



HILLS OF DESTINY

BY AGNES LOUISE PROVOST

CHAPTER X

Synopsis: Lee Hollister, returning unexpectedly from a trip abroad to the Circle V ranch, his home from childhood, is troubled by signs of neglect. Joey, an old prospector friend of Matt Blair, Lee's foster father and owner of the ranch, tells Lee that Matt has killed himself, probably discouraged by hard times. The ranch is going to ruin under Lawler, manager appointed by Matt's daughter Virginia, who is staying in New York with her aunt and uncle, the Archers. Lee is worried when he sees Slanty Gano, a trouble-maker, now manager of the old Ceballos place, hanging around the Circle V. He hurries east and urges Virginia to go home. Canceling an engagement with young Stanley Bradish, she hurries west.

From the side of a rock on the hillside Francisco watched his flight with a grunt of contempt.

"I think you not fool round here no more," he said calmly, and went back to his sheep. He had protected the honor of his house efficiently and in his own way.

Stanley drew in his sweating horse only when he came in view of the Circle V ranch house. Virginia, sitting at Matt's desk, heard her aunt's terrified scream.

"Stanley, what has happened? Virginia?"

Fear gripped her. She ran. Stanley was just coming in. Blood stained his shirt on the shoulder and blood was crusted on the fingers of one hand, where he had pressed them against the wound to staunch the flow.

"Stanley! What is the matter?" "Oh, nothing to be frightened about," He smiled pallidly. "Somebody winged me. Just a pleasant little attention."

Mrs. Archer moaned, but Virginia was very quiet. She was as pale as Stanley now, but her voice was steady and cool.

"Sit down here in this big chair. Curly, please help me."

They worked quickly. A call to Ling brought warm water, iodine and bandages, and Curly's strong fingers made short work of the stained shirt.

Curly squinted at the wound judicially. "Whoever plucked ye must've been considerable higher up than you was," he said innocently. "Did ye get a chance at him?"

"I don't go around armed," he said curtly, "and he took good care not to show himself. I was on my way here, just entering the mouth of Turkey Gulch."

Mrs. Archer shot a triumphant glance at her niece; Virginia looked steadily down at the wound she was bathing. Curly's brick red face was as nearly expressionless as a human face can be. The mouth of Turkey Gulch was in a direct downward line from Lee Hollister's cabin.

"We should have a doctor, Curly. Will you get him?" That was the only comment Virginia made.

"I'll go and bring him," suggested Curly obligingly. Mrs. Archer followed him with a nervous backward glance at Virginia as she left the room.

"Stanley, how did it happen?" Virginia's low voiced question came the moment they were alone.

"Why just as I told you, Vee." "But you suspect someone," she persisted. "Who is it?"

"No one that I would care to accuse," he answered evasively. She ignored his light tone, but she could not ignore the implication back of it. "But I'm sure that no one here would do such a thing."

"No one?" he queried ironically. She flushed. "If you mean Lee Hollister, he would never fight that way, from ambush."

"Oh, I'm not accusing him." He raised cynical brows that did accuse. Out on the veranda Curly took some hastily written messages from Mrs. Archer and started back to the corral with Stanley's waiting horse.

"He's a liar," reflected Curly dispassionately. "I've been plucked, myself, and I'll bet two dollars Mex that he carried that cat scratch from a blame' sight further than Turkey Gulch."

The doctor came and went, pronouncing Stanley's injury only a flesh wound that might be painful for a few days, but was not dangerous.

Virginia wandered restlessly from room to room. It was all maddening and impossible. Only one thing stood out definitely. A guest in her house had been the victim of a cowardly attack from ambush, almost within the limits of her own land. That could not be passed in silence.

Footsteps on the veranda caught her attention. She went to the door. "Good evening," said Lee. "I hear Bradish met with an accident."

"I should scarcely call it that," Virginia chilled instantly under this

casual reference.

"Stanley was shot in the back this afternoon by some contemptible assassin who hadn't the courage to let himself be seen. He is a guest in my house and a friend, and I shall expect every man connected with the Circle V or interested in it to make it his business to find the man who did it."

His steady eyes were on her, unsmilingly. "Men don't usually ask women to fight their battles for them," he commented.

"He hasn't asked anything," she flamed back at him.

"Hope you find your man," he said politely. "Is Bradish in? I'd like to see him. Alone, please."

Stanley looked up sharply at the tall figure in the door.

"How d'you do," he said languidly. "Looking for Miss Blair? She's just stepped out."

"No, I'm looking for you. I hear that you're spreading the report that some friend of mine tried to kill you in my interest. You happen to know that it's a lie. In the first place, I wouldn't take the trouble to have you killed. In the second place, I don't hand over dirty work to other people, and in the third place, my friends don't miss."

