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Violets—and Man.

Two violet plants had sprung up in one corner of the hothouse, although the gardener had been sure that he had removed all roots. They looked so beautiful there against the row of young tomatoes that he decided not to disturb them.

For a while they both grew vigorously. Then one appeared to languish, whereas the other grew luxuriantly. Soon the difference was striking. The one plant had so far outstripped the other that the smaller, cut off from the light, was ready to perish.

The gardener was puzzled. He removed the earth from round the plants and lifted them out, roots and all; he examined them and the earth with a microscope and made chemical analyses. The explanation was clear. The roots of the larger plant had reached out toward the corner of the plot

where a pinch of nitrate of soda had been spilled. With the aid of that powerful stimulant the plant had soon crowded its neighbor. Moreover, in the same corner the hungry roots had found a rich compost of decaying leaves. Obeying the only law that it knew, the violet became stronger until it choked out the life of the other plant. And that is as it should be, for the violet knew no other law.

It is scarcely necessary to point the lesson. God made one law for the plants, and it is a good law for them. But for us there is another, a law that transcends the natural law. "Bear ye one another's burdens," said Paul. You are strong? Beside you a comrade stumbles? Stop and give him a hand! Ease his burden! Rejoice that you are sturdy enough to carry your own burden and can also lift something from off the shoulders of the weak.

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Tangled Trails

—BY WILLIAM MACLEOD RAINB

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CHAPTER XXII.—(Cont'd.)

"I'm sure you do. We all want to do that. The surest way to get it out of our minds is to solve the mystery and find out who is guilty. That's why I want you to tell me a few things to clear up my mind."

"But I don't know anything about it—nothing at all. Why should you come to me?"

"When did you last see my uncle alive?"

"What a dreadful question! It was—let me think—in the afternoon—the day before—"

"And you parted from him on the best of terms?"

"Of course."

He leaned toward her ever so little, his eyes level with hers and steadily fastened upon her. "That's the last time you saw him—until you went to his rooms at the Paradox the night he was killed?"

She had lifted her hand to pat into place an escaping tendril of hair. The hand remained lifted. The dark eyes froze with horror. They stared at him, as though held by some dreadful fascination. From her cheeks the color ebbed. Kirby thought she was going to faint.

But she did not. A low moan of despair escaped from the ashen lips. The lifted arm fell heavily to her lap.

Then Kirby discovered that the two in the red room had become three. Jack Cunningham was standing in the doorway.

His glance flashed to Lane accusingly. "What's up? What are you doing here?" he demanded abruptly.

The Wyoming man rose. "I've been asking Miss Harriman a question."

"A question. What business have you to ask her questions?" demanded Jack hotly.

His cousin tried a shot in the dark. "I was asking her," he said, his voice low and even, "about that visit you and she paid to Uncle James's rooms the night he was killed."

Kirby knew instantly he had scored a hit. The insolence, the jaunty confidence, were stricken from him as by a buffet in the face. For a moment body and mind alike were lax and stunned. Then courage flowed back into his veins. He came forward, blustering.

"What do you mean? What visit? It's a damned lie."

"Is it? Then why is the question such a knockout to you and Miss Harriman? She almost fainted, and it certainly crumpled you up till you got second breath."

Jack flushed angrily. "Of course it shocked her for you to make such a charge against her. It would frighten any woman. By God, it's an outrage. You come here and try to browbeat Miss Harriman when she's alone. You ask her impudent questions, as good as tell her she—she—"

Kirby's eyes were like a glittering rapier probing for the weakness of his opponent's defence. "I say that she and you were in the rooms of Uncle James at 9.50 the evening he was killed. I say that you concealed the fact at the inquest. Why?" He shot his question at the other man with the velocity of a bullet.

Cunningham's lip twitched, his eye wavered. How much did his cousin know? How much was he merely guessing?

"Who told you we were there? How do you know it? I don't propose to answer every wild accusation nor to let Miss Harriman be insulted by you. Who are you, anyhow? A man accused of killing my uncle, the man who found his valet dead and is suspected of that crime, too, a fellow who would be lying behind the bars now if my brother hadn't put up the money to save the family from disgrace. If we tell all we know, the police will grab you again double-quick. Yet you have the nerve to come here and make insinuations against the lady who is mourning my uncle's death. I've a good mind to phone for the police right now."

"Do," suggested Kirby, smiling. "Then we'll both tell what we know and perhaps things will clear up a bit."

It was a bluff pure and simple. He couldn't tell what he knew any more than his cousin could. The part played by Rose and Esther McLean in the story barred him from the luxury of truth-telling. Moreover, he had no real evidence to back his suspicions. But Jack did not know how strong the restraining influence was.

What is it? I'm not a fool. I don't think you killed Uncle any more than I did. But you an' Miss Harriman have a secret. Why don't you go to James an' make a clean breast of it? He'll tell you what to do."

"The devil he will! I tell you we haven't any secret. We weren't in Uncle's rooms that night."

"Can you prove an alibi for the whole evening—both of you?" the range rider asked curtly.

"None of your business. We're not in the prisoner's dock. It's you that is likely to be there," Jack tossed out petulantly.

Phyllis Harriman had flung herself down to sob with her head in the pillows. But Kirby noticed that one small pink ear was in the open to take in the swift sentences passing between the men.

"I'm intendin' to make it my business," Lane said, his voice ominously quiet.

"You're laying up trouble for yourself," Jack warned blackly. "If you want me for an enemy you're going at this the right way."

