

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 Bessie McFarlane, called Bessie, typical ranch girl, daughter of the supervising ranger of Bear Tooth forest.

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

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

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

CHAPTER VII.

Storm Bound.

Wayland was awakened by the mellow voice of his chief calling: "All out! All out! Daylight down the creek!" Then, breathing a prayer of thankfulness, the boy sat up and looked about him. "The long night is over at last, and I am alive," he said and congratulated himself.

"How did you sleep?" asked the supervisor.

"First rate—at least during the latter part of the night," Wayland briskly lied.

"That's good. I was afraid that Adirondack bed of yours might let the white wolf in."

"My blankets did seem a trifle thin," confessed Norcross.

"It doesn't pay to sleep cold," the supervisor went on. "A man wants to wake up refreshed, not tired out with fighting the night wind and frost. I always carry a good bed."

It was instructive to see how quietly and methodically the old mountaineer went about his task of getting breakfast. First he cut and laid a couple of eight inch logs on either side of the fire, so that the wind drew through them properly; then, placing the Dutch oven cover on the fire, he laid the bottom part where the flames touched it. Next he filled his coffeepot with water and set it on the coals. From his pannier he took his dishes and the flour and salt and pepper, arranging them all within reach, and at last laid some slices of bacon in the skillet.

At this stage of the work a smothered cry, half yawn, half complaint, came from the tent. "Oh, hum! Is it morning?" inquired Bessie.

"Morning," replied her father. "It's going toward noon. You get up or you'll have no breakfast."

Thereupon Wayland called: "Can I get you anything, Miss Bessie? Would you like some warm water?"

"What for?" interposed McFarlane before the girl could reply.

"To bathe in," replied the youth.

"To bathe in! If a daughter of mine should ask for warm water to wash with I'd throw her in the creek."

Bessie chuckled. "Sometimes I think daddy has no feeling for me. I reckon he thinks I'm a boy."

"Hot water is debilitating and very bad for the complexion," retorted her father. "Ice cold water is what you need. And if you don't get out of there in five minutes I'll douse you with a dipperful."

This reminded Wayland that he had not yet made his own toilet, and, seizing soap, towel and brushes, he hurried away down the beach, where he came face to face with the dawn. The splendor of it smote him full in the eyes. From the waveless surface of the water a spectral mist was rising, a light veil, through which the stupendous cliffs loomed 3,000 feet in height, darkly shadowed, dim and far. The willows along the western margin burned as if dipped in liquid gold, and on the lofty crags the sun's coming created keen edged shadows, violet as ink. Truly this forestry business was not so bad after all. It had its compensations.

Back at the campfire he found Bessie at work, glowing, vigorous, laughing. Her comradeship with her father was very charming, and at the moment she was rallying him on his method of bread mixing. "You should rub the lead into the flour," she said. "Don't be afraid to get your hands into it—after they are clean. You can't mix bread with a spoon."

"Yes, I made camp bread for twenty years before you were born."

"It's a wonder you lived to tell of it," she retorted, and took the pan away from him. "That's another thing you must learn," she said to Wayland. "You must know how to mix."

You can't expect to find bakershops or ranchers along the way."

In the heat of the fire, in the charm of the girl's presence, the young man forgot the discomforts of the night, and, as they sat at breakfast and the sun rising over the high summits flooded them with warmth and good cheer and the frost melted like magic from the tent, the experience had all the satisfying elements of a picnic. It seemed that nothing remained to do. But McFarlane said, "Well, now you youngsters wash up and pack while I reconnoiter the stock." And with his saddle and bridle on his shoulder he went away down the trail.

Under Bessie's direction Wayland worked busily putting the camp equipment in proper parcels, taking no special thought of time till the tent was down and folded, the panniers filled and closed and the fire carefully covered. Then the girl said: "I hope the horses haven't been stamped. There are bears in this valley, and horses are afraid of bears. Father ought to have been back before this. I hope they haven't quit us."

"Shall I go and see?"

