

THE MIDLANDERS

By CHARLES TENNEY JACKSON

Author of 'The Day of Souls, My Brother's Keeper, Etc.'

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SYNOPSIS OF THE MIDLANDERS.

Aurelie was stolen from the Holy Family orphanage in New Orleans, when a tiny child, in Uncle Michigan, and taken to the swamps to Master Captain to be brought up to lead the people back to their own—for he was a Confederate who had not surrendered. But he died, so Aurelie and Uncle Mich started out to see the world, eventually sailing up the Mississippi, and landing at Rome, Iowa, a small town with large ideas of class, caste, and family precedent. Here Aurelie grows up, an elfish, goblin-like child, scorned and despised by the townspeople; she and Uncle Mich living in the Pocket Quarry with the Lindstroms. John the father was a farmer, and after losing his suit, fled for the loss of his arm in a stonemason's shop, he became rabid against the laws and the town. Aurelie's only friends were Harlan Van Hart, son of the Judge, and her lover, and Wiley Curran, editor of the town weekly. Aurelie and Uncle Mich are shocked by the people of Rome, Iowa, and their love affair is broken off.

CHAPTER VI

To Occupy the Land

Aurelie sped up the narrow road that skirted the rocky face of Eagle Point bluff, on one side the creek shrouded with laurel and sumac, on the other the uncouth board fences of the rear lots of the town. She did not heed her steps. Once, on a rise of the path, she stopped and gazed stonily back at the lights of the house. At last she seemed to understand that she had been bowed out, dismissed in a manner so marvellously gracious that she, the little fool, had not known it—she had stood with a heart so full of gratefulness that she had not dared trust her voice; she had given all with an inexplicable rapture of renunciation. She was burning with a fear that she had been outrageously tricked, and then a knowledge that, in some desolating way, the mother was right.

"She never shook hands with me," the girl whispered and shivered, her pale face turned to the hills, "she just said, 'Good-bye, Aurelie.' Oh, I wish I could do that—that's being a lady!" Then she turned fiercely to look back. "I hate 'em—all of 'em! They're different. Harlan's different—I see now!"

Then a faint note of the piano came on the night wind, and she shuddered, her hands and feet on to gain the cliff, up, anywhere, to silence and to freedom. She burst around the buttress of rock where the road ended in Eagle Point trail, and there, directly behind the News office fence, a man in shirt-sleeves was emptying a basket of bottles down the creek bank. The girl almost struck him as she sped across the foot-bridge. He stopped his task, looked up, cried after her, and then followed. She reached the trail and heard him tolling on among the boulders.

"Aurelie!" he gasped. "What's the matter?"

She did not answer and he leaped on. But the girl gained swiftly on him, step as the ascent was, until he saw her slip on a pinnacle of rock, heard her cry out and pitch down into a hollow filled with her prisoner in the Pocket Quarry deep in the leaves, sullen, breathing hard, her hair disordered. She would not look at him.

"Aurelie—what on earth's the matter?"

"I fell and broke my arm."

He leaped down and struggled to help her. They both were panting. "You're suffering!" Mr. Curran gasped.

She laughed and flung a bloody little hand up to him. He saw her tense and tragic figure; there was more mortal hurt there.

He took her arm and she rebelled, pulling it away until she writhed with pain. But he had her sit, and tore his handkerchief to bind the cut, after examining it.

"It's not broken, Aurelie! Only gashed—maybe sprained."

"I wish it was broken—everything!" He could hear her heart beat as he bent to bind the wrist. "You little savage—running off wild like this. And the prize winner, Aurelie! The most beautiful girl in all the west, they say!"

She stared dumbly at him. Perhaps he was mocking her, playing on her full heart, her headless generosity, her hungry soul, her love. There was none of her small poses and airs about her now, but the Celt's romance stirred in him at some wild beauty in her. When he had bound her arm she quivered, and he had a sense she was about to leap from him like a creature of the woods at the chance of freedom. Then she turned to him.

"She fooled me; and I'm going away."

"Fooled you? And I said I'd give him up to her, but now I see she only fooled me. I hate them now—and him, too!"

"Aurelie!" Mr. Curran was bewildered. "I never knew of this affair—of her and Harlan. It's astounding!" he rubbed his forehead—"impossible!"

"You think so, too?" she blurted. "All right, I'm a fool, I guess. But I'll show 'em." She came directly to him.

"Oh, Mr. Curran, I want to go away! I told 'em I'd give up this prize thing, if he wanted me to. But now it's different. Mr. Curran, I want to be somebody!"

