

GOLD BULLETS

by Charles G. Booth

SYNOPSIS: Nearly frantic in her efforts to prove that her fiancé, Jerry Oaden, did not murder her father, Lucy Oaden, she takes the fight into her own hands. She learns that Jerry was seen speeding toward Skull Valley, probably to the deserted Oaden mine at Terridity. Determined to reach Jerry before he is arrested, she locks Henry Deacon, chief of police, in a closet, takes his automobile and starts on a mad dash to the desert to save her lover.

Chapter 18

THE CITY OF SILENCE

What was I going to do, you ask? Well, I might as well in English dress—and let Deacon out. He would stop Lucy by telephone. Or I might leave Deacon and take after Jerry. The first was what I ought to do, and the second was what I was going to do. Lucy's argument had impressed me. It seemed vitally necessary to Jerry's well-being that he give himself up before he was arrested. If Lucy had the courage to take the law into her own hands, so had I.

Yes, even though it cost me Henry's friendship! And, besides, she wasn't going down to that devil's cemetery alone.

Slipping quietly into the house, I waited for a moment to the terrific uproar Deacon was making. Fortunately, the room was remote from the avenue. I made my way out to the garage, feeling uncomfortable about leaving him behind. Filling a couple of water canteens at a faucet, I took them into my car with me.

Two mountain ranges lay between me and my destination. The first 40 miles of road would be paved or good dirt, the next 20 would fall by degrees from poor to dreadful. Lucy would make for Pitchfork Canyon, the only possible approach to Terridity from the west, and I hoped to reach her before she began the descent. That road down into the Skull is a madman's nightmare and I didn't fancy her making it alone.

The San Felipe Valley was drenched in sunlight and the sweet scent of orange blossoms hung like incense. This morning I had little time for sentimentalizing, however, and when, some short while later, the rhythmic thrum of the engine fell steeply into silence, I had even less. I got out and looked in the tank. It was empty! The nearest filling station was seven miles behind me!

Raging at my carelessness, I flung my coat into the car and set off down the scorching road. When I finally got my hand on the wheel again Lucy was some three hours ahead of me. Likely enough she was at Terridity.

Skull Valley lies between the Skeleton Mountains and the Red, Gold, and Silver. From the west you descend into it by Shiloh Canyon and on the east you ascend from it by the Devil's Mouth. A road of sorts spans the valley from

Shiloh to the Devil's Mouth and if you want a taste of the grim terror of the place you may cross it by car. But Terridity is ten miles south of the road which spans the valley and the intervening stretch of desert is impassable. Another road, a miserable affair, leads into the valley by way of Pitchfork Canyon, passes through Terridity, and joins the main road at Devil's Mouth on the east. This is the only road into the town from the west. I supposed Jerry and Lucy had taken it and I purposed following it myself.

It was just one o'clock when I reached the summit of the Skeletons. Time was precious—my fears for Lucy had increased with every mile I had come—but nothing on earth could have driven me down Pitchfork until my eyes had had their desire of that mardonic masterpiece below. Never before had the valley gripped my soul with so violent a sense of unholy horror and sleek and tawny beauty.

The valley blazed with light and color. But as I looked upon this bewitching opalescence it seemed to me that something alive and thingy, sleek as seal skin, vital as a young tiger, alluring as a perfumed goddess, vaporous arms reached out to me and tried to cloud my senses—and I knew that its beauty masked a spirit as venomous as Satan.

My eyes leaped to the saffron flames of the Red Gold Range, then fell again into the rainbow sea below. A last look and I started down the Pitchfork. The road had been blasted out of the side of the canyon 40 years ago. Millions in silver, gold and borax had been hauled around its hairpin curves. But with the closing down of the ore-mining properties the road had fallen into disuse.

Little repair work had been done on the road of recent years and the spring freshets had made a ruin of it. Below me fell a 1000-foot drop and as I crawled around the sharp curves I looked at death a score of times. Nor did I for a moment forget that the next bend might show me Deacon's car upside down and Lucy's broken body.

In two hours I reached the bottom. The opalescent beauty of the desert had vanished. Grim and terrible, it seemed to say, "I've got you, fool!" The trail to Terridity lay before me, and I was cheered. And there were car tracks. Several of them. Lucy was ahead of me. I would be with her half an hour! The trail was vile, but I got along fairly well. The empty desolation oppressed my spirit and again I was seized by that profound melancholy I had felt in the canyon. The air seemed charged with sinister potency.

Out of a sky as hard as a metal bell poured a ferocious blinding heat that made me thankful for my water canteens. A light, hot wind blew and a faint humming sound was in the air. Perhaps I was running into one of the shrilling windstorms for which the valley

is notorious. They come in a twinkling, sometimes last for days, and cease as suddenly as they began.

Just then Terridity lifted its sun-blanched bones into view and I blared on my horn. In the heyday of its glory it had been a typical western mining town of 1500 population. The present hopeless desolation of the town shocked me. I have been in a few "ghost cities" of the West, but none of them had seemed quite so abandoned as this one did.

And here it was that the candle of my friend's life had burned with such hectic brilliance that its reflection shone up through the dust of 30 years. What tragedy had dimmed its light? In the crooked main street, I stopped the car and with head bowed listened reverently. A window rattled. A door creaked. That was all.

