





Gunlock Ranch By FRANK H. SPEARMAN

SYNOPSIS

Sleepy Cat, desert town of the Southwest, is celebrating the Fourth of July. Jane Van Tassel, beautiful daughter of Gus Van Tassel, hated owner of Gunlock ranch, has arrived from the East for the first time. She watches the Frontier Day celebration in company with Dr. Carpy, crusty, tender-hearted friend of the community. Henry Sawdy of the Circle Dot ranch, tricked in a fake horse race the day before by Dave McCrossen, foreman at Gunlock, plans revenge. He enters Bill Denison, a handsome young Texas wrangler, in the rodeo which McCrossen is favored to win, and lays heavy bets on him. Unknown to the crowd, Denison is a champion horseman. McCrossen and the young stranger tie in the various events. Denison drops a cigarette carelessly. Racing down the track full tilt, he picks up the cigarette. The verdict goes to Denison when McCrossen refuses to attempt the stunt. Entreated by the crowd, Denison agrees to perform another trick. Jane is asked for her bracelet, and throws it on the track. Just as Denison rides to pick it up a yell from Barney Hebstock, a McCrossen henchman, scares the pony, nearly costing the rider his life. Gun play is prevented by the intervention of Dr. Carpy. Back on Gunlock ranch after two years in Chicago, because of her father's illness, Jane gets lost riding in the hills and meets Denison, now a neighbor who guides her home. Not knowing her identity, he speaks bitterly of Van Tassel.

CHAPTER III—Continued

"You must have been trying not to find me," said Jane coldly. Without much reason she resented the fact that she had got lost and not been promptly found. "Where were you?" asked the foreman, sitting down. "In the hills. You've always been telling me to ride where I pleased and that there was no danger because you'd pick me up. I guess your formula didn't work." "I missed this time. There's never been any trouble locatin' you before. But it won't happen again. So you just wandered away and wandered home again?" "I did not wander home. I was brought home." "Who brought you?" "Bill Denison."

"If a cannon cracker had been exploded under McCrossen, it could not have been more sensational than her answer. He caught his breath with a gulp. "That fellow! Well, some things do beat the devil!" The name doesn't seem to sit very well with you," observed Jane crustily. "That bird's name doesn't sit very well with anyone at Gunlock."

Jane seemed willing to pursue the subject. "Why not?" she asked languidly as she sipped her coffee. "Why not? There's more reasons than one. Denison is a rustler, if you know what that means." He paused. "What else?" she asked in the same fatigued manner. "He's the worst enemy your father ever had in this whole country. He's probably stole more Gunlock cattle than all the rustlers in the hills."

Jane rode into Sleepy Cat next morning with Bull Page, and when she had dispatched her business at the bank, she walked up street to Carpy's hotel. She asked for Dr. Carpy, whom she remembered from her visit two years before. The doctor was somewhat surprised at the sight of this trim, erect girl, eighteen or nineteen years of age, and seemingly a stranger, facing him. Obviously she was a newcomer to Sleepy Cat; the doctor did not at once place her. But his glance swept everything about her like a flash—her cowboy hat, her red, open-necked blouse with its dark flowing tie; her sloping feminine shoulders; delicate, pleasing bosom and slender, rounded hips; her short brown riding skirt and her soft, tight-fitting tan boots. The rig seemed right for her brown hair and blue eyes. "Dr. Carpy?" her voice was clear and her manner possessed. The doctor doffed his hat and set his bag down on the desk with an air of satisfaction. "I'm Dr. Carpy. But I'm glad to see you don't need me or any other doctor."

"You must mean the wildcat," suggested Carpy, grinning half amiably. "Everyone doing things his own way," she continued, ignoring the thrust. "Or not doing them at all." "Mostly that," I guess. "Mostly that," agreed Jane. "I can see I have plenty of work ahead."

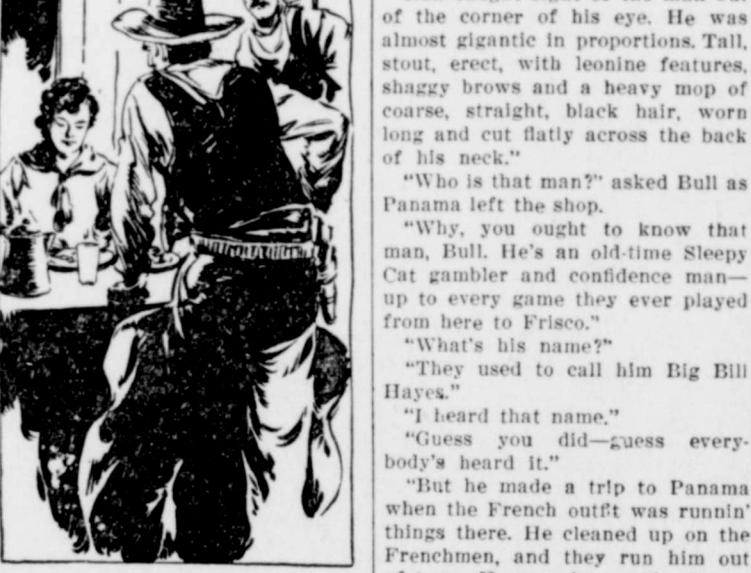
"And you going on nineteen. And, I'll bet, never did a day's work in your life." She straightened up. "I've worked every day of my life since I left high school at fifteen."

