



(Continued From Last Week)

CHAPTER XVIII

"Brena, I want you to stand here by this old well without walking away from it a moment," said Peter, looking her by the shoulders and looking squarely into her dark eyes. "I'm going to leave you alone a minute. It's not pleasant. I want you to do it just the same."

"Where are you going?"
"Outside the wall again. I've seen something there that you did not see," Brena shivered.

"Don't be afraid, dear," he said. "We have had both of us the lesson of fear. Once we told each other that fear was a crime—a terrible waste. We are on the verge of learning how terrible a waste it can be."

She put her hands in his; with a smile she said, "You see, Peter, I am in the dark, dear. But just the same I'll do as you tell me."

As he walked away from her, his head bent forward as if meditating, she leaned back against the hot, flat face of one of the huge stone blocks of the well curb, following him with her steady gaze. He disappeared outside the old wall, and as he vanished, so vanished all that attached her to the living world. There was no sound, no motion within the range of the senses; the place of death was still.

From the tablelands above, a lonely buzzard had come swooping down on wide black wings, dipping and turning, with one eye cocked down, as if sometime before he had picked bones in this inclosure and had returned to the scene of gruesome feasts, black, ill-omened, carrion creatures that he was. Brena felt glad that he had come—a thing of life and motion—into this place of vast dimensions filled by the silence and rigidity of death. She watched the magnificent grace and power of his flight until Peter's voice broke the silence again, and, flapping toward the west, the bird began to circle up whence he had come.

"I said," said Peter, who came to her with an expression drawn as if with some stress within.

"Yes?"

"Sit down with me here where these blocks cast a shadow, dear. I will show you what I have found—a thing like the writing of a giant flag of justice—here in the desert. But first I want to tell you a tale, Brena—true, revolting and terrible."

"Tell me," she said, sitting with her elbows on her knees.

"It is of surprising brevity, Brena," he asserted. "Its simplicity is the thing that makes ridiculous the many legends I expected, all the nightmares of the unknown. I told you, dear, that

I was no Master Mind—no Great Analyst in capital letters. I was right. I stumbled onto the trail. I used my head. That's all."

He stopped to think.
"And yet the simplicity is hideous!" he said.

Brena glanced toward all that remained of Jim Hennepin of Virginia—the blackened, fleshless relics of his existence.

"He deserved it, perhaps," said Peter, pointing. "He tried to cash in his knowledge."

"You told me last night of the superstition of buried treasure here," she said. "You mean that?"

"No, not exactly," said Peter. "I picked up the trail in the house where Parmelee took you. Two old books; and maps of this country and of this place were missing from both. One Parmelee took when he went away. The other? Well, I began to wonder about the other."

"You thought it must have been used—before?"

"Yes. It had been used and probably destroyed. It was used by one man to tell another to his death."

Brena leaned forward.
"I began to be sure, Brena, when I found that expert knowledge pronounced that the writing on a check made out by the one man who led the other to his death here was written by the same hand that, with an attempt to disguise, had written the words, 'This Sign,' on the scrap of paper Jim Hennepin left with you and that you gave me. I'd better tell you that when I first took that check it was because your indorsement was on it. I wasn't sure, Brena—of anybody."

"I understand," she said. "I understand. And the scrap of paper was a part of the bait?"

Peter raised his hand as if to say that he wished to go on in his own way. "It was chance too that led me to the motive for ridding the world of Hennepin. That miserable man had become a menace. He knew too much. He knew of a long series of embezzlements from a certain estate in Texas. A capitalist had bought vast quantities of something—on speculation—and his agent after his death deceived the speculators as to the extent of his holdings. I have had a clue from an old account book sifted to the bottom."

"And Jim Hennepin knew?"

"Knew and began a merciless blackmail, threatening ruin. I can see him now, insatiable, hungry, losing in speculations, asking for more, hounding a man who was balancing between success and failure and always hinting at bankruptcy and the penitentiary."

Peter went on. He told of the probability that Compton Parmelee, the hounded man, a physical coward, but resourceful and ingenious, had come

upon an old volume describing this lost city of the desert. There were traditions of vast wealth hidden there. Parmelee had pretended to the possession of knowledge confirming it. He had shown old letters, the scrap of paper with the Kukui-can symbol. He wanted to take the blackmailer to a place from which he would never come back.

