

The VALLEY OF THE GIANTS

BY PETER B. KYNE
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SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTER I.—Pioneer in the California redwood region, John Cardigan, at forty-seven is the leading citizen of Sequoia, owner of mills, ships, and many acres of timber, a widower after three years of married life, and father of two-day-old Bryce Cardigan.

CHAPTER II.—At fourteen Bryce makes the acquaintance of Shirley Sumner, a visitor to Sequoia, and his junior by a few years. Together they visit the Valley of the Giants, sacred to John Cardigan and his son as the burial place of Bryce's mother, and part with mutual regret.

CHAPTER III.—While Bryce is at college John Cardigan meets with heavy business losses and for the first time views the future with uncertainty.

CHAPTER IV.—After graduation from college, and a trip abroad, Bryce Cardigan comes home. On the train he meets Shirley Sumner, on her way to Sequoia to make her home there with her uncle, Col. Pennington. Bryce learns that his father's eyesight has failed and that Pennington is seeking to take advantage of the old man's business misfortunes.

CHAPTER V.—In the Valley of the Giants young Cardigan finds a tree felled directly across his mother's grave. Indications are that it was cut down to secure the burl, and evidence seems to show that Pennington and his woods-lover, Jules Rondeau, are implicated in the outrage.

CHAPTER VI.—Dining with Col. Pennington and his niece, Bryce finds a room paneled with redwood burl, confirming his suspicions of Pennington's guilt. In a diplomatic way, unperceived by Shirley, the two men declare war.

CHAPTER VII.—Pennington refuses to renew his logging contract with the Cardigans, believing his action means bankruptcy for the latter. Bryce forces Rondeau to confess he felled the tree in the Valley of the Giants, at Pennington's order. After punishing the man, Bryce burials him at Col. Pennington, who, with Shirley, had witnessed the deed. Pennington is humiliated, and the girl, indignantly orders Bryce to leave her and forget their friendship. He leaves, but refuses to accept dismissal.

CHAPTER VIII.—Returning to Sequoia, the train on which Shirley, her uncle, and Bryce are traveling, breaks away from the locomotive, and Bryce, who could have escaped, at the risk of his life, enters the caboose and saves them from certain death, being painfully injured in doing so.

CHAPTER IX.—Molra McTavish, childhood friend of Bryce and employed in his office, makes Shirley's acquaintance and the two become friends. Needing money badly, John Cardigan offers to sell Pennington the Valley of the Giants, but the Colonel, confident the property must soon be his through the bankruptcy of his enemies, contemptuously refuses. Unknown to her uncle, Shirley buys the Valley and the Cardigans have a new lease of business life. They interest capital and decide on a scheme to parallel Pennington's logging railroad.

CHAPTER X.—Buchanan Ogilvy, railroad contractor and Bryce's college friend, is decided on by the Cardigans as the man to figure as the builder of the proposed railroad. Bryce goes to San Francisco to meet him.

CHAPTER XI.—Ogilvy ostentatiously begins work of surveying the line, which is announced as a proposed through route. Pennington, vaguely alarmed, decides to block operations by making it impossible to secure a franchise for the line through Sequoia. In this he plans to enlist the aid of the mayor, Poundstone.

CHAPTER XII.—"Buck" Ogilvy, as builder of the projected Northern California & Oregon railroad, meets Molra McTavish and is much impressed. Bryce and his father make plans for securing a franchise for the line from the city council.

CHAPTER XIII.—Ogilvy, in a business interview, favorably impresses the Mayor, and later engages that official's son as attorney for the new road. Through him they obtain the temporary franchise. Pennington, finally convinced that the Cardigan interests are behind the scheme, sets to work to balk them.

CHAPTER XIV.—Pennington refuses Bryce the use of a locomotive and trucks to move equipment for laying a switch, and Bryce and Ogilvy plan to steal both and during the night put in a crossing cutting Pennington's tracks in the city. Pennington bribes Mayor Poundstone to ignore the temporary franchise granted and to refuse a permanent one. That night Pennington hears the Cardigan tracklaying crew at work and hurries to the spot.

