

THE FORTUNE HUNTER

Novelized by LOUIS JOSEPH VANCE From the Play of the Same Name by WINCHELL SMITH

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(Continued from Monday.)

"Do you mean that?" she flung at Bohun.

"He straightened up and held his face well in hand. 'Is it the first you have heard of it?'"

"Yes," she looked inquiringly at her father.

"Why didn't you tell her?" Bohun persisted harshly. "Were you afraid?"

"No," Sam shook his head slowly. "I wasn't afraid, but it was unnecessary. You see, Betty, Colonel Bohun is willing to do all this for you on several conditions. You must leave me and never see me again. You mustn't even recognize me should we meet upon the street. You must change your name to Bohun and never permit yourself to be known as Betty Graham. Then you must—"

"Never mind, daddy, dear," said the girl. "That is enough. I know now. I understand why you never told me. It's impossible. Colonel Bohun knew that when he made the offer, of course. He made it simply to harass you, daddy. It's his revenge."

"And that's your answer, miss?" snapped the colonel, livid with wrath. "I would not," she told him slowly. "accept a favor from you, sir, if I were starving."

Bohun drew himself up. "Then starve," he told her and walked out of the shop.

CHAPTER VI.

ON my way back from my walk I came across Duncan sitting on the wall of the bridge. I introduced myself to him, and we walked along together. Finally I asked him the reason for his presence in the town.

"I'm reading law, Mr. Littlejohn; that I shall continue. In the meantime I shall keep my eyes open for a job," he answered. "At any day, at any amount, the opportunity may present itself, the opportunity I'm looking for."

"Probably you're right," I assented, impressed, as we turned a corner.

A young woman in a very attractive linen gown was strolling toward us, quite prettily engaged with a book which she read as she walked, her fair young head bowed beneath a sunshade which tilted her face becomingly. She gave me a shy smile and a low voiced greeting as we passed. Only my knowledge of the young woman prevented me from being blinded by her engaging appearance.

"That," said I when we were out of earshot, "shows you what a furor a good looking young man can create in a town like this. Jostie Lockwood has

"Ah!" he said cryptically. I managed to hear much of Mr. Duncan while I myself was engaged in formulating an estimate of the young man. He left the hotel and took modest accommodations at the house of Hetty Carpenter. He engaged the popular imagination no less than mine own, although I was more intimately associated with him as a fellow resident at Hetty Carpenter's. My professional duties making their habitual demands upon my time, I saw, it may be, less of him than many of our people. Certainly I learned less of his ways from first hand knowledge. But from my desk—it's the nearest to the window right above the postoffice door—I was enabled to keep a pretty close line upon his habits and movements during the first fortnight of his stay in Radville.

At length I saw him with unvarying regularity at mealtimes and less frequently after supper. Between whiles he seemed to observe a fairly regular routine. In the morning after breakfast he walked abroad for his health's sake. In the afternoon and evening he sequestered himself in his room for the pursuit of his legal studies. About the genuineness of these latter I was long without a question. Having been privileged to inspect his room, I found it replete of an atmosphere of highly commendable application. His writing table was a model of neatness, and his store of legal treatises impressed one vastly. That no one, not even Hetty Carpenter, ever saw the room with



"HE'S GOT SIX SUITS OF CLOTHES."

out remarking the open volume of "The Law of Torts," with its numerous pages unjustly spaced by slips of paper by way of bookmarks, is an attested fact. That it was always the same volume is less widely known.

Less directly—that is to say, via my window—I learned of him compendiously from sources which would have been anonymous but for my long acquaintance with the voices of the townspersons. I write these pages at my desk at home and, if truth's to be told, somewhat surreptitiously. But with these voices ringing in my memory's ear I seemed still to be sitting at my erstwhile desk by the window, looking out over Courthouse square, chewing the rubber heel of my pencil while I listen.

