

Albany Directory

ALBANY BAKING CO.
405 West First
BUTTER-NUT BREAD

Albany Floral Co. Cut flowers and plants. Floral art for every and all occasions.
Flower phone 458-7.

ALBANY STATE BANK—We invite your business. Savings and commercial accounts. Capital, surplus, undivided profits, \$100,000.

EASTBURN'S GROCERY
4th and Lyons Street
The place to buy good groceries at the right price. On the corner, plenty of room to park. Albany.

FORD SALES AND SERVICE
Tires and accessories - Repairs
KIRK-POLAK MOTOR CO.

Fortmiller Furniture Co., furniture, rugs, linoleum, stoves ranges. General directors. 427-433 west First street, Albany, Oregon.

FUNTEL WRECKING CO.
436 West 1st
Used Parts for all cars

Hemstitching, stamped goods, fancy work of all kinds at the SPECIALTY SHOP
318 West Second st.

HOLMAN & JACKSON
Grocery—Bakery
Everything in the line of goods
Opposite Postoffice

HUB Confectionery, Nougats, liches, Home-made candy and ice cream. First street, next door to Blain Clothing Co.

IMPERIAL CAFE, 209 W. First
Harold G. Murphy Prop.
Phone 665
WE NEVER CLOSE

Jennings Auto Top Shop—Auto trimming, seat covers and winter closures. 202 E. Second. Phone 4187
N. L. Jennings Manager

MAGNETO ELECTRIC CO.
Investigate the new Prestolite Battery prices before buying.

Pianos! Pianos!! Some big bargains in second-hand pianos; one \$85, one \$195; one \$250. Call at Davenport Music House, Albany

PULLMAN CAFE
Good food. Popular prices
227 W. First

ROSCOE AMES HARDWARE
The Winchester Store

FARM LOANS
at lowest rate of interest.

Real Estate Insurance
Prompt service, courteous treatment
WM. BAIN, Room 5, First Savings Bank building, Albany

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.

PARAGON CAFE Legion lunch Tuesdays
GEO. M. GILCHRIST ALBANY
Ticket office Bell Line Stage.
Albany to San Francisco, 15

TUSSING & TUSSING
LAWYERS
Halsey and Brownsville
Oregon

REFEREE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, That pursuant to an order of sale made and entered in the Circuit Court of the State of Oregon for the County of Linn, Dept. No. 2, on the 28th Day of April, 1927, in that certain suit therein wherein Jesse B. Schroll, Annie M. Schroll his wife, and Clara L. Carlson and C. E. Carlson her husband, were plaintiffs, and Emory Wallace Schroll, Ruby Almon, H. L. Almon her husband, Pearl P. Sturgis, J. H. Sturgis, her husband, and George W. Schroll and Ruth Schroll his wife, were defendants, and appointing and directing the undersigned as sole referee to sell the real property hereinafter described, I, the undersigned referee with more different kinds of good stories than almost anyone else—travel and adventure stories, western travel and tales, as he has written more than 200 of them for some fifty different magazines. He is one boy who actually ran away from home, joined a circus and stuck to it. For several years he was a clown under the big top. Then he became a feature writer on vaudeville, a writer on military subjects through his serving as soldier and eventually officer in the U. S. Marine Corps, and finally a novelist and playwright.

Tussing & Tussing, Attys for Pliffs.
Hewitt & Sox,
Attys for Dfts. Emory Wallace Schroll et al.

M. & J. CAFE
Featuring
25¢ Meals
115 Lyon st.
Albany Oregon

George William Wright
ATTORNEY AT LAW
Loans money at 5% on farms
Baltimore bldg., Albany, Oregon

Your eyes examined and a fine pair of
Toric Reading Glasses
in a frame of your own choice
\$6 to \$7.50

F. M. French & Son
Jewelers and Optometrists
Albany, Oregon

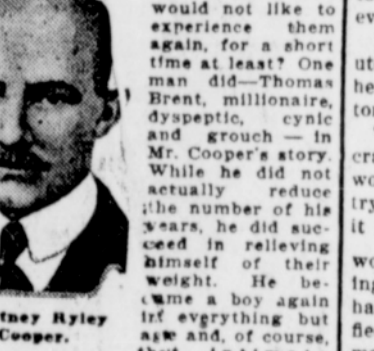
Must sell
High Grade Used PIANO
near Halsey. Will sell on easy terms to responsible party. Phone or address J. A. Given, Vandran Hotel, Albany.

