

The Girl a Horse and a Dog

By FRANCIS LYNDE

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SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTER I.—Under his grandfather's will, Stanford Broughton, society idler, finds his share of the estate, valued at \$1,000,000, in the form of a mine and a dog, and that is all. It may be done by the mine, and the dog, and a dog with a split face, half black and half white, and Stanford first reads the bequest as a joke, but after consideration sets out to find his legacy.

CHAPTER II.—On his way to Denver, the city nearest the meridian described in his grandfather's will, Stanford hears from a fellow traveler a story having to do with a flooded mine.

CHAPTER III.—Thinking things over, he begins to imagine there may be something in his grandfather's bequest, and while his idea finally centers on the possibility of a mine, as a "safe" report. Recalling the narrative on the train, he ascertains that his fellow traveler was a mining engineer, Charles Bullerton. Bullerton refused him information, but from other sources Broughton learns enough to make him proceed to Silverville, in the Red desert.

CHAPTER IV.—On the station platform at Atropia, just as the train pulls out, Stanford sees what appear to be the identical horse and dog described in his grandfather's will. Impressed, he leaves the train at the next stop, Ansel. There he finds that Atropia was originally Silverville, his destination. Unable to secure a conveyance at once to take him to Silverville, Broughton decides to wait until the next morning, and the impression on the town is somewhat different than he is slightly demoralized.

CHAPTER V.—Pursued, he abandons the car, which is wrecked, and escapes on a girl on horseback and the dog. After he examines his "Beastly" dog, he takes him to her home, at the Old Cinnabar mine, to meet her father.

CHAPTER VI.—Broughton's horse and dog are mysteriously lost, and he is forced to return to Denver, but does not reveal his identity.

CHAPTER VII.—Next morning, with Hiram, he visits the mine. Hiram asks him to look over the machinery, and goes so, kind of an excuse to be near Jeanie, in whom he has become interested, and he engaged in the first real work he has ever done.

CHAPTER VIII.—The pumps started, but are unable to make an impression on the water. Broughton gives up, and Jeanie offers to help him. He offers to drain it in consideration of Broughton's giving him fifty-one per cent of the property. Stanford refuses. The Bullerton offers to buy the mine outright for that amount, but Broughton's father more than half a million. Stanford again refuses.

CHAPTER IX.—Jeanie cautions Broughton against selling the mine, under any circumstances, and, apparently in a spirit of mischief, allows him to kiss her. After a conversation with Daddy Hiram, Broughton decides he will stick to the property.

CHAPTER X.—Next day, during Stanford's temporary absence from the mine, an enemy without doubt, Bullerton, wrecks the pumping machinery. Broughton decides to have it out with him next day.

CHAPTER XI.—In the morning he finds Bullerton and Jeanie have disappeared, apparently eloped. He also discovers that his deed to the mine has been stolen, and as it has not been recorded, he has no proof of ownership. Mystery! Broughton of the dog cause Hiram and Broughton to take the trail in search of Jeanie.

CHAPTER XII.—They find Jeanie's pony, abandoned, but no trace of the girl. When they get back to the cabin, Bullerton is there, apparently awaiting their return.

CHAPTER XIII.—Believing Jeanie to have gone with Bullerton, Broughton and Hiram set out in search of her. He uses him roughly. Bullerton denies knowing the whereabouts of Jeanie. Broughton orders him off his property, and he departs vowing vengeance. Broughton and Hiram fortify themselves in the mine shafthouse and prepare for a siege. Broughton comes with a crop of potatoes and on their refusal to vacate, begins an attack.

CHAPTER XIV.—During the day and night the two successfully defend the shafthouse against a series of attacks, including an attempt to drown them out.

CHAPTER XV.—Almost ready to give up, Broughton is heartened by Hiram's assertion that the sounds of the firing must have reached Atropia, and an investigating party will soon appear.

CHAPTER XVI.—The siege continues. Bullerton vainly endeavors to induce Hiram to abandon Broughton. He finally announces his purpose to destroy the shafthouse, with its defenders. They defy him.

CHAPTER XVII.—Using dynamite, the besiegers have Twombly and Broughton at their last gasp when the rescuing party from Atropia arrives, headed by Broughton's acquaintance, Beasley, who is Daddy Hiram's nephew. With the party is Jeanie. As an explanation of her disappearance she hands Stanford his deed to the Old Cinnabar, which she had taken to have recorded, a precaution he had neglected. Beasley arrests Broughton for the theft and destruction of the construction car.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Hold-Up.

Beasley left me sitting on the doorstep—l've a notion he had run out of handkerchiefs, else he might have clapped a pair of them on me—while he started his posse down to Atropia with the captured raiders and their leader. When he came back we took time. Daddy and I and the big marshal, to size up the damage that had been wrought, and beyond that, to dig into the mystery of the continuous, grumbling roar which was still ascending out of the wreck-covered mine shaft.

Beasley stayed with us, waiting, as I took it to get his breakfast before he ran me off to jail, and the three of us fell to work clearing away the fallen timbers and roofing iron. Dad-



"Hooryay!" He yelled. "Charley Bullerton's Dressed Your Mine for Ye!"

Hiram leading the attack and being the first to strike his head through what remained of the tangle and hang it over the edge of the shaft's mouth. "Hooryay!" he yelled, his voice sounding as if it came from the inside of a barrel; and then again, "Hooryay, Stannie, son!" by the ghosts of old Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, Charley Bullerton's done gone and done eggs-zactly what he said he could do—dressed your mine for ye! Climb in here and take a look at her. She's empty—empty as a gourd—but, at that, she ain't goin' to be very long!"

