

# THE FORTUNE HUNTER

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

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(Continued from Tuesday.)

He told himself he had solved the problem of her disease, but its remedy remained beyond his reach. The business was doing very well indeed, but it was still young and must be subjected to its few financial drains as possible. As it ran there was an income sufficient to board, lodge and clothe the three of them, maintain the credit of the partnership and now and again admit of a slight but advantageous addition to the stock of fixtures. Things would certainly be better in the course of time, but—  
It came to pass that he left the store early one evening, excusing himself on the plea of some slight indisposition, and hid himself for the space of two hours.  
He found himself shortly after 8 at pause by the gate to the Bohun place. An aged negro butler, one of the freed slaves brought from Virginia by the Bohuns, admitted him to the hall and took his card, smoothing his own wig with a gloved hand, and looking at the stranger with some interest. In those days nobody disturbed the silence and the peace of decay of the Bohun mansion save its master. Duncan had long to wait.  
"Colonel Bohun will see you, sir," the servant said and ushered him into the library.  
Bohun received the young man standing. He was as courteous beneath his own roof as he was impossible away from it.  
The colonel nodded. "At your service, sir," and waited grimly.  
Duncan had his own way of getting at things.  
"May I inquire, sir, if you are acquainted with the firm of L. J. Bartlett & Co. of New York?"  
"I have heard of it, Mr. Duncan."  
"Then would you mind doing me the favor of writing to Mr. Henry Kellogg, the junior partner, and asking him about me?"  
The colonel stiffened. "May I ask why I should do anything so uncalled for?"  
"Because it isn't uncalled for, sir. I mean you won't think so after I've explained."  
Bohun inclined his head, searching Nat's face with his keen, bright eyes.  
"You see, sir, it's this way. I want you to intrust me with a considerable sum of money, and naturally you would not do that without knowing something about me."  
"I incline very much to doubt that I should do it in any event, Mr. Duncan."  
"Oh, don't say that. You don't know the circumstances as yet." Nat jerked his head earnestly at the colonel. "You see, you're said to be one of the richest men in town, and I'm certainly one of the poorest, so of course I turn to you in a case like this."  
Duncan could have sworn that the eyes were twinkling beneath the savagely knitted brows.  
"You must understand I'm in business here in Radville—a partner in a growing and prospering concern—ah—doing—very well in point of fact."  
"Yes?"  
"But we haven't any spare capital. In fact, we haven't got any capital worth mentioning. But the business is entirely sound and solvent."  
"I congratulate you, sir."  
"Thank you very much. Now, I'm interested in a rather singular case, that of a young woman—a girl, I should say—daughter of my partner. She's a good girl and wonderfully sweet and fine, sir. She comes of one of the best families in these parts."  
"On her mother's side," suggested the colonel dryly.  
"So I'm told, sir. But she's been neglected. Circumstances have been against her. She hasn't had a real chance in life, but she ought to have it, and I'm going to see that she gets it one way or another."  
"You haven't finished?" said the colonel coldly.  
"Not quite, sir," said Duncan. "Good sign," he told himself. "He hasn't ordered me thrown out yet."  
"To come down to cases, sir, she ought to be sent to a good boarding school for a few years. It'll make a new woman of her—a woman to be proud of. She's got that in her. It only needs to be brought out."  
"And before you leave, sir," said the colonel with significant precision, "will you be so kind as to inform me why you think this should interest me?"  
"No," said Duncan candidly. "I haven't got the nerve to. But what I wanted to propose was this—that you lend me \$500 to cover the expense of the first year on condition that I represent the money as coming from the profits of the business and, in short, keep the transaction between ourselves absolutely quiet. If you'll inquire of Mr. Kellogg he'll tell you I can be trusted to keep my word. Furthermore—he galloped, suspecting that his time was perilously short and desiring to get it all out of his system—"I'll guarantee you repayment within

a year and that you shan't be annoyed in this way a second time."  
Bohun looked him over from head to foot, bowed in silence and, turning both had stood throughout this passage—grasped a bell rope by the chain and pulled it violently.  
In the desolate fastnesses of that dreary house somewhere a bell tinkled discordantly. A moment later the white-headed darky butler opened the door.  
"Suh?" he said.  
Colonel Bohun essayed to speak, cleared his throat angrily and indi-



ANGIE BECAME THE GIB OF TRACEY'S UN-EVILS.  
Duncan greeted him with a courteous gesture.  
"Belgio," said he, "this gentleman will have a glass of wine with me."  
"Yessuh!" stammered the negro.  
Bohun turned to his guest. "Won't you be seated, Mr. Duncan?" he said. "You have interested me considerably, sir, and I should be glad to discuss the matter with you."  
Speechless, Duncan gasped incoherently and moved toward a chair as the servant reappeared with a tray on which was a decanter of sherry and two old-fashioned, thin stemmed crystal glasses. He placed this on the library table, filled the glasses and at a sign from Bohun retired.  
"Sir," said the colonel, indicating the tray, "to you, I hold it a privilege, sir, to drink to the only gentleman of spirit I have seen my good fortune to meet this many a year."  
By way of an aside, it should be mentioned that this was the first and only drink Duncan took while he lived in Radville.

