

These Three Loves

by Louis Arthur Cunningham

CHAPTER IX

But Gillian could not have let Simon put that ring on her finger, not until her hands were free of Jaffry Clay's story. She could not. Tomorrow she would wear it with pride. Tonight, when she consigned that thing to the kindly flames, there would be no ring of Simon's on her finger.

It was late when Simon left Gillian at her apartment. He said he was tired after the hurry and excitement of his trip. He would go straight home.

She gave Simon plenty of time to be on his way, then moved out of the doorway and along the street.

She stood for a while across the square from the printery. She crossed the square then and opened the door.

She went cautiously upstairs, feeling her way.

Finding the manuscript, she laid it on Simon's desk, pulled it from the envelope and carried it to the fireplace. She found a book of matches in her pocket and struck one and carried the flame to the top sheet. It caught slowly, the flame creeping over the black lines, like the tide across the sand, blotting them out forever.

Faster, faster, she urged—burn faster. Journal of My Loves—one by one the words of the title were eaten away, as his name had been eaten before them.

"Thank God!" she whispered. "Thank God, it's done now, and nothing can ever bring it back—"

The lights went on. For a moment, dazzled she did not realize what had happened. She stood up, turned slowly, to meet Simon's startled eyes.

"Why, Gillian! Whatever are you doing?"

"I was burning—some rubbish." "Oh, some odds and ends. Nothing important."

"But why in the dark, Gillian? I left my brief case here and remember when I was part way home some things I wanted to look at."

"Oh, it's nothing, Simon. I—her hand flew to her throat, and her eyes dilated and all her life seemed to stop. She could not move, could not speak, could not tear her gaze from the envelope on Simon's desk. From where she stood she could see the bold letters of the label—"Journal of My Loves." And "Jaffry Clay" below it.

Simon walked over to the desk and picked it up.

"You burned the story Jaffry left. You flung it in the fire rather than let me know and let the world know what you really were to Jaffry Clay. I—it is hard to believe!"

She managed to speak at last. "I've learned to take it, from you. Now you can take it, for once and all, from me; I burned his story, yes! And if he'd written a thousand like it, I'd have burned them too. And if you think the world is any worse off for not being able to read the records of a small-time Don Juan, you're making a sad mistake."

"I hate you for this," he said quietly. "You wouldn't have gone out of your way to lie to me, you wouldn't have burned that manuscript, if you were not afraid of it,

of what it might do to you. You couldn't afford to let it see the light, could you? It accused you, didn't it?"

She said, "I'll go now, Simon. I—I suppose that's the only thing to do."

"What else?" He threw the empty envelope on the desk and looked forlornly at it and at her. "This was why you would not take the ring from me this afternoon. You had to do this rotten thing first. Then you could have worn it with what you could call a clear conscience. You have no conscience, no heart, no—"

"Bitter things, Simon." Her voice was soft. "I have to go. I won't come back here. So it's goodbye, Simon."

She could never remember what Anse said when she groped her way up the dark stairs and into the quiet, comfortable room where he sat surrounded by his books and maps.

She became calmer after a little while. She sat there, weak and spent, with no strength in her, no desire, no power to straighten out the tangle of her thoughts. She had lost Simon. That one thing was fixed in her mind.

She said finally: "It's all over, Anse—between Simon and me." She laughed. "Jaffry Clay left a manuscript that I read, that I would not have Simon read—I will not say why. Tonight I burned that manuscript and Simon found out. The title of the book was 'Journal of My Loves.'"

"You still care for Simon—you know you do."

"I think I'll have to go my way and let him go his. I—I am not going back to the printery any more. I can't stay here, Anse. Can't we go back to Rydal?"

"We'll go."

"We can't start too soon to suit me, Anse."

Jon Hillyer came to see them after they had been at Rydal less than a month. Gillian felt absurdly glad when she opened the door and saw him standing there.

"I am glad to see you, Jon. What is going on in Montreal? I—I'm starved for news. I came down here to forget all about the place, but I'm afraid there's no getting back."

"You mean it's all over between you and Killigrew? Jon's voice was eager, the hand that held his cigarette trembled. "If that's so, Gillian, you know that I—"

"Darling Jon!" She put her hand over his.

"I want only the right to protect you, Gillian, to make you happy. Wouldn't you give me the chance?"

"It wouldn't be fair to you, Jon. No; that's all past and done with."

"If he comes back to you—"

"If he comes back to me or if he doesn't, I'll feel just the same towards him. I found love, and once you find it you never lose it."

"There are things between Simon and me—" she spoke very slowly—"that may never be cleared up. If he wants me he must take a great deal on trust. I think he is big enough to do that. If he really loves me enough, he will come back to

me. I want him to come back—want him on any terms."

