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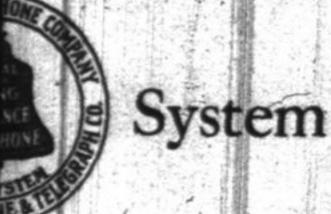
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HIS RISE TO POWER



"If you want to know, Evoted fur him, The old clerk turned and slowly stumped out of the room

"Jeremy," commented the senator seems to have unearthed an unsus pected backbone."

this was senatorial humor or not. chose silence as the dourse of discre-

tainer, bumbly willing to take what he | would be to him. could get.

sion that Senator Murchell said, "If him that it isn't a horrible calamity. John Dunmende weren't such a stubborn fool he would be just the man to is this Katherine Hampden?" meet Brent with." He spoke angrily.

lu the financial district of the Steel City was no June day relaxation. In the exchange was a bowling, frenzied mob struggling desperately to speed advancing fortune or to retain that Iron and Coal squeez

have done credit to the robber barons down, middle aged fallure. had raped the treasure developed by should be looking up at the men wh barons, more gluttonous, springing upon | regret." him in an unguarded moment, by like ones made penniless.

The mad scramble rose to a climax. eral principles." In his office the man who was the He had struggled, with the authinking valor born of desperation, against the unwavering, releutless attacks made upon him. They had forced him back. far per and still further back to his inner lines of defense, into the last dirch. Driven out of that he had made a last vain stand. Now awaited the slaughter. He glared fix-

edly at the tape in his band Suddenly the fixly broke up in an insane belpless rage that demanded physical expression. From his twisted mouth came an marticulate, wolfish cry. With a convulsive jerk be snap ped off the tape kicked the ticker un til it fell with a crash. A clerk in the outer office heard the noise and rushed in Immediately, frightened by what he saw, he withdrew, closing

the door behind him Stephen Hampden was not good look upon as he rushed up and down the room, striking and kicking at the objects in his way. His face was purple convulsed. He poured out unin telligible imprecations on the "curs." the "crooks," the "traitors" who had broken him. He had no thought for those apon whom he in his turn but fallen. He was obsessed by the pas slop of his defeat?

The paroxysm spent Itself. He flung himself, panting and still glaring, into a chair. The telephone rang. He paid no attention to it

The clerk, trembling, opened the door. "You're wanted on the long dis-

tance, Mr. Hampilen, It's"-"I won't talk to them!" Hampden snarled back.

The clerk withdrew, then reappear ed. "Beg pardoh, Mr. Hampden," he insisted timidly, "but it's Mr. Blake of New Chelsen. He, says be must

talk to you." Hampden caught "All right." He waited until the click told him that the clerk's receiver had been hung up, then snapped: "This is Hampden. What do you want?"

The precaution was unnecessary. The message was strangely worded It would have meant nothing to an outsider. But Hampden had the key. He hung up the receiver. And for a moment be allowed himself to be beaten down. Fear before a danger incurred in the heat of battle and now become imminent, terrible, through the folly of another, onsted rage. Mere defeat, hankrnatev, nuled before this

new penalty which he must pay. An fear steadied him, cleared his brain He wasted po time in futile His mind darted bither and thither swift and calculating, pondering an rejecting a hundred avenues of escape from the perff which must be averted before he could set out to recoup hi losses. There was no thought of sa ing Warren Blake-only bimself Late in the day be went out-to be

the mercy he had never shown. Katherine Hampden was alone tha evening. She was often alone nowa days, but not entirely because, as she had told John Dunmeade, she had been assigned a berth on the shelf-re served for unmarriageable females There were many men who would have gladly undertaken to relieve her soll tude But these found ber extremely anapproachable. Those whom would have welcomed most gladly had least time for dalliance in drawing

The truth was, she was disappointed Mature perception, quickened, by glimpse of a different ideal of life, bad seen beyond the false setting of romance behind which men seek to hide the ugliness of the greedy, unscrupulous scramble for gold. She would have married Gregg had it not been for the fact that the acid of his calling was etching more and more clearly upon bis frank, clean exterior a picture of what lay within. As it was, she had sept him away.

She was waiting for her father homecoming. While she wnited she glanced through the evening paper. it the day's doings on the stock exchange were featured. The account had it that Hampden had been hard The politicious, uncertain whether hit-even vaguely hinted that he might have to fail. She was amazed at the lack of emotion with which she read that their fortune, hitherto so potent Later still, after the small fry bao and all sufficing, had in a day been left, came the news that the opposition sadly shaken if not totally destroyed. bad freed itself and that Jerry Breut She tried to picture to berself what it would control its convention, which must mean to them-the economies, the meant that he would be nominated for privations even, the loss of caste among governor. And this was matter for a set that measured worth by stocks grave concern. Until nearly morning and bonds. Somehow the picture could the leaders discussed candidates. The not profoundly alarm, partly perhaps tenor of their conversation seemed to because she knew too little of want to indicate that Wash Jenkins was not draw convincingly. She could not even assured of the Murchell support. Nor feel deeply for her father, although did he seem unduly resentful because she had for him a gennine daughter's of this fact. Wash was a model re affection and knew what a blow fallure

"Poor father!" she smiled half pity-It was in the course of this discus ingly. "I suppose nothing can persuade ought to feel so, too, but- Heigho!