She was staring at him in the moonlight. Mr. Curran could not stand that; his own vagabond heart throbed mightily. He, too, was the exile, the outlander. To be somebody! Right then and there, Mr. Curran knew he would lay any form of hope for her, for any one who wanted to be somebody.

from a safe tree, she laughed again, and then suddenly remembered that she was trying to be miserable, and yet rebelling against it with all her pride.

When she came to the neat houses of High street the eyes of early housewives, atring their rugs, caught her gipsy figure; they whispered to the household, and noses flattened against the panes to watch her pass. Already, despite Mr. Curran's effort to hold the story for the Sunday papers, the town was buzzing with Aurelie Lindstrom's notoriety. It was agitated, it was incredulous; but when she passed it ran to see and whispered. When she neared the square and passed a shop where the cheerful avails rang, she was conscious that the work stopped, and the smiths came out of the blue haze in their leather aprons to stare after her; and when a farm wagon came along, heaped with frosted corn, the hired man halted her; and when she passed the Hub Clothing Store, a dapper clerk called: "Hello, Aurelie!" And all the other clerks and the proprietor gathered open-mouthed, to whisper.

She set her shoulders straight and marched on into the News office. The editor arose hastily and stared at her. Then he sighed and came to her with his hand out. "Aurelie, I see it now!"

"What?" she asked innocently.

"The beauty winner! Oh, we're a lot of chumps around it this old town! Here you grew up among us and nobody ever suspected you. You're the most beautiful girl I ever saw!"

She sat down perplexedly. Jim Mims, the tramp printer, toothless and whiskey-soaked, grinned at her over his case. Aleck, the press boy, stopped his work. Rube Van Hart, the broken-down ball-player, stuffing old papers into the stove, lifted his derby awkwardly: "Morning, Aurelie!"

All the world seemed radiant with friendliness. The editor had her hand and refused to drop it. His eyes were bright with eagerness.

"Right here in my old shop," he said, "is Cinderella!"

She looked seriously at him. She had never known anybody like Wiley T. Curran. He seemed like a man who had produced a miracle when he merely meant to knock out his pipe. There it was, the sparks flew, and the fairy stood on tiptoes smiling at him! An Irishman had to believe in them.

"Miss Cinderella," went on Curran, "there comes the Chronicle man now from the Parsons House. Those people sent Max Jerome down to sketch you—the top-notch illustrator in the business."

She had never heard of him. Two men came in: one fat, short, busy-looking; the other a lanky youth, laid down a flat case of card papers and turned a good-humored ironical face directly on her.

"And you're Aurelie Lindstrom," he said. "Well, well!"

The stout little man took her hand warmly at Curran's introduction. The Chronicle wants to congratulate you, Miss Lindstrom. It's great! Curran, here, has been telling about you—he looked flustered for a minute—"it's great stuff! But we won't want the sketch papers to get in on this until we spread on it Sunday—understand! Don't let 'em get your picture, or buzz you. And we got to make that eleven-twenty train from the Junction"—he looked at his watch—"and Max wants to sketch you. We're going to run a three-color border on the sup that's a pipkin. Wait till you see that Carmen effect of yours in the Chronicle layout. It's going to make 'em sit up."

She didn't understand a word of it. She looked appealingly at Mr. Curran. Then she was conscious that Max, the artist, was sketching her swiftly, skilfully, glancing first at her, and then at the light in the News' dingy windows and then at his board.

"Say," went on the assistant Sunday editor, "I'm mighty glad you got it, Miss Lindstrom. You see the Chronicle contest was straight—it was no frame-up for one of these show girls, who are always butting in on these things. I tell you I never was so pleased at anything as to find you didn't know a thing about it!"

"Not a blamed thing!" cried Mr. Curran, "I'll tell her why, I've forgotten to ever send those pictures in the News! Your hair—you couldn't have it done better on Michigan avenue. Some women can, you know, and some can't—some can't even buy it." He went back to his sketches. "There's a curious trick about you"—he began to work, and then stopped and laid down his pencil.

"What's the matter, Max?" grunted the newspaper man.

Max was watching her strangely. He muttered; then he said, without regard to his companion: "Miss Lindstrom, do you know you interest me more than any girl I've done since I did some things in Algiers. You're a bit of the Orient about you—or Mexico."

"I'm a Creole, I think," she said pensively. "That's what Uncle Mich said."

The two Chicago men exchanged glances. "Oh, yes," the editor put in—"Curran was saying. Your story—romantic, Miss Lindstrom. I've seen girls like you on Royal street. Not many, but once in a while a Creole, Miss Lindstrom—great stuff—we're going to flash it big." He looked at his watch busily. "Max, you better kick in hard—"

And in the silence she discovered again that the artist had stopped to watch her and his ironical smile was gone. Presently she heard him mutter and resume work, but ever and again he stopped to study her dreamily.

