

# GUNLOCK RANCH

by Frank H. Spearman

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CHAPTER XI—Continued

"Not going out?"  
"I'm staying in town."  
"Staying in town?" stammered Bull, vastly surprised.  
"Drive me to the hotel," Jane said wearily. "I'll take a room there. You drive home and come back for me tomorrow afternoon."  
It was ten o'clock. Assigned to a room, Jane freshened herself after the long, dusty car ride, bathed her face and temples again and again in cold water, and tried to collect her throbbing thoughts.  
It all seemed like a hideous dream. Surely it could be shaken off; surely men could not be so fiendish as to plot fire and so horrible a death as would follow to sleeping men.  
Her father! She shuddered. This thought was most horrible of all—incredible—and yet . . .  
Of one thing she felt certain: If it were true, she could no longer live under the same roof with him, and the terrifying duty of learning the revolting truth from his own lips confronted her.  
And her lover—Bill, blinded Bill—what now of him? Could she ever face him again? What would he say? What would he do?  
He knew the truth. No doubt remained in her mind on that point. No need now to ask why he seemed worried and changed. Was he only waiting, trying to decide how to tell her he could not marry her—that her father had blinded him—that they must part?  
She threw open her window and kneeling before it, looked out upon the silent, far-stretching desert with its myriad of heavenly lights. The cool air cleared her head. But what could loosen the deadly grief and shame that clutched at her pounding heart?

When Dr. Carpy walked into his office from the dining room after breakfast next morning, he saw Jane Van Tambel standing before the window, looking out.  
"Why, Jane!" he exclaimed. "What brings you here so early?"  
She looked around at him in silence. The doctor walked over to her and laid his hands on her shoulders. "Jane," he asked, "what has happened, girl?"  
The grief in her sunken eyes was too apparent.  
"Oh, Doctor!" The exclamation came like a burst of suffering long pent. "I know everything."  
He saw the fat was flatty in the fire. Indeed he had long had only a faint hope of keeping the facts from Jane. His real hope had been that she might not hear the truth till he could save Denison's eyes and thus cushion the horrid shock that the facts must bring to an innocent sufferer.  
She had thrown her arms on the table in front of her. Her head sank between them.  
Dr. Carpy rose, walked around to her side, lifted her head and, standing beside her, supported it in his arms. "Jane," he said slowly, looking down into her pitiful eyes, "from what you tell me, I see that you have heard loose stories floating around."  
"You, too, have heard them, Doctor. Why, oh, why didn't you tell me?"  
"Jane!" exclaimed the doctor, driven from his last stronghold of reserve by the poignancy of her grief. "How the hell could I tell you a story involving those it did in such an affair? Actually, nobody knows just what the facts are. Now we must get started right. First you tell me all you heard. Then I'll tell you all I've heard—is that fair?"  
Brokenly, and pausing at intervals to control her voice, Jane gave him the train story.  
Carpy bowed his head.  
"Well," he commented as she looked soberly up, "that's not far from what I've been told myself. But, Jane, I'm not a bit sure we have the facts in these stories. They all depend on the word of one of the worst characters in this country. Barney Rebstock wouldn't hesitate at anything low down in the whole range of crime—anybody in town will tell you that. He's not only an ex-convict but the biggest liar in this whole country."  
"Doctor," she said solemnly, "does Bill know all that you and I know?"  
"Jane," he answered in like, "Bill knows all that you and I know."  
"Oh, I knew it. I knew it. To think that poor I should have brought this horror into his life!"  
"Jane, that's not so. This might all have happened if you never had seen this country."  
"I want you to do one last favor for me, Doctor. Will you?" asked Jane.  
"What is it, Jane?"  
"I want you to say to Bill that I freely release him from his promise of marriage; that I beg him to forgive me all I have innocently caused him to suffer—and that I will leave here forever."  
"Jane!" exclaimed her listener. She raised her hand, "I've not finished yet."  
"Go on!" he snapped, bluntly.  
"My father has made me his heir to Gunlock ranch; he has no other heir. This morning I will make my will and bequeath whatever I inherit from my father to William Denison, to atone as far as I can for the wrongs my father has done him."  
"Well?" remarked Carpy coldly.  
"That is all."  
"And that is what you want me to tell Bill?"  
"That, Doctor, is what I want Bill