Again I sounded the horn. "Lucy! Lucy!" I shouted. "Lucy! Lucy!" And then "Jerry, where are you? Lucy! Lucy! Jerry!" No response. I got out of the car. Nowhere was there sign of human life. Here and there on the rutted street were the faint imprints of car tires. I tried to follow them, but the ground was unyielding and the trail soon ended. They had been here. Getting in the car, I drove up and down the street, blowing my horn and calling the children to me.

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What has happened to Lucy and Jerry in this desert tomb? Continue the story tomorrow.

In Solomon's Time

The principal articles of food of the common people during the time of Solomon were wheat and barley meal, fish, lentils, olives and their oil, locusts (a species of insect), honey, figs, grapes, mulberries, melons and peaches. Meat was an article of luxury, the flesh of goats being perhaps the most commonly used. Swine, of course, were altogether forbidden as an article of food.

Rather Catty Comment

A Persian kitten has been insured for \$25,000, and Uncle Hiram comment Hiram opines that if anything happens to the cat, it will be the insurance company which has the fit.

Bruce Hits Stride



BRUCE CALDWELL

NEW HAVEN (AP)—Eastern league pitchers are having trouble trying to subdue Bruce Caldwell as is indicated by his batting average of .400.

This former Yale star who started at the top of professional baseball last year with Cleveland, is playing first base for New Haven.

Bruce, with all of the publicity he received hereabouts when he starred in several sports for Yale, is proving an excellent gate attraction.

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COST TO OPERATE CAR IS FIGURED

W. C. Perkins, La Grande Director of O. S. M. A., Works Out Table.

"What does it cost me to run my car" is a question frequently asked the Oregon State Motor association by individuals who just drive the old bus and do not bother to keep track of costs," stated W. C. Perkins, director of the Oregon

Items	CENTS PER MILE			
	Light 4-cyl.	Medium 4-cyl.	Heavy 6-cyl.	Very Heavy 8-cyl.
Gasoline 28c gal.	1.34	1.14	1.51	1.35
Oil	.25	.17	.16	.18
Tires and Tubes	.60	.65	.70	.75
Maintenance	1.55	1.50	2.06	1.95
Depreciation	1.25	1.40	1.57	1.74
Licenses	.11	.14	.20	.24
Garage—\$4 per mo.	.44	.44	.44	.44
Insurance at 6%	.27	.38	.55	.71
Insurance	.21	.20	.21	.26
Total	6.82	6.42	7.20	7.38

From the above table it can be seen that the medium and heavy 4 cylinder car requires less gasoline and oil per mile than do the very lightest class and this is due to the greater mechanical perfect-

State Motor association and owner of the Perkins Motor company, at La Grande.

"Of course," continued Mr. Perkins, "the answer varies with the make of car the motorist drives and the individual car costs depend also upon the way the car is driven. Some very complete statistics on the operation of all types of cars have been worked out by the Iowa State college in their engineering experiment station and this study is considered the most exhaustive investigation ever made upon this subject. The following table covers the average costs of automobile operations by the various types of cars and gives in detail the various items making up the total cost:

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Emigration Tide Sets Southwest

Toward The Ports of Brazil

By Hal E. Walker
(Associated Press Correspondent)
RIO DE JANEIRO (AP)—The tide of emigration which for decades flowed westward across the Atlantic to New York and other American ports has definitely set in a southwesterly direction.

European steamship companies are operating larger and faster steamers to South America than were the pre-war emigrant carriers of the North Atlantic, with much better accommodations. Under these conditions Brazilians believe that their country is on the verge of a great increase in population with consequent agricultural development.

Brazilian officials argue that by its climate, its nearness to European markets, and its vast undeveloped resources, Brazil today offers to the immigrant the promise offered by the United States half a century ago. During the century 1820 to 1920 there were 3,648,382 immigrants received in Brazil of whom Italians numbered 1,388,881, Portuguese 1,055,154, Spaniards 510,514 and Germans 131,441. Since 1900 the largest immigration year was 1913 when 182,683 newcomers entered Brazil.

The southern states, especially Sao Paulo, Minas Gerais, Parana, Santa Catharina and Rio Grande do Sul, offer to the European climatic conditions similar to his own country.

The federal government does not assist immigration at present, but there is an Ellis Island in the harbor of Rio—Ilha das Flores—where the newcomer is held until his final destination is decided.

Men of able bodies and with set desires to become successful farmers are especially desired by Brazil. The immigrants of this type are welcome whether they be 16 or 40 years of age.

They will find inducements offered by the states of Rio Grande do Sul and Sao Paulo for settlement on uncultivated agricultural lands in those sections. Both state governments have set aside large tracts for homesteading. The price per acre is low and the states are willing to sell on long term payments.

Another factor in the general movement is the absence of a literacy test. Brazil is less concerned with the fact that immigrants may not be able to read or write than with the fact that their muscles are well developed, that they are free from disabling or contagious disease and that they have the will to work.

This willingness to receive uneducated persons has, however, no application to Portuguese, the second most numerous nationality

among newcomers. The government of Portugal itself is responsible for this state of affairs, it having recently decreed that no illiterates may leave the home shores.

The West Branch, Iowa, home where President Hoover was born, recently was the scene of the culmination of the romance of Dorothy Helen Franco and Francis Rolfeel. It was the first wedding there.

Social organizations are contrary to the spirit of democracy which Abraham Lincoln typified. The Lincoln memorial university has decided. Fraternities are banned.

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FORD TOURING 1924—With 1929 license—4 new tires—top in good shape, motor in perfect running order. This car will fill the bill for someone who wants low cost transportation. With an O K that counts.

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