Albany Creamery Association
Manufacturers of
LINN BUTTER
and Buyers of Eggs
A Farmers' Co-operative Creamery

A Modern Barber Shop
Laundry sent Tuesdays
Agency Hub Cleaning Works
ABE'S PLACE

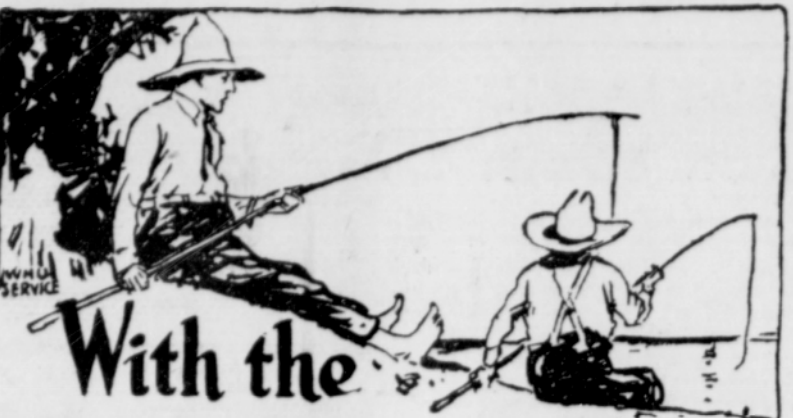
"With the Clock Turned Back"

Oh for the joys of boyhood! For playin' hooker, fishin', swimmin' and one ole cat! What man is there who would not like to experience them again, for a short time at least? One man did—Thomas Brent, millionaire, dyspeptic, cynic and grouchy—in Mr. Cooper's story. While he did not actually reduce the number of his years, he did succeed in relieving himself of their weight. He became a boy again in everything but age and, of course, that intimate knowledge of the secrets of nature which only a boy knows and which no one past the age of boyhood can ever gain. But Brent found the next best thing, a real good second-hand knowledge of those secrets. He did not become so wise as a boy, but sitting at the feet of a real boy, he learned a lot.



Brent learned so much and found such a vast field of exploration opening before him that he did not want to go back to his money bags and the exacting life of the market places. Only the fact that certain rumors were trying to put over something on him, and there was a certain satisfaction, as well as the spice of adventure, in defeating them, ever lured him back. And also, a woman entered his life, a woman who, presumably, objected to his running barefoot, gathering stone bruises—how much worse they hurt than they do a boy—fishing in the creek, sleeping in wet clothes by a campfire in the woods, letting his hair and whiskers grow, and otherwise acting like a wild man. That is always the way. Some mother is always drawing the check rein on a boy, and some sweetheart or wife is always doing the same thing for a man. Just as each of them is about to learn the most priceless secrets of existence.

The first three chapters of Mr. Cooper's story are in this week's Enterprise. For ten cents we will send the entire story to any address in Oregon. Have it sent to a friend.



With the Clock Turned Back

By Courtney Ryley Cooper

CHAPTER I

Here Goes

As Thomas Brent left the elevator he resembled somewhat a man at bay. His hands were deep in his pockets, his heavy chin was jammed against his collar, and his lips were in a straight line. There was a glitter in his eyes which carried an impression of pent-up rage.

"Idiot!" he grumbled to himself. "What's he think I am, anyway? Doesn't he know I have something better to do than to go tearing around the country like a wild man? I know what I'll do"—he stopped short and waved a hand impatiently—"I'll see another doctor, that's what. I'll see whether anybody is going to make an idiot out of me."

Whereupon Mr. Thomas Brent dived as fast as his palpitating heart would allow him into another office building and scanned the register of names. Soon, panting from the exertions of a hurried entrance, he stood before a professional-looking man in one of the upper suites.

"Brent's my name," he said shortly. "Thomas Brent. I'm president of the Amalgamated Foundry company, and I've just been having a session with a pure idiot. One of your tribe," he added sarcastically.

Doctor Jordan smiled blandly. "There are idiots in all classes," he said with a laugh. "Now what's your particular grievance?"

The president of the Amalgamated Foundry company seated himself and grunted in a distressed sort of way. "There's enough of a grievance," he began. "Here I've been going to Doctor Jim Henderson for the last ten years and paying him my good money for what I thought was professional work, and now when I need him, he comes rising up with a proposition that a ten-year-old schoolboy ought to know is pure idiocy. You know what he's just told me to do?" he asked with a sudden flare of anger. "He told me to live in a cave."

"A cave?" Doctor Jordan appeared interested. "I think we had better get to the bottom of this thing. Tell me everything from the beginning."

