

The Quarterbreed

BY ROBERT AMES BENNETT



Vandervyn hit his lip. "Need he come along?"

"I did not think that you, Regie. How can I have him here alone? You have never seemed to realize that I came back from Ottawa because I wished to be with him. Even before I went to court I saw the traits in him that you see, but I saw something more—the man that he might have been."

"Don't imagine I'm asking you to give him up," Vandervyn insisted to Marie. "All I suggest is that we take our honeymoon trip alone."

"And leave Pere with no one to cook for him—leave him here? Can't you guess what would happen? Within a week a fortnight at the latest—he would marry the youngest and best cook within reach, a breed girl by preference—most likely Charlie's sister."

Vandervyn winced as if cut across the face with a whiplash.

"No—not her!" he stammered. "That—it would be impossible. She would be—I tell you, I will not stand for it—I cannot!"

"Of course that could not be permitted," sweetly agreed Marie. "I would not care to come back and find I had acquired a stepmother as young or younger than myself—no, not even if she were as clean and as good as a girl as is Irma Redoubt."

"Then—you—think—?" hesitated Vandervyn.

"Listen, I have thought and thought, and now I have it all planned out. I must do what is just by you, yet, as you see, I cannot leave Pere here. You may remember that I told you a little about the English people I knew in Ottawa. When I saw that you thought I was renouncing, I said no more except in hints. I really was more intimate with Lady Verblaine than you will find it easy to believe. Her son and daughters were already married. She took a fancy to me. When I was to come home, she invited me to visit her in England. I had told her all about myself and Pere. We corresponded regularly. She has renewed her invitation more than once. The last time she insisted that I should come without further delay, and bring Pere with me."

"She did?" exclaimed Vandervyn. "Then why not all three of us go together?"

Marie drooped again in her attitude of meek humility.

"You are so generous, Regie, to be willing to travel with Pere! But I cannot allow you to make such a sacrifice. No; there is a better way. I shall go alone with Pere to England, and then perhaps for a little visit to Paris with the sister of the mother superior of my convent. Pere has a cousin in England, the mother superior's niece, and I have been tinkering it into fairly good French. A month or two in Paris may correct his accent. It may also smooth down our roughness enough for us to venture over to Washington without putting you too greatly to shame before your friends."

"Two months—all that time?" complained Vandervyn.

"Indeed, no. It will be much longer," answered the girl. "I cannot permit you to marry a more agreeable girl. Besides, if Pere does not wish to sell out his little business, I may have to wait for returns from the mine. It takes quantities of money to pay police, and lots of time to put it on. We shall not reach Washington before November or December."

"Five or six months?"

"Yes. Aren't you willing to wait for me?" asked the girl, smiling.

The sudden change from meekness to a basty assurance from Vandervyn: "Of course I am. It will be a fearful long time to be without you, if you insist upon— But I could run over and see you in England or France."

"No," she refused. "I wish you to stay and work for the good of my people. Pere and I still are members of the tribe, you know, and I am deeply interested in the irrigation project laid out by Captain Hardy."

Vandervyn smiled in his most boyish manner.

"I am neither an engineer nor an army officer. Someone else must dig the ditches. I shall at once go on to Washington and prepare for the passage of the appropriation. It's going to slide through as soon as congress meets."

"And then I shall come over from Paris. You will have my engagement with your cousin and you—No, no, sir! not a single kiss—not one until you are free, and I set the day. I am an honest now, and must act accordingly. Besides, here is Pere with the horses. We must be starting."

CHAPTER XXIV.

Marie looked up, her eyes full of tender reproach.

"I did not think that you, Regie. How can I have him here alone? You have never seemed to realize that I came back from Ottawa because I wished to be with him. Even before I went to court I saw the traits in him that you see, but I saw something more—the man that he might have been."

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(No. 1)

She flushed him an odd, quizzical look. "No, I cannot doubt my future husband now, Captain Hardy. I must believe in him if I am to be happy, must I not?"

"Yes," agreed Hardy.

"She uttered a gay little trill of laughter.

