, old man," Bart answered, "but the town closes up tomorrow night-and closes tight. That gives

you 24 hours to get out." Bart departed. At a dance hall next door he made the same announcement, received in staring silence. Then he went on, finally to stop in front of a small tent, in which a lean, checksuited man bent over a small counter, manipulating as he did so three plaster-filled halves of English wal-

Money was being piled on the counter. Bart swept it aside.

"Nix on that butt-in stuff!" came sharply. "Who let you in here?" "The same person who's going to let you out," came with equal asperity from the marshal. "Rogers is my name. I'm marshal here. Now close

24 hours. Understand?" "Nix!" the gambler had become suddenly serious. "You're on the wrong guy, honest. I'm fixed, see? Every-

up this joint and get out of town in

Why suffer from headaches

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thing's all right with me-I'm a right guy, I've put in my ante. Don't crab the party on me here. I'm-

"Fixed? Oh, are you? Well, you fixed with the wrong person-that stuff doesn't go! Step fast or-" key and was looking through the bars

at his prisener. Then he went to the front entrance, to await the arrival of the enemy. Nor was the wait a long one. Five minutes passed Then the

sound of steps from around the corner. Bart squared his shoulders for the conflict, and pulled his holster into a position in which it could be reached with ease. A moment more

"Bull" Franniston faced him, slight appearance of surprise on his countenance.

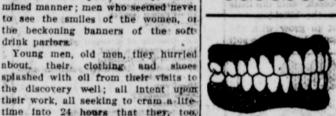
"Oh, it's you, huh?" he announced.

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was ready to see it through. A moment of hesitation, and then, deliberately he started up the street to the fulfillment of the first duty he had set for himself, the throwing down of the

latter told him of his new job. say, now, do you need an assistant?"

"Listen!" Bart caught him by the shoulders and drew him down to speaking distance, "are you joking or are you serious?"

will there be excitement? I crave action, you know.'

"You'll get plenty of action, but the pay is only \$75 a month."

down here." Then sidling closer, he adopted a paternal air of almost friendship. "You've got one of my boys in there." "So?" Bart Rogers expressed neither interest por the lack of it."

got in there is a tin-horn three-shell worker. He's not the boy you mean, Bull" Franniston's face blackened and his heavy arms swung slowly. He

started to move a step closer-then stopped. Bart's hand had gone quietly to his holster. "You den't, eh?" The black, thick

eyebrows raised in question. "Going to get real rough, ch?

"I'm grang to clean up this town." "You-and who else?"

"Oh, a deputy or two. Now, listen, Mr. Frauniston"—and Bart lost his breeze and get my discharge papers bantering manner-"I've heard your name mentioned a good deal in connec tion with the gambling and bootlegging that's going on here. They seen to look on you as a sort of a boss. If that's so, a little talk between us may save a little trouble. I'm giving the rough-neck element just 24 hours to get out of town, and the same thing goes for that tented camp of women that's sprung up just east of the town. If you've taken any money on the pre tense that you can protect these persons-I'd advise you to give it back."

"All right, boy," came the answer "Go to it-and see how far you get! Then whirling swiftly, "Bull" Franpiston turned again toward town, while Bart watched him wonderingly. The man had threatened, yet he practically had acknowledged defeat! He had come to the jail building determined. apparently, to release the man he sought, yet departed almost after his first unsuccessful effort. Until he was lost in the surging mob of the main street did Rogers follow him with his eyes, half expecting him to return with a fresh demand or a new threat. But an hour passed-without sight of him

What did the absence and the si lence mean? Could it mean that he was closeted up there in the cold office of Leon Barrows-with the danny appearing man whom Old Jim had accused of traveling under an assumed name-perhaps arranging some intricate legal method for the defeating of Bart's purposes? Rogers knew only one line of action, the straightforward attack, and with a sudden resolve, he swung down the steps and headed to-

ward the office of the attorney. But no one was there. In vain Bart knocked on the door and tried the knob. It did not yield. Listening brought no sound of voices from within. It was more than evident that Loon Barrows still was dailying with his new hobby, the superintending of the work of

erecting rigs and machinery out at the and which Bart Rogers once had called his own-and that the law business was suffering as a result. He turned down the steps again and

into the main street. Then, shifting his belt in preparation for a resumption of his task, he started again upon his interrupted mission. A yelping, squawking "cootch" show was his first

objective. At the ticket stand a collarless man, talking in a low, yet penetrating voice, was telling in confidential manner of the lecherous performance to be seen beyond the canvas sidewalling. Bart approached him, in-terrupting: "Youll have to close this show and get out of here in 24 hourssavey?"

