



With the Clock Turned Back

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By Courtney Ryley Cooper

CHAPTER VIII

Magnate of Crawdads.

It was three days after his conference with young Mr. Edwards that Thomas Brent lay in a shady spot beside Indian creek contemplating a large soiled package and a number of small sticks with strings attached. Freck was in Dodson; he was making daily trips there now on a flea-bitten mare which Mr. Brent had bought from Aunt Margie, and waiting at the telegraph office for any message that might come for Mr. Thomas Brent. He did not return to the cave until evening and Mr. Brent had the whole day to himself.

"It's time I was getting Freck started in some business," he mused: "something where he can live out in the country. I don't believe you could change that boy to a city job." Suddenly he slapped his thigh heavily and paved for the package of meat. He undid the wrapper, displaying a large beef liver, and then began cutting it in small chunks and tying one to every bit of string. Then, sticking the poles in the bank of the stream about a foot apart, he sank the liver and began to await developments.

Far into the afternoon his activities continued, and then, staggering up the hill to the cave, he carried a gun-sack full to the very brim with live crawfish.

"I don't see why I couldn't develop a money-making proposition for him," he mused as he went back to the stream again. "That boy ought to be a magnate in less than a year."

Whereupon he closed his eyes for the well-earned nap that had become a part of his afternoon life. When he awoke it was to find Freck and his flea-bitten mare near by.

"Any luck, boy?" he asked.

"No, sir; there wasn't any news for you at all, Mr. Brent." Freck said "Maybe it'll come tomorrow."

"Maybe it will. I don't care much when it comes just so it gets here some time. Look here, Freck, do you ever think much about your own future? What you are going to be when you grow up, and so on?"

Freck's face went blank. "Why, I thought I was going to be your confidential agent," he said.

Mr. Brent laughed. "You were, but you gave the job to that brother-in-law of yours. I can't have a whole flock of confidential agents, you know. Look here, Freck, I've got an idea for you. How'd you like to be president of the Consolidated Crawdad company? Of course, there wouldn't be any consolidation to it, but we'd just give it that name for the sake of the sound. How'd you like it?"

"What'd I do?" Freck asked.

"Do? Why, you'd be a crawdad magnate. The first thing you know you'd be getting your picture in all the papers and be owning motor cars and steam yachts, and I don't know what all."

"I'd like to have an automobile," Freck said eagerly.

"I don't see any reason why you shouldn't have it. Why, see here Freck, down in town you can go along at night and find two or three negroes on the street selling these crawfish. They seem to make a pretty good living at it just selling them out of baskets all wrapped up in dirty old news papers and that sort of thing, so why wouldn't it be a good idea to sell them the way crawfish ought to be sold? Fix up a crawfish cafe, sell them there in salads, crawfish sandwiches, crawfish this way and crawfish that."

"Oh, snakes!" Freck whistled in addition to the exclamation. "You sure ain't like what you was when you first come out here, Mr. Brent."

"I'm not? Why not?" Brent asked surprisedly.

Freck grinned. "I'd take too long to tell you," he answered. "But what would I do? I couldn't run this business."

"Certainly not. You couldn't run this business, but you could hire some body to do that. Your business is to be the chief crawfish finder. Anybody could run a shop, but it takes a genius to keep it supplied with first-class, fat healthy crawdads."

"Selling them at twenty-five cents a dozen," Brent went on, "that would be one thousand two hundred and fifty quarters; that would be three hundred and twelve dollars and fifty cents a day. Count out about seventy-five or a hundred for expenses—they won't be more than twenty, though. Why, boy, you'll be rich in a month."

Freck gasped. "There ain't that much money in the world," he said.

"Freck," he asked quickly, "who owns this land around here?"

"I'm not sure," Freck said, "but I think a man named Ridge in Kansas City owns it."

"Well, I don't think he is going to own it very long," Mr. Brent answered. "By the way, Freck, you've got a good head on you. Now let's see how tight you can keep it shut. We'll save the crawdad business until another time. In the meantime I've got several things to transact in Kansas City. Let's go down to Aunt Margie's and borrow another horse. I want you to show me the way to the railroad station."

CHAPTER IX

Outside of the Door.

Five men were gathered around a table in the directors' room of the Amalgamated Foundry company. Three of them represented interests in St. Louis and Denver. The two others were John Brady and Phillip Scrotties.

Mr. Tempest of St. Louis rose. "I fall to see, Mr. Scrotties," he said, "how, without any word from your employer, you can be sure of throwing this plant of Mr. Brent's into this affair. I don't see why the Kelly-Griggs company should be given the balance of power in this thing. Of course, I am only the representative of my plant, but if this is to be a merger, I want them to have as much representation as anyone."

