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Satan Sanderson

By HALLIE ERMINIE RIVES.

Author of "Hearts Courageous," Etc.

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ich sniffed at the heels of the circle bystanders as if to inquire casual-

Numbers were swelling now, and street preacher, shaking back his ng hair, drew a premonitory, waverchord from his melodeon and ruck up a gospel song. The song vied, he mounted his camp stool to nound his usual fiery text.

The watcher by the steps was gazing oth a strange, alert intentness. Someing in the scene held him enthralled. allelujah Jones knew the melodraatic value of contrast. As his mood alled he passed abruptly from exhortion to song, from prayer to fulminan, and he embellished his harangue ith anecdotes drawn from his lifelong ampaign against the arch enemy of nis Of what he had said the soliobserver had been quite unconions. It was the ensemble—the repetion of something experienced somehere before—that appealed to him. idealy, however, a chance phrase bred to his understanding.

nother moment and he was leaning mand, his eyes fixed, his breath mining at his breast. For each word the speaker now was knocking a oige hammer blow upon the blank l in his brain. Hallelujah Jones dlaunched into the recital of a story hich though the stern charge of a shop had kept him silent as to name d locality, yet, possessing the vividss of an actual experience, had lost tie in the telling. It was the tale of evening when he had peered through tilted window of a chapel and seen dissolute rector gambling on the taof the Lord. The words shrieked themselves

rough Harry's brain. Harry Sanderson, not Hugh

> Stires! Not an outcast! Not criminal, thief and forger! The curtain was rent. The dead wall in his brain was down, and the real past swept over him in an ungovernable flood. Hallelujah Jones had furnished the clew to the maze. His story was the last great wave, which had crumbled all at once

the cliff of oblivion that the nor-

process of the recovered mind had a stealthily undermining. Harry nderson at last knew his past and of puzzlement and distress that it

baking in every limb and feeling all ng the courthouse wall like a drunkman, he made his way to the furdeserted street. A passerby would tortain the b or these months he, the Rev. Henry

disgraced, had suffered se, had been sunk out of sight and h and hearing like a stone in a For these months-through an dental facial resemblance and a nitous concurrence of circumless-he had owned the name and miny of Hugh Stires. And Jes-Deceived no less than he, dather piteous error from that mismoment when she had torn the age from her eyes on her wedding she had never seen the real Hugh moky Mountain. She must learn truth. Yet how to tell her? How d be tell her all?

any hour yesterday, hard as the g must have been, he could have her. Last night the hour passed. could he tell her now? Yet she the real Hugh's wife by law and He himself could not marry her. od would but turn back the uniand give him yesterday!

feet dragging as though from climbed the mountain road e walked he took from his pocket little gold cross, and his fingers, with misery, tied it to his thong a guard. It had been only a baupocket piece acquired he knew hen or how. Now he knew it for of his calling. He remem-

Have a Cough.
Have Lung Troubles.
Have Lost Flesh, but by th Are Threatened with Con-

SClark, Supt. Grace Hosforonto, writes they have d it with the best results. so, and \$1.00 Bottles. AVIS & LAWRENCE CO., Montreal.

bered now that, pressed a certain way, it would open, and engraved inside were his name and the date of his ordination.

He might shut the cabin door, but he could not forbid the torturer that came with him across the threshold. He might throw himself upon his knees and bury his face in the rough skin of the couch, but he could not shut out words that blent in golden lettered flashes across his throbbing eyeballs. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife."

So he crouched, a man under whose feet life had crashed, leaving him pinned beneath the wreck to watch the fire that must creep nearer and nearer.

Curiosity held Jessica until the evangelist closed his melodeon preparatory to a descent upon the dance hall. Then, thinking of the growing dark with some trepidation, she started toward the mountain.

sounded, and the dark bulk of an auto- distorted his features. "Wait-wait!" mobile was moving slowly in the same direction, and she quickened her pace, glad of this quasi company.

A little way up the ascent a cumbrous shadow startled her. She saw in a moment that it was the automobile, halted at the side of the road. Her footsteps made no sound, and she was close upon it when she saw the three men it had carried standing near by. She made to pass them and had crossed half the intervening space, when some instinct sent her to the shade of the trees. They had stopped opposite the hydraulic concession, where a side path left the main road. It was the same path by which she and August

Prendergast had taken their unconscious burden on a night long ago, leading along the hillside, overlooking the snakelike flume and forming a steeper short cut to the cabin above. They were conversing in low tones, and as they talked they pointed, she thought, toward it.

Jessica had never in her life been an eavesdropper, but her excited senses



"It was Stires killed him."

made her anxious. Moreover, she was in a way committed, for she could not now emerge without being seen. As she waited a man came from the path and joined the others. The sky had been overcast and gloomy, but the moon drew out just then, and she saw that the newcomer, evidently a patrol, carried a rifle in the hollow of his arm. She also saw that one of the first three was the automobile's owner.

