

CEDAR SWAMP

by Michael J. Phillips

Illustrations by Henry Jay Lee
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The Leading Characters.

EDISON FORBES, a young resident of Scottsdale, goes on a little joy ride with another young fellow. Some liquor is consumed. They are stopped suddenly by the sight of a booze truck driven by...

CHAPTER III. A Doubting Wife

It was his own wife, Patsy Jane Forbes, who first gave expression in his hearing to the doubt of Edison's story—a doubt which hung over the community like miasma from a swamp in the succeeding days. Scotts Libbey was not captured the night of the tragedy. He slipped through the telephone dragnet. No one had seen him; nor was trace of him found thereafter.

his own accord. He has a good job; he stands high here. It would be awfully hard on his people. And really, I'm to blame—

"Patsy Jane let go his hand. 'Oh, indeed!' she commenced coldly. 'He does stand high, does he?' And of course you're being under arrest and losing your job isn't hard on me! You owe me something at home, don't you?"

But he shook his head, stubbornly. "I can't do it, Pat. I've thought it all over. In a way I'm responsible for that woman's death. If I hadn't persuaded Libbey to break into a case at Burley, he might have not gotten drunk. Don't you see? And if when this chap offered me a ride, I had asked him to take me home, he would have done it. That's all there would have been to it. But I didn't. It's like pushing over a line of dominoes. I gave the shove, and it's up to me to stand the gaff alone."

"Unless, of course, he offers to help. That'll be different."

He could feel her stiffening with resentment, and something less. She rose and began clearing away the dishes. "It—almost looks as though there might have been something dishonorable," she murmured.

He knew what she meant, and flushed. They had been married only a year. Previous to her coming to Scottsdale with her father and stepmother to reside, he had been tacitly engaged to Nance Ennell, daughter of the town's richest man. But Nance was headstrong and highspirited. They quarreled frequently and violently. After one of the quarrels he met, fell in love with Patsy Jane and married her, all within the space of three months.

keep the faith, no matter what happens next week or next year. Besides, I really don't need your help. No jury would convict on such flimsy evidence."

He was curiously mistaken in this. He failed to take into consideration many elements which combined to work against him with what appeared to be personal malignancy. Mrs. Knowles, the woman who had been crushed to death, was admired and respected in the community. Her life had been a long struggle against odds, which she had overcome with noteworthy patience and industry.

It has been suspected for some time that Scottsdale was on the main booze route between Canadian ports and Detroit and Chicago. Furthermore, there were hints that peace officers were being subsidized to look the other way when the trucks slipped through in the night. This was keenly resented. The town had been dry for years before the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment, and the numerous violations had aroused public sentiment.

Eddie Forbes had been popular. But now that he was under arrest for a mishap due to liquor, it was recalled that he had been drunk with more or less frequency in the past. Repudiation by his employer, a man of influence, had done much to turn the community against him.

The trial overwhelmed him like a landslide. The prosecution produced witnesses to prove that he had been seen sitting alone on the truck, on the main street of Burley, less than two hours before the accident. This was while Scotts Libbey conducted the wretchedly ill Barney Ok to the Burley House a short distance away. But Barney had entered the hotel alone. Hearing of the accident, he disappeared next morning before he could be questioned.

manage the truck, and the accident had followed.

His thoughts ran: "If I'd have known they'd convict me, I would have told who was with me." The train puffed into Jackson. Beal signaled a taxicab. They were driven to the prison whose sinister walls towered above the railway tracks. Edison shuddered as they passed within the gateway of discolored gray stone. The whole place seemed to recover slowly from the recent siege of wet weather. There were puddles in the worn flags of the foot walk. The ivy dripped as it clung to the cold stone barriers. There was the same cold dampness in the prison office, and a strong smell of disinfectants, both depressing and degrading.

Linus received a receipt for his prisoner and went away after a silent handclasp. His mouth twitched with emotion, so that he dared attempt no word. The clerk in charge had barely started on Edison's pedigree when the warden entered.

