Hidden Ways

By FREDERIC F. VAN DE WATER

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CHAPTER XVI—Continued

—17—

"You're not," Miss Agatha asked slowly, "a very generous young man, are you?"

"I have too little," I told her, still tingling, "to be generous. That, I suppose, is why I fight to keep it. I'm so far beneath the Pagets—"

"Don't talk nonsense," she bade.

I shrugged, deliberately provoking my hurt.

"So much that is—uncomfortable to me, is nonsense to a Paget," I answered.

She grinned mockingly.

"How proletarian! You care less about lifting yourself than pulling others down?"

"Let's drop it," I said and flipped my cigarette into the wastebasket with needless force.

"Willingly," she agreed and laid hold of the rim of her chair's wheels. "Will you stay to lunch, David?"

"No," I said ungraciously, "I have an engagement. With Cochrane of the Press," I added to rub it in.

"I see," said Miss Agatha calmly. "When you come back this afternoon, we'll get the typewriter from the basement. And before you go out, you might see that whatever is kindling in the wastebasket is extinguished. We've enough on our hands without adding arson."

I smelled scorching paper and bent over the basket.

"Annie," said Miss Agatha, moving toward the door, "should have emptied it, but when the police come in the door reason flies out—"

"Wait a minute," I begged. There was a single balled sheet of paper in the wastebasket and the tip of my castaway cigarette lay on it. I picked up the crumpled wad and an odd feeling, half inspiration, half theory, excited me. My fingers trembled as I undid the ball. It was a half-completed letter, broken off in mid-sentence. As I read it I could see Grove, blindly in love as twenty-odd can be, hammering out reproach and devotion to the woman who had not kept their tryst. I could see him look up, where the typing ended, and mark that a window in the Ferriter flat was bright. Ione had returned. She had not failed him. He had torn the paper from the typewriter, cast it into the basket and rushed, headlong, into disaster. I handed the crumpled sheet to Miss Agatha without a word and she, too, read it through before she spoke.

"Poor boy," she said at last, and there was tenderness in her usually brisk voice. "Poor, passionate, foolish Grove."

I had expected something more from her than this, though even to me the missive was more pitiful and less ridiculous than most letters of its sort.

"But don't you see," I asked, "what this means?" She turned toward me and replied with equal tartness.

"See? Of course I see? This is what put my nephew's fingerprints on those typewriter keys. This is the letter he said he had been writing. That note the police found on him was written by Everett, bent on suicide, earlier. This merely proves that Grove has told the truth. It seems more of a surprise to you, David, than it does to me."

She read it over again with a crooked little smile and folded it with gentle hands.

I suggested:

"Shan't we turn it over to Shannon. It proves—"

"Shannon?" she repeated with odd indecision. "I don't know. It seems to me a rather sacred thing. You see, no one ever wrote such a letter to me. Let me think it over, David. We'll talk of it later."

She rolled herself away without another word. I looked at the clock. It was almost time for my appointment with Cochrane.

CHAPTER XVII

The food before us cooled while I talked and Cochrane listened. Like the Ancient Mariner's stooge, Jerry had to take it and like it. I had come to the beanery to Tell All. My mind had been partly laundered by my confession to Miss Agatha. I wanted to complete the cleansing by holding back nothing from Jerry. There was too much darkness for me to increase it by further reticence.

It was bitter, under his mild and trustful regard, to lay bare things I might have told long ago, but I went through with it. I saw his eyebrows go up, and up, as I told of Grove's earlier visit to the Ferriter apartment, of the voice I had heard in Mino's and, finally, of Duke's letter. Then I leaned back, feeling empty but easier and Cochrane looked from me to the salt shaker he fingered.

"Duke," he said, still watching it, "was sore, of course, over the skinning we've handed him. He doesn't know how much worse it might have been, if—" He stuck.

I said, "If I hadn't held out on you. Go ahead and tell me what I am. I won't argue it."

He looked at me again and gave his beaming smile.

