

FOUR

# HOSTILE VALLEY

By Ben Ames Williams



Her heart swelled with the quick perception that this was Will. He came at speed, his hands clenched and pounding at his sides, his head forward as though reaching out to fill his lungs with air; and she thought he came to seek her, and thus thinking she rose to her feet and stood waiting in a tender readiness to receive and comfort him.

But he emerged from the spruce wood, and without pause swung to the left and disappeared again.

She understood, after a moment, that he had gone toward the steam mill down the Valley; and he was in such a haste of passion that even from this distance she seemed to feel the fury in the man.

It would not be fear that drove him! Will would not thus run in fear. It must be anger, then; and swift conjecture lashed her with biting strokes, while she went slowly, like one dazed, across the open to the house, and into the kitchen there.

Marm Pierce, at her coming, looked up, and saw her countenance. "What's the matter, Jen?" she asked sharply. "What's wrong with you?"

"Will," the girl whispered. "He came running along the path, and went down toward the steam mill. Running, like he was awful mad."

Silence for a long moment, and Marm Pierce nodded in slow comprehension. "Well, it was bound to come," she said, half to herself. "He's found out, somehow, about Seth Humphreys."

"But Granny," Jenny cried. "I Marm Pierce shook her head. "Nought to do, child," she said gently. "Nought but set and wait. Will's found out he's made a bad trade; but he's the only one can get him out of it."

And she came to the girl, and put her arm around Jenny's shoulder. "Rest you, Jen," she said. "It's the hard part a woman has, to stay quiet while her man's in danger; but there's no other way!"

## CHAPTER IV

IT WOULD be a long time before Jenny knew the full tale of that day's events. The latter part of the drama she witnessed, and had in it a part; but the beginning was hidden from her for the time.

If during these months since he brought Huldy home, his wife and become a by-word in the Valley and in the wide region roundabout, Will—as is apt to be the case—was the last to know this. Yet he was not wholly in ignorance. He might not admit even to himself doubt or misgiving, for there was in this man a fine loyalty; nevertheless he was not witless, nor wholly blind, nor could any man loving Huldy as intensely as he did be unconscious of those withdrawals and evasions and scornful mockeries which she offered him behind the screen of her arrogantly yielding smile.

He never even shaped doubt of her in his thoughts; yet just as one walking alone through a deep wood may be conscious of a movement behind him, so Will was conscious of many things that happened just beyond his sight or ken.

He was thus in some degree prepared for what occurred this day. It was not that he had known anything before; but rather that with a sixth sense he felt certain things, and was brought into a frame of mind where full comprehension and belief were made easy, where it needed no more than one tangible peg in order for him to pick up and hang upon it the whole web of his wife's deceptions.

He had been all the long summer very busy about the farm, and dusk each day found him bone-tired, so that he might nod at the supper table, and presently thereafter go quick and heavily to bed, and sleep till dawn.

He loved Huldy; but after the first rapture of possession passed, he loved also this farm of his father's, and with an almost equal ardor, serving it with the full measure of his strength and energy. At night he was hungry only for sleep, and rose to work again at dawn.

No one spoke; but Jenny felt the blood drain out of her lips. "I like handsome men," said Huldy, drawing. "And even if he don't like me, he's handsome as they come!"

Zeke's eyes were black with anger. She laughed at his rage, and she said in soft tones: "You can see he don't like me, WHI. I'll have to make him like me before I go." Zeke cried, in choking exasperation: "You've got one man outside! How many . . ."

Huldy looked over her shoulder, then back to Zeke again. "You go

out and tell him he can go," she said. "Tell him I'm through with him!" And when he hesitated: "He's just a little man," she urged, derisively cajoling. "You've no call to be afraid!"

Zeke appealed to Will with a glance; and Will spoke wearily. "Go ahead, Zeke," he said, submitting. "This here's Huldy's home, if she's a mind to stay."

Huldy took off her hat and laid it aside; she touched her hair with her hands. Jenny stood up and moved toward the door; but Huldy said softly: "Don't you go! There's room enough for both of us. I don't want your Will!"

