

GOING SOME



A ROMANCE OF STRENUOUS AFFECTION

BY REX BEACH

SUGGESTED BY THE PLAY BY REX BEACH AND PAUL ARMSTRONG

Illustrated By Edgar Bert Smith

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SYNOPSIS.

Cowboys of the Flying Heart ranch are heartbroken over the loss of their much-prized photograph by the defeat of their champion in a foot-race with the cook of the Centipede ranch. A house party is on at the Flying Heart. J. Wallingford Speed, cheer leader at Yale, and Culver Covington, inter-collegiate champion runner, are expected. Helen Blake, Speed's sweetheart, becomes interested in the loss of the photograph.

CHAPTER I.—Continued.

"Nonsense! Robert Keap is only twenty-three. Why, she hardly knew her husband, even! It was one of those sudden, impulsive affairs that would overwhelm any girl who hadn't seen a man for four years. And then he enlisted in the Spanish War, and was killed."

"Considerate chap!" "Roberta, you know, is my best friend, after Helen. Do be nice to her, Jack." Miss Chapin sighed. "It is too bad the others couldn't come."

"Yes, a small house-party has its disadvantages. By-the-way, what's that gold thing on your frock?" "It's a medal. Culver sent it to me."

"Another?" "Yes, he won the intercollegiate championship again." Miss Chapin proudly extended the emblem on its ribbon.

"I wish to goodness Covington had been here to take Humpy Joe's place," said the young cattle-man as he turned it over. "The boys are just broken-hearted over losing that photograph."

"I'll get him to run and win it back," Jean offered, easily. Her brother laughed. "Take my advice, Sis, and don't let Culver mix up in this game! The stakes are too high. I think that Centipede cook is a professional runner, myself, and if our boys were beaten again—well, you said mother and I would have to move out of New Mexico, that's all. No, we'd better let the memory of that defeat die out as quickly as possible. You warn Fresno not to joke about it any more, and I'll take Mrs. Keap off your hands. She may be a widow, she may even be the chaperon, but I'll do it; I will do it," promised Jack—"for my sister's sake."

CHAPTER II.

HELLEN BLAKE was undeniably bored. The sultry afternoon was very long—longer even than Berkeley Fresno's autobiography, and quite as dry. It was too hot and dusty to ride, so she took refuge in the latest "best seller," and sought out a hammock on the vine-shaded gallery, where Jean Chapin was writing letters, while the disconsolate Fresno, banished, wandered at large, vaguely injured at her lack of appreciation.

Absent-mindedly, the girls dipped into the box of bonbons between them. Jean finished her correspondence and essayed conversation, but her companion's blond head was bowed over the book in her lap, and the effort met with no response. Lulled by the somniferous droning of insects and lazy echoes from afar, Miss Chapin was on the verge of slumber, when she saw her guest rapidly turn the last pages of her novel, then, with a chocolate between her teeth, read wide-eyed to the finish. Miss Blake closed the book reluctantly, uncurled slowly, then stared out through the dancing heat-waves, her blue eyes shadowed with romance.

"Did she marry him?" queried Jean. "No, no!" Helen Blake sighed, blissfully. "It was infinitely finer. She killed herself."

"I like to see them get married." "Naturally. You are at that stage. But I think suicide is more glorious, in many cases."

Miss Chapin yawned openly. "Speaking of suicides, isn't this ranch the dearest place?" "Oh, I don't think so at all."

"Oh yes, you do, and you needn't be polite just because you're a guest." "Well, then, to be as truthful as a boarder, it is a little dull. Not for our chaperon, though. The time doesn't seem to drag on her hands. Jack certainly is making it pleasant for her."

"If you call taking her out to watch a lot of bellowing calves get branded, entertainment," Miss Chapin sighed. Miss Blake leaned forward and read the inscription on her companion's medal. "Oh, isn't it heavy!" feeling it reverently.

"Pure gold like himself! You should have seen him when he won it. Why, at the finish of that race all the men but Culver were making the most horrible faces. They were simply dead."

Miss Blake's hands were clasped in her lap. "They all make faces," said she. "Have you told Roberta about your engagement?"

"No, she doesn't dream of it, and I don't want her to know. I'm so afraid she'll think, now that mother has

gone, that I asked her here just as a chaperon. Perhaps I'll tell her when Culver comes."

