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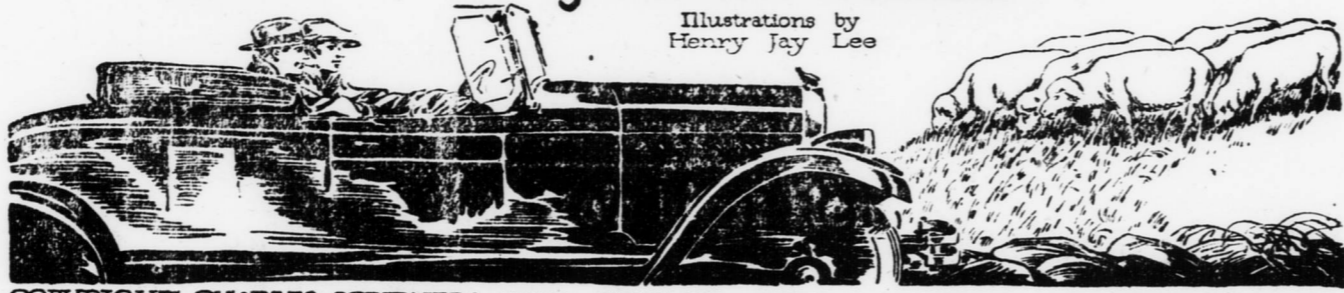
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BLACKSHEEP!

by Meredith Nicholson



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CHAPTER IX

When the Governor and Archie went down to breakfast at nine o'clock the next morning they learned that Congdon had risen early and gone out.

The Governor drew from his pocket a telegram which Leary had carried up to him while he was dressing. "A cipher from Perky at Harbor Springs. He's got the provisions aboard but reports that he suspects the tug is being watched. It's possible of course that he and old Eliphalet were spotted at Cleveland when they boarded the boat and that the Government is keeping an eye on the Arthur B. Grover."

Archie fidgeted uneasily. "We've got enough trouble on hand right here without bucking the Federal authorities. Of course you'll warn him at once not to put in here!" "My reply was sent instantly. I wired him to hold on to Eliphalet but to drop all the men he didn't need to handle the tug at the first convenient point and send them singly into the woods beyond Caldersville to await instructions."

They had reached the veranda, where Congdon joined them. Obviously he was in a serious mood. "Something's happened that bothers me a little," he said. "A man motored up here awhile ago, looked the place over and asked me a lot of questions about the hotel and its guests. You understand Comly?"

He hesitated, glancing questioningly from Archie to the Governor. "You may trust Saulsbury. We have knowledge of some other things that make it necessary for us all to stand together."

"This fellow seemed to have business here," Congdon continued. "He looked me over in a way I didn't like. You remember, Comly, I took you into my confidence about a little difficulty I had before I came here—"

"That little affair on the Maine Coast? It was a shooting, Saulsbury," Archie explained soberly. "Extraordinary!" exclaimed the Governor, and listened gravely while Congdon described the shooting at Bailey Harbor.

"You have troubled about this matter quite unnecessarily," the Governor declared with a wave of the hand. You were in your own house, and had every right to be there. You were defending yourself against a scoundrel who did his best to kill you.

"But it's most fortunate that we three have met here, gentlemen and murderers all!" the Governor went on airily. "Comly tells me that he too has been dodging the police, and to make you both feel perfectly at ease I'll be equally frank and say that for nearly seven years I've been mixed up with the leading crooks of this country."

"And now to business. We seem to be fellows with a pretty taste for adventure, and I'm going to appeal to your chivalry right now to help me in a very delicate matter—and a very dangerous one that calls for prompt attention."

He bade Archie tell the story, interrupting occasionally to supply some detail. When Isabel's name was mentioned as the head of the camp Congdon jumped to his feet excitedly.

"Why," he flung round upon Archie, "That's the girl who gave me the bad advice that got me into all my trouble with my wife. And she is custodian of my daughter! With my own child over there at the mercy of that scoundrel I couldn't refuse, and I assure you that I cherish no resentment against Miss Perry. I enlist right now."

"Good" the Governor cried, "and now to get back to business. The tug that's bringing the supplies for the camp is also towing a launch for our use. Now, Congdon, if you've no objection to taking orders from me, I'll ask you to lie off Heart O' Dreams in the row boat, while landlord, a trustworthy person in every particular, will go with you. Comly and I will meet the tug and pick up the launch."

While they waited for the tug's appearance Archie and the Governor hung off Heart O' Dreams shore, paddled close enough to talk with Ruth at the wharf.

"Everything's all right," she re-

ported cheerily. "The doctor is keeping Isabel in bed today but merely to rest. The camp's running smoothly and the girls don't know that they ate our last bread and butter for luncheon."

An exclamation from Ruth caused Archie and the Governor to turn toward the lake. The Arthur B. Grover was steaming slowly into the bay. A moment later Leary whistled to call attention to the Carey launch, which was running rapidly toward the camp.

"Keep out of sight," the Governor ordered Ruth "and send your young charges to play in the woods."

"Please," she cried, turning to go, "take care of yourselves! We'd better give up the fight right now than have you hurt!"

The Arthur B. Grover had rounded the point and was feeling its way toward Heart O' Dreams. Archie recognized Perky, industriously giving orders to the man at the wheel.

"There's our new launch trailing behind like clouds of glory," said the Governor. "A very snappy little affair it is."

