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The mayor resumed his questions. "Who sent you? Whom do you represent?"

"Munro sent me."

"Who is Munro?"

"He is the adviser of the president of the union."

"He's the 'whole thing,' isn't he?" asked the mayor.

"That I cannot answer. He has the confidence of the committee."

"I don't suppose it will do any good to ask about the buried dynamite and the fortifications on the hill?"

"None whatever."

"Then what did you hope to accomplish?"

Raymond fired a little. "I came here to tell you that if you think you can overawe this camp with 1,000 men or 2,000 men you are mistaken. Since this trouble began hundreds of the most reckless and dangerous characters in the west have flocked to Sky in support of the miners. These recruits are accustomed to the sound of guns. Furthermore, Bozle itself—in fact, the whole western end of the county—is tired of the domination of the eastern end, and they will aid and abet the miners. Your party is in a minority in the state, and you cannot safely look for support to the militia. Therefore, for all these reasons and because I know Munro and his men, I advise, I plead with you, to stay where you are. There is one other consideration: The party which I represent—the free miners and prospectors, like Kelly and Bingham and Reese—have stood aside from this quarrel. We have had no share in it. We have kept our men out of it, but if you march against the hill many of our fellows will join Munro. And I want to tell you, gentlemen, that one of these free miners—these rangers of the hills—is more dangerous than twenty little dogoes. A hundred of them would stand off 500 of your men."

His deep earnestness impressed them all, and a silence followed his last words. At last Don said:

"Gentlemen, Raymond is not merely an acquaintance; he was in my employ for some years, and he is my friend. I am forced to give his words great weight. I suggest that we try to arrange a meeting between the miners and ourselves and the governor and reach some peaceful solution."

The sheriff leaped to his feet. "That would make us the laughingstock of the whole country."

"Better be that than a melancholy example of foolish pride and obstinacy," Raymond interjected.

At this point the argument stuck. Mackay, the county attorney, and the sheriff stood for war; the mayor and Barnett, being for the moment under the power of Raymond's earnest glance, pleaded rather spiritlessly for at least a stay in proceedings.

"I think it all a ruse to gain time," said Mackay. "I think we ought to hold this man here and march at once. He is known to be a friend of Munro. If we allow him to go back he will inform..."

Raymond smiled grimly. "My services as a spy are not needed. Every movement you make will be watched by a hundred eyes, and back of the eyes will be a gun."

The mayor rose. "Well, gentlemen, I don't see that we can decide anything here. We have Mr. Raymond's opinion that our attack on the hill will result in disaster. The sheriff is confident he can win practically without a struggle. This is no place to take a vote on so momentous a subject." Here he looked at his watch. "And it is lunchtime. I suggest that we go to lunch and meet at 3 o'clock in the committee room."

After they were well out of the house Barnett said: "You see how it is. They are inexorable."

"May I come in?" asked Mrs. Barnett at the door. "Luncheon is waiting."

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against you underhand fight along. You don't want to take no chances. They'll do ye if they can."

Raymond was impressed with Brown's earnestness and by the admirable loyalty of his fellows camped there in the snow. "Boys, what are you staying here for?" he asked. "This isn't a picnic. What do you do it for?"

Brown answered, "We do it because we want to help these miners stand off the 'plutes.'"

Raymond mused. "But you're friendly toward Kelly & Raymond?"

"Sure thing. You fellers are all right. You've punched cows, and Kelly is an old broncho buster himself. But let me tell ye this, Rob, we're goin' to need you and your men if these chaps come up here the way they talk o' doin'—with Gatling guns and all that. The boys have been rollin' logs for a fortnight. You can just about see it from here—just on that point."

"Well, suppose we ride along," said Raymond, and as he took a last look around his heart warmed to these rough souls who had taken sides in a quarrel not their own, moved by a blind desire to aid their fellows in a war against privilege and social caste.

Brown called another man out of the group to ride with them, and they started away. On the hill east of the town and overlooking the valley lights could be seen flickering. The corporal lifted his arm and pointed that way. "There they are building the fort."

Raymond's blood began to stir, his military instruction to freshen, and for a moment, as he paused there in the darkness, he understood something of Munro's joy in a defensive campaign, but he said aloud: "It's all a mistake, Brown. They can't afford to fight the sheriff. The law is on his side."

Brown grimly replied, "Well, we'll give him a little run for his money, anyway."

Raymond smiled at the boyish quality of this remark, but made no comment upon it, and allowed himself to be led by a roundabout path to the west side of the town. At last his guide paused. "You're all right now."

"I wish you'd tell Jack I'm here and that I want to see him," said Raymond. "I'm much obliged to you."

"Oh, that's all right, Rob; take keer o' yourself." And the two men rode off.

"Good luck, boys."

As he rode up to Kelly's cabin and called out, "Hello, the house!" Matt opened the door and, with a lad on either side of him, peered out. "Is that you, Rob?"

"The very same, Matt."

"Well, now, wait a whist and come some and out our horses."

Mrs. Kelly called cheerily: "Rob, we're glad to see you safe returned. Are you hungry?"

He slid from his horse. "I am empty as a wolf in March," he replied. "Where's Louis?"

"Louis! He hasn't returned. Didn't you leave him at the Springs?"

"No. He left early this morning and Ann thought he had hit the stage road for the camp. I hope he hasn't gone wrong."

This news took away a large part of his pleasure in the friendly hearing to which he was welcomed and, removing his outer garments, he bent to the

blaze in silence while Mrs. Kelly spread some food before him.

Kelly listened to the news of Louis' disappearance with less concern. "He's run into some of Munro's men and is probably up at headquarters. He couldn't get lost. He knows the road. What's the word from the valley?"

"They're coming, Matt."

"When?"

"Tonight or tomorrow."

"I've been receiving delegations and posters and all kinds of warnin's. It's been a lively day on the hill. They're buildin' a fort."

"So Frank Brown told me. How do our men feel?"

Matt rubbed his chin. "They're a little uneasy, to tell the truth."

Mrs. Kelly interrupted. "Sit up and eat, Rob. Talk afterward."

Raymond could see that Kelly was disturbed, and that he had something to tell which he did not care to have Nora know. It was plain that he no longer minimized the danger, and his face fell easily into stern lines.

Seizing the moment when his wife led the room to put the youngsters to bed, the big miner laid a sheet of paper before his partner. "What do you think of that?"

(To be Continued.)

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**Traverston.**

The township auditors spent Saturday in Treasurer Edge's office examining the big cash book and the papers connected therewith and found everything in good shape and correct. They are getting out their report this week.

Quite a number of fat cattle were picked up around here last week. Mr. Will Cook sold five, Mr. M. J. Davis two, Mr. Geo. Peart disposed of four. The market is a trifle firmer.

During the storm of Saturday night, the stork brought the best of good luck to two young households. On the 6th con. was born to Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Greenwood a little girl, and on the 8th con. a wee lassie was given to Mr. and Mrs. Tom Glencross. Congratulations.

A most happy event, interesting to many in South Grey, where the talented and successful young doctor has many friends took place in the handsome home of Mr. and Mrs. P. W. Tompkins, Ottawa, when their nice, Miss Etta M. Egarr, was joined in holy wedlock to Dr. J. Malcolm McCulloch, of Peterborough. The wedding was on Tuesday Jan. 29th, at 67 James street, and the Dr. is being warmly congratulated on winning one of the Capital's fairest daughters. South Grey is proud of the success of her gifted son and the best wishes of his old school mates and his old dominie are with him and his winsome bride.

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