The FORESTER'S DAUGHTER

A ROMANCE OF THE BEAR TOOTH RANGE

By HAMLIN GARLAND

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SYNOPSIS

Wayland Norcross, an eastern youth seeking health in Colorado, meets Berea McFarlane, called Berrie, typical ranch girl, daughter of the supervising ranger of Bear Tooth forest.

Berrie is greeted by her lover, Cliff Belden, a cowboy, supposed to be interested in a saloon at Meeker's Mill, where Norcross is bound. Berrie guides Norcross to his destination.

A shower intercepts them and the girl gives the youth her raincoat. There is a rough element at Meeker's, and Norcross chooses Landon, the ranger, as his companion. Landon loves Berrie.

Cliff notices Berrie's interest in the tenderfoot and warns him away. He also takes his betrothed to task. She resents this and breaks their engagement.

Nash, the ranger at Bear Tooth, gives Wayland points on forestry. Berrie's father offers him a place in the service. Berrie decides to go with them over the trail.

They climb the high, rough trail and only make camp when Wayland is on the point of collapse. Night in the open charms Wayland.

Wayland blunders repeatedly. The supervisor goes after the horses which have wandered off. He is detained. Norcross arranges to sleep outside and Berrie inside a tent.

They reach the empty cabin of Tony, a ranger. Next day Mr. Moore, a lumberman, his daughter Siona and a notorious gossip, Mrs. Belden, pass. Norcross admits he is the son of a wealthy lumberman.

CHAPTER X.

Further Perplexities.

PERCEIVING Wayland's returning weakness, Berea insisted on his lying down again while she set to work preparing dinner. "There is no telling when father will get here," she said. "And Tony will be hungry when he comes. Lie down and rest."

He obeyed her silently and, going to the bunk, at once fell asleep. How long he slept he could not tell, but he was awakened by the voice of the ranger, who was standing in the doorway and regarding Berrie with a round eyed stare.

He was a tall, awkward fellow of about thirty-five, plainly of the frontier type, but a man of intelligence. At the end of a brief explanation Berrie said, with an air of authority: "Now you'd better ride up the trail and bring our camp outfit down. We can't go back that way anyhow."

The ranger glanced toward Wayland. "All right, Miss Berrie, but perhaps your tenderfoot needs a doctor."

Wayland rose painfully, but resolutely. "Oh, no. I am not sick. I'm a little lame, that's all. I'll go along with you."

The Supervisor Waved His Hand.

"No," said Berrie decisively. "You're not well enough for that. Get up your horses, Tony, and by that time I'll have some dinner ready."

"All right, Miss Berrie," replied the man and turned away.

Hardly had he crossed the bridge on his way to the pasture when Berrie cried out, "There comes daddy."

Wayland joined her at the door and stood beside her watching the supervisor as he came zigzagging down the steep hill to the east with all his horses trailing behind him roped together head to tail.

"He's had to come round by Lost lake," she exclaimed. "He'll be tired out and absolutely starved. Wahoo!" she shouted in greeting, and the supervisor waved his hand.

There was something superb in the calm seat of the veteran as he slid down the slope. He kept his place in the saddle with the air of the rider to whom hunger, fatigue, windfalls and snowslides were all a part of the day's work, and when he reined in before the door and dropped from his horse he put his arm about his daughter's neck with quiet word: "I thought I'd find you here. How is everything?"

"All right, daddy. But what about you? Where have you been?"

"Clean back to Mill park. The blamed cayuses kept just ahead of me all the way."

"Poor old dad! And on top of that came the snow."

"Yes, and a whole hatful. I couldn't get back over the high pass. Had to go round by Lost lake, and, to cap all, Old Baldy took a notion not to lead. Oh, I've had a peach of a time, but here I am. Have you seen Moore and his party?"

"Yes, they're in camp up the trail. He and Alec Belden and two women. Are you hungry?"

He turned a comical glance upon her "Am I hungry? Sister, I am a wolf. Norcross, take my horses down to the pasture."

She hastened to interpose. "Let me do that, daddy. Mr. Norcross is badly used up. You see, we started down here late yesterday afternoon. It was raining and horribly muddy, and I took the wrong trail. The darkness caught us, and we didn't reach the station till nearly midnight."