"That is so good of you to say it, Captain! It makes me feel that I really must do something for you in return. May I not offer you a little loan of, say, three or four thousand dollars? I understand that, for some strange reason—or unreason—you have refused your pay as captain."

"My resignation has not been withdrawn, and I am engaged in a private enterprise. I cannot draw pay as an officer in the service," explained Hardy.

"Few would be so quizzical," she argued. "Most would make the excuse that an attempt to frustrate what they considered a wrong to others is not to be considered a private enterprise."

"I must beg to differ with you, Miss Dupont."

"Then let it pass. But the little loan?"

"Very good of you to offer. However, I believe I have enough left to last me through. And in any event, I

serious, and he opposed them with vigor. He denied emphatically any intention to desert, or to remain permanently absent from his proper duties without leave. He showed the telegram from a high official in the war department that led him to believe his resignation and application for leave of absence would be at once favorably acted upon by his commanding officer at Vancouver barracks. This, in some circumstances, might have been considered sufficient excuse for his conduct. But his refusal to explain his reasons for taking advantage of his secret knowledge of the mine perceptibly influenced the members of the court to doubt the statement of his purpose in coming to Washington.

Though the court-martial adjourned without rendering its findings, he left the courtroom ten years older in appearance than when he entered. The weary, commiserating glance of the friendly judges seemed plainly to indicate what would be the findings. The thought of voluntarily resigning from the service had been hard. To be cashiered was almost unbearable.

Yet he walked out with his back straight and his head well up. He went directly to the White House and sent in a written application for an interview with the president. It was refused. He went to his lodgings and spent the remainder of the day and half the night drafting and redrafting a concise statement of his argument against Vandervyn's contract. This he addressed to the president. He wrote with regard to his own case.

"When, next morning, he at last fell asleep, he was so near exhaustion that he did not waken until late. The hour set for the reconvening of the court-martial had already come. He sprang into his uniform with a certainty that he had not wakened a fellow officer in the barracks at West Point."

The worn soles of his highly polished shoes beat a tattoo on the carpeted stairs which he descended to the street. He did not turn to go in for a belated breakfast at the messer table of his landlady. He hastened along the few feet of narrow hallway to the street door. As he drew it open, another man in uniform stepped into the doorway and confronted him. The other officer saluted. Hardy responded mechanically. For all his cool look, he was astonished. The man before him was the president's military aide.

"Captain Floyd Hardy?"

"Yes, sir."

"You should now be in attendance upon the court-martial," stated the aide with cold severity.

"I shall explain to the court," replied Hardy. "If not delayed, I shall be only a few—"

"You will come with me," interrupted the aide, still more severely. "Your conduct has been brought to the attention of the president. It is to be seen, sir, whether you will continue to refuse to answer the inquiries of your superiors."

Hardy went white, but his jaw set firm with grim resolution. He stepped out beside the aide, and crossed the sidewalk to the waiting room. As they were whirled away over the city, he caught the aide set with more than military stiffness, his head and body rigid to avoid contamination. Hardy set as stiffly at the other extreme of the scale.

The ride was short. The car made a sudden turn, and curved around to the executive offices of the president. Hardy looked at his companion, perplexed. The face of the aide showed only the stern watchfulness of one who has a reputedly dangerous prisoner confined in the car. At the entrance he stepped behind him as if apprehensive that Hardy might attempt to escape. A doorkeeper conducted them along a corridor into a small waiting room. Hardy looked at the man beyond, but reappeared in a few moments and signed to Hardy to enter.

Hardy stepped into the room, and the door was closed behind him. The aide and the doorkeeper had remained outside. Hardy looked around with a frown of perplexity. Across the room a man sat writing at a businesslike desk. There was no one else present.

The man turned in his swivel chair and abruptly made a beckoning gesture. Hardy stepped forward. He was in the presence of the commander in chief of the army and navy.

The president looked him up and down with a severe glance.

"You are Captain Floyd Hardy?"

"Yes, sir."

"The same who suppressed the late insurrection in the States?"

"I happened to be in command at the time, sir."