Will protested heavily: "Huldy, if you stay here, you'll have to mend your ways!"

Huldy was suddenly vicious, dangerous. "Don't talk to me!" she retorted. "After fetching her in here the minute I was gone. I aim to stay; and if you try to boss me around, I'll howl her name up and down the Valley till people hold their noses when they see her! You better mend your own ways, Will Ferrin!"

Zeke touched Will's arm. "Let me throw her out, Will," he protested. "Don't you go and take her in." "I have to, Zeke," Will confessed.

Zeke stared at the other man, hot, scornful, furious. "All right," he said then contemptuously. "If you're that kind, I'm quitting! You'll have to get on without me!"

But Huldy moved slowly to Zeke's side. "Don't you quit," she said, and touched his hand. "You'll be glad you stayed."

Zeke seemed choking; he said at last, grudgingly: "I'll finish out the week, I reckon."

And Huldy smiled contentedly; but Jenny could bear no more. Moving slowly, she went out through the shed and the barn and down the orchard path to the brook; she came through the deep woods home. As she opened the kitchen door, Marm Pierce looked up inquiringly. And then, in quick alarm at what she saw, she rose to her feet; but there was no need of a question. Jenny spoke.

"Huldy's back," she said through trembling lips. "She's come home!" Marm Pierce exclaimed, in quick reassurance: "Don't you grieve, Jenny! She'll never stay!"

Jenny shook her head, almost smiling, pitifully. "She didn't aim to. She just come to fetch her clothes," she said. "But she saw Zeke Dace. And—now she's going to stay!"

From Huldy's return until Jim Saladine came at last to Hostile Valley, two years intervened; and during this period, though her heart was his forever, Jenny saw Will not at all. In the country as in the city, it is possible to go for years without glimpsing your next-door neighbor. Accident might have brought them face to face; but neither the girl nor Will would design an encounter. Jenny loved him deeply and completely; and the very fact that they did not see one another served in some fashion to intensify the girl's devotion. This love of hers for Will, springing out of the years of her childhood, growing in stature and in depth as she became a woman, seemed to feed on denial. Lacking the man himself, she kept his remembered image in her heart and was wistfully contented so.

It sometimes seemed to Marm Pierce that Jenny's love for Will must communicate itself to him in silent ways; and at first she blamed him for that he did not throw Huldy headlong out of his home and his life, so that he might turn to Jenny; and she spoke this thought to Jenny. But the girl shook her head.

"Not Will," she said. "He's not the kind to. Long as she lives, he'll stand by her."

Marm Pierce indignantly insisted: "There's nothing so dumb as a good man that's got mixed up with a bad woman; and I've a mind to go tell Will so."

Jenny smiled wisely. "You'll not," she said. "You never will."

And Marm Pierce, perceiving in the girl a wisdom greater than her own, never did.

In the weeks after Huldy's return, Amy Carey fell more and more into the habit of coming through the woods to see the old woman and the girl who dwelt here in this house divided. Win Haven's side of the house fell nowadays more and more into disrepair. It would not be long, unless measures of repair were taken, till that half of the house sagged weakly downward into a collapsed ruin. Once Jenny proposed taking tar paper and like material to proof the other side of the walls against moisture; but the old woman would not consent.

"I wouldn't give Win the satis-

faction," she declared.

When Amy came to stop a while with these two, in the warm kitchen, she could not fall to remark the increasing disrepair; and she urged

harm her. And Bart, you keep your tongue off her, if you're good friend to me."

And Jenny, listening, loved him more and more.

In the matter of Seth's death, Will was held blameless. None had seen the beginning of the encounter between them; but the mill men had seen and could testify that Seth shot Will, and tried to shoot him again; and Bart could testify that Seth had borrowed the gun, as though the thing were premeditated. So, though Will had to answer to the law, he was presently free again; and when he had learned the use of a peg leg, he went back to the farm on the hill.

