



LANGFORD OF THE THREE BARS

BY KATE AND VIRGIL D. BOYLES

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Men knew of Kienara Gordon that night that he was a marked man. The secret workings of a secret clan had him on their proscription list. Some one had at last found this unweary and doggedly persistent young fellow in the way. In the way, he was a menace, a danger. He must be removed from out the way. He could not be bought from it—he should be warned from it. So now his home—his work room and his rest room, the first by many hours daily the more in use, with all its furnishings of bachelor plainness and utility, that yet had held a curious charm for some men, friends and cronies like Langford—was burning that he might be warned. Could any one say, "Jesse Black has done this thing?" Would he not bring down proof of guilt by a retaliation struck too soon? It would seem as if he were anticipating an unfavorable verdict. So men reasoned. And even then they did not arise to stamp out the evil that had endured and hugged itself and spit out corruption in the cattle country. That was reserved for another.

They talked of a match thrown down at the court-house by a tramp, likely—when it was past midnight, when the fire broke out with the wind a piercing gale, and when no vagrant but had long since left such cold comfort and had slept these many weeks in sunnier climes. Some argued that the windows of the court-room might have been left open and the stove blown down by the wind tearing through, or the stove door might have been blown open and remains of the fire been blown out, or the pipe might have fallen down. But it was a little odd that the same people said Dick Gordon's office likely caught fire from flying sparks. Dick's office was two blocks to westward of the court-house and it would have been a brave spark and a lively one that could have made headway against that northwester.

CHAPTER XIX.

The Escape.

The little county seat awoke in the morning to a strange sight. The storm had not abated. The wind was still blowing at blizzard rate off the northwest hills, and fine, icy snow was swirling so thickly through the cold air that vision was obstructed. Building were distinguishable only as shadows showing faintly through a heavy white veil. The thermometer had gone many degrees below the zero mark. It was steadily growing colder. The older inhabitants said it would surely break the record the coming night.

An immense fire had been built in the sitting-room. Thither Mary and Louise repaired. Here they were joined by Dale, Langford and Gordon. "You should be out at the ranch looking after your poor cattle, Mr. Langford," said Mary, smilingly. She could be light-hearted now—since a little secret had been whispered to her last night at a tea party where no tea had been drunk. Langford had gravitated toward her as naturally as steel to a magnet. He shrugged his big shoulders and laughed a little.

"The Scribe will do everything that can be done. Honest, now, did you think this trial could be pulled off without me?"

"But there can be no trial to-day." "Why not?"

"Did I dream the court-house burned last night?"

"If you did, we are all dreamers alike."

"Then how can you hold court?" "We have gone back to the time when church and state were one and inseparable, and court convenes at 10 o'clock sharp in the meeting-house," he said.

Louise was looking white and miserable. "You are not contemplating running away, are you?" asked Gordon. "This is unusual weather—really."

She looked at him with a pitiful smile.

"I should like to be strong and brave and enduring and capable—like Mary. You don't believe it, do you? It's true, though. But I can't. I'm weak and homesick and cold. I ought not to have come. I am not the kind. You said it, you know. I am going home just as soon as this court is over. I mean it."

There was no mistaking that. Gordon bowed his head. His face was white. It had come sooner than he had thought.

All the records of the work yesterday had been burned. There was nothing to do but begin at the beginning again. It was discouraging, uninteresting. But it had to be done. Dale refused positively to adjourn. The jurymen were all here. So the little frame church was bargained for. If the fire-bugs had thought to postpone events—to gain time—by last night's work, they would find themselves very greatly mistaken. The church was long and narrow like a country school-house, and rather roomy considering the size of the town. It had precise windows—also like a country school-house—four on the west side, through which the fine snow was drifting, four opposite. The storm kept few at home with the exception of the people from across the river. There were

enough staying in the town to fill the room to its utmost limits. Standing room was at a premium. The entry was crowded. Men not able to get in ploughed back through the cutting wind and snow only to return presently to see if the situation had changed any during their brief absence. So all the work of yesterday was gone over again.

So close was the pack of people that the fire roaring in the big stove in the middle of the room was allowed to sink in smouldering quiet. The heavy air had been unbearable else. The snow that had been brought in on tramping feet lay in little melted pools on the rough flooring. Men forgot to eat peanuts and women forgot to chew their gum—except one or two extremely nervous ones whose jaws moved the faster under the stimulus of hysteria. Jesse Black was telling his story.