Immediately opposite, on the far side of the square, the courthouse rises proudly in all the majesty of its columned front and clapboarded sides. Further along there's the Methodist church, very severe, with its rows of sheds on one side for the teams of the more rural members. Behind them all bulk our hills, dim and purple against the overwelding blue of the sky. It's very quiet. There are few sounds and those few most familiar—the raucous warrery of a rooster somewhere on the outskirts of town, an intermittent thudding of hoofs in the inch deep dust of the roadway, Miles Stetson wringing faint but genuine shrieks of agony from his cornet in a room behind the opera house on the next street, periodically a shuffle of feet on the sidewalk below, less frequently the whine of the swinging doors at Schwartz's place and above it all perhaps the shrill but not unpleasant accents of Angle Tutill as she pauses on the threshold downstairs and injects surprising information into the nothing reluctant ears of Mme. Garibon.

"He's got six suits of clothes, three for summer and three for winter, and two others to wear to parties, one regular full dress suit and another without any tails on the coat that he told Miss Carpenter was a dinner coat, but Roland Barnette says he must've meant a tuxedo, because nobody wears that kind of clothes except at night, so how could it be a dinner coat? And Miss Carpenter told me he's got twelve striped shirts and eight white ones and dozens of silk socks and two dozen neckties and handkerchiefs till you can't count and—"

Mame punctuates this monologue with a regular and excusable "My land!" and the young voices fade away into the midsummer afternoon quiet. I am free to resume my interrupted flight of fancy, but I refrain. The atmosphere is soporiferous, hardly conducive to editorial inspiration, and I find the commingled fumes of red cedar, glue and rubber quite nourishing.



JOSTIE LOCKWOOD, put on her best bib and tucker to go walking in this afternoon on the off chance of meeting you, Mr. Duncan. "Flattery note," he commented. "Who's Jostie Lockwood?" "Daughter of Blinky Lockwood, the oldest man in Radville."

Presently Dr. Mortimer, the minister, comes down the street in company with his deacon, Blinky Lockwood. They are discussing some one in subdued tones, but I catch references to a worthy young man and the vacancy in the choir.

Jostie Lockwood rustles into hearing with Besse Gabriel in tow. Jostie is rattling volubly, but with a hint of the confidential in her tone. She insists that "of course I never let go, but every time we meet I can just feel him looking and—"

Besse interposes, "Why, Tracey Tanner's just crazy for tear he'll take on with Angle."

I can see Jostie's head toss at this. "I bet he don't know what Angle Tutill looks like. That's too absurd!"

"Absurd" is Jostie's newest word. It's a very good word, too, but sometimes I fear she will wear it threadbare. It closes her remarks as the two girls dart into the postoffice, and there is peace for a time; then they emerge, giggling, and I hear Jostie declare: "I'd get Roland Barnette to do it, but he's so jealous. He makes me tired."

Besse's response is inaudible. "Well," Jostie continues, "I'm simply not going to send them out until I meet him. Father said I could give it a week from Saturday, but I won't unless—"

Besse interrupts again inaudibly. "Of course I could do that, but if I just said 'Miss Carpenter and guests' that money old Roland Littlejohn'd think I meant him, too, and if I only said 'guest' it'd look too pointed. Don't you think so?"

To my relief they pass from hearing, and I feel for my pipe for comfort. Anyway, I never did like Jostie Lockwood. Smoking, I meditate on the astonishing power of personality. Here is Mr. Nathaniel Duncan no more than a fortnight in our midst (the phrase is used caliginously as something sacred to country journalism, and, behold, not yet has the town ceased to discuss him. The control he has over the local mind and imagination is certainly wonderful, the more so since he has apparently made no effort to attract attention—rather, I should say, to the contrary. Quiet and unassuming he goes his way, minding his own business as carefully as we would mind it for him, with all the good will in the world, if only we could find out what it is. But we can't leave him alone.

Tracey Tanner interrupts my musings. "Hello!" he twangs, like a tuneless banjo.

