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ON TUESDAY, DEC. 13th, 1910, beginning at 10 a. m., I will sell at public auction to the highest bidder for cash, the following: 2 Wagons, 1 Buggy, some farming tools, household and kitchen furniture, mules and horses, corn, roughness, hogs, etc. One and 1-2 miles east of Bessemer City, the Pink Fronberger place.
GEO. A. GOLD.

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Notice to Tax-Payers

I will be at the following places on the dates named for the purpose of collecting your taxes. You had better pay your tax now and save the costs.

- Gastonia, City Hall, Saturday, December 3rd, all day.
- Gastonia, City Hall, Saturday, December 10th, all day.
- Cherryville, Hendricks-Harrelson's Store, Thursday, December 15th, 9 a. m. to 3:30 p. m.
- Mount Holly, Cannon-Torrence Co's. Store, Friday, December 16th, 9 a. m. to 3 p. m.
- Gastonia, City Hall, Saturday, December 17th, all day.
- Belmont, Drug Store, Monday, December 19th, 9 a. m. to 3 p. m.
- Bessemer City, Drug Store, Tuesday, December 20th, 9 to 3:30 p. m.
- Stanley, Carpenter's Store, Wednesday, December 21st.

You had better meet me and pay your taxes. This is my third and last round, all that the law requires. I will be at Dallas on all other days except those named above.

T. E. SHUFORD

Sheriff Gaston County.

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The mid-winter meeting of the North Carolina Press Association will be held January 30-31 at Winston-Salem. A feature of the meeting will be a trip in a special car over the So tabound Railway from the Twin-City to Charleston, S. C.

A sensation was sprung last Friday at the annual session of the North Carolina Conference of the Southern Methodist Church at Elizabeth City when a letter was read from Rev. L. N. Booth, of the Chowan circuit, acknowledging that he had misappropriated missionary and conference funds amounting to about \$200, that he had fled to New Jersey and could not return the money. Charges were preferred against him and a trial was ordered.

The SILVER HORDE

By REX BEACH.

Author of "The Spoilers" and "The Barrier"

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CHAPTER IX.

CHERRY the next day demonstrated her power over all sorts and conditions of men by reducing the blase young clubman to a state of grinning admiration. "Fingerless" Fraser alone had been missing from the coterie. He had discovered them from a distance, to be sure, and came over to exchange greetings with Cherry, but the disastrous result of the fellow's garrulity was still so fresh in Boyd's mind that he could not invite him to join them, and Fraser, with singular modesty, had quickly withdrawn, to wander lonesomely for awhile till sheer ennui drove him to bed. His dejection awakened little sympathy in Boyd, who felt happier for the removal of his irritating presence.

In the morning Boyd was brought sharply back to a realization of his difficult position by a letter from Mildred Wayland.

"Father and I had another scene over you," wrote Mildred. "It was the first quarrel we ever had, and I'm half sick as a result. I simply can't bear that sort of thing, and we have agreed to drop the subject. What roused him to such a sudden fury I'm sure I don't know."

Boyd knew, however, and the knowledge did not add to his comfort. It seemed, indeed, as if the trust's enmity had marked him in the eyes of the whole financial world. He was again denied assistance at the banks, and this time in a manner to show him the futility of further effort.

In his perplexity he turned naturally to Cherry, who listened to his tale of repeated failure with furrowed brows, pondering the matter as seriously as if the responsibility had been her own. "The battle has begun sooner than I expected," she said at length. "I never dreamed they could fix the banks so quickly."

"Somehow I can't believe this is the work of the trust people. I don't see how they could accomplish so much in so short a time. Why, it came like a thunderclap."

"I hope I am wrong," she answered, "but something unexpected must have happened to change Mr. Hilliard's attitude. What could it be except pressure from higher sources?"

"Has he dropped any hint before you?"

"Not a hint. He wouldn't let go of anything. Why, he is too close fist to drop his 'r's.'"

"Will you take dinner with me this evening so that we can talk over any further developments?"

"I am to dine with Mr. Hilliard," said the girl.

"Oh!" Boyd's tone of disappointment seemed disproportionate to the occasion. He endeavored to disguise his feeling by saying lightly: "You are breaking into exclusive circles. He lives in quite a palace, I am told."

"I—I'm not dining at his home," Cherry hesitated, and Boyd flashed a sharp glance at her. A faint color flushed her cheeks as she explained, "He could not see me at the office today, so he arranged for me to take dinner with him."

"I see," Boyd detected a note hither to strange in his own voice. "I am going to try the Tacoma banks tomorrow. Would you like to run over with me in the morning? The sound trip is beautiful."

"I would love to," she exclaimed. "I may have something to report if I can make Mr. Hilliard talk."

"Out of curiosity, I should like to know what influenced him. I'll call for you in time for the 9 o'clock boat," he added as he arose to go. "Meanwhile if you get a hint from Hilliard it may be useful."

