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# The GIRLAHORSE AND A DOG

By FRANCIS LYNDE

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CHAPTER I  
Cousin Percy's Little Joke.  
I suppose every one has had the experience of waking in the middle of the night to find everything perfectly still and quiet and normal, and yet with the impression persisting that there had been a tremendous crash of some sort just before the waking scenes were alive enough to realize it. It was some such razing jolt as this that was given me on the morning when I was called in, with the other members of the family, to listen to the reading of my grandfather's will.  
But, first, however, to give some idea of the conditions precedent, as a lawyer would say. My father—good, easy-going, comfort-loving, Daddy—never owned what Grandfather Dudley, parsing his thin lips and snapping the words out, called "the money sense." As an architect high in his profession and with fine artistic feeling for the beautiful in buildings, he earned a liberal income—and spent it; or so much of it that there was barely enough left after his death to provide for my mother and sister, and to keep me going, as you might say, in an exceedingly modest manner. Without work, I mean. I may as well confess at once, that I had never acquired the work habit. I was always "going to," but it was so fatally easy to keep on postponing the coming thing. I suppose I had been ready on at least half a dozen occasions to take a dice into some pool with a salary attachment, but always some good friend would bob up to say, "Oh, come on, Stannie, old man; we're lacking just one more to make up the bunch. Don't be a

clam. Time enough to settle down when you have to," and then it would be all off.  
Besides, you see, there was always Grandfather Jasper in the background. He had money—lashings of it, so we all believed; and it had been a family understanding for years that he intended splitting the bulk of it fifty-fifty between my cousin Percy and me. Before we got any farther, let me set it down that Cousin Percy was—and is—all the seventeen different kinds of things that I am not, and never wished to be; smooth, neat, well-groomed, a "grind" in college and a "perfect dear" with the girls, ambitious as the very devil, and measuring his friends by the amount of "pull" they might be able to exert in his behalf; there you have him from the crown of his well-brushed little head to his patent-leather pumps.

"You're a fright, Stannie," he would say, in his carefully polished, diplomatic manner—he had a blizt in the Department of State at Washington, and was in training for the legation service abroad—"you are a perfect fright. Three whole years out of college, and you haven't done a single, solitary useful thing yet. When are you going to begin? And, incidentally, how long are you going to keep Lisette waiting?"  
Oh, Lord!—Right there was another knot in the tangle—Lisette. We had agreed to agree—Lisette and I—some six months or so in advance of Grandfather Jasper's death, and we were both perfectly well-assured, and had been perfectly well-assured, and had assured each other a dozen times, that my income from Daddy's estate would be more than half big enough to marry

on. You see, it was this way: Lisette was one of a family of four girls in a mighty expensive household, and there wasn't anything to lean on on that side of the fence. Though, of course, we never discussed it brutally in so many words, we were waiting for that fifty-fifty look-in at the will which family tradition declared had already been drawn up, signed, sealed, witnessed and put away in cold storage; otherwise in the safe-keeping of Grandfather Jasper's family lawyer.

All of which may serve to bring us back to that nightmare effect registered at the start. When the Dudley will was taken out of the icebox and read to the assembled members of the family, there were at least two shocking surprises. Jasper hadn't been anywhere near as rich as we had all been thinking he was; that his modest manner of living had been, perhaps, as much a matter of necessity as of choice. Bad investments—of which the family had never heard so much as a whisper—had cut his fortune down to something less than half a million, all told. That was shock Number One; and shock Number Two was strictly personal to me. Grandfather Jasper had left me his love and best wishes, and had willed the money and property—all of it, mind you—to Cousin Percy, giving as his reason that he thought Percy would make better use of it.

Of course, I had everybody's sympathy and condolences—even Percy's, for that matter. My mother wept; and, as I recall it, Lisette managed to compass a tear or so when I told her what had happened; or rather what had so ignominiously failed to happen.  
"Whatever will you do?" she faltered. "I suppose you will really have to go to work now, won't you, Stannie?"  
"Perish the thought!" I told her; then I gave the good reasons why there was no hope for us in that direction. "A fat chance I'd have to earn any real money. I can navigate a yacht—a little—drive a motor, ride a polo pony; and play the great American game. I think these are the sum total of my shining accomplishments."