"Got Max going," drawled the Sunday editor, "and they don't pass bad on Max." And the chaps who had picked your picture, Miss Lindstrom, out of all that bunch—thousands and thousands of 'em—why, they're no

slouches either. There was Pixley of the Art Institute, and Martineau who has charge of the Philadelphia collection, and Benny Booth, who does that girl stuff for the syndicate. Three guys you ought to know. And they picked you!"

She sighed luxuriantly and said nothing. Wiley was agitated at all this complacency. He followed her eyes, which were fixed on the morning peace of the court house lawn under the maples. Up the bluff she heard the mob-whites calling, and the gleam of a dove's wing came before the window.

The most beautiful woman! One does not easily grasp it, if one has lived an obscure life of common duties in a gray little world; at times hungry, chilled, hurt with rebuff, underhug with sadness. One may wander the world striving for gain or fame, dig for treasure, grow old, dim-eyed, seeking approval, admiration, love—but here, at once, without asking, seeking nothing, knowing nothing, the jinnse had come and broken the magic vase at her feet!

She sighed again her luxurious peace. The garrulous Sunday editor's voice came faintly through her dream. "When you come to Chicago the paper will entertain you. The old man himself is crazy about that picture—wants a special wire to get that Max thought of yours. You see you got some clothes—Miss—Miss—"

"Not a bit," retorted Max. "It would be a sin to put anything on her. Look at her! In the door-frame—the maples on the bluff beyond her—the sun on that summit! That little gown, the circlet in her hair, the flower—good God, girl, did you get yourself up for this?"

She smiled complacently. "They make fun of me," she murmured, and face back to Max and tried to smile.

And while she sat there with the eyes of the silent men upon her, a step sounded upon the sidewalk. Harlan came past. Her face grew rigid when he saw her. He appeared about to swing into the News office in his old gaudy fashion to see Wiley. Then he met Aurelie's blank gaze and gazed as blankly at her. She saw his big sensitive nose quiver, he stared furiously at Max and his work, so furiously that she was frightened and tried to speak to him. But her voice failed her, and she looked on with her lips, spoke doggedly.

"Aurelie, are you going into this?"

"Into this?"

"This abominable contest—going to have your picture in and all the stuff printed about you!"

He was mad with despair, it seemed; he almost leaped in the doorway. "You shant!" he roared.

"Yes, I shall!" She looked fixedly at him. "I just made up my mind. I'm just going in for everything and be somebody!"

The you-er man stared at her. Then he whirled about and walked before her the sidewalk and walked without looking back to Max and tried to smile.

"Who," said the Sunday editor, "is that damned fool?"

Wiley mumbled awkwardly. "Judge's son—best family. Sort of well, gone on her."

"Good good," commented the newspaper man laconically. "Got his picture about your shop? Heart interest, and all that sort of thing—big as a house! Get us a come-on story to follow Thursday."

Aurelie stared at him. Then she jumped down and walked before her the sidewalk and walked without looking back to Max and tried to smile.

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Miscellaneous Reading.

CIVIL SERVICE REGULATIONS

The Only Way to Get Certain Positions.

Hundreds of South Carolinians have written their senators and congressmen begging for positions. Practically everything worth having is under the civil service and an examination is necessary before one can get an appointment. In these days "political pull" is worth very little, in fact nothing, in filling the various positions in the government departments. The people from the northern states have known this for some time and consequently have been taking the examinations regularly, while our people have been depending on "pull." The result is the south has a very small representation in the government service in Washington and elsewhere. In talking with Senator Tillman recently he called attention to the fact that just at this time there are a great many fine positions to be filled. Look over this list which he has given your correspondent and take his advice and stand the examination. It will cost you nothing but a little time and may get you the position.

Here they are:

Stenographic clerk, departmental office. Examination to be held at eight points in South Carolina on July 22, 1913. Entrance salary \$840-\$900 per annum.

Fireman, Bureau of standards. Examination to be held at Charleston, Columbia and Greenville on July 16, 1913. Entrance salary \$720 per annum.

Architectural designer (male). Examination to be held on July 21, 1913. Salary \$1800 per annum. This examination is for service in the Philippines.

Examiner of accounts (male). This examination will be held on July 23, 1913, and is to secure bookkeepers and accountants for the Interstate commerce commission. This ought to be of special interest to young men in the service of the railroads. There are two grades and the salaries are \$1860 to \$2100 and \$2220 to \$3000 per annum. If you are thoroughly familiar with railroad accounts, it would probably pay you to investigate this examination.

Nautical expert (male). This examination will be held on July 16, 1913, at Columbia and Greenville. Entrance salary \$1000 per annum.

