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CHAPTER XI. Fool's Luck.

THREE days they rested in the wild seclusion of the canyon. The silence, the solemnity of the place, fascinated Winthrop.

The tiny stream, cold and clear; the vegetation in a region otherwise barren gray and burning; the arid Mojave with its blistering heat; the trees; the painted rocks—ochre, copper, bronze, red, gray and dim lilac in the distances; the gracious shade, the little burro, half ludicrous, half pathetic in its stolid acceptance of circumstances—all had a charm for him that soothed and satisfied his restlessness.

Meanwhile the indefatigable Overland spun yarn after yarn of the road and range and rolled innumerable cigarettes with one hand, much to Winthrop's amusement.

The third morning Winthrop had awakened feeling so completely refreshed that he begged Overland to allow him to make an attempt to find the hidden papers and the little bag of gold. Overland demurred at first, fearing that the easterner would become lost or stricken with the heat.

Overland did. He asserted that he could easily find the water hole, which was no difficult task, and from there he could go by compass straight out to the tracks. Overland had told him that somewhere near a little culvert beneath the track was the marked place indicating the hiding place of the dead prospector's things.

Finally Overland agreed to Winthrop's plan to make the attempt the following day. After they separated Overland found his slow way back to the hidden canyon. He felt a little lonely as he thought of Collie. He

gave the burro some scraps of camp bread, knowing that the little animal would not stray so long as he was fed, even a little, each day.

It was while he was scouring the fry pan that he noticed the black sand across the stream. Leisurely he rose and scooped a panful of the sand and gravel and began washing it, more as a pastime than with an idea of finding gold. Slowly he oscillated the whisping sand, slopping the water out until he had panned the lot.

He spread his bandanna on a smooth rock and gently emptied the residue of the washing on it. "Color, but thin," he said. "Let's try her again." He moved farther upstream, this time with one of his regular pans. He became absorbed in his experiment. He washed panful after panful, slowly, carefully, collectedly. Suddenly he stood up, swore softly and flung the half washed dirt of the last pan on the rocks. "I'm a nut!" he exclaimed. "This livin' in civilization has been puttin' my intellec' to the bad. Too much eastern sassiety." And with this inexplicable self arrangement he stooped at the tent door, buckled on his gun and started upstream. He glanced from side to side of the steep and narrowing walls as he advanced slowly. He passed places where the stream disappeared in the sand to find some subterranean channel and reappear below again. Rounding an angle of the cliff, he dropped to his knees and examined some tiny parallel scratches on a rounded rock—the marks made by a bootheel that had slipped. For an hour he toiled over the rocks on up the diminishing stream. "Gettin' thin," he muttered, gazing at the silver thread of water rippling over the pebbles. A few feet ahead the cliffs met at the bottom in a sharp edged "V," not over a foot apart in the stream bed, but widening above. Overland scrambled through. On the other side of the opening he straightened up, breathing hard. His hand crept to his hip. On a sandy level a few yards ahead of him stood a ragged and faded canvas tent, its flap waving idly in a breath of wind. In front of the tent was the rusted pan, a pick and the worn stub of a shovel lay near the stream. A box marked "Dynamite" was half filled with odds and ends of empty tins, cooking utensils, and among the things

Slowly Overland's hand dropped to his side. He stepped forward, stooped and peered into the tent. "Thought so," he said, laughing queerly. Save for a pair of old quilts and an old corduroy coat the place was empty. "Fool's luck!" muttered Overland. "Wonder the Gophertown outfit didn't find him and fix him! But, come to think of it, they ain't so anxious to cross over to this side of the range and get too close to a real town and get run in or shot up. Fool's luck!" he reiterated, coolly rolling a cigarette and gazing about with a critical eye. "They's another trail into this canyon that the prospector knowed. I got to find it. Billy 'll be some interested."

Overland Red lay concealed in an arroyo at the foot of the range. He could overlook the desert without being seen. It was the afternoon of the day following Winthrop's departure.

Since discovering the dead prospector's camp and all that it meant, the tramp was doubly vigilant. He tried to believe that his anxiety was for his own safety rather than for Winthrop's. He finally gave up that idea, grumbling something about becoming "plumb soft in his feelin's since he took to associatin' with sassiety folks." However, had Winthrop been of the west and seasoned in its more rugged ways Overland would have thought little of the young man's share in recent events. While he knew that Winthrop looked upon their venture as nothing more than a rather keenly exciting game, Overland realized also that the easterner had played the game royally. Perhaps the fact that Winthrop's health was not of the best appealed to some hidden sentiment in the tramp's peculiar nature.

