A QUESTION of HONOR

by Ruth Cross

SYNOPSIS: Beautiful Anne Wilmot believes her armor is love proof until she goes to the Sierras as the guest of Leon Morse, whose wealth makes him attractive in the eyes of her ambitious aunt. Beside a mountain spring she meets a bronzed westerner who speaks glibly of the Rue de la Paix and in whose eyes there lurks amusement instead of admiration. Her interest is piqued. She satisfies her hunger from his knapsack but her gratitude turns to anger when he calls her "Miss Eve" and kisses her hand in departing. She is further incensed when Sheb, an eccentric prospector and the younger man's pal, warns her to "leave him be."

Chapter 2

MR. MONTE CRISTO

THE lodge sprawled like a huge brown barnacle, sunning itself along the mountainside.

Its rough logs, weather-blackened shingles, and rustic porches merged into the brown green of encircling rock and shrub and fir tree. A sketchy uneven road ended abruptly at the front steps.

Ten days before it had stood, desolate in its abandonment. Then it had been metamorphosed and revitalized by a magic wand, waved by Leon Morse. Its exterior was still in perfect harmony with its wild and rugged surroundings but its interior was stamped with the mark of luxury.

After a pause, he thought of Miss Wilmot. "Shall I inquire now, sir?"

"Do so," he commanded.

"A party by the name of Monte Cristo." Morse smiled. That was his own idea exactly, only he hadn't given it the literary flavor.

There were two things Leon Morse wanted now as he had never wanted anything in his life. The first was Anne Wilmot. The second was a line of track between Kansas City and the great northwest which would shorten the present schedule by 12 hours. The former was to be had, doubtless, but not yet on his own terms.

The latter had presented unforseen difficulties—an upstart irrigation company with a title to the right-of-way which was the key to his projected line of track—a pig-headed young engineer in charge who refused to be tricked, bulldozed or intimidated.

Well, there were several cards he had yet to play before he would take the irrigation company seriously—Douglas, for one. Douglas was his attorney and confidential aid whom he had sent to Sacramento to obtain an understanding with an underpaid legislature.

Douglas should be here now, he thought as he casually picked up

The rough log lodge blended into the background of the lofty Sierras.

in the great living room, Jarvis unwrapped countless packages that had been brought from town by buckboard. Books, magazines, dozens of them, chocolates, French bon-bons and phonograph records. Armfuls of hot house flowers were spread before the butler.

He pressed an electric button and a pretty French maid responded. The bundles of flowers he placed in her arms. "Delphine, these are for Miss Wilmot's rooms," he explained.

"Mon dieu," she breathed, "what am I to do with him? Mad'moiselle's rooms, they are already—how do you say—like one house on fire—"

"You mean hot house no doubt," Jarvis corrected.

Jarvis was starting to sort the mail, when the door at the end of the room opened and Morse entered.

Jarvis bowed profoundly and earned a curt "good morning" from his master.

"Mr. Douglas hasn't come back yet?" he asked as he glanced down the road through the chintz curtained window.

"No, sir," Jarvis replied.

Morse drummed lean, nervous fingers impatiently against the window pane. It irked him to wait. He took out his watch. It was twelve o'clock.

"Has Mrs. Wilmot come down yet?" he inquired.

"No, sir."

"And Miss Wilmot?" he appended casually.

"No, she has not come down. Shall I inquire, sir?"

"Presently—and, oh, by the way Jarvis, all this so far as I have seen, very good indeed." With his hand he took in, in one sweep, the beautiful, spacious room with its multiplicity of windows, great fireplace, fine skins and rugs that covered the floor completely, and the grand piano.

The old man bent his head in dignified recognition. "I'm glad you're pleased, sir. The Frisco decorator didn't think it could be done in 10 days but I said to him, begging your pardon sir, 'If you work for Mr. Morse you've got to be able to turn a hollow stump into an Aladdin's palace over night if he says so.' I says 'Did you ever hear tell of a party by the name of Monte Cristo? Well, that's the way Mr. Morse is used to having things done for him.'"

Morse smiled slightly—otherwise ignoring the tribute. "The servants are all here, I suppose?"

