

HESPER

...BY...
HAMLIN GARLAND
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(Continued from last week)

"No, thank you. It is a great temptation, but I've got to do it."
And so, chilled and hungry, Ann entered the pleasant home of the Kellys, and the terror of the dark ride became a part of the outer world, shut away by the strong, rude door.

"Mrs. Kelly put Ann down to some tea and cold meat, and while she was still at the table and in the midst of her story Raymond flung open the door.

"Here she is!" he called to some one behind him, and his white face and glowing eyes testified to his great anxiety.

Ann rose to meet him with a rush of trust and confidence that filled her throat and rendered her wordless, but she held her hand toward him.

"I was greatly alarmed when I heard that you were coming alone. How did you come? How did you find the way?"

"Ann then said, 'Your friend Munro met us, turned Don back and piloted me up the hill.'"

Raymond turned to a big man who stood waiting. "Miss Rupert, this is Matthew Kelly, my mining partner."

Ann gave her hand into Kelly's enormous palm with a look of admiration.

"I am glad to know you, Mr. Kelly. I have heard Louis speak of you very often."

In the presence of these men Ann lost all sense of fear and weakness. They were possessed of something which Don, loyal as he was, lacked.

Raymond's eyes hardly left her face, but she no longer resented his interest. On the contrary, she studied him closely.

His seemed older, gentler, but more manly and handsomer than before.

"It is a rude place for you to live, Miss Rupert," he said, "but there is no danger. The strike has not involved us. We are as peaceful as a farm here."

She smiled back into his eyes with more of liking than she had ever expressed.

"I am not afraid," she replied. "I am going to find the camp interesting. At any rate, so long as Louis is settled in his determination to be a miner, I must keep him in sight."

"It is a great pleasure to have him with me, and I am glad to be of use to him, for his own sake as well as for what you have come to mean to me."

Ann's lashes fell before the glow of his admiring eyes, and with this sign of weakness a flush of resentment again passed over her. "He must not look at me in that way," she complained to herself.

When Raymond left the house to walk back to his own cabin he resented for the first time the presence of Louis. He wished to be alone with the mysterious emotion which had swept back upon him at sight of Ann.

He faced the night, out of which every shred of vapor had vanished, and the blue-black vault, blinding with innumerable jetting globes of light, invited to high thoughts, to serious imaginings.

"I don't know. I haven't the slightest idea where the night went to." After her hostess left her Ann lay staring at the ceiling walls and the still more primitive crouching in wonder. "It must be real," she thought, "for I couldn't possibly dream it." With a realization of her own sloth, she sprang out upon the cold floor and began to dress with a vigor and celerity she did not know she possessed.

During breakfast she studied Mrs. Kelly and began to understand at last that the little mother had not merely washed and dressed the boys and cooked the breakfast, but had served as waitress and maid of all work, and in calm and sweet and self-contained, was presiding over the table.

"If any dish needed replenishing, she sprang up to get it, and this put the robust daughter of wealth to shame.

"Don't you feel tired some mornings and lie abed?" she asked.

Mrs. Kelly smiled. "Indeed I do, but I can't afford to lie abed. When Matt makes his next strike, sure I'm going to hire a girl and sleep till I'm weary of it, if it takes a week."

"You must let me do something while I am here," said Ann. "Let me provide a maid for you."

"Oh, no, I was only joking. Sure, you couldn't hire a girl on the hill to do housework. Besides, the best of them are not fit company for you, and in a small but like this you're cheek by jowl with your help."

Ann had not thought of them as company, but she gravely replied: "I might bring a maid from my cousin's house. At any rate, you must let me help this morning. I can sweep and dust—indeed I can."

"Mighty little dusting the shack needs in this air," said Mrs. Kelly. "Good luck to me, it's true."

"I must help or I will not stay," insisted Ann. "At least I can amuse the children."

Louis shot through the door like a stone from a sling. His eyes were dancing. "Good morning, everybody!" he shouted. "Haven't you breakfasted yet? Why, we've been done ten minutes. Isn't this bully—this life up here? How do you feel this morning?"