Far in the south a speck moved, almost imperceptibly. The tramp's keen eyes told him that this was no horse-man. He rolled a cigarette and lay back in the shade of a bowlder. "He's a couple of points off his course, but he can't miss the range," he reflected. Desiring to assure himself that no horseman followed Winthrop, Overland Red made no sign that might help the other to find the trail over the range. The rim of Winthrop's hat became distinguishable; then the white lacing of his boots. Nearer, Overland saw that his face was drawn and set with lines of fatigue.

No riders appeared on the horizon. Overland stepped out from behind the rock. "Well, how did you make it?" he called.

Winthrop came forward wearily. "No luck at all." "Couldn't find it, eh?" "I counted every tie between the tank and that little ditch under the track. The entire stretch has been re-laid with new ties."

Overland whistled. Then he grinned. "You had a good healthy walk, any how," he observed. "It doesn't seem to worry you much," said Winthrop. "Nope. Now you're back, it don't. I reckon you done your best. Angels can do no less. Buck up, Billy! You are limper'n a second hand porous plaster. Here, take a shot at this. That will stiffen your knees some. Did you meet up with anybody?"

"Not a soul. I thought I should freeze last night, though. I didn't imagine the desert could get so cold." "Never mind," said Overland Red. "I've struck it rich here." And he explained at length. "Do you remember," replied Winthrop, "that I said, a day or two ago, that I shouldn't be surprised if the lost gold were in the very canyon where we camped? I claim precedence of divination, autosuggestion and right of eminent domain. I shall not waive my prerogative."

"I never owned one," said Overland. "But afore I'll let you come any style over me I'll have one made with a silk linin' and di'monds in the buttons just as soon as the claim gets to payin' good. Say, pardner, it's free gold and coarse. I wisht Collie was here—the little cuss."

"Collie?" "Uhuh! The kid I was tellin' you about that I adopted back in Albuquerque. He's got a share in this here deal by rights. He invested his eight rollers and four bits in the chances of my findin' the stuff. It was all the coin he had at the time. You see, I was campin' up on the Moonstone for a change of air, and Collie and me had a meetin' of the board of directors. The board votes unanimous to invest the paid in capital in a suit of new jeans for the president, which was me. I got 'em on now. You see, I had to be dollied up to look the part so I could catch a come on and get me grubstake."

those things?" asked Winthrop after they had inspected the abandoned camp. "Not burn them?" "Yep; every strap and tie string," replied Overland, gathering together the dead prospector's few effects. "Cause why? Well, Billy, if this claim ain't fied on—and I reckon it ain't—why, we fies on her as the original locators. Nobody gets wise to anything, and it saves the chance of gettin' jumped. The bunch over there would make it interestin' for us if they knowed we was goin' to fies on it. They'd put up a fight by law, and mebbe one not by law. Sabe?" "I think so. Going to burn that little er—cradle arrangement too?" "Yep. Sorry, 'cause it's wood, and wood is wood here. That little rocker is a cradle, all right, for rockin' them



They Drew Nearer the Fire and Smoked in the Chill Silence.

yella babies in and then out. The hand that rocks that cradle hard enough rules the world, as the pote says."

They worked steadily until evening. They staked out their respective and adjoining claims, dropped the rusted tools in the bottomless crevice and removed the last shred and vestige of a previous occupancy.

"This here's been too easy," said Overland as he sliced bacon for the evening meal. "When things comes as easy as this you want to watch out for a change in the weather. We ain't through with the bunch yet."

After the evening meal they drew nearer the fire and smoked in the chill silence. The flames threw strange dancing shadows on the opposite cliff. Winthrop, mindful of Overland's advice, slipped on his coat as the night deepened. "About your adoptin' a disguise," he began. "I should think you would look well enough clean shaved and dressed in some stylish, rough tweed. You have fine shoulders and—"

"Hold on, Billy! I'm a livin' statoo. I know. But listen! I got to go the limit to look the part. You can't iron the hoof marks out of my mug in a hundred years. The old desert and the border towns and the bottle burned 'em in to stay. Them kind of looks don't go with business clothes. I got to look fly—jest like I didn't know no better."

"Perhaps you are right. You seem to make a go of everything you tackle." "Yep! Some things I made go so fast I ain't caught up with 'em yet. You know I used to wonder if a fella's face would ever come smooth again in heaven. That was a spell ago. I ain't been worryin' about it none lately."