"A guy who's That Way is never quite normal. I might have done worse myself. You have large ideas, Lochinvar."

"Listen," I told him. "I've got one idea. That is to get that noble and highbred sap out of this jam and then fade out of the picture."

"I get you." He grinned. "With a sad renunciatory gesture that will live forever in her memory."

I checked what I started to say.

"Go ahead," I answered. "Rub it in. I rate it."

He still played with the shaker. He asked at last:

"So the old lady didn't have Winterbottom show you the door?"

"No. All I have to do is help her get her nephew out of the coop and substitute the murderer."

"Which should keep you busy," Jerry said, "at least until day after tomorrow. Would you like any help?"

I did not understand him.

"I mean," he went on, "is this just a personal or a professional conference? Do I forget all you've told me, or do we work it out together?"

His generosity threw me off balance.

"If you still want me to play ball with you," I began, "after—"

"I don't quite see how I'm to finish it off solo."

He seemed relieved and went on more briskly.

"Since we're still accomplices, I've got something to show you."

He pulled from his pocket a creased and glazed placard, bearing the picture of four men in tights and spangles, posed beneath a good deal of dangling cordage. Below the half-tone was the legend "The Four

I picked up the crumpled wad.

Flying Ferriters." Cochrane gave it to me and said:

"Handle it gently. I got it from Henkel, old-time vaudeville agent, and I've got to return it. Recognize anyone?"

I did and started to speak. I looked more closely and at last faced Jerry's expectant grin.

"Either of the two middle ones," I said at last, "could have been Lyon Ferriter, ten years ago."

"Excellent, Watson," Cochrane crooned. "My own idea. The one on the left, Henkel tells me, was Lyon Ferriter. His neighbor was his cousin, Andrew Horstman. The other Ferriters were named Levine and Pappas. They were semi-headliners in the old two-a-day era."

"Proving what?" I asked him, folding the placard carefully and returning it.

"Not a thing in the world," Jerry answered, "except that your friend used to be the daring young man on the flying trapeze. Henkel has the memory of an elephant but even he doesn't know what happened next. He does say that Lyon and his cousin were very intelligent, for acrobats. When the movies ruined Art, and the Four Flying Ferriters flew apart, Henkel thinks that Horstman went into acting and played in stock for a while and that Lyon went to Alaska."

"Part of which," I told him, "checks."

"It does more than that," Cochrane drawled with the sleepy air that was his mask for excitement. "It practically proves that the Horstman who joined the Ferriters, Lyon and Ione, in their honky-tonk, or whatever, in Alaska was their cousin. And he, if you recall, went out looking for gold with them. They found it and lost Horstman. He never came back."

"Well?" I asked, at last, for he seemed to have run down, yet I knew the pause was for dramatic effect.

"Neither," Cochrane crooned, "did Lyon and Ione."

He beamed.

I said, "All right; spring it."

"They never came back to their cozy little shack," Jerry went on. "That's pure Robert Service, eh? Ione and her brother showed up the following spring in Fairbanks, which is a considerable hike from Tanana Crossing, where their place stood.

"They claimed that Horstman got lost in a blizzard and he wasn't there to say he didn't. They had samples with them that started a stampede. Lyon went in with it and sold his claim. When he came back, he and sister went down-river, took steamer for the states and vanished. They left so fast, they forgot to do anything about the dump at Tanana Crossing. This was sold last year for taxes. And, thanks to the assiduous Fairbanks correspondent of the Press, there you are."

"Where?" I asked.

Cochrane chuckled.

"It all adds up," he admitted, "to whatever you choose to make it. It's background on the guy you and the old gal have elected murderer, anyway."

I said, "It's also a problem in relationship. Everett used to be a Horstman. Then he wasn't brother to Lyon and Ione. He may have been—"

I bogged down.

"Brother or something to the Horstman the blizzard is alleged to have abolished," Cochrane finished for me. "It'll take a genealogist to figure it out, eh? And the authority on the subject broke his neck last night. That's too bad. We need him."

