

TREY O' HEARTS

Continued from Saturday

"What's the good of that? We're fast enough as it is!"

"Simply to make assurance doubly sure by causing a cave-in . . ."

"I seem to remember hearing of reading, some place, that tunnels have two ends. If that's true, the far end of this ought to be about the safest place when that explosion happens—if it ever does."

"Something in that!"

"Got any matches?" Barcus inquired, as Alan hurriedly helped Rose to her feet.

"Never one."

"Nor I. We'll have to feel our way along. Let me lead. If I step over the brink of a pit or anything, I'll try to yell and warn you in time."

Alan caught his friend's hand in passing and pressed it warmly—a caress eloquent of his gratitude to Barcus for taking the peril lightly, or pretending to, for the sake of Rose.

A ticklish business, that—groping their way through blackness so opaque that it seemed as palpable as a pool of ink. And haste was indicated; they stumbled on with what caution was possible against pitfalls—a gingerly scramble. Then an elbow or seen—cut them off from direct communication with the bulkhead, and at the same time opened up a shaft of daylight, striking down through that pitchy darkness like a column of fine gold.

Cries of joy, amazement, incredulity choking in their throats, they stumbled forward, gained the spot immediately below the shaft, looked upward, dazzled, to see blue sky like a coin of heaven's minting far above them, at the end of a long and almost perpendicular tunnel, wide enough to permit the passage of a man's body, and lined with wooden ladders.

The end of the lowermost ladder hung within easy reach from the floor of the tunnel.

But even as Alan lifted his hands to grasp the bottom rung the opening at the top of the shaft was temporarily obscured.

Thrilled with apprehension, he hesitated: Marrophat was up there, he little doubted; hardly like that one to overlook the ladder-shaft in preparing the tunnel to be a living tomb.

"What is it?" Rose demanded at his elbow, in a shaken whisper.

"Nothing," he lied instantly, and seizing the bottom rung, swung himself up. "But wait for me till I signal the coast's clear," he warned before committing himself finally to the ascent.

Marrophat or no Marrophat at the top, there was nothing for him to do but to grasp the nettle danger with a steady hand, unflinching. Even though he were shot dead on emerging from the shaft, it were better than to die down there, like a rat in a trap.

He had climbed not more than half a dozen rungs when a voice hailed from above:

"Law—Oh, Mister Law, I say—don't come up—here's a present for you."

Pausing without answer, he looked up. A few drops of water splattered his face, like heavy rain. Almost immediately the blue sky was permanently eclipsed: a heavy cascade of water, almost a solid column, shot down the shaft with terrific force.

Half-drowned and wholly dazed, he felt himself picked up and dragged away from the waterfall.

Then, as his senses cleared, he comprehended the fact that the tunnel was already filling; that where they stood it was already ankle deep; while the water continued to fall without hint of letup.

CHAPTER XLVI.

Flood and Fire.

Screaming to make himself heard above the roar of the deluge, Barcus yammered in Alan's ear:

"That devil! He's found the reservoir—opened the sluiceways—turned it into that shaft! We're done for!"

Alan had no argument with which to gainsay him. Silently getting on his feet, silently he groped for Rose in the darkness, momentarily becoming more dense as the fall of water shut out the light, and drew her away with him, up the slight incline that led back to the bulkhead.

The hour that followed lived ever in his memory as an hour in hell. No ray of hope lightened its impenetrable blackness. He could say nothing to comfort the girl; bravely though she strove to keep up her heart, time and again she shook in his arms like a mad thing, when panic dread caught her by the neck as a terrier catches a rat.

To die there, in the darkness, like so many noxious animals trapped in a well!

The water mounted rapidly. Within five minutes it drove them back to the elbow in the tunnel; within ten it lapped their ankles as they lingered there, doubting which was the greater peril, to advance or to stand fast and let the flooding tide snuff out the fires of life. To return to the neighborhood of the bulkhead was to court the death indicated by the fuse and the keg of blasting powder.

