

GUNLOCK RANCH

by FRANK H. SPEARMAN

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WNU Service

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, crass, tender-hearted friend of the community. Henry Sawdy of the Circle Dot ranch, tricked in a false horse race the day before by Dave McCrossen, foreman at Gunlock, plans revenge. He enters Bill Denton, a handsome young Texas wrangler, in the rodeo which McCrossen is favored to win, and lays heavy bets on him with Harry Boland, saloonkeeper and enemy of McCrossen. Unknown to the crowd, Denton is a champion horseman. McCrossen and the young stranger tie in the various events. They are then asked to propose their own stunts. McCrossen winning the toss, picks up a handkerchief from the ground riding full speed, facing backward, in his turn. He drops a cigarette carelessly, and it is proposed that he try to pick it up riding full tilt. Racing down the track, Denton picks up the cigarette. Boland and the Gunlock ranch followers protest. McCrossen refuses to attempt the stunt.

CHAPTER II—Continued

The judges huddled. At a little distance Sawdy and Lefever huddled with the wrangler on the gelding. Presently Lefever stepped over to the judges. "Gents," he announced, "before you decide, we make another proposal. Our man will now undertake to duplicate any trick on a horse that the Gunlock champion wants to try. We want to be perfectly fair."

"You mean," retorted Selwood, "you mean enough to heat the boots of him an' carry away the boots. Well, Boland," he called out, turning to the saloonkeeper, "you heard that. Do you want to take that challenge?"

"McCrossen has done all the tricks and done 'em well."

"If you decline," declared Selwood, "judgment for the fancy riding goes to Circle Dot. It is so ordered. Stop your yawp, Harry Boland."

Boland continued to protest, but the verdict, announced to the spectators, met with wild approval. They declined to let the wrangler go. He was assailed with cries, "Do it again! . . . Once more! . . . Again!"

Sawdy, after a conference with the favorite, made a stentorian announcement: "If you'll all get off the track and shut up," he began, "our lad will give you one more exhibition."

When the track was cleared and the men were again seated, the portly spicifer continued: "To show there was no trick in the cigarette ride, and to show there's no collusion, I'll ask any lady in the audience to throw any little personal ornament of wear out on the track. That young lady next to Dr. Carpy"—he pointed—"isn't that a small bracelet I see on her left arm? Just that thing. Lady, if you'll lend us that bracelet for a minute, we'll show you some riding."

Sawdy was addressing Jane. "Oh, I won't do it!" exclaimed Jane.

Sawdy looked pained, but kept his eye fixed on the bracelet. "Go ahead, girl, throw it out!" suggested Carpy.

"Never! The pony might step on it!" protested Jane.

Vexed, but unwilling to ignore the growing clamor of the spectators, Jane rose reluctantly, passed the slender gold band over her wrist, and, pausing for an awkward feminine throw, flung it out ungraciously on the track. The crowd applauded. Jane blushed.

The bracelet fell close to the grandstand side of the track. Sawdy thought too close, but the wrangler,

riding over, nodded that he could make it.

The wrangler wheeled his horse, and cantered down the track. Wheeling again, he patted his pony's neck and headed up toward the grandstand. Again the pony took the quirt, leaped ahead, and, with the onlookers mostly standing to see and holding their breath, the wrangler dashed for the bracelet.

Once more he swung over to the right of his saddle till he could trail his hand easily along in the dust of the track. With eyes straining and every nerve taut, the wrangler, sighting the shining object, struck for it. At the same instant, out of perfect silence a sudden vicious yell rang from somewhere about the grandstand. The pony, startled, sprang straight sidewise, throwing his rider head first into the dust, and bolted across the track, dragging the wrangler, caught by one foot in the stirrup.

A murmur rose, breaking into cries of anger and shame.

The pony headed for the inside guard rail of the track fence.

But while the panicky spectators stared, speechless, the wrangler, dragged along at breakneck speed, shook loose his foot and, rolling with the momentum over and over on the track, sprang to his feet, cov-



Again the Pony Took the Quirt.

ered with dust. The bolting pony cleared the fence and dashed across the field.

The angry wrangler steadied himself after a step or two, his eyes roving over the faces before him, striving to catch his breath. With his quirt still hanging from his wrist, his hair ruffled and his bronzed features dust-smudged, his shirt torn half off his back, and breathing hard and fast, he stood eyeing the crowd and raised his voice in a loud clear drawl:

"If the calf that just bellowed for milk isn't too much of a coward to walk down here, I'll agree to bottle-feed him with a quirt."