"No, he'll bring 'em if they're in the land of the living. He picked his saddle horse, so he's not afoot. Nobody can teach him anything about trailing horses, and, besides, you might get lost. You'd better keep close to camp."

Thereupon Wayland put aside all responsibility. "Let's see if we can catch some more fish," he urged.

To this she agreed, and together they went again to the outlet of the lake, where the trout could be seen darting to and fro on the clear, dark food, and there cast their flies till they had secured ten good sized fish.

"We'll stop now," declared the girl. "I don't believe in being wasteful."

Once more at the camp they prepared the fish for the pan.

As they were unpacking the panniers and getting out the dishes for their meal thunder broke from the high crags above the lake, and the girl called out:

"Quick! It's going to rain! We must reset the tent and get things under cover."

Once more he was put to shame by the decision, the skill and the strength with which she went about re-establishing the camp. She led, he followed in every action. In ten minutes the canvas was up, the beds rolled, the panniers protected, the food stored safely. But they were none too soon, for the thick gray veil of rain which had clothed the loftiest crags for half an hour swung out over the water, lenden gray under its folds, and with a roar which began in the tall pines, a roar which deepened, hushed only when the thunder crashed resoundingly from crag to crest, the tempest fell upon the camp and the world of sun and odorless pine vanished almost instantly, and a dark, threatening and forbidding world took its place.

But the young people, huddled close together beneath the tent, would have enjoyed the change had it not been for the thought of the supervisor. "I hope he took his slicker," the girl said between the tearing, ripping flashes of the lightning. "It's raining hard up there."

"How quickly it came. Who would have thought it could rain like this after so beautiful a morning?"

"It storms when it storms in the mountains," she responded with the sententious air of her father. "You never can tell what the sky is going to do up here. It is probably snowing on the high divide. Looks now as though those cayuses pulled out some time in the night and have hit the trail for home. That's the trouble with stall fed stock. They'll quit you any time they feel cold and hungry. Here comes the hail!" she shouted as a sharper, more spiteful roar sounded far away and approaching. "Now keep from under!"

"What will your father do?" he called.

"Don't worry about him. He's at home any place there's a tree. He's probably under a balsam somewhere, waiting for this ice to spill out. The only point is, they may get over the divide, and if they do it will be slippery coming back."

For the first time the thought that the supervisor might not be able to return entered Wayland's mind, but he said nothing of his fear.

The hail soon changed to snow, great, clinging, drowsy, soft, slow moving flakes, and with their coming the roar died away and the forest became as silent as a grave of bronze. Nothing moved save the thick falling, feathery, frozen vapor, and the world was again very beautiful and very mysterious.

"We must keep the fire going," warned the girl. "It will be hard to start after this soaking."

He threw upon the fire all of the wood which lay near, and Bessie, taking the ax, went to the big fir and began to chop off the dry branches which hung beneath, working almost as effectively as a man. Wayland insisted on taking a turn with the tool, but his efforts were so awkward that she laughed and took it away again. "You'll have to take lessons in swinging an ax," she said. "That's part of the job."

Gradually the storm lightened, the snow changed back into rain and finally to mist, but up on the heights the clouds still rolled waddy, and through their openings the white drifts bleakly shone.

"It's all in the trip," said Bessie. "You have to take the weather as it comes on the trail." As the storm lessened she resumed the business of cooking the midday meal, and at 2 o'clock they were able to eat in comparative comfort, though the unmelting snow still covered the trees, and the water dripped from the branches.



"You'll have to take lessons in swinging an ax," she said. "That's part of the job."

"Isn't it beautiful!" exclaimed Wayland, with glowing, boyish face. "The landscape is like a Christmas card."

"It wouldn't be so beautiful if you had to wallow through ten miles of it," she sagely responded. "Daddy will be wet to the skin, for I found he didn't take his slicker. However, the sun may be out before night. That's the way the thing goes in the hills."

To the youth, though the peaks were storm hid, the afternoon was joyous. Bessie was a sweet companion. Under her supervision he practiced at chopping wood and took a hand at cooking.