Of a sudden the thought crossed Alan's mind that Marrophat had arranged the latter solely to keep them away from the bulkhead. Now that he thought of it, he felt certain that the powder room had been deliberately disclosed to him by Jimmy.

Probably, then, the keg and fuse were but stage properties—or possibly.

Whether or no, was death in one form preferable to the other? He was decidedly of the opinion that it were better to be extinguished once and for all time, in the space of a second, annihilated by an explosion, than to die thus lingeringly.

On this consideration, he drew Rose with him back to the bulkhead.

When they had been some fifteen minutes beside the bulkhead, the water mounted the head of a slight rise perhaps ten feet behind them, and poured down in ever deeper volume to back up against the barrier.

It was waist deep, however, before they retreated to the head of that rise.

Half an hour later it was waist deep there, on the highest spot in the tunnel.

In fifteen minutes more it had reached their chins. And they stood with head against the roof of the tunnel.

Holding Rose close to him, Alan kissed her lips, that were as cold as death.

Then, fumbling under water, he found the hand of the man at his side. The water lapped his lips like a blind hand.

In the tunnel that branched off from the main shaft, beyond the bulkhead, some thirty minutes before this juncture, a candle had guttered in its stick.



Alan Negotiates for the Burros.

left carelessly thrust into the wall by Marrophat's lieutenant, and guttering, had dropped a flaming wick into a little heap of bone-dry debris. This last flamed, licked hungrily at the timbering that upheld the falls of the tunnel. The timbering caught fire without delay. In a space of time lacerably brief the flames were spreading right and left, the tunnel was a vault of blistering fury.

As Alan said his last mute farewell to Rose and Barcus, the fire spread out in the bottom of the shaft and invaded the powder room.

Alan had guessed aright at Marrophat's design; the keg of blasting powder was less than an eighth full; its explosion could not possibly have effected the cave-in Alan had at first feared.

But what Marrophat had overlooked was the proximity to the keg of some several sticks of dynamite, masked by a film of earth that had fallen from the crumbling walls.

When the blazing fuse dropped sparks into the blasting powder this last exploded right willingly and the dynamite took its cue without the least delay.

The resultant detonation was terrific. The bulkhead was crushed in like an eggshell barrier. Part of the walls fell in, but the tunnels and shaft remained intact. The released flood streamed out and spread swiftly to the farthest recesses of the burning tunnel. Dense clouds of steam filled that place of terror as the fires were extinguished.

Swept with the stream as it poured out of the tunnel, Alan contrived throughout to retain his hold round the waist of Rose. Barcus shot past him unseen in the darkness. It was not until Alan had contrived to catch an unburned timber and stay himself and his almost witless burden beneath the mouth of the shaft that he discovered Barcus alive, if almost unrecognizable in his mask of mold and soot, battling back toward the shaft against the kneedeep tide.

Half-blinded and stifled as he was by the reek of steam and powder fumes, Alan struggled with himself until his wits were passably clear.

Immediately before him dangled the hoisting bucket and rope.

Surrendering the care of Rose to Barcus, Alan climbed into the bucket and stared upward, examining the walls of the shaft for a way to the top.

There was none other than the most difficult; gaps too great to be bridged by climbing showed in the wooden ladders.

The one feasible route was via the rope. And there was nobody at the top to work the windlass—and Alan hoped there would be nobody to oppose his essay.

He addressed himself to the task without murmuring—lifted himself upon the rope, wound it round one leg, and began that heartbreaking climb.

How he accomplished it he never knew. That it must be accomplished was his one, all-absorbing thought. And somehow, by some almost superhuman effort, it was eventually accomplished.

He arrived at the top of the shaft far too exhausted to show surprise when, falling in half-fainting condition within two feet of the brink, he saw Judith Trine running like mad across the clearing.