Wayland acknowledged his weakness. "I guess I made a mistake, supervisor; I'm not fitted for this strenuous life."

McFarlane was quick to understand. "I didn't intend to pitchfork you into the forest life quite so suddenly," he said. "Don't give up yet awhile. You'll harden to it."

"Here comes Tony," said Berrie. "He'll look after the ponies."

Nevertheless Wayland went out, believing that Berrie wished to be alone with her father for a short time.

As he took his seat McFarlane said: "You stayed in camp till yesterday afternoon, did you?"

"Yes, we were expecting you every moment."

He saw nothing in this to remark upon. "Did it snow at the lake?"

"Yes, a little; it mostly rained."

"It stormed up on the divide like a January blizzard. When did Moore and his party arrive?"

"About 10 o'clock this morning."

"I'll ride right up and see them. What about the outfit? That's at the lake, I reckon?"

"Yes, I was just sending Tony after it. But, father, if you go up to Moore's camp don't say too much about what has happened. Don't tell them just when you took the back trail and just how long Wayland and I were in camp."

"Why not?"

She reddened with confusion. "Because— You know what an old gossip Mrs. Belden is. I don't want her to know. She's an awful talker, and our being together up there all that time will give her a chance."

A light broke in on the supervisor's brain. In the midst of his preoccupation as a forester he suddenly became the father. His eyes narrowed and his face darkened. "That's so. The old rip could make a whole lot of capital out of your being left in camp that way. At the same time I don't believe in dodging. The worst thing we could do would be to try to blind the trail. Was Tony here last night when you came?"

"No; he was down the valley after his mail."

His face darkened again. "That's another piece of bad luck too. How much does the old woman know at present?"

"Nothing at all."

"Didn't she cross examine you?"

"Sure she did, but Wayland side tracked her. Of course it only delays things. She'll know all about it sooner or later. She's great at putting two and two together. Two and two with her always make five."

McFarlane mused. "Cliff will be plumb crazy if she gets his ear first."

"I don't care anything about Cliff, daddy. I don't care what he thinks or does if he will only let Wayland alone."

"See here, daughter, you do seem to be terribly interested in this tourist."

"He's the finest man I ever knew, father."

He looked at her with tender, trusting glance. "He isn't your kind, daughter. He's a nice clean boy, but he's different. He don't belong in our world. He's only just stopping here Don't forget that."

"I'm not forgetting that, daddy. I know he's different. That's why I like him." After a pause she added: "Nobody could have been nicer all through these days than he has been. He was like a brother."

McFarlane fixed a keen glance upon her. "Has he said anything to you? Did you come to an understanding?"

Her eyes fell. "Not the way you mean, daddy, but I think he—likes me. But do you know who he is? He's the son of W. W. Norcross, that big Michigan lumberman."

McFarlane started. "How do you know that?"

"Mr. Moore asked him if he was any relation to W. W. Norcross, and he said, 'Yes, a son.' You should have seen how that Moore girl changed her tune the moment he admitted that. She'd been very free with him up to that time. But when she found out he was a rich man's son she became as quiet and innocent as a kitten. I hate her! She's a deceitful snip!"

"Well, now, daughter, that being the case, it's all the more certain that he don't belong to our world, and you mustn't fix your mind on keeping him here."

"A girl can't help fixing her mind, daddy."

"Or changing it." He smiled a little. "You used to like Cliff. You liked him well enough to promise to marry him."

"I know I did. But I despise him now."

"Poor Cliff! But the thing we've got to guard against is old lady Belden's tongue. She and that Belden gang have it in for me, and all that has kept them from open war has been Cliff's relationship to you. They'll take a keen delight in making the worst of all this camping business." McFarlane was now very grave. "I wish your mother was here this minute. I guess we had better cut out this timber cruise and go right back."

"No, you mustn't do that. That would only make more talk. Go on with your plans. I'll stay here with you. It won't take you but a couple of days to do the work, and Wayland needs the rest."

"But suppose Cliff hears of this business between you and Norcross and comes galloping over the ridge?"

"Well, let him. He has no claim on me."

He rose uneasily. "It's all mighty risky business, and it's my fault. I should never have permitted you to start on this trip."

