

## WAITING FOR HILDA

By NORMAN H. CROWELL.

It was evening on the Dakota prairie. Before the door of his sod shanty a young man whose flaxen hair proclaimed his Scandinavian lineage stood, engaged in the engrossing duty of feeding his shepherd dog. As he tossed the crumbs the dog would leap nimbly upward and catch them neatly as they descended.

"Ah, Jim," he ejaculated, presently, "a week—maybe two weeks and she'll be here!"

He gazed straight at the dying sun and murmured the word "Hilda" in a subdued voice. Then he walked to a bench beside the door and sat down, folding his strong young arms across his breast, while the dog crept up and buried his nose in his master's lap.

It had been a year of reverses with Lundquist. He had labored hard—no man could put more honest toil into the struggle with a penurious soil than he—and it seemed now as if all was for naught. Beginning with a wet, disheartening spring, the season had crept on, piling up against him its mute but potent protests in a manner that had discouraged many a less hardy man. His best horse, becoming entangled in the only wire fence within 20 miles, had been sacrificed to the casualty list of a frontiersman's life. By mortgaging his crop he had secured another.

He was now facing his annual interest payment, while the storekeeper in the town a dozen miles away was growing suspicious and was demanding payment of an open account. His crops—only punk stacks of discolored wheat straw standing limply awaiting the threshing.

But Lundquist was forgetting all this as he sat on the bench before his abode. Hilda was coming to him. Hilda, from far-off Norway. Six years it had been since he had gazed into her eyes—six years since he had stolen aside in the crush at the embarkation and kissed her many times on her willing lips. The thought of it brought a smile to Lundquist's sun-tanned visage. The dog saw it and wagged his tail in recognition of his master's mood.

Two years ago she would have come, but he set his teeth firmly and sent her that letter which had wrung his heart. "Wait!" he had told her. "Wait till Fortune smiles more brightly on these bleak Dakota prairies! It was a bitter thing to do, but Lundquist saw no other course.

Only last year she was prevented from coming by the sickness of her mother. Nothing, not even poor crops, now stood in the way of her coming, and she was now in mid-ocean on the steamer that was bearing her westward—to Carl.

In a little box under his bunk he had every letter that Hilda had written him. They were good reading during the long winter evenings.

The steamer agent had said that she would reach Quebec on the 14th. It was now the 9th.

On the 16th Lundquist went to town. He walked up and down the single street, keeping close watch on the depot until the afternoon train had passed. He rode the 12 miles home in moody silence.

The following day he went to town again and in the evening, when he went back toward home, his face was haggard and wan from his day's vigil. He was getting worried. What could be keeping Hilda? Had something gone wrong? Lundquist slept little that night.

Old Jim, for the first time in months, barked piteously, and his master, starting guiltily, made haste to throw some bread to the animal.

"Pore Jim!" said he, "Ay forget yo' eh?"

Lundquist essayed a laugh, but it died away hollowly.

The next day he had stalked by the post office five times in sulky silence when he heard some one call his name. He paused and entered. Banks, the postmaster, had a letter in his hand.

"Letter for you, Carl!" he said. "Come this morning."

Lundquist took it in his hand and edged away to a corner of the little office. It was a queer letter—all in print, like a newspaper. Lundquist bent over it and wrinkled his brow.

"Read it for you?" suggested the postmaster, expectantly.

"Ja! Yo read hem," assented Lundquist, perplexed.

The letter was a cruel stab to the eager listener. Hilda was detained in Quebec. The medical authorities had examined her and found her suffering with an affliction of the eyes that would prohibit her entry unless speedily cured. To do this a sufficient amount of money must be advanced by Lundquist to insure payment of the medical expense incident to the treatment.

The postmaster, hearing a suspicious sound, paused in his translation and glanced up. The listener was staring at him wide-eyed, his whole soul pouring out through his blue orbs. It confused him and he crumpled the paper nervously. Lundquist brought himself together with a jerk.

"How much money hem say?"

"A hundred dollars!" was the postmaster's response.

"Von hundred dollars!" repeated the stricken youth. "Von hundred—"

He reached out and took the sheet from Bank's fingers and placed it in his pocket. Then he went out, old

Jim close at his heels, with his tail down dejectedly.

An hour later the two emerged from the door of the bank. Aimlessly they strolled along the dismal street until they came to where the team was tied. A mile out on the open prairie the youth turned in his seat and shook his clenched fist at the receding town. Once he glanced upward—then settled firmly in a straight stare ahead, and so remained till the cabin was reached.

That night he did not go to bed. He sat and walked and babbled to the dog till daybreak. In the morning he eyed the rising sun with bloodshot eyes. His body quivered with the protests of abused nerves and his cheeks were sunken from lack of nourishment.

"Von hundred dollars!" he said bitterly.

That day he visited the bank three different times. The last time he stood in the doorway and told the banker a few of the hot things that rankled in his brain. Old Jim stood aside and snarled.

He visited the store and asked for food. When the storekeeper suggested pay, he cursed beneath his breath and left the place. He went to the post office with a letter he had written to Hilda—a letter filled with scalding tears and heart burnings. The postmaster spoke to him, asking if he was sending the money on to the girl. Lundquist clenched his teeth tightly and rushed out to conceal the tears that stole unpressed down his cheeks.

Two days later a letter came. It was cold and formal. Hilda had returned to Norway. Lundquist stumbled awkwardly when Banks read the letter and thrust his elbow through a pane of glass. Banks, glancing up, made light of the accident.

"Don't worry about that, Carl!" he remarked. "I'll fix that."

"Ay get yo glass!" said Lundquist, hoarsely, as he went out.