"How old are you?" "Me? I'm huggin' thirty-five close. But not so close I can't hear thirty-six loppin' up right smart." "Only thirty-five?" exclaimed Winthrop; then quickly, "Oh, I beg your pardon!" "That's nothin'," said Overland generally. "It ain't the 'thirty-five' that makes me feel sore, it's the 'only.' You said it all then. But believe me, pardner, the thirty-five have been all red chips."

"Well, you have lived!" sighed Winthrop. "And come close to forgettin' to once or twice. Anyhow, speakin' of heaven, I'd jest as soon take my chances with this here mug of mine, what shows I earned all I got, as with one of them there dead fish faces I seen on some guys that never done nothin' better or worse than get up for breakfast."

Winthrop smiled. "Yes. And you believe in a heaven, then?" "From mornin' till night. And then more than ever. Not your kind of a heaven, or mebbe any other guy's. But as sure as you're goin' to create them new boots by settin' 'em too close to the fire there's somethin' up there windin' up the works regular and seein' that she ticks right and once in awhile chuckin' out old wheels and puttin' in new ones. Jest take a look at them stars! Do you reckon they're runnin' right on time and not jumpin' the track and dodgin' each other that slick—jest because there was throwed out of a star factory promiscuous like a shovel of gravel? Sure, there's somethin' runnin' the big works, but whether me or you is goin' to get a look in—goin' to be let in on it—why, that's different."

Winthrop drew back from the fire and crossed his legs. He leaned forward, gazing at the flames. From the distance came the howl of coyotes.

(Continued next week)

The Home Circle Column

Pleasant Evening Reveries—A Column Dedicated to Tired Mothers as They Join the Home Circle at Evening Tide

Crude Thots from the Editorial Pen

SCHOOL OF MOTHERHOOD

There have been innumerable projects for schools or school courses in the art and science of motherhood. Some of them may have been successful, for all anyone knows, although in the rush of news on the advance styles in corsets and earrings and other necessities there seems no place for reviewing the motherhood situation. But the will of the late Mrs. Lizzie Morrill Palmer, of Detroit, is attracting some attention, momentarily. Mrs. Palmer left something like one million dollars to found a school of motherhood. The million surely tinkles in the ear, even if motherhood doesn't mean much to some mothers.

Mrs. Palmer's idea went deeper than the mere vocal and instrumental teaching of motherhood. And properly so. For the fundamentals of motherhood can be picked from a ninety-eight cent dictionary, while what we want to see taught is the responsibility, not the medicine of it.

Mrs. Palmer understood that. Her plans provide for no ordinary clinic in obstetrics, but for a school that shall train girls of ten years and upwards, mentally, morally, physically, and religiously for the discharge of the functions of wifehood and motherhood and the management, supervision and inspiration of the home. Poor girls will receive the training free. Rich girls will pay—if it should strangely happen that any girls with money to spend are interested in such affairs.

The will of Mrs. Palmer may never be executed in its finest intention. Ours is a busy world, and motherhood is hardly more than an incident as some women view it. But it's a good will. The beautiful idealism of it may impress a few, even if people do snort at the thought of going to school for posterity's sake.

A trifle eccentric, no doubt, but hearken to these words of Mrs. Palmer:

"I hold profoundly the conviction that the welfare of any community is divinely and hence inseparably dependent upon the qualities of its motherhood and the spirit and charity of its homes."

It sounds like the music of an old song. You couldn't fox trot to it to save your soul, but it does have a certain melody.

Boys, do not forget that profanity is a mark of low breeding. Show us the man who commands the best respect; an oath never trembles on his tongue. Read the catalogue of crime. Inquire into the character of those who depart from virtue. Without a single exception you will find them to be profane. Truth is one of the rarest gems. Many a youth has been lost to society by allowing it to tarnish and foolishly throwing it away. If this gem still shines in your bosom, suffer nothing to displace it or dim its luster.

It has been well said that a single bitter word may disquiet an entire family for a whole day. One surly glance casts a gloom over the whole household, while a smile, like a gleam of sunshine, may light the darkest

and weariest hour. Like unexpected flowers springing up along our dusty road, full of fresh fragrance and beauty, so kind words and gentle acts and sweet dispositions make glad the home where peace and blessing dwell. No matter how humble the abode if it be thus garnished with grace and sweetened with kindness and smiles, the heart will turn longingly toward it from all the tumults of the world, and home, if it be ever so homely, will be the dearest spot beneath the circuit of the sky.

The best sauce for any meat is cheerfulness. Never grumble while eating; laughter aids digestion.