"Just as you please," the man answered quickly. Bart, still surprised at the quiet manner in which his ultimatum had been received, walked on. Everywhere it was the same. Politeness greeted his announcement. Perfect harmony was accorded his or der that the town must be rid of its bootleggers, its dance halls, its wom-

en and its gambling by the next night. What could it mean? What could it portend? "Bull" Franniston had threatened him, in a quiet, determined manner, then strode away as to the carrying out of a purpose. Yet nowhere that Bart turned had he met opposi-

At last he went back to the city hall and found Bud Tarko waiting for him with his honorable discharge papers and other references in his hands "It's a good thing you're here," Bart said with a grim smile. "Your first night on duty's liable to be anything but a bed of roses."

"Gosh! Spill the news, Cap'n. Spill the news !"

Bart talked of the experiences of the afternoon-and of the queerness of the events that had followed. Tarko cocked his head and nodded with evident glee. "What do you suppose is in the wind?" he questioned. "I don't know. But I believe we'd. better work in double harness until midnight, anyway. "Bull" Franciston threatened me this afternoon-I'm

around again. But why-"Don't know. Certainly looks funny!" Eleven o'clock came and went. Then midnight. The crowd had begun to thin would be deserted by all save a few.

sure, too, that he passed the word

not to start any trouble if I came

Bart turned to his deputy. "It looks like we were wrong," came his conclusion. "If you think you can handle things all right now, I'll turn

"Sure." Bud Tarke squinted down and to receive the encouraging news the street. "Nothing doing around here for which he had hoped. "Sure." Bud Tarko squinted down a-tall. I'll trot down to the coop and see how our chicken is."

"Sure." They parted, Tarko to stroll once more down the street before going to the little jail, Bart to turn toward his hotel. In his room, tired after his long first day in his new job wondering a bit as to what the next chair to the window and sat there for a half-hour or so, merely resting before going to bed. Then suddenly he

straightened. From the distance had come the faint sound of voices-calsed in anger. Higher, more strident they became, Then-a shot! with two more following in quick succession! It was enough for Bart Rogers. A leap and he had made the door, to race down the narrow hallway to the stairs, and with a few bounds gain the steps. There was no need to stop for a sense of direction-he had recognized the location immediately. The fail!

Bart suddenly saw Bud Tarko. "Tarko!" he called "Tarko-what's

appened?"

"They got me!" came through thick, bruised lips. "Got me from behind. Just as I was turning into the jail. I-I fought the best I knew but I couldn't keep going. Then some one hit me from behind and I went out. They must have carried me away from the jail-when I got my senses back, one of 'em was standing over me down by the station. Then somebody yelled to him and he ran. After that-look!"

The reeling form of Bud Tarko broke from the grasp of his supporter, and drunkenly, an unsteady hand pointing toward the little city hall and fall. But Bart had little need of the gesture. The hitherto dark little City half suddenly had become light, with a menacing brightness. The windows were gleaming. Smoke had begun to swirl about the building; from within there glowed the swift licking flames which Bart Rogers knew only too well spelled but one thing-incendiarism!

CHAPTER VII

Sheriff Graham.

There was no need for questions. Bull" Franniston and his henchmen simply had waited until the right and proper moment for the carrying out of their schemes-then forced them through to a conclusion. Franniston suddenly drove up.

"Nice little frame-up you've pulled, ain't it?" he sneered. "But it doesn't go! Understand that? It doesn't go!

"Think we're not wise to you, eh? Well, whenever you can shoot innocent men and think you can get away with it-you're mistaken. Look here, sheriff, or marshal, or whatever your name is. if you want to find the men who beat up your deputy, here we are right here. See it you've got the gameness to come out in the open and admit that you tried to freme up on a brach of If you enjoy a good meal, and know a good meal when you get it, You'll be back, for you'll not forget it: Our aim is to please you

PARAGON CAFE ALBANY.