The curt contempt of it brought dull red to Stanley's face. "Look here," he began angrily, but the sardonic voice went on.

"If any friend of mine winged you like that, he wasn't trying to commit murder. He was posting a warning, and I advise you to take it. Whatever you were up to when that thing happened, don't do it again."

Without waiting for any reply he turned to go, not by the way he had come, but by another door.

From the veranda Virginia saw him go without making any attempt to see her again. She went slowly into the house to meet her aunt.

"I thought I heard voices," Mrs. Archer glanced nervously past her niece. "You really ought not to leave that door open, Virginia. You don't know who may be out there in the dark."

"There's no one out there. It's perfectly safe."

"Safe!" Mrs. Archer cried hysterically. "How can you say such a thing when Stanley has been nearly murdered! I shall not feel safe for one minute until we get away from here. I have telegraphed to your uncle and Mr. Bradish."

"Oh, darling! Without even telling me!" Mrs. Archer flushed guiltily.

"Why not?" she demanded with injured dignity. "One might almost think that you were trying to shield this criminal!"

She shot an indignant glance at her niece and then broke into hysterical sobs.

"Oh, I can't stand it any longer! I've been worried to death for weeks, ever since that insolent, lawless man came east and persuaded you to come back here. He's at the bottom of all this; I know it."

"Aunt Adele, please. That isn't so."

"It's true, Virginia. And you just keep on dropping money into this bottomless pit to satisfy the greed of that man, instead of taking the wonderful price Mr. Bradish has offered you just out of friendship and sentiment for the place!"

On and on and on. Accusations, pleas, babbling, hysterical reproaches. Virginia closed her eyes.

"You needn't worry any more," she said wearily. "I wrote to Mr. Bradish some days ago that I was ready to sell. I'll keep my word."

A second telegram a few days later announced the hour of Milton Bradish's arrival. Virginia went to meet him, and he greeted her generally.

"How'd you do? Has that boy of mine been making trouble for you up here? I'll take him in hand. By the way, just drive around to Gideon Morse's office first, will you? He has something there that we'll both want to see."

She drove him there. Half an hour later, when they left Saunders, Bradish was in an expansively contented frame of mind. Virginia was unusually quiet, with steady eyes fixed ahead of her.

"Well, what have you been up to?"

It was the first moment that Stanley and his father had been alone, but there was more suspicion than sympathy in the stare that Bradish bent on his son.

Stanley looked sulkily. "I've told you I was riding horseback in this infernal desolation, and some sniper tried to pick me off."

"Don't talk bosh with me! You were probably meddling around with some girl. One more affair of that kind and I'll cut off your allowance. You must think I'm asleep."

"Far from it," Stanley drawled it

out with the slightly patronizing air that his father particularly hated. "But I'm not exactly unconscious myself. And something seems to tell me that Matt Blair's ure samples weren't quite so—er—harmless as they were assayed."

Bradish's eyes bored into the insolent weakness of his son's face.

"Well?" he snapped. "What of it?"

"Oh, nothing," Stanley was bland. "I just thought I'd remind you that I have some business acumen myself. How about a half interest, giving you a first option on buying me out? You know," he added, "I might have advised Virginia not to sell, and managed my wife's interests myself."

Bradish regarded his son with a heavy stare.

"Trying to buck the old man, are you?" he demanded. "Bigger men than you have tried that, and most of 'em are in the bread lines or adding up columns of other people's assets."

Stanley looked annoyed. "Hollister bucked you pretty successfully until I took him in hand," he hinted sulkily, but got no further.

"What's that out there?" his father demanded abruptly.

Stanley went to the window. "The gentleman himself," he murmured maliciously. "That's your amiable friend, Mr. Lee Hollister. I wonder what he's up to now?"

"Humph! Looks like a competent young devil!" Bradish stared after him with interest. "I was a fool not to get him on my side," he reflected. "Maybe I'll do it yet. Rides like an Indian and has as cool an eye as I ever looked at. Bet he can handle men. I'll get him. I'll have him on my payroll inside of two weeks."

Lee had been looking for Virginia, going first to make his inquiries of the friendly Ling, but Virginia was not there. She had slipped out without a word to anyone, wanting only to get away from the house and everyone in it. High up on Monument Rimrock where they had carried her father to look down forever on the Valley of the Sun, she sat in a disconsolate little huddle, her chin in her hand, staring out at the rugged country he had loved. Hot tears came into her eyes. She laid her cheek against the rough rock. "I had to do it! I had to! You understand, don't you?"

Quiet and solitude were around her. Far above, a hawk wheeled in smooth curves, watching for prey. Back of her was a grassy flat where a few pines whispered. A squirrel whisked up a tree; a darting wren scolded.

