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HIS RISE TO POWER

John's knee in a tight grip.  
"I want to say something while I got  
the chance. I guess there's more to  
this than appears to be. But I have  
faith in you, John. I'm sure. I have  
faith that you'll govern this state in  
the fear of God and the love of your  
fellow men."  
"Whatever you do," supplemented  
Sykes, "I'll believe that."  
"An' so long as we got faith in you,  
we needn't lose faith in yourself," Cris-  
well concluded.  
John did not answer. He was past  
speaking just then and later when his  
townsfolk acclaimed him.  
At home took place a wonder. Judge  
Dunmude, almost forgetting the judi-  
cial dignity, slapped John on the back  
and exclaimed: "My son, this is a  
happy hour. I always knew you would  
make your mark."  
At which Miss Roberts sniffed. But  
when she tried to convey her felicitas  
tions her tongue refused the uncer-  
tained office, and she broke away to  
prepare a supper that should do justice  
to the occasion.  
That evening Benton county made  
holiday, with torches and bonfires and  
fireworks. John made a speech at his  
home—not much of a speech. It is true,  
but his audience was not hypocritical.  
It lasted just three minutes. Then the  
band began to play "America." For a  
little a deep hush fell. Then some one  
—later identified as a one-legged, hy-  
sterically happy old soldier—began to  
sing in a cracked, quavering voice.  
Something that passed beyond mere  
jubilation stirred. With one accord the  
crowd lifted up its voice and sang:  
"My country, 'tis of thee—"  
The solemn, stately measures died  
away. A young woman under a tree at  
the edge of the crowd discovered an  
ashamed tears coursing down her  
cheeks. A last cheer was given, and  
the famous celebration passed into  
history.  
At his window John Dunmude look-  
ed with troubled eyes up into the sil-  
ent, starry night. It was ungenial  
perhaps, but he could not help thinking  
of the lean years of defeat and discour-  
agement. And he wondered—Was the  
lyric still ringing in his ears the voice  
of an abiding passion—or hysteria?  
CHAPTER XXI  
The Price.  
THE next day John's office was  
besieged by a stream of  
neighbors, calling with a new  
born diffidence to say in per-  
son what they had said in mass the  
evening before. No one doubted that  
he would receive an enormous major  
ity. It was not until the middle of the  
afternoon that Haig found him alone.  
"Well, Cato," he grinned, "they tell  
me they're a little exercised about Car-  
thage way."  
John smiled faintly. "Not much. I  
suspect I've been thinking of Cato  
I'm not even a relative. Poor Jerry  
Brent."  
"Great guns! You can think of him!  
Guess you haven't read his interview."  
"Yes, I have."  
They alluded to Brent's comment on  
the convention, in which he made an  
ingenious sarcastic reference to the  
"lofty souled uplifter who had sold out  
to the gang for an office."  
"It's the cry of a bitterly disappoint-  
ed man. Brent's chance of a lifetime is  
gone. He knows he can't beat you, and  
he's sore. I wouldn't mind it."  
"I don't. I'm sorry for him. He could  
have beaten Sherrod. I really believe."  
"Look here, old man! I think I un-  
derstand how you're feeling over this.  
You're not very happy because you  
think it isn't your victory—that you  
have it only by blackmailing a man  
you dislike."  
"I don't dislike Marchell person-  
ally."  
"At least you don't approve of him  
politically. Down at the bottom of your  
heart you're a little peevish because a  
bit of trickery has got what you the  
cry of fighting wouldn't skin. And you  
feel that in sacrifice, for merely per-  
sonal considerations, what you conside-  
re to be a duty to the general scheme of  
things you have been weak. Well,  
you're right. You have been weak.  
And I'm glad of it. It will help you to  
understand that no cold, abstract ideal  
of duty that ignores the primitive, self-  
ish instincts in men can attract such  
less insipid, them. The truly good in  
spirits no sympathy. The point of this  
matter is, out of your weakness has  
come nothing but good. The news  
will eventually become a sound inspi-  
ration, and you—I suppose you'll ad-  
mit that you'll make a better governor  
than Sherrod or Brent."  
"I hope so. But that has come about  
only through an accident over which I  
have had no control."  
"Remember another thing," Haig  
continued. "Three weeks ago this  
county cast you aside. Now it is yell-  
ing its feet head off for you. The  
American people worship the great  
god Success. Keep successful. You've  
been promoted from a lofty souled  
uplifter to a practical politician in the  
glory of God. Accept the promotion."  
He was relieved to note that John  
could laugh. "And here," he grinned,  
"endeth the reading of my vast store  
It's one thing to share my vast store  
of wisdom with John Dunmude, the  
visionary reformer, and quite another  
thing what a difference a prospective  
office makes in one's attitude toward  
a man."  
John smiled absently. He was think-  
ing.  
"Haig," he said abruptly, "I sup-  
pose I'm an obstinate pig. But, hon-  
estly, I'd give all I hope to possess to  
be able to answer you. If only they'd  
renominated me as district attorney!  
I'd earned that. Or if I could believe  
that the present bullheadedness was  
artificially manufactured."  
CONTINUED NEXT WEEK



