

# A TALE of RED ROSES

By  
GEORGE  
RANDOLPH  
CHESTER

Copyright, 1914, by the Bobbs-Merrill Co.

Immediately he made a neat little speech to his faithful friends, the stanch investors, who had believed in the future of their heretofore prosper organization well enough to hold to their stock or to purchase more in the face of apparent adversity. It was true that certain purely manipulative transactions had seemed to militate against the company and had temporarily depressed the market value of its stock.

Bendix stole a sly look at Sledge. He had never batted an eyelash.

However, the president went on, the intrinsic value of the stock was still there, and, with that thought constantly in mind, there was no need for a panic. The stock was worth and should command par. The improvements, for which the reorganization had been made, were to be carried out, and others vastly greater were in immediate contemplation.

It was a hopeful speech, a rousing speech, a reassuring speech, and President Marley felt when he sat down, bathed in self approbation and inspiration, that there being six reporters present by special invitation, he had raised the market value of his stock from ten to fifteen points.

So impressive was his speech that little Henry Peters, whose cheeks were shrunken and pale and whose wrinkle framed eyes were bleared from the loss of sleep, turned to his nearest neighbor and said, with a sigh of relief:

"I'm glad I didn't sell my stock day before yesterday. I almost took thirty-five for it, but the man didn't come back."

His neighbor, a wattle necked man with a crooked nose and towlike hair, which swept down his forehead and curled up over his eyebrows, said through his nose, like the wheeze of a penny whistle:

"Nyah; everything's all talk."

Up rose Attorney Tucker, a sharp nosed little man with beady eyes and the crisp business air which frowns on a smile and hates a holiday.

Let his fellow stockholders beware of too much optimism. He himself had been, next to President Marley, the largest individual holder of stock in the company. He had sold all but an extremely small portion before the panic and wished that he had sold the balance, for the outlook was very gloomy. He did not wish to make his remarks in the form of a personal tirade, but he did feel it necessary to point out that the downfall and ultimate ruination of their company was due, not to mismanagement, but to political manipulation.

"Let me tell you the truth!" he shouted. "We have with us today, at this very meeting, a man of tremendous power and influence; a politician of national renown; one who is at this moment under the searching eye of the law; an omnipotent friend and a relentless foe, and this man has chosen, for reasons of his own, to wreck, and devastate and turn to useless rust the Ring City Street railway company."

Every eye was turned to Sledge, but that omnipotent friend and relentless foe, without moving a corpuscle, gazed straight ahead at nothing.

"He is no friend of the working man!" swore little Henry Peters.

As if infuriated by his impasse, Attorney Tucker, who was paid by Sledge for the purpose, figuratively ripped the big boss up the back, skinned him alive, hung up his hide to dry, and scattered his ashes to the winds, painting him as an insatiable monster, and chiefly calling attention to his habits of ruthless devastation. Wherever the present street car company had a line the new one would have one on an adjoining street, with newer and better and swifter cars, and a closer schedule, and unless something radical were done he would not give a continental cuss per bale for the stock of the now rapidly dying Ring City Street Railway company.

A long low sigh, like the midnight sooths in a churchyard, arose from that meeting, as Attorney Tucker sat down. Little Henry Peters, with a livid face, clutched the arm of his wattle necked neighbor.

"If that man had only come back I could have got thirty-five for my stock!" he wailed. "I'm ruined. I shall lose my home! Frank Marley is a rotten business man!"

"Yeh!" intoned the crooked nosed one. "They're all thieves."

Jim Delancy, who, with a clear eye and a straight countenance, could make louder speeches than any man in the Eighth ward, painted even a blacker picture than Attorney Tucker, and when he sat down he had bankrupted every stockholder within the sound of his voice. It even seemed incredible that a street car should still be whizzing outside. Little Henry Peters sat numbly, with his hair clutched in his hands. If he could have swapped his

Attorney Tucker begged leave of the chair to ask Mr. Bozzam just one question and received it.

"Have you named your bottom figure?" he wanted to know.

"Positively!" declared Mr. Bozzam, with vast firmness.

"One more question. Are you empowered to close this deal?"

"I am," replied Mr. Bozzam. "I have a free hand."

Sledge almost looked at the genial promoter.

