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The LAND OF FORGOTTEN MEN

by Edison Marshall

BEGIN HERE TODAY.

Peter Newhall, Augusta, Ga., flees to Alaska, after being told by Ivan Ishmin, Russian violinist, he had drowned Paul Sarichef, Ishmon's secretary. He joins Big Chris Larson in response to a distress signal at sea, giving Larson his sea jacket. Their launch hits rocks. Larson's body is buried as Newhall's. Peter, rescued, finds injuries have completely changed his appearance.

Dorothy and Ishmin go to Alaska, to return Peter's body They do not recognize Peter in their head guide. A storm strands them at the grave. Ishmin goes for supplies. Peter falls in a gully on a hunting trip. Dorothy finds her greatest happiness in rescuing him. Ishmin returns and Dorothy accepts his proposal and they are married by a native priest. Peter goes to give them best wishes.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY.

CHAPTER XVII.—(Cont'd.)

The girl spoke sharply in the silence. "Peter Newhall, my dead husband," she answered in evident awe.

"That word came from beyond the grave," Pete went on solemnly. He was partly acting on inspiration now—an urge that he did not know—and partly in a deliberate attempt to take advantage of Ivan's Asiatic superstitions. "Peter Newhall that was your husband is dead, but his ghost has been here all the time—both of you know it." The girl's eyes filmed with tears, and she nodded. "Ivan, the ghost of Peter Newhall is guarding this girl still. It will guard her clear to the end—I'm not a medium, as Joe is, yet I know that as well as I know anything. You can take my word for gospel. Worship her and thank God for her and be kind to her—and your soul will be saved. But at the first wickedness of which you are so easily capable—the ghost of Peter Newhall will hound you to your destruction!"

Ivan stared like a stricken man. Pete took a long-drawn breath, then turned to Dorothy. "I want you to remember, too," he told her gently, his eyes fixed on her. "The ghost of your husband is watching over you—believe me, because it's true! If you ever need him, he will be there to help you. If you ever need me—your guide that is more than a guide—I will come no matter how many seas I have to cross. All you have to do is to send for me."

To Dorothy it was like an unearthly dream. She knew, with a sure knowledge that this man meant exactly what he said; and she had experienced a new sense of security and peace that could never wholly pass away. Already this seer was turning to go. His trembling hand was at the flap of the tent.

He seemed to be listening. As she watched, fascinated, she saw the rapt look leave his face, and a look of common earthly interest take its place. He bent his head, straining; then turned to Ivan.

"It's the squaw, I guess," he said. "She's already come with the supplies."

They heard dragging steps; then the crackle of dead twigs that were strewn about the camp fire. Some one with a heavy load halted just outside the flap of the tent.

Pete drew aside the flap, and the candle light streamed out into the gloom. It was not an Indian squaw who had brought this back-load of supplies from across the Peninsula. The black-bearded stalwart man who stood without was Paul Sarichef, whom Peter Newhall had supposedly drowned in the Savannah River years before.

CHAPTER XVIII.

SARICHEF APPEARS.

There could not be the least doubt of Sarichef's identity. All three actors in the drama knew him at the first glance, with certain recognition not to be mistaken. His clothes were rough and worn, but physically he was unchanged since Pete had last seen him on the launch on the Savannah. That fatal night! The thought was infinitely ironical. Here, in the flesh stood the man of whose murder he had believed himself guilty and for which he had so dearly paid.

There was one instant of bewildered groping in the dark, and then Peter knew the truth. He had simply been the victim of a cruel, relentless, criminal mind. Ivan Ishmin, loving Dorothy with his Oriental ardor, had schemed to win her away from her husband; and he had known no law but his own. That he should have neither scruples nor mercy was wholly in character; he was a strong, profound, relentless man, and he had never been one to be swayed from his purpose. He had craved Dorothy with an unholy fire, his genius demanded to prey upon her, and when a drunken quarrel aboard the launch on the Savannah River had given him his opportunity, he had been remorseless in taking advantage of it. Sarichef had been told to disappear; Ivan had contrived the wicked lie that had been Pete's downfall. When Peter had wakened from drunken slumber he had been easy to convince that he had actually committed the crime that Ivan swore he had seen. Pete's only amazement was that this remorseless man had stopped where he did; that Sarichef had not actually been slain to add plasibility to his story, or he himself—by cunning, deliberate, carefully covered murder—wiped from his rival's path.

The flood of vengeful rage that might have been expected did not at once sweep over Pete, partly because the drama of the moment carried him above it, partly from sheer amazement at this incredible, unexpected visitation. He felt oddly cool, capable of deliberate thought. The moment was inordinately vivid, rather than; dreamy; his realities still endured—the clouds that hid the stars, the camp fire glowing dully, the wide bed of straw at his feet and the caribou flesh drying behind the camp stove. The moan of the sea carried through the moment, unbroken; and the wind still yelled and blustered, flapping the canvas with maniacal frenzy without an instant's cessation. After one great start which seemed to be wholly internal—one single, violent impulse throughout the strong tree of his nervous system that showed not at all in his face or frame—all his powers seemed to rally, vouchsafing him not only perfect self-control, but a certain penetrative, infallible quality of thought. Outwardly this was Dorothy and Ivan's drama solely; neither in look nor word did he give any sign that he recognized Sarichef. Such action might immediately reveal his own identity.