to know. Oh, if I had another to do it for me, dear Doctor, I wouldn't put it on you."  
Carpy rose to his feet.  
"Jane, you're sending me on a fool's errand. But seeing I'm nothing but an old fool, I expect I'm just the man for the job. I can tell you now what he'll say as well as if I'd seen him and given him your message. But I know, of course, that wouldn't satisfy you. So I'll go—and go now."  
"Now promise," he repeated, in parting, "you will stay right here in this office till I get back."  
She promised.  
But she was ill prepared for what she saw when the office door was opened half an hour later and Doctor Carpy pushed Denison ahead of him into the office. Bill's eyes were banded. He groped a little with his hands, while the doctor guided him to a chair.  
"Here he is, Jane," announced Carpy bluntly. "He can speak for himself."  
She had not an instant to wait. No sooner did Denison feel himself seated in a chair than he held out his



"Bill, I Thought You Ought at Least to Have a—"

arms and said, apparently not with deep feeling, not with pained emotion, but in the most commonplace, everyday, matter-of-fact manner: "Where's my girl? Come here!"  
The old doctor watched Jane run timidly to Denison's side. "Bill!" she exclaimed brokenly. "Here I am!"  
"What's all this talk I hear about your quitting me, Jane?" he asked unsteadily.  
"Bill, I thought you ought at least to have a—"  
"Well, I've had my chance, haven't I? And this is my answer. Till death us do part! Nothing less, nothing else goes! Is that plain, girlie? I gave you a chance the other day to quit me—what was your answer?"

## CHAPTER XII

Jane did not go home that afternoon. She sent Bull and the buckboard back with instructions not to come in for her until she sent word. She wrote a brief note to her father, merely saying that she had attended to his business and would be home in a few days. Van Tambel, in an impatient rage, sent Bull back with an order to Jane to come home at once or not to come home at all.  
The harsh message made less impression on his daughter than he had intended; but it did bring back the answer that she would be out soon.  
When the buckboard next day drew up at the ranchhouse door, Jane, alighted with a fast-beating heart.  
Fortunately, when she got home, her father was out in the hills. Her welcome came from Quong; it sort of broke the ice of the home-coming. But she went to her room, got out her two old suitcases, dusted them off, laid them on her bed and, stripping the hooks of her closet and opening the drawers of her dresser, began almost furiously to pack.  
While she was at this, she heard the heavy uneven steps of her father in the living room, and the next minute his huge bulk darkened the open doorway of her bedroom.  
"Hello!" he snapped.  
She turned. "Hello, Father," she responded simply.  
"What are you doing?"  
"Packing."  
"What for?"  
"Preparing to go into town."  
"What you goin' in town agin for?"  
"I've got a job in town, and I'm going there to work at it."  
"What kind of a job?" he snorted.  
"I'm going to study nursing at the hospital."  
"What the hell you goin' to do that for?"  
"Because things have been done from here that make this place hateful to me. I couldn't stand it here any longer."  
"What things you talkin' about?"  
She looked at him steadily. "I'm talking about burning Bill Denison's ranch house."  
"What's that got to do with your quitting home?"