Seed warehouseman (male). On July 16 an examination will be held in Columbia, Charleston and Greenville to fill a vacancy in the bureau of plant industry, agricultural department. Salary from \$900 to \$1200 per annum.

Aid (male). The lighthouse service has a vacancy to be filled by examination on August 6 and 7, 1913, at a salary of \$1380 per annum. The examination will be held in Charleston, Columbia and Greenville.

Tinner's helper (male). In the office of the secretary of agriculture there is a vacancy in the above position to be filled by an examination on July 21, 1913. The salary is \$720 per annum.

Shop apprentice (male). The bureau of standards wants a young man between 16 and 20 to fit himself for work as a mechanic. Examination will be held at Columbia, Greenville and Charleston on August 6, 1913. Salary is \$480 to \$540 per annum.

Assistant in cotton seed marketing and utilization (male). The new office of markets, department of agriculture, announces an examination for the above position on August 4, 1913. The salary is \$720 per annum. An experienced cotton seed oil man is wanted and he must have had at least three years' experience in an oil mill.

Assistant in co-operative organization accounting (male). On August 4, 1913, an examination will be held for the above position. Salary is from \$1800 to \$2400 per annum. The duties of this position will be to devise suitable forms and system of accounting for the use of co-operative producers and consumers organizations, and the applicant must be able to adapt such systems to the needs of individual or groups or communities as particular conditions may require.

Specialist in transportation of farm products (male). The new office of markets, department of agriculture, wants a transportation expert and is to pay \$3000 a year. Practical experience in the service of a common carrier, involving responsibility not less extensive than that of division freight agent, is a prerequisite for consideration for this position. The examination will be held on August 4.

Structural engineer (male). Salary \$1080 to \$1500. Examination on July 23. Applicants must have had not less than four years' experience in engineering of which not less than two shall have been spent in structural work.

Senior civil engineer (male). Salary \$3000 to \$4800 per annum. Examination on July 21. Men are wanted with thorough training, and several years' practical experience in connection with designing and supervising the construction of railway bridges, buildings and other structures.

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at least five years' experience in car construction as master mechanic, master car builder, general car foreman or in similar service. Age 23 to 60.

Inspector of car equipment (male). Salary \$1200 to \$1500 per annum. Examination on July 23. Three years' experience in the employ of a railway in the department of equipment or with a company manufacturing car equipment is required for admission to this examination. Graduation in mechanical engineering from a technical school of recognized standing will be accepted in lieu of two years of these three.

Senior inspector of motive power (male). Salary \$1900 to \$2600 per annum. Examination on July 21. Applicants must show that they have had at least five years' experience as master mechanic, road foreman of engines, roundhouse foreman, locomotive shop foreman or engineer.

Senior railway signal engineer (male). Salary \$3000 to \$4800. Examination on July 21. It is desired to secure eligibles having a thorough technical training and several years' practical experience in connection with the design, construction, operation and maintenance of railway signals and interlockers, and having a thorough acquaintance with the methods of appraisal and cost estimating of railway signals and interlockers.

Railway signal engineer (male). Salary \$1080 to \$1500 per annum. Examination on July 23. Three years' experience in the employ of a railway in the block signaling or interlocking system department or with a company engaged in the manufacture of this special feature of railway equipment is required for admission to this examination.

Senior electrical engineer (male). Salary \$1800 to \$2700 and \$3000 to \$4800 per annum. Examination on July 21. It is desired to secure eligibles having a thorough technical training and several years' practical experience in connection with the design, construction, maintenance and operation of electric railways, power plants and equipments.

Electrical engineer (male). Salary \$1080 to \$1500 per annum. Examination on July 23. Three years' experience in electrical engineering work will be required for admission to this examination. Graduation in electrical engineering from a reputable technical school will be accepted as equivalent to two years of this experience.

Senior mechanical engineer (male). Salary \$1800 to \$2700 and \$3000 to \$4800. Examination on July 21. It is desired to secure eligibles having a thorough technical training and several years' practical experience in connection with the design, construction, operation and maintenance of railway machinery, motive power and equipment.

Mechanical engineer (male). Salary \$1080 to \$1500 per annum. Examination on July 23. Three years' practical experience in mechanical engineering will be required for admission to this examination.

Senior architect (male). Salary \$1800 to \$2700 and \$3000 to \$4800. Examination on July 21. It is desired to secure eligibles having a thorough technical training and several years' practical experience in connection with the design of architectural structures, especially of railway structures, the supervision of the construction and maintenance of buildings.

Architect (male). Salary \$1080 to \$1500. Examination on July 23. Applicants must have had not less than four years' experience in architecture.

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