"Then we must pay the price," fervently asserted Attorney Tucker. "This is a gleam of hope in the darkness, a way out of our difficulties, a solution to our troubles. We have the cash to purchase these franchises, which will give us a practical monopoly of the city's street car business. We can either increase our capitalization or issue bonds to pay for our extensions, and, in the meantime, the moment we conclude this deal our stock jumps back to par."

Loud cries of "Question!" came from all over the hall, and little Henry Peters, after the demand had started, shouted louder than anybody.

Young Daniel B. Atkins wanted to make a speech and was granted that privilege.

He was more enthusiastic about paying out that \$250,000 than anybody, and, being a professional whooper-up, he used his clarion voice and silver tongue to such good advantage that the throng was with difficulty restrained from rushing up to Bozzam and paying him the money on the spot.

In defiance of the madly expressed wishes of the multitude, however, President Marley recognized Bert Gilder.

"Move to amend the resolution to read fifty thousand in place of two hundred and fifty," he shouted.

"Second the motion!" yelled a big mouthed young man sitting next to him.

"Mr. President," exclaimed Mr. Bozzam, rising to his feet, "that amendment is positively useless."

A frantic hubbub arose. The hall was a sea of open mouths. Little Henry Peters held his mouth open wider than any stockholder present. One could see his tonsils perfectly. He was helping to hew down Bert Gilder's absurd amendment.

President Marley tapped his gavel energetically.

"I perceive that it is useless to waste time on speeches against this amendment," he announced. "Are there any remarks to be made in favor of it? The chair will permit five minutes for such argument." He waited a moment. No one arose. Attorney Tucker stood up.

"If the chair please!" he began.

"Are you about to speak in favor of this amendment?" interrupted the chair.

"No," replied Attorney Tucker.

"The chair refuses to recognize the gentleman," announced the president. "The secretary will take a roll call vote on the amendment."

They endured that as men do, only venting their emotions by the vehemence of their "No!" on the roll call vote. A scant few had the temerity to say "Yes" and were nearly mobbed for their daring. The most of them kept their eyes on Bozzam in mortal anxiety lest, offended by this proceeding, he might withdraw his generous offer and walk out, leaving them doomed to extinction by his mighty rival.

"Albert T. Gilder," called the secretary.

"The chair refuses to recognize the gentleman," announced the president. "The secretary will take a roll call vote on the amendment."

They endured that as men do, only venting their emotions by the vehemence of their "No!" on the roll call vote. A scant few had the temerity to say "Yes" and were nearly mobbed for their daring. The most of them kept their eyes on Bozzam in mortal anxiety lest, offended by this proceeding, he might withdraw his generous offer and walk out, leaving them doomed to extinction by his mighty rival.

"Albert T. Gilder," called the secretary.

"The chair refuses to recognize the gentleman," announced the president. "The secretary will take a roll call vote on the amendment."

They endured that as men do, only venting their emotions by the vehemence of their "No!" on the roll call vote. A scant few had the temerity to say "Yes" and were nearly mobbed for their daring. The most of them kept their eyes on Bozzam in mortal anxiety lest, offended by this proceeding, he might withdraw his generous offer and walk out, leaving them doomed to extinction by his mighty rival.

"Albert T. Gilder," called the secretary.

"The chair refuses to recognize the gentleman," announced the president. "The secretary will take a roll call vote on the amendment."

They endured that as men do, only venting their emotions by the vehemence of their "No!" on the roll call vote. A scant few had the temerity to say "Yes" and were nearly mobbed for their daring. The most of them kept their eyes on Bozzam in mortal anxiety lest, offended by this proceeding, he might withdraw his generous offer and walk out, leaving them doomed to extinction by his mighty rival.

"Albert T. Gilder," called the secretary.

"The chair refuses to recognize the gentleman," announced the president. "The secretary will take a roll call vote on the amendment."

They endured that as men do, only venting their emotions by the vehemence of their "No!" on the roll call vote. A scant few had the temerity to say "Yes" and were nearly mobbed for their daring. The most of them kept their eyes on Bozzam in mortal anxiety lest, offended by this proceeding, he might withdraw his generous offer and walk out, leaving them doomed to extinction by his mighty rival.

"Albert T. Gilder," called the secretary.