CHAPTER XV.—Bryce and Ogilvy disregard Pennington's frenzied remonstrances and continue work, but the Colonel gets word to the Mayor and also employs a desperado to shoot Bryce. Bryce is wounded. Work on the track is stopped by the chief of police. Shirley accuses her uncle of conniving at the murder of Bryce, and the Colonel leaves for San Francisco to safeguard his interests through further legal proceedings.

"I do," she answered passionately. "With Bryce Cardigan out of the way you would have a clear field before you."

"Oh, my dear, my dear! Surely you do not realize what you are saying. You are beside yourself, Shirley. Please—please do not wound me so—so horribly. I am surrounded by enemies—the most implacable enemies. They force me to fight the devil with fire—and here you are, giving them aid and comfort."

"I want you to defeat Bryce Cardigan, if you can do it fairly."

"At another time and in a calmer mood we will discuss that villain," she said authoritatively. "Get into the car, and we will go home. There is nothing more to be done tonight."

"Your sophistry does not alter my opinion," she replied firmly. "However, as you say, this is neither the time nor the place to discuss it."

They drove home in silence. Shirley went at once to her room. For the Colonel, however, the night's work had scarcely begun. The instant he heard the door to his niece's room shut, he went to the telephone and called up the Laguna Grande roundhouse. Sexton, his manager, answered.

"Have you sent the switch engine to the woods for Rondeau and his men?"

"Just left."

"Good! Now, then, Sexton, listen to me: As you know, this raid of Cardigan's has developed so suddenly I am more or less taken by surprise and have had no time to prepare the kind of counter-attack that will be most effective. However, with the crossing blocked, I gain time in which to organize—only there must be no weak point in the organization. In order to insure that, I am proceeding to San Francisco tonight by motor, via the coast road. I will arrive late tomorrow night, and early Saturday morning I will appear in the United States district court with our attorneys and file a complaint and petition for an order temporarily restraining the N. C. O. from cutting our tracks."

"I will have to make an affidavit to support the complaint, so I had better be Johnny-on-the-spot to do it, rather than risk the delay of making the affidavit tomorrow morning here and forwarding it by mail to our attorneys."

"The judge will sign a restraining order, returnable in from ten to thirty days—I'll try for thirty, because that will knock out the N. C. O.'s temporary franchise—and after I have obtained the restraining order, I will have the United States marshal telegraph it to Ogilvy and Cardigan."

"Bully!" cried Sexton heartily. "That will fix their clock."

"In the meantime," Pennington continued, "logs will be gutting our landings. We need that locomotive for its legitimate purposes. Take all that discarded machinery and the old boiler we removed from the mill last fall, dump it on the tracks at the crossing, and get the locomotive back on its run. Understand? The other side, having no means of removing these heavy obstructions, will be blocked until I return; by that time the matter will be in the district court, Cardigan will be hung up until his temporary franchise expires—and the city council will not renew it. Get me?"

"Yes, sir."

"I'll be back Sunday forenoon. Good-by."

He hung up, went to his chauffeur's quarters over the garage, and routed the man out of bed. Then he returned quietly to his room, dressed and packed a bag for his journey, left a brief note for Shirley notifying her of his departure, and started on his two hundred and fifty-mile trip over the mountains to the south. As his car sped through sleeping Sequoia and gained the open country, the Colonel's heart thrilled pleasantly. He held cards and spades, big and little casino, four aces and the joker; therefore he knew he could sweep the board at his pleasure. And during his absence Shirley would have opportunity to cool off, while he would find time to formulate an argument to null her suspicions upon his return.

Quite oblivious of her uncle's departure for San Francisco, Shirley lay awake throughout the remainder of the night, turning over and over in her mind the various aspects of the Cardigan-Pennington imbroglio. Of one thing she was quite certain; peace must be declared at all hazards. She realized that she had permitted matters to go too far. A revision of feeling toward her uncle, induced by the memory of Bryce Cardigan's blood on her white finger tips, convinced the girl that, at all hazards to her financial future, henceforth she and her uncle must tread separate paths. She had found him out at last, and because in her nature there was some of his own fixity of purpose, the resolution cost her no particular pang.

She had been obsessed of a desire, rather unusual in her sex, to see a fight worth while; she had planned to permit it to go to a knockout, to use Bryce Cardigan's language, because she believed Bryce Cardigan would be vanquished—and she had desired to see him smacked—but not beyond repair, for her joy in the conflict was to lie in the task of putting the pieces together afterward!

