

THE LAST SHOT

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by FREDERICK PALMER



SYNOPSIS

CHAPTER I—At their home on the frontier between the Browns and Grays Marta Galland and her mother, entertaining Colonel Westerling of the Grays, see Captain Lanstron, staff intelligence officer of the Browns, injured by a fall in his aeroplane.

CHAPTER II—Ten years later. Westerling, nominal vice but real chief of staff, reinforces South La Tir, meditates on war, and speculates on the comparative ages of himself and Marta, who is visiting in the Gray Capital.

CHAPTER III—Westerling calls on Marta. She tells him of her teaching children the follies of war and martial patriotism, begs him to prevent war while he is chief of staff, and predicts that if he makes war against the Browns he will not win.

CHAPTER IV—On the march with the 53rd of the Browns Private Stransky, anarchist, decries war and played-out patriotism and is placed under arrest. Colonel Lanstron overbearing, begs him off saying the anarchist will fight well when enraged and is "all man."

CHAPTER V—Lanstron calls on Marta at her home. He talks with Feller, the gardener. Marta tells Lanstron that she believes Feller to be a spy. Lanstron confesses it is true.

CHAPTER VI—Lanstron shows Marta a telephone which Feller has concealed in a secret passage under the tower for use to benefit the Browns in war emergencies, pointing out its value as being in the center of the fighting zone in case of war. Marta consents for it and Feller to remain for the present. Lanstron declares his love for Marta.

CHAPTER VII—Westerling and the Gray premier plan to use a trivial international affair to ferment warlike patriotism in army and people and striking before declaring war. Partow, Brown chief of staff, and Lanstron, made vice, discuss the trouble, and the Brown defense. Partow reveals his plans to Lanstron.

CHAPTER VIII—At the frontier the two armies lie crouched for attack and defense. In the town with the non-combatants fleeing from the danger zone. Martha hears her child pupils recite the peace oath.

CHAPTER IX—The Gray army crosses the boarder line and attacks. The Browns check them. Artillery, infantry, aeroplanes, dirigibles engage. Stransky, rising to make the anarchist speech of his life, draws the Gray artillery fire. Nicked by a shrapnel splinter he goes Berserk and fights—"all a man."

CHAPTER X—Martha has her first glimpse of war in its modern, cold, scientific, murderous brutality. She allows the telephone to remain.

CHAPTER XI—The Browns fall back to the Galland house. Stransky forages. Martha sees a night attack.

CHAPTER XII—The Grays attack in force. The call of the fight too strong for Feller, he leaves his secret telephone and goes back to his guns. Hand to hand fighting. The Browns fall back again.

"I tell nothing, but you tell me everything!" said Bouchard's hawk eyes. He was old-fashioned; he looked his part, which was one of the many points of difference between him and Lanstron as a chief of intelligence.

It lacked one minute to four when Hedworth Westerling, chief of staff in name as well as power now, alighted from the gray automobile that turned in at the Galland drive. His Excellency had not occupied his new headquarters as soon as he expected, but this could have no influence on results. If he had lost fifty thousand men on the first two days and two hundred thousand since the war had begun, should he allow this to disturb his well-being of body or mind? His well-being of body and mind meant the ultimate saving of lives.

Confidence was reflected in Westerling's bearing and in his smile of command as he passed through the staff rooms, Turcas and Bouchard in his train, with tacit approval of the arrangements. Finally, Turcas, now vice-chief of staff, and the other chiefs awaited his pleasure in the library, which was to be his sanctum. On the massive seventeenth-century desk lay a number of reports and suggestions. Westerling ran through them with accustomed swiftness of sifting and then turned to his personal aide.

"Tell Francois that I will have tea on the veranda."

From the fact that he took with him the papers that he had laid aside, subordinate generals, with the gift of unspoken directions which is a part of their profession, understood that he

meant to go over the subjects requiring special attention while he had tea. "Everything is going well—well!" he added.

"Well!" ran the unspoken communication of confidence through the staff. So well that His Excellency was calmly taking tea on the veranda! For the indefatigable Turcas the detail; for Westerling the front of Jove.

He had told Marta only two weeks ago that he should see her again if war came; and war had come. With the inviting prospect of a few holiday moments in which to continue the interview that had been abruptly concluded in a hotel reception-room, he started down the terrace steps. Above the second terrace he saw a crown of woman's hair—hair of jet abundance, shading a face that brought familiar completeness to the scene. Their glances met where the path ended at the second terrace flight; hers shot with a beam of restrained and questioning good humor that spoke at least a truce to the invader.

"You called sooner than I expected," she said in a note of equivocal pleasantry.

"Or I," he rejoined with a shade of triumph, the politest of triumph. He was a step above her, her head on a level with the pocket of his blouse. His square shoulders, commanding height, and military erectness were thus emphasized, as was her own feminine slightness.

"I want to thank you," she said. "As becomes a soldier, your forethought was expressed in action." It was the promptness of the men you sent to look after the garden which saved the uprooted plants before they were past recovery.