"He told me to ask you, Gillian."

"He—he sent you here?"

Jon nodded. "I should have told you at first, but I had to know how you felt about it. And now I know. Shall I tell him to come?"

"Yes, please, Jon—tell him to come. Tell him I'll be waiting."

He came the next day, when only Anse was in the cottage, and Anse shook his hand and showed him the path across the fields Gillian had taken. "If you follow that path you're bound to meet her."

He walked slowly through the fallow fields.

Gillian stood still and expectant when she saw him. She said, "I am so glad you came, Simon. I—I don't think I could have waited any longer. I don't care what you think of me, Simon, just so long as you love me."

"I think only the best of you, Gillian. I would not ask you again to marry me if I couldn't take you with a heart free from doubt. I believe in you—believe in you with all my soul."

"As you've always believed in those you love," she said, and same into his arms and raised her face to his kiss.

They were married three days later in the little graystone church in Rydal where many other Meades before her had stood before the high altar and said the words she said.

Anse was there, tall and straight and very much on parade. He looked at her in the pale green dress she wore and thought that he had never seen her lovelier than at this moment.

Deborah was there, looking aloof and mournful, and Jon Hillyer was there, sharing their happiness, forgetting his own loss in seeing Gillian happy.

The reception was at Rydal House. It was a happy hour and if the ghosts of Jaffry Clay and Hilary were there at the long, white, glittering table with its tall cake, no one saw them. "I adore you, Gillian," Simon whispered during Anse's lovely speech, of which she heard scarcely a word. "Forgive me if ever I hurt you."

"Maybe I am the one to ask forgiveness, Simon. Let us say that on both sides all things are forgiven. That's the way it should be—today."

"Today and forever."

At the bend of the road on Malvern Hill where one, looking back, has the last glimpse of Rydal, he stopped the car and drew her into his arms and kissed her. He said, holding her close, looking earnestly down at her, "I couldn't wait any longer for that. It's so hard to realize that we're married at last, Gillian, that nothing can take you from

NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE

North Carolina, Watauga County.

By virtue of the power of sale contained in that certain deed of trust executed by Mrs. Josephine V. Hodgkins to the undersigned trustee, dated January 18, 1935, and duly registered in the office of the register of deeds for Watauga county, North Carolina, in Book 17, at page 122, and default having been made in the payment of the indebtedness secured by said deed of trust, and the undersigned trustee having been required by the Watauga Building & Loan Association to advertise and sell the hereinafter described property, said undersigned trustee will on Monday, August 4, 1941, at 12:00 noon, sell at public auction for cash at the courthouse door in Boone, North Carolina, Watauga county, the following lands and premises, to wit:

First Tract: Beginning at a small Spanish oak, the Leason Hartley old corner, and runs east with the G. H. Duncan line to a spruce pine stump on side of branch; thence north up the branch to a spruce pine stump and laurel on east side of branch; thence west crossing pine hill to Boone road to a small chestnut, and contains 15 acres, more or less. The lines of this tract are to run so as to make full 15 acres. The same being the land deeded to Josephine V. Hodgkins by M. C. Church and wife, Lizzie Church.

Second Tract: Beginning on a white oak on east side of Boone road near the old Baptist church and runs the branch, near A. C. Gilbert's (now north 39 east 49 poles to a birch in Lentz's); thence north 34 west 16 poles to a spruce pine stump on the east side of said branch; thence south 77 west 40 poles to a red oak on the east side of the Boone road; thence with said road 49 poles to the beginning, containing 10 acres, more or less. The same being the land deeded to Josephine V. Hodgkins by Jacob Phillips and wife.

This property will be sold to satisfy the indebtedness secured by the above described deed of trust and also to satisfy a second deed of trust held by said Building and Loan Association, dated April 7, 1937, and recorded in the office of the register of deeds for Watauga county, in Book 17, page 265.

This 3rd day of July, 1941.

W. H. GRAGG,
Trustee.

7-10-4c

me now." "Nothing can, Simon." They drove into the dusk of a bleak and windy day.

"We'll drive until the moon comes," he said gayly, "and then there's a little lost village I went to years ago—alone, I was happy there and I'd like to take you to it."

Singing, they came to the inn and drove into the yard and had no trouble finding the landlord, for he came, fat and jolly and washing his hands with invisible soap and water, to greet them.

"Madame et m'sieur! You are mos' welcome. An' my best room is, certainly, at your disposal. We will go up there now and while you rest I will make ready some good supper, no?"

It was a large and pleasant room into which he ushered them.

Gillian was looking at the books on the little table by the bed. Simon looked too. "Hello," he said. "Here is a copy of Jaffry Clay's first poem, and, by Jove, with his autograph, too!"