"Jane's eyes fell. She crimsoned. Then, collecting herself, she said, "I did not mean to tell you, Doctor. It slipped out. We've nearly always had to look out for ourselves—but I hate to talk about it, Doctor. Father says he's sorry. When I telegraphed him about Mother's death, he was all broken up and sent me so much money for the expenses that I didn't know what to do with it—I thought it was too late to do poor Mother any good. I know Father's eccentric, Doctor." Jane continued gravely. "But that doesn't explain to me, why everybody out here hates him. And that's what I've wanted to ask somebody like you, Doctor, somebody who would tell me the truth. Why is Father so disliked? Is it because he is so rich?"

Dr. Carpy was taken aback. Here was an innocent and charming girl budding into a lovely womanhood, the daughter of an unscrupulous criminal and thoroughly detested cattle king, asking him to tell her why her father was so hated among the Spanish Sinks. "Well, Jane," he said at length slowly, "many a rich man is hated without good reason."

But if he thought he could get off with such a general observation he was mistaken. Jane pursued him. "Was that the case with Father?" she asked bluntly. "Other rich men are hated," continued Carpy, unmovable, "not because they're rich, but because of the way they got rich."

The force of his words was not lost on his listener. "And if a man does get rich here or anywhere else, they don't lose any time hatching up lies about him, do they?"



"You Must Have Been Trying Not to Find Me," Said Jane Coldly. "What other man, Doctor?" she asked coolly. "Why, offhand, I couldn't say right now, Jane."

"Doctor," said Van Tassel's daughter, rising, suddenly; he thought her still angry, but she really wasn't—"may I come again, just to talk with you, perhaps get a little advice—come without excuse at all to see you?"

"Why, of course you may, Jane. Why not? Come any time, all times—my latechestrin's always out for you," declared Carpy, swayed by an admiration he could not resist. "And you won't harbor any feelings against me just because you don't like my father?"

"How could I? Doctor Carpy almost gasped with surprise at her polite, "Jane," he said, taking her hand, "just feel I'm your friend—I mean it. Sick or well, I'll be with you. I don't care a damn who your father is or was—is that plain, girl?" "I'm awfully grateful, Doctor," she said collectively. "If I get into a tight place, or into troubles, I'll know where I'll have a friend to turn to."



Washington.—Several years ago I expressed in these columns the conviction that one thing America needed was a congress which would cease attempting to amend the law of supply and demand. The observation was made in the midst of the most depressed economic conditions that modern times had known and it brought down upon my head a vast amount of criticism. Readers wrote me at length about the stupidity that I had displayed by making such a statement.

Reference to that circumstance is made here at this time, because it is apropos again. It is apropos because we are in a political campaign out of which will come either the re-election of Franklin D. Roosevelt or the election of Governor Landon of Kansas. The results of this political campaign are going to hinge to a considerable extent on the attitude of the farmers of this country and if there is one segment of the American economic structure to whom the law of supply and demand means more than to another, it is to the farmers.

Now, Democratic spokesmen are going about the country talking about soil conservation, about relief for the farmers, about anything and everything that will give the farmers money. Republican spokesmen are shouting and waving their arms with other propositions to aid the farmer. Some of them probably are workable, and if they are workable they must be considered constructive.

But the point I am trying to make is that in the case of either candidate, there is still too much of the idea of the superficial, of surface help, for agriculture. In other words, the programs still take into account some circumvention of the law of supply and demand. That statement is not wholly true of Governor Landon's farm program, but unless the New Dealers come forward with more than they have thus far advanced, I think it can be said their program offers nothing more than a continued raid on the Treasury of the United States with no plans at all for correcting underlying conditions.

There was one phase of Governor Landon's program, as advanced in speeches at Des Moines, Iowa and Minneapolis, Minn. that appealed to me. Brushing aside verbiage and detail, Governor Landon basically has in mind, apparently, a desire to get the government out of the farmer's hair. He seems convinced that there are many things which the farmers would like to do for themselves and will do for themselves if the machinery upon which he can operate is made available. He proposes, for example, to seek legislation that will enable the farmers to finance themselves through borrowing from commercial agencies, banks and trust companies, instead of from the government. With that I agree to the fullest. It means simply that farmers again can be masters of their own souls as well as the crops which they grow for it, puts them in a position to sell when they want to sell, without the necessity for asking permission from a bureaucrat in Washington. It means further that no bureaucrat in Washington can issue an order to that farmer that he must dispose of his stored crop.

It seems to me as well that anyone who analyzes the present regimentation of the farmers from that Washington must recognize that which has always been true: Every time the government, which means politicians, attempts to mess into and in greater benefits to a limited class than to the country as a whole. I am not a rabble rouser; I do not link the New York Times with the money-changers of Wall street as the demagogues describe them. It is just the perspective that I have gained of the whole picture since I have no axes to grind.

In the case of those newspapers that have turned against Mr. Roosevelt, there is to some extent a consideration of local interests, circumstances which they serve, just as in the case of the New York Times. The point is, however, that in the case of newspapers turning against Mr. Roosevelt, their new positions are predicated on what appears to me to be traditional American bases. That is to say, they are adhering to the principles which I believe to have been the foundation stones of American history. I have no quarrel with the attitude of that school of thought that believes we should engage further in international affairs than we have done. It is their conviction and they have a right to it. Yet, it is not mine.

I have said many times in these columns that I will support any proposition that is good for America as a whole; I have contended consistently for Americanism and the things which that means, and I have argued always for sound government. I do not know how the Governor as President will be able to put the federal government behind such a program, but it is to be assumed that he had definite ideas on the subject or he would not have boldly stated his position. My hope is that it can be done not with government money, but with money supplied from private institutions since there has been too much government competition with business of the nation already. Further, regret-

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