"Never mind, Jerry," he said to the clerk. And then to Edison: "You're Forbes of Scottsdale?" "Yes, sir." (Continued next week)

Good harvest cook and husband want position. Husband can help in kitchen or do other light work. Inquire Mrs. M. L. Oney.

FOR SALE—One 12-foot Deering Combine with motor. In good condition. Inquire this office. 12tf.

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H. M. Olden and Claud Huston took out a new Wood Bros. thrasher Saturday which they will use in threshing the crops on their farms. They expected to begin the harvest this week.



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In a scathing arraignment that lasted for 20 minutes Judge Randolph Parsons sentenced Edison Forbes to from five to fifteen years in the state penitentiary at Jackson.



white-painted house which they rented on Scottsdale's second-best street, Patsy Jane cried over her husband and petted him. The jail breakfast had not been palatable; she made coffee and cooked eggs and bacon. With the boyish smile and frank simplicity which were his chief charms Eddie told her the story of the previous evening.

"Now you go ahead and walk over me, Pat," he concluded. "For I certainly deserve it. I've acted like a fool and I've lost my job, all on account of a bottle of hooch. But before you start I want to tell you that I'm done, through, completed, finished, no more booze for mine. I'm off the stuff for life. When I saw what it did last night it opened my eyes, I can tell you. Oh, I know I've said all this before. But this time I mean it, I'm done; that's all."

"You didn't say who was with you, Eddie," was her comment.

"No, I didn't, Pat," he replied. "I'm not going to tell anyone."

She looked at him in surprise. "But at the trial you'll have to, won't you?" "Not if I don't want to; and I don't."

"But why?" "Well, it's like this," he began, shamefaced and flushing. He was about to confess a determination to do a generous thing, and it embarrassed him. "The fellow who was with me wasn't one of my particular cronies, Pat. He has a good job. He doesn't take a drink once in six months."

"I didn't intend to go to Burley last night. I was headed home after getting a balance on the month's business. But there was a smell of spring in the air. It was moonlight. I was tired out; I've been working extra hard for six or eight weeks. This fellow drove along and the idea popped into my head from nowhere to go to a drink. When he offered me a lift I put it up to him. He—well, he sort of acted on impulse the way I did. The first thing we knew, we were on our way to Burley."

"I know, Eddie," the wife shook with tender impatience the hand she was fondling. "But he's free, white and twenty-one, isn't he? He's able to bear his share of the responsibility, isn't he? Why, you may have to go to jail unless you tell. Or he does." He smiled tolerantly. "Oh, no, I won't. But he must come forward of

She came and went as she pleased. She had her own car. Its powerful motor was frequently heard roaring at unconventional hours along Scottsdale's quiet streets. It might look, thought Eddie, moodily, after he had kissed his wife goodbye and started downtown, that he had been out riding with Nance last night and was concealing the fact. Well, if Patsy Jane was silly enough to believe that, let her. He would keep silent as to who his companion was. That was the only square, decent thing to do. Of course, if that companion chose to come forward voluntarily, the complications would be smoothed out.

He had left the book in which his home was situated when he met a small boy on a bicycle. The boy dismounted, handed him a plain white envelope on which was typewritten only Forbes' name, and rode off again. He tore it open curiously. There was a half sheet of paper inside. There were a few words, also in typewriting, upon it. He read: "For God's sake, Eddie, stand by me. If you tell about last night I will be disgraced. It will break my people's hearts." There was neither salutation nor signature.

He tore the note into small pieces as he walked along and allowed them to sift into the new grass. He was contemptuous, but the appeal strengthened his determination to protect the weak youth. "If I don't do it, he'll just about go to the dogs," thought Eddie.

CHAPTER IV "Guilty"

For his companion was not of the stuff of which martyrs are fashioned. He was easily led, easily oppressed by disapproval. He was of the type whose face registers with hangdog faithfulness for days the record of a few hours' dissipation. "Well, you're a weak sister, kid," he summed up, "which is all the more reason I have to stand by you. If I told, your father would probably kick you out; they'd fire you down at the office, just the way I was fired by old Sam. You'd stink away to the big town and be a bum."

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