"Along toward the 1st of last July, I took a hike out into the Indian country to buy a few head o' cattle. I trade considerable with the half-breeds around Crow creek and Lower Brule. They're always for sellin' and if it comes to a show-down never haggle much about the lure—it all goes for snake-juice anyway. Well, I landed at John Yellow Wolf's shanty along about noon and found there was others ahead of me. Yellow Wolf always was a popular cuss. There was Charlie Nightbird, Pete Monroe, Jesse Big Cloud and two or three others whose mugs I did not happen to be onto. After our feed, we all strolled out to the corral. Yellow Wolf said he had bought a likely little bunch from some English feller who was skipping the country—starved out and homesick—and hadn't put 'em on the range yet. He said J R was the English feller's brand. I didn't suspicion no underhand dealin's. Yellow Wolf's always treated me white before, so I bargained for this here chap and three or four others and then pulled out for home driving the bunch. They fed at home for a spell and then I decided to put 'em on the range. On the way I fell in with Billy Brown here. He was dead set on havin' the lot to fill in the chinks of the two car loads he was shippin', so I up and lets him have 'em. I showed him this here bill-of-sale from Yellow Wolf and made him out one from me, and that was all there was to it. He rode to Velpen and I turned on my trail."

It was a straight story, and apparently damaging for the prosecution. It corroborated the attestations of other witnesses—many others. It had a plausible ring to it. Two bills of sale radiated atmospheric legality. If there had been dirty work it must have originated with that renegade half-breed, Yellow Wolf. And Yellow Wolf was dead. He had died while serving a term in the penitentiary for cattle rustling. Uncle Sam himself had set the seal upon him—and now he was dead. This insinuated charge he could not answer. The finality of it seemed to set its stamp upon the people gathered there—upon the 12 good men and true, as well as upon others. Yellow Wolf was dead. George Williston was dead. Their secrets had died with them. An inscrutable fate had lowered the veil. Who could pierce it? One might believe, but who could know? And the law required knowledge.

"We will call Charlie Nightbird," said Small, complacently. There was a little waiting silence—a breathless, palpating silence. "Is Charlie Nightbird present?" asked Small, casting rather anxious eyes over the packed, intent faces. Charlie Nightbird was not present. At least he made no sign of coming forward. The face of the young counsel for the state was immobile during the brief time they waited for Charlie Nightbird—whose dark, frozen face at that moment turned toward the cold, sparkling sky, and who would never come, not if they waited for him till the last dread trump of the last dread day.

There was some mistake. Counsel had been misinformed. Nightbird was an important witness. He had been reported present. Never mind. He was probably unavoidably detained by the storm. They would call Jesse Big Cloud and others to corroborate the defendant's statements—which they did, and the story was sustained in all its parts, major and minor. Then the defense rested.

Richard Gordon arose from his chair. His face was white. His lean jaws were set. His eyes were steel. He was anything but a lover now, this man Gordon. Yet the slim little court reporter with dark circles of homesickness under her eyes had never looked him half so well as at this moment. His voice was clear and deliberate.

"Your honor, I ask permission of the court to call a witness in direct testimony. I assure your honor that the state had used all efforts in its power to obtain the presence of this witness before resting its case, but had failed and believed at the time that he could not be produced. The witness is now here and I consider his testimony of the utmost impor-

importance in this case." Counsel for the defendant objected strenuously, but the court granted the petition. He wanted to hear everything that might throw some light on the dark places in the evidence. "I call Mr. George Williston," said Gordon.

Had the strain crazed him? Louise covered her eyes with her hands. Men sat in if dazed. And thus, the cynosure of all eyes—stupefied eyes—Williston of the ravaged Lazy S, thin and worn but calm, natural and scholarly-looking as of old—walked from the little ante-room at the side into the light and knowledge of men once more and raised his hand for the oath. Not until this was taken and he had sat quietly down in the witness chair did the tension snap. Even then men found it difficult to focus their attention on the enormous difference this new witness must make in the case that a few moments before seemed settled.

Mary sat with shining eyes in the front row of wooden chairs. It was no wonder she had laughed and been so gay all the dreary yesterday and all the worse to-day. Louise shot her a look of pure gladness. Small's face was ludicrous in its drop-jawed astonishment. The little lawyer's face was a study. A look of defiance had crept into the defendant's countenance. The preliminary questions were asked and answered. "Mr. Williston, you may state where you were and what you saw on the 14th day of July last."

