THE CLAN CALL

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CHAPTER II

In the Cup.

Dale found the humble home of his nonrelatives but a house in the fullest sense of the word.

Set on the edge of the town, he met Mrs. Moreland and the sons of the household, and they were exactly as he had pictured them. Mrs. Moreland was quiet, motherly, always smiling, an upright and real as her husband. The sons, Caleb and Luke, were as much alike as the fingers on your hands, though one tall and broad-shouldered, gray-eyed and brown-haired.

Before another hale had become acquainted with the rest of the Moreland family, he had liked them, every one. He was at the cabin of his host's gray old father and mother for a long time.

When supper was over John Moreland lighted his pipe, then went into the best room, and the family and their guest gathered there to spend the evening. Then the lanky moonshiner and Dale had a talk.

"Dale," began the sharp-featured and the stooped, thin figure of a white, "she were a right fetchful lassie when her white head, and she carried a long shooting staff; there was a rest stemmed clay pipe in her mouth, and her dark calico skirt had a tobacco pocket in it.

Her son preceded her into the room. He walked to the center table, faced about, and said in a low and calm sweep of his right hand:

"Bill, old boy, this here's new. Mebbe talks forehears."

"So that were created Granny Heck, looking over the brass rims of her spectacles at Mr. Bill. Well, well! I jest thought to myself at I'd come down and see Bill, and I'll be sure forehears."

She dropped into the rocker that Caleb had placed for her.

"Addie," she said to the smiling Mrs. Moreland, "you'll jest be a-sorry for Bill a' coffee grounds?"

When the cup came, the fortune-teller took it and shook it and patted it, all the while muttering supernatural words that she had learned from the old Indian squaw. Dale smiled, leaned her purpose very well.

"I see," she mumbled more or less sepulchrally, "a pow'ful good-lookin' gyurl in a heap o' trouble, with her hair a-hangin' away down her back. A bare-footed gyurl, with big, purty eyes like Bile's a-standin' on a low cliff, a-peerin' off into the sky, a-waitin' for a feller, Bill. This is the gyurl.

"In the future," she went on slowly, "I see this here gyurl a-trudgin' through a heap o' trouble; a-wandering, a-wandering, a-wandering,