The innkeeper nodded delightedly. "He stay here one time for a week, that young poet. He an' his wife. He forgot this book. M'sieur and Madame Jones, he tells me, but I see his picture in that book he left. Ah, they were happy those two—so young, so much in love—Jaff, he call him 'an' he call her Hilary."

The door closed behind him. Simon stood as if turned to stone and the book slid slowly from his hand and fell to the floor. Gillian looked at him and looked away. Even she could not intrude upon what he felt in this moment. Here, in this forgotten place, he had found the truth at last, the cruel truth that she had risked her happiness to keep from him.

"I—I'm sorry, Simon. I fought always to keep it from you. It was all in his book, the story of their love, that was why I burned it. He turned from her to me. She came to me then and that was why I'd have no more to do with him. But for them it was over. She caught cold, took no care of herself—and he, well you know now."

"I'm not thinking of them, Gillian," he said, his head bowed. "I'll never again think of them. It's of you I'm thinking—of what you did, of what you suffered—"

He took her in his arms and held her close, her wet cheeks against his. "It was worth while, Simon," she said. "I wanted you to keep your faith in love and in the things you loved."

"I have faith now. I've seen

something that I didn't know existed in this world. It is in your heart, Gillian, and it's a shrine at which I can always worship now and know that no falshness can enter there." (THE END)

It is estimated that the average number of bacteria on a dollar bill is 142,000.

NOTICE OF SALE

North Carolina, Watauga County: County of Watauga, Plaintiff, vs. Mrs. Minnie Jestes and husband, Joe Jestes.

By virtue and in pursuance of a decree of the superior court made in the above entitled cause on the 25th day of June, 1941, the undersigned commissioner appointed for the purpose therein expressed it being the suit to foreclose the lien held by the plaintiff on the land hereinafter described for the non-payment of taxes, will expose for sale to the highest bidder at public auction for cash on the 28th day of July, 1941, at the court house door in Boone, N. C., at 12:00 o'clock noon the following land situated in Watauga township of Watauga, North Carolina, described as follows: Being 35 acres adjoining W. H. Byrd. For a complete description see deed recorded in Deed Book 40 at Page 450.

This 25th day of June 1941.
WADE E. BROWN,
Commissioner.

NOTICE OF SALE

By virtue of the power of sale contained in a certain deed of trust made by Ethel Boogher, Eliza Boogher, Lyles Harris and wife, Jane Walker Harris, to the undersigned trustee, dated November 19th, 1937, and duly registered in the office of the Register of Deeds for Watauga County, N. C., in Book of Mortgages and Deeds of Trust No. 24, at page

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Thirty to Fifty Years	.40	1.60	100.00
Fifty to Sixty-five years	.60	2.40	100.00

575, to which reference is hereby made, and default having been made in the payment of the indebtedness secured by said deed of trust, where-by the power of sale therein contained has become operative, and said undersigned trustee will on Monday, July 28th, 1941, at 12 o'clock noon, sell at public auction, for cash, at the courthouse door in Boone, County of Watauga, and State of North Carolina, the following lands and premises. A certain tract of land lying and being in Watauga County aforesaid, and more particularly described as follows:

The same being situate, lying and being in the town of Blowing Rock, State of North Carolina, bounded and described as follows:

Beginning at a stake on the east side of a street in Blowing Rock and running south 89 degrees east 100 feet to a stone, Robbins' N.W. corner; then with this line north 85 degrees east passing Robbins' N.E. corner, running in all 168 feet to a stone; then north 14 west 143 11-50 feet to a stone on the south side of a street; then with the street south 81 west 242 feet to a stake at the junction of the two streets; then with the street 4 1/2 degrees east 105 feet to the beginning, being the land described in a deed from Eliza S. Boogher to Ethel Boogher and Elise Boogher, dated August 31st, 1933, and recorded in the Registry for Watauga County, N. C., in Book 41, page 624.

This sale is made pursuant to raised bid for the above property filed with the Clerk of the Superior Court of Watauga County, following sale on June 23rd, 1941, and order of re-sale entered by said clerk. This July 10th, 1941.

GUY M. SALES,
Trustee.

7-10-3c



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SPECIAL NOTICE TO TAXPAYERS

This is to notify all county taxpayers that their taxes for the year 1939 must absolutely be paid this month to avoid advertising during the month of August.

All those who have not paid by the first day of August, will be advertised and their property sold to satisfy said taxes. I am anxious that as many as possible take care of their taxes and save the costs which will be added in each instance.

I am very sorry to take this action but have no choice in the matter. I ask for your full co-operation.

E. B. MAST

County Tax Collector