

BURNING DAYLIGHT

By JACK LONDON

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Illustrations by Dearborn Melvill

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SYNOPSIS.

Elam Harnish, known all through Alaska as "Burning Daylight," celebrates his 25th birthday with a crowd of miners at the Circle City Tivoli. The dance leads to heavy gambling, in which over \$100,000 is staked. Harnish loses his money and his mine but wins the mail contract. He starts on his mail trip with dogs and sledges, telling his friends that he will be in the big Yukon gold strike at the start. Burning Daylight makes a sensational raid run a row country with the mail, appears at the Tivoli and is now ready to join his friends in a dash to the new gold fields. Deciding that gold will be found in the upper river district Harnish buys two tons of flour, which he declares will be worth its weight in gold, but when he arrives with his flour he finds the big flat desolate. A comrade discovers gold and Daylight reaps a rich harvest. He goes to Dawson, becomes the most prominent figure in the Klondike and defeats a combination of capitalists in a vast mining deal. He returns to civilization and amid the bewildering complications of high finance, Daylight finds that he has been led to invent his eleven millions in a manipulated scheme. He goes to New York, and confronting his dishonest partners with a revolver, he threatens to kill them if his money is not returned. They are cowed, return their stealings and Harnish goes back to San Francisco where he meets his fate in Dede Mason, a pretty stenographer. He makes large investments and gets into the political ring. For a rest he goes to the country. Daylight gets deeper into high finance in San Francisco, but often the longing for the simple life nearly overcomes him. Dede Mason buys a horse and Daylight meets her in her saddle trips. One day he asks Dede to go with him on one more ride, his purpose being to ask her to marry him and they rather away, she trying to analyze her feelings. Dede tells Daylight that her happiness could not be with a money manipulator. Daylight undertakes to build up a great industrial community. He is insistent that she marry him and yet hopes to win her.

CHAPTER XVIII.

When the ferry system began to run, and the time between Oakland and San Francisco was demonstrated to be cut in half, the tide of Daylight's terrific expenditure started to turn. Not that it really did turn, for he promptly went into further investments. Thousands of lots in his residence tracts were sold, and thousands of homes were being built. Factory sites also were selling, and business properties in the heart of Oakland. All this tended to a steady appreciation in the value of Daylight's huge holdings. But, as of old, he had his hunch and was riding it. Already he had begun borrowing from the banks. The magnificent profits he made on the land he sold were turned into more land, into more development; and instead of paying off old loans, he contracted new ones. As he had pyramided in Dawson City, he now pyramided in Oakland; but he did it with the knowledge that it was a stable enterprise rather than a risky placering boom.

Work on Daylight's dock system went on apace; yet it was one of those enterprises that consumed money dreadfully and that could not be accomplished as quickly as a ferry system. Not content with manufacturing electricity for his street rail ways in the old-fashioned way, in power houses, Daylight organized the Sierra and Salvador Power Company. This immediately assumed large proportions. Crossing the San Joaquin Valley on the way from the mountains, and plunging through the Contra Costa hills, there were many towns, and even a robust city, that could be supplied with power, also with light; and it became a street and house-lighting project as well. As soon as the purchase of power sites in the Sierras was rushed through, the survey parties were out and building operations begun. And so it went. There were a thousand maws into which he poured unceasing streams of money.

In the spring of the year the Great Panic came on. The first warning was when the banks began calling in their unprotected loans. Daylight promptly paid the first of several of his personal notes that were presented; then he divined that these demands but indicated the way the wind was going to blow, and that one of those terrific financial storms he had heard about was soon to sweep over the United States. How terrific this particular storm was to be he did not anticipate. Nevertheless, he took every precaution in his power and had no anxiety about his weathering it out.

And in the end, when early summer was on, everything began to mend. Came a day when Daylight did the unprecedented. He left the office an hour earlier than usual, and for the reason that for the first time since the panic there was not an item of work waiting to be done. He dropped into Hegan's private office, before leaving, for a chat, and as he stood up to go, he said—

"Hegan, we're all hunkadory. We're pulling out of the financial pawnshop in fine shape, and we'll get out without leaving one unredeemed pledge behind. The worst is over, and the end is in sight. Just tight rein for a couple more weeks, just a bit of a pinch or a flurry or so now and then, and we can let go and spit on our hands."