There were a few applauding laughs, many murmurs, and a general feeling of uneasiness among the spectators.

Suddenly from the midst of a riot of men talking at the end of the grandstand near Jane came a clash of angry voices. The next instant a bald-headed man with keen gray eyes and a dyed mustache, scattering onlookers right and left, pushed his way out of the gathering crowd and, stretching out his arm, yelled at the three Circle Dot cowmen standing on the track beside the contrite pony. "Look-a-here, Texas!"

yelled the bald-head, beckoning. "Come here, you! You too, Lefever! Quick!"

"It's Jake Spotts," said the excited Sawdy. "Come on, boys! With Lefever, and followed by the wrangler, Sawdy hurried to the late barber's side.

"There's the skunk that yelled," cried Spotts, almost beside himself as he pushed the wrangler forward, and pointed. "That yellow faced skunk right there, Barney Rebstock!"

"You're a liar," shouted the man accused, a slender, shrill-voiced, sharp-faced ranch hand. "I never did it."

A long-haired, mild voiced Indian standing near him spoke up: "Yes, you did, I stood right behind you."

Jane was sitting so close to the altercation she could have touched the nearest man. She rose in alarm. Dr. Carpy pushed her to his other side. She heard Sawdy thunder, "No more lyn'g, Barney! There's two witnesses."

That was almost all she could remember. There were a few more sharp words. Then the dusty wrangler, shortening his quirt, sprang at Rebstock, knocked off his hat with one hand, and with the other brought the heavy handle down on Rebstock's forehead.

There was instant uproar. McCrossen sprang forward to defend Rebstock. He was too late. His hand slipped to his gun holster. Carpy, jumping up, stood almost over the brawlers. "Hold on, there! Hold on!" he thundered. "The first man that draws a gun here, I'll run out of Sleepy Cat!"

Dr. Carpy was the only man in Sleepy Cat who could have done it. But his word was the last word in Sleepy Cat. No one cared to face his wrath. He turned to Jane. "Don't be frightened, girl. It's all over."

Cheers greeted the wrangler as he walked back with his cronies to where the contrite pony stood on the track. Although his attire was in much disarray, his manner put his hearers perfectly at ease. "I know," he said to those who had returned to the grandstand, and patting his mount, "that this generally well-behaved little Texas pony is as much ashamed of his conduct as I am, and I know he would like to apologize."

He had the crowd with him. While they cheered, the wrangler remounted, cantered leisurely up the track and down, and brought the gelding to a halt in front of Dr. Carpy and Jane Van Tassel. Patting the pony affectionately on the neck with his left hand, and speaking softly, the wrangler tapped the little fellow with his doubled quirt on the right shoulder.

The pony pawed the dust in protest but gradually crooked his right foreleg, then his left, and knelt in apology to the grandstand. The crowd gave him loud applause.

Meantime, throwing his lines, the wrangler stepped off the pony, laid his hand on the guard rails of the grandstand track-fence, cleared it, and, picking his way among the spectators up to where Carpy sat, stopped before Jane.

He was covered with dust and sweat. Jane started. She saw a pair of keen brown eyes inspecting her from behind long dusty lashes. She saw a familiar object in his right hand, as he held it out to her and heard his low words:

"Lady, your bracelet!"

"Oh!" exclaimed Jane completely surprised. "Thank you!"

He tried to fade away among his boisterous following of uproarious Circle Dot men. But not every one was disposed to let him escape easily. Harry Tenison, who paid the stake money over to Sawdy at the Circle Dot quarters, insisted on meeting the Texan. He was dragged, reluctant, out of the sleeping tent and shook hands slowly with the Medicine Bend sport magnate.

"Where did you pick up that cigarette trick?" demanded Tenison. "I never saw it done but once. That was at Madison Square Garden."

"How long ago?" asked the wrangler.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Geer went to Coburg Sunday to pick beans.

A sister and brother-in-law of Mrs. Hallie McGuire visited at the McGuire home Friday. They are from Bend.

Mrs. Leon Morton and Mrs. C. H. Woods chaperoned a party of 4-H club members on a camping trip to Sougar bend Wednesday night.

Mrs. Ike Wertz and baby, who had been visiting her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Joe Brookhart, for a month, left Friday for their home at Anderson, Cal.

The John Sutherland family visited Sunday afternoon at the home of Mrs. Sutherland's bother, Mrs. Pauline Elmore. While there their 3-year-old son Iils found some poisoned wheat and was feeding the chickens when discovered. They were fearful lest he had eaten some of the wheat but on

The Howard Cox family picnicked at McKenzie Bridge Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Geer and son Mike of Cedar creek visited Sunday at the Harold Phillips home.