Virginia jumped up quickly. The girl from the sheep ranch stood a short distance away, leaning against the rough trunk of a pine.

"You wish to see me?" asked Virginia.

"No. I not wish to see you. I hate you. But I come."

"But why do you hate me?" "I hate you because he thenk love you! I hate you because he thenk love you because you throw heem away like the soiled rag, like a poson snake, because you see heem touch me."

Virginia listened, astonished and a little angry. The last words caught her attention sharply.

"What are you talking about? What have you been doing?" (Continued Next Week)

MABEL SCHOOL HONOR ROLL

First grade: Mary Lou Greer, Nancy Lee Greer, Shirley Trivette, Welda Critcher, Janis Wallace, Billy Wallace, Bert Reece, Robert Wilson, Bert Norman Reece.

Second grade: Frank Combs, Walter Kirby, Lizzie Brown, Mary June Stevens, Virginia Wilson, Lucille Winebarger, Jackye Lou Wilkinson.

Third grade: Fred Anderson, Reed Potter, Blane Wilson, Gene Wilson, Josephine Greer, Pauline Holman, Irene Miller, Pauline Norris, Ruby Smith, Geneva Wallace.

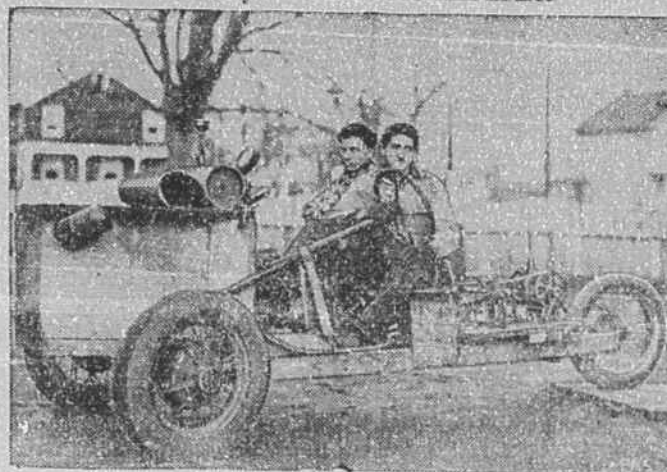
Fourth grade: Ruby Nell Reece, Ruby Trivette, Faith Thompson, Irene Townsend, Jean Younce, Elsa Mae Warren, Nolan Church, John Edward Combs, Tommy Greer, G. C. Wilkinson.

Fifth grade: Margaret Burkett, Cora Lee Trivette, Christine Oliver, Lester Warren, Frank Thomas, Shirley Max Swift, Ruby Dean Wilson, Bobbie Younce, Fay Wilson.

Sixth grade: Pearl Wilson, Mae Norris, Mary Lou Miller, Rainy Lawrence, George Thomas, Eugene Wilson, Betty Greer, Ruth Miller, John Henry Oliver, Edna Miller, Rosa Lee Warren.

Seventh grade: Mary Sue Eggers, Juanita Warren, Sophia Thompson, Clyde Miller, Carl Campbell, Edd Anderson, Claude May, Otto Thomas, Paul Younce, Geneva Bumgardner, Pauline Thomas.

Three Boys Build Steamburner



Jamesburg, N. J.—Two of the three local boys who built a steam automobile shown with the car here recently. They are Kim Oman (left) and Frank Baumgartner. All the boys are 18 and are proud of the car on which they worked all winter. The power plant includes two house radiators and pressure is built up to 25 pounds with a wood fire in the hood. The firebox is an oven from a discarded gas stove. A small steam engine develops the power. The transmission came from a truck and the car has four speeds. Local residents were astonished when they first saw the car "scorching" along with a stream of smoke behind.

Gilbert Patten, who wrote the "Frank Merriwell" stories of dime novel days, received six dollars for his first two short stories.

If it were not for the rotation of the earth on its axis, the direction of the trade winds would always be the same.

The new law extending the income tax to public employees is estimated to affect 2,300,000 persons heretofore exempt.

LEGAL NOTICES

NOTICE OF COMMISSIONER'S SALE

By virtue of an order of the superior court in that certain proceeding entitled "Fred E. Payne, administrator of W. W. Greene, deceased, against Willie Gods, et al.," appointing the undersigned a commissioner to sell the lands described in the petition, I will on Monday, April 29, 1940, at the courthouse door of Watauga county, at 1:00 o'clock p. m., sell to the highest bidder for cash the following described land, to-wit: Being in Stony Fork township, Watauga county, North Carolina, and bounded as follows: On the west by the lands of J. G. Greene; on the south side by the lands of Cleonard Greene; on the east by the lands of E. L. Greene heirs; on the north by the lands of J. G. Greene, and containing 33 acres, more or less.

his the 27th day of March, 1940. MONA BINGHAM, Commissioner.

