

FORBIDDEN VALLEY

By William Byron Mowery

SYNOPSIS: Coldly, Curt Tennyson awaits an attack by the dangerous Kluksklo Indians at his camp in the Canadian northwest. Sonya Tennyson, whom he had befriended, has turned traitor by communicating with Igor Karakhan, millionaire crook, whom Curt is pursuing. Curt has read a letter from Sonya to Karakhan which reveals she is planning to join him. Meanwhile, Karakhan is eagerly awaiting her arrival, and has arranged safe passage to his camp for her.

Chapter 34 SONYA'S PLEA

"H'LL get a damned bad disappointment!" Curt was thinking grimly. "When that avalanche piles down we're going to be elsewhere!"

The moment Sonya went he intended to start Francois and Jocko back south and send Ralph along with them. By traveling at night and bolting up during the day the three would get out to Russian Lake easily enough. That would free himself and Paul. Taking nothing but rifles and light canoes, they would slip away from the island and be miles gone when LeNoir and his outfit came calling. Up the Lilluar they would watch for Sonya to pass, then fall in behind her party and let her lead them to Karakhan.

Through the open flap-front of Sonya's tent he could see her moving about in the dim interior, making ready, he believed, to leave them that night. He tried not to watch her, but his eyes kept straying back. He could steel himself against her, he could scorn her, but indifference lay beyond his power. She had meant too much to him.

In the tent Sonya was putting together a few personal articles for her trip, fully expecting LeNoir to come and take her away that midnight. Her unshakable purpose kept her steady, and after that long trail from Vetensk to Urga the dangers of this trip were not formidable enough to stop her; but the darkness settling down, the daunting journey ahead and the terrible uncertainty at the end of it filled her with dread.

GLANCING through the flap, she saw Curt lay aside his rifle and start filling cartridge clips, evidently getting ready for whatever might come. The safety of the party after she left worried her only a little; she had an implicit faith that Curt and Paul could take care of themselves against a dozen like LeNoir and the sub-chief. They would get back to safety, and get Ralph back.

She longed to step outside and talk with Curt, a few last words; but she was afraid to, afraid he would cut her cold as he had been doing for the last four days. She was utterly bewildered by his attitude, his icy exaggerated politeness, his sudden and complete change toward her. Something had happened, that night of his return.

She could not fathom the cause of his change. It couldn't be that he knew anything about her rendezvous with LeNoir; she herself had seen him leaning against the rocks asleep, and Paul had been in his tent both before and after she went. And it couldn't be that Ralph had told him about her trip. Ralph protested earnestly that he had never dropped a hint nor had Curt questioned him.

Whatever the reason, she felt that she had lost her best friend on earth, the one person whom she might have depended on to help her. When her light pack was made up, she buckled it, laid it aside and stepped over to the tent door. Curt was almost done with the clips. In a minute or two he'd go up and join Paul, and she wouldn't get to see him again alone.

For a few moments she wavered, torn between her pride and the promptings of her heart. It might be that she had said or done something which had offended him and which she could smooth out. When she thought of his pleading "Can't I hope you do care—a little bit, sweetheart," it seemed impossible that he could care nothing at all now. Maybe she had been too Spartan with herself and with him on those two evenings.

She put her pride in her pocket and went out to him. "Can't I help you with those cartridges?" she proffered as an excuse to linger and talk. "Very kind of you," Curt refused coldly, "but if you haven't done this before you might load 'em backwards." Sonya wondered what he meant by that. His words carried some barbed meaning, just as he had meant something stinging when he

brought her that black lily at the Iskitimwah camp.

"CURT," she asked, with a sudden impulse, "what's made you change so to—rid me? Is it something I've done?"

"Change? Have I?" "Please, Curt, let's not—you know as well as I do that you've changed." He laid a filled clip on his hatbrim. "I believe you asked me on two occasions to—ah, restrain myself. Are you objecting now how I'm doing what you asked?" "You're not being fair, Curt! I



What lies at trail's end for her?

didn't say we shouldn't be good friends. In fact, I—I wanted—" "Friends—exactly!" His tones were sharp-edged. "Just so far and no farther, that's what you wanted. Just as far as it suited your convenience. But men, my dear, that is men of self-respect, don't care to be treated like tethered bears on a chain."

"Curt, that's unjust. I went to extremes, as usual, on those two occasions. I thought I was doing right, acting honestly; but everything was so chaotic with me that I wasn't sure of anything at all. And, Curt, you should remember that I'd known you only a very, very short time, not long enough to—to—" her cheeks flushed as she said it—"to realize that I—that we could be more than friends."

Curt looked up from his half-filled clip and glanced at her sharply, altogether pained by her confession. He could not believe she was speaking honestly. That letter of hers to Karakhan left no possible doubt where her heart and passion lay. Then why was she telling him this? She must be trying to play some game with him.

It was awkward to ignore so plain an overture, but he kept silent. Sonya waited, waited for him to make at least some comment, but when she saw he would not she flung away her last rag of pride: "I didn't really mean what I said about your sense of decency that night. Curt, you didn't deserve that. And I did hope we'd keep in touch. I intended to let you know where I was, and I hoped you would understand my trip—" "I don't see the need of digging up these old bones," Curt cut her short.

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Tomorrow Sonya goes—into what dire danger?

STOLEN CURRENCY RETURNED TO COP

PORTLAND, Ore., Dec. 27.—(AP)—The discovery of \$350 in bills

wrapped in a poinsettia plant delivered at his home was reported today by Patrolman Clarence C. Barber of the Portland police force, from whose home \$380 was stolen last Thursday. The thief who had taken the money removed it from a hiding place in the basement. Patrolman Barber spread the news that the robber had left fingerprints which

compare with those of "several suspects," but that he would not prosecute if the cash was returned. When the potted plant reached the Barber home it was found that a large envelope had been wrapped inside. The envelope contained three \$100 bills and a \$50 bill. Dance at Rogue Elk Saturday night, January 6th.

EIGHT FISHERMEN DIE IN BLIZZARD

MICHIGAN CITY, Ind., Dec. 27.—(AP)—Eight fishermen were reported

lost today in the capsizing of two fishing tugs on Lake Michigan in a blizzard. The fishing tug Bremen, with a crew of four men, capsized off South Haven, carrying the crew to their deaths. No trace of the bodies was found. The master of the tug was Albert Balow of South Haven. One of the crew members was his son, about 19

years old. The other two men were named Carter and Stevens. About the same time another fishing tug, the Martha, capsized near here. It also carried four men to their deaths. Broken windows glazed by Trowbridge Cabinet Works. Ph. 315, EADS, for Fuel Oil Delivery. Equipment to reach any tank. NRA.

S'MATTER POP—

By C. M. PAYNE



TAILSPIN TOMMY—Brownie Knocked Out

By GLENN CHAFFIN and HAL FORREST



BOUND TO WIN—"Pleasant" Surroundings

By EDWIN ALGER



THE NEBBS—Love Is Blind

By SOL HESS



BRINGING UP FATHER

By George McManus



NINE DIE IN TYPHOON IN PHILIPPINE ISLANDS
MANILA, P. I., Dec. 27.—(AP)—Floods sweeping down the sides of the inactive volcano Buisuan in Ilocos province drowned at least nine persons today, while a typhoon, tidal wave and torrential rains caused heavy damage in eastern and southern Philippine Islands. Early reports that Buisuan, which last erupted in 1918, was again active were denied by a parish priest living nearby.

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