

The Chalice of Courage

Being the Story of Certain Persons
Who Drank of it and Conquered

A Romance of Colorado

By **Cyrus Townsend Brady**

Author of "The King and the Man,"
"The Island of Regeneration,"
"The Better Man," "Hearts and
the Highway," "As the Sparks
Fly Upward," etc.

Illustrations by **Elsworth Young**
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CHAPTER XXI.

The Odds Against Him.

The noise of the opening of the door and the inrush of cold air that followed awoke Enid Maitland to instant action. She rose to her feet and faced the entrance through which she expected Newbold to reappear—for of course the newcomer must be he—and for the life of her she could not help that radiating flash of joy, the momentary anticipation of which fairly transfigured her being; although if she had stopped to reflect she would have remembered that not in the whole course of their acquaintance had Newbold ever entered her room at any time without knocking and receiving permission.

Some of that joy yet lingered in her lovely face when she tardily recognized the newcomer in the half light. Armstrong, scarcely waiting to close the door, sprang forward joyfully with his hands outstretched.

"Enid!" he cried. Naturally he thought the look of expectant happiness he had surprised upon her face was for him and he accounted for its sudden disappearance by the shock of his unexpected, unannounced, abrupt, entrance. The warm color had flushed her face, but as she stared at him her aspect rapidly changed. She grew paler. The happy light that had shone in her eyes faded away and as he approached her she shrank back.

"You have no warrant whatever for saying or hoping that," answered the girl slowly but decisively. "Have I not?" asked the man quickly. "Did you not say to me a little while ago that you liked me better than any man you had ever met and that I might win you if I could? Well, I can, and what's more, I will in spite of yourself, Enid," he laughed. "Why, the memory of that kiss I stole from you makes me mad." He pushed the things before him and rose to his feet once more. "Come, give me another," he said, "it isn't in the power of woman to stand against a love like mine."

"Isn't it?" "No, indeed." "Louise Newbold did," she answered very quietly but with the swiftness and the dexterity of a sword thrust by a master hand, a mighty arm. Armstrong stared at her in open mouthed astonishment. "What do you know about Louise Rosser or Newbold?" he asked at last. "All that I want to know." "And did that damned hound tell you?" "If you mean Mr. Newbold, he never mentioned your name, he does not know you exist."

"Have no fear," answered the man calmly, "he has gone to the settlements to tell them I am safe and to seek help to get me out of the mountains." "Fear!" exclaimed Armstrong, proudly, "I fear nothing on earth. For years, ever since I heard his name in fact, I have longed to meet him. I want to know who told you about that woman—Kirkby?" "He never mentioned your name in connection with her." "But you must have heard it somewhere," cried the man thoroughly bewildered. "The birds of the air didn't tell it to you, did they?" "She told me herself," answered Enid Maitland. "She told you? Why, she's been dead in her grave five years, shot to death by that murderous dog of a husband of hers."

"A word with you, Mr. Armstrong," said the woman with great spirit. "You can't talk that way about Mr. Newbold; he saved my life twice over, from a bear and then in the cloudburst which caught me in the canon." "That evens up a little," said Armstrong. "Perhaps for your sake I will spare him." "You!" laughed the woman contemptuously. "Spare him? Be advised, look to yourself, if he ever finds out what I know, I don't believe any power on earth could save you." "Oh," said Armstrong carelessly enough, although he was consumed with hate and jealousy and raging against her clearly evident disdain. "I can take care of myself, I guess. Anyway I only want to talk about you, not about him or her. Your father—"

"Is he well?" "Well enough, but heart-broken, crushed. I happened to be in his house in Philadelphia when the telegram came from your uncle that you were lost and probably dead. I had just asked him for your hand," he added, smiling grimly at the recollection. "You had no right to do that." "I know that." "It was not, it is not, his to give." "Still when I won you I thought it would be pleasant all around if he knew and approved." "And did he?" "Not then, he literally drove me out of the house, but afterwards he said if I could find you I could have you; and, by Heaven, I have found you and I will have you whether you like it or not." "Never," cried the woman decisively.

prepared, while she stood over him watching him silently. "This is cozy. A warm, comfortable room, something to eat served by the finest woman in the world, the prettiest girl on earth to look at—what more could a man desire? This is the way it's going to be always in the future."

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The situation had got on Arm-

strong's nerves, and he must perforce show himself in his true colors. His only resources were his strength, not of mind but of body. He made another most damaging mistake at this juncture.

"We are alone here, and I am master, remember," he said meaningly. "Come, let's make up. Give me a kiss for my pains and—"

"I have been alone here for a month with another man," answered Enid Maitland who was strangely unafraid in spite of this threat. "A gentleman, he has never so much as offered to touch my hand without my permission; the contrast is quite to your disadvantage."