"To kill him?" asked Brena.
"No," replied Peter. "He hadn't the courage. He feared that. He feared the work. He feared the result. He had a better way."

"And how?" she asked.
"It is all there—here in the sand—a record," he said. "A ghastly record. Seven years have gone, but in this deep fine dust, Brena, there still remains the story."

He paused; he lit a cigarette; went on. He said, "There around the entrance are the marks of horses' hoofs—almost lost—but still readable—three horses. Two saddled and one carrying the packs. They came in two horses abreast, and the pack horse led behind. Two men in the saddles. Night came on. One man slept. The other crept to the animals and he rode away."

"Rode away? Left Jim Hennepin here?"

"Yes, beyond hope—no horse, no water."

"How do you know?"

"Because, Brena, when the three horses went out into the desert their footprints are in single file—one man led the other two. I will show you. It is in the sand—a record and a good guess."

He was silent and he broke his silence with a cry.

"I can see him—Hennepin—awakened, realizing, seeing far away the little



"I Can See Him—Hennepin—Awakened, Realizing."

galloping specks in the pale moonlight with the treacherous man upon the leader—a tiny bobbing figure. I can hear the curses hurled after them. And he—the one left—alone under the moon, alone under the sun, alone under the moon again—without a drop—rushing out into the desert, only to be driven back to the shade after weary marches dragging through the sand, hunting among the rocks, crazed with thirst, gone mad, cursing, blithering mad—his tongue black—the end—perhaps a thought of you—the cur!"

He looked up at Brena; he set his jaw.

"I'm sorry," he said. "But I can see it so clearly—the terrible retribution in this place of silence. His screams echoing back from the rocks, his curses rising into this thin, pale blue sky and the vultures, swirling overhead."

To be continued next week.)

TIGARD NEWS

Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Ariss are the proud parents of a baby son and heir.

The bond election for Union High School District No. 1 has been set for Saturday, May 8.

Dr. I. E. Barrett and family have moved into their new home on the Tigard Highway tract.

The Tigard Telephone Co. has installed a new switchboard which is expected to help their fast-growing business.

The Ladies Aid of the Evangelical church met Thursday. Mrs. M. H. Salmon and Mrs. A. Brooks acted as hostesses.

A happy crowd of young school friends gathered at the Grandy home in Greenburg to help Miss Mariette Grandy celebrate her ninth birthday.

Mr. F. C. Kimmey has purchased the Burch building and expects to move his confectionery and pool tables into his own building.

Mrs. Walter West and daughter, Marion, who have been visiting relatives and friends in Tigard and vicinity have returned to their home in Klamath Falls.

The program rendered by the pupils of the Tigard school last Friday was appreciated by a large crowd. The Girls' Glee club were a prominent feature on the program.

HAZELDALE CONCERT

HUGE SUCCESS

The concert held in the Hazeldale Schoolhouse last Friday evening, given by the Hazeldale Literary Society, proved a big success.

To a crowded audience, which taxed the capacity of the school house to the limit, the varied program of songs, instrumental music, children's dances, readings, etc., was well received.

Mr. Henry Fuigi's accordion solo, accompanied by Mr. Milt-berger on the guitar, went over "big". So did Master Paul Noble, Jr., with his "Charleston Dance". Little Miss Evelyn Day with her recitations was exceptionally good, and the audience showed their appreciation by several re-calls.

The Committee who had charge of the affair is to be congratulated on getting up such a well-balanced entertainment, and the thanks of the Society are tendered to the ladies who so kindly helped with contributions to the "Cafeteria Lunch" provided at the conclusion of the program.

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Below are the names of a few of his many satisfied patients in Oregon: Mrs. L. L. Peetz, Moro, heart trouble; Mrs. F. F. Hager, (daughter Marie) Walton, tonsils and adenoids; Mrs. E. C. Mulloy, Hillsboro, ulcer of the leg; Mrs. Nels. Peterson, Stamokawa, Wash. colitis; George C. Thompson, Coquille, Oreg., eczema and virus of skin; Mrs. Carl Johnson, Marshfield, ear trouble; J. J. Turner, The Dalles, stomach trouble; E. A. Russell, Klamath Falls, appendicitis.

Remember the above date, that consultation on this trip will be free and that his treatment is different.

Married women must be accompanied by their husbands.

Address: 211 Broadway Bldg. Los Angeles, Calif. Adv. p.22-23