She went on turning the pages of the The others gave respectful if surprised paper until her casuat glauce was caught by a familiar name in a satirical editorial under the caption "A Foot Errant" The fool errant was John Dunmeade, recently-and happily, in the editor's opinion-disposed of at the primaries.

Her color deepened suddenly and for which was vanishing in the Alabama another reason. Memory tind recalled to her something she had once said to A glutton by methods that would this man "When you were a broken weaker brethren. And now greater | were conquering . . . And I should

Well, her prophecy had been fulfilled methods were tearing the spoils from sooner than she had expected. He had his grasp. But no one saw a joke, been cast aside even by his own neigh-Before it could end two great banking bors. But there was something large houses would be bunkrupt, at least one and fine about him which forbade pity daring, arrogant speculator sensation and commanded respect, made even ally ruined and a thousand little greedy such men as Gregg, with their vitiated ideals, want to do him favors "on gen

"To think that I could have said that storm center stood over the ticker, to him!" she cried to herself. "What a cad I was! If only I andn't said 'Up John Dunmende, you tower above them

She was still dreaming of John when her father came in.

His face was haggard, set in an ugly bitter scowl. The sympathy that had lagged as she read of the wiping out of a fortune leaped when she saw the man who had lost it.

"Cleaned out," be said curtly She went to him quickly, laying an impulsive hand on his shoulder. "Oh, well, dear, never mind. It might be so You aren't the guardian of the puts much worse. You might have been taken sick or had an accident, or-or anything I've just been thinking how they don't. Keep out of what nice it would be to go back home to your affairs. New Chelsen and start all over again in-in something that wouldn't take all your time. 1-I'd be so glad to get se- any one makes official information to qualuted with you again" She gave a

little laugh. "You talk like a fool," be replied roughly, "What could I do in that rube town-run a grocery store? Here's where I can make money. And I can make all we need, once I get things straightened out. I've been broke before. The immediate question is

keep out of jail." She started back from him with gasp. "Out-of-jall! Father!" "Out of jail, I said. I'm 'into' the

New Chelsea bank and I've nothing left to pay with." "Is-is it much?"

"It wasn't, but it is now," "But we must pay it back. There are the bonds you gave me.' And the New Chelsea bouses that mother owns-she'll give those up. And"-"Not a third enough."

She dropped weakly into a chair, staring at him foolishly. She was very pale, dazed by the sudden new calamity that bad fallen. "But surely," she insisted anxiously,

"the bank won't press you. They know you'll pay it all back when you can." ted, cleaned out, And the bank examiner is overdue. If he comes around now"- With a gesture he sketched

the impending catastrophe. "Stephen, what is the matter new?"

your voice. It's so vuigar to talk loud ly before servants." Mrs. Hampden entered and, with an air of utter ex haustion, deposited her substruction self in an easy chair.

"Father," Kutherine explained, with cruel brevity, "bas lost his money." It was an unexpected tonic. The valid suddenly sat bolt upright and almost shricked. "Lost our money? De you mean to say, Stephen Hampder that you've been selfish enough to gam ble our money away after all I've suf

fered and denied myself"-She threw her bands sloft and fel back mosning, "Oh, in my weak co

"Maria, you're a fraud. Even with your laziness and induigences you the picture of vulgar bealth."

Mrs. Hampden rose. She manage a stagger that would have done to Bernhardt, clutching at tables and chairs for the doubtfully necessary Hampden growled again, anistel

"Father, isn't there something to be

of his rascally politicians are in as deep as Blake and I."

"Can be belp?" "He can. And be's got to." "Do you mind if I go up with yo

In her darkened room Katherine by the window for a long time, think-



She Started Back From Him With

ing with a feeling of sickening disgust on the sordid scene between her parents just enacted. This was the other side, the unlovely other side, of that splendid life of conquest for which she had put the best of all aside. Thus it waiting I'll finish my work," sald made victims of its votaries She thought of John.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Honey Pot. thought that anticipation until Benton county, his own neigh bors, bud repudiated him could b measure the burt. There was one thing which he would do-deep down within him was the unworded resolve that should be his valedictory.

"There's something," he told Haig. week after the primaries, "that ha been baunting me.