GEO, M. GILCHRIST

decent, respectable show people tonight, that you had this deputy of yours open up the jail and let out a prisoner, and then deliberately shot an innocent man, to make it appear that-"

"Where do you get that stuff?" The accusation had given Bud Tarko sod-den strength. "While you're lyin', you're tellin' a good one, ain't you'l

"Here!" A man rose in the automobile, and in the glare of the flames, Bart saw the narrow-featured gambler he had arrested that afternoon. "Bull" waved a hand

"How about this? Who turned you

"That fellow there."

"You mean this deputy?" "Yeh. Then, just as I was coming out, he happened to see Rocky Jamise here, passing the jail on the way home and he deliberately pulled out his gun and shot him I jumped on him about that time, and then you fellows come along. He set the place on fire tou!"

Gasping, goggle-eyed, the ciongated Bud Tarko reeled forward, his bloody fists clenched, his arms churning belligerently.

"I can whip the dirty pup that started that lie!"

"Tarko !" Bud had caught him by the arm. "Stay back here!" He dragged his deputy to safety, then turned again to "Bull" Franciston. "It we did all this, why do you stand here telling us about it?" he demanded. "Why don't you-"

But "Bull" Franniston had sneered. "I just wanted you to know that you needn't think you're going to get away with anything. That's ail. Now if you think you can just start out and try

He re-entered the automobile then. A moment later he was gone, leaving the two men staring almost vacuou after him. Bart then assisted the in jured man to a passing automobile, and had him taken to his room. There he gave the dilapidated Tarko intean hour or so more and the street the keeping of the landlerd and called a physician. Following this he re-turned to the fire, and sought the

> The city hall was doomed. Bart wormed his way until he reached the mayor's side, there to tell his story.

"Lies!" came tersely from the old cattleman, serious and grim-featured for once in his life. "D-n lies every word of it. Go get the sheriff on the wire and tell him that I suid to send: you help. No, better than that, get a horse or an automobile and go see him. Lay the whole thing before him 24 hours would bring, Bart drew a and tell him that I want action! Un derstand?"

Bart nodded and turned swiftly away. Five minutes later, he was at a garage, demanding a car-only to learn that such a thing was unavailable. He turned toward the livery stable, and hurriedly assisted in the saddling of a horse. Then, out over the prairie he started, the glow of the flames lighting his way, on the beginning of the 20-mile ride to Mannington.

Ten miles and he drew aside, as the blazing headlights of a hurrying machine dazzled blm for a moment, then swept past on the road to Bellaine. An hour more and he swung from his horse before the sheriff's office in Mannington

But this time the office was bright ly lighted. No man dozed in a chetr. Instead, as he turned on to the walk

(Continued on page 6)

Judgment

Judgment follows sin as the echo follows the voice.--Prophetic News.

CASH PAID for false teeth, den-tal gold, platinum and discarded ewelry. Hoke Sme ling and Refining ewelry Co., Otsego, Mich,

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to a clean town?"
"Objections?" The big man chuckled.

him often, making his way from one dance hall to another, from the softdrink emporiums and along the snack stands. He seemed to be known everywhere-it was as though an army had gathered and then waited for the appearance of its general. That army, Bart knew, he must fight, now that he had taken office. More, he felt sure that the moment he began his battle, he also would be forced into active campaign with the man who possessed power sufficient to make him the leader of them all-"Bull" Franniston. But Bart Rogers had given himself plenty of time in which to think it over He had made his determination,

and now that the time had come, he

TI'd heard there was a new marshal

gage of battle. But at the corner he stopped, as Bud Tarko approached. Tarko wanted to know where Bart | you're mistaken. The only person I've got the marshal's badge. Then the

"Never more serious in my life, but

"That's O. K. with me," answered Bud, genially. "Well, I guess I'll



"Get Out of Town in Twenty-Four Hours.

"Pete!" The man's voice had a new note in it, one of sudden excitement, and a hanger-on hurried to his side. "There's something wrong here, This guy needs showin' where to get off at. Go get Franniston-quick!"

"Franniston is it?" A thin smile appeared on the lips of Bart Rogers. Well, in the meanwhile, you'll come along with me." A lurching push and shoving the

gambler a step or two ahead of him, he started toward the jail. Ten minutes later he had turned the heavy