True ladyhood is heightened rather than lessened by housewifery traits.

If you love, love more. If you hate, hate less. Life is too short to spend in hating any one. Why war against a mortal who is going the same road with us? Why not expand the flower of life and happiness by learning to love, by teaching those who are near and dear the beautiful lessons? Your hands may be hard, but your heart need not be. Your form may be bony or ugly, but do you know that the most beautiful flowers grow in the most rugged, unsheltered places? The palace for care, the cottage for love. Not that there is no love in a mansion; but somehow if we are not very careful, business will crowd all there is of beauty out of the heart. This is why God has given the Sabbaths and Saturday nights, that we may leave business and have a little heart cleaning.

Take the trouble to get well acquainted with your children, and to interest yourself in their pastime, etc. By this means they will learn to trust and confide in you, and are not easily led away by outside influence.

The person that has wiped wet eyes, moistened parched tongues, put a new star in the sky of a dark life, added beauty and bloom, the song of birds and the blossom of flowers to the lot of another is—whether he be rich or poor, known or unknown, bond or free—one of God's nobility.

THE NEWSPAPER

Of all men the newspaper men who are to select from the world's doings and the community's doings that with which the public is to be made familiar, needs to be wise and judicious, and to lay aside his dislikes and clear himself of all malice. If the newspaper which you take is to decide what information concerning the doings, good and bad, in the world and in the community, you and your family are to be made familiar with, have you not also a duty as to the kind of newspaper you take—whether it be one that parades and patronizes vice and crime, and sneers at goodness and decency, or one that does the reverse of this? Does it make any difference whether you admit, daily or weekly, to your household, a paper which has regard for truthfulness and fairness,

or one which will lie and slander at any time to suit its purpose?

To the newspapers are committed great responsibilities, and of it there must be corresponding demand. The responsibility of the paper, of those who make it and give it its character, is great and this responsibility ought to be exercised under the power and guidance of noble principle. But the paper and they who make it have not the only responsibility. They who select the paper which they will take and patronize have a responsibility for their selection. He who supports a paper in any way is responsible in a measure for the character of that paper. This community is responsible for the kind of papers which it encourages and supports; and especially is there a responsibility as to the character of the paper admitted to the home—a responsibility for admitting it. There is no place where a man should more carefully and firmly exercise his moral and Christian principle than in the selection of his paper.

You know that if the floor is clean, labor has been performed to make it so. You know that if you can take from your drawer a clean shirt whenever you want it, somebody's fingers have toiled. Why don't you come out with it hearty. "Why, how pleasant you make things look, wife, or "I am much obliged to you taking so much pains." If you gave a hundred and sixtieth part of the compliments you almost choked them with before they were married; if you would stop the banding of who you are going to have when number one is dead (such things wives may laugh at, but they sink deep sometimes) fewer women would seek for other sources of happiness.

It doesn't pay to gossip about one's neighbors. Let us have only kind thoughts and good words for every one, and be sure to lend a helping hand whenever occasion calls for it. In trying to lighten another's burden, we forget our own, and the kind thoughts we send out come back to us like echoes.

Should an acquaintance tread on your dress—your best, your very best—and by accident tear it, how profuse you are with your, "Never mind—don't think of it—I don't care at all." If a husband does it he gets a frown of nothing worse; if a child, it is chastised. Ah, these are little things, say you. They tell on the heart, be assured, little as they are. A gentleman stops at a friend's house and finds it in confusion. He doesn't see anything to apologize for—never thinks of such matters—everything is all right, cold supper, cold room, crying children, "perfectly comfortable." He goes home. His wife has been taking care of the sick ones and worked her life almost out. "Don't see why things can't be kept in better order—there never were such cross children before."

Everyone of our girls likes to be as beautiful as she can. That is right and proper, but she must remember that it is not alone the smile of the pretty face, the tint of the delicate complexion, the luring glance of the eye, the beauty and symmetry of the person, nor the costly dress or decorations that compose a girl's loveliness. It is far more to be found in her pleasing deportment, her chaste conversation, the sensibility and open disposition, her sympathy with those in adversity, her comfort and relief to the distressed, and above all, her real companionship, that constitutes true loveliness.



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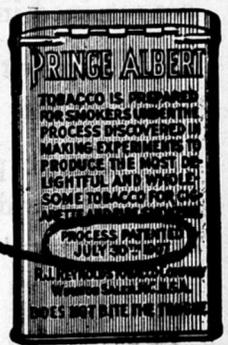
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