"Yes, sir. I brought them out myself, day before yesterday."

the pile of letters on the reading table. He smiled as he noticed the letters to Mrs. Emily Wilmot from New York's most famous and expensive dressmakers, milliners, caterers, florists and jewelers. Anne would come high but he was rich.

He pushed away the letters and stood drumming his closed knuckles against the table. His long lean perfectly groomed body bent slightly above it. His hair was prematurely gray.

Overwork and dissipation had sapped the first vigor of youth but there was a certain toughness of fibre about him, a dynamic energy and power which balanced, in considerable measure, the lightness of build. It was in the set of his shoulders, the line of his long clean-cut head, in his every movement, as if his muscles operated on steel springs.

"Well?" he queried as Jarvis reappeared.

"Miss Wilmot went out early this morning, sir—alone. She has not yet returned."

"Early this morning—alone?" Morse repeated, reflectively.

As he spoke Mrs. Wilmot came downstairs with her usual aristocratic leisurelness. She was the picture of a plump, white-haired, grandmotherly old patrician. Her soft and rather full mouth hardened as she took in the significance of Morse's phrase. "You say Anne has gone out—alone—after you expressly asked her not to?"

Morse nodded. At a slight sign of dismissal, Jarvis vanished. Morse drew up a chair for Mrs. Wilmot and after an exchange of pleasantries, sat down near her.

"I want to speak very seriously with you," he began. "I want you to try to impress upon your niece that it is dangerous for her to go to the mountains alone. The country is overrun with the irrigation company's workmen and our own—a lot of low class trash."

He broke off abruptly as the door opened and Douglas entered.

The two men faced each other for a moment in silence, then Morse made a slight inquiring movement. The attorney, a stocky shrewd-eyed man of considerably less than his employer's height, shook his head. The other frowned and signed to his study at the end of the room. Then Morse excused himself and a moment later, the door of the study closed upon them.

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Anne learns Morse had received an ultimatum from her aunt in tomorrow's installment.

TINKHAM TO SUCCEED WARRACK IN SERVICE

WASHINGTON, Dec. 31.—(AP)—Representative Korell, Republican, Oregon, announced today that he had been advised by the commerce department of the appointment of R. B. Tinkham to succeed Robert Warrack as superintendent of the 17th district of the lighthouse service, comprising Oregon and Washington.

Warrack will retire January 1, after more than 43 years in government service. His successor at present is superintendent of the Honolulu district. The latter post will be taken over by Frederick A. Edgecomb, now assistant superintendent in Hawaii.

A policy of gradually extending tobacco production has been adopted by Spain, through royal decree.

OREGON AUTHORS GAIN AWARDS IN O. HENRY LISTING

Oregon short story writers fared exceptionally well in the listing of best short stories for 1929, issued in connection with the O. Henry memorial award prizes of the year. The eight Oregon writers, their stories and the magazines in which they were published are:

"The Heart of Don Juan," McCall's, Vivien Bretherton; "The Other Woman," Prize Story Magazine, Mary Caroline Davies; "Watch Fires," Adventure, and "Fandango," Short Stories, Ernest Haycox; "Off Finisterre, Adventure, "The Chief of the Loch McCree," Collier's and "Death on Deck," Albert Richard Wetjen; "Orders," Everybody's, and "The Last Reserve," Collier's, Ared (General George A.) White; "Icky of Oluk Lake," Munsey's, Fred White; "Dynamite," Western Stories, Robert Ormond Case, and "Dessert," Argosy, Harold Bradley Say.

Fred White is a member of the news staff of the Oregonian. General White, Haycox and Case are ex-members of the reportorial staff of the Oregonian. Say is at present attached to the publicity department of the Portland chamber of commerce, and has been a member of the staff of the Telegram and the Journal.

The Portland Press club will hold open house New Year's day, commencing at 3 o'clock, for club members, their wives and friends and in particular honor to the eight writers mentioned in the O. Henry award. Five of those named are members of the club. The reception will continue through until late New Year's night.—The Oregonian.