A few more minutes of the strenuous toil cleared the pit mouth so that we could all see. The bomb which had exploded in the shaft had wrought a complete transformation. The standing floor, which all of our pumping attacks had failed to lower by so much as a fraction of an inch, was gone, and with it had vanished the two big centrifugals, the platform upon which they had stood, and their pipe connections. Gone, likewise, was the greater part of the heavy wooden shaft-lining. A little of this remained in the upper part of the shaft, but from a point possibly twenty-five feet down, there was nothing but the bare rock sides of the square pit swept by the receding floor.

As for the hollow roaring noise which had followed the crash of the explosion, and which still continued, there was a good and sufficient reason plainly visible from the pit's mouth. Some twenty feet down, and on the eastern side of the shaft, a stream of water big enough to run a good-sized hydroelectric plant was pouring into the perpendicular cavern, and it was its plunging descent into the bowels of the earth which was making the terrific thunder.

Beasley was the first to find speech. "Where the blazes is all that water comin' from?" he exploded.

"That's just what we're going to find out!" I barked. "Can you and Daddy handle my weight in a rope sling?"

They both protested that they could handle two—mine if necessary, and a sling was quickly rigged and I was lowered into the pit. At the nearer view thus obtained, some of the mysteries were instantly made clear. The reason why the wooden boxing disappeared below a certain point in the shaft was that it had never extended any farther down. It had been merely a box with a bottom!—and all those pipe-dream impressions which had tried to register themselves on the day when I had my struggle with the suction-pipe octopus were instantly translated into facts. I could have sworn, then, that there was a bottom in the box, and there was a bottom. And that other impression—that I had encountered an rushing stream of ice-cold water in the chilling depths; here was the stream; a foot-thick, never-failing cataract, pouring in through a perfectly good and substantial conduit of twelve-inch iron pipe!

In a flash the whole criminal mystery involving the ostensibly flooded mine was illuminated for me. "Haul away!" I called to the two above; and when they had drawn me up to the pit's mouth and I could get upon my feet, I yipped at Daddy and the marshal to come on, and led them in an outdoor race along the mine ledge to the eastward; a hundred-yards dash which brought us to the banks of the swift little mountain torrent in the right-hand gully.

A brief search revealed precisely what I was expecting to find; what anyone in possession of the facts precedent would have expected to find. In the middle of a small pool slightly upstream from the path level—a pocketed bit of water neatly screened and half hidden by a growth of low-branched spruces—we saw a cone-shaped whirlpool swirl into which a good third of the stream flow was vanishing. Below this pool an apparently accidental heaping of rocks formed a small dam which kept the little reservoir full.

Without a word, Daddy Hiram and the Angelle marshal plunged recklessly into the stream and with their bare hands tore away the loose-rock dam. With the removal of the slight barrier and the consequent raising of the course of the stream, the pocket reservoir immediately sucked dry, the inlet of the cataracting pipe was exposed,

and the secret of the flooded Cinnabar was a secret no longer.

The scheme which had been elaborated and set in motion to "soak" Grandfather Jasper was a premeditated "rotundum." The Cinnabar, in operation and producing to its capacity, was worth, so Beasley asserted, all that my grandfather had paid for it, and more. But with the branch railroad built to its very door, its value would be doubled. Two alternatives had thus presented themselves to the owners, who were Cripple Creek mining speculators who had bought in the stock at a low figure while the main vein was as yet unexploited: they could go on mining the ore and storing it against the time when the railroad, with its cost-reducing advantages, should come along; or they could suspend operations for the same length of time, setting the losses of a shut-down over against the increased profits when they should start up again.

With our discoveries of the morning the plan of the robbery became perfectly plain. Some giant of finance among the speculators had evolved a scheme by which the mine not only might be shut down during the interval of waiting for the railroad to build over the bench, but at the same time be made to yield a bumper crop of profits.

Taking its various steps in their order, Hiram leading the game was to sell the mine to Grandfather Jasper while it was still a going proposition; and this was done. But one of the conditions of the sale (Beasley told us) was that the selling corporation should continue to operate the mine, not as a lessee, but under a contract by which the operating company should receive a certain percentage of the output; an arrangement which gave the holdup artists ample opportunity to prepare for the coup d'etat.

How these preparations were made, and the secret of them kept from leaking out, still remained one of the unsolved mysteries, though Beasley suggested that probably important work-

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men were employed, and that the work had been done under jealous supervision with all the careful precautions taken against publicity. The tight wooden box—which would figure as a part of the shaft lining had been built, and into the box the creek had been diverted by means of the small dam and the underground conduits. With the water admitted, to rise in the box to the level of its intake in the creek reservoir, the trap was set and was ready to be sprung.

Beyond this point there was a gap we were obliged to bridge by conjecture, but the inferences were all plausible enough. Doubtless the plotters had notified my grandfather that his mine was flooded and was no longer workable. Doubtless, again, he had authorized them to buy the needful pumping machinery and to install it— which they did.

In this barefaced imposture the plotters had positively builded something upon a grandfather Jasper's advanced age as an insurance against any too-searching investigation; but beyond this they had carefully disarmed any suspicion that he might otherwise have harbored by encourag-

(Continued on Page Six)

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