"No," I told him, "what we really need is Lyon's weakness. That's what Miss Agatha Paget wants."

I went over my recent talk with her. Cochrane ate and then forgot his food to sit listening, apparently half asleep.

"You know," he said when I ended, "that's a pretty unusual crone. I'd like to meet her."

"Why not?" I asked.

He had been too generous for me to hold back now. The question shook him out of his drowsiness.

"Do you mean it?"

"I'll phone and see," I said, rising. "But you'll have to keep her out of the papers."

"Oke," Jerry beamed. "It'll be enough of a thrill just to get inside the Morello."

At the telephone, I told Miss Agatha I was bringing Cochrane up to see her. If I had asked permission, I think she might have forbidden it, but I followed up with persuasion and reassurance until she consented and promised at my suggestion to clear our way through the hostile lobby. She was in the workroom when we entered. She seemed relieved that Jerry had neither horns nor tail and welcomed him serenely. I had grown accustomed to the spirit that dwelt intact in that crippled body, but Cochrane was a little dazed.

The tea-wagon, glass and bottle laden, stood beside the old lady's wheel chair.

"One of the few perquisites of age," Miss Agatha told us briskly, "is liquor. I hope you drink, Mr. Cochrane?"

"Only," he said solemnly, "in my social moments."

Miss Agatha's face changed and she glanced at me. She picked her words:

"I had understood that this was a social call."

"It is," Jerry told her, and she chuckled as she reached for the glasses.

We talked and sipped our highballs. I watched Cochrane's reticence melt, and saw the old lady's stiff face relax. Presently, with his doubt completely gone, Jerry was telling her in a low intimate voice all he had learned from Henkel and the Press' Fairbanks correspondent, of Lyon's past. Miss Agatha heard him through, with slowly narrowing eyes. She surveyed the placard Cochrane showed her and looked at it so long that Jerry repeated:

"Ferriter is the second man from the left."

This seemed to rouse her.

"Yes," she said with forced briskness, "yes, I see," and threw off whatever odd abstraction had held her. "He and his neighbor look much alike. So he's the one who went with his beloved sister to the Arctic. I don't think I'm over-inhospitable in wishing they'd stayed there."

"Is she," Cochrane asked suddenly, "his 'beloved sister'?"

Miss Agatha looked at him hard before she spoke.

"I've seen no birth certificates," she replied tartly, "but there certainly is a family resemblance. And he is utterly devoted to her. If he were less so, my nephew mightn't be in jail at the moment."

"Because," Cochrane went on, "I gather from our Fairbanks man—I wish I'd brought along that dispatch—that they quarreled a good deal while they were living at Tanana Crossing."

"Pooh," said Miss Agatha, "brothers and sisters always quarrel. She was good-looking, in a region of few women, and he probably was jealous."

"Our correspondent's idea," Jerry answered, "is just the opposite. He wires that Lyon objected because she wasn't attentive enough to customers. After Horstman arrived, there was a blow-up. He and Lyon had a fight. That was just before the three of them went prospecting."

"And Horstman didn't come back," Miss Agatha thought aloud, and was silent for an instant. "Well," she added, pulling herself together, "Lyon and Ione probably murdered him. There's nothing to compare with a murder as a solvent or maker of trouble."

Yet when Cochrane had gone, that part of his narrative seemed to irritate her. She spoke of it while Annie rolled away the tea-wagon.

"You've seen for yourself," she appealed to me, as though she needed endorsement, "there never was a more devoted brother than Lyon."

I nodded as the bell rang.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

WHO'S NEWS THIS WEEK

By LEMUEL F. PARTON

(Consolidated Features—WNU Service.)

NEW YORK.—Just how far Dr. Arnulfo Arias, new president of Panama, will co-operate with the U. S. A. in defending the Canal Zone has been a topic of considerable argument in the last several weeks, some of it out in the open. Several correspondents have flicked the president with charges of Fascist leanings and have quoted him as saying that any grants for naval bases would not of necessity be limited to the United States. Not necessarily as a riposte to these thrusts, he now pledges co-operation with his northern neighbor, but makes certain qualifications. He proposes to abandon no sovereignty and demands "understanding and unselfishness from the United States." Which seems fair enough at this distance.