He had to admit that she was better able to care for herself in the wilderness than most men, even western men and, though he had not yet witnessed a display of her skill with a rifle, he was ready to believe that she could shoot as well as her sire. Nevertheless he liked her better when engaged in purely feminine duties, and he led the talk back to subjects concerning which her speech was less blunt and manlike.

He liked her when she was joking, for delicious little curves of laughter played about her lips. She became very amusing as she told of her "visits east" and of her embarrassments in the homes of city friends. "I just have to own up that about all the schooling I've got is from the magazines. Sometimes I wish I had pulled out for town when I was about fourteen; but, you see, I didn't feel like leaving mother, and she didn't feel like letting me go, and so I just got what I could at Bear Tooth." She sprang up. "There's a patch of blue sky. Let's go see if we can't get a grouse."

Together they strolled along the edge of the willows. "The grouse come down to feed about this time," she said. "We'll put up a covey soon."

Within a quarter of a mile they found their birds, and she killed four with five shots. "This is all we need," she said, "and I don't believe in killing for the sake of killing. Rangers should set good examples in way of game preservation. They are deputy game wardens in most states, and good ones too."

The night rose formidably from the valley while they ate their supper, but Bessie remained tranquil. "Those horses probably went clean back to the ranch. If they did, daddy can't possibly get back before 8 o'clock, and he may not get back till tomorrow."

Norcross, with his city training, was acutely conscious of the delicacy of the situation. In his sister's circle a girl left alone in this way with a man would have been very seriously embarrassed, but it was evident that Bessie took it all joyously, innocently. Their being together was something which had happened in the natural course of weather, a condition for which they were in no way responsible. Therefore she permitted herself to be frankly happy in the charm of their enforced intimacy.

She had never known a youth of his quality. He was so considerate, so refined, so quick of understanding and so swift to serve. He filled her mind to the exclusion of unimportant matters like the snow, which was beginning again. Indeed, her only anxiety concerned his health, and as he toiled amid the falling flakes, intent upon heaping up wood enough to last out the night, she became solicitous.

"You will be soaked," she warningly cried. "Don't stay out any more. Come to the fire. I'll bring in the wood."

Something primeval, some strength he did not know he possessed sustained him, and he toiled on. "Suppose this snow keeps falling?" he retorted. "The supervisor will not be able to get back tonight—perhaps not for a couple of nights. We will need a lot of fuel."

He did not voice the fear of the storm which filled his thought, but the girl understood it. "It won't be very cold," she calmly replied. "It never is during these early blizzards, and, besides, all we need to do is to drop down the trail ten miles, and we'll be entirely out of it."

"I'll feel safer with plenty of wood," he argued, but soon found it necessary

to rest from his labor. Coming in to camp, he seated himself beside her on a roll of blankets, and so together they tended the fire and watched the darkness roll over the lake till the shining crystals seemed to drop from a measureless black arch, soundless and oppressive.

"What time is it now?" she asked abruptly.

He looked at his watch. "Half after 8."

"If father isn't on this side of the divide now he won't try to cross. If he's coming down the slope he'll be here in an hour, although that trail is a tolerably tough proposition this minute. A patch of dead timber on a dark night is sure a nuisance even to a good man. He may not make it."

"Couldn't I rig up a torch and go to meet him?"

"She put her hand on his arm. "You stay right here!" she commanded. "You couldn't follow that trail five minutes."

"You have a very poor opinion of my skill."

"No, I haven't; but I know how hard it is to keep direction on a night like this, and I don't want you wandering around in the timber. Father can take care of himself. He's probably sitting under a big tree smoking his pipe before his fire—or else he's at home. He knows we're all right, and we are. We have wood and grub and plenty of blankets and a roof over us. You can make your bed under this fly," she said, looking up at the canvas. "It beats the old balsam as a roof. You mustn't sleep cold again."

"I think I'd better sit up and keep the fire going," he replied heroically. "There's a big log out there that I'm going to bring in to roll up on the windward side."