"Make good your bluff if you dare."

wonderment became fear. Heads of  
sweat stood out on his forehead. He  
shook visibly. The defiant attitude sud-  
denly dissolved.  
"Perhaps," said Marchell grimly,  
"Mr. Sherrod would prefer to make  
this statement himself."  
There was an instant of painful si-  
lence. Sherrod's mouth worked as  
though he were trying to speak. But  
no sound fell.  
Parrott came to his relief. "Gentle-  
men," he said solemnly, "Mr. Sherrod  
has withdrawn his candidacy."  
"In favor of Dunmude," supple-  
mented Greene.  
The reporters looked inquiringly at  
Senator Marchell.  
He nodded. "That's the statement."  
Without a single backward glance  
he went out of the room. Greene and  
the reporters followed him, leaving  
Sherrod and Parrott alone to get what  
comfort they could out of their plight  
and to settle certain accounts, a scene  
upon which we considerably draw the  
curtains.  
A man around whom a battle had  
been fought leaped on a tall fence,  
gazing off at the undulating line where  
the azure of sky curved down to meet  
the green of hills. He had been there  
most of the afternoon, in sight from  
the kindly but obtrusive interest of  
his neighbors.  
A state was acclaiming him, and he  
was not uplifted. He had read the  
news of the morning and knew that at  
that very hour several hundred of his  
fellow citizens in convention assem-  
bled were naming him to a high honor,  
and he took no joy in it. For the ac-  
clamation was but the serried chorus  
of a tractable stage mob. And the  
victory was not for him, nor for the  
principles he had served, but for a man  
whom he had condemned, for an in-  
stitution he believed to be wrong. He  
was big enough—or small enough if  
you prefer—to resent being outspiced  
into power by the strength of another's  
arm, and he was honest enough to  
hate the means he knew must have  
been used. He could not exult. The  
advancement had come to him. The  
dervy eagerness of youth was gone.  
He longed not for a sword, but for  
peace—the peace of the hills, of the  
growing things, of the commonplace  
from which once he had fled.  
A sound, strange for that hour and  
place, slowly pierced his abstraction.  
He raised his head, started, listening.  
It was the courthouse bell. Another  
joined in, and another, until all the  
bells of the town were ringing. The  
iron choral was for him!  
He walked slowly on.  
As he rounded the foot of the knob,  
he heard another sound rising to mingle  
with the clamor of the bells—  
cheering voices. He had a strong de-  
sire to turn back and flee to some hid-  
den place in the hills, but he forced  
himself to march forward.  
At the northernmost edge of the town  
he perceived a rapidly tripping  
figure. It was Jeremy Applegate.  
"Heard you came out this way,"  
Jeremy gasped, "and I wanted to be  
first to tell you. Nominated by accla-  
mation at 3:45 this afternoon. I  
hain't felt so good since Appomattox."  
John, beholding the tears shining in  
Jeremy's eyes, felt the moisture  
rise to his own. His heart leaped  
sharply; it was something to receive,  
even if one has not earned, such  
loyalty!  
Down Main street came a team  
drawing a double seated spring wagon.  
From the wagon descended a silent  
trio whose handclasp eloquently told  
what awkward lips could not phrase.  
"Drove into town to get the news of  
the convention," "It explained, "They  
said you'd gone out the pike, so we  
drove out to fetch you in. They're wait-  
in' for ye, consider'ble excited."  
"They've found out," said Dan Cris-  
well dryly, "all at once that ye're a  
great man."  
"Low I damned the murricans peo-  
ple a mite too soon," confessed Sykes,  
which caused Cranshaw and Criswell  
to laugh.  
"Git in," commanded "Ri. "Come  
right along, Jeremy."  
They all climbed into the wagon.  
John with lips compressed as if he  
faced an ordeal. And indeed he did.  
"Ri was quick to perceive what Jeremy  
in the hysteria of his joy had over-  
looked. His great, hairy hand fell on  
Sherrod's wrist whose face had fallen

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