He dwelt there alone that winter, and Bart daily tramped up the steep road from his farm to take the heavier chores off the cripple's hands; but by February, Will had become almost as nimble on his peg as he had used to be on his sound foot. Only the work indoors he slighted, as a man will; and Jenny sometimes went to catch up loose ends. Between them during these winter months a bond began to form, and no longer on Jenny's side alone. Will never spoke his mind nor his heart to her, nor she to him; yet to them both the thing was clear. To him it was a trouble and deep concern. From Huldy he had had no word; yet to her he still was bound, and would remain so if she chose.

He told Jenny this one day. They approached the subject guardedly, by long indirection, naming Huldy not at all; until at last Will said, soberly: "Jen, no use our dodging around the thing. Here's my look at it. A man might want to say a woman wa'n't his wife, if she'd acted wrong. But I don't see it so. The way I see it, I'm bound—any man's bound—long as he's give his word."

And he said: "It looks to me, the worse a woman is, the more like she is to come to a time when she needs a husband to stand by her, and look out for her. A man, if his wife ever come to him, no matter what she'd done, and said he'd got to help her, why it looks to me he'd have to."

(Continued next week)

Lespedeza growers who are planning to produce seed on a commercial scale have been busy in August mowing weeds in their fields.

### Colored Child Struck By Auto

A colored child was struck by an automobile driven by Clay Smith Saturday but was not seriously injured. Eye witnesses said the accident which occurred near the water tower was unavoidable.

At first the child appeared to be badly injured but examination revealed the fact that his wounds consisted chiefly of bruises and cuts.

### BUSINESS TRIP

R. I. Mintz and S. B. Frink were in Durham and St. Paul Monday and Tuesday of this week on business.

### LOOKING OVER THE HEADLINES

(Continued from page 1.)

### Monday

Adolph Hitler's Reichstag, stung by the criticism of a New York Magistrate of the Nazi emblem, voted Monday to adopt the swastika as the official flag of Germany. . . . A committee from the League of Nations working on peace plans which they hope will settle the trouble between Italy and Ethiopia probably will announce their peace plan at an early date. . . . Meanwhile, unthinking Ethiopians pleaded with the Emperor for war. . . . Major Alexander P. Deservesky of Farmindale, N. Y. set a new speed record Sunday for amphibian planes when he traveled 230.03 miles per hour. . . . The bodies of two navy fliers were found Sunday by CCC workers near Beacon, N. Y. The men later were identified as Lieutenant Lincoln C. Denton and Mechanic C. Hart.

### Sunday

William Gibbs McAdoo, 71-year-old Senator from California, was married yesterday to Miss Doris I. Chase, 26. . . . The state of Louisiana was in a political whirlwind during the week-end as Huey Long's henchmen watched each other jealously to see who would be first to assume their leader's mantle. . . . A general coal strike appeared inevitable today as United Mine Workers flatly refused a compromise offered them in wage and hours by Assistant Secretary of Labor Edward P. McGrady. . . . The war news for the day found Italy defying the world to stop her in preparations for war on Ethiopia. . . . Funeral rites were held

today for Colonel Wade H. Harris, 77-year-old editor of The Charlotte Observer. . . . There was a general rear yesterday that thousands of local projects might be scrapped in the revision plans of President Roosevelt in his work relief program.

### Saturday

Investigators were busy yesterday working on the Evelyn Hoey murder case though there were some who still clung to the theory that the glamorous singer killed herself. . . . Colonel Wade H. Harris, editor of The Charlotte Observer, died early Saturday morning at his home following a lingering illness. . . . Another special session of the Louisiana legislature appeared as a possibility as political followers of Huey Long still were undecided who should be elevated to first in command. . . . Two armed robbers forced their way into the apartment of June Knight, pretty Broadway actress Saturday and escaped with \$5,000. . . . If this was a publicity stunt it surely was expensive.