"It'll be cold and wet early in the morning, and I don't like to hunt kindling in the snow," she said. "I always get everything ready the night before. I wish you had a better bed. It seems selfish of me to have the tent while you are cold."

Continued Next Week.

Between Tips.



Waiter—No tip from dat explorer, eh? He's most decidedly economical.

Brother Waiter—He suttinly am! He's longer from tip to tip dan any crocker-dile he evah shot!—Pittsburgh Chronicle.

Point of View.



Ethel—But papa's decision may not be final.

Ferdinand—But mine is. I've decided to stay single.—New York Globe.

Good Idea.



"Why did he get married on Feb. 29?"

"He said he didn't want his wife to remind him of his wedding anniversary every year."—Exchange.

Long Chances.



Mrs. Knagg—Mr. Flimmer has just been sent to prison for raising money on forged notes. Just think of the chances some men will take for money.

Mr. Knagg—Awful! Some men will even marry for money.—Boston Globe

A FIND ON THE BEACH

By M. QUAD
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The Palawan islands, in the China sea, are to the north of Borneo and form a part of the Philippine group. They stretch out for a distance of 700 miles and number nearly a thousand. In the year 1882 I was landed on one of the Palawans from a Singapore trader to get up and run a copra plant. I had with me four Chinese, and the trader landed provisions for a year.

Nothing of special interest occurred until I had been on the island three months. Then one morning as I went down to the boat to go on a fishing trip I was amazed to find tracks of a woman's bare feet on the wet sands.

Whoever had visited our island in the darkness had come out of the depths of the sea. No boat or raft had landed on the shore. The footprints were as plain as a plaster cast, and we were immediately interested and more or less excited. After thinking the matter over I decided that the woman must have come from one of two islands north and south and determined to give both a search. I set off to the north and in the course of an hour made a landing. This island had an area of not more than five acres. I went over it carefully, but not a living thing did I find.

It was noon when I got back to my own island, and after dinner I set out to search the other. As this one had more vegetation I took with me a boy, who was about fifteen years of age and named Whang.

It was near sunset when we put off after a vain search, and when we reached the reef surrounding our island and a half a mile out from the beach, the evening breeze died out to a flat calm, and we lay like a log. Before taking to the oar to scull us into the shore I sat quiet for a minute listening to the whispers of the sea.

Whang leaned over the rail of the boat and watched the sharks darting to and fro and leaving trails of fire behind them, and things were so still that I could hear the ticking of my watch, when there came a strange interruption. It was the voice of a woman in laughter, and it sounded close by. We both sprang up at the sound, wondering if our ears had deceived us, and as we stood listening the sounds came again. When they had died away the boy turned to me and whispered:

"Master, let us get ashore at once! There is a witch of the sea close by, and she will drag us down!"

I waited ten minutes, and hearing nothing more, I picked up the oar and sculled in to the landing. There I found the three Chinamen waiting for me, and they were in a state of great excitement. They had heard the laughter, and they believed with the boy that a witch of the sea was hanging about and meant to do us harm.

I simply contented myself with saying that we would leave some provisions on the beach that night and see if they were missing in the morning and with sleeping with one eye open to see that the frightened fellows did not steal the boat and make off to some other island.

We were down on the beach when daylight came, and there were fresh tracks again. The woman had circled about the heap of provisions, but had touched nothing. The Chinese were absolutely knocked out with consternation, and only my promise to watch the beach that night and capture or shoot the witch calmed them down. I remained with them all that day to prevent them from plotting, and it was not until midnight that I took up my watch on the shore.

It was low tide at 2 o'clock. I was concealed behind a heap of brush, and it was a starlight night. At that hour a figure which looked like a human being came out of the gentle surf and began to walk up and down the beach. As it walked away from me I rose up and went forward on tiptoe and was within thirty feet of it when it caught the alarm and fed back to the water like a shadow. I heard an exclamation of alarm and splashes in the water and saw the wake as the "it" swam away. I had meant to keep cool, but the sight of the figure excited me, and its escape when I figured on capture added to it, and so, hardly knowing what I did, I drew one of my revolvers and began firing as the swimmer moved away. I fired six shots, but I heard no cry of pain or other sound.

