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cultured, high bred woman like Ann

Munro was staggered. "What busi-

Raymond's wrath was self contained.

"Keep your temper, Jack. We've sum-

mered and wintered together, and you

can't make any mistakes about what I

live with and the kind of life you lead,

and I tell you to keep away from the

Munro did not snarl as Raymond ex-

pected. His voice became softly in-

sinuating as he said: "Suppose the

lady invited me to call? Suppose she

was interested in my conversation?

The lady had a chance to go. The path

was open, but she lingered, she smiled."

with me. I say the lady was gracious."

women, but that's all the more reason

why I should be able to tell when I

she's tied up back in the states any-

way, so that neither of us has any

chance of interesting her. But it's an

open course and no favors, and so long

as she doesn't hand me out the 'icy

my chance, and from this moment"-he

took off his hat-"I reform, I throw up

my job at Hanley's, I cut off 'booze'

val's manner. "You can quit gam-

bling, and I hope you can leave liquor

alone, but I see trouble when you

shake Claire. But that doesn't matter.

For the sake of old times I want to

avoid a quarrel with you, Jack. But I

warn you that if Miss Rupert finds

you stay! As you say, she is probably

engaged to a better man than either of

us. But she is here because of the boy.

and I feel a certain responsibility for

them both, and the man who presumes

on a chance acquaintance with her will

"All right. Leave it to her, Rob."

said Munro almost jocularly. "If she

turns me down I'll pull out of my own

Raymond walked away with a sense

of failure. Munro had adroitly writhed

out of his grasp and was probably ex-

ulting at his own cleverness. He was

troubled, too, by the confident tone

which Munro had taken in saying, "The

Out of the tumult of his doubt he

He saw the light in Kelly's home,

and its allurement was stronger than

way to his own fireside, there to bit-

terly muse the entire evening over his

poverty and the false position in which

He repented of his resolute passing

of her door when he heard next day

that a couple of the independent opera-

tors had spent the entire evening with

Kelly and that one of them talked a

great deal to Ann. The sting of it lay

in the fact that Tracy was a fine young

fellow, seudious and capable. "You are

a fool," Raymond said to himself. "You

threw away a chance to be happy.

CHAPTER XVI.

with some fanciful greeting, carefully

and ornately uttered. So much he re-

does not march," he announced one

morous defiance of law-this colossal

recklessness. "What will you do when

"The sheriff's army grows apace, but

Ann could not understand this hu-

"Tell me, now," she said to him at

another time, "what is your real mo-

tive? Why should you be the cham-

He astonished her by giving back

earnestness for earnestness. "I'll tell

you, my lady. Labor has got to fight.

This union is the coming thing. The

tollers have not only got to stand to-

gether, but they've got to drill. I hap-

pen to have a little military training.

and I'm going to give western labor its

first lesson in the power of military or-

thing that is going out. They think any

man has the same chance they have,

but I tell you this union that they de-

In truth, Kelly and Raymond were

watching Munro's rise to power with

growing uneasiness. He was now in

almost complete control of the camp,

and though he still deferred to the un-

ion and its committees, his reckless

bravery, his prompt execution of or-

ders and his knowledge of military

spise is the coming order."

"Rob and Kelly both stand for the

tained of his Kentucky breeding.

YOT a day passed that the cap-

tain of the patrol did not ride

down to the door of the Kelly

cabin and leap from his saddle

Don't do it again."

it does march?"

ganization.

"Meet it and bu'st it."

pion of the rights of labor?"

Munro had cleverly placed him:

way was open; she lingered."

accord, lightning sure. Good night!"

and I shake 'Eau Claire.' "

answer to me."

ness is it of yours?" he asked, with

Rupert, and you know it!"

instant anger.

Kelly cabin."

"You're a liar!"

CHAPTER XV.

OTWITHSTANDING the excitements of the day, or perhaps because of them, Ann slept soundly. She was awakened as before, by the sound of the little coffee mill, but she did not rise as promptly as on the first morning and was still dozing when Nora appeared with a piece of corn cake and a cup of coffee. "You feel tired this morning, I know. Well, now, take your breakfast in

Ann was conscious smitten. "No, no! You poor, dear thing! I am ashamed to have you waiting on me."

"It's so little-a mere step or two." "Yes, but you have so many steps. After this I forbid you doing anything of this kind for me, and I've been thinking why can't we hire a Chinaman to work for us? Unless I can do something to relieve you I will not stay. You are tired. I wish you would ask Mr. Raymond to find us a helper

"Hello, sis!" shouted Louis. "Aren't you up yet? You'll never make a miner." Here he poked his head in at the door. "Jupiter, wasn't yesterday an exciting day? It makes me sick to think I didn't go down to Bozle with you. Rob has been telling me about Matt's shielding the sheriff. It must have been great. I was out on the billside. We all thought the sheriff was coming up that way, but he didn't, He turned back and went into camp, and last night Jack went down and pitched into him, and they had a battle."

"They did? Was any one killed?"

Nora gasped. "Merciful powers!" "So Perry says. Our side won."