For once he varied his programme. Instead of going directly to his hotel, he started on a round of the bars and cafes, drinking a cocktail here and a cocktail there, and two or three when he encountered men he knew. It was after an hour or so of this that he dropped into the bar of the Parthenon for one last drink before going to dinner. By this time all his being was pleasantly warmed by the alcohol, and he was in the most genial and best of spirits. At the corner of the bar several young men were up to the old trick of resting their elbows and attempting to force each other's hands down. One broad-shouldered young giant never removed his elbow, but put down every hand that came against him. Daylight was interested. "It's Slosson," the barkeeper told him, in answer to his query. "He's the heavy-hammer thrower at the U. C. Broke all records this year, and the world's record on top of it. He's a husky all right all right."

Daylight nodded and went over to him, placing his own arm in opposition.

"I'd like to go you a flutter, son, on that proposition," he said.

The young man laughed and locked hands with him; and to Daylight's astonishment it was his own hand that was forced down on the bar.

"Hold on," he muttered. "Just one more flutter. I reckon I wasn't just ready that time."

Again the hands locked. It happened quickly. The offensive attack of Daylight's muscles slipped instantly into defence, and, resisting vainly, his hand was forced over and down. Daylight was dazed. It had been no trick. The skill was equal, or, if anything, the superior skill had been his.



"We're Pulling Out of the Financial Pawnshop in Fine Shape."

Strength, sheer strength, had done it. He called for the drinks, and, still dazed and pondering, held up his own arm and looked at it as at some new strange thing. He did not know this arm. It certainly was not the arm he had carried around with him all the years. The old arm? Why, it would have been play to turn down that young husky's. But this arm—he continued to look at it with such dubious perplexity as to bring a roar of laughter from the young men.

This laughter aroused him. He joined in it at first, and then his face slowly grew grave. He leaned toward the hammer-thrower.

"Son," he said, "let me whisper a secret. Get out of here and quit drinking before you begin."

The young fellow flushed angrily, but Daylight held steadily on.

"You listen to your dad, and let him say a few. I'm a young man myself, only I ain't. Let me tell you, several years ago for me to turn your hand down would have been like committing assault and battery on a kindergarten."

Slosson looked his incredulity, while the others grinned and clustered around Daylight encouragingly.

"Son, I ain't given to preaching. This is the first time I ever come to the penitent form, and you put me there yourself—hard. I've seen a few in my time, and I ain't fastidious so as you can notice it. But let me tell you right now that I'm worth the devil alone knows how many millions, and that I'd sure give it all, right here on the bar, to turn down your hand. Which means I'd give the whole shooting match just to be back where I was before I quit sleeping under the stars and come into the hen-coops of cities to drink cocktails and lift up my feet and ride. Son, that's what's the matter with me, and that's the way I feel about it. The game ain't worth the candle. You just take care of yourself, and roll my advice over once in a while. Good night."

He turned and lurched out of the place, the moral effect of his utterance largely spoiled by the fact that he was so patently full while he uttered it.

Still in a daze, Daylight made to his hotel, accomplished his dinner, and prepared for bed.

"The damned young whippersnapper!" he muttered. "Put my hand down easy as you please. My hand!"

He held up the offending member and regarded it with stupid wonder. The hand that had never been beaten! The hand that had made the Circle City giants wince! And a kid from college, with a laugh on his face, had put it down—twice! Dede was right. He was not the same man. The situation would bear more serious looking into than he had ever given it. But this was not the time. In the morning, after a good sleep, he would give it consideration.

CHAPTER XIX.

Daylight awoke with the familiar parched mouth and lips and throat, took a long drink of water from the pitcher beside his bed, and gathered up the train of thought where he had

rest of slaves. It tied him fast. Which was better? he asked himself. All this was Dede's own thought. It was what she had meant when she prayed he would go broke. He held up his offending right arm. It wasn't the same old arm. Of course she could not love that arm and that body as she had loved the strong, clean arm and body of years before. He didn't like that arm and body himself. A young whippersnapper had been able to take liberties with it. It had gone back on him. He sat up suddenly. No, he had gone back on it! He had gone back on himself. He had gone back on Dede. She was right, a thousand times right, and she had sense enough to know it, sense enough to refuse to marry a money-slave with a whisky-rotted carcass.