"I wished it for your sake and somewhat for my own sake to be the same that it was in the days when I used to call," he said graciously. "Tea was from four to five, do you remember? Will you join me? I have just ordered it."

A generous, pleasant conqueror, this! No one knew better than Westerling how to be one when he chose. He was something of an actor. Leaders of men of his type usually are.

"Why, yes. Very gladly!" she assented with no undue cordiality and no undue constraint, quite as if there were no war.

Neutrality could not be better impersonated, he thought, than in the even cleaving of her lips over the words. They seemed to say that a storm had come and gone and a new set of masters had taken the place of the old. As they approached the veranda Francois was placing the tea things.

"Just like the old days, isn't it?" he exclaimed with his first sip, convinced that the officers' commissary supplied excellent tea in the field.

"Yes, for the moment—if we forget the war!" she replied, and looked away, preoccupied, toward the landscape.

If we forget the war! She bore on the words rather grimly. The change that he had noted between the Marta of the hotel reception-room and the Marta of the moment was not altogether the work of ten years. It had developed since she was in the capital. In these three weeks war had been brought to her door. She had been under heavy fire. Yet this subject of the war was the one which he, as an invader, considered himself bound to avoid.

"We do forget it at tea, don't we?" he asked.

"At least we need not speak of it!" she replied.

"I am staying tonight. I was going to ask if you wouldn't remain on the veranda while I go over these papers. It—it would be very cozy and pleasant."

"Why, yes," she agreed with evident pleasure.

Turcas came, in answer to Westerling's ring. The orders and suggestions on the table seemed to be the product of this lath of a man, the vice-chief, but a lath of steel, not wood, who appeared a runner trained for a race of intellects in the scratch class. One by one, almost perfunctorily, Westerling gave his assent as he passed the papers to Turcas; while Turcas's dry voice, coming from between a narrow opening of the thin lips, gave his reasons with a rapid-fire's precision in answer to his chief's inquiries.

With each order somewhere along that frontier some unit of a great organism would respond. The reserves from this position would be transferred to that; such a position would be felt out before dark by a reconnaissance in force, however costly; the rapid-firers of the 19th Division would be transferred to the 20th; despite the 37th Brigade's losses, it would still form the advance; General So-and-So would be superseded after his failure of yesterday; Colonel So-and-So would take his place as acting major-general; more care must be exercised in recommendations for bronze crosses, lest their value so depreciate that officers and men would lack incentive to win them.

Marta was having a look behind the

scenes at the fountainhead of great events. Power! power! The absolute power of the soldier in the saddle, with premier and government and all the institutions of peace only a dim background for the processes of war! Opposite her was a man who could make and unmake not only generals but even the destinies of peoples. By every sign he enjoyed his power for its own sake. There must be a chief of the five millions, which were as a moving forest of destruction, and here was the chief, his strength reflected in the strong muscles of his short neck as he turned his head to listen to Turcas. Marta recalled the contrast between Westerling and Lanstron as they faced each other after the wreck of the aeroplane ten years ago; the iron invincibility of the elder's sturdy, mature figure and the alert, high-strung invincibility of the slighter figure of the younger man.

He had taken up a paper thoughtfully after Turcas withdrew, when he looked up to Marta in answer to a movement in her chair. She had bent forward in a pose that freed her figure from the chair-back in an outline of suppleness and firmness; her lips were parted, showing a faint line of the white of her teeth, and he caught her gazing at him in a kind of wondering admiration. But she dropped her eyelids instantly and said deliberately, less to him than to herself:

"You have the gift!"

No tea-table flattery that, he knew, only the reflection of a fact whose existence had been borne in on her by observation.

"The gift? How?" he inquired, speaking to the fringe of hair that half hid her lowered face.

She looked up, smiling brightly.

"You don't know what gift! Not the pianist's! Not the poet's! Why, of course, the supreme gift of command! The thing that made you chief of staff! And the war goes well for you, doesn't it?"

WADSWORTH

William Huston, for many years a resident of Wadsworth, died Saturday at the home of his niece, Mrs. Quintus Allbright, at Young's Crossing, near Kenmore. He was 78 years old and had been gradually declining for the past year. He removed from this place about a year ago on the death of his wife. As marshal of Wadsworth and later as village assessor, he was well known here. The remains were brought here Monday, services being held in the Methodist church at 3 o'clock Monday afternoon, and interment made in Woodlawn cemetery.

Clarence Hartman, Saturday morning while working at the Wadsworth lumber mills, had his right hand caught in the machinery and drawn into the sander. Several ligaments were torn. He will not be able to use the hand for several weeks.

Dan Rickard is slowly improving after a serious illness, and is able to be up again.

Mrs. Charles Schaffter and son, of Rittman, were visitors at the home of J. F. Rutledge on Saturday.

Attorney F. O. Smoyer spent Friday in Columbus.

Misses Martha Mills, Mildred Rickard and Mary Overholt spent Saturday in Akron.

Mrs. A. G. Abbott's Sunday school class of the Reformed church was entertained at an enjoyable social gathering by Miss Mabel Hartman Friday night.