But without her aid he would not within hours have been able to work the windlass and lift Rose and Barcus to the surface.

There Are Three Full Days Left

In which to avail yourself of the great bargains offered in **Our Removal Sale**

Christmas has come and gone and the holiday shoppers have been satisfied.

There remains in our large stock of seasonable goods almost countless articles that it will pay you well to investigate during these final days of the best value giving sale Kinston has ever experienced

Come Tuesday Wednesday and Thursday

J. M. Stephenson THE LADIES' STORE



Better Light and More of It

KEROSENE light is best for young and old eyes alike. **Rayo LAMPS** give you kerosene light at its best—a steady, generous glow that reaches every corner of the room.

The **RAYO** does not smoke or smell. It is made of solid brass, nickel-plated. It is easy to light, easy to clean, easy to rewick. At dealers everywhere.

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We have moved into our new place of business opposite Free Press Office and are better prepared than ever to supply your wants in **PLUMBING**. We are also agents for the best awning mace. Special attention given to repair work.

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OUR WEEKLY LIMERICK

We know of a farmer, by the name of McWade, Who long, has found this, a good place to trade.



HE HAS BEEN COMING TO **OUR STORE** FOR—YEARS OR MORE.

And as yet, he has never been "held up", or "waylaid" WE PRIDE OURSELVES ON **An Established Reputation for Fair Dealing** We handle a good quality of Goods, marked with a fair margin of profit. **We Guarantee Everything Exactly as Represented** Stand ready to make right that which is not right **AND SOLICIT YOUR TRADE**

D. V. DIXON & SON

We Lead --- Others Follow

At this great **GOING OUT OF BUSINESS SALE** you can find anything you wish that will be suitable for **HIS or HER CHRISTMAS GIFT**. Why pay more, when you can buy the same goods here for less money. **We are positively going out of business and everything must be sold by JANUARY 1st.**

M. Adler & Sons

Millinery-- Ribbons-- Embroidery-- Handkerchiefs-- Hat Pins--

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Caswell Building

WANT ADS
1 CENT A WORD EACH INSERTION
MINIMUM 15 CENTS

FOR RENT—Store on North street, next to corner store occupied by Harvey Hines. N. J. Rouse. 12-22-d-tf

JAMES G. MEHEGAN, Piano Tuner, Phone 184 or address J. H. Dawson. 12-22-5t-dly*

A. E. POOLE, at Hyatt House—Typewriters Cleaned, Repaired and adjusted. Charges reasonable; work guaranteed. Phone 67. 12-28-1t-dly*

WANTED—Position by Stenographer with six years' experience, by first of year. Address J. B., care Free Press. 12-28-3t-dly

FOR RENT—January 1st, my house, on North College street. All modern conveniences. D. F. Jarman. 12-22-5t-dly*

TO OUR CUSTOMERS—Our store will be closed Monday and Tuesday December 28th and 29th, on account of inventory. L. Harvey & Son Co. 12-21-4t-dly 2t-sw

LOST—Between Snow Hill and Kinston, Umbrella with sterling silver handle. Engraved Helen Montague, Winston Salem, N. C. Reward for return to Leon Sugg. 12-26-6t dly

DON'T FAIL to attend sale of David Craft on December 31, at 10 a. m., at his residence, near Kinston, on Grifton road. Four horses and mules, wagons, carts, corn and hay; also a quantity of farming implements and utensils. 12-24-3t SW-Sat and Wed

FOR SALE—All the old Furniture in postoffice and Federal Building in Raleigh, N. C. Magnificent double and single black walnut, flat top roll top desks, filing cabinets and book cases. Worth a trip to Raleigh to see. Bargains. Koonce Bros., 111 E Hargett street, Raleigh, N. C. 12-26-3t dly

NOTICE

The annual meeting of the shareholders of the First National Bank of Kinston will be held at 3 o'clock p. m., Tuesday, January 12, 1915, at their banking house, for the election of officers and such other business as may properly come before them. D. F. WOOTEN, Cashier. 12-11-1tawk-4wks-dly

Special Reduction SALE

ON ALL MY STOCK OF Hats, Flowers, Feathers, Ribbons, Velvets, Neckwear, Gloves, Hose, Handkerchiefs, Handbags, and Umbrellas.