At the hardware store he brought forth his paltry store of silver—four dollars in all. The glass took one of these. Inside the case something caught his eye—something shiny and cold. He inquired its price.

"Two-fifty," said the man, "and it's a 38."

Lundquist slid the money hesitatingly across the glass counter and took the object gingerly in his hand. Flushed and trembling he started for the door.

"Wait! You want—you'll need some of these!" called the proprietor as he slid out some little boxes.

"Ja! Von box!" said Lundquist.

It was late that night when the two reached the lone cabin on the prairie. The dog sat on the floor before his master, and licked his lips expectantly, but his master heeded him not—he was reading, reading, reading Hilda's letters.

Two weeks later the newspaper at the county seat printed the following:

"A party of sportsmen made a gruesome find in a sod shanty 12 miles north of E—last week. Attracted by the mournful howling of a shepherd dog they drew up and entered. The body of a young Scandinavian lay upon the earth floor with a bullet wound in his forehead. Numerous letters scattered about created the impression that he committed the deed in a fit of homesickness or despondency. The dog refused to leave the spot, although wasted to a skeleton by hunger and exposure."

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## CAUSED TOO MUCH TROUBLE

Difficulty That Lay in the Way of Pope's Following Simple Medical Advice.

Pope Pius X was a man of simple habits. One morning his doctor reminded him that a considerable amount of pure water as a drink was beneficial, and the pope there and then rang a bell and asked the prelate in attendance to bring him a glass of water. Fully ten minutes passed before the prelate returned to the library, followed by an attendant and a waiter. The latter carried a silver tray with a glass of water on it. The prelate, the attendant, and the waiter made a deep genuflection when the door was opened.

They crossed the room, and made a second genuflection when they were half-way to the pope's chair, and a third when they got near the pope. Then the attendant took the glass of the tray and handed it to the prelate, who knelt down and handed it to the prelate. The same ceremony was repeated after the pope had drunk the water. Turning to the doctor, the pope then said:

"I wanted to show you how difficult it is for me to get a glass of water, and I hope you will not blame me for neglecting the cure and not drinking more water. I hate to disturb three men and make them kneel six times every time I want a drink of water. I tried to get the water myself, but I have been told that, being a sovereign, I must not serve myself."

Fooling the Neighbors.

"The Updykes are installing a great deal of new furniture."

"Not as much as you might think. Mrs. Updyke is having some of the more expensive pieces carried through the house to the rear entrance, where they are loaded in a van and brought round to the front door again."

The Proof.

"Warden, I hope you are humane to your prisoners."

"Yes, ma'am, we do our best to make them comfortable. This warm spell, we put them all in the cooler."

# Panama City and the Canal

PANAMA is a unique city. The circumstances which shaped her destiny and wove her into the web of progress, made of her a sister to the great cities of North and South America. Her geographical situation, her North American adoption and the greatest of world projects carried out in her environs, all have served to lift her out of that centuries old lethargy so enervating, impulsive and retarding.

After the old Panama had been revived again and again from the rapine destruction of pirates and buccaneers, it was finally left to the denizens of the jungles and the new Panama founded some five miles to the southwest, where the devastation of plundering ships' crews was impossible. The Panama of today stands protected to seaward by a long reef, to landward by a narrow peninsular neck, and by the mighty arm of the United States government.

Metropolis of Central America. No more will Pizarros, Morgans and Walkers pillage this metropolis of Central America, no more will the bigotry of priesthood hold a throttling hand upon her progress. The new Panama, born in the last decade, is pulsating with enterprise and industrial achievement. The financial inva-

There are many beautiful plazas and patios set among the otherwise bald, bare houses and streets of Panama. These are green and fragrant all the year with fan palms and banyans casting a day-long shade over the up-to-date benches. In Santa park, when the shades of evening begin to fall, a "Spiggoty band" usually playing some of our popular music, comes from somewhere, and begins The young people seem to think a great deal of the music for they acclaim it loudly after each piece, and will sit all night and listen, if the bands keeps up.

There are still a considerable number of high-class families who make various far-reaching claims toward an aristocracy, which, so far as is actually known, never existed beyond the imagination. But they nevertheless observe strict relations with the inferior "Americans" as they hold them to be, and will not let their daughters be seen unescorted in any of the plazas. The girls of the common class are met and spoken to by the young men, but come and return home in groups after they have concluded a merry evening at the concert.

For those who can afford it, the National theater offers entertainment of a type that is peculiarly original in



STREET SCENE, PANAMA CITY

sion of the United States has attracted every type of civilized mankind. There is work to be done, needs to be asquaged, money to be made. All the resources of the surrounding country must be brought to a focus so that the ships that glide in at the Pacific entrance and out into the Atlantic, will carry away to the crowded markets of the north Panama's quota of fruits, hardwood, rubber, indigo, coffee and hats. With this, civilized prosperity begins, and it matters not what race or conglomeration of races are involved.

The "Spiggoty Lingo." At first it was difficult for these people to get along on any kind of footing in the way of everyday speech. One man having many interests in common with another could find no medium of expression. And out of this confusion of tongues grew a language which is neither English, nor French, nor Spanish, nor German, nor Chinese, nor Japanese, nor anything other than itself. It is not a very old language, and consequently not well developed, nor has it ever been written or spoken outside of the canal zone and Panama. It is called the "Spiggoty Lingo," and its origin is substantially this: If you ask a native something in English, he will say, "No speaka da English," because he doesn't. For a long time they used this reply, until the enterprising American found a few words of their language and they found a few of his, and of all the others brought in, so that there were words enough of all languages known in common to make for a new language which was promptly called the "Spiggoty" or "Speaka de—" as you please to invent it.

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