Mr. Brent looked at the floor a minute, then with his hands on his knees he began, while the sharp eyes of Doctor Jordan watched his every action.

"Well, it's enough to drive anybody crazy," he began. "Here I've been working for the last twenty-five years trying to build up a good business and it just seems that everybody in the world is eternally hanging around trying to bleed me for something. I haven't got an employee that's satisfied. All of them are kicking for more money all the time. All I hear is money, money, money."

His hands went up and waved windmill fashion. "I'm getting tired of it—tired of everything. I'm sick of the whole blamed business. I know what I ought to do, but nobody will let me do it. They won't let me run the business the way I want to—and I'm president, too, understand that. Every time I turn around somebody is sticking a requisition for money in my face and it has just got on my nerves until I can't stand it any longer. I need a tonic or something of the kind—"

"I've been working ever since I was knee-high to a grasshopper. Carried papers to get through school on and washed dishes in a restaurant at night."

"Do you good to get all those things and more. Now, look here, Mr. Brent," the doctor added, leaning forward forcefully, "you are forty-five years old; you look fifty-five. Your nerves are broken down, and your digestion is bad. Your mind has become centered on one thing until it is almost a mania with you. And you must get away from it. I don't care how you do it, or where you go, but for six months you must cease to be a part of the Amalgamated Foundry company."

"If you want to go to the woods somewhere and hunt, very well. If you want to get your freckled-face boy and live in a cave and do your own cooking, all the better. I say all the better because that will show you one part of your life you have missed entirely. Did you ever reflect that you never had any boyhood, that you have been shouldering a man's responsibilities and worries ever since you were old enough to remember. Think it over, Mr. Brent." With that Doctor Jordan leaned back with an air of having finished the interview, while Thomas Brent, too bewildered to be longer angry, rose and left the office.

Slowly he stumbled to the elevator shaft, muttering something to himself as he went.

"Those fellows have either got a conspiracy against me, or else they know something," Brent mused. "Well, I never went into a thing halfway in my life, and if I've got to do this thing, I'm going to do it up brown. I'm going to leave that fool shop of mine so far behind it never will catch up with me. This crazy thing'll kill me—I won't live through the first week of it, but I'll see the thing through or bust a blood vessel doing it. I suppose I'll have to put an advertisement in the paper for that freckled-face kid. I wonder why it is," he asked himself as he turned down a side street toward a newspaper office, "that they are always talking about those freckled-face boys that live in the country and do all that sort of thing? I don't see where there is anything so fine about that. I never had any freckles when I was a kid. Well," he grunted again, "freckles or not, here goes!"

CHAPTER II

The Only Way

The door which led to the private office of Mr. Thomas Brent had been closed all morning. More than being closed, it was locked, as Philip Scrotties, the first aid and assistant of Mr. Brent, had found out after several ineffectual attempts to open it. Still more mysterious was the fact that Mr. Brent had left his hotel early that morning and should have been at work long ago.

It all put a puzzled expression on the face of Scrotties. Anything out of the beaten track always seemed to puzzle him.

"I don't know what I'll do," he said to the stenographer as he sat at his desk. "He ought to have been here a long time ago. He never stayed away before without letting me know. I—"

"I beg your pardon." It was the voice of a young man at his shoulder. Philip Scrotties looked up into the face of John Edwards of the checking department.

"Well?" he asked.

Edwards seemed to hesitate a little. "I—I came to ask again about my raise," he began. "I believe I am entitled to one. I have been working here a good while, and there have been no objections to my work. It seems—"

Scrotties pounded his desk. "This isn't any time to ask for a raise," he ejaculated. "It seems that you would get it through your head after a while that we don't want to raise you."

"But I must have a raise," Edwards broke in. "There are certain things in my life that demand it. I have been figuring on getting married for some time, but I can't do it as long as my salary stays as low as it is now."

"Well, you can't count that against us," Scrotties answered him. "We pay a man what he's worth. If he wants to get married, that is not our lookout at all. You ought to realize that, Edwards."

"But I don't believe you are paying me what I'm worth," Edwards retorted. "I know I am young and all that, but just the same I have the ability to do a lot of things that you don't give me credit for. If you would only give me half a chance here I could show you. Now to be frank, Mr. Scrotties, I must have a raise, or I will be forced to leave my position and hunt another. Of course, I would like to stay, but I must—"

Scrotties interrupted with a gesture. "It has always been a rule of this company that we hold no man here against his will. Mr. Brent has made up his mind that he is not going to give any more raises around here, and that rule will be enforced. I am very sorry, Mr. Edwards, but if you don't care to work here at your present salary, you had better find another position."