CHAPTER XVII.  
PROBABLY nothing ever gave rise to more comment in Radville than Betty Graham's departure to spend the winter at a boarding school near Philadelphia. Hardly any one knew anything about it—fact, the rumor of it was just being noised about and contemptuously discredited on all hands—when Tracey galloped down Main street Monday morning with the news that she had left on the early train.  
Radville was at first stupefied, then clamorous, but there was little information to be got out of old Sam.  
Duncan himself refused to be interviewed. He told everybody who had the impudence to mention the matter to him that it was Mr. Graham's affair. Mr. Graham was a substantial business man, he said, and if he chose to send his daughter away to school he had a perfect right to do so.  
One direct result of it all was to hasten Josie's own leave taking. It would never do to let the Graham's eclipse the Lockwoods, you see. Josie had been talking of going to a school in Maryland, but Betty's move to a



A FASHIONABLE CENTER LIKE PHILADELPHIA made her change her mind, and arrangements were made by which Josie was able to go Betty one better. A young ladies' seminary in New York city itself received Josie. She left us bereaved about a week after Betty vanished from our ken, but promised to be back for the Christmas holidays.  
Betty was happy, she protested in every communication, and wholly content. She was getting along. The other girls liked her, and she liked them, these statements being made in the order of their relative importance. Lots of them, of course, were frightfully swell (Betty annexed 'frightfully' at school, by the bye) and had all sorts of clothes. The drug store, not to be outdone, supplied her with a party

down for state occasions.  
Josie kept her promise and came home for Christmas. She was rapt as to her impressions of the New York seminary, but seemed extremely glad to be home, notwithstanding the fact that Nat had apparently contracted no disturbing alliances with the other belles of her village. And Ireland remained true—a reliable second string to Josie's bow. Ireland was working hard at the bank, with an application that earned Billy Lockwood's regard and outspoken approbation, and his Christmas raiment proved the sensation of the season.  
In passing I should mention that Betty didn't come home once throughout the entire school term. The Christmas and Easter holidays she spent with a girl friend at her Philadelphia home.  
Meanwhile life in our town simmered gently. Duncan continued to make progress. For one thing I recall that he put in hot soda with whipped cream, which helped a lot to hold the trade regained in the summer from Sothern & Lee.  
Occasionally Duncan visited some of the towns in the county to develop the mail order business which he had successfully inaugurated and which increased materially the profits of the firm.

There was a certain night along toward the 1st of January when trade was dull, as it always is after Christmas, and there was nobody in the store save Nat and Tracey. Each had these tasks, whatever it may have been, and each was busied with it, but of the two Tracey seemed the more restless.  
Duncan broke a long silence in the store. "What's the trouble, Tracey?"  
Tracey rolled up with a stare of confusion. "I-I dunno, Mr. Duncan; I was thinking, I guess."  
"Anything gone wrong?"  
"Not yet."  
"Somebody been demonstrating that your doll's stuffed with sawdust, Tracey?"  
"No; but, say, Mr. Duncan—Tracey's confusion became terrific.  
"Say on, Mr. Tanner."  
Tracey struggled perceptibly. The words when they came were blurted. "Ah, I was only thinkin' 'bout Angie."  
"Do you ever think about anything else?"  
"No," Tracey admitted honestly, "not much. But I was wonderin'—"  
"Well?"  
"Are you stuck on Angie, Mr. Duncan?" demanded Tracey desperately.  
"Great snakes! I hope not!"  
The boy sighed. "Thank you, Mr.



DUNCAN TRAVELED TO THE NEIGHBORING TOWNS TO DEVELOP BUSINESS.  
Duncan. I was only worryin' because you and Angie is slighly together in the choir now Josie Lockwood's gone to school—an—ah—Angie's the prettiest girl in town—an I was 'traid 't you might like her best when Josie's away. Ah! I wanted to ask you to pick out 'another girl."  
Duncan chuckled silently. "Tracey," he said presently, "it strikes me you must be in love with Angie."  
The boy gulped. "I—I ain't."  
"And I think she's rather partial to you."  
"Do you, really, Mr. Duncan?"  
"I do. Do you want to marry her?"  
"Gee! I can't hardly wait! Only," Tracey continued, disconsolate. "It ain't no use, really. She's so party an' swell an' old man Tutbill's so rich—not like the Lockwoods, but rich all the same—an' I'm only the son of the heavy stable man an' fat an'—all that an'—"  
"Nonsense, Tracey," Nat interrupted firmly. "If you really want her and will follow the rules I give you it's a cluck."  
(To be Continued.)