ENTRY NOTICE

State of North Carolina, Watauga County: Office of Entry Taker for Said County—No. 2594. H. J. McGuire locates and enters 92 acres of land, more or less, on the waters of Buckeye creek in said county, beginning on a stake in Lenoir school line running north 75 poles to a sugar tree, corner to H. J. McGuire's line; then east 76 poles to a beech corner; then to A. D. Reynolds, then east with his line 120 poles to a stake, corner to A. C. Farthing's; then south 75 poles to a stake in Lenoir school line; then west with said line 196 poles to the beginning, for complement.

Entered the 27th day of March, 1940. MRS. H. JOE HARDIN, Entry Taker.

NOTICE OF SUMMONS AND WARRANT OF ATTACHMENT

North Carolina, Watauga County: in the Superior Court, Before the Clerk Don Trivett and wife, Mary Trivett, vs. H. R. Trivett, et al.

The defendants, H. R. Trivett and wife, Mary Trivett; Willie B. Trivett and wife, Alice Bowman; Lee Bowman and wife, Ida Bowman; Harve Bowman and wife, Bowman; Bus Bowman, Byrd Trivett Yates and husband, Alfred Yates, and Donnie Trivett, will take notice that the summons in the above entitled action was issued against said defendants on the 18th day of March, 1940, by A. E. South, clerk of the superior court of Watauga county, North Carolina, for the partition of certain real estate in Watauga county, known as the Wm. G. Trivett lands, containing about 75 acres, more or less, which summons is returnable before the said clerk of the superior court of Watauga county, at his office at Boone in said county, on the 29th day of April, 1940, at 1 o'clock p. m., when and where the defendants are required to appear and answer or demur to the petition or the relief demanded will be granted.

This 18th day of March, 1940. A. E. SOUTH, Clerk Superior Court for Watauga County. 3-21-4p

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Grade A Pure Raw Milk
TUBERCULOSIS AND
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CERTIFICATE NO. 773
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THE REINS-STURDIVANT BURIAL ASSOCIATION, Inc.

TELEPHONE 24... BOONE, N. C.
PROTECTION FOR THE FAMILY
Joining Fee 25c Each Member... Dues Thereafter as Follows:

	Quarterly	Yearly	Benefit
One to Ten Years	.10	.40	\$ 50.00
Ten to Twenty-nine Years	.20	.80	100.00
Thirty to Fifty Years	.40	1.60	100.00
Fifty to Sixty-five Years	.60	2.40	100.00

Notice To Taxpayers

I will be at the following places on the dates mentioned for the purpose of collecting taxes due Watauga county:

- | | Elk—April 4 | Stony Fork—April 5 | Blue Ridge—April 6 | Blowing Rock—April 8 | Watauga—April 8 | Watauga—April 9 | Shawneehaw—April 10 | Laurel Creek—April 10 | Laurel Creek—April 11 | Beaver Dam—April 12 | Cove Creek—April 13 |
|----------------------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Triplet's Store | 9 to 12 a. m. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Cook's Store | | 9 to 12 a. m. | | | | | | | | | |
| Deep Gap—Moretz's Store | | | 1 to 3 p. m. | | | | | | | | |
| Aho | | | 9 to 12 a. m. | | | | | | | | |
| Bradshaw's Store | | | 1 to 3 p. m. | | | | | | | | |
| Greene's Store | | | | 9 to 12 a. m. | | | | | | | |
| Collins' Store | | | | | 1 to 3 p. m. | | | | | | |
| Harbin's Store | | | | | | 9 to 12 a. m. | | | | | |
| W. W. Mast's Store | | | | | | 1 to 3 p. m. | | | | | |
| Tester's Store | | | | | | | 9 to 12 a. m. | | | | |
| Rominger | | | | | | | | 1 to 3 p. m. | | | |
| Edmisten's Store | | | | | | | | | 9 to 12 a. m. | | |
| V. D. Ward's Store | | | | | | | | | | 1 to 3 p. m. | |
| Perry's Store | | | | | | | | | | | 9 to 12 a. m. |
| Don Hagaman's Store | | | | | | | | | | | 1 to 3 p. m. |
| Mabel—Bert Mast's Store | | | | | | | | | | | 9 to 12 a. m. |
| Silverstone—J. M. Moretz's Store | | | | | | | | | | | 1 to 3 p. m. |

We earnestly insist that everyone pay their taxes before penalties and costs accumulate. Remember the 1938 taxes will be advertised in the near future.

AVERY GREENE, Tax Collector, Watauga County.

THE HOUSE OF HAZARDS
By Mac Arthur