The young man's hand twitched, his face grew the least bit pale, then suddenly he turned and left the office, while the eyes of Mr. Scrotties once more turned toward the door of Brent's office.

"He ought to be here—he certainly ought to be here," the confidential manager mused. "I can't make it out. Then, somewhat uneasily, he telephoned the janitor. Five minutes later, the door having been opened by the master keys on the janitor's ring, Mr. Philip Scrotties entered the office and started hastily toward the table by Mr. Brent's desk. Two envelopes lay there. He picked up the smaller, read the note it contained, and then motioned in an agitated manner for Mr. Brent's stenographer.

"I can't make it out," his voice was husky. "You read it, Miss Sylvester."

The stenographer rustled briskly by Mr. Brent's closed desk to the table. Her brows contracted as she read. She compressed her lips and allowed her eyes to roll a bit as she laid the note back on the table—without comment. Scrotties waited impatiently.

"Well?" he asked.

Miss Sylvester spread her hands and shrugged her shoulders. She said nothing. Scrotties again picked up the offending bit of paper, gazed at it fixedly, and then pushed it into the hands of Miss Sylvester.

"Read it out loud," he ordered, and his voice was a bit strange. "I couldn't see well—without my glasses."

Miss Sylvester obeyed, and read:

Dear Scrotties: In the long envelope you will find power of attorney to act for me in all things except the merger as long as I am away, which may be a long time. The merger which may be long up can be delayed by you as you see fit. I don't care whether you merge or not. I don't care about anything. School can keep or it can let get just as it chooses. You needn't fly up in the air and look for me. I'm all right. Maybe you will get some satisfaction out of you about this thing in person, but you would have called an ambulance and had me put in the private ward.

"That is all," said Miss Sylvester slowly.

"Read the advertisement," came in a strange voice from across the table. The paper rustled again as Miss Sylvester held the bit of finely printed paper to her stenographic eyes.

Wanted: Small, red-haired, freckled-face, barefoot boy, of about sixteen years, to act as companion to a man of forty-five years who is forced to turn back the clock. Must know how to fish, swim, hunt, and live in a cave if necessary. Imperative that he is a country boy who has never lived in the city. G-111, Chronicle.

After that for ten minutes there was silence in the private office of Mr. Thomas Brent. Then Philip Scrotties wandered unsteadily to a window and stood looking out.

"Give it out he has gone to Europe," he said at last. "Nobody will believe a sane man could do such a crazy thing. What we are going to do I don't know. I guess I will have to look for him myself, and bring him back. That's the only way—"

"Where will you look?" asked Miss Sylvester with a quick upward jerk of her head.

"I don't know," Scrotties said with a sigh.

CHAPTER III

In the Jutting Ledges

Indian creek strolls along through bluff and prairies—mostly the former. And cleft in the highest of these, one hundred feet by a sloping footpath above where the reflection of the shimmering moon told of the water, there sat that night two figures.

Their faces were lighted from the glow of the fire which blazed cheerily on the ledge that had made their resting place. The great rocks behind them were dark shadowed and formed a background of almost overpowering weirdness. Beyond gaped the darkness of a small cave, or, rather, a sheltering hollow in the jutting ledges of rocks. The heads of both figures were bare. One was much so, because it wore a crown of baldness. Both shirts were open at the neck. Both pairs of feet were short of covering—but in them was a great difference. Those of the boy were brown and calloused, while those of the bald one were gingerly extended, toes rampant, splattered with marks of purple and blue.

Neither the man nor the boy had spoken for a few minutes. The younger person was busy attaching the white meat of two frog saddles to two forked sticks preparatory to roasting them. The older man's mind was busy in thought.

"Freck," he began in a complaining sort of voice, "my feet hurt."

"Stone bruise, mebbe," came from the boy. "That's always the way, though, when you first take off your shoes. They'll toughen up after a while. I know Jennie says when I first take off my shoes in the spring I look like a bow-legged goose on a hot griddle."

Mr. Brent, undergoing the first painful stages of his metamorphosis, stared glumly ahead. "Who's Jennie?" he asked.

"Why, Jennie's my sister," "Freck" returned. "She's older than I am—she's twenty-one. She works in the city, but she comes out every couple of weeks to see ma and me. I guess if ma hadn't looked at Jennie and seen what the city had done for her I wouldn't have been here now."

The bruises on Mr. Brent's feet absorbed his attention too much for him to delve into Freck's conversation to any depth. He merely grunted while the boy went on.

