The Clan Call

By Hapsburg Liebe

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CHAPTER XV.

—At—

Tried.

Two days before Bill Dale was tried in court at Carterville, the new Elizabeth Littlefield alighted from an afternoon train at the Halfway switch. She was dressed in a smart and neatly fitting suit of dark blue, with heavy white ad fur throat and at her wrists; she wore a hat of dark blue relieved by a touch of white. In one of her strong and well-shaped, gloved hands she carried a traveling bag of black leather.

A big and sunburned young man in mask and corduroys hastened to her. He raised his broad-rimmed hat, stuffed tusk the bag, and pressed her hand so though he was very glad to see her.

"Bill Dale!" she cried joyously above the roar of the passing train. "Bill Dale, Mr. you!"

"Sure, I am!" laughed Dale. "How good you look! I was hardly believe it's you."

"It is," she smiled. "Tell me about what do you think the outcome of your trial is going to be?"

Dale cared that her English had improved, and it was gratifying to him. As for the trial—

"I don't know," he said. "But Mr. Jim Bayley thinks I'll come clear. He believes that somebody that was hid den on the mountainside above the cabin that night and fired the shots must be know that this was the case; and Jim Bayley says that he's going to get the chance he wanted against them before we would stand, and that if I re ceived a sentence the right men would come forward with a confession. I have got the thing that Fly Hen himself killed Alton Ball—that is, if I didn't do it."

"And Cale Moreland—wasn't it for him to do the best he done for you, Bill Dale? How are you gettin along with the sheriff?"

"First rate." Dale answered, bright ening at the question. "Sheriff Hall and me getting a something pretty for every answer of it."

"I see"—and the young woman, in wear ing

"All the boys and girls of the Morelands, except the very little ones, are in school in Carterville, and they're learning fast. When our bereaved capital is paid back, the Moreland families are going to buy farms and have a farmerville and go to them in a big lowland farm close to good schools and a good church. I'm going there my widow places on earth. Pro fessor David Moreland don't know about it."

"I'd say?"

She hitched her head. She was thinking, as she had so often thought be fore, of those benighted people "And the Littlefields?" she was inter mented. It had stopped just her lips. Dale and the Morelands owed the Lit tlefields nothing.

Dale understood and he gave her credit for the thought.

"Some of the boys and girls of the Littlefield name are going to school to Carterville, perhaps one from each family," he told her. "It is rather ex pensive, you know, on account of the boarding, and they can't afford to send all their children. However, I think—ultimately—your people will have their chance for education, too."

"But it won't be much good to edu cate one of such family," said Miss Ellen. "They'd come straight back here when they got through with their schooling, and soon b'gin—I mean for get—all that they had learned. There is no use in anything, they'll have to stay where they can use it."

She began to state absently toward the tiest was in the sight.

"Are you ready to go?" Dale asked. Elizabeth Littlefield raised her head with a slight jerk and said rather awk wardly:

"How the valley changed much?"

"Not very much," answered Dale. "There's a new log church, where an old schoolster formed Ashby Cross roads—the gokey of gasoline wells big and human kindliness every Sun day. Henderson Goff just came to more, but he sent me his address in case I should want to write to him. He became prosperous over back in Jersusalem town and Hector's hell, and the Dalle are as good as ever. There, I believe are all the changes worth mentioning."

Together they set out and walked without saying much, to the crest of David Moreland's mountain, and there they halted. The autumn sun, a great red fire, was just setting beyond the the majestic Big Pine.

Dale pointed to a long, zero-covered slab of brown sandstone.

"Let's sit down there and rest," he suggested. "You're tired, Hube, I know. I'm pleased to smile you Hube, Hube, too?"

She looked at him as though she were surprised at his asking that. They sat down.

Bill Dale suddenly leaned toward her and took one of her hands; and he didn't take it as Jimmy Faine had done—as though he were afraid of it. "You know I love you, don't you, Babe?"

"I've been believin' it," she said him after a moment of pretty limited. She was looking down, now. "But it—But then, it seemed you didn't seem just sure to you to love me. Because I'm north Carolina to you—I'm as poor as sin; and I hain't—haven't even got good manners. But—But if you love me, if you're sure you do, tell me why!"

There came another minute of pale ful silence.

"Because," said Dale, speaking slow ly, "you have always seemed to be one of my own kind. Of settlement to me. I was an dirt of settlement to you. It seems I loved you the moment I saw you. I know you are primitive, too. And you weren't really prepared 'Ole-a-ma-ma' to a do-d poodle.

"Baby Bunting," he went on, "feels sure that I will be acquitted. If it turns out like that, I want you to marry me at once. Tell me—will you, Babe?"

How bluntly impatient he was. Were he afraidWhy some her by wait ing?

"You love me, don't you, Babe?" he pressed.

Dale turned him with the sudden, queer light of a tragedy in her eyes. But she didn't speak. He pressed her hand until it hurt and demanded:

"You do, don't you, Babe?"

"Yes," she told him, in a voice that he barely heard.

"Then why won't you marry me?"

She didn't answer. She was watch ing the sun

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The day of the court had dawned clear with the snap of autumn in the air. The courthouse at Carterville was crowded before 10 o'clock.

"Will You Always Think of Me as the Finest and Most Beautiful Woman in the World?" She asked.

the doors were thrown open. Every one knew who had a rifle was forced to leave it lashed with the sheriff's deputies—a company of the state's militia regs there, and each member of it had a hundred rounds of ball cartridges in his belt—the authorities were taking no chances.

Amid a breath less hush, the wheels of the law began to move. Judge Bowden said quickly told what he had to say. Prosecuting Attorney Fayre was brought out a perfect plea for the judge and the jury frowned and smiled in the same moment. Fayre became weary and took his place. He pleaded that Bill Dale was guilty, and then introduced its evidence and rested.

The summary for the defense, jerky rain and another the. Immediately from the witness to the stock of his head, and quickly told what he had to say. Bill Dale was not guilty. He was not guilty because he was not there. He was not there because he was at a higher world and a higher business. Somewhere from the mists of his head, Dale's lawyer went eagerly to his feet. He had fairly prepared himself, and he made a strong argument with an eloquent and forceful appeal to the jury. He was not trying to prove anything, they'll have to say where they can see it.

Maybe Bowden thought his argument on the supporting third shot. If that's better laid down and said rather well, he said Adam Ball have been shot squarely at the heart nearly squarely from the front? As it was, the bullet had been fired straight through the back. That third shot had been fired by some one who knew that Ball was to be murdered, and it had been done for the purpose of making it appear that the murder was the act of a higher world.

Lastly truck; he had killed a man in North Carolina by the name of Jerome Lee