By LOUIS JOSEPH VANCE tuther of "The Forture Hunter," "The Bran Boot,""The Black Bog," at Illustrated with Photographs from the Picture Production

> Cupyright, 1914, by Louis Joseph Vance fight on our side?

> > this madman-'

with you

pressing it fervently.

with you, my friend!"

rugged, rocky walls.

seem reassuring.

afraid of the dark!"

"You're raving." Barcus commented

in a hopeless tone. He looked to the

girl. "Rose-Miss Trine-reason with

Dropping the glasses, the girl came

swiftly and confidently to her lover's

"Go, sweetheart!" she told him

With a look of triumph for the bene

fit of Mr. Barcus Alan Law gathered

would see her own sister carried to

her death if anything could be done

to avert it-no matter what we may

With an indignant grunt, but con-

siderate none the less. Mr. Barcus

caught up the glasses and turned his

"Go on!" he grumbled, pretending

But go!" he insisted,

"And God go

to ignore the hand Alan offered him

from the saddle. "I've got no patience

of a sudden seizing the hand and

Then hoofbeats drumming on the

hard-packed earth of the canyon trail

struck a hundred echoes from its

Mr. Barcus showed Rose Trine a

face almost ludicrous with its an-

guished smile that was intended to

"Let's look sharp and follow him

as quick as may be," he urged. "Light-

ning will never strike us so long as

we stick to Mr. Law of the charmed

life-but I don't mind telling you, once

out of his company, I'm just naturally

CHAPTER XLI.

The Trail of Flying Hoof-Prints.

chill of night lingered stubbornlyand would until the shadow of the

eastern rampart had crept slowly

down the conyon's western wall, tele-

ting in the sun to make the place a

Refreshed from rest and exhilarated

by this grateful coolness, his horse

responded willingly to the first light

touch of Alan's spur. In a twinkling

the overnight camp dropped from view

behind the rounded shoulder of a hill-

the horse settled down to steady go-

ing, lengthened its stride, and ran for

leagues with the long, apparently ef-

fortless and tireless lope of the plains-

Alan's departure from camp had an-

appearance on the upper trail of

friends of the slain bandit, to the

number of four or five, who had both

discovered and recovered his body,

called his death murder and pledged

themselves to its avengement-laying

responsibility for the putative crime

at the door of the man and woman

to be seen in the canyon, immediately

Between the moment when discov

ery of the men on the ridge trail in-

terrupted their simple and burried

breakfast and that which found Rose

their own horse and making the best

of their way down the canyon in pur-

And even with its double burden,

their horse made better time upon

ing, when they approached the foot-

hills that ran down to the desert, the

pursuit was more than a mile in the

rear and shut off to boot by a mono-

lithic hill, while Alan was many a

He sat upon his horse, just then, at

standstill upon the summit of a round-

ed knoll, the Painted hills lifting up

behind him, the desert before unfold-

ing like a map-but like a map all

Only in the near foreground was anything definite to be distinguished

in the aspect of that sunbitten wastebleached earth patterned in almost or-

derly arrangement by sagebrush and gnarled cacti. At the distance of half

a mile all blended into one vast plain

of glaring gray that stretched over

the round of the world to a broken

wall of purple hills that reeled drunk-

Was Judith out there, somewhere,

lost, defenseless, forlorn, impotent to

lift a hand to shield her face from the

enly in the haze-veiled southwest.

weary mile in advance.

below the scene of Hopt Jim's fall.

bred broncho, ventre-a-terre,

deligated by a round quarter-nou

Then from its first spirited flight

plt of torment and of burning.

side, mesquite-cloaked.

In the still air of that young day the

have suffered at Judith's hands?"

side, lifting her lips to his.

Rose Trine into his arms.

Save her if you can!"

CHAPTER XL.

The Man in the Shadow.

Two hundred feet, if one, Hop! Jim fell from the lip of the cliff. Then suddealy the thing that had been Hopt Jim Slade was checked in its headlong descent by the outstanding trunk of a tree, over which it remained, doubled up, limp, horrible

The miniature landslide that had been caused by his fall went on, settling gradually as the slope became less sheer. Only part of it, a double handful of pebbles, gained the bottom of the canyon.

Its muffled impact on the ground round his feet roused the man who had compassed the bandit's death from the pose he had unconsciously assumed on the instant of firing.

He stepped back, and snatched up a case containing binoculars.

Not before the glasses were adjusted to his vision did he find time to respond absently to the alarmed and insistent inquiries of his two companions, a man of his own age and a girl of some years less, who had been wakened from their sleep by the report of the rifle.

Now the latter plucked his sleeve, momentarily deflecting the glasses from the object which they were following so sedulously as it moved along the heights; a wildly running horse with a woman bound helpless upon its back, both sharply in silhouette against the burning blue,

"Alan!" the girl demanded, "what is it? Why did you fire? Why won't you answer me? What is it?"

"Judith," Alan replied tersely, again picking up with the glasses the runaway horse that fled so madly along the perilous and narrow track of the hill trail.

The name was echoed from two throats as Alan swung sharply and thrust the glasses into the hands of

"Judith." he affirmed with a look of polgnant solicitude. "She's roped to the back of that crazy broncho-help- scoped upon itself and vanished, letless! See fer yourcelf; one false step - suppose a stone turns beneath its hoof-she'll be killed!

While the girl focused her glasses upon that speck that flew against the Alan turned to the two horses hobbled near by and selling a saddle threw it over the back of one.