"You see, ma knows that Jennie knows what's what and she's just been thinking lately that maybe the place ain't nice enough for Jennie to come to visit us in. So she wanted to get a new rug for the parlor, but, huh! we haven't got any money. So when I got a chance to take this job, I took it. Five dollars a week would help out lots."

Mr. Brent had looked up quickly. "I didn't say anything about five dollars a week," he broke in. "I said four-forty. By George! if I'd go to the end of the earth, there would be somebody nagging me for money."

"Beg your pardon, sir, but I wasn't nagging," Freck interrupted. "You said you would give me four-fifty now and five if I gave satisfaction."

"Well, you haven't given satisfaction yet," Mr. Brent said, adding, however, with a little twinkle of conscience, "you are a pretty good boy, though. What are you going to do with those frog legs?"

"I'm going to cook 'em. See, here's yours and here's mine." Freck handed Mr. Brent his forked stick with the frog leg dangling on the end. "We'll brush the fire away a little so we can get down to the embers and hold 'em over and let 'em roast."

Mr. Brent, doubled up on the ledge, felt himself taking rather an elephantine interest in the doings of his young companion.

"Then what?" he asked.

"There won't be any 'then what' after that," said Freck. "We'll just eat 'em." A moment later he added: "It's going to rain."

Mr. Brent looked at the young prophet with a queer expression in his face.

"How do you know it is going to

CHAPTER II

The Only Way

The door which led to the private office of Mr. Thomas Brent had been closed all morning. More than being closed, it was locked, as Philip Scrotties, the first aid and assistant of Mr. Brent, had found out after several ineffectual attempts to open it. Still more mysterious was the fact that Mr. Brent had left his hotel early that morning and should have been at work long ago.

It all put a puzzled expression on the face of Scrotties. Anything out of the beaten track always seemed to puzzle him.

"I don't know what I'll do," he said to the stenographer as he sat at his desk. "He ought to have been here a long time ago. He never stayed away before without letting me know. I—"

"I beg your pardon." It was the voice of a young man at his shoulder. Philip Scrotties looked up into the face of John Edwards of the checking department.

"Well?" he asked.

Edwards seemed to hesitate a little. "I—I came to ask again about my raise," he began. "I believe I am entitled to one. I have been working here a good while, and there have been no objections to my work. It seems—"

Scrotties pounded his desk. "This isn't any time to ask for a raise," he ejaculated. "It seems that you would get it through your head after a while that we don't want to raise you."

"But I must have a raise," Edwards broke in. "There are certain things in my life that demand it. I have been figuring on getting married for some time, but I can't do it as long as my salary stays as low as it is now."

"Well, you can't count that against us," Scrotties answered him. "We pay a man what he's worth. If he wants to get married, that is not our lookout at all. You ought to realize that, Edwards."

"But I don't believe you are paying me what I'm worth," Edwards retorted. "I know I am young and all that, but just the same I have the ability to do a lot of things that you don't give me credit for. If you would only give me half a chance here I could show you. Now to be frank, Mr. Scrotties, I must have a raise, or I will be forced to leave my position and hunt another. Of course, I would like to stay, but I must—"

Scrotties interrupted with a gesture. "It has always been a rule of this company that we hold no man here against his will. Mr. Brent has made up his mind that he is not going to give any more raises around here, and that rule will be enforced. I am very sorry, Mr. Edwards, but if you don't care to work here at your present salary, you had better find another position."

The young man's hand twitched, his face grew the least bit pale, then suddenly he turned and left the office, while the eyes of Mr. Scrotties once more turned toward the door of Brent's office.

"He ought to be here—he certainly ought to be here," the confidential manager mused. "I can't make it out. Then, somewhat uneasily, he telephoned the janitor. Five minutes later, the door having been opened by the master keys on the janitor's ring, Mr. Philip Scrotties entered the office and started hastily toward the table by Mr. Brent's desk. Two envelopes lay there. He picked up the smaller, read the note it contained, and then motioned in an agitated manner for Mr. Brent's stenographer.

"I can't make it out," his voice was husky. "You read it, Miss Sylvester."

The stenographer rustled briskly by Mr. Brent's closed desk to the table. Her brows contracted as she read. She compressed her lips and allowed her eyes to roll a bit as she laid the note back on the table—without comment. Scrotties waited impatiently.

"Well?" he asked.

Miss Sylvester spread her hands and shrugged her shoulders. She said nothing. Scrotties again picked up the offending bit of paper, gazed at it fixedly, and then pushed it into the hands of Miss Sylvester.