Ann laughed to see him so elate, so vigorous. "What a child you are!" she exclaimed in wonder.

Raymond followed at a little distance. "Good morning, Miss Rupert. Good morning, Nora. Hello, youkers. He looked very capable and entirely self-contained as he put the lads down and addressed himself to Ann. "I suppose your baggage went to Bozle, but we will get that today. And Mrs. Kelly, if you need anything to make Miss Rupert comfortable let us know. To the limit of our resources command us."

Ann, with unaccountable lightness of spirit, quickly protested. "Now, please don't make my company of me. I am going to earn my living by helping Mrs. Kelly about the house. My bed was very comfortable and my breakfast delicious. What else do I require? One needn't ask how you are. You look to be perfectly well again."

Louis stared at his sister and was about to make some revealing remark upon the lad and bustle him back to Valley Springs and so on; but this was not easy. He argued that she was in no danger and that the change of air would do her good. "She will be interested in the mines," he went on in formless debate with himself. "The scenery is magnificent; and then, of course, she can go down at any time we think wise."

CHAPTER XIII.
THE little room to which Mrs. Kelly conducted Ann was hardly larger than a steamer state-room and was very primitive as regards its furnishings.

"It's a small place and a rough place for such as you, but it's the best we have," said Mrs. Kelly.

Ann responded to the humility which shaded the hearty voice of her hostess, and, though she shivered in the chill air, answered cheerily: "I'm sure this is very nice. The bed is tempting."

Hesitatingly, with many misgivings, Mrs. Kelly withdrew, and Ann hurriedly disrobed and leaped into the bed, which was white as snow and almost as cold. It was like a plunge into the breakers at Niagara; and it fairly took her breath away, and there was no escape from this icy contact, for the air was as bitter as the sheets.

But the joy of the meeting with Louis and the unexpected glow of confidence and pleasure with which she met Raymond's anxious, piercing eyes came back to warm her heart.

Hanley, perceiving Raymond at the door, approached to say: "One of Munro's vedettes intercepted that kid of yours last night and got word that Don Barnett was on his way up here. You better warn him off."

Raymond resented his tone, but coldly replied: "The boy was mistaken. Barnett turned back him by the arm, and following his guide, Raymond entered the room used as the office of the union, where he found Carter, the president, and Larned, the organizer, in the midst of a hot argument with Munro, Smith and a group of others of their sort. Larned was shaking with excitement and rage, and Carter, the little president, looked white and scared.

Munro, with a grin, said: "Come in, Rob. This is a council of war." Raymond entered calmly, his head a little bent, his keen eyes studying every face. "What's it all about?"

Larned explained, his hands quivering, his eyes red and fevered. "If they will not countenance lawlessness of this sort, I'm not a fool. I know that the effect will be. If they turn back this posse the state militia will be called out. I came to organize a union to meet the coming question of labor and capital. I did not come here to form mobs. I refuse to sanction it. I will not have a thing to do with it. If you make this raid I leave the camp."

Raymond spoke. "I'm not involved in the present. I'm not interested, but as you've ridden up and asked me I give it as my opinion that Larned is right. You can stand off a sheriff once or twice, and you might even stand off a regiment of militia, but you can't stand off the United States army, and that's what you'll run up against in the end. Jack, you ought to have sense enough to keep out of this."

Munro smiled. "I'm only the military arm of government. I'm not making laws, I execute them."

"Why not call a meeting and put it to a vote?" asked Smith.

"I know why," replied Brock. "Larned is afraid it will carry."

Larned leaped to his feet. "I admit that I don't want the word to go out that this raid has been voted on by the union. With the camp boiling with excitement, it might carry. Outsiders must be taught the difference between the action of the mob and the will of the organization."

Smith was brutally plain. "It isn't your say. You're only an outsider yourself. It's Carter's place to call the meeting and discuss what we are to do, and I don't see what we have laid ourselves liable by doing duty for the union. Now, the question is whether the union is going to stand by us or sneak and leave us to eat dirt in a valley jail."

