

SUPERSTITION MOUNTAIN

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CAST OF CHARACTERS
 CAROLEE COLTER, heroine, prospector's daughter.
 STUART BLAKE, eastern "hacker" tourist, Carolee's lover.
 HENRY COLTER, prospector, Paul and Silas Colter's father.
 PAUL AND SILAS COLTER, prospector's sons.
 NINA BLAKE, Stuart's sister.

Yesterday Stuart became lost in the mountains, suffers delirium, and finally falls asleep on a patch of buck brush, utterly exhausted.

CHAPTER VIII

THERE was nothing especially romantic about the way they found Stuart Blake. Silas Colter saw him first, and grasped his father's arm.

"Ain't-ain't that a man away over yonder?" He was staring in the distance.

It was a man, undoubtedly. Silas unconsciously cocked the rifle he carried. The man was staggering, half crawling. But he wasn't menacing. He hadn't even seen the Colters, in fact.

Carolee was with the Colters that day, but that was just happenstance. She had hung out her sheet signal on the morning after her experience with Stuart, but he had not met her down trail. This had piqued her considerably; she'd wait a week or more before she tried to signal him again, she promised herself. Paul Colter had gone alone to study the high plateau country, and Silas and the father had spent a day at wood gathering. On the second day they and Carolee went mine hunting.

She saw the man in the distance, but didn't recognize him. "He's in trouble, isn't he?" she demanded.

They had no field glasses, and he was several hundred yards away. They turned to get nearer him.

"It's that Blake feller!" Old man Colter recognized him first.

"Oh!" cried Carolee. They all spurred their horses to move as fast as the rugged terrain permitted.

STUART still didn't see them. He appeared not to see them even when they dismounted in his presence. He had been deceived by many a mirage.

"Stuart!" Carolee spoke to him. Nobody noticed her familiarity. He didn't answer. He couldn't have answered, anyway. He just stared, blinking. His face was

rather black, his clothing torn.

They gave him water, put him in the shade. The Colter men had to hold him off the water, once he got a sip. They let him drink a swallow at a time, with considerable interval. Carolee bathed his brow with a moistened handkerchief. Nobody did any talking for a long while. Silas had a can of peaches in his pack, and fed Stuart the sweet juice, then some of the fruit. After that Stuart slept. They sat with him until he revived and recognized them as real people, not phantoms.

"Carolee!" he murmured, and smiled. She smiled back and asked, gently, "Do you feel better?"

He drank more water, and ate more of the food they offered. Strength was flowing back into him. "This—Wednesday!" he asked.

"Thursday," she said. "What happened? How long have you been here? Who is with you?"

"Nobody. Nothing happened. To me, I mean. My horse fell over a cliff and killed himself. Yesterday, I suppose. Where are the panthers?"

It was his last memory, and his speech was confusing. He realized he'd have to explain.

"I found some mountain lion babies, panthers. Like those in the filling station zoo. Not the old ones. I expected them to come and tear into me."

"They don't do people no harm," Mr. Colter said, watching Stuart intently. "Where's your horse?"

"I don't know. Dead somewhere, on the rocks. Busted my canteen and lost the water all out. I had no idea there'd be like that. My tongue is still thick and hard. It was hellish."

The Colters, of course, had to help Stuart out of the mountain. He wanted to walk, but Carolee insisted that he ride and Silas gave up his horse. Carolee did most of the talking for her family.

"Were you hunting gold, too?" she inquired, cheerfully. "Well, yes, I was. In a way. Not too seriously, but—" He glanced in some concern at the other two men. "I mean, I was just tracing down some of the clues that everybody knows about, more or less for fun. I'm not—I wouldn't of course interfere with anybody else. Just adventuring. You know what I mean."

HE felt he was talking himself into a pocket. He had already

had one run-in with the Colter men, down town. He had no desire to offend them again, especially since they had apparently saved his life.

But in him was growing a new thought, too. These Colters were odd, clannish, all but the girl. They had been quick to fight, even to shoot. Perhaps—he mused silently for a mile or two.

"Say, where's the other brother, Paul?" he suddenly asked.

"He went out alone," Carolee explained. "Said he had his own ideas about hunting. Wants to find a landmark, a rock shaped like a horse's head, that shows on dad's map."

"Was he out—day before yesterday?" Stuart asked.

"Why yes. And yesterday also. Papa and Silas gathered wood yesterday. Paul was due back last night, but he didn't come. He has water and food, though. The same accident isn't likely to happen again. I mean, like yours."