SMALL RANCH AT TALENT IS MODEL

TALENT, Ore., Dec. 31.—(Spl.)—In an interview with Mr. and Mrs. John Webster at their home in Talent some interesting facts were learned of what can be done on a small tract when well handled. Mr. Webster has six and one-half acres located in Talent, known to many as the old Charley Watler's home. About half of this is in apples of different kinds.

Aside from a family garden and berry patch the remainder is in pasture on which Mr. Webster keeps four fine milk cows. The milk is bottled and sold to local people and to the Talent merchants.

They have 250 White Leghorn and White Wyandotte hens. In Mr. Webster's front yard is one of the largest black walnut trees in the western states that has attracted attention far and wide. Many travelers have visited this great walnut.

The beautiful old-fashioned farm house of Mr. and and Mrs. Webster is one of the most attractive homes in Talent.

ROGUE RIVER

ROGUE RIVER, Ore., Dec. 31.—(Special)—Mr. and Mrs. Wallace Le Moine and family of Banks, Oregon, are visiting with Mrs. Le Moine's parents, Mr. and Mrs. S. J. Blakely.

Mr. and Mrs. John Aune and son, Stanley of Cottage Grove, are spending a few days visiting Mrs. Aune's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Le Moine.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Grimmett, daughters, Evelyn and Mabel and son, Lee and their house guest, Mrs. Howard Chapp of Casper, Wyo., were guests Christmas day at the Lind home on the Caves highway.

Mr. Ford of the Buick agency in Medford was a business visitor in Rogue River Friday.

Mrs. Brashear and son, Norman, had as their guests Christmas day, Mrs. Elizabeth Southern, Mrs. Martha Stricker and Mr. Arthur Pratt.

Mrs. E. Fowler of Corvallis is visiting a few days with Mrs. Jane Smack.

Mr. and Mrs. Dave Jones and two sons of Seattle are visiting at the home of Mrs. Effie Birdseye. The Jones are former residents of Rogue River.

Mrs. Striker of Pufer, Alberta, is visiting her sister, Mrs. Esther Brashear.

Several Rogue River people attended the dance given by the Grange at Wimer. The next dance will be held January 4.

Clifford Jackson of Klamath Falls was visiting his parents, Christmas Day.

Raymond Stevens was a Medford visitor Friday.

The resignation of Mrs. Muriel Hawk, teacher of the fifth and sixth grades, has been accepted by the school board. Miss Velma Carter of Lebanon will fill the position for the remaining five months of school.

Mr. and Mrs. John Ray and son, spent the Christmas holidays at Myrtle Point.

Miss Evelyn Charlie spent Christmas with relatives in Medford.

Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Shepherd attended a meeting of the Talent Grange Thursday evening.

The Rogue River schools will open December 30 for the semester after the holidays.

Mr. and Mrs. Hawkins and children are visiting at the home of Mrs. Hawkins' parents, Mr. and Mrs. Will Beck. Jim Beck is also visiting at his parents' home.

Osee Pickett of Washington is visiting with friends in Rogue River.

Miss Betty Payne, member of the Rogue River high school faculty is spending the Christmas vacation in Seattle.

Uncle Tom's Cabin Starts Isis Today

The South of old, with its charming gallantry and beautiful women, is colorfully transported to the screen in "Uncle Tom's Cabin," the stupendous Universal-Pollard production which opened at the Isis theater today for four days' run. It is almost possible to inhale the sweet scent of the magnolias and hear the soft voices of the crooning darkies at the hour of dusk. So truthfully does the picture mirror the old South. Harry Pollard's superb direction is reflected in every foot of this great screen epic.

ROGUE RIVER GIRLS ENJOY YULE PARTY

ROGUE RIVER, Ore., Dec. 31.—(Special)—The Girl Scouts had a Christmas party at the Community Hall Saturday. The afternoon was spent in games, and gifts were given each member from the tree. Refreshments of ice cream, cake and candy were served. Those assisting Mrs. Skelton in giving the party were Mrs. Eads, Mrs. Baker, Mrs. Lance and Mrs. Bates.

Graham McNamee always depends upon one listener for his radio football broadcasts. It is the "missus," a football fan who would rather stay at home beside the radio on Saturday afternoons than go to a game. However, she broke this rule and saw her first gridiron contest recently.

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