"And a very snappy little man is hanging over the rail of the tug gripping an umbrella. How do you suppose Perky's explaining all this to Eliphalet?"

"Trust Perky to be plausible."

By the time the Arthur B. Grover had warped in, Carey had brought his launch to within a dozen yards of the tug, and his companion was standing up anxiously scrutinizing the men on board.

"Prisoners!" he bawled; "every one of you a prisoner! I know you, Perky and you needn't try any tricks on me or it'll be the worse for you."

"Trapped! Lost!" cried Eliphalet, tragically.

"You're mighty right you're lost!" yelled the officer. "You're a nice old scoundrel, to be circulating plugged gold pieces, and a rich man at that. You're under arrest, do you understand?"

Perky was thoroughly prepared for the expeditious delivery of his cargo, even to wheelbarrows in which three men now began trundling supplies up the wharf and along the beach to the camp store house. He paid no heed whatever to the threats uttered by the officer, and the work was proceeding rapidly, without noise or confusion, when they were startled by a yell.

Leary and Congdon in the row boat had been stealing up behind Carey's launch. Leary sprang aboard while the two occupants were watching the landing of the stores. Carey, diving under Leary's arms, seized a club and knocked him overboard. The detective jumped into the water and swam to the wharf, where he was immediately overpowered and hauled aboard the tug. By this time Carey was steering for the middle of the bay, where he watched the tug for a while and then retired toward his camp.

It was five o'clock when the last of the cargo was landed in the store house. The engineer sounded the whistle.

Ruth ran down to the shore and Archie and the Governor went to meet her.

The Governor gave her the details of the afternoon and when he finished she cried:

"You angels! It's perfectly splendid!"

"By the way," the Governor added, "when does the camp close?"

"August twenty, if Mr. Carey doesn't close it sooner."

"That date shall stand without reference to Carey's wishes, intentions, or acts. Please write your father to be here on that last day and bring his episcopal robes with him. Have you anything to add, Archie?"

"You might say to Isabel," said Archie slowly, "that August twenty strikes me as the happiest possible date for our wedding."

"You two talk of weddings as though we were not in the midst of battle, murder and sudden death!" She folded her arms and regarded them with an odd little smile, half wistful, half questioning, playing about her lips.

"I was just thinking," she said in a few moments, "how we seem to be living in the good old times when

knights hastened by land or water to the rescue of ladies in distress. But I don't quite see through to the end!" The smile was gone and her eyes darkened as she ended with a little quavering, despairing note: "Something serious and dreadful threatens us, one and all of us maybe! It's only—what do you call such a thing—a presentiment?"

"Please don't think of it!" pleaded Archie. Thing are bound to come out all right."

"Yes; it will be only a little longer," muttered the Governor listlessly.

He had responded instantly to Ruth's confession of her premonition of impending evil, and Archie, troubled by his friend's change of mood, had ended the interview.

"We're not going to lose!" he declared. "It's when the world is brightest that the shadow of a cloud sometimes makes us fear to trust our happiness. Good-bye and good luck!"

She was not reassured, however, and as she shook hands with them there were tears in her eyes.

(To be continued next week)

**BEST CORN VARIETIES
REPORTED BY STATION**

Raleigh, N. C., Feb. 6.—That the farmers of North Carolina may know how the different varieties of corn grown in the State yield when compared with each other on the same soil under identical treatment, the agronomy department makes variety tests from time to time. The last five-year period ended in 1918. Since that time no further tests were made until 1926.

In the meantime, however, seed corn selection and breeding work has been conducted with different varieties by the Cereals Agronomist, G. M. Garren. In this interval also new breeders of seed corn have appeared and some of the older growers made improvements in their varieties, so the tests were started again in 1926. For the two years of 1926 and 1927, there have been some changes in the rank of the varieties as tested on the various branch station farms.

At the mountain station, for instance, First Generation Cross No. 182 was first, Southern Beauty second and Biggs Prolific third under the five-year test concluded in 1918. For the past two years, however, Southern Beauty ranks first, Holcombe's Prolific second and Kiser's Cocke's Prolific is third.

At the piedmont station, Southern Beauty was first, First Generation Cross was second and Biggs Prolific was third in the old five-year test. In the new test, Latham's Double is first, Weekly's Improved second and Highland Horesetooth is third.

On the College farm at Raleigh, Biggs Prolific was first, First Generation Cross was second and Southern Beauty was third under the five year test concluded in 1918. Under the new test, Latham's Double is again first, Southern Beauty second and Indian Chief third.

At the Upper Coastal Plain farm near Rocky Mount, Latham's Double and Biggs Prolific tied for first place in the last tests made. Gerrick's Prolific was second and Williams corn was third.

Eleven poultrymen of Forsyth county culled out 300 birds from the 1400 in their flocks before beginning their breeding work for this season.

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**NOTICE STOCKHOLDERS
MEETING**

The annual meeting of the stockholders of Forest City Building and Loan Association will be held in the office of the Association on Monday evening, February 12, at 8 o'clock. W. L. BROWN, Secy.-Treas.

Farmers of Union County are still interested in growing lespedeza for soil improvement and for hay. A group recently ordered 1,400 bushels of seed for planting on the small grain this month.

Tom Tarheel says that when he is in doubt about a farming question, he follows the advice of his Agricultural Experiment Station workers and that's why he uses no other lime on his tobacco land except the dolomitic or magnesium form.

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