"You say and Mr. Brady says," Mr. Tempest continued, "that the Kelly-Griggs company is going to take over the Amalgamated Foundry company, causing them to come into the merger with an amount of capital that would far overbalance what capital we smaller fry have, and throwing the running of affairs into the hands of the larger holders of capital. In other words, we would simply be coming into this affair to be fleeced."

"Not at all! Not at all!" Mr. Scrotties said. "Of course, if you don't care to draw up the agreement for the merger, we can leave the companies separate, but I give you my word of honor the Amalgamated is to be bought by Mr. Brady. Before Mr. Brent left he advised me to make such plans as I saw fit and then hold them pending his return. I have found a good proposition and I'm going ahead with it. Mr. Brent, I believe, is at present in Cincinnati. I heard that he was there and went attempting to find him, but could not do so. I feel sure that we will hear from him within a week, and to the end that everything will be all right. Therefore, gentlemen, I feel that we can draw up the contract now."

"Why not wait until we hear from Mr. Brent? There's no special hurry about this thing," Tempest said.

"But there is a hurry," Brady broke in. "I've been planning to take my wife and daughter to Europe for the last two months, and I don't like to wait any longer. Let's get it out of the way. You fellows are going to have your representation in this thing. You wouldn't be coming into it if you weren't. It's a good thing for you. It's the only way we can get ahead of the American syndicate."

"As it is we have a monopoly of prices now," Brady went on. "We can hold goods on contracts just as high as we want to, but this isn't going to continue very long unless we stay banded together and keep the American syndicate from buying in this territory. As long as they feel they would have to start shops and plants of their own they are going to stay away from here. But give them an opening and we'll have a cutthroat gang that will cut our profits down to less than nothing. Now, gentlemen—he slammed his hand on the table—"why can't we get together on this thing. Come on, let's sign up."

He reached for some of the papers but stopped at a knock on the door.

"See who that is, Scrotties."

Scrotties opened the door to find Mr. Edwards standing there.

"Well," he asked, "I came to be present at the meeting," the young man answered.

"In whose interest?" Scrotties had not seen Edwards since the day he

mailed.

Edwards smiled. He took a paper from his pocket and prepared to hand it to the waiting Scrotties. "I think that will tell you."

Scrotties looked at the top line and his face went blank. "I don't see how," he said. "This seems to be a warrant for arrest."

Edwards laughed. "I gave you the wrong paper. You'll find out about that after a while. This is the one I intended to give you. It comes from Mr. Brent." He handed him a paper. "I am acting as his representative. You are discharged."

"Discharged?"

Five men came to their feet.

"Yes. We'll talk about that later on. Right now I have something to say affecting this merger. Mr. Brady, as far as you are concerned, I don't care what you do. But for Mr. Tempest and his associates I am holding forth a proposition to you to ally yourselves with the American syndicate, and thereby save yourselves much undesirable competition. The American syndicate is now in a position to do about as it pleases in this field, inasmuch as it came into possession this morning of the Amalgamated Foundry company."

There was a moment of silence. Not one of the men in the room, Phillip Scrotties and John Brady least of all, could find words to speak. Scrotties merely stood by the table and gasped. He opened his mouth once or twice then closed it wordlessly. Edwards stood by the door, still smiling. Presently he stepped to one side as the knob turned and there entered a sun-browned man whose eyes bore a twinkle and whose hands were rough and darkened from life in the open.

"Good morning, gentlemen," he said cheerily.

It was Mr. Thomas Brent.

Scrotties started forward. "Mr. Brent," he said, "this young upstart, this—"

"Hello, Scrotties!" Brent beamed. "By the way, how much was this young upstart getting when he was head of the checking department?"

"Why—why—" Scrotties was stammering.

"Tell the truth," Edwards said.

"Yes," broke in Mr. Brent, "he a good thing for you to tell the truth once."

Scrotties went red, then white. "Sixty dollars a month," he said at last.

"I thought so," said Mr. Brent. "By the way, Scrotties, step outside the door there. There's somebody waiting for you. A large man with a red face and big hands and a shining decoration on his coat. He has already taken the cashier for a little walk, and now he wants you to keep the other company."

Scrotties seemed to stagger. "Mr. Brent," he began, "I—I—"

"That'll be all from you, Scrotties," came the voice of the employer, and this time it was stern. "Your friend outside is getting impatient. Come on." He opened the door and gave the other man a little push. A second later and Scrotties was gone. Brent turned to the remaining men.