The Thad Ailsworth family of Tucson, Ariz., who had been visiting here for the past six weeks, left Tuesday for their home. They were accompanied by Wilma Sutherland.

Earl Crane and daughter of Dee Lake were overnight guests Monday at the Frank Taylor home at Black Butte and Tuesday they visited at the Will Lively home.

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Garman and children and Mr. and Mrs. Paul Haney from the McKenzie river section spent the week end at the Richard Garman home.

Elbert Hess has gone to Humbolt, Cal., to work in the mines.

The Charles Coffman family of Drain spent Sunday at the W. T. Bobwood home.

The Phillips homestead has been sold to Charles Whethem of Kansas. Carl King made the deal.

Two Kinds of Vampire

The Greeks believe that there are two kinds of vampire—one dead, but retaining a sinister half-life by preying on the blood of the living; and the other still alive. Thus, we are told that the vampires of Thesaly and Epirus are "living men mastered by a kind of somnambulism, who, seized by a thirst for blood, go forth at night from their shepherds' huts, and scour the country, biting and tearing all that they meet, both man and beast." According to another authority, this type of vampire is particularly active when the moon is at its full.

Nelson Motor Opens With Kansas, Portlane Men

The Nelson Motor service opened for business with a "one stop" garage and service station at the old Nelson Motor company location on South Fifth street as announced last week.

J. A. Read of El Dorado, Kansas, with fifteen years experience in the retail end of the automobile business and Norman McKeel, Portland, with a like number of years experience in the mechanical end, will operate the establishment.

The new concern will handle Richfield products, Hudson and Terraplane motor cars, and later possibly another make. Postmaster N. J. Nelson Jr. is the proprietor.

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Southern Pacific

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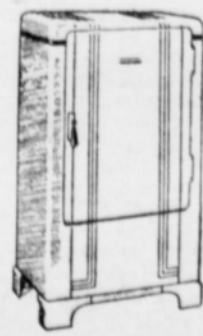
I never realized, till we bought our new electric refrigerator how much food I used to throw away, spoiled, which I now am able to save. It didn't seem much at the time, but when I work it over into tasty dishes, it saves on our buying.



In the old days, I couldn't take advantage of lots of special prices on meats and vegetables because they wouldn't keep till we could eat them up.



Now I can buy far ahead; nothing spoils; there is always something nice in the refrigerator when Tom and his wife drop in unexpectedly; my grocery bills are lower; we have better things to eat; and I can't see where the refrigerator has cost us anything.



Mountain States Power Company

TODAY'S TAXOGRAM

The American automobile owner is one of the nation's heaviest taxpayers. To begin with he pays the federal government a five per cent tax on the purchase price of his automobile (\$40 on an \$800 car); another tax to the state for the privilege of operating it and in many cases still a third tax for his driver's permit. But that's just a starter. On every 10 gallons of gas he buys he pays an additional federal, state, county and municipal tax amounting in some states to a total of \$1.10, or 11 cents a gallon. Add to this another cent a quart for oil and you see how the motorist pays \$750,000,000 annually in gasoline taxes alone.

LONDON. Mr. and Mrs. Fred Knott and Mrs. Ray Heaton of Sacramento, Cal., relatives of Mrs. Geer, are visiting at the Joe Geer home. The Lawrence Wolfe family and the Cliff Elashire family of Phillip, S. D., have moved here. L. A. Bachelder, an elderly man, that lives alone on his farm, had a narrow escape from serious injury or perhaps death, Wednesday

evening when he was attacked by a bull. The animal had knocked him down, when R. C. McKay and his nephew arrived on the scene and drove the bull away with pitchforks. The Harvey Shipp family of Cottage Grove spent Saturday night at the J. E. Banton home. Sunday the Banton and Shipp families attended church services in Eugene and visited friends. Mrs. Joe Brookhart, Mrs. C. C. Ritter, Mrs. Phil Brookhart and Mrs. Ike Wertz and son spent Thursday with relatives at Drain. Mr. and Mrs. Orlan Higgenboth-

am and son of Cottage Grove were week-end guests at the Oakley McGuire home.

Mrs. George Sutherland, Mrs. Thad Ailsworth, Mrs. Murry Newton, Wilma Sutherland and Mildred Cox spent Friday at Salem. They were dinner guests of Mrs. Albert North.

Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Andrews and son Joe of Los Angeles spent Monday and Tuesday of last week at the J. E. Banton home. The Andrews family are looking for a location here.

Mrs. Zella Willey and Grace

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