Cuban Allegiance To Hemisphere Is Bit Dubious

President Arias, son of a wealthy cattle-raiser, attended Hartwick college, Oneonta, N. Y., took a bachelor of science degree at the University of Chicago, and a medical degree at Harvard. He began practice as a surgeon, but was diverted to politics in 1931, being in the diplomatic service at Paris and Rome. At the age of 39, he is the youngest chief executive in Latin-America.

One cause of much pulling and hauling over the president's political leanings was the new constitution which he promulgated within 17 days of his election last fall. It withdrew citizenship from about 90,000 non-Spanish speaking Panamanians, many from the West Indies, and left them without a country. It extended the powers of the state in the expropriation of property; and the president, in decreeing its adoption, said it would provide "state socialism consonant with new social movements." This take-off, with many later references to a "disciplined people" stirred, possibly irresponsible, talk of foreign derivation of the new constitution.

Good - looking, handsomely tailored, a facile orator, Dr. Arias was elected by the largest majority ever given a Panamanian president. Washington has shown no official concern over the liberal and left charges of doubtful allegiance.

JOHN P. FREY, president of the metal trades department of the A. F. of L., announces the "no strike" and full co-operation policy of his organization in the national defense effort. Mr. Frey, one of the most eminent of the elder statesmen of the labor movement, is, like Ernest Bevin of England, a staunch conservative who has cracked down on the left-wingers and has singled out radicals, rather than employers as the most dangerous foes of labor.

Metal Workers' Chief Is Firm for Labor Status Quo

When the C. I. O. was established he raked John L. Lewis as "a tool of Moscow" and never ceased firing until Mr. Lewis' withdrawal. It is understood that his animus is considerably less toward Philip Murray, Mr. Lewis' successor, and the more optimistic among labor critics and onlookers see hope of peace, under the unifying stress of the defense call. Mr. Frey has great influence in the A. F. of L. and his metal trade workers, nearly a million of them, are in a key spot.

White-haired, baldish, clerical in appearance, facile in speech and a ready writer and controversialist, Mr. Frey is a veteran jouster in many wordy tournaments in which he has expounded the old-line Sam Gompers gospel of labor paddling its own canoe and not getting caught in any errant political or intellectual drifts.

Gompers repeatedly warned labor to fight shy of governmental entanglements, and Mr. Frey has carried on from where he left off. This drive has brought him into some violent collisions with the New Deal labor program. He has vigorously assailed the Labor Relations board and the wages and hours act.

Mr. Frey has been known as a "labor educator" for many years. Among the half-dozen books and scores of labor tracts and pamphlets that he has written, there is only one that deviates from orthodox conservative opinion, "Bankers' Domination," written in 1933 and charging the depression to the bankers. He is 70 years old. He was editor of the Molders' Journal from 1903 to 1927. He has lectured on trade unionism at the University of Chicago, and was president of the Ohio State Federation of Labor from 1924 to 1928.

(Released by Western Newspaper Union.)

BACK IN 1876, U. S. MONEY ALSO WENT SOUTH-AMERICAN

THE UNITED STATES government, through the Import and Export Bank, loaned the Brazilian government fifty million dollars. With a portion of that loan Brazil will pay two American firms, using American materials, for rehabilitating and electrifying a part of the railways of Brazil. In time the American government will get its money back through taxes paid by the contracting firms and those employed by them in this country, and in other ways. The system is all too complicated for us ordinary mortals to understand, but it is the process through which creditor nations, of which we are now the greatest, encourage foreign trade.

"None of the American money put into the attempt to build the first railroad in South America ever came back," explained J. P. Clark, believed to be the only man now living who participated in that ill-fated project.