Cherry had finished her breakfast next morning when he called and was awaiting him, clad in a brown velvet suit which set off her trim figure with all the effectiveness of skillful tailoring. She was as perfect to the eye as the morning itself.

"Well, did Hilliard expose the hidden mysteries of the banking system?" he questioned as they walked down toward the water front.

"He did. It is no mystery at all now."

"Then it was that newspaper story that frightened him?"

"Indirectly perhaps. He didn't mention it."

"What did he say?"

"Nothing!"

"Nothing! Then how?"

"He informed me that you are engaged to marry Miss Wayland."

"Yes. But what did he say about the loan?"

"Only what I have told you. The rest is easy. Had you been less secretive I would have known instantly whom to blame for this trouble. Wayne Wayland and Willis Marsh are working double, and inasmuch as you are persona non grata—"

"Who told you I am persona non grata?"

"You told me yourself without intending to. Please give me credit for some shrewdness. If you had been a welcome suitor you would have had no difficulty in raising twice \$200,000 in Chicago. Then, too, I remember the story you told me at Kalvik, your mental attitude—many things, in fact. Oh, it was very simple."

"Well, what of it? What has all that got to do with my present difficulty?"

"Listen! You want to marry the daughter of the greatest trust builder in the country, and he doesn't want you for a son-in-law. You undertake an enterprise which seriously threatens his financial interests, and if successful in that you could defy his opposition in the other matter. Now, all goes well until he learns of your plans, then he strikes with his own weapons. A word here and there, a hint to the banks, and your fine castle comes tumbling down about your ears. I thought you had more perception."

"We haven't figured Marsh in at all," he said tentatively.

"He figures nevertheless, as I intend to show you today. To begin with, please notice that unobtrusive man in the gray suit. Not now! Don't look around for a minute. You will see him on the opposite side of the street."

Boyd turned, to observe a rat faced fellow across the way, evidently bound for the Tacoma boat.

"Is he following us?"

"I see him everywhere I go."

Boyd's face clouded angrily, at which Cherry exclaimed, "Now, for heaven's sake, don't mimic Big George or we'll never learn anything."

"I won't stand for a spy," he growled.

Finally the girl said, "You really do care a great deal for Miss Wayland, don't you?"

His only answer was a deep breath and a slow turning of the head, but once she had seen the look in his eyes she needed no other. She could only say: "I hope she is worthy of all she is causing you to suffer, Boyd. So few of us are."

She did not speak again, but in her heart was a great heaviness. They reached the dock and lost sight of the spy, only to have him reappear soon after the boat cleared, and, while neither spoke of it, they felt his presence during the whole trip.

At Tacoma Boyd left her to go about his business, but joined her later at lunch, with the joyful announcement: "I've had better luck this time. They said there would be no difficulty whatever in handling the matter, and they are to let me know definitely tomorrow."

"Did Hawkshaw bound you to the bank?" she inquired.

"I rather think so."

"Then tomorrow will tell the tale."

"You mean the bank will turn me down?"

"Yes, if I've sized up the situation correctly. I dare say these banks are as cautious as those in Seattle, and a few words over the telephone would do the trick."

"I'm inclined to give that shadow a little personal attention," the young man mused, but when she questioned him he only smiled and assured her of his caution.

Again on the return trip they discovered the fellow among the passengers. Cherry noticed as they reached the dock that while Emerson maintained a flow of conversation his eyes were constantly upon the fellow's back and that he kept a position close to his shoulder, regardless of jostling from the others. She could not tell what this foreboded, nor did she gain a hint of Boyd's purpose until the gangplank was in place and they were out upon it. A narrow space separated the boat from the dock. As they crossed this Boyd slipped and half fell on the slanting planks. He lunged violently against the man in gray, who was next him. It occurred with the suddenness of pure accident, and the next she saw was the stranger plunging downward along the piling, clutching wildly at the vessel's side, while Boyd clung to the guard rope as if about to lose his balance.

The man's cry as he struck the water alarmed the crowd and caused a momentary stampede, in which Cherry and Boyd were thrust shoreward, but the confusion quickly subsided as an officer swung a heaving line to the gasping creature beneath. A moment later the batless spy was dragged to the dock, indignant and sputtering.

"I'm very sorry, sir," Boyd apologized profusely. "It was all my fault. The plank was steep, and I was forced

off my feet. Whenever I'm followed too closely I lose my head. It's a weakness I have."

The man was still too unmannered by his cold immersion to do more than chatter angrily. In the hubbub Emerson led his companion out into the street, where she beheld him shaking with suppressed laughter.

"Boyd," she cried in a shocked voice, "then it was. You—you might have killed him! Suppose his head had struck a timber!"

"Yes, that would have been too bad," he declared. Then, at the sight



"I'M VERY SORRY, SIR"

of her face, his chuckle changed to a wolfish snarl. "He'll know enough to keep away from me hereafter."

"Don't! Don't! I never saw you look so. Why, it might have been murder!"

"Well?" He stared at her curiously.