"Read it out loud," he ordered, and his voice was a bit strange. "I couldn't see well—without my glasses."

Miss Sylvester obeyed, and read:

Dear Scrotties: In the long envelope you will find power of attorney to act for me in all things except the merger as long as I am away, which may be a long time. The merger which may be long up can be delayed by you as you see fit. I don't care whether you merge or not. I don't care about anything. School can keep or it can let get just as it chooses. You needn't fly up in the air and look for me. I'm all right. Maybe you will get some satisfaction out of you about this thing in person, but you would have called an ambulance and had me put in the private ward.

"That is all," said Miss Sylvester slowly.

"Read the advertisement," came in a strange voice from across the table. The paper rustled again as Miss Sylvester held the bit of finely printed paper to her stenographic eyes.

Wanted: Small, red-haired, freckled-face, barefoot boy, of about sixteen years, to act as companion to a man of forty-five years who is forced to turn back the clock. Must know how to fish, swim, hunt, and live in a cave if necessary. Imperative that he is a country boy who has never lived in the city. G-111, Chronicle.

After that for ten minutes there was silence in the private office of Mr. Thomas Brent. Then Philip Scrotties wandered unsteadily to a window and stood looking out.

"Give it out he has gone to Europe," he said at last. "Nobody will believe a sane man could do such a crazy thing. What we are going to do I don't know. I guess I will have to look for him myself, and bring him back. That's the only way—"

"Where will you look?" asked Miss Sylvester with a quick upward jerk of her head.

"I don't know," Scrotties said with a sigh.

CHAPTER III

In the Jutting Ledges

Indian creek strolls along through bluff and prairies—mostly the former. And cleft in the highest of these, one hundred feet by a sloping footpath above where the reflection of the shimmering moon told of the water, there sat that night two figures.

Their faces were lighted from the glow of the fire which blazed cheerily on the ledge that had made their resting place. The great rocks behind them were dark shadowed and formed a background of almost overpowering weirdness. Beyond gaped the darkness of a small cave, or, rather, a sheltering hollow in the jutting ledges of rocks. The heads of both figures were bare. One was much so, because it wore a crown of baldness. Both shirts were open at the neck. Both pairs of feet were short of covering—but in them was a great difference. Those of the boy were brown and calloused, while those of the bald one were gingerly extended, toes rampant, splattered with marks of purple and blue.

Neither the man nor the boy had spoken for a few minutes. The younger person was busy attaching the white meat of two frog saddles to two forked sticks preparatory to roasting them. The older man's mind was busy in thought.

"Freck," he began in a complaining sort of voice, "my feet hurt."

"Stone bruise, mebbe," came from the boy. "That's always the way, though, when you first take off your shoes. They'll toughen up after a while. I know Jennie says when I first take off my shoes in the spring I look like a bow-legged goose on a hot griddle."

Mr. Brent, undergoing the first painful stages of his metamorphosis, stared glumly ahead. "Who's Jennie?" he asked.

"Why, Jennie's my sister," "Freck" returned. "She's older than I am—she's twenty-one. She works in the city, but she comes out every couple of weeks to see ma and me. I guess if ma hadn't looked at Jennie and seen what the city had done for her I wouldn't have been here now."

The bruises on Mr. Brent's feet absorbed his attention too much for him to delve into Freck's conversation to any depth. He merely grunted while the boy went on.

"You see, ma knows that Jennie knows what's what and she's just been thinking lately that maybe the place ain't nice enough for Jennie to come to visit us in. So she wanted to get a new rug for the parlor, but, huh! we haven't got any money. So when I got a chance to take this job, I took it. Five dollars a week would help out lots."

Mr. Brent had looked up quickly. "I didn't say anything about five dollars a week," he broke in. "I said four-forty. By George! if I'd go to the end of the earth, there would be somebody nagging me for money."

"Beg your pardon, sir, but I wasn't nagging," Freck interrupted. "You said you would give me four-fifty now and five if I gave satisfaction."

"Well, you haven't given satisfaction yet," Mr. Brent said, adding, however, with a little twinkle of conscience, "you are a pretty good boy, though. What are you going to do with those frog legs?"

"I'm going to cook 'em. See, here's yours and here's mine." Freck handed Mr. Brent his forked stick with the frog leg dangling on the end. "We'll brush the fire away a little so we can get down to the embers and hold 'em over and let 'em roast."

Mr. Brent, doubled up on the ledge, felt himself taking rather an elephantine interest in the doings of his young companion.

"Then what?" he asked.

"There won't be any 'then what' after that," said Freck. "We'll just eat 'em." A moment later he added: "It's going to rain."