It was rather a relief, therefore, when the imperturbable James handed her at breakfast the following note:

"Shirley Dear:

"After leaving you last night, I decided that in your present frame of mind my absence for a few days might tend to a calmer and clearer perception, on your part, of the necessary tactics which in a moment of desperation, I saw fit, with regret, to pursue last night. And in the hope that you will have attained your old attitude toward me before my return, I am leaving in the motor for San Francisco. Your terrible accusation has grieved me to such an extent that I do not feel equal to the task of confronting you until, in a more judicial frame of mind, you can truly absolve me of

CHAPTER XVI.

the charge of wishing to do away with young Cardigan.

"Your affectionate
"UNCLE SETH."

Shirley's lip curled. With a rarer, keener intuition than she had hitherto manifested, she sensed the hypocrisy between the lines; she was not deceived.

"He has gone to San Francisco for more ammunition," she soliloquized. "Very well, unkle-dunk! While you're away, I shall manufacture a few bombs myself."

After breakfast she left the house and walked to the intersection of B with Water street. Jules Rondeau and his crew of lumberjacks were there, and with two policemen guarded the crossing.

Shirley looked from the woods bully to the locomotive and back to Rondeau.

"Rondeau," she said, "Mr. Cardigan is a bad man to fight. You fought him once. Are you going to do it again?" He nodded.

"By whose orders?"

"Mr. Sexton, she tell me to do it."

"Well, Rondeau, some day I'll be boss of Laguna Grande and there'll be no more fighting," she replied, and passed on down B street to the office of the Cardigan Redwood Lumber company. Molra McTavish looked up as she entered.

"You mustn't try," protested Shirley. "Rondeau is there with his crew—and he has orders to stop you. Besides, you can't expect help from the police. Uncle Seth has made a deal with the mayor. I came prepared to suggest a compromise, Bryce," she declared, but he interrupted her with a wave of his hand.

"That for the police and that venal Mayor Poundstone!" Bryce retorted, with another snap of his fingers. "I'll rid the city of them at the fall election."

"You can't afford a compromise. You've been telling me I shall never build the N. C. O. because you will not permit me to. You're powerless, I tell you. I shall build it."

"You shan't!" she fired back at him, and a spot of anger glowed in each cheek. "You're the most stubborn and belligerent man I have ever known. Sometimes I almost hate you."

"Come around at ten tomorrow morning and watch me put in the crossing—watch me give Rondeau and his gang the run." He reached over suddenly, lifted her hand, and kissed it. "How I love you, dear little antagonist!" he murmured.

"If you loved me, you wouldn't oppose me," she protested softly. "I tell you again, Bryce, you make it very hard for me to be friendly with you."

"I don't want to be friendly with you. You're driving me crazy, Shirley. Please run along home, or wherever you're bound. I've tried to understand your peculiar code, but you're too deep for me; so let me go my way to the devil. George Sea Otter is outside asleep in the tonneau of the car. Tell him to drive you wherever you're going. I suppose you're afoot today, for I noticed the mayor riding to his office in your sedan this morning."

She tried to look outraged, but for the life of her she could not take offense at his bluntness; neither did she resent a look which she detected in his eyes, even though it told her he was laughing at her.

"Oh, very well," she replied with what dignity she could muster. "Have it your own way. I've tried to warn you. Thank you for your offer of the car. I shall be glad to use it. Uncle Seth sold my car to Mayor Poundstone last night. Mrs. P—admired it so!"

"Ah! Then it was that rascally Poundstone who told your uncle about the temporary franchise, thus arousing his suspicions to such an extent that when he heard his locomotive rumbling into town, he smelled a rat and hurried down to the crossing?"

"Possibly. The Poundstones dined at our house last night."

"Pretty hard on you, I should say. But then I suppose you have to play the game with Uncle Seth. Well, good morning, Shirley. Sorry to hurry you away, but you must remember we're on a strictly business basis; and you mustn't waste my time."

"You're horrid, Bryce Cardigan."

"You're adorable. Good morning."

"You'll be sorry for this," she warned him. "Good morning." She passed out into the general office, visited with Molra about five minutes, and drove away in the Napier. Bryce watched her through the window. She knew he was watching her, but nevertheless she could not forbear turning round to verify her suspicions. When she did, he waved his sound arm at her, and she flushed with vexation.