TWO DROWNED WHEN STEAMER GOES DOWN  
LITTLE ROCK, Ark., Jan. 13.—Three passengers were drowned and 14 others are badly frozen as a result of the sinking of the steamer Nettie Johnson, when she struck ice in Lake L'Angeuille today.  
Haskins for health.

# FRUIT GROWERS FOUR DISTRICTS ARE TO COMBINE

Plan to Form Corporation to Handle Product of Northwest; May Absorb Northwestern Fruit Exchange; Secret Meeting Is Held.

(Oregon Journal.)  
Very quietly, a committee of leading fruit growers from Hood River is in Portland planning the organization of an apple handlers' corporation that will include the great districts of Hood River, Rogue river, Wenatchee and North Yakima, together with all the smaller districts of the northwest and that will absorb the Northwestern Fruit exchange, whose offices are in Portland.  
The Hood River committee consists of C. H. Sprout, head of the Hood River Apple Growers' union, A. I. Mason and J. F. Ferguson. The meeting was held with attempted secrecy with C. A. Malbeoff of the Northwestern Fruit exchange in the Spaulding building.  
To obtain control of the fruit exchange and include its equipment as an asset of proposed corporation it is said that it will be necessary to secure control of \$10,000 stock of the concern. The amount now needed for control is variously placed at \$30,000 to \$50,000.  
Plans for an all-northwest fruit handlers' corporation have before been considered, but never so definitely, it is said. Fruit growers of one or the other of the four great districts have before taken the initiative in proposing combination, but each time hostility of interests due to difference in location has been urged against the plan. Now it is as strongly urged that if the apple crop of the northwest is handled through one big corporation or "trust," maintained by representation from fruit growers of all the sections, it will be possible to keep the eastern markets from being flooded and to dictate prices to eastern buyers.

Committees from Medford and Grants Pass have already considered a proposition, and it is said now recommends consolidation to the growers of Hood River, Wenatchee and North Yakima.  
In their desire to escape publicity Mr. Sprout, Mr. Mason and Mr. Ferguson, after registering at the Imperial hotel, turned in their keys and went away, not saying where they were going or what their plans.  
The committee spent the day going over the stock and assets of the Northwestern Fruit exchange.

| MEDFORD MARKETS.                  |                               |               |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|
| Retail Prices.                    |                               |               |
| <b>Vegetables.</b>                |                               |               |
| Potatoes                          | \$1.50 per cwt.               |               |
| Cabbage                           | 2c.                           |               |
| Parsnips                          | 3c.                           |               |
| Lettuce                           | 5c head.                      |               |
| Carrots                           | 2c.                           |               |
| Beets                             | 2c.                           |               |
| Onions                            | 2c.                           |               |
| Celery                            | 50c @ \$1 doz.                |               |
| Cauliflower                       | 10 @ 15c head.                |               |
| Turnips                           | 2c.                           |               |
| Radishes                          | 5c bunch.                     |               |
| Onions—Green                      | 5c bunch.                     |               |
| <b>Fruit.</b>                     |                               |               |
| Cocoanuts                         | 10c each.                     |               |
| Prunes—Dried                      | 10c lb.                       |               |
| Lemons                            | 25c dozen.                    |               |
| Bananas                           | 10c to 30c per dozen.         |               |
| Oranges                           | 15c to 40c.                   |               |
| Cranberries                       | 15c quart.                    |               |
| <b>Butter Eggs and Poultry</b>    |                               |               |
| Butter—Fresh ranch, per roll.     | 65c; creamy, 85c.             |               |
| Eggs—Fresh ranch, 35c; storage,   | 25c.                          |               |
| Poultry—Hens, dressed, 15c; live, | 12c; springs, dressed, 15c.   |               |
| Turkeys                           | 20c to 25c, dressed.          |               |
| <b>Meats, Wholesale</b>           |                               |               |
| Beef—Cows, 4 1-2c; steers, 5c.    |                               |               |
| Pork                              | 5 1/4c and 6c.                |               |
| Venison                           | Dressed, 7 1/2-10c.           |               |
| Mutton                            | 3 @ 3 1-2c, live; lambs,      | 5c to 7 1/2c. |
| <b>Hay and Feed.</b>              |                               |               |
| Hay—Timothy, \$14; alfalfa, \$12; | grass, \$12; grain hay, \$14. |               |
| Grain—Wheat, 95c bushel; oats,    | \$35 ton; barley, \$35 ton.   |               |

WILLAMETTE RIVER IS APPROACHING FLOOD STAGE  
PORTLAND, Ore., Jan. 13.—With leaps and bounds the Willamette river here is on its way to the flood stage and by noon tomorrow it is expected to reach a stage of five feet, when some of the lower docks will be submerged. The river rose three feet in the last 24 hours.  
Rainfall during the past 24 hours,

together with the mild temperatures which has melted the snow in the higher pines tributary to the Willamette, has caused the rise.  
Have you harnessed up a want ad lately—and hitched it to your task? Tell what the place is like—briefly. The prospective tenant is watching for your ad.



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