"You don't know the size of it," I grumped, seeing that she was looking at it rather regretfully. "You can wear it on some other finger, you know."  
"Yes; I suppose I could do that," she agreed; and I'm blizt if she didn't shift it to a finger of the other hand right there and then!  
It was less than a week after this little fade-out scene with Lisette that Percy's letter came. This is what it said:  
"Dear Stannie:  
"I know just about how you felt last week when you heard Grandfather Jasper's will read, and it isn't going to make you feel any better now when I tell you that I knew of its provisions more than a year ago. When the will was drawn, grandfather showed it to me, and gave me a sealed envelope, which I was to open after his death. That envelope, as I knew at the time, contained, among other things, a codicil to the will. By its provisions you are to receive a legacy under certain conditions which were to be revealed to you at such time as I might think best.  
"Your portion of Grandfather Jasper's property was worth, at its latest valuation, something like \$440,000. It lies in a perfectly safe repository, situated between the 106th and 110th degrees of longitude west from Greenwich, and the 85th and 89th degrees north latitude. When you find it, you will be able to identify it by the presence of a girl with brown hair and eyes and small nose on her left shoulder, a placid horse which she rides, and a dog with a split face—half black and half white. You will be sure to find it; and the three hundred and fifty thousand dollars of it, if you wish, is at

your disposal. You'll be on the trail of your legacy.  
"So there you are, Stannie, old boy; there's your fortune. All you've got to do is to go to work and find it. Perhaps by that time you will have acquired the working habit—which is what Grandfather Jasper hoped might prove to be the case.  
"Wishing you great joy in your search, I am,  
"Your affectionate cousin,  
"PERCY."

Naturally, I had a quiet little laugh over this screed of Percy's, taking it for a joke; a poor joke and in rather bad taste, I thought. In that mood I handed the letter to Lisette for her to read. She didn't laugh, but she did look a bit scornful and put about, if you know what I mean.  
"I don't suppose the blue-eyed girl would appeal to you," she said, "though the horse and the dog might. When do you start?"  
We discovered that Meridian 105 west of Greenwich split the state of Colorado just beyond Denver, Colorado Springs and Pueblo, and the hunting ground plotted out for me took in three-fourths of the remainder of the state, a slice of Utah, a good bit bigger slice of New Mexico, with a wedge out of the northeastern corner of Arizona, just for good measure.

"Me for the wild and woolly!" I brayed. "Don't you see me rigged out in a nice, hairy pair of 'shaps' and riding hell-bent-for-leather—I believe that's the phrase—over the snow-capped peaks or the boundless prairies, as the case may be? But just imagine Percy the immaculate pulling a bone-head joke like this!"  
"You are taking it for a joke?" she questioned.  
"Sure I am; and it's a rather rotten one at that, I should say—considering the source."

"Then you won't go to look for the blue-eyed girl with nut-brown hair and the cunning little mole? Think of what you may be missing!"  
For just one crazy minute I had a hunch, or a premonition, or whatever you like to call it, that the letter might not be a joke. Grandfather Jasper had always been a bit eccentric, a rich man's privilege and a rich old man's incontestable right. What if he had actually done this thing to me—a thing scarcely less devastating than cutting me off without a penny? On the spur of the moment I said:  
"If I should go, would you wait for me, Lisette?"  
She took her time about answering—a good and sufficient plenty of it.  
"I think perhaps I'd better not

(Continued on Page Six)



**BURROWS NATIONAL BANK**  
The annual meeting of the stockholders of The Burrows National Bank for the election of directors and transaction of such other business as may come before the meeting, will be held at the banking office, Tuesday, January 10th, 1922, at 10 a. m.  
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