"Everything. Everybody's talking about that fire. Barney Rebstock has told that you paid him for setting fire to a neighbor's ranch house with me sleeping in it."  
"Why, that fellow's the worst liar in Sleepy Cat. Nobody believes anything he says."  
"I can tell you everybody believes it," she said, trembling.  
"Do you believe it?"  
"Father, I am forced to unless you can convince me you had nothing to do with it. This wretch has had pocketful of money."  
Van Tambel regarded her with perfect poise. "Why, I did give him a little money. I'll say I've been sorry for him. I know he hates Bill Denison—a good many folks in this country's got no use for that—"  
"Stop!" cried Jane. "Don't say anything against Bill Denison. He saved my life!"  
"—that damned, dirty, ornery rustler and thief—"  
Jane's eyes blazed. She stamped her foot. "Don't you dare!" she cried. "What you're saying about him is what everyone in this country says about you."  
"Yes? There's some damned mean people in this country," thundered her father. "Just look out yourself, my lady. I don't know any more about that fire than you do. If Barney Rebstock wanted to get even with Denison, that's his business, not mine. You shut your trap."  
"That's not all."  
"More lies, eh?"  
"McCrosen has told in town that you once tried to get him to set the house on fire and he refused to do it."  
"He lies! He did do it! I gave him five hundred dollars to do it. He agreed to do it and took the money to do it. If he hired Barney Rebstock to start the fire that's his lookout! I left you here to watch things, and McCrosen has been running off my steers ever since I went to the hospital. He knows I know it. He knows I'm going to get after him. And I will," he shouted with a frightful oath. "Now look here! I'll tell you where you get off. You're not going a step to town! I know your scheme; you're going to live with that man Denison—"  
"Father!"  
"Yes, I know you. You don't leave this house!"  
Loading every sentence with rage and oaths, Van Tambel seized a suitcase from the bed, dashed it to the floor, stamped on it.  
"Now you go to town if you dare," he roared. "And if you leave this house today, never come back—if you do I'll kick you out. Get out of my sight, before I choke you!"  
She hurried from the room and from the house.  
What should she do? Escape was first in her thoughts, as she hurried up the hill trail. When she could partially collect her distracted senses, she had wandered well into the hills. She threw herself on the ground and tried to think.  
She never knew how long she was there. But shadows were lengthening when she rose. She was hungry. There was nothing to do but go down and get something to eat; then, if she could keep out of sight of her father to start for town.  
She walked to the house in fear. But she reached the kitchen without seeing her father. Quong gave her dinner. He told her her father had gone to the Reservation. Afraid that her father would return before she could get away, Jane started for the corral. Bull Page was fastening the gate when Jane walked up to him. "I must go to town, Bull. I want a horse."  
"It's again orders, Miss Jane, to let a horse out for you. Gus is a rarin' mad for some cause."  
"I know, Bull. He's angry at me. I can't help it."  
Bull scratched his head. "His orders are dead agin lettin' a horse go out."  
"No matter, Bull. Never mind."  
She started to walk away. "What you goin' to do, Missy Jane?"  
She turned with a sorry smile. "Guess I'll have to walk. Good-bye."  
"Hold on," he called, hobbling after her. "Hold on! You ain't goin' to walk!"  
"Bull, I don't want to make trouble for you. I'll walk."  
"Trouble be damned. I've seen Gus mad before—he'll get over it. I'm goin' to saddle a horse."  
Jane hesitated. But, dragged out as she was by excitement and worry, she doubted whether she could make town on foot. She surrendered and climbed onto the horse he had saddled.  
"Bull," she said, "why do you take all this trouble for me?"  
"Why, I'd do anythin' in the world for you, Missy Jane. You're the one person on Gunlock that treats old Bull like a man an' not like a dog. Why, if I up 'n' just died for you, it wouldn't be too much."  
"Good-bye, Bull."  
"So long, Missy Jane."

A dispute with the agent on the Reservation over a cattle delivery held Van Tambel at Flambeau until late Bull Page unsaddled and put Van Tambel's horse into the corral.  
"Where's Jane's pony?" Van Tambel demanded.  
"Why, I guess she's out with it, Gus," suggested Bull.  
Van Tambel flared up. "Didn't I give you and everybody else orders not to let her take a horse till I gave permission?"  
(TO BE CONTINUED)

## IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

By REV. HAROLD L. LUNDQUIST, Dean of the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, © Western Newspaper Union.

Lesson for November 22

AN AMBASSADOR IN CHAINS

LESSON TEXT—Acts 28:16-24, 30, 31; Romans 8:6-11.  
GOLDEN TEXT—I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. Phil. 4:13.

PRIMARY TOPIC—In the World's Greatest City.  
JUNIOR TOPIC—An Ambassador in Chains.  
INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR TOPIC—A Prisoner Speaks for Christ.  
YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULT TOPIC—Chained But Not Silenced.