"God bless her!" he murmured. "She's been my ally all along, and I never suspected it! I wonder what her game can be."

He sat musing for a long time. "Yes," he concluded presently, "old Poundstone has double-crossed us—and Pennington made it worth his while. And the Colonel sold the mayor his niece's automobile. It's worth twenty-five hundred dollars, at least, and since old Poundstone's finances will not permit such an extravagance, I'm wondering how Pennington expects him to pay for it. I smell a rat as big as a kangaroo. In this case two and two don't make four. They make six! Guess I'll build a fire under old Poundstone."

He took down the telephone receiver and called up the mayor. "Bryce Cardigan speaking, Mr. Poundstone," he greeted the chief executive of Sequoia.

"Oh, hello, Bryce, my boy," Poundstone boomed affably. "How's tricks?"

"So-so! I hear you've bought that sedan from Col. Pennington's niece. Wish I'd known it was for sale. I'd have outbid you. Want to make a profit on your bargain?"

"No, not this morning, Bryce. I think we'll keep it. Mrs. P—has been wanting a closed car for a long time, and when the Colonel offered me this one at a bargain, I snapped it up."

"And you don't care to get rid of it at a profit?" Bryce repeated.

"No, sree!"

"Oh, you're mistaken, Mr. Mayor. I think you do. I would suggest that you take that car back to Pennington's garage and leave it there. That would be the most profitable thing you could do."

"What—what—what in blue blazes are you driving at?" the mayor sput-

tered.

"I wouldn't care to discuss it over the telephone. I take it, however, that a hint to the wise is sufficient; and I warn you, mayor, that if you keep that car it will bring you bad luck. Today is Friday, and Friday is an unlucky day. I'd get rid of that sedan before noon if I were you."

There was a long, fateful silence. Then in a singular small, quavering voice: "You think it best, Cardigan?"

"I do. Return it to No. 88 Redwood boulevard, and no questions will be asked. Good-by!"

main blocked. As for the restraining order—well, if one wants a thing well done, one should do it oneself."

"All that doesn't explain your cheerful attitude, though."

"Oh, but it does. I've told you about old Duncan McTavish, Molra's father, haven't I?" Ogilvy nodded, and Bryce continued: "When I fired the old scoundrel for boxing, it almost broke his heart; he had to leave Humboldt, where everybody knew him, so he wandered down into Sequoia county and got a job sticking lumber in the drying yard of the Willits Lumber company. He's been there two months now, and I am informed by his employer that old Mac hasn't taken a drink in all that time. And what's more, he isn't going to take one again."

"How do you know?"

"Because I make it my business to find out. Mac was the finest woods-boss this county ever knew; hence you do not assume that I would lose the old scoundrel without making a fight for him, do you? Why, Buck, he's been on the Cardigan pay roll thirty years, and I only fired him in order to reform him. Well, last week I sent one of Mac's old friends down to Willits purposely to call on him and invite him out for a time; but Mac wouldn't drink with him. No, sir, he couldn't be tempted. On the contrary, he told the tempter that I had promised to give him back his job if he remained on the water wagon for one year; he was resolved to win back his job and his self-respect."

"I know what your plan is," Ogilvy interrupted. "Listen, now, to father's words of wisdom. Didn't you hear me tell that girl and her villainous avuncular relative last night that I had another ace up my kimono?"

Bryce nodded.

"That was not brag, old dear. I had the ace, and this morning I played it—wherefore in my heart there is that peace that passeth understanding—particularly since I have just had a telegram informing me that my ace took the odd trick."

"You will recall that from the very instant we decided to cut in that jump-crossing, we commenced to plan against interference by Pennington; in consequence we kept, or tried to keep, our decision a secret. However, there existed at all times the possibility that Pennington might discover our benevolent intentions and block us with his only weapon—a restraining order issued by the judge of the United States district court."

"Now, one of the most delightful things I know about a court is that it is open to all men seeking justice—or injustice disguised as justice. Also there is a wise old saw to the effect that battles are won by the fellow who gets there first with the most men. The situation from the start was absurdly simple. If Pennington got to the district court first, we were lost!"