And he told the other what Sheehal

"Well, what business is it of your people have just clearly declared that

"All right if anything unppens fore the end of your term prosecute "But I understand my duty to include ing what others expose. I'll ask Blake

There'd be a crash

"I think be will," said John thought fully, "if nothing is wrong. Especially when he understands that, if he doesn't, I'll subpoens him with the books before the grand jury. If there's nothing wrong, there will be no crash But I have friends who have money and stock in the bank. And if our political bank history is repeating itself they and the public have the right to

"John," Halg argued earnestly, "don". you do it. Haven't you had enough What's the use of making more trouble and enemies for yourself?"

"I know," John said patiently, "I've gone over all that. This is my last crusade. But it goes through. cause, if there's anything amiss, now it can belp Jerry Brent"

"Great Scott! Have you still faith "What do you know about it? It in the people? Don't you know what isn't the bank; it's the government that they'll do, if you uncover anything will make the trouble. That fool Blake Just sniff daintily around and then is in worse than I am. The bank's gut- walk off to vote for Sherred or Jenkins or whoever the gangs nomi nate. I think it very possible that things aren't straight at the bank But I like you and I like Warren Blake-be's a good friend of yours

defense? If it is-are you comfr

"I suppose," Haig grumbled, "I'l have to. You need a guardian angel." So it happened that at a critical time within, as all New Chelsen knew, Warren Blake was apt to be found faith fully at the work that never seemed

The dark green window shades hi been closely pulled down, but a glim mering around the edges showed that light was burning within. Blake migh was the door thrown open when they rapped. Surprise, however, was de picted on his face when he beheld the

"Good evening, gentlemen. Can I de

you, Warren," said John, "It concerns

"The bank"

Suddenly Warren by some strange in tuition knew, as he had known that the market would sag, what this untimely visit portended. He felt the blood leave his face and rush to his heart. His hands and feet became icy cold. though his faculties were benumb

"1-I'm pretty busy tonight." he said CARL FOR DUCIT OR URLINGSONARY. "I think we'd better talk it over now Warren," John answered.

The sense of shock seemed to pass away. The cashier threw the door wider open to admit them. "Come in." he said quietly. They entered, and he closed and locked the door behind them. Then be straightened up, all composure

"I'll have to ask you to be brief. I'm preparing some papers for Senator Mut chell and Mr. Hampden, and they'll be

"I'll come right to the point." John answered "Warren, I want to see the books of the bank. I've heard that you are carrying a good deal of worth less political paper and that the bank is in danger. I want to verify or di prove that."

"That's absurd. The bank is perfectly safe. And, of course, we can't let you see the books. You aren't even a stockholder and have no it "Warren," said Raig hastily, putting his hand on the cashler's shoulder, "I

beg you to do as be asks. We're here

in a wholly friendly way. And, of

course, the bank is sound. You can rely on Dunmende and me to do absolutely nothing, to that case, to harm it. Warren shock his head. "You ought to know that it is out of the question. "Then," said John regretfully, "I'll have to subpoens you to appear with

the books before the grand-jury on Monday." He drew forth two doen-"I suggest that you want and explain. your errand to Murchell and tlampden. They will be here soon Just take chairs in the cage. While we're

He usbered them into the cage, found chairs, offered cigars and, politely excusing bimself, retired into the cashier's office and settled himself. at the desk. For a few minutes be worked, with a speed that was not ! nervous haste, transcribing figures from the book before him and adding up columns. Then he wrote a few

tines and carefully blotted them. This done, he seemed to have come to the end of his work. But he did pot return to John and Haig. He seemed to have lost consciousness of their proximity. The pen fell from his fingers. His folded bands rested passively on the desk. He sat motion less, staring straight shead into noth ingness. Under the gaslight his face showed very white A beavy, uncauny slience descended upon the three mer

There came a rap at the door As though be had been waiting to just that. Warren rose, went to the door and admitted the new visitors. They were Hampden and Murchell Hampden was the first to notice the presence of John and Haig "What are ther doing here?" he

explain." Warren answered "You come, too," be podded to the men with in the enge The five men gathered in the little

shake bands. Warren broke the silence. "Dunmende wants to examine the

can't do it." Hampden said "So I told him," Warren continued. "And he followed the request up by

serving me with a subpoena to appear with the books before the grand jury. "Why are you doing this?" Murchell "Because I have information that the

per and is rotten. I have it from one who has beloed manipulate such paper efrom one, in fact, whose notes, sup ed to be uncollectable, the bank is now trying to collect." "And on general suspicion you would

take an action that might ruin the soundest bank in the country?". "Not on general suspicion," John returned. "But on absolute knowledge.

There!" He pointed to Blake's face. "And there." Haig's dry, shrill voice was like the crack of a whip as he aimed a long, lean forefinger at Hampden. The latter recoiled as from

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