"Are you jealous of Louise Rosser?" asked Armstrong suddenly seeing that he was losing ground and casting about desperately to account for it, and to recover what was escaping him. "Why, that was nothing, a mere boy and girl affair," he ran on with a sly and good humor as if it were all a trifle. "The woman was, I hate to say it, just crazy in love with me, but I really never cared anything especially for her; it was just a harmless sort of flirtation anyway. She afterward married this man Newbold and that's all there was about it."

The truth would not serve him and in his desperation and desire he staked everything on this astounding lie. The woman he loved looked at him with her face as rigid as a mask. "You won't hold that against me, will you?" pleaded the man. "I told you that I'd been a man among men, yes, among women, too, here in this rough country, and that I wasn't worthy of you; there are lots of things in my past that I ought to be ashamed of and I am, and the more I see you the more ashamed I grow, but as for loving any one else, all that I've ever thought or felt or experienced before now is just nothing."

And this indeed was true, and even Enid Maitland with all her prejudice could realize and understand it. Out of the same mouth, was said of old, proceeded blessing and cursing, and from these same lips came truth and falsehood; but the power of the truth to influence this woman was as nothing to the power of falsehood. She could never have loved him, she now knew; a better man had won her affections, a nobler being claimed her heart; but if he had told the truth regarding his relationship to Newbold's wife and then had completed it with his personal appeal to her present

she would have respected him.

"You have not told me the truth," she answered directly; "you have deliberately been false."

"Can't you see," protested the man drawing nearer to her, "how much I love you?" "Oh, that; yes I suppose that is true; as far as you can love any one I will admit that you do love me."

"So far as I can love any one?" he repeated after her. "Give me a chance and I'll show you."

"But you haven't told the truth about Mrs. Newbold. You have calumniated the dead, you have sought to shelter yourself by throwing the burden of a guilty passion upon the weaker vessel; it isn't manlike, it isn't— Armstrong was a bold fighter, quick and prompt in his decisions. He made another effort to set himself right. He staked his all on another throw of the dice, which he began to feel were somehow loaded against him.

"You are right," he admitted, wondering anxiously how much the woman really knew. "It wasn't true, it was a coward's act, I am ashamed of it. I'm so mad with love for you that I scarcely know what I am doing, but I will make a clean breast of it now. I loved Louise Rosser after a fashion before ever Newbold came on the scene. We were pledged to each other; a foolish quarrel arose, she was jealous of other girls—"

"And had she no right to be?" "Oh, I suppose so. We broke it off anyway and then she married Newbold, out of pique I suppose, or what you will. I thought I was heart-broken at the time, it did hit me pretty hard; it was five or six years ago; I was a youngster then, I am a man now. The woman has been dead long since; there was some cock-and-bull story about her falling off a cliff and her husband being compelled to shoot her. I didn't believe it at the time, and naturally I have been waiting to get even with him. I have been hating him for five years, but he has been good to you and we will let bygones be bygones. What do I care for Louise Rosser, or for him, or for Newbold, her, now! I am sorry that I said what I did, but you will have to charge it to my blinding passion for you. I can truthfully say that you are one woman that I have ever craved with all my heart. I will do anything, be anything, to win you."

It was very brilliantly done; he had not told a single untruth; he had admitted much, but he had withheld the essentials after all. He was playing against desperate odds, he had no knowledge of how much she knew, or

where she had learned anything. Every one about the mining camp where she had lived had known of his love for Louise Rosser, but he had not supposed there was a single human soul who had been privy to its later developments, and he could not figure out any way by which Enid Maitland could have learned by any possibility any more of the story than he had told her. He had calculated swiftly and with the utmost nicety, just how much he should confess. He was a keen witted clever man and he was fighting for what he held most dear, but his eagerness and zeal, as they have often done, overrode his judgment, and he made another mistake at this juncture. His evil genius was at his elbow.

"You must remember," he continued, "that you have been alone here in these mountains with a man for over a month; the world—"

"What, what do you mean?" exclaimed the girl, who indeed knew very well what he meant, but who would not admit the possibility.

"It's not every man," he added, blindly rushing to his doom, "that would care for you or want you—after that."

He received a sudden and terrible enlightenment.

"You coward," she cried, with upraised hand, whether in protest or to strike him neither ever knew, for at that moment the door opened the second time that morning to admit another man.

CHAPTER XXII.

The Last Resort of Kings and Men.

The sudden entrant upon a quarrel between others is invariably at a disadvantage. Usually he is unaware of the cause of difference and generally he has no idea of the stage of development of the affair that has been reached. Newbold suffered from this lack of knowledge and to these disadvantages were added others. For instance, he had not the faintest idea as to who or what was the stranger. The room was not very light in the day time. Armstrong happened to be standing with his back to it at some distance from the window by the side of which Enid stood. Six years naturally and inevitably makes some difference in a man's appearance, and it is not to be wondered that at first Newbold did not recognize the man before him as the original of the face in his wife's locket, although he had stud-

iously scanned her features, and a longer study would have enlightened him of course, but for the present he saw nothing but a stranger visibly perturbed on one side and the woman he loved apparently fiercely resentful, stormily indignant, confronting the other with an upraised hand.