To Dorothy the sight of that startled face that she recognized instantly as that of her husband's supposed victim was like a shattering fist at her breast. Her throat froze and she could not cry out; but instead of dullness and insensibility a white light superconsciousness seemed to pervade the scene; to her also the whole truth became vividly, cruelly manifest, and she was acutely sensitive, as in a death by fire, of all its tragic phases. Her hands clasped, her face was deathly white, ugly and haggard from unbearable pain.

At the same time her thought moved with a cruel clarity. She knew now why Ivan had urged Peter's flight instead of encouraging him to stay and fight the murder charge through the courts. She saw now why Ivan had directed him south, clearing the way and arranging for his concealment in the Brazilian fastnesses; he had known that Sarichef had gone north and he had wanted to guard against a possible meeting of the two men. She understood why he had been so moved and stirred, like a man who has just come safely through an unseen danger, when he had got the word that Peter had died in the North rather than the South, and why he had opposed so bitterly and earnestly her own venture into the North in search of her husband's body; he had feared that she might encounter and identify Sarichef. Over and above the fact of this present meeting, it was justifiable fear. The North has but a comparatively small white population, and they all cross trails sooner or later, particularly in this great barren end of Alaska that was such a refuge for missing men. He likely knew that Sarichef was located somewhere in this immediate vicinity—probably on the other side of the Peninsula—and therefore he had insisted on going himself on the expedition after supplies, rather than send one of the guides who might, not guessing the truth, encounter Sarichef, enlist his aid in his employer's behalf, and bring him back as one of a rescue party to the camp.

Her husband had been wronged and, she believed, indirectly done to death! He had been the victim of a wicked, deliberate plot of which she herself had been an unsuspecting instrument. Her remorse had been poignant before, but now it swept over her like the sea. The cruel futility of it all, the torturing sense of bootless loss seemed more than she could bear.

Ivan's expression hardly changed. His face twitched once; and it might have been that a mirthless, ironic half-smile hovered for an instant at his closely pressed lips. He walked more fully into the firelight, uttered one grim, subdued oath, then leered at his late secretary in contempt. It was not that he failed to recognize what this sudden coming meant to him and his. He knew that, except by Dorothy's loyalty to him, he could never go back to the civilized world again. He had risked everything, and he was done for, if the truth ever came out; he had gone on record in the Georgia courts as saying that he had seen Peter Newhall throw this man into the river and that he had seen him go down for the third time. He would be ruined socially and professionally, and in all probability the law itself would seie him. Fortunately Dorothy was his wife. Surely he would have vital need of her loyalty.

Himself, Dorothy, and Sarichef were now grouped about the fire; and Pete stolidly piled on fresh fuel. The flame mounted higher, crackling; and the head guide retired into the shadows just without the circle of weird, ruddy firelight. Then he stood waiting, forgotten and unseen.

"You fool!" Ivan began contemptuously to Sarichef. "What are you doing here? Blackmail, I suppose"

The man's blank face showed he was utterly baffled. He seemed to be fearing a blow. "I don't know— I can't explain—"

(To be continued.)

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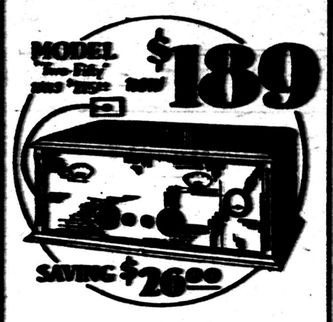

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"She's so worried, poor girl. She tells me she can't bring her mind to a decision." "Good-oh. I'm glad there's something about Muriel that isn't made up."

A motoring journal suggests that the radiator should be more artistic. After all, it is often the first thing about a car that strikes you.

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Engaged Sister: "When we are married, dear, we must have a hyphenated name—it's so much smarter. What would go well with Eaton?" Her Small Brother: "Moth!"

Lobsters That Wear Odd Colors

Lobsters alive and in their native element are a dark green, which turns to a brilliant red when they are boiled; but there are exceptions, and sometimes a lobster fresh from the salt water will be some other color than green.

Near Amherst, N.S., a pure white or albino lobster was taken once and sent to a Portland (Me.) wholesale lobster dealer, who for many years exhibited it preserved in alcohol. Near Mohegan Island a lobsterman took from a trap a thirteen-inch lobster which was a rich indigo along the top of the body shell and tail, the indigo shading off on the sides of the carapace into blues of a clear, lighter tint.

At Peaks Island a specimen was captured whose back and tail were a bright indigo blue, while the under parts shaded off into an almost pure white. At Beal's Island a jet-black lobster was caught a few years ago, and near Vinalhaven this Winter a cream-colored one was found.

Bright red lobsters, looking precisely as if they had been boiled, while infrequentt, have been hauled up at several points along the Maine coast. A few weeks ago a Nova Scotia lobster in a consignment for Boston attracted attention because its body shell was in alternatet stripes of green and yellowish whitet or ivory tint, almost as if it had been painted.

Keep Minard's in the Medicine Chest.

A housewife objected to being awakened at dawn by the crowing of a neighbor's chickens. Some people would have threatened Police Court. The housewife wrote a courteous note to her neighbor. A few days later the neighbor's maid appeared with a nicely dressed chicken on a platter. A note attached said: "We think this is the rooster that has been causing all the trouble." Courtesy wins every time.

A famous anthropologist says boys are two inches taller than they were fifty years ago. Well, why not? It's a poor sort of kid who can't grow two inches in that time.

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A large fragment of a mussel shell, computed to be about 100,000,000 years old, has been found in New Zealand. Judged by the measurements made on this and other fragments found elsewhere, it is estimated that the mussels of its remote date, apparently the heyday of mussels, grew to be as much as three feet in length.

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