Ann frowned. "Our side! You are not taking sides with these lawless miners?"

Louis wished to sidetrack this discussion. "Our things have come."

"Have they? Very well; I'll get up at once and unpack. I want you to

help me a little here." "And I want you to help fix up our

oungalow." "Agreed. Now run away and find a

hammer and some tacks." Together they worked to render her room a little less bleak, and together they crossed the path to Raymond's embin, where they toiled merrily. Ann was just leaving the bungalow to help Mrs. Kelly with the midday meal when Munro dashed up and flung himself

from his horse. "Good morning, Lady Ann! How

fares the day?" Something unduly presuming in his tone irritated her, and she gave him a gionce intended to check and humble

emerged with an accession of confihim. "I am quite well, thank you." dence in himself. "If it comes to a He was not of those whom disdainchoice between us, my chances are as ful eyes abase. He hugged himself and good as Jack's. Her tolerance of him chivered comically. "Wow, but that is due to ignorance of his real characwas a cold breeze! Some one must ter. Mrs. Kelly must tell her." have left the bars down. You're not going to draw the line on me. are you? What do you know against me?" ever before, but he resolutely held his

"I know nothing against you or for

you either," she replied. She was turning to go when he stopped her, and his tone was hard and dry. "You were in Bozle yesterday with Raymond. Don't do that again. When you want an escort let me know. I'll send a man that knows enough not to take a lady into danger and who has 'savvy' enough to keep his horses

for the return trip." "Thank you. You are very kind, but I'm not in need of additional protection." Ann Rily replied.

"Goodby till tomorrow," he called after her in mockery, his voice as musical as a bugle.

This interview, short as it was, left the girl with the feeling of having been grasped and shaken by a rude hand. And yet her anger was not unmixed with admiration. His magnificent audacity and the grace and dash of his advance interested her.

Raymond saw Munro riding away and wondered what his errand could have been, and when Louis told him that the gambler had stopped and detained Ann in the path his teeth set in anger. "The little hound!" he growled under his breath. "I'll put an end to that!"

Immediately upon finishing his supper he went up the path to Hanley's to find "the lookout." Munro was in his place, sitting high above his faro layout clicking a couple of silver dollars together, talking with gleeful intensity to Denver Dan, who stood at his shoulder broadly smiling. The saloon was packed with men, all in high spirits over the precipitate flight of the sheriff.

Munro sighted him at last and called out: "Hello, Rob! How goes it?" Raymond did not reply till he reached

his side. "I want to talk with you, Jack," he said in a low voice. Munro studied him for a moment, then turned to Dan. "Take my place a

minute." Dan compiled, and Raymond led the way into the open air, and when they were well out of the crowd he turned

and said: "You intercepted Miss Rupert today?"

"I met her, yes. What about it?" "Just this. You're not fit to shake the hand of a decent girl, much less a

forms had made of him the cmes source of command, the only adequate regulative force on the peak. Those on the outside did not besitate to call him "the arch devil of the district," and the whole western world was filled with his doings, his reckless speeches.

His fame had fired the hearts of all the dead shots and restless spirits of the west, and from an irregular squad of twenty-five or thirty men his forces had risen to nearly 200 heavily armed and hardy horsemen.

Raymond, though keeping keen eyes upon Munro, was unable to find cause for war in any word or act of the gambler, nor could he fathom Ann's mind either toward Munro or himself. She appeared to find Munro diverting and spoke of him only in that way. If she understood his "home life," it made no change in her attitude. It was inconceivable that a refined girl should tolerate a man who passed from one ignorant and vicious woman to another, and yet Ann's greeting remained gracious, if not friendly. What it was when they were alone, he dared not think. mean. I know the kind of women you

As for Raymond himself, he continued to punish himself by putting aside the many opportunities which came to plead his own suit, and took a morbid sort of pleasure in his renunciation, "There will be one man at least who will not persecute her," he said savagely and bent his best energies to the work of developing his mine.

One afternoon as Ann and Mrs. Kelly sat sewing and chatting together a woman suddenly appeared in the open Munro was now very confident. "Am | door. She was large and high colored, I? Ask the boy; he saw her talking her hat was awry, and there was a wild glare in her eyes and a look in The gambler took on the air of an in- her face that froze even Nora into sijured comrade. "Now, see here, Rob; lence. Both stared at their strange you're away out of limits. I acknowl- visitor in breathless apprehension till she pointed her unsteady finger at edge I've known a whole lot of cheap Ann and hoarsely cried out:

"So you're the one that's cut me out?" meet the real thing. Her name is as The muscles of one cheek contorted safe with me as with you. Probably and her eyelid drooped like that of a paralytic as she fixed a baleful look on the astonished girl. After a moment's pause she stepped uncertainly upon the threshold and leaned against the jamb. "Well, you'd better watch out. mitt' I'm going to make the most of If you don't give him up, I'll kill you!"

"She's crazy," whispered Nora. The intruder fumbled in her absurdly flamboyant skirt and at last drew out a pistol. "Now you better hop!" she said, with menacing calmness. Raymond was impressed by his ri-

Ann rose, white and calm. are you? What do you want?"