The man, whoever he was, had affronted her, had aroused her indignation, perhaps had insulted her, that was plain. He went swiftly to her side, he interposed himself between her and the man.

"Enid," he asked, and his easy use of the name was a revelation and an illumination to Armstrong, "who is this man, what has he done?"

It was Armstrong who replied. If Newbold were in the dark, not so he; although they had never spoken, he had seen Newbold. He recognized him instantly, indeed, recognized or not, the newcomer could be no other



"You Coward!" She Cried.

man he. There was doubtless no other man in the mountains. He had expected to find him when he approached the hut and was ready for him.

To the fire of his ancient hatred and jealousy was added a new fuel that increased its heat and flame. This man had come between Armstrong and the woman he loved before and had got away unscathed; evidently he had come between him and this new woman he loved. Well, he should be made to suffer for it this time and by Armstrong's own hands. The instant Newbold had entered the room Armstrong had thirsted to leap upon him, and he meant to do it. One or the other of them, he swore in his heart, should never leave that room

alive. But Newbold should have his chance. Armstrong was as brave, as fearless, as intrepid, as any man on earth. There was much that was admirable in his character; he would not take any man at a disadvantage in an encounter such as he proposed. He would not hesitate to rob a man of his wife if he could, and he would not shrink from any deceit necessary to gain his purpose with a woman, for good or evil, but he had his own ideas of honor, he would not shoot an enemy in the back for instance.

Singular perversion, this, to which some minds are liable! To take from a man his wife by subtle and underhand methods, to rob him of that which makes life dear and sweet—there was nothing dishonorable in that! But to take his life, a thing of infinitely less moment, by the same process—that was not to be thought of. In Armstrong's code it was right, it was imperative, to confront a man with the truth and take the consequences; but to confront a woman with a lie and take her body and soul, if so be she might be gained, was equally admirable. And there are other souls than Armstrong's in which this moral inconsistency and obliquity about men and women has lodgment!

Armstrong confronted Newbold therefore, lustful of battles; he yearned to leap upon him, his fingers itched to grasp him, then trembled slightly as he rubbed them nervously against his thumbs; his face protruded a little, his eyes narrowed.

"My name is Armstrong," he said, determined to precipitate the issue without further delay and flinging the words at the other in a tone of hectoring defiance which, however strange to say, did not seem to affect Newbold in any perceptible degree.

The name was an illumination to him, though not at all in the way the speaker had fancied; the recollection of it was the one fact concerning her that rankled in the solitary mind. He had often wanted to ask Enid Maitland what she had meant by that chance allusion to Armstrong which she had made in the beginning of their acquaintance, but he had refrained. At first he had no right to question her; there could be no natural end to their affections; and latterly when their hearts had been disclosed to each other in the wild, tempestuous, passionate scenes of the last two or three

(Continued on page 6.)

SEABOARD AIR LINE RAILWAY

Southbound

No. 81 Arrive in Cheraw 3.12 a. m.
No. 57 Arrive in Cheraw 8.22 a. m.
No. 43 Arrive in Cheraw 9.45 p. m.

Northbound

No. 84 Arrive in Cheraw 12.30 a. m.
No. 66 Arrive in Cheraw 8.22 a. m.
No. 58 Arrive in Cheraw 9.48 p. m.

No. 58 Northbound makes connection at Kollock with the Bennettsville & Cheraw R. R. train.

No. 66 makes connection at Kollock with Bennettsville & Cheraw R. R. train for Bennettsville and all points on the B. & C. system beyond Bennettsville.

No. 57 makes connection at McBee with the C. M. & C. R. R. for Jefferson, S. C., also with the S. C. & W. R. R. for Hartsville, Darlington and Florence.

ATLANTIC COAST LINE RAILWAY

Southbound

No. 61 Leave Cheraw 6.30 a. m.
No. 63 Leave Cheraw 5.30 p. m.

Northbound

No. 62 Leave Cheraw 11.57 a. m.
No. 60 Arrive in Cheraw 10.10 p. m.

No. 62 makes connection at Wadesboro with train for Winston-Salem.

No. 61 makes connection at Florence with trains for Charleston, Columbia, and Wilmington, and at Darlington with train for Sumter and Columbia.

No. 63 makes connection at Florence with trains for Columbia, Charleston and Wilmington.

CHESTERFIELD & LANCASTER RY.

Westbound

No. 7 (local) Due to Leave 7.00 a. m.
No. 35 Due to Leave 4.50 p. m.

Eastbound

No. 8 (local) Due to Arrive 4.50 p. m.
No. 36 Due to Arrive 2.45 p. m.

No. 36, if on time, makes connection with the Atlantic Coast Line, No. 63 for Darlington, Florence, Columbia, Charleston and Wilmington.

No. 7 subject to annulment.