The rescue of Paul from the Jewish mob by the Roman authorities resulted in consideration of his case on their part to determine what manner of man he was, and why his words and actions provoked such violent reactions among the Jewish subjects of Rome in Judea. When it appeared that Festus, who was procurator, was inclined to turn him over to the Jews at Jerusalem, Paul, knowing of their hatred, makes

I. An Appeal to Caesar (Acts 28:16-19).

It was an act of great significance, and largely determined the course of Paul's life and ministry until his death. It is a question upon which there is no little difference of opinion whether Paul was right in making this appeal. Perhaps Dr. G. Campbell Morgan has best gathered up the truth of the matter in saying, "His way was that of an attitude revealing for all time what the duty of the Christian man is—to be true to his Lord, to be true to his conscience, to be loyal to the powers that be, and to make his appeal to them where necessary, for protection, in order that he may continue his work in accordance with the will of his Lord." Paul made no appeal to save his own life, but he did want to continue his ministry. And this he was permitted to do, for after he had come to Rome we find him to be

II. A Prisoner Preacher (vv. 20-24, 30, 31).

He was chained, but not silenced. He was anxious that those in Rome should "see" and "speak with" him (v. 20). They knew of the Christian "sect" only by rumor as one "which everywhere is spoken against" (v. 22). He now proclaimed the truth to them, and with what results? "Some believed . . . and some disbelieved" (v. 23). Again, we see that the greatest of all preachers met just the same encouragement and discouragement that we face.  
The witness and messenger is not judged by the success that crowns his efforts, but by the faithfulness with which he discharges his duty. Let us not condone our own carelessness or inefficiency by saying that even Paul was unsuccessful; but if we have been faithful and diligent, let us be encouraged even though some disbelieve.

Verse 30 indicates that Paul either had a large measure of liberty, being permitted even as a prisoner to dwell in a private house, or that he was tried and acquitted and continued to work in Rome for a period of years. Whichever may be true we cannot but admire the faithful testimony of this man upon whose body time and trials had borne heavily, but whose spirit was as young and as powerful as the message he presented. And what was his message? We find it in his epistle to the Roman church. It was

III. Justification by Faith (Rom. 8:1-11).

Christian men and women are those who were weak (v. 6), ungodly (v. 6), unrighteous sinners (v. 7, 8), and enemies of God (v. 10). But having been justified by his blood (v. 9), they are "saved" (v. 9). What a beautiful word—"saved!" Brought back to God, "reconciled to God through the death of his Son" (v. 10), we are indeed saved if we have accepted him as our Saviour.

This was Paul's message, and it is our message to a lost world.

### Count Your Mercies

Be on the lookout for mercies. The more we look for them the more of them will we see. Blessings brighten when we count them. Out of the determination of the heart the eyes see. If you want to be gloomy, there's gloom enough to keep you glum; if you want to be glad, there's gleam enough to keep you glad. Say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." Better lose count in his enumerating your blessings than lose your blessings in telling over your troubles. "Be thankful unto him and bless his name."—Maltbie D. Babcock, D. D.

### A True Life

One truly Christian life will do more to prove the divine origin of Christianity than many lectures. It is of much greater importance to develop Christian character, than to exhibit Christian evidences.—J. M. Gibson.

### Power of the Spirit

The spirit of a person's life is ever shedding some power, just as a flower is steadily bestowing fragrance upon the air.—T. Starr King.

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Happiness a State of Mind  
There are as many miseries beyond riches, as there are on this side of them, declares a man of great observation. Happiness is a state of mind.

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## DIFFICULT DECISIONS

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



IN TRYING TO HELP A SMALL BOY AFTER A FALL BY PICKING UP HIS VELOCIPED, YOU REALIZE THAT IF YOU LET GO OF IT NOW, HE'LL TUMBLE OVER BACKWARDS INTO THE GUTTER, AND IF YOU DON'T LET GO THE WHOLE NEIGHBORHOOD WILL SOON BE ON HAND, PROBABLY SHARING THE SMALL BOY'S OPINION THAT YOU'RE TRYING TO STEAL IT.

GLUYAS WILLIAMS