For some minutes they conversed in undertones, whose very secrecy inflamed her imagination. It seemed to her that they made some reference to the flume. Had there been another robbery of the sluice boxes and could they still suspect Hugh?

Dread and indignation made her bold. When they turned into the path she followed, treading noiselessly, till she was close behind them. They had stopped again and were looking intently at a shadowy gray something that

moved in the bottom below. She heard the man who carried the

rifle say, with a smothered laugh: "It's only Barney McGinn's old white horse taking a drink out of the sluice

box. He often does that." Then the sheriff's voice said: "Mc-Ginn's horse is in town tonight, with Barney on her back. Horse or no horse, I'm going to"- The rest was lost in the swift action with which he snatched the firearm from the first

speaker, sighted and fired. In the still night the concussion seemed to rock the ground and roused a hundred echoes. It startled and shocked the listening girl, but not so much as the sound that followed ita cry that had nothing animal-like and that sent the men running down the

The ge in Peterborough Hact in the west pi

slope toward an object that lay haddled by the sluice box.

In horrified curiosity Jessica followed, slipping from shadow to shadow. She saw the sheriff kneel down and draw a collapsed and empty herseskin from a figure whose thieving cunning it would never cloak again.

"So it was you, after all, Prendergast!" the sheriff said contemptuously. The white face stared up at them, venomous and writhing, turning about the circle as though searching for some one who was not there.

"How did-you guess?" The sheriff, who had been making a swift examination, answered the panted question. "You have no time to

think of that now," he said.

A sinister look darted into the filmyellow eyes, and hatred and cerfainty rekindled them, Prendergast struggled to a sitting posture, then fell back, convulsed. "Hugh Stires! He was the only-one who knew-how it was done. He's clever, but he can't Ahead of her a muffled puff-puff | get the best of Prendergast!" A spasm He fumbled in his breast, and his fingers brought forth a crumpled piece of paper. He thrust it into the sheriff's hands.

> "Look! Look!" he gasped. "The man they found murdered on the claim there"-he pointed wildly up the hillside-"Dr. Moreau. L found him-dying! Stires"-

Strength was fast failing him. He tried again to speak, but only inarticulate sounds came from his throat.

A blind terror had clutched the heart of the girl leaning from the shadow. "Dr. Moreau"-"murdered." Why, he had been one of Hugh's friends! Why did this man couple Hugh's name with that worst of crimes? What dreadful thing was he trying to tell? She hard ly repressed a desire to scream aloud. "Be careful what you say, Prender-

gast," said the sheriff sternly. The wretched man gathered force for a last effort. His voice came in a

croaking whisper: "It was Stires killed him. Moreau wrote it down-and I-kept the paper.



Chapter 25

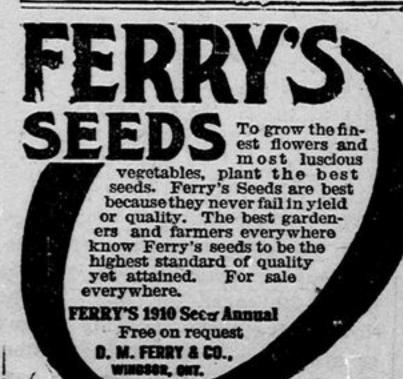
HILE the man whom the town knew as Hugh Stires listened to the tale of the street preacher, another, unlike yet curiously like

him in feature, had slowly climbed the | money?" hilly slope from the north by the sanitarium road. He walked with a jaunty swagger bred of too frequent applieations to a flask in his pocket.

As he walked unsteadily along Hugh drank more than once from the flask to deaden the superstitious dread of the place which was stealing over him. On the crest of the ridge he skirted the sanitarium grounds and at length gained the road that twisted down toward the lights of the town. In the dubious moonlight he mistook the narrow trail to the Knob for the lower path to the cabin. As he turned into it the report of a rifle came faintly from the gulch below.

He quickened his steps and stumbled all at once into the little clearing that held the new made grave and Jessica's statue. The sight terrified his intoxicated imagination. His hair rose. The name on the headstone was Stires, and there was himself-no, a ghost of himself-sitting near! He turned and broke into a run down the steep slope. In his fear-for he imagined the white figure was pursuing him-he tripped and fell, regained his feet, rushed across the level space, threw his weight against the cabin door and burst into the room.

A dog sprang up with a growl, and in the light of the fire that burned on the hearth a man sitting at the rough hewn table lifted a haggard face from his arms, and each recognized the



The ghost was gone now before fire-Hight and human presence; and Hugh, with a loud laugh of tipsy incredulity. stood staring at the man before him.