Williston, the unfortunate gentleman and scholar, the vanquished man, for a brief while the most important man in the county, perhaps, was about to uncover to men's understanding the dark secret hitherto obscured by a cloud of supposition and hearsay. He told the story of his visit to the island, and he told it well.

ing on the attorneys' table and drank a little of it nervously.

"I move," said the little lawyer, "that all this touching upon the personal matter of this witness and having to do with his private quarrels be stricken out of the evidence as not bearing on the case in question."

All in vain. The judge ruled that it did bear on the case, and Williston picked up the thread of his story.

"We rode and rode hard—it must have been hours; daylight was coming before we stopped. Our horses were spent. I had no idea where we were. From the formation of the land, I judged we were not far from the river. We were surrounded by bluffs. I can hardly make you see how clearly this little retreat had been planned. It was in a valley—one of a hundred similar in all essential respects. The gulch at the bottom of the valley was heavily wooded with scrub-oak, cottonwood, woodbine and plum trees, and this tangle of foliage extended for some distance up the sides of the hills. In the midst of this underbrush—a most excellent screen—was a tiny cabin. In this tiny cabin I have lived, a closely watched prisoner, from that day until I escaped."

The defendant stirred a little uneasily. Was he thinking of Nightbird with the dark, frozen face—who had not answered to his call?

"Black left me soon after. He did not unbind me, rather bound me the tighter. There was no one then to watch me. He deigned to inform me that he had found it rather inconvenient to kill me after the relief party rode up, as then there was no absolute surety of his making a clean getaway, and being caught in the act would be bound to be unpleasant, very unpleasant just then, so he had altered his plans a little—for the present. He gave me no hint either that time, nor either of the two times I saw him subsequently, as to what was to be his ultimate disposal of me. I could only suppose that after this trial was well over in his favor, and fear of indictment for arson and murder had blown over—if blow over it did—he would then quietly put an end to me. Dead men tell no tales. The shanty in the gulch did not seem to be much of a rendezvous for secret meetings. I led a lonely existence. My jailers were mostly half-breeds—usually Charlie Nightbird. Two or three times Jake Sanderson was my guard."

Then from the doorway came a loud, clear, resonant voice, a joyful voice, a voice whose tones fairly oozed rapture. "Hellity damn! The Three Bars's gettin' busy, Mouse-hair!" Judge Dale started. He glared angrily in that direction. "Remove that man!" he ordered, curtly. He liked Jim, but he could not brook this crying contempt of court. Jim was removed. He went quietly, but shaking his head reproachfully.

"I never would 'a' thought it o' the judge," he murmured, disconsolately. "I never would 'a' thought it."

There was a movement in the back of the room. A man was making his way out, slipping along, cat-like, trying to evade attention. Quietly Gordon motioned to the sheriff and slipped a paper into his hand.

"Look sharp," he whispered, his steady eyes on the shifty ones of the sheriff. "If you let him get away, just remember the handwriting on the wall. It's our turn now."

Presently there was a slight scuffle by the door and two men quietly left the improvised courtroom.

"Day before yesterday, in the afternoon," continued Williston, "I managed to knock Nightbird down at the threshold as he was about to enter. I had secretly worked a cross-beam from the low, unfinished ceiling. There was nothing else in the room I might use for a weapon. They were very careful. I think I killed him, your honor and gentlemen of the jury. I am not sorry. There was no other way. But I would rather it had been the maker, not the tool. By the time I had made my way back to the Lazy S I was too exhausted to go further; so I crawled over to my neighbors, the Whites, and Mother White made me a shake-down. I lay there, nearly dead, until this morning."

He leaned back wearily. Black stood up. He was not lank nor lazy now, nor shuffling. His body was drawn to its full height. In the instant before the spring, Mary, who was sitting close to the attorneys' table, met his glance squarely. She read there what he was about to do. Only a moment their eyes held each other's but it was time enough for a swift message of understanding, of utter dislike, and of a determined will to defeat the man's purpose, to pass from the accusing brown eyes to the cruel ones of the defendant.

Quick as a flash Black seized the chair upon which he had been sitting, sprang clear of the table and his lawyers, and landed close to Mary's side. With his chair as a weapon, he meant to force his way to the nearest window. Mary's dilated, unhesitatingly she seized the half-emptied glass on the table and dashed the contents full into the prisoner's face. Blinded, he halted a moment in his mad rush. Mary's quick maneuver made Langford's opportunity. He grappled with Black. The crowd went mad with excitement.