"You had no sanction from the union," the old mountaineer seemed to take it lightly. "They must fight their own battles. I had nothing to do with bringing on the strike, and I'll have nothing to do with staying it off."

"It is a regular strike," asked Ann. "It is, and it is not. The big mines are all shut down. So far, it is a lock-out. But the men refuse to work shifts of nine hours for eight hours' pay. To that extent it is a strike."

"The trouble all springs from a small group of reckless desperadoes," said Raymond. "The main body of the men are ready to submit to law, but men like Smith and Denver Dan and Brock must either fight or flee, and they prefer to fight. But what they do doesn't concern us. We are going right along in our small way. Our men are all outside the union."

Mrs. Kelly spoke in praise of Ann to Raymond (she had divined his love). "You should 'a' seen her working every blessed minute this forenoon, Robert."

"You must not compliment me too much," interrupted Ann. "Maiders are sometimes spoiled by too much kindness. Are there shops near? We need a few things to make us comfortable, and my valises, when can I get them?"

Raymond replied: "I will take you down to Bozle tomorrow, if you care to do so. The shops are better there and the streets less turbulent."

"I'd like to go very much," said Ann, on a sudden impulse. "I'd like to go this afternoon. Can we drive? How far is it?"

"We will ride, if you are not afraid of our bronchos and steep trails. It will be more comfortable than a two-wheeler. After you've rested an hour or two I'll bring round the horses."

"Good morning, friends!" A clear voice made them all turn. Jack Munro, booted and spurred, stood in the door. "And how is the lady of the silken voice?"

Kelly greeted him coldly. "Hello, Jack. Come in and eat."

"That's one of my scoups," said Munro, "with news of the invaders." And he pushed off into the crowd, while Raymond, with serious face and slow step, went down the path toward his mine.

"They're going to fight," he said to Kelly. "Fight? Of course they'll fight. They'll go down and drive the sheriff's men like sheep. But what then? The crazy jacks!"

"Do you think we ought to tell the women? Are they in danger?" Kelly was reflective. "Not now. The sheriff will hardly reach the hill this time. He'll go back. The authorities and the newspapers will chew the rag for a couple of weeks, and then—we'll be up against it!"

"All the same, Matt, I wear my guns from this on, and one of us must stand guard at night. The camp is filling with dangerous men."

At Kelly's invitation, Raymond and Louis took noontime dinner with him. It was a most delicious meal to Raymond and a pleasantly exciting one to Ann, for she confessed to having cooked the eggs and potatoes. All reference to the trouble on the hill was jocular.

He smiled again, and his white teeth showed. "I must have seemed a bandit. I'm very glad I went to meet Barnett. Brock might have made you more trouble, and I would have missed the pleasure of being your guide and protector."

"You can stand off a sheriff once or twice, and you might even stand off a regiment of militia, but you can't stand off the United States army, and that's what you'll run up against in the end. Jack, you ought to have sense enough to keep out of this."

"You speak as one having authority," remarked Ann. "I am captain of the vedettes," he replied.

"What are they?" "A company of mounted police which I have organized to keep order here in the camp. The lockout leaves many men idle, and the local authorities need help to maintain peace and quiet. My force represents the union and its desire to prevent violence in the camp. You are quite safe here under our protection."

"You are very kind," replied Ann. "But aren't you one of those for whom the sheriff comes?"

Munro laughed a silent, boyish laugh. "I believe I am included in his list of notables, but I assure you the honor is quite undeserved."

"Is true he kicked Mackay down the hill and put the mouth of his gun to his ear," said Kelly, "but that's a trifle not worth mentioning."

Munro winked. "A mere practical joke." "With the punctilious grace of a dancing master he bowed himself out, swung to his saddle and galloped away, leaving us to start on our trip?"