"Don't you worry about me, daddy. I'll pull through somehow. Anybody that knows me will understand how little there is in—in old lady Belden's gab. I've had a beautiful trip, and I won't let her nor anybody else spoil it for me."

Wayland was down on the bridge leaning over the rail listening to the song of the water.

McFarlane approached gravely, but when he spoke it was in his usual soft monotone. "Mr. Norcross," he began, with candid inflection, "I am very sorry to say it, but I wish you and my daughter had never started on this trip."

"I know what you mean, supervisor and I feel as you do about it. Of course none of us foresaw any such complication as this, but now that we are snarled up in it we'll have to make the best of it. No one of us is to blame. It was all accidental."

The youth's frank words and his sympathetic voice disarmed McFarlane completely. Even the slight resentment he felt melted away. "It's no use saying 'if,'" he remarked at length. "What we've got to meet is Seth Belden's report—Berrie has cut loose from Cliff, and he's red headed already. When he drops on to this story, when he learns that I had to chase back after the horses and that you and Berrie were alone together for three days, he'll have a fine club to swing, and he'll swing it, and Alec will help him. They're all waiting a chance to get me, and they're mean enough to get me through my girl."

"What can I do?" asked Wayland.

McFarlane pondered. "I'll try to head off Marm Belden and I'll have a talk with Moore. He's a pretty reasonable chap."

"But you forget there's another tale bearer. Moore's daughter is with them."

"That's so. I'd forgotten her. Good Lord, we are in for it! There's no use trying to cover anything up."

Here was the place for Norcross to speak up and say, "Never mind, I'm going to ask Berrie to be my wife." But he couldn't do it. Something rose in his throat which prevented speech. A strange repugnance, a kind of sullen resentment at being forced into a declaration kept him silent, and McFarlane, disappointed, wondering and hurt, kept silence also.

Norcross was the first to speak. "Of course those who know your daughter will not listen for an instant to the story of an unclean old thing like Mrs. Belden."

"I'm not so sure about that," replied the father gloomily. "People always listen to such stories, and a girl always gets the worst of a situation like this. Berrie's been brought up to take care of herself, and she's kept clear of criticism so far, but with Cliff on edge and this old rip snooping around"— His mind suddenly changed. "Your being the son of a rich man won't help any. Why didn't you tell me who you were?"

"I didn't think it necessary. What difference does it make? I have nothing to do with my father's business. His notions of forest speculation are not mine."

"It would have made a difference with me, and it might have made a difference with Berrie. She mightn't have been so free with you at the start if she'd known who you were. You looked sick and kind of lonesome, and that worked on her sympathy."

"I was sick and I was lonesome, and she has been very sweet and lovely to me, and it breaks my heart to think that her kindness and your friendship should bring all this trouble and suspicion upon her. Let's go up to the Moore camp and have it out with them. I'll make any statement you think best."

"I reckon the less said about it the better," responded the older man. "I'm going up to the camp, but not to talk about my daughter."

"How can you help it? They'll force the topic."

"If they do I'll force them to let it alone," retorted McFarlane, but he went away disappointed and sorrowful.

When the supervisor returned from the camp something in his manner revealed the fact that the situation had not improved.

"They forced me into a corner," he said peevishly. "I lied out of one night, but they know that you were here last night. Of course they were respectful enough so long as I had an eye on them, but their tongues are wagging now."

As bedtime drew near Settle took a blanket and went to the corral, and Berrie insisted that her father and Wayland occupy the bunk.

Norcross protested, but the supervisor said: "Let her alone. She's better able to sleep on the floor than either of us."

This was perfectly true; but, in spite of his bruised and aching body, the youth would gladly have taken her place beside the stove. It seemed pitifully unjust that she should have this physical hardship in addition to her uneasiness of mind.

Berea suffered a restless night, the most painful and broken she had known in all her life. She acknowledged that Siona Moore was prettier and that she stood more nearly on Wayland's plane than herself, but the realization of this fact did not bring surrender. She was not of that temper. All her life she had been called upon to combat the elements, to hold her own amid rude men and inconsiderate women, and she had no intention of yielding her place to a pert coquette, no matter what the gossips might say.