(To be continued)

Do you have backache occasionally, or "stitches" in the side, and sometimes do you feel all tired out, without ambition and without energy? If so, your kidneys are out of order. Take DeWitt's Kidney and Bladder Pills. They promptly relieve backache, weak back, inflammation of the ladder and weak kidneys. Sold by Lamborn Drug Co.

Williston of the Ravaged Lazy S.

It was enough. Gordon asked no further questions regarding that event. "And now, Mr. Williston, you may tell what happened to you on the night of the 30th of last August?" Williston began to tell the story of the night attack upon the Lazy S, when the galvanic Small jumped to his feet. The little lawyer touched him with a light hand.

"Your honor," he said, smoothly, "I object to that as incompetent, irrelevant and immaterial, and not binding on the defendant."

"Your honor," interrupted Gordon, with great calmness, "we intend to show you before we get through that this testimony is competent, and that it is binding upon the defendant."

"Was the defendant there?" "The defendant was there."

The objection was overruled. So Williston told briefly but to the point the story of the night attack upon his home, of the defence by himself and daughter, and of the burning of his house and sheds. Then he proceeded:

"Suddenly, some one caught me from behind, my arms were pinioned to my sides, something was clapped over my mouth. I was flung over a horse and strapped to the saddle all in less time that it takes to tell it, and was borne away in company with the man who had overpowered me."

He paused a moment in his recital. Faces strained with expectancy devoured him—his every look and word and action. Mary was very pale, carried this back to the dread realities of that night in August, and shuddered, remembering that ghastly galloping. Langford could scarce restrain himself. He wanted to rip out a blood-curdling Sioux war-whoop on the spot.

"Who was this man, Mr. Williston?" asked Gordon. "Jesse Black."

Small was on his feet again, gesticulating wildly. "I object! This is all a fabrication, put in here to prejudice the minds of the jury against this defendant. It is a pack of lies, and I move that it be stricken from the record."

The little lawyer bowed his head to the storm and shrugged up his shoulders. Perhaps he wished that he, or his associates—one of the unholly alliance at least—was where the wicked cease from troubling, on the far-away islands of the deep seas, possibly, or home on the farm. But his expression told nothing.

"Gentlemen! gentlemen!" expostulated Judge Dale. "Gentlemen! I insist. This is all out of order. Only one gentleman was out of order, but that was the judge's way. Gordon had remained provokingly cool under the trade. Again the soft touch. Small fell into his chair. He poured himself a glass of water from the pitcher stand-

ing on the attorneys' table and drank a little of it nervously.

"I move," said the little lawyer, "that all this touching upon the personal matter of this witness and having to do with his private quarrels be stricken out of the evidence as not bearing on the case in question."

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Help down
a hot griddle cake
on a cold morning with

Karo

CORN SYRUP

The health-giving essence of
golden corn. Tastes good
—does good.

In air-tight tins, 10c., 25c., 50c.

CORN PRODUCTS
MANUFACTURING CO.

W. A. McHenry, Pres. Sears McHenry, Cash.

FIRST NATIONAL BANK

Denison, Iowa.

Capital and Surplus, \$125,000 Deposits, \$518,875.18 Loans, \$34,751.34

If your patronage and influence have, in any degree, contributed to the success of our business, we thank you for it. If as yet you are not a customer, let this be your invitation to become one. We will endeavor to make it both agreeable and profitable for you to do business at our Bank. Personal interviews are desired.

Money to Loan on Long or Short Time.

PUBLIC SALE.

The undersigned will sell at public sale on the John Gorman farm, 5 and one half miles southwest of Denison, 3 miles north of Buck Grove and 4 miles east of Arion, on

TUESDAY JAN. 21, 1908

Commencing at 10 o'clock a. m. the following described property:

7 head of horses, consisting of one span of bay mares, 7 and 8 years old, weight 2200, 1 gray mare, 6 years old, weight 1100, 1 iron gray mare, 4 years old, weight 1100, gray gelding 14 years old, weight 1400, 2 colts, one black mare, coming 2 years old and the other an iron gray coming 2 years old, 40 head of cattle consisting of 7 milch cows 1 fresh and 6 coming fresh soon, 16 steers, coming 2 years old, 6 heifers coming two-years old, 9 spring and summer calves, consisting of 3 heifers and 6 steers, 1 coming three years old, and the other a registered Shorthorn coming 1 year old, 80 head of brood sows, consisting of 15 old sows bred to an old boar and 15 young sows, bred to a young boar, 1 old and 1 young boar.