"Lo, Tracey." This lofty and blasé greeting can come from none other than Roland Barnette.

"Where you goin'?" "Over to the railway station."

"What for?" "To give you something to talk about. I'm going to send a telegram to a friend of mine in New York."

"Aw, you ain't the only one can send telegrams. Sam Graham sent one just now."

"He did?" "Uh-huh. I was sort of hangin' round when he came in, and I seen him send it myself."

"Sam Graham telegraphing? Do you know who to, Tracey?" Roland's superiority is wearing thin under contact with his curiosity. This surprising bit of news makes him distinctly more affable and inclined to lower himself to the social level of the son of the livery stable keeper.

As for myself, I am inclined to lean out of the window and call Tracey up lest he get out of hearing before I hear the rest of it. Fortunately I am not thus obliged to compromise my dignity. The two are at pause.

"Gimme a cigarette and I'll tell you," bargains Tracey shrewdly. "Lew Parker told me after Sam'd gone."

The deal is put through promptly. "He was telegraphin' to— Got a match?"

(To Be Continued.)

Medford, Ore., Nov. 7, 1911.—This is to certify that about November my daughter was taken with a severe attack of rheumatism which rendered her left arm useless, in fact it was so near paralyzed that she was not able to move her fingers, but knowing of some of Dr. Chow Young's marvelous cures of long standing cases of rheumatism, we decided to consult him, in which I am pleased to say made no mistake, as his remedies acted as he claimed they would and after the third treatment the rheumatic pain entirely left her and she has not had any symptoms of rheumatism since; besides her general health is much improved and I do not hesitate in saying I believe those afflicted with rheumatism or paralysis will do well to consult Dr. Chow Young, whose house is corner of Tenth and Front streets, Medford, Oregon. A. P. WEISS, 211

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APPLE SHOWS ON AT HOOD RIVER, ALBANY

HOOD RIVER, Ore., Nov. 10.—The Hood River fruit fair, next to the yearly apple sale Hood River's biggest annual event, opened yesterday for three days.

Many grovers have held out their best fruit for the fair. After being shown here it will be taken to Portland and entered in the exhibit of the state horticultural society to be held next week.

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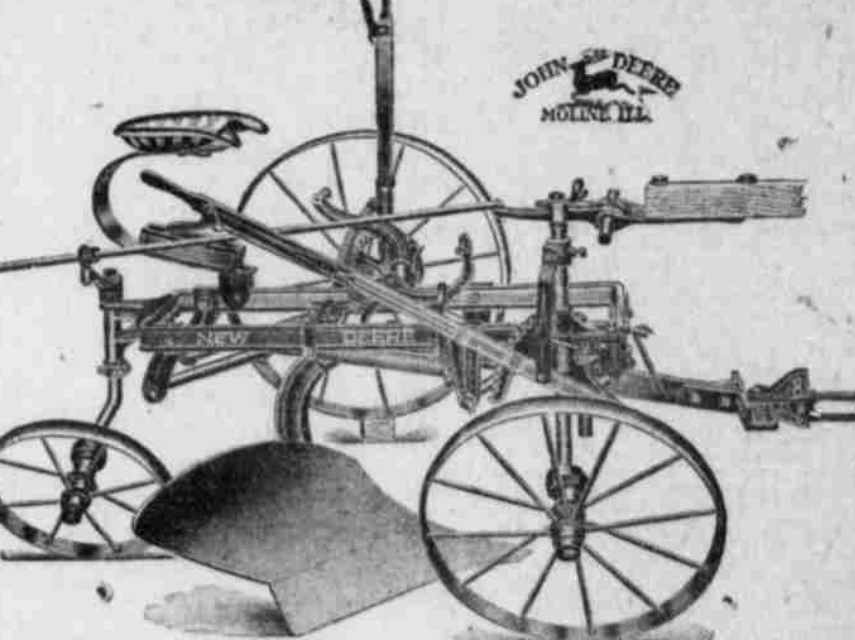
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