"She shall not have her way with Wayland," she decided. "I know what she wants—she wants him at her side tomorrow. But I will not have it so. She is trying to get him away from me."

The more she dwelt on this the hotter her jealous fever burned. The floor on which she lay was full of knots. She could not lose herself in sleep, tired as she was. The planks no longer turned their soft spots to her flesh, and she rolled from side to side in torment.

Her plan of action was simple. "I shall go home tomorrow and take Wayland with me. I will not have him going with that girl; that's settled."

The hard trip of the day before had seemingly done him no permanent injury. On the contrary, a few hours' rest had almost restored him to his normal self. "Tomorrow he will be able to ride again." And this thought reconciled her to her hard bed. She did not look beyond the long, delicious day which they must spend in returning to the Springs.

She fell asleep at last and was awakened only by her father tinkering about the stove.

CHAPTER XI.

The Camp on the Pass.

AS soon as she was alone with her father Berrie said, "I'm going home today, dad."

"Going home! What for?"

"I've had enough of it."

He glanced at her bed on the floor. "I can't say I blame you any."

"Oh, I don't mind sleeping on the floor," she replied. "But I want to get back. I don't want to meet those women. Another thing, you'd better use Mr. Norcross at the Springs instead of leaving him here with Tony."

"Why so?"

"Well, he isn't quite well enough to run the risk. It's a long way from here to a doctor."

"He 'pears to be on deck this morning. Besides, I haven't anything in the office to offer him."

"Then send him up to Meeker. Landon needs help, and he's a better forester than Tony anyway."

"I don't know but you're right. Landon is almost as good a hustler as Tony and a much better forester. I thought of sending Norcross up there at first, but he told me that Frank and his gang had it in for him. Of course he's only nominally in the service, but I want him to begin right."

Berrie went further. "I want him to ride back with me today."

He looked at her with grave inquiry. "Do you think that a wise thing to do? Won't that make more talk?"

"We'll start early and ride straight through."

"You'll have to go by Lost lake, and that means a long, hard hike. Can he stand it?"

"If I find we can't make it I'll pull into a ranch. But I'm sure we can."

When Wayland came in the supervisor inquired, "Do you feel able to ride back over the hill today?"

"Entirely so. It isn't the riding that uses me up, it is the walking, and, besides, as a candidate for promotion I must obey orders—especially orders to march."

They breakfasted hurriedly and while McFarlane and Tony were bringing in the horses Wayland and Berrie set the cabin to rights. Working thus side by side, she recovered her dominion over him and at the same time regained her own cheerful self confidence.

"You're a wonder!" he exclaimed as he watched her deft adjustment of the dishes and furniture. "You're ambidextrous."

"I have to be to hold my job," she laughingly replied. "A feller must play all the parts when he's up here."

It was still early morning as they mounted and set off up the trail, but Moore's camp was astir, and as McFarlane turned in—much against Berrie's will—the lumberman and his daughter both came out to meet them. "Come in and have some breakfast," said Siona, with cordial inclusiveness, while her eyes met Wayland's glance with mocking glee.

"Thank you," said McFarlane, "we can't stop. I'm going to set my daughter over the divide. She has had enough camping, and Norcross is pretty well battered up, so I'm going to help them across. I'll be back tonight and we'll take our turn up the valley tomorrow. Nash will be here then."

Berrie did not mind her father's explanation. On the contrary, she took a distinct pleasure in letting the other girl know of the long and intimate day she was about to spend with her young lover.

Siona, too adroit to display her disappointment, expressed polite regret. "I hope you won't get storm bound," she said, showing her white teeth in a meaning smile.

"If there is any sign of a storm we won't cross," declared McFarlane. "We're going round by the lower pass, anyhow. If I'm not here by dark you may know I've stayed to set 'em down at the mill."

There was charm in Siona's alert poise and in the neatness of her camp dress. Her dainty tent, with its stools and rugs, made the wilderness seem but a park. She reminded Norcross of the troops of tourists of the Tyrol her tent was of a kind to harp with the tea houses on the path to the summit of the Matterhorn. Then, too, something triumphantly feminine shone

"You're a wonder!" he exclaimed.

fury, but the sun occasionally shone through the clouds with vivid splendor. "It is December now," shouted Wayland as he put on his slicker and cowered low to his saddle. "It will be January soon."