"Gentlemen," he said to Tempest and the others, meanwhile watching Brady out of the corner of his eyes. "I learned about three weeks ago that the Kelly-Griggs company was trying to make a sort of trust out of this thing instead of a legitimate merger. They didn't even want to do that in an honest way, and so," he said with a little smile, "I got bull-headed. With Mr. Edwards to help me, since I didn't care about appearing in town just then, I sold out to the American syndicate. This, of course, gives them the power to go ahead and do just about as they please in this territory. One of the terms of my agreement was that under no conditions could the Kelly-Griggs company come into it. As for the rest of you, I understand you are invited to do as you please. As for myself, I'm out of business. I like the simple life so well I'm going to stay with it. I think, I guess that's about all," he said, preening his feet and shoving his hands in his pockets. "I guess this about breaks up the little merger meeting."

Fifteen minutes later young Edwards and Thomas Brent were in Mr. Brent's old office of the Amalgamated Foundry company. The older man was cleaning out his desk and throwing away letters, sticking a little keep-sake into his pocket now and then, and laughing to himself with great frequency.

"Well, Edwards, I never thought you could get that much for it," he said. "I had hoped that you might get an even half million, but seven hundred thousand was more than I ever dreamed of."

"I had a little tip," Edwards returned, smiling back. "You see, I've been working for the American syndicate branch office here—the one they just established, you know—and I handled the stenographic notes on a couple of board meetings. So when I put our proposition up to them, I knew exactly what they'd pay, and I kept it at that until they agreed."

"Well, three days to handle the sale of more than a half-million business is a pretty fair little job, Edwards. Of course, you'll get your commission. Ten per cent of seven hundred thousand ought to keep the wolf from your door for a while, oughtn't it?"

Edwards smiled almost sheepishly. "That's more than my wildcat dreams," he answered. "Why, with that Jennie and I can have a farm and horses and cows and an automobile."



Scrotties Opened the Door to Find Edwards Standing There. He had left the employ of the Amalgamated Foundry Company.

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-J.

ALBANY STATE BANK—We invite your business. Savings and commercial accounts. Capital, surplus, undivided profits, \$109,000.

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-POLLAK MOTOR CO.

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

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

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

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

HUB Confectionery, Noon lunches. 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
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N. L. Jennings Manager

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227 W. First
Good food. Popular prices

ROSCOE AMES HARDWARE
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D. C. ROSSMAN, Local Manager
Lady Assistant
All calls answered day or night
Phone 255
Halsey, 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 husbands, 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 herein after described, I, the undersigned referee will, on Saturday, the 4th Day of June, 1927, at the hour of One o'clock P. M. of said day, at the front door of the courthouse at Albany in Linn County, Oregon, offer and sell at public auction to the highest bidder for cash, in the manner required for sale of real property on execution, subject to confirmation of said court, all the following real property, to-wit:—All of Blocks 22, 39 and 40 of the City of Halsey in Linn County, Oregon; also beginning 60 Ft. West of the S. W. corner of Block 38 in the City of Halsey in Linn County, Oregon, and running from thence North 720 Ft. to the county road; Thence West 123 Ft.; Thence South 720 Ft. to a point due W. of the place of beginning; and thence East 123 Ft. to beginning, as said blocks are numbered, designated and described on the maps and plats of said city of record in the office of the County Recorder of said County. Dated and first published May 5, 1927.
FRANK RICHARD,
Sole Referee.

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

After the Years
John Anderson, my Joe, John,
When Nature first began
To try her canny hand, John,
Her master work was man,
And you among them a', John,
Sae trig frae top to toe —
She proved herself nae jarny work,
John Anderson, my Joe.

John Anderson, my Joe, John,
When we were first acquaint
Your locks were like the raven,
Your bonie brow was bent,
Put now ye ha, gr'n as I', John;
Your locks are like the snow,
Yet blessings on your frosty pww,
John Anderson, my Joe.

Yes, now we are aged and gray, Maggie,
Like waves by the wild breakers flung,
But to me you're as fair as you were,
Maggie,
When you and I were young.

The General Motors corporation has forced Henry Ford out of his shell and he announces a new type of Ford automobile, prettier and more convenient. Since the former company began advertising in country newspapers its output of Chevrolets has beaten all records. But to beat the Chevrolet Ford will need to do similar advertising. This goes against his grain.

It has been shown conclusively in all cow testing associations that the highest producing cows achieve their records through the consumption of grain. Grain feeding pays with good cows. It does not pay with poor cows.

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Loans money at 5% on farms
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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

Albany Creamery Association
Manufacturers of

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and Buyers of Eggs

A Farmers' Co-operative Creamery

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And know a good meal when you get it
You'll be back for you'll not forget it.
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Agency Hub Cleaning Works
ABE'S PLACE

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