### Friday

Adding her bit to the warlike preparations of Europe, France lined up yesterday with the League of Nations. . . . Premier Laval said "our obligations are inscribed in the covenant." . . . General Hugh S. Johnson will quit his post as relief administrator in New York the first of October. . . . Tobacco exports from Wilmington have been heavy this year, 16,090 hogsheds had been shipped from that port through yesterday. . . . Fred Perry, world's ranking amateur tennis player, was married yesterday to Helen Vinson, movie actress. . . . Mrs. Carl Austin Weiss, widow of the man who fatally wounded Huey Long, denied Thursday that her husband had entered into any conspiracy to kill the Kingfish. . . . The peak of the Public Works Administration program probably will be reached by June, according to statements issued yesterday.

### Thursday

Relations between England and Italy were further strained Wednesday when Britain's representa-

would support the covenant of the League of Nations in its entirety. It was announced that Italy considered October 10 as the starting date of the war. . . . One deputy was killed and three others were seriously wounded Wednesday night when gunplay took place on the floor of the Mexican chamber of deputies. . . . R. L. Cochran, governor of Nebraska, refused Wednesday to appear on the same program with Governor Talmadge of Georgia and refused to invite the Georgian to take part in a celebration in his state because of Talmadge's attitude toward the administration.

### NOTICE

SECTION 34-A.—That Section 34 of Chapter 4 be and same is amended as follows, viz: "ERASE the figure 12 in line six of said Ordinance and insert in lieu thereof the figure '11' and erase the figure '6' in line six of said Ordinance and insert in lieu thereof the figure '4'." Add after the period in line six and before the word "any" in line seven the following: "And each and every place, room, or store situated in the City of Southport, N. C., where any of the above enumerated drinks are sold, or offered for sale, shall not be opened earlier than 4 o'clock A. M. and shall be closed not later than 11 o'clock P. M. on each and every other day." This ordinance to take effect on and after 3rd day of October, A. D., 1935. This 12th day of September, 1935. J. D. ERIKSEN, Mayor, 9-18c E. R. WEEKS, City Clerk.

### Want Ads

If you are interested in a five room apartment with private bath in Southport, call Dozier at 9035.

FOR SALE—One roll-top price \$5.00. Also bath tub. J. H. YOUNG, Southport, Oct 2p.

FOUND — Key-holder contains 31 keys on fish factory. Owner may recover same at office of The State Port Pilot paying cost of this ad.

—FIRST SALE AT—

# CRUTCHFIELD'S WAREHOUSE

WHITEVILLE, N. C.

Tuesday, September 24th

Friday, September 27th



THE Ford Motor Company has always built a car to suit the requirements of the man on the farm. The 1935 Ford V-8 does this to a greater degree than ever before. In spite of greater power, smoother performance, in spite of new beauty, comfort and roominess, it costs less to own and operate this Ford V-8 than any Ford ever built before.

Examine the new Ford V-8 feature by feature and you will agree it is the biggest dollar value Ford has ever offered. Buy the car you can afford to own and afford to run. Ask us about a plan that will enable you to own your Ford V-8 now and pay for it out of your new crop money. We can offer you a better trade-in on your used car now than later when crops come in. Come in and drive the Ford V-8 today. You will find that you can't beat the Ford V-8 for the farm.

THESE FEATURES REPRESENT EXTRA VALUE IN THE FORD V-8 AT NO EXTRA COST TO YOU

88-horsepower, V-type, 8 cylinder engine with aluminum cylinder heads and dual downdraft carburetor. 123-inch springbase for handling ease on an 112-inch chassis for handling ease. Torque-tube Drive. Front seat into one piece. Big, positive brakes with 12" drums and more braking surface per pound of car weight than any other car under \$1095. 4 hydraulic double-acting automatic shock absorbers. 17 plate battery. 6.00 x 16" air-balloon tires. Safety Glass all round.

## Willetts Motor Company

BOLIVIA, NORTH CAROLINA

# FORD V-8

ON THE AIR—Fred Waring, Tuesday Evenings—Columbia Network—Daily Except Sunday—United Press News Release and Grady Cole—5:45 P. M., WBT The Ford Sunday Evening Hour will be resumed Sunday, September 29th, on Columbia Network