"Harry Sanderson!" he cried. His shifty eyes surveyed the other's figure -the corduroys, the high laced boots, the soft blue flannel shirt. "Not exactly in purple and fine linen," he said. The impudent swagger of intoxication had slipped over him again, and his boisterous laugh broke with a hiccough. "I thought the gospel game was about played out that night in



"You were something of a howling swell as a parson."

the chapel. And now you are willing to take a hint from the prodigal. How did you find my nest? And perhaps you can tell me who has been making himself so at home here lately?"

"I have," said Harry evenly. Hugh's glance, that had been waven ing about the neat interior, returned to Harry and knowledge and anger leaped into it. "So it was you, was it? You are the one who has been trying his hand as a claim jumper!" He lurched toward the table and leaned upon it, "I've always heard that the devil took care of his own. The runaway rector stumbles on my manor, and, with his usual luck-Satan's luck we called it at college-steps in just in time to strike it rich."

He stretched his hand suddenly and caught a tiny object that glittered against Harry's coat-the little gold cross which the other had tied to his watch guard. The thong snapped, and Hugh sent the pendant rattling across the doorway.

"You were something of a howling swell as a parson," he said insolently, "but you don't need the jewelry now!" you paid me those days of decent living you staked, and lost?"

"But I will!" he exclaimed desperately. "If you'll only help me out of this I'll live straight to my dying day! You don't know how I've suffered, Harry, or you'd have some mercy on me now! Let me go, Harry, for my father's sake!"

"Your father is dead," said Harry. "Then for old time's sake!" He tried to clasp Harry's knees. "They may be here at any minute! I must have been seen as I erossed the mountain! I thought it would never come out or I wouldn't have come! I'll go far enough away. I'll go to South America, and you will never see me alive again, neither you nor Jessica! For God's sake, Harry, listen! Jessica wouldn't (want to see me hung! For her sake!"

It was the Harry Sanderson of St. James' parish, of the scrupulous conscience-whose college career as Satan Sanderson had come to be a fiery sore in his breast-who now spoke.

"Get up!" he said. "Have you any Hugh rose, trembling and ashen.

"Hardly \$10," he answered. Harry considered hastily. He was almost penniless. Nearly all his share of the strike had gone to repay the

forged draft. "I have no ready cash," he said, "but the night we played in the chapel I left a thousand dollars in my study safe. I have not been there since." He took pencil and paper from his pocket and wrote down some figures hastily. "Here is the combination. You must try to get that money."

"Wait," he added as Hugh's hand was on the latch. He must risk nothing. He could make assurance doubly sure. "A half mile from the foot of the mountain, where the road comes in from Funeral Hollow, wait for me. I will bring a horse there for you."

Hugh crushed the paper into his pocket and opened the door. "I'll wait," he said. He darted out, slipped around the corner of the cabin and stealthily disappeared.

Harry sat down upon the doorstep. The strain had been great. In the re-



action he was faint, and a mist was before his eyes. The die was cast. Hugh could easily escape. Until he himself spoke he would not even be hunted. He, Harry Sanderson, was

the scapegoat, left to play his part. How long he sat there he did not know. He sprang up at a muffled sound. He had still a work to do before they came-for Hugh! He saw in an instant, however, that it was Jessica, leading her horse by the bridle.

"I could not wait," she breathed: "You did not come, and I was afraid!" Mounting, he leaned from the saddle and took both her hands in his. Still he did not kiss her.

"Jessica, you believe I am innocent?" he asked anxiously.

"Yes-yes!" "Will you believe what I am doing.

is for the best?" "Always, always!" she whispered,

her voice vibrating. "Only go!" He released her hands and rode quickly up the grassy path.

As she stood looking after him ; dog's whine came from the cabin. She ran and released the spaniel and took him up in her arms.

As she did so a sparkle caught her eye. It came from the tiny gold crosslying where Hugh had flung it near the lighted doorway. She picked it up, looked at it a moment abstractedly and thrust it into her pocket scarce consciously, for her heart was keeping time to the silenced boof beat that was bearing the man she loved from dan-

Where the way opened into the gloomy cut of Funeral Hollow, Harry dismounted and went forward slowly afoot, leading the horse, till a figure stepped from a clump of bushes to meet him with an exclamation of relief. Hugh had waited at the rendezvous shivering apprehension and dismal suspicion of Harry's intentions and had not approached till he had convinced himself that the other came alone. He wrung Harry's hand as he said:

"If I get out of this, I'll do better the rest of my life, I will, upon my soul, Harry!"

"You may not be able to get into the chapel," said Harry; "my rooms"-befelt his cheek burn as he spoke-"may be occupied. On the chance that you fail, take this." He took off the ruby ring, whose interlaced initials had once fortified him in his error of identity. "The stone is worth a good deal. It should be enough to take you anywhere."

Hugh nodded, slipped the ring on To be continued.

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