Stuart didn't reply to that. He was thinking.

Paul Colter had been in the mountain alone, on both Tuesday and Wednesday, and was still out on Thursday. Paul Colter had impulsively tried to kill Stuart with his rifle, over a fancied insult downtown. Paul, as well as his brother and father, did not welcome "easterners" or any other men as suitors for Carolee, yet she and Stuart had been keeping company.

It was beginning to sound sort of melodramatic, Stuart reasoned, like an old-time story book. But by George it was also beginning to make sense!

He couldn't come out openly and accuse them, or Paul, of shooting at Mr. Blake, Sr., on Tuesday. Or of running Stuart's own horse off the cliff yesterday. He had no proof, and here the Colters were saving his life anyway.

But it was Carolee, he reasoned, who was aiding him. Luckily for him she had ridden with her men that day. She was swell! He looked carefully at her. He had never seen such natural beauty. Back in Chicago he would already have been making ardent love to her, but out here—well—Stuart promised himself to make a change in tactics regardless of her family.

He thanked them sincerely when they left him at the yard gate of Superstition Lodge.

(To Be Continued)

Many motorists fail to take advantage of the manual adjustment for normally automatic spark which their cars are fitted, thereby overlooking an opportunity to get a maximum of economy and efficiency out of their vehicles.

November, 1928, was the warmest 11th month recorded in London for 15 years, although in some parts of southern England it nearly won another record for wetness.

A large seaplane ramp and hangar nearing completion at the new civil airport at Singapore will be used by 17-ton flying boats to be placed in service by a British air line.

Originally, Plymouth Rock was a solid boulder of greenish syenite weighing about seven tons. It split during an attempt to move it to Town Square during the Revolution, but the upper half later was cemented to the base.

OUT OUR WAY

BY J. R. WILLIAMS OUR BOARDING HOUSE

With MAJOR HOOPLE



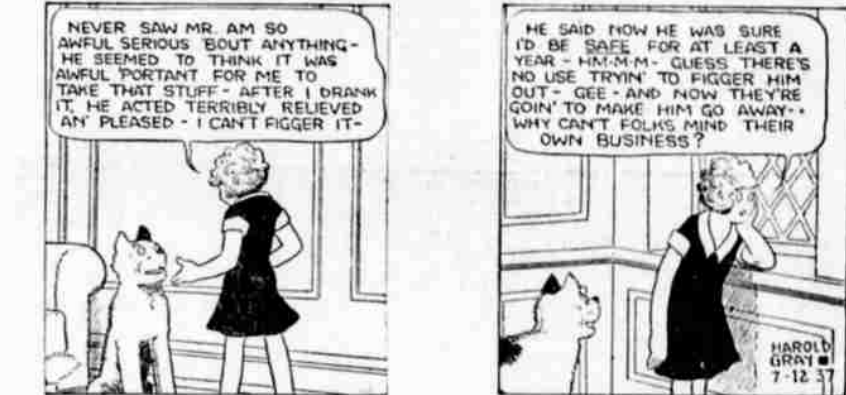
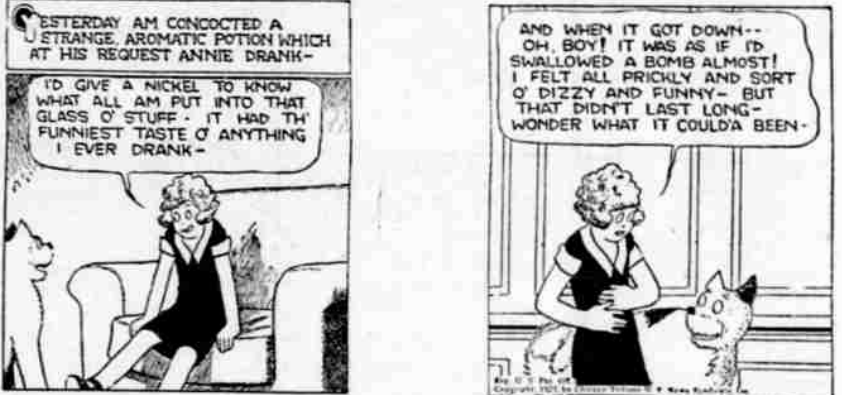
MYRA NORTH, SPECIAL NURSE

BY THOMPSON AND COLL



LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE

BY HAROLD GRAY



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS

BY BLOSSER



WASH TUBBS

BY CRANE



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES

BY MARTIN



FLAPPER FANNY

By Sylvia