"I—I didn't think it of you." She shuddered weakly, but he only shrugged his shoulders and said, with a finality that cut off further discussion: "He's a spy. I won't be spied upon."

When Boyd entered his room at the hotel, whether he had gone after leaving Cherry at Hilliard's bank, Big George greeted him excitedly.

"Here's the dickens to pay. We can't get that barkentine."

"The Margaret? Why not? The charter was all arranged."

"The agent telephoned that we could not have her."

"What reasons did he offer?"

"None. We can't have her, that's all."

"She's the only available ship on the sound. Our stuff will be here in a fortnight."

"Some of it will."

"What do you?"

"Boilers held up."

"Boilers?"

"Yes. Read that." Balt tossed him a telegram.

"Shipment delayed," read Boyd.

"Well, this is growing interesting. Thank heaven, other people handle machinery." He reached for a blank and hurriedly wrote a message canceling his order. "I guess Cherry was right. Marsh is fighting to delay us. He began a recital of the morning's occurrence, but before he had finished he was called to the telephone.

"More bad news," he exclaimed as he re-entered the room. "The Jackson-Nebur company say they can't make delivery of their order. I wonder what next."

"We don't need anything more to cripple us," George declared blankly. "Any one of these blows is a knockout."

It was perhaps an hour later that Cherry entered unannounced.

"I just ran in for a minute to tell you something new. When I came up from the bank the elevator boy at the hotel made a mistake and carried me past my floor. Without noticing the difference, I went down the hall, and whom should I run right in to, coming out of a room, but our detective! As he opened the door I heard him say, 'Very well, sir, I'll report tomorrow.'"

"To whom was he reporting?"

"I don't know. A few minutes later I called you up to tell you about it, but while I was waiting for my number the operator evidently got the wires crossed or left a switch open, for I heard this much of a conversation: 'Our contract covers 50,000 cases at \$5. We thought that was at least 20 cents under the market.'"

"I was about to ring off when I remembered that you had sold your output of 50,000 cases to Bloc & Co. for \$5 a case, so I listened on a chance and heard another voice reply:—"

"Whose voice?"

"I don't know. It said, 'We'll undersell that by \$1.'"

"Good Lord!" said the first speaker. "That means a loss of— And then I was cut off. I thought I'd better come over in person instead of trusting to the wire."

"And you didn't recognize either speaker?"

"No. But I discovered at the office that rooms 610 and 612—the suit I saw that detective coming out of—are occupied by a Mr. Jones of New York, who arrived three days ago. I'll bet anything you please that you'll hear from Bloc & Co. within twenty-four hours and that the occupant of those rooms at the Hotel Buller is Willis Marsh."

Big George began to mutter profanely. "It looks like they had us, and all because Fraser's tongue is hung in the middle."

"All the same, we'll fight it out," said Emerson grimly. "If I can raise that money in Tacoma"— Again the telephone bell buzzed noisily.

"Bloc & Co." predicted Cherry, but for once she was wrong.

"A call from Tacoma," said Boyd, the receiver to his ear: "It must be the Second National. They were not to let me know till tomorrow." Through the open door of the adjoining room

his words came distinctly, while the others listened in tense silence.

"Hello! Yes! This is Boyd Emerson." Then followed a pause, during which the thin, rasping voice of the distant speaker murmured unintelligibly.

"Why not? Can't you give me a reason? I thought you said— Very well, Goodby."

Emerson hung up the receiver carefully and with the same deliberation turned to face his companions. He nodded and spread his hands outward in an unmistakable gesture.

"What, already?" queried the girl.

"They must have been reached by phone."

"That detective may have called Marsh up from there."

"That means it won't do any good to try further in Tacoma. The other banks have undoubtedly been fixed, or they soon will be. If I can slip away undiscovered I'll try Vancouver next, but I haven't much hope."

"It looks bad, doesn't it?" said Cherry.

"As we stand at present," Boyd acknowledged, "we are the owners of a hundred thousand dollars' worth of useless machinery and unsalable supplies."

"And all," mused the girl, "because of a loose tongue and a little type."

(To be Continued.)

Kept the King at Home.

"For the past year we have kept the King of all laxatives—Dr. King's New Life Pills—in our home and they have proved a blessing to all our family," writes Paul Mathulka, of Buffalo, N. Y. Easy, but sure remedy for all Stomach, Liver and Kidney troubles. Only 25c at all Druggists.

An Associated Press dispatch from Slisterville, W. Va., dated December 2nd, says that Mrs. Elizabeth Allen, aged 87, a wealthy widow, was found dead in her home near that place on that day. A large sum of money which she was known to have had in the house was missing and the coroner is of the opinion that she was strangled to death then robbed. Mrs. Allen lived alone and had no cash in banks, keeping all of her money, stocks, etc., in the house.

—Mrs. R. J. Davis and son, Mr. W. Guy Davis, of Clover, S. C., route two, were in the city shopping Saturday.

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