To his cronies in the Adventurers' Club of Chicago, he is known as "Dad" Clark. The expedition, of which he was a member, left Philadelphia in 1876, bound for the headwaters of the Madeira river, to build a railroad around the falls and rapids along the border between Brazil and Bolivia. Of the 941 men in the expedition, 250 died as victims of jungle fever or the poisoned arrows of Bolivian head-hunting Indians. The project was bankrupt before the road was completed. Another American expedition finished the job in 1912, with American capital. It is a narrow gauge and its one train makes one round trip over its 225 miles of track each week.

Mason Warner, a Chicago advertising executive, made a trip over the line this past summer and brought back movies to show "Dad" Clark the railroad he helped build.

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'STRAY CATS' TOO HAVE THEIR DAY

IN THE HOOVER-ROOSEVELT campaign of 1932, Gov. Henry Allen of Kansas headed the Republican publicity department. At the opening of the campaign he was quoted as saying, "the party would not seek, did not need or want, the support of the rural press."

Early in September of that year that statement was being discussed by a group of rural newspaper men in a Chicago hotel. Ollie Little of the Alma (Kan.) Record expressed the predicament in which rural Republican editors found themselves.

"Politically, we are a bunch of stray cats, with no place to hole in," said Little.

Two days later that statement and the reason for it was expressed to President Hoover. He took immediate steps to correct the situation by directing Everett Saunders, the national Republican chairman, to communicate with all rural newspapers and seek their support.

In the recent campaign, the Republicans created a rural press section, under the direction of Herman Roe, editor of the Northfield (Minn.) News. Serious consideration is now being given to making the rural press section a permanent feature of the Republican committee organization. The statement about "political stray cats" made by Ollie Little back in 1932 started the recognition of the rural press as a medium which molds public opinion in America.

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MORE PRODUCTION, NOT MORE COST

WHEELER McMILLEN, editor of Farm Journal, tells me that while running a weekly newspaper at Covington, Ind., he learned practical economics was the application of horse sense to a problem.

I am not an economist, but it looks to me that America is forcing inflation by attempting to force prices beyond their intrinsic value.

If we get two dollars instead of one, but must spend the two dollars to buy what we formerly bought with one, what have we gained?

It does not even take "horse sense" to realize it is much easier to increase outgo than to increase income.

American prosperity will be measured by production of things people want, more than by charging higher and still higher prices for the things produced.

Forcing prices beyond a point that represents intrinsic value creates a demand for more and cheaper money. More and cheaper money represents the first steps in inflation. Extreme inflation means individual and national bankruptcy.

That is a bit of Wheeler McMillen's "horse sense" economics.

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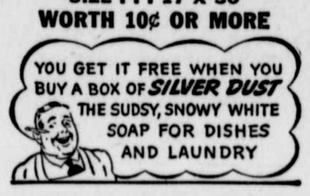
JOY OF JOURNALISM

HON. GUY U. HARDY is editor and publisher of the Canon City (Colo.) Daily Record. He was nominated for, and elected to congress in 1918. It was my privilege to be the first to advise him of his nomination by a Republican convention, a nomination he did not seek and did not want. He continued as an influential member of congress for 12 years. Now he finds more pleasure in running his small city daily than he found in Washington.

Work Lives On

Man's actions here are of definite moment to him and never die or end at all; man with his little life, reaches upwards high as heaven, downward low as hell, and in his three score years of time holds an eternity fearfully and wonderfully hidden.

FREE
AT YOUR GROCER'S
BIG CANNON DISH TOWEL
SIZE . . . 17 X 30
WORTH 10¢ OR MORE



Calm in Danger

True courage is cool and calm. The bravest men have the least bullying insolence, and in the time of danger are found the most serene and free.—Shaftesbury.

The Smoke of Slower-Burning Camels gives you—
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EXTRA COOLNESS
EXTRA FLAVOR
AND—
28% LESS NICOTINE
than the average of the 4 other largest-selling cigarettes tested—less than any of them—according to independent scientific tests of the smoke itself.

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