From Dec. 3 to 25

Mrs. M. L. BRASWELL

SOCIAL And PERSONAL

Miss Louise Ballard is visiting relatives at Trenton.

Miss Carrie Wooten is visiting relatives at Caswell.

Mr. James W. Russ, Jr., is visiting friends in Baltimore, Md.

Mr. Chester A. Walsh returned this morning from Richmond, Va.

Mrs. Dave Oettinger has returned from visiting relatives at Greensboro.

Mr. J. H. Alexander left this morning for Goldsboro on a business trip.

Mrs. Kate Cobb has gone to Tuscarora, where she is visiting her daughter.

Mr. R. L. Crisp left this morning for LaGrange to spend the day on business.

Miss Mabel Brown of Ayden is visiting Mrs. T. R. Lee on West Peyton avenue.

Dr. A. L. Hyatt of Beulaville was a welcome visitor in the city this morning.

Mrs. Charles Davis of Eureka is visiting Mrs. J. F. Davis on East Peyton avenue.

Miss Bertha Johnson of Charlotte is visiting her parents, Mr. and Mrs. H. C. Johnson.

Miss Hulda Slaughter of Goldsboro is visiting Miss Alice Hines on King street.

Miss Addie Byrd of Washington, N. C. is visiting Miss Annie Lee Scott, in the city.

Mrs. A. J. Kilpatrick and daughter, Miss Kate, have returned from visiting relatives at Cove City.

Misses Carlotta Mewborn and Carrie Beasley have gone to Bonneton, where they are visiting friends.

Mr. James M. Hines of Greensboro has returned to his home after a visit in the city to his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Lovitt Hines.

Mrs. R. A. Lomax returned to her home in Goldsboro Sunday evening after a visit in the city to her parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Russ.

Sutton—Skinner.

Mr. Thomas W. Sutton and Miss Genevieve Skinner, young people of the city, were married at the home of Magistrate H. C. V. Peebles, on King street, Sunday evening, Mr. Peebles officiating.

Double Wedding in Hotel Tull Sunday Afternoon.

Sunday afternoon at 4 o'clock two couples were married at the same time by Pastor Bernard P. Smith. The same ceremony was used for both couples until the vows were reached. These having been taken by each individual separately, the ceremony was resumed in its application to all. The parties married were Miss Lovetta Jones to Mr. R. Lee Hill, and Miss Floreand Jones to Mr. C. Oscar Dawson. The brides are sisters. They are natives of Georgia, but have been attending school for several years at Dawson. Mr. Hill is a farmer, living near Dawson, and Mr. Dawson is a resident of this city, in the employ of the county. Both couples will live in the city for the present.

Speaker Clark's Daughter Engaged.

Washington, Dec. 27.—Speaker Champ Clark and Mrs. Clark tonight announced the engagement of their daughter, Miss Genevieve to James M. Thomson, editor of the New Orleans Item. The wedding will take place in the spring or early summer at the Clark home in Bowling Green, Mo.

Children Cry FOR FLETCHER'S CASTORIA

NOTICE OF EXECUTOR'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

The undersigned Executors of Dock Wallace, deceased, will, on Monday, January 4, 1915, at the hour of 12 o'clock m., at the Court House door in Kinston, North Carolina, sell at public outcry to the highest bidder for cash, the following described lot of land, situated in the City of Kinston, on Lenoir street and the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad, fronting about 121 feet on Lenoir street.

This 9th day of December, 1914.

NEAL WALLACE

CATHERINE WALLACE

Executors of Dock Wallace, deceased.

ROUSE & LAND,