"When shall we start on our trip?" asked Ann, turning to Raymond. "I will bring the horses round very soon." As they stepped outside he turned to Kelly and asked in a low voice, "Do you see any objection to this trip to Bozle?"

"Divil a bit. The sheriff will find Jack and his men waitin' for him on the road. He'll get no farther than Sage Hen flat this night. I'm goin' to ride down the hill myself just to know where his goat's on. Go ahead, lad; only don't letter." The big fellow smiled. "Get back before sunset, whatever ye do."

Raymond resented Munro's call and forced introduction to Ann more deeply than he cared to admit even to Kelly. It hurt him to think that Ann's hand had lain within the clasp of a man to whom women had ever been merely a lower order of life, to be used as playthings.

"And yet I cannot say anything to her," Raymond said to himself. "I can't tell her what his life is. I dare not even hint at it. But I can stop his coming"—and his lips straightened grimly—"and that I will do!"

CHAPTER XIV.
AT 2:30, prompt as a groon, Raymond brought the horses round to the door. Midwinter though it was, the sun was clear and warm, and as they went winding down the trail to the southwest Ann exclaimed over the exquisite quality of the air, the crystalline clarity of the distant peaks and the cloudless serenity of the sky.

After a short and steep descent they came out into a wagon road and were able to ride side by side.

"You must be prepared for very poor goods and very small stores," said Rob. "Bozle is by no means to be compared even with Valley Springs. Everything is temporary. No one really intends to live there; they are all just staying. And I fear the millinery is not of the latest fashion."

"What a power lies in the idea of gold! See the people who have come from all over the world! Don tell me that every European language is spoken here. Did I see Perry, the Mexican boy, at your cabin this morning?"

"Yes, Perry is here, and so is Baker. You have cause to remember Baker."

"When they entered the town Ann said: 'Please take me to a shop where I can get some chairs and a small table. I am going to present Mrs. Kelly with an easy chair.'"

"Very well," said he. "I know the very place, but please do not go about the streets alone. Of course you are perfectly safe, but you are a stranger and might wander into the wrong doors. Wait till I tie the horses and do one or two errands, then I will join you, and we can go where you please."

he was filled with anxiety. The street was full of men drawn together by a report that the sheriff had stolen a march on Skytown and was already on his way to intimidate Bozle and demand those for whom his warrants

read the following testimonial: Peterboro, July 9th, 1905. To Whom It May Concern,— This is to certify that the curative powers of Dr. Unger's Liquefied Lightening. I was completely laid up with Barbers' Itch for seven weeks, unable to do work of any kind, four weeks of which I spent in the Peterboro hospital. I was so bad that I thought the flesh would drop off my face. I used one bottle of Dr. Unger's Liquefied Lightening and it cured me completely, leaving no very little marks of the disease on my face. I would recommend any person who is troubled with Barbers' Itch to use this remedy, as I am confident that it will effect a complete cure. L. O'CONNOR, Peterboro.

The Dr. Unger Medicine Co., Ltd., Lorneville, Ont.

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To which you have been invited. You don't know what to buy for a wedding present. Drop in and see if we cannot help you to decide. We have everything in FINE JEWELLERY and LEATHER GOODS for personal wear, and everything in SILVER, FINE CHINA, CUT GLASS, Etc., for home use or decoration.

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STAPLED ON HIS WAY TO CHURCH.
Rev. E. R. Nicholls, Baptist minister of Baillieboro, was stapled while on his way to service on Sunday evening, June 17. It was so dark that he could not see his assailant. Mr. Nicholls is recovering from his wounds. Chief Bond, of Port Hope, has been investigating the case.
CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL.
Oshawa is to have a new consolidated school, and work has begun on the construction of the building.



"It isn't your funeral, but it will be."

The roaring savagery of the Golden Horn saloon seemed of another world, having no possible connection with the peace and sunshine and homely joy of the Kelly cabin.

"The old mountaineer seemed to take it lightly. 'They must fight their own battles. I had nothing to do with bringing on the strike, and I'll have nothing to do with staying it off.'"

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Volume X
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