"After that you obtained a detail, your conduct in discharge of which has resulted in your trial by court-martial on serious charges. I have before me the findings of the court. The circumstances are exceptional. Because of your record and of certain statements that have been presented to me, I have been persuaded to give you an opportunity to explain your conduct."

Hardy saluted. "Permit me, sir, to first present for your consideration a matter relating to the interests of the tribe which—"

"Stop!" ordered the president. "Others are waiting for interviews. If you expend them on this other matter, you will have no further opportunity to state your own case."

"The evidence before the court-martial covered the facts, sir. These facts sustain the charges against me, then I am guilty, and desire no clemency. That is all I have to say on my own case. Sir. With regard to the matter which I desire to present—"

"Sit down!" ordered the president. "You have nine minutes. Be brief."

Hardy seated himself and proceeded to present his argument against the Vandervyn contract. He spoke deliberately, but with a consciousness that covered what he had to say fully and clearly, in words as forceful as they were few. The president listened attentively, but with no change in his expression.

HERE'S A HAPPY "TANLAG FAMILY" Sisters Join Their Mother In Declaring Tanlag Meant New Start In Life For Them.



"Someone suggested the other day that we tack a sign on our house saying, 'This is a Tanlag Family.' That's because my two daughters and I talk so much about Tanlag. We all wear the Tanlag Smile, too." Mrs. S. C. Burnett, 1408 Walnut street, said.

"But why shouldn't we talk about it when we feel that it has done us a world of good. Everyone of us has been helped by Tanlag and I'll tell you we can't say too much for it."

"First my older daughter, Mrs. John Lowe, tried it. She had lost 30 pounds and was so run down and nervous that she needed a change of air and a change of diet. She had to leave her home in the morning of a day when she was to go to work. We found we would have to send her to a hospital."

"I honestly believe that Tanlag saved her from complete breakdown. Nothing else seemed to help her. But Tanlag put her on her feet again right quick. Today she is one of the happiest women in Cincinnati."

"Then Frances became run down—lost her appetite. She had dizzy spells. We were going to take her out of school because she kept complaining of spots and webs before her eyes. Her complexion got pasty and she didn't look a bit well. Tanlag, however, proved to be just the thing she needed and now she is back in good health again."

"Mother was Half-Sick."

"As for myself, I felt about the same as Mrs. Lowe. My stomach troubled me. My appetite was poor and I suffered after eating with bloating and belching of gas. But with the help of Tanlag I got rid of these troubles and now I feel simply splendid."

"But I started out at first to tell you about Mrs. Lowe. She simply thought she was going to die. She felt so bad I believe she almost would have been glad to have it all ended. It was just pitiful to watch her. Her weight dropped from 140 to 110 pounds. She couldn't eat without being sick. We had just about given her up. Then we heard of Tanlag and she tried it. All of a sudden she seemed to take new interest in life. Within a week she began eating solid food. Just like she did before she had trouble with her stomach. The food nourished her, too, and she began taking on weight. She slept sound and it seemed like no time before she was feeling well again."

Helps Youngest Girl.

"One day Frances was up to see her sister. She's the youngest, you know. She was feeling bad and Mrs. Lowe gave her some Tanlag. It made her feel better and she came home and said, 'Mama, I believe that new tonic that helped sister will do me some good. Please get me a bottle.' So I did and you know that in a week she began to feel better. Now she eats all she wants, sleeps well and doesn't have those dizzy spells or spots before her eyes when she is studying."

"I was such a firm believer in Tanlag by the time it had built up the health of my two girls that I got some for myself. It certainly toned up my system. I used to have nervous spells but they are all gone now. I got back my appetite and now I sleep as well as I did before my stomach started to bother me."

"I tell you Tanlag has done a lot for our family and we can't say too much good about it."

Tanlag can be obtained in RICHMOND at PERRY'S DRUG STORE. Tanlag can be obtained at the following nearby cities: College Hill, Glister Bros.; Irvine, Irvine Drug Co.; Lewis, S. E. Welsh; Pains Lick, J. N. Metcalf; Winchester, Duff Drug Co.