I went back to the Chinamen and found them chattering in terror, and if they had not been afraid of the witch they would have made a rush for the boat and left me alone on the island. I sat watching them till daylight came, and then we all went down to the beach. The tide was coming in, but we found tracks as before. While we were hurrying about, arguing and discussing, the tide brought in the naked limb and foot of a woman, a white woman. It had been torn from the body by the sharks, and it was the foot which had made the tracks in the sand. One of my shots had struck and killed her as she swam away, and the blood had brought the savage sharks to the attack. There lay the limb before us, with the flesh hard and firm, though showing a bruise here and there. But no other part of the body came ashore. To whom the limb had belonged, how she had been cast away there, where she was hiding, why she did not seek our protection—none of these questions can I answer. We buried the limb in the sands and heard no more of the nymph of the sea.

PILLOWS AND FOOTSTOOLS.

Some interesting suggestions about new designs for these comforts.

A certain shop specializing in up to date novelties had recently several very odd pillows and footstools. The work resembled the crazy quilt work our great-grandmothers were so fond of doing, only in those days the pieces were all joined together, while the pillows in this shop were made in a different way. Black satin was used for the background, and various odd pieces of bright colored silk, velvet and leather—yes, leather—were scattered about and appliqued in place.

Some of the pieces were cut to form star shaped flowers with bright centers of embroidery silk. Others were shaped like leaves, and the few pieces of leather (suede) used had scalloped edges like a stitcher, with the edge worked in blanket stitch and fastened in the center to the satin. The silks, velvets and leather were all colors, but the stitching around the edges was entirely in heavy black embroidery silk.

No attempt had been made to form a design; the colored bits of silk and velvet—emerald green, yellow, orange, vermilion and brown—were evenly distributed over the black satin, and the effect was quite pleasing and very odd.

If you look carefully through the pile of remnants in the dress goods as well as the upholstery department of stores you can often find the most wonderful materials in a variety of colors, and being odd sizes, one can usually buy them for a small sum, and they are large enough for pillows.

Few of us can afford to have rooms repapered or changed each season, but it is quite possible with a little thought to give just the right touch of color to each room and make it appear home-like and cozy at all times.

While bright colors are recommended and extremely smart this season, do not forget that you are the jewel and the room the setting, and when considering emerald green, rose pink or scarlet for pillows select whichever will harmonize best with your gowns. It may seem rather absurd to some to consider such matters, but every woman should live up to her best. It is not a question of vanity; it is harmony.

FROM ETON.

Smart Togs For the Small Men of Your Family.

One of the smart suits for boys is this Eton suit with the trousers of pepper and salt mixture cut ankle



QUITE ENGLISH.

length. The bebbed coat takes the regulation collar and four-in-hand tie. The effect is very smart despite the fact that son forgot to take off his derby.

Food Value of Nuts.

Nuts have a high protein content and a high fat content as well and should take the place of meat in a meal.

Almonds are so rich in protein and fats that a pound of shelled almonds is equivalent in food value to about three pounds of steak. At usual price a good grade of almonds is more economical than the ordinary cuts of meat.

Chestnuts are a staple food in parts of Italy and have a delicious flavor in soups, stuffings and sauces. Our own native chestnuts, boiled or served whole or roasted, make an excellent simple desert.

Hickory nuts, English walnuts, pecan nuts and filberts are not only palatable in muffins, cake and yeast bread, but add to the food value in a rational way. Peanuts are rich in oil and protein. They are nearly equal to almonds in food value and are even more economical. Peanuts are too concentrated a food for eating between meals or to be taken after a meal already sufficient, but they may take the place of meat in the meal, and peanut butter may be used on bread and sandwiches without butter. They, too, may be used with cake and cookies. Chopped nuts may be served with dessert.