"You mean you got there first?" exclaimed Bryce.

"I did—by the very simple method of preparing to get there first in case anything slipped. Something did slip—last night! However, I was ready; so all I had to do was press the button, for as Omar Khayyam remarked: 'What shall it avail a man if he buyeth a padlock for his stable after his favorite stallion hath been lifted? Several days ago, my boy, I wrote a long letter to our attorney in San Francisco explaining every detail of our predicament; the instant I received that temporary franchise from the city council, I mailed a certified copy of it to our attorney also. Then, in anticipation of our discovery by Pennington, I instructed the attorney to prepare the complaint and petition for a restraining order against Seth Pennington et al, and stand by to rush to the judge with it the instant he heard from me!'"

"Well, about the time old Pennington started for San Francisco this morning, I had our attorney out of bed and on the long-distance telephone; at nine o'clock this morning he appeared in the United States district court; at nine-fifteen the judge signed a restraining order forbidding our enemies to interfere with us in the exercise of a right legally granted us by the city of Sequoia, and at nine-thirty a deputy United States marshal started in an automobile for Sequoia, via the overland route. He will arrive late tomorrow night, and on Sunday we will get that locomotive out of our way and install our crossing."

"And Pennington—"

"Ah, the poor Pennington! Mon pauvre Seth!" Buck sighed comically. "He will be just twenty-four hours late."

"You old he-fox!" Bryce murmured. "You wicked, wicked man!"

Buck Ogilvy lifted his lapel and sniffed luxuriously at his white carnation, the while a thin little smile played around the corners of his humorous mouth. "Ah," he murmured presently, "life's pretty sweet, isn't it?"

(Continued next week.)

Careless With Money

Few men are careless with actual cash, but many men do not stop to think that the checks and notes they give out represent money and that fraudulent alteration of a check may mean a serious loss. Protect yourself by using paper that betrays alteration—

SAFETY

Paper. We can tell you more about it and show you how we can protect your cash, your checks, notes, drafts, and receipts.



"I Suppose You'll Acknowledge Yourself Whipped at Last, Bryce?"

at him searchingly. "I suppose you'll acknowledge yourself whipped at last, Bryce?" she ventured.

"Would it please you to have me surrender?" He was very serious.

"Indeed it would, Bryce. I'm tired of fighting. I want peace. I'm—I'm afraid to let this matter go any further. I'm truly afraid."

"I think I want peace, too," he answered. "I'd be glad to quit—with honor. And I'll do it, too, if you can induce your uncle to give me the kind of logging contract I want with his road."

"I couldn't do that, Bryce. He has you whipped—and he is not merciful to the fallen. You'll have to surrender unconditionally." Again she laid her little hand timidly on his wounded forearm. "Please give up, Bryce—for my sake."

"I suppose I'll have to," he murmured sadly. "I dare say you're right, though one should never admit defeat until he is counted out. I suppose," he continued bitterly, "your uncle is in high feather this morning."

"I don't know, Bryce. He left in his motor for San Francisco about one o'clock this morning."

For an instant Bryce Cardigan stared at her; then a slow, mocking little smile crept around the corners of his mouth, and his eyes lighted with mirth.

"Three Long, Loud, Raucous Cheers for Uncle. He's gone to rush a restraining order through the United States

district court. Wonder why he didn't wire his attorney to attend to the matter for him."

"He has the crossing blocked, and inasmuch as the mayor feeds out of Pennington's hand, the Colonel is quite confident that said crossing will re-

turn to our advantage."

"You're perfectly horrid," she blazed, and hung up without the formality of saying good-by.

"Really, I believe you're happy today."

"Happy? I should tell a man! If the streets of Sequoia were paved with eggs, I could walk them all day without making an omelette."

"It must be nice to feel so happy, after so many months of the blues."

"Indeed it is, Shirley. You see until very recently I was very much worried as to your attitude toward me. I couldn't believe you'd so far forgotten yourself as to love me in spite of everything—so I never took the trouble to ask you. And now I don't have to ask you. I know! And I'll be around to see you after I get that crossing in!"

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"Ah! Then it was that rascally Poundstone who told your uncle about the temporary franchise, thus arousing his suspicions to such an extent that when he heard his locomotive rumbling into town, he smelled a rat and hurried down to the crossing?"

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