"I'm not lookin' for enemies. What I want is the truth. You're concealin' it. We'll see if you can make it stick."

"We're not concealing a thing."

"Last call for you to show down your cards, Jack. Are you with me or against me?" asked Kirby.

"Against you, you meddling fool!" Cunningham burst out in a gust of fury. "Don't you meddle with my affairs, unless you want trouble right off the bat. I'm not going to have a Paul Pry nosing around and hinting slanders about me and Miss Harriman. What do you think I am? I'll protect my good name and this lady's if I have to do it with a gun. Don't forget that, Mr. Lane."

Kirby's steady gaze appraised him coolly. "You're excited an' talkin' foolishness. I'm not attackin' anybody's good name. I'm lookin' for the man who killed Uncle James. I'm expectin' to find him. If anybody stands in the way, I'm liable to run against him."

The man from Twin Buttes bowed toward the black hair and pink ear of his hostess. He turned on his heel and walked from the room.

CHAPTER XXIII.

COUSINS DISAGREE.

It was essential to Kirby's plans that he should be at liberty. If he should be locked up in prison even for a few days the threads that he had begun to untangle from the snarl known as the Cunningham mystery would again be ensnared. He was not sure what action James would take at his brother's demand that he withdraw from the bond. But Lane had no desire to embarrass him by forcing the issue. He set about securing a new bond.

He was, ten minutes later, in the law offices of Irwin, Foster & Warren, attorneys who represented the cattle interests in Wyoming with which Kirby was identified. Foster, a stout, middle-aged man with only a few locks of gray hair left, heard what the rough rider had to say.

"I'll wire to Caldwell and to Norman as you suggest, Mr. Lane," he said. "If they give me instructions to stand back of you, I'll arrange a new bond as soon as possible."

"Will it take long? I can't afford to be tied up behind the bars right now."

"Not if I can get it accepted. I'll let you know at once."

Kirby rose. He had finished his business.

"Just a moment, Mr. Lane," Foster leaned back in his swivel-chair and looked out of the window. His eyes did not focus on any detail of the office building opposite. They had the far-away look which denotes a preoccupied mind. "Ever been to Golden?" he asked at last abruptly, swinging back in his seat and looking at his client.

"No. Why?"

"Golden is the Gretna Green of Denver, you know. When young people elope they go to Golden. When a couple gets married and doesn't want to know they choose Golden. Very convenient spot."

"I'm not figuring on gettin' married right now," the cattleman said, smiling.

"Still you might find a visit to the place interesting and useful. I was there on business a couple of weeks ago."

(To be continued.)

Oldest of the churches in the City of London, All Hallows, Barking-by-the-Tower, recently celebrated its 1,238th birthday.

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A Victim of Unjust Suspicion.

A certain young man who lives in a Middle-Western city was made happy on his last birthday by the present of a handsome umbrella, given him by the lady whom he expects shortly to marry. On the first showery morning he proudly stepped forth from his door, umbrella in hand, and boarded a passing street car. He found a place on one of the cross seats at the front, across the aisle from a lady and her son, a bright-eyed child of six or seven.

The boy regarded the young man with frank interest and after he had sufficiently studied his face permitted his eyes to wander to the umbrella that the stranger carried. The child's countenance gained animation; he turned to his mother and in a shrill voice cried:

"Look, mamma, doesn't that look just like papa's umbrella that he lost?"

"Hush! Hush! Georgie!" whispered the mother warningly.

"Papa was looking for his umbrella just this morning," persisted the boy, staring hard at the young man.

"Yes! Yes! But he found it," said the lady, conscious that everyone in that end of the car was paying attention to the dialogue.

"Why, mamma," said the child reproachfully, "you know he didn't find it. You told him he didn't know enough to keep an umbrella. Look, mamma, that is just the kind of a handle—"

But at that moment the young man, considerably embarrassed, signaled the conductor and left the car.



She—"Do you believe in spirits, dear?"

He—"Yes, but I'm a little careful of the kind y'buy nowadays."

Discovering Our Power.

Man's power and ability seem to grow and expand in proportion to the struggle he makes with difficulties, to the size of the obstacles he overcomes.

Without the struggle to overcome there would be no growth. We never quite come to ourselves, never discover the larger man or woman and realize our fullness of power, until we are confronted by some mighty problem, some seemingly unsurmountable obstacle, which taxes all our resources.

THE CAPTIVE.

I trust that day will never dawn
When thorough scrubbing of a floor,
And careful baking of a scone
Is all that I'm existing for.
The meals that stretch in endless queue,
The things to make and the things to do,

So often done before;
And Pegasus, forever gone,
Disturbs my burning thoughts no more;
But far in the Olympian blue
Scales magic heights I never knew,
While toiling here I must go on
Unstirred by fiery, fairy hoofs a-trampling at the door.

—Elizabeth Fleming.
"Scalped."

A Scottish footballer was as bald as a billiard ball, but managed to keep it concealed by means of a cap and wig. In one match, however, as one of his opponents took a red-hot shot at the goal, "Wiggly" got his head in the way of the ball and the wig and cap were knocked off. When the first player saw the result of his shot he seemed thunderstruck for a moment, and then exclaimed: "Guid heavens! I've scalped the mon!"

Every evil to which we do not succumb is a benefactor. As the Sandwich Islander believes that the strength and valor of an enemy he kills passes into himself, so we gain the strength of the temptation we resist.—Emerson.