"The chair refuses to recognize the gentleman," announced the president. "The secretary will take a roll call vote on the amendment."

They endured that as men do, only venting their emotions by the vehemence of their "No!" on the roll call vote. A scant few had the temerity to say "Yes" and were nearly mobbed for their daring. The most of them kept their eyes on Bozzam in mortal anxiety lest, offended by this proceeding, he might withdraw his generous offer and walk out, leaving them doomed to extinction by his mighty rival.

"Albert T. Gilder," called the secretary.

"The chair refuses to recognize the gentleman," announced the president. "The secretary will take a roll call vote on the amendment."

They endured that as men do, only venting their emotions by the vehemence of their "No!" on the roll call vote. A scant few had the temerity to say "Yes" and were nearly mobbed for their daring. The most of them kept their eyes on Bozzam in mortal anxiety lest, offended by this proceeding, he might withdraw his generous offer and walk out, leaving them doomed to extinction by his mighty rival.

"Albert T. Gilder," called the secretary.

"The chair refuses to recognize the gentleman," announced the president. "The secretary will take a roll call vote on the amendment."

They endured that as men do, only venting their emotions by the vehemence of their "No!" on the roll call vote. A scant few had the temerity to say "Yes" and were nearly mobbed for their daring. The most of them kept their eyes on Bozzam in mortal anxiety lest, offended by this proceeding, he might withdraw his generous offer and walk out, leaving them doomed to extinction by his mighty rival.

"Albert T. Gilder," called the secretary.

"The chair refuses to recognize the gentleman," announced the president. "The secretary will take a roll call vote on the amendment."

They endured that as men do, only venting their emotions by the vehemence of their "No!" on the roll call vote. A scant few had the temerity to say "Yes" and were nearly mobbed for their daring. The most of them kept their eyes on Bozzam in mortal anxiety lest, offended by this proceeding, he might withdraw his generous offer and walk out, leaving them doomed to extinction by his mighty rival.

"Albert T. Gilder," called the secretary.

"The chair refuses to recognize the gentleman," announced the president. "The secretary will take a roll call vote on the amendment."

They endured that as men do, only venting their emotions by the vehemence of their "No!" on the roll call vote. A scant few had the temerity to say "Yes" and were nearly mobbed for their daring. The most of them kept their eyes on Bozzam in mortal anxiety lest, offended by this proceeding, he might withdraw his generous offer and walk out, leaving them doomed to extinction by his mighty rival.

"Albert T. Gilder," called the secretary.

"The chair refuses to recognize the gentleman," announced the president. "The secretary will take a roll call vote on the amendment."

They endured that as men do, only venting their emotions by the vehemence of their "No!" on the roll call vote. A scant few had the temerity to say "Yes" and were nearly mobbed for their daring. The most of them kept their eyes on Bozzam in mortal anxiety lest, offended by this proceeding, he might withdraw his generous offer and walk out, leaving them doomed to extinction by his mighty rival.

"Albert T. Gilder," called the secretary.

"The chair refuses to recognize the gentleman," announced the president. "The secretary will take a roll call vote on the amendment."

They endured that as men do, only venting their emotions by the vehemence of their "No!" on the roll call vote. A scant few had the temerity to say "Yes" and were nearly mobbed for their daring. The most of them kept their eyes on Bozzam in mortal anxiety lest, offended by this proceeding, he might withdraw his generous offer and walk out, leaving them doomed to extinction by his mighty rival.

"Albert T. Gilder," called the secretary.

"The chair refuses to recognize the gentleman," announced the president. "The secretary will take a roll call vote on the amendment."

They endured that as men do, only venting their emotions by the vehemence of their "No!" on the roll call vote. A scant few had the temerity to say "Yes" and were nearly mobbed for their daring. The most of them kept their eyes on Bozzam in mortal anxiety lest, offended by this proceeding, he might withdraw his generous offer and walk out, leaving them doomed to extinction by his mighty rival.

"Albert T. Gilder," called the secretary.

"The chair refuses to recognize the gentleman," announced the president. "The secretary will take a roll call vote on the amendment."

They endured that as men do, only venting their emotions by the vehemence of their "No!" on the roll call vote. A scant few had the temerity to say "Yes" and were nearly mobbed for their daring. The most of them kept their eyes on Bozzam in mortal anxiety lest, offended by this proceeding, he might withdraw his generous offer and walk out, leaving them doomed to extinction by his mighty rival.

