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back stoop, a dressed white wolf skin tucked against the door, and once a great bunch of some wild red flowers. The Colonel took them all with conscious virtue, but Marion was filled with a sea of raging emotions. She came to watch in dread for the blue-shirted figure on the big roan, and yet her eyes followed with a desire that was at once ashamed and irresistible. He never looked toward the veranda. If he had, the seething feelings of the girl would have settled into disgust, which is simple and easy to handle. To save her life she could not get out of her mind the grotesque face of the half-breed. In vain she sought the Major's society and smiled on Lieutenant Brassier. A vague feeling of something primitive stirred in her blood at the memory of that unhidden, yet unasking and almost unconscious look of his eyes, with its mighty impression of unknown strength and savagery. A savagery that was not even held down, so abased was it. By the last of July the girl was in a state of vexation that drove her to Halsted. She had come to loathe herself for the thrill of something, she knew not what, which passed through her when this vagabond from behind the hills left his primitive offerings where she would find them.

"Send me home," she begged earnestly of her brother, but Halsted frowned and told her it was out of the question. The eighty-mile trail to the railroad was too uncertain just then, in view of vague rumors.

So Marion stayed off the veranda and did not meet her own eyes in the glass, for this shameful thing was eating into her heart. Then one night the flimsy barracks burned to the ground and with them went a part of the small garrison's ammunition. That was a signing of the rumors. The Colonel made hasty preparations, and none too soon, for one dawn there was a sudden flurry of shots on the plain south of the settlement, between them and the hills, and the women hurried to the dim windows to see a straggling line of feathered fighters spread out in attack. Upon a shoulder of the butte, outlined against the red bar of the morning, a statuesque figure in full war dress sat still upon his horse overlooking the scene below. Big Thunder had dared the Government. Mrs. Bergunson scanned the shadowy line beyond the town. "Three to one," she said quietly, unmindful of the frozen clutch on her arm of Marion Halsted, across whose face overwhelming horror was following stupid disbelief. Already the small garrison was grimly offering front. East from the Colonel's house a line of ancient boulders stood at regular intervals along the south front of the settlement. To the north was an old, low stockade. Along this line some of the men were deployed, and already the army rifles were spitting flame. At the little stone blockhouse the rest were formed in order. And then began a fight which, throughout its long day, made men sweat and curse or laugh, according to temperament, and the stakes of the individual in that dot of a settlement, and which added five years to the two women in the Colonel's house.

Big Thunder came down from the butte and led his hideous horde in charge after charge, only to be met with repulse from the sheltering line of boulders. Each time there was a roar of musketry and tumbling brown bodies sliding from ponies that galloped away. Behind the curtains of the house Marion Halsted stood swaying, unable to look away. An hour, two, three—with the continual blare of a battle, and the coming in every moment of women who wept or trembled, and the stanch bracing of the Colonel's wife. The girl from the East looked dully from the plain outside where the bodies wriggled and lay still, to the pretty dining room and the piano in the parlor beyond. She saw from up the line a man in uniform suddenly leap to his feet, throw up his hands and fall. His boulder ceased spitting fire. Another man that looked like Lieutenant Brassier came running, stooping, from the blockhouse to dart in and drop behind it. She stood, numb with speechless agony, the hand that held the curtain back stiff with cramp. "Come away," said Mrs. Bergunson pityingly, but she did not hear. Her dazed eyes rested on a huge rock just beyond the window, the last of the line, whose beetling front protected the house. For the last hour she had been watching its regular flash. Protruding beyond it was the black nose of a rifle and behind it lay two khaki-clad legs. Presently she became conscious that someone on the plain was firing directly at this rock. Every half-minute a bullet spat against it like a splash of bright water. And as regularly the black rifle screamed its defiance. It seemed, after awhile, that there was something personal, familiar, in it all, something that held her eyes and stirred her dull heart, as the click of a hated horse's hoofs had drawn her glance in the weeks gone. She looked a dumb question to the Colonel's wife, who had stopped beside her.

"Oh, that?" she said, grimly quoting the Colonel, "that is Tharon Sales. All hell couldn't stop Tharon Sales." Sudden thickening darkness came before her eyes, and in her breast was a straining longing to weep, a pathetic, weary thing that took sudden hold of her whole womanhood and shook it. She turned at last from the window and felt her way among the crying women to her room. It was almost dusk when she came out again, white and calm, and stood a moment in the parlor listening to the weary volleys—almost dusk outside, twilight in the Colonel's house. She ran against Halsted, black with the grime of powder, who took her in his arms and kissed her. "We've sent to Fort Kendrick for help," he said. "The Major—God bless him! He'll win through, Marion, you know why." But Marion went into the dining room, sick at heart at the words.

She stopped in the twilight. Two chairs stood together and on them, his face to the back, lay a limp figure in a blue shirt and ragged khaki trousers. A hand, black with the backspit of a gun, hung down. The almost grotesque face was pallid in the gloom. The girl stood still in the empty room. Under cover of the dusk they were

bringing into the back stoop stiff and limber figures in the army blue, figures that counted. She stood with her hands clenched at her sides. Within, her very nature heaved and broke up. Her throbbing heart stifled the breath in her throat. Softly, unresistingly, she went to the chairs and bent above their burden. It seemed as if her nearness penetrated into the darkness of his senses. The long black eyes opened sleepily and looked up at her through the gloom with absolute devotion—unhidden, dog-like worship, detached, abased, unasking and all-absorbing, an undying light that shone feebly through the dull stupidity of his wandering eyes. With a rasping sob Marion tore the chairs apart, sank on her knees and took into her arms the slender shoulders of Tharon Sales, the renegade. She kissed his lips passionately, woman-like, wildly, kissed his temple and the ragged black hair, gathering to her face the powder-blackened hand, while her sobs shook in the empty room and moved the crowd on the back stoop. Then she raised her voice and cried wildly for Halsted and Mrs. Bergunson and help, while in the midst of it all a bugle sounded down the twilight-shadowed prairie from the north, and Halsted and some others brought a light. Tharon Sales raised himself and the girl's breast was red. No one spoke and the guns outside changed their tune because of the cry of the bugle, and the girl, kneeling on the floor, saw in the face of the man that which filled the years that followed. For a long moment Tharon Sales looked into her eyes, looked as if the world was not, as if the glory of all dreams had fallen, as if there could be no more. Then he put his face against her throat and the summer breeze came in from the window, and the room was still, save for the weeping of the women.

Presently Halsted came and took Marion gently by the shoulder.

"Come," he said. But the girl looked up defiantly through her tears.

"I won't," she answered brokenly. "I have surrendered!"

But Halsted loosed her arms and laid their burden back upon the chairs.

Tharon Sales was dead amid his glory.

—Vingie E. Roe—Town Topics.

PESSIMISM.

Mental dyspepsia.

The stepmother of despair.

Moral blindness boasting of its clear vision.

Poisoning the waters of another's hope.

The kindergarten stage of atheism.

Viewing life as a proofreader, with eyes trained to see only error.

Universal suspicion on the rampage.

Mental color blindness that sees only black.

Living in an atmosphere of sneer, snarl and sarcasm.

Dissecting a nightingale to prove it has no song.

—Sunday Magazine.

There has never been a time in the history of the intermountain country when so much bridge and construction work has been attempted as is now under way or contemplated in Utah, Idaho, Montana, Colorado, Oregon, Nevada, Arizona and other intermountain and western states.

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