Mr. Brent looked at the young prophet with a queer expression in his face.

"How do you know it is going to

CHAPTER II

The Only Way

The door which led to the private office of Mr. Thomas Brent had been closed all morning. More than being closed, it was locked, as Philip Scrotties, the first aid and assistant of Mr. Brent, had found out after several ineffectual attempts to open it. Still more mysterious was the fact that Mr. Brent had left his hotel early that morning and should have been at work long ago.

It all put a puzzled expression on the face of Scrotties. Anything out of the beaten track always seemed to puzzle him.

"I don't know what I'll do," he said to the stenographer as he sat at his desk. "He ought to have been here a long time ago. He never stayed away before without letting me know. I—"

"I beg your pardon." It was the voice of a young man at his shoulder. Philip Scrotties looked up into the face of John Edwards of the checking department.

"Well?" he asked.

Edwards seemed to hesitate a little. "I—I came to ask again about my raise," he began. "I believe I am entitled to one. I have been working here a good while, and there have been no objections to my work. It seems—"

Scrotties pounded his desk. "This isn't any time to ask for a raise," he ejaculated. "It seems that you would get it through your head after a while that we don't want to raise you."

"But I must have a raise," Edwards broke in. "There are certain things in my life that demand it. I have been figuring on getting married for some time, but I can't do it as long as my salary stays as low as it is now."

"Well, you can't count that against us," Scrotties answered him. "We pay a man what he's worth. If he wants to get married, that is not our lookout at all. You ought to realize that, Edwards."

"But I don't believe you are paying me what I'm worth," Edwards retorted. "I know I am young and all that, but just the same I have the ability to do a lot of things that you don't give me credit for. If you would only give me half a chance here I could show you. Now to be frank, Mr. Scrotties, I must have a raise, or I will be forced to leave my position and hunt another. Of course, I would like to stay, but I must—"

Scrotties interrupted with a gesture. "It has always been a rule of this company that we hold no man here against his will. Mr. Brent has made up his mind that he is not going to give any more raises around here, and that rule will be enforced. I am very sorry, Mr. Edwards, but if you don't care to work here at your present salary, you had better find another position."

The young man's hand twitched, his face grew the least bit pale, then suddenly he turned and left the office, while the eyes of Mr. Scrotties once more turned toward the door of Brent's office.

"He ought to be here—he certainly ought to be here," the confidential manager mused. "I can't make it out. Then, somewhat uneasily, he telephoned the janitor. Five minutes later, the door having been opened by the master keys on the janitor's ring, Mr. Philip Scrotties entered the office and started hastily toward the table by Mr. Brent's desk. Two envelopes lay there. He picked up the smaller, read the note it contained, and then motioned in an agitated manner for Mr. Brent's stenographer.

"I can't make it out," his voice was husky. "You read it, Miss Sylvester."

The stenographer rustled briskly by Mr. Brent's closed desk to the table. Her brows contracted as she read. She compressed her lips and allowed her eyes to roll a bit as she laid the note back on the table—without comment. Scrotties waited impatiently.

"Well?" he asked.

Miss Sylvester spread her hands and shrugged her shoulders. She said nothing. Scrotties again picked up the offending bit of paper, gazed at it fixedly, and then pushed it into the hands of Miss Sylvester.

"Read it out loud," he ordered, and his voice was a bit strange. "I couldn't see well—without my glasses."

Miss Sylvester obeyed, and read:

Dear Scrotties: In the long envelope you will find power of attorney to act for me in all things except the merger as long as I am away, which may be a long time. The merger which may be long up can be delayed by you as you see fit. I don't care whether you merge or not. I don't care about anything. School can keep or it can let get just as it chooses. You needn't fly up in the air and look for me. I'm all right. Maybe you will get some satisfaction out of you about this thing in person, but you would have called an ambulance and had me put in the private ward.

"That is all," said Miss Sylvester slowly.

"Read the advertisement," came in a strange voice from across the table. The paper rustled again as Miss Sylvester held the bit of finely printed paper to her stenographic eyes.

Wanted: Small, red-haired, freckled-face, barefoot boy, of about sixteen years, to act as companion to a man of forty-five years who is forced to turn back the clock. Must know how to fish, swim, hunt, and live in a cave if necessary. Imperative that he is a country boy who has never lived in the city. G-111, Chronicle.

After that for ten minutes there was silence in the private office of Mr. Thomas Brent. Then Philip Scrotties wandered unsteadily to a window and stood looking out.