Machinery—hograck and wagon, 1 new wagon box, 2 tongueless cultivators, three-section drag, 16-inch walking plow, 1½ sets work harness, Empire cream separator, No. 2, 5 tons of prairie hay, 3000 bushels corn and other articles. Free lunch at noon.

Terms—All sums of \$10.00 and under, cash; on all sums over \$10.00 a credit of one year's time will be given on good secured notes bearing 8 per cent interest.

HOWARD BIGGS,
McAhren & Smith Auctioneer.
Sears McHenry, Clerk. 2-2t.

PUBLIC SALE.

The undersigned will offer for sale at the old county poor farm, in Denison township, 1 mile east of Arion 5 miles southwest of Denison, on

FRIDAY, JAN. 17.

Commencing at one o'clock sharp, the following property 7 head of horses, consisting of 1 black mare coming 6 years old weight 1300; one bay mare coming 12 years weight 1300; one gray mare coming 11 years weight 1200; one bay mare coming 7 years, weight 1400; one bay gelding coming 2 years weight, 1000 and one colt 8 months old.

35 head of cattle, consisting of 7 milch cows which will be fresh in the spring; 24 steer coming two years old in the spring, weight about 800 pounds 2 two-year-old heifers with calf; 4 calves, 2 heifer and 2 steers; 1 registered bull, weight about 1500.

About 50 head of good, thrifty brood sows and shoats.

Machinery and Grain—McCormick binder, U. S. planter, 3-section drag, 2 Avery tongue cultivators, good as new; Canton riding lister, top buggy, road cart, McCormick mower, hay rake, 2 hay racks, 2 wagons, 2 walking stirring plows, seeder 14, and 16-inch riding stirring plows, pulverizer, 180-egg Iowa incubator, bob sled, 2 sets harness, hand corn sheller, 2000 bushels good corn and some choice seed corn.

Free Lunch at Noon.

Terms of Sale—All sums of \$10.00 and under cash; on all sums over that amount a credit of one year's time will be given on good secured notes bearing 8 per cent interest.

F. B. MICHELS,
McAhren & Smith Auctioneers.
Chas. Horn Clerk. 2-2t

PUBLIC SALE.

The undersigned will sell at Public Auction on his place Section 9, Goodrich township, 1 mile north of the center school house, on

THURSDAY, JAN. 23

Commencing at 10 o'clock a. m. the following described property: 3 mules, one coming 4 years old, and 2 coming 5 years old, 3 horses, one team coming 7 and 8 years old, 1 horse coming 12 years old, 24 head of cattle, consisting of 9 milch cows, 4 heifers 2 years old; 4 steers 2 years old; 4 steer calves and 2 heifer calves; 1 high grade Shorthorn Bull coming 2 years old; 23 head of hogs, among them 7 with pigs and 7 brood sows, the balance barrows; 12 dozen chickens; McCormick hay rake; 2 cornplanters with 80 rod wire; stubble plow; sulky plow; 2 tongueless cultivators; pulverizer; seeder; one 3-section harrow; 3 wagons; one two seated spring buggy; hograck; 2 hay-racks; bob sled; 3 set double work harness; 1 brand new buggy harness, 2 set fly nets; one 2-hole cornsheller with 4 horse hower feed grinder; about 1200 bushels corn in crib; about 20 tons timothy hay and about 150 bushels of oats and a number of smaller articles.

Terms: Sums of \$10 and under cash; on sums over \$10 one year's time will be given on good security bearing 8 per cent interest.

Free Lunch at Noon.

CHARLEY RETMAN,
McAhren & Smith, Auctioneers.
Sears McHenry, Clerk. 2-2t

How's This!

We offer One Hundred Dollars Reward for any case of Catarrh that cannot be cured by Hall's Catarrh Cure.

F. J. CHENNEY & CO., Toledo, O.

We, the undersigned, have known F. J. Chenney for the last fifteen years, and believe him perfectly honorable in all business transactions and financially able to carry on any obligations made by him.

WALDING, KINNAN & MARVIN,
Wholesale Druggists, Toledo, O.
Hall's Catarrh Cure is taken internally, acting directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces of the system. Testimonials sent free. Price 75 cents. Sold by all druggists.
Take Hall's Family Pills for constipation.