"Albert T. Gilder," called the secretary.

"The chair refuses to recognize the gentleman," announced the president. "The secretary will take a roll call vote on the amendment."

They endured that as men do, only venting their emotions by the vehemence of their "No!" on the roll call vote. A scant few had the temerity to say "Yes" and were nearly mobbed for their daring. The most of them kept their eyes on Bozzam in mortal anxiety lest, offended by this proceeding, he might withdraw his generous offer and walk out, leaving them doomed to extinction by his mighty rival.

"Albert T. Gilder," called the secretary.

"The chair refuses to recognize the gentleman," announced the president. "The secretary will take a roll call vote on the amendment."

They endured that as men do, only venting their emotions by the vehemence of their "No!" on the roll call vote. A scant few had the temerity to say "Yes" and were nearly mobbed for their daring. The most of them kept their eyes on Bozzam in mortal anxiety lest, offended by this proceeding, he might withdraw his generous offer and walk out, leaving them doomed to extinction by his mighty rival.

"Albert T. Gilder," called the secretary.

"The chair refuses to recognize the gentleman," announced the president. "The secretary will take a roll call vote on the amendment."

They endured that as men do, only venting their emotions by the vehemence of their "No!" on the roll call vote. A scant few had the temerity to say "Yes" and were nearly mobbed for their daring. The most of them kept their eyes on Bozzam in mortal anxiety lest, offended by this proceeding, he might withdraw his generous offer and walk out, leaving them doomed to extinction by his mighty rival.

"Albert T. Gilder," called the secretary.

"The chair refuses to recognize the gentleman," announced the president. "The secretary will take a roll call vote on the amendment."

They endured that as men do, only venting their emotions by the vehemence of their "No!" on the roll call vote. A scant few had the temerity to say "Yes" and were nearly mobbed for their daring. The most of them kept their eyes on Bozzam in mortal anxiety lest, offended by this proceeding, he might withdraw his generous offer and walk out, leaving them doomed to extinction by his mighty rival.

"Albert T. Gilder," called the secretary.

"The chair refuses to recognize the gentleman," announced the president. "The secretary will take a roll call vote on the amendment."

They endured that as men do, only venting their emotions by the vehemence of their "No!" on the roll call vote. A scant few had the temerity to say "Yes" and were nearly mobbed for their daring. The most of them kept their eyes on Bozzam in mortal anxiety lest, offended by this proceeding, he might withdraw his generous offer and walk out, leaving them doomed to extinction by his mighty rival.

"Albert T. Gilder," called the secretary.

"The chair refuses to recognize the gentleman," announced the president. "The secretary will take a roll call vote on the amendment."

They endured that as men do, only venting their emotions by the vehemence of their "No!" on the roll call vote. A scant few had the temerity to say "Yes" and were nearly mobbed for their daring. The most of them kept their eyes on Bozzam in mortal anxiety lest, offended by this proceeding, he might withdraw his generous offer and walk out, leaving them doomed to extinction by his mighty rival.

"Albert T. Gilder," called the secretary.

"The chair refuses to recognize the gentleman," announced the president. "The secretary will take a roll call vote on the amendment."

They endured that as men do, only venting their emotions by the vehemence of their "No!" on the roll call vote. A scant few had the temerity to say "Yes" and were nearly mobbed for their daring. The most of them kept their eyes on Bozzam in mortal anxiety lest, offended by this proceeding, he might withdraw his generous offer and walk out, leaving them doomed to extinction by his mighty rival.

"Albert T. Gilder," called the secretary.

"The chair refuses to recognize the gentleman," announced the president. "The secretary will take a roll call vote on the amendment."

They endured that as men do, only venting their emotions by the vehemence of their "No!" on the roll call vote. A scant few had the temerity to say "Yes" and were nearly mobbed for their daring. The most of them kept their eyes on Bozzam in mortal anxiety lest, offended by this proceeding, he might withdraw his generous offer and walk out, leaving them doomed to extinction by his mighty rival.

"Albert T. Gilder," called the secretary.

"The chair refuses to recognize the gentleman," announced the president. "The secretary will take a roll call vote on the amendment."