"We will make it Christmas dinner," she laughed, and her glowing good humor warmed his heart. She was entirely her cheerful self again.

As they rose the view became magnificent, wintry, sparkling. The great clouds, drifting like ancient warships heavy with armament, sent down chill showers of hail over the frosted gold of the grassy slopes, but when the shadows passed the sunlight descended in silent cataracts deliciously spring-like. The conies squeaked from the rocky ridges and a brace of eagles circling about a lone crag, as if exulting in their sovereign mastery of the air, screamed in shrill ecstatic duo. The sheer cliffs on their shadowed sides were violently purple. Everywhere the landscape exhibited crashing contrasts of primary pigments which bit into consciousness like the flare of a martial band.

It was nearly 2 o'clock when they began to drop down behind the rocky ridges of the eastern slope, and soon, in the bottom of a warm and sheltered hollow just at timber line, Berrie drew her horse to stand and slipped from the saddle. "We'll rest here an hour," she said, "and cook our grouse, or are you too hungry to wait?"

"I can wait," he answered dramatically. "But it seems as if I had never eaten."

"Well, then, we'll save the grouse till tomorrow, but I'll make some coffee. You bring some water while I start a fire."

And so, while the tired horses cropped the russet grass, she boiled some coffee and laid out some bread and meat, while he sat by watching her and absorbing the beauty of the scene, the charm of the hour. "It is exactly like a warm afternoon in April," he said, "and here are some of the spring flowers."

"There now, sit by and eat," she said, with humor, and in perfectly restored tranquillity they ate and drank, with no thought of critics or of rivals They were alone, and content to be so.

It was deliciously sweet and restful there in that sunny hollow on the breast of the mountain. The wind swept through the worn branches of the dwarfed spruce with immemorial wistfulness, but these young souls heard it only as a far off song. Side by side on the soft Alpine clover they rested and talked, looking away at the shining peaks, and down over the dark green billows of fir beneath them Half the forest was under their eyes at the moment, and the man said: "Is it not magnificent! It makes me proud of my country. Just think, all this glorious spread of hill and valley is under your father's direction—I may say under your direction, for I notice he does just about what you tell him to do."

"You've noticed that?" she laughed "If I were a man I'd rather be supervisor of this forest than congressman."

"So would I," he agreed. "Nash says you are the supervisor. I wonder if your father realizes how efficient you are? Does he ever sorrow over your not being a boy?"

Her eyes shone with mirth. "Not that I can notice. He 'pears contented."

"You're a good deal like a son to him, I imagine. You can do about all that a boy can do, anyhow—more than I could ever do. Does he realize how much you have to do with the management of his forest? I've never seen your like. I really believe you could carry on the work as well as he."

She flushed with pleasure. "You seem to think I'm a district forester in disguise."

"I have eyes, Miss Supervisor, and also ears, which leads me to ask, Why don't you clean out that saloon gang? Landon is sure there's crooked work going on at that mill—certainly that open bar is a disgraceful and corrupting thing."

Her face clouded. "We've tried to cut out that saloon, but it can't be done. You see, it's on a patented claim. The claim was bogus, of course, and we've made complaint, but the matter is hung up and that gives 'em a chance to go on."

"Well, let's not talk of that. It's too delicious an hour for any question of business. It is a moment for poetry. I wish I could write what I feel this moment. Why don't we camp here and watch the sun go down and the moon rise? From our lofty vantage ground the coming of dawn would be an epic."

"We mustn't think of that," she protested. "We must be going."

"Not yet. The hour is too perfect. It may never come again. The wind in the pines, the sunshine, the conies crying from their rocks, the butterflies on the clover—my heart aches with the beauty of it. It's been a wonderful trip. Even that staggering walk in the rain had its splendid quality. I couldn't see the poetry in it then, but I do now. These few days have made us comrades, haven't they—comrades of the trail?"

To be Continued.