"Give it out he has gone to Europe," he said at last. "Nobody will believe a sane man could do such a crazy thing. What we are going to do I don't know. I guess I will have to look for him myself, and bring him back. That's the only way—"

"Where will you look?" asked Miss Sylvester with a quick upward jerk of her head.

"I don't know," Scrotties said with a sigh.

CHAPTER III

In the Jutting Ledges

Indian creek strolls along through bluff and prairies—mostly the former. And cleft in the highest of these, one hundred feet by a sloping footpath above where the reflection of the shimmering moon told of the water, there sat that night two figures.

Their faces were lighted from the glow of the fire which blazed cheerily on the ledge that had made their resting place. The great rocks behind them were dark shadowed and formed a background of almost overpowering weirdness. Beyond gaped the darkness of a small cave, or, rather, a sheltering hollow in the jutting ledges of rocks. The heads of both figures were bare. One was much so, because it wore a crown of baldness. Both shirts were open at the neck. Both pairs of feet were short of covering—but in them was a great difference. Those of the boy were brown and calloused, while those of the bald one were gingerly extended, toes rampant, splattered with marks of purple and blue.

Neither the man nor the boy had spoken for a few minutes. The younger person was busy attaching the white meat of two frog saddles to two forked sticks preparatory to roasting them. The older man's mind was busy in thought.

"Freck," he began in a complaining sort of voice, "my feet hurt."

"Stone bruise, mebbe," came from the boy. "That's always the way, though, when you first take off your shoes. They'll toughen up after a while. I know Jennie says when I first take off my shoes in the spring I look like a bow-legged goose on a hot griddle."

Mr. Brent, undergoing the first painful stages of his metamorphosis, stared glumly ahead. "Who's Jennie?" he asked.

"Why, Jennie's my sister," "Freck" returned. "She's older than I am—she's twenty-one. She works in the city, but she comes out every couple of weeks to see ma and me. I guess if ma hadn't looked at Jennie and seen what the city had done for her I wouldn't have been here now."

The bruises on Mr. Brent's feet absorbed his attention too much for him to delve into Freck's conversation to any depth. He merely grunted while the boy went on.

"You see, ma knows that Jennie knows what's what and she's just been thinking lately that maybe the place ain't nice enough for Jennie to come to visit us in. So she wanted to get a new rug for the parlor, but, huh! we haven't got any money. So when I got a chance to take this job, I took it. Five dollars a week would help out lots."

Mr. Brent had looked up quickly. "I didn't say anything about five dollars a week," he broke in. "I said four-forty. By George! if I'd go to the end of the earth, there would be somebody nagging me for money."

"Beg your pardon, sir, but I wasn't nagging," Freck interrupted. "You said you would give me four-fifty now and five if I gave satisfaction."

"Well, you haven't given satisfaction yet," Mr. Brent said, adding, however, with a little twinkle of conscience, "you are a pretty good boy, though. What are you going to do with those frog legs?"

"I'm going to cook 'em. See, here's yours and here's mine." Freck handed Mr. Brent his forked stick with the frog leg dangling on the end. "We'll brush the fire away a little so we can get down to the embers and hold 'em over and let 'em roast."

Mr. Brent, doubled up on the ledge, felt himself taking rather an elephantine interest in the doings of his young companion.

"Then what?" he asked.

"There won't be any 'then what' after that," said Freck. "We'll just eat 'em." A moment later he added: "It's going to rain."

Mr. Brent looked at the young prophet with a queer expression in his face.

"How do you know it is going to

CHAPTER II

The Only Way

The door which led to the private office of Mr. Thomas Brent had been closed all morning. More than being closed, it was locked, as Philip Scrotties, the first aid and assistant of Mr. Brent, had found out after several ineffectual attempts to open it. Still more mysterious was the fact that Mr. Brent had left his hotel early that morning and should have been at work long ago.

It all put a puzzled expression on the face of Scrotties. Anything out of the beaten track always seemed to puzzle him.

"I don't know what I'll do," he said to the stenographer as he sat at his desk. "He ought to have been here a long time ago. He never stayed away before without letting me know. I—"

"I beg your pardon." It was the voice of a young man at his shoulder. Philip Scrotties looked up into the face of John Edwards of the checking department.

"Well?" he asked.

Edwards seemed to hesitate a little. "I—I came to ask again about my raise," he began. "I believe I am entitled to one. I have been working here a good while, and there have been no objections to my work. It seems—"

Scrotties pounded his desk. "This isn't any time to ask for a raise," he ejaculated. "It seems that you would get it through your head after a while that we don't want to raise you."