He got out of bed and looked at



His Arms Went Out and Around Her.

himself in the long mirror on the wardrobe door. He wasn't pretty. The old-time lean cheeks were gone. These were heavy, seeming to hang down by their own weight. He looked for the lines of cruelty Dede had spoken of, and he found them, and he found the harshness in the eyes as well, the eyes that were muddy now after all the cocktails of the night before, and of the months and years before. He looked at the clearly defined pouches that showed under his eyes, and they shocked him. He rolled up the sleeve of his pajamas. No wonder the hammer-thrower had put his hand down. Those weren't muscles. A rising tide of fat had submerged them. He stripped off the pajama coat. Again he was shocked, this time by the bulk of his body. It wasn't pretty. The lean stomach had become a paunch. The rigid muscles of chest and shoulders and abdomen had broken down into rolls of flesh. And this was age. Then there drifted across the field of vision of his mind's eye the old man he had encountered at Glen Ellen, coming up the hillside through the fires of sunset, white-headed and white-bearded, eighty-four, in his hand the pail of foaming milk and in his face all the warm glow and content of the passing summer day. That had been age. "Yes sree, eighty-four, and spryer than most," he could hear the old man say.

Next he remembered Ferguson, the little man who had scuttled into the road like a rabbit, the one-time managing editor of a great newspaper, who was content to live in the chaparral along with his spring of mountain water and his hand-reared and manicured fruit trees. Ferguson had solved a problem. A weakling and an alcoholic, he had run away from the doctors and the chicken-coop of a city, and soaked up health like a thirsty sponge. He sat down suddenly on the bed, startled by the greatness of the idea that had come to him. He did not sit long. His mind, working in its customary way, like a steel trap, canvassed the idea in all its bearings. It was big—bigger than anything he had faced before. And he faced it squarely, picked it up in his two hands and turned it over and around and looked at it. The simplicity of it delighted him. He chuckled over it, reached his decision, and began to dress. Midway in the dressing, he stopped in order to use the telephone.

Dede was the first he called up. "Don't come to the office this morning," he said. "I'm coming out to see you for a moment."

He called up others. He ordered his motor-car. To Jones he gave instructions for the forwarding of Bob and Wolf to Glen Ellen. Hegan he surprised by asking him to look up the deed of the Glen Ellen ranch and make out a new one in Dede Mason's name. "Who?" Hegan demanded. "Dede Mason," Daylight replied imperturbably—"the 'phone must be indistinct this morning. De-de Ma-son. Got it?"

Half an hour later he was flying out to Berkeley. And for the first time the big red car halted directly before the house. Dede offered to receive him in the parlor, but he shook his head and nodded toward her rooms.

"In there," he said. "No other place would suit."

As the door closed, his arms went out and around her. Then he stood with his hands on her shoulders and looking down into her face.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

HAD THROAT TROUBLE SINCE CHILDHOOD

All Treatments Failed. Relieved by Peruna.



Mrs. Wm. Hohmann, 2704 Lincoln Ave., Chicago, Ill., writes:

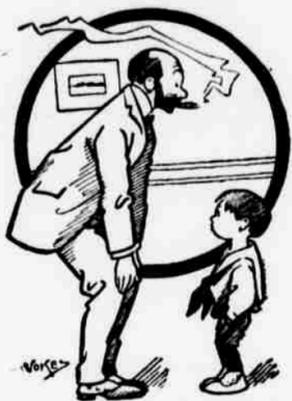
"I suffered with catarrh of the bronchial tubes and had a terrible cough ever since a child. 'I would sit up in bed with pillow propped up behind me, but still the cough would not let me sleep. I thought and everybody else that I had consumption.'

"So reading the papers about Peruna I decided to try, without the least bit of hope that it would do me any good. But after taking three bottles I noticed a change. My appetite got better, so I kept on, never discouraged.

Finally I seemed not to cough so much and the pains in my chest got better and I could rest at night.

"I am well now and cured of a chronic cough and sore throat. I cannot tell you how grateful I am, and I cannot thank Peruna enough. It has cured where doctors have failed and I talk Peruna wherever I go, recommend it to everybody. People who think they have consumption better give it a trial."

ABOVE MERE STORY TELLER.



Willie (aged seven)—Say, paw, what's a raconteur?

Father—A fellow who wears a dress suit when he tells stories.

Man and His Happiness.

"Man is the creator of his own happiness; it is the arena of a life lived in harmony with high ideals. For what a man has, he may be dependent on others; what he is, rests with him alone. What he obtains in life is but acquisition; what he attains, is growth. Happiness is the soul's joy in the possession of the intangible."—From Self-Control, by William George Jordan.

The Proportion.

Knickner—Did he speak at a dinner?
Hocker—No; he ate at a talk.

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To
Your Table
Untouched by human hands—
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A table dainty, made of white Indian corn—presenting delicious flavour and wholesome nourishment in new and appetizing form.

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