"Who am I? I'm Jack Munro's wife, that's who I am, and I want you to let him alone, that's what I want. You can understand that, can't you?" Her big, flabby face again contorted horyour presence disagreeable you go, and | ribly.

"a found tongue. "You go away or . .! call Matt."

"Call him. What do I care for him? I ain't afraid of no man livin'. No, sir; let him come. But I got no war with you; you're all right. But that thing there, with her fancy dresses-I'll pink her with a bullet if she don't let my Jack alone." If the drunken creature had swept a

bandful of mire into her face Ann could not have been more revolted, more degraded. Fixing a look of disdain on the woman, she said: "You are quite mistaken. Your Jack is less than nothing to me. I despise him and all he represents."

The other wildly laughed. "Ah, yes, you can talk-you're smooth-but I know!" She began to bluster. "If you hated him, why do you talk and laugh with him? I saw you yesterday." She raised the pistol. "I tell you, I'll blow you into kingdom come if you don't promise right now to give him up!"

As she advanced the two little lads at play just outside appeared in the doorway, and the sight of them steeled the little mother's heart. "Go away, darlin's," she called to them. "Quick, run for dad!"

The woman turned to see who was behind her, and the desperate Nora seized her by the wrist. "Give me the gun!" she called.

"I won't! Le' go me!" shrieked the intruder, jerking hard in the effort to free her hand.

Ann seized the other arm. "I prom-

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ise," she said quietly, fixing her eyes full upon those of the infuriated woman, who ceased to struggle. "Now go away."

"You promise?" "I promise!"

The woman again laughed harshly, drunkenly. "I don't trust you. I'll kill you; then I know. Let go me!" she called. "Let go or I'll smash your face!"

"Matt! Oh, Matt!" called Nora as she clung desperately to that terrible

Help came from an unexpected quarter. Like a flash, Woo, the new Chinese



"Dlop it!" he curtly commanded. "Dlop

cook of the household, rushed into the room and flung himself on the mad wretch. His long fingers encircled her throat. "Dlop it!" he curtly commanded. "Dlop gun!" For a few moments the woman struggled, then the volver fell to the floor, and Nora snatched it up.

Woo turned the gasping, hiccoughing creature to the door and flung her out upon the ground. "You dlunk. Go home. Stop home. Me sabbe you-you sabbe me," he said as he bent above

Ann interposed. "Don't hurt her,

He stood beside her while she slowly regained a sitting posture. "She belly dangelous. Me go tell Munlo. She

fight-me kick." The poor creature now seemed dazed

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and broken and began to weep, and with her tears became as abjectly pitiful, as pathetically tawdry, as she had been hideous and menacing in her wrath. Ann shuddered with a bitter nausea, a disorder that was half physical weakness, half mental repulsion. There was something guastly beyond words in this creature sitting in utter abandonment in her rumpled finery, which the pitiless sun dissected. Stooping, she took the miserable one by the arm. "Get up. You must not sit there."

Slowly the woman rose, all thought of revenge swallowed up in a wave of maudlin self pity. "You're all agin me-all of ye! I guess you wouldn't like it to have your husband stolen by another woman. You let me alone!" she said to Woo, with a flash of anger. "You pigtail, what business you got to lay hands on a white lady?"

The creature began to pour forth a flood of vile epithets, directed toward the patient Woo, who tried again and again to lift her and was in the midst of a howl of wrath when Matt came round the corner of the house. "What's all this?" he asked sharply.

The woman suddenly rose to her feet,

well aware that a man had arrived. and began to mumble and weep again. Nora ran to her husband. "Oh, Matt, drive her away. She tried to kill us." "Who is she? Who are you, and what are you doing here anyway?"

The woman, quité dismayed, began to retreat. "It's all right. She promised. I'm going now." Woo explained: "She Munlo's wife.

Belly dlunk--alice same clazy. Take um gun-go shoot lady." He pointed at Ann. "Me choke um. She fall on glound. No get up. Nola catchee gun." Kelly followed the invader. "You go back to where you came from and stay there or 'twill be the worse for ye. ye murderin' omadhaun." Ann went to her room and flung

herself down upon her bed in such abasement as she had never known in all her life. She could not deceive herself. She had brought this horrible assault upon herself by something more than telerance of Munro.

The woman's ignorance and tastelessness, her common voice, her badly fitting garments, her incredible baseness of speech, all came back. "Ann

Rupert a rival to that being!" Of course she had never for an instant directly encouraged Munro, and yet he had appealed to her and she had lis-

"Rob should have warned me," she complained, her mind going back to the man she could trust. At the moment she could not see or would not acknowledge that Raymond had ventured as far as he dared in revealing Munro's private life. She was too angry with herself and every one around her to be just. As her flaming wrath died she grew cold and bitter. "This is what comes of going outside one's own proper world. I shall leave the peak at once, and I hope I shall never see it or hear it spoken of again,"

(To be Continued.)



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