At this the other man turned to his side and dropping a detaining hand upon his arm asked:

"What are you going to do?" Alan shook the hand off and went

on with his self-appointed task. "Go after her, Tom, of course," he replied. "What else? That animal is crazy. I tell you-

"Even so," Tom Parcus argued, "you can't climb that hillside on horsebackand if you could, you'd be too late to eatch up, much less prevent an ac-

c.dent-" 'I know it. But suppose it doesn't fall . . . You know what's beyond these hills-deserts! And the girl is helpless. I tell you, bound hand and foot. Think of her being carried that ay-all day, perhaps-face up to this brutal sun! She'll go mad if some-

thing isn't done-"You've gone mad yourself already." Mr. Barcus contended darkly, "What's and Barcus mounted on the back of it to you if she does? Suppose you do succeed in rescuing her: what then? As soon as she gets on her pins she'll suit of Alan, but little time had try to stick a knife into you-like as elapsed. not What's she been chasing you for, all over this land of the brave and home of the free, but to take your fool the broad lower level than those who life? And now you want to sacrifice followed the ridge trail. By mid morn-



Moistened His Parched Lips and Throat.

yourself to her, out of sheer, downright foolishness in the head! I sup- the surface of the desert but its pose you'll like me to call it chivalry: I'll tell you what I call it-lunacy!"

"Don't be an ass!" Alan responded temperately, gathering the reins to- she back there among the Painted gether and instinctively lifting a foot hills, lying still and lifeless, crushed to the stirrup. "Who warned us yes- beneath the weight of that fallen terday in time to prevent our being horse? crushed by that rock? Judith! Why was she separated from Marrophat and the others-alone up there when that beast speaked up behind her-O, lowing its winding course through the I saw him-I saw it all-and grabbed foothills and round the base of that her and roped her to that bronco-if monolithic mountain toward the juneit wasn't because she had broken with tion with the ridge trail, miles away. them for good and all and started to It approached the hour of noon be- some prize.

fore he gained the point where the two trails joined and struck out across the desert. And here he discovered what he thought indisputable indication that the fright of Judith's horse had persisted.

Abandoning immediately all notion of returning through the hills by the ridge-trail, he turned and swung away at the best pace he could spur from his broncho delivering himself into the pitiless embrace of that implacable wilderness of sun and sand.

At long intervals he would check the bronche and, reeling in his saddle. endeavor to sweep the desert with his binoculars.

And toward the middle of the afternoon he fancied that something rewarded one such effort; something for an instant swam athwart the field of the glasses: something that seemed to move like a weary horse with a human figure bound to its back.

But now the phenomena were discernible which, had he been more desert wise, would have made him pause and think before he ventured farther from those hills, already beyond reach as they were. "Did you dream for an instant Rose

His first appreciated warning came when the surface of the desert seemed

to lift and shake like the top of a to sell the most remarkable bargain canvas tent in a gale. At the same in the magazine world this year. time a mighty gust of wind swept athwart the waste, hot as a furnace blast. In a trice dust enveloped man and horse, a stiffing cloud of super Delineator heated particles that stung the flesh like a myriad needles. And then dark ness fell, the twilight of hades, a copper-colored pall. Nothing remained visible beyond arm's length.

Blinded, half suffocated, unspeak

Himself more than half-dazed, but still hounded by his nightmare vision of Judith, Alan dismounted to escape being torn bodily from the saddle by that hellish sand-blast, and seizing the bridle sought to draw the horse on with him.

He wasted his strength in that endeavor: the animal balked, planted its boofs deep in the sand, stiffened its legs and resisted with the stubbornness of a rock; then, of a sudden, jerked his head smartly, snapped the Belk-Bunday Bldg. Monroe, N. C bridle from his grasp and flung away scudding before the storm.

Pursuit was out of the question: indeed, the bridle was barely torn from his hand before Alan lost sight of the broncho.

For a moment he stood rooted in consternation as in a bog-with an arm upthrown across his face.

Then the thought of Judith recurred. Head bended and shoulders rounded.

he began to forge a way into the teeth of the sandstorm How long he fought on, pitting his strength against the elements, cannot

be reckened. In the end he stumbled blindly down a slight decline and was abruptly conscious that he had in some way found shelter from the full force of the

He staggered on another yard or two, breathing more freely, and blundered into a rough-ribbed wall of rock some sporadic outcrop, he understood, whose bulk stood between him and the storm

He thought to rest for a time, until the storm had spent its greatest strength; but as he laid his shoulder gratefully against the rock and scrubbed the dust from his smarting eyes he saw what he at first conceived to be a hallucination: Judith Trine standing within a yard of him, alive, strong, free,

He stared incredulously, saw her recognize him, open her mouth to utter a wondering cry that was inaudible, and come quickly nearer.

"Alan! You came for me! You followed me, through all this!"

He threw off her hand with a bitter laugh-that was like the creaking of a raven as it issued from his bone-dry threat-and in momentary possession of hysteric madness, reeled away from the woman and the shelter of the rock and delivered himself anew to the mercy of the dust-storm.

(Continued in next issue.)

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blast of that savage sun? Staring beneath a shading hand, he Seasonable Groceries discerned nothing that moved upon Call and see us. myriad heat-devils jigging monoto-We buy Country Produce.

nously their infernal danse macabre. Or-as seemed more probable-was

No rest for Alan till he knew Descending the knoll he reined his lagging mount back into the trail, fol-

The live and let live grocer,

Help some young lady win a hand-

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Having this day qualified as adminstrator of the estate of J. A. Little, deceased, this is to notify all persons having claims against the estate of said deceased to present same to me at my residence in New Salem township, Union county, N. C., on or be-fore the 10th day of November, 1915, or this notice will be pleaded in bar All persons inof their ecovery. debted to said estate are required to make immediate settlement.

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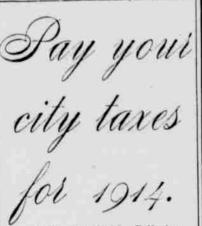
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