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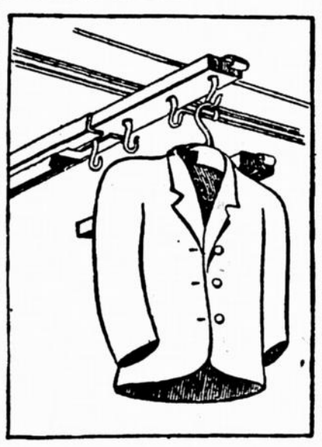

To increase the capacity of the bedroom closet, which is very often lacking in the matter of its size, a new style of rack has been recently patented which makes it possible to get much more material into them without crowding the clothing to the stage that its appearance is sacrificed by the mussing up which usually results from overcrowding. A metal runway is provided, which is readily secured to the under side of the shelf, or where there is no shelf it may be fastened to the ceiling of the closet. This has a slot along its under surface, and the sides of the runway embrace a rack consisting of a length of wood with hooks beneath, on which it is designed to suspend the clothing on suitable hangers. The slot referred to permits of the withdrawal of this rack without interference on the part of the hooks secured to the under surface of the former. When the rack is loaded and it is desired to secure a suit or other garment from it the rack and its contents are pulled out and the selection made, after which it is pushed back into the closet. The capacity of a closet of ordinary depth is about doubled by the aid of this device.

Potato Pie.

Use two pounds of potatoes, one onion, stalk of celery, one ounce of tapioca, a little milk, pepper and salt. Fry the onion in the butter. Slice the potatoes and celery very thin. Put them in a pie dish, sprinkling in the tapioca and seasoning. Fill up the dish with milk, cover with short paste and bake in a good oven for one hour or a little more. Before sending the pie to the table cut a little hole at the top of the crust and pour in a couple of tablespoonfuls of warm milk. Then let the pie stand a few minutes in a warm place, so that the milk may have a chance to soak into the ingredients and soften them nicely.

Rice Buns.

Use one-quarter pound of butter, one-quarter pound of sugar, one-quarter pound of self raising flour, two ounces of ground rice, two eggs and vanilla flavoring. Cream the butter and sugar together by beating these until the sugar is dissolved and the mixture resembles rich cream. Add the beaten eggs and stir in the flour and ground rice and also a few drops of vanilla flavoring. Form the mixture into small rounds, press these flat into some crystallized sugar and bake on a buttered baking sheet for ten minutes in a quick oven.

Baked Custard.

Two cupfuls of milk, three eggs, one-fourth of a cupful of sugar, one-fourth of a teaspoonful of salt, nutmeg. Beat the eggs. Add sugar and salt. Pour slowly into the scalded milk. Stir briskly while pouring the mixture into the milk. Strain into a buttered dish. Sprinkle with nutmeg. Bake in a dish of water in a slow oven. Do not let the water in the pan boil. Many puddings are spoiled by being in too hot an oven or by being baked too long. Bake until a knife blade comes out clean. If baked too long a curd will form.

Corned Beef Hash.

Cold boiled potatoes and corned beef must be chopped as fine as possible. Put liberal amount of butter in frying pan, enough to make a nice juicy mixture with the meat. Let cook a little before adding the potatoes. Use two and one-half cupfuls of potatoes for each cupful of meat. Stir and mix thoroughly, salt to taste and add a cupful or so of rich milk. This makes it moist and most delicious.

Bleaching White Clothes.

White clothes will be bleached if one teaspoonful of washing soda is added to the boiling water. Care should be taken that all traces of the soda are removed by thorough rinsing. Another bleaching process, one that holds no danger effects, is accomplished by dissolving one teaspoonful of oil of turpentine and three teaspoonfuls of alcohol in the last rinsing water.

Fruit Punch

Mix together one cupful each of water and sugar, boil it ten minutes and skim the sirup carefully. Add one cupful of hot, strained tea, one cupful of any fruit juice that you prefer and the juice of five lemons and six oranges. Add sufficient water to make a gallon and serve it ice cold.

Lights Save Lives.

That fully 25 per cent of the accidents to workmen are caused by insufficient lighting for men working at night, is the opinion of experts who have made a study of the subject. It is estimated that $250,000,000 is the average cost of injuries to workmen in the United States alone, and that more than 50 per cent of these accidents are preventable.—Popular Mechanics.

Up-to-Date Gypsies.

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