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(To be Continued)

could not impose on your generosity. The money would be used against him—which, you see, would hardly do."

"Then you refuse any loan?"

"It was most kind of you to make the offer."

"Don Quixote de la Mancha!" she murmured.

"Tilting at machine windmills!" he replied.

Though there was no trace of bitterness or satire in his wit, her chin lifted to the angle of offended pride.

"That is sufficient, Captain Hardy. May I ask you to take me back to my room?"

Vandervyn was waiting for her near the president. As they approached him, she gave Hardy a look of half-repentment. "You must understand, Captain, that I must do as my heart dictates, though I confess that lobbying is far from agreeable to me. I have already met his excellency, and he has been so kind as to promise me a hearing."

"I cannot wish you success," he replied.

She gave him a quizzical glance and turned away with Vandervyn.

Standing in the eager, jostling crowd that waited for a word or even a nod from the president, he fully appreciated the ease with which, in the midst of so great a crisis, she managed to obtain several minutes' conversation apart with the nation's chief magistrate.

She was still beside the president when the sharp-eyed man to whom Vandervyn had spoken came around beside Hardy and murmured a few words to his ear. Hardy looked him in the eye, bowed, and quietly started to move away. The man followed him until he had left the White House.

CHAPTER XXV.

Condemned.

The court-martial began its session at nine in the morning, and the trial of Hardy was over before three in the afternoon. Vandervyn testified to the suppression by the accused of the existence of the developed mine and of Redoubt's misconduct.

Hardy's statements in explanation of his actions were as brief as they were cold and dry. Acting as a civil officer, he had received the question of withholding any mention of the mine as a matter with his discretion. When interrogated whether he had not taken advantage of this suppression to enter the contest and win the mine for himself, his bald admission of the fact, unaccompanied by any explanation of his motives, was received by his officer-judges with marked gravity. The other charges were far more

"My Word's as Good or Better Than a Cashier's Officers."

"I suppose he showed his 'gun' at me. I supposed it loaded, and shot him in self-defense. Hardy was present. He can't deny what I say, without swearing himself."

Hardy met the president's look of inquiry, and bowed in confirmation of the statement. The president again looked thoughtful. "That leaves the man's story as the only witness to the contract. It would be well if she could be produced."

The aide left the room. Vandervyn again shrugged. "Search has been made for her, Mr. President. All that could be learned from her Indian relatives was that she had been very sick and had gone away. Of course that meant to the happy hunting grounds. There was no other place that she could have gone."

The aide returned to the room bearing a tall young woman who was dressed in a Parisian tailored suit that Vandervyn had last seen on Marie. She was gloved and heavily veiled and she entered the room with perceptible timidity. Marie went to meet her in a reassuring clasp and raised the veil. At no time since their coming to Washington had Vandervyn been given so much as a glimpse of Miss Dupont's reputed Hindu maid. This undoubtedly was the woman, and he looked at her with sharp curiosity as Marie raised the veil. Marie stepped aside and gave him a full view of the girl's face.

"Otnah!" he exclaimed.

"Yes. Is it not a happy surprise?" said Marie.

She smiled at the shrinking girl, and drew her about to the president. "My dear, this is the great White Father of all Indians and of our tribe—he is our father—your excellency, this is Mrs. Redoubt Vandervyn."

The blow was given with merciless force. As Vandervyn gaped at Marie, her eyes flashed with a sudden up-lifting of fierce indignation.

He gasped and choked out; "You—you!—All these months—this—you—Indian!"

"Yes, Indian—to you, even as she was Indian to you," cried the girl. "You have been so eager to marry a breed girl—here is now, already your wife!"

"It's a lie—a black lie!" denied Vandervyn. "I never married her!"

"You took her by tricked custom, and you told her that you were taking her legally according to the common law."

"She cannot prove I lived with her openly as her husband," rejoined Vandervyn.

The president looked at the shrinking Otnah with kindly gravity. "Do you wish him to acknowledge you as his wife?"

"No, no, sir!" she disclaimed. "I don't want him any more."

"I am pleased to hear you say that."

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