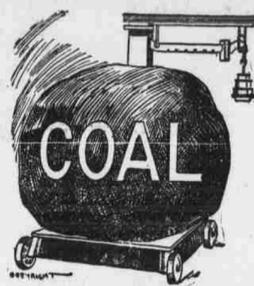
Miss Houseworth, an employe at the Kreider hotel, is recovering from a severe attack of appendicitis.

A temperature of ten degrees below zero here Tuesday morning made itself felt on school attendance. Many of the pupils have a long way to travel, and as a result, many remained away from their classes.

Rowdyism in local moving picture shows has been brought to a sudden end by the arrest of five young men Monday night. Probation sentences were handed out. The lesson taught by Mayor Boyer will be sufficient to insure theater goers against annoyance in the future, he says.

There is still some hope of getting the proposed C. B. & Z. street railway, which was the object of much consideration here some months ago, to run through Wadsworth.

Charles Farr, Wadsworth representative, went to Cleveland on Monday to confer with the board of directors of the company in regard to getting the road in case Wadsworth money and right of way is secured.



Still Coming!

The best coal money can buy. We are sure you will need some before long.

Phone your needs to

Medina Coal Co.

Phone 1171

Office at O. C. Shepard Co. store on Saturday evening

The Man Who Wants To Borrow Money

and the man who wants a safe place to keep his money, a place where he can leave it with the certainty of getting all or any part of it at any time, are both appreciated patrons at this bank.

We do a general commercial banking business—we co-operate with and assist our customers in the up-building of their business.

We are constantly gaining new patrons and shall be pleased to number you among them.

4 Per Cent Allowed on Savings Accounts.

OLD PHOENIX NATIONAL BANK

MEDINA, OHIO.

Edwards Edwards

With the approach of another Christmas Season we have been busy gathering together a fine assortment of our good things to eat.

Whether your needs be large or small we shall be ready to give you the very best service possible.

- Xmas Oranges selected with care—not bought at random.
- Figs and Dates—Fancy Layer and Candied Figs.
- Bulk Dates and Dromedary Packages.
- Malaga Grapes—Fine Fresh Stock.
- Apples, Bananas, Grape Fruit—Never Better Than This Season.
- Xmas Candy—Made from Pure Sugar—Assorted Chocolates.
- Creams and Bon Bons—Don't Feed the Little Ones Cheap Candy.
- Fancy Groceries for Xmas. OMEGA Canned Goods—Corn, Peas, Lima Beans, Tomatoes and Succotash.

Try our GOLDEN KERNEL CORN—something great at 18 cents. We could mention a good many more articles just as fine and good as the above but we want you to come and see for yourself. No long waits or short answers here.

A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all.

Edwards Grocery

CITY MARKET

The Market of Quality

Remember when you buy here you buy the best. We use all our customers alike. We always aim to sell the best goods at the lowest possible prices. WATCH OUR ADS.

SPECIAL SATURDAY

- Steer Beef Pot Roasts 14c per lb.
- Rib Boiling Beef 12½c per lb.
- Pork Sausage (Sage) only 12½c per lb.
- Smoker Sausage 14c per lb.
- Whole Pork Shoulder 13c per lb.
- Pork Roasts (Loin) 16c per lb.
- Pork Chops and Steak 16c per lb.
- Liver Pudding 3 lbs. 25c
- Chickens 18c and 20c per lb.
- Sauer Kraut 6 lbs. for 25c
- Fresh Halibut Oysters

Don't forget we will have a full line of fine turkeys, ducks and chickens for Xmas.

We have made special arrangements to have plenty of fine SUET for your Xmas puddings.

Come and get your Contest Tickets.

A nice calendar for every one.

Don't forget our chicken sausage at 3c per lb.

Yours for Business,

W. G. STEINGASS

2c, 4c and 5c a Pound Less

Not Much, But TOO Important to Neglect

BUT HARK!

On Dec. 1, we adopted the C. O. D. system, and that means a reduction of 2, 4, and 5 cents a pound for cash under the price that any other dealer can sell meat for.

- Beef Roast 12 to 14c
- Beef steak, all kinds 16c
- Pork Roast 14 to 16c
- Pork Chops and Steak 16 to 18c
- Home-made Sausage 14c, or 3 lbs. 38c
- Home-made Pudding 4 lbs. 25c

HENRY YOUNG'S Cash Market

Christmas Specials

- Turkeys, ducks, oysters, chickens 16, 17, 18c lb.
- Cranberries, grapes, grapefruit, Sun-kissed oranges, (all sizes), English walnuts, Brazil nuts and mixed nuts.
- Peanuts, fresh roasted 12c per lb.
- Dairy Butter 34c per lb.
- Bacon (our own cure) 20c per chunk
- Coffee, (our own roasting) . . . 25c, 30c and 35c lb.
- Celery, Cabbage, Onions, Sweet and Irish Potatoes

PICKLES

- Sweet Sour Mixed Dill

S. S. OATMAN

Children Cry FOR FLETCHER'S CASTORIA Children Cry FOR FLETCHER'S CASTORIA