"I have heard Culver speak of him, but never as an athlete. Have you and Mr. Speed settled things between you, Helen? I mean, has he—said anything?" Miss Blake flushed. "Not exactly." She adjusted a cushion to cover her confusion, then leaned back complacently. "But he has stuttered dangerously several times."

A musical tinkle of silver spurs sounded in the distance, and around the corner of the cook-house opposite came Carara, the Mexican, his wide, spangled sombrero tipped rakishly over one ear, a corn-husk cigarette drooping from his lips.

"It's that romantic Spaniard!" whispered Helen. "What does he want?" "It's his afternoon call on Mariadetta, the maid," said Jean. "They meet there twice a day, morning and afternoon."

"A lovers' tryst!" breathed Miss Blake, eagerly. "Isn't he graceful and picturesque! Can we watch them?" "Sh-h! There she comes!"

From the opposite direction appeared a slim, swarthy Mexican girl, an Indian water-jug balanced upon her shoulders. She was clad in the straight-hanging native garment, belted in with a sash; her feet were in sandals, and she moved as silently as a shadow.

During the four days since Miss Blake's arrival at the Flying Heart Ranch she had seen Mariadetta flitting noiselessly here and there, but had never heard her speak. The pretty, expressionless face beneath the straight black hair had ever retained its wooden stolidity, the velvety eyes had not laughed nor frowned nor sparkled. She seemed to be merely a part of this far southwestern picture; a bit of inanimate yet breathing local color. Now, however, the girl dropped her jug, and with a low cry glided to her lover, who tossed aside his cigarette and took her in his arms. From this distance their words were indistinguishable.

"How perfectly romantic," said the Eastern girl, breathlessly. "I had no idea Mariadetta could love anybody."

"She is a volcano," Jean answered. "Why, it's like a play!"

"And it goes on all the time." "How gentle and sweet he is! I think he is charming. He is not at all like the other cowboys, is he?"

While the two witnesses of the scene were eagerly discussing it, Joy, the Chinese cook, emerged from the kitchen bearing a bucket of water, his presence hidden from the lovers by the corner of the building. Carara languidly released his inamorata from his embrace and lounged out of sight around the building, pausing at the farther corner to wait a graceful kiss from the ends of his fingers, as with a farewell flash of his white teeth he disappeared. Mariadetta recovered her water-jug and glided onward into the court in front of the cook-house, her face masklike, her movements deliberate as usual.

Joy, spying the girl, grinned at her. She tossed her head coquettishly and her step slackened, whereupon the cook, with a sly glance around, tapped her gently on the arm, and said:

"Nice lil' gally." "The idea!" indignantly exclaimed Miss Blake from her hammock. But Mariadetta was not offended. Instead she smiled over her shoulder

at her lover, and said: "Did she marry him?" queried Jean. "No, no!" Helen Blake sighed, blissfully. "It was infinitely finer. She killed herself."

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who dove through the open door like a prairie dog into his hole. Carara followed at his heels.

"It serves him right!" cried Miss Blake, rising. "I hope Mr. Carara—" A din of falling pots and pans issued from the cook-house, mingled with shrill cries and soft Spanish imprecations; then, with one long-drawn wail, the pandemonium ceased as suddenly as it had commenced, and Carara issued forth, black with anger. "Ha!" said he, scowling at Mariadetta, who had retreated, her hand upon her bosom. He exhaled a lungful of cigarette smoke through his nostrils fiercely. "You play wit' me, eh?"

"No, no!" Mariadetta ran to him, and, seizing his arm, cooed amorously in Spanish.

"Bah! Vamos!" Carara flung her from him, and stalked away.

"Well, of all the outrageous things!" said Miss Blake. "Why, she was actually flirting with that Chinaman."

"Mariadetta flirts with every man she can find," said Jean, calmly. "But she doesn't mean any harm. She'll marry Carara some time—if he doesn't kill her."

"Kill her!" Miss Blake's eyes were round. "He wouldn't do that!"

"Indeed, yes. He is a Mexican, and he has a terrible temper."

Miss Blake sank back into the hammock. "How perfectly dreadful! And yet—it must be heavenly to love a man who would kill you."

Miss Chapin lost herself in meditation for an instant. "Culver is almost like that when he is angry. Hello, here comes our foreman!"

Stover, a tall, gangling cattle-man with drooping grizzled mustache, came shambling up to the steps. He dusted his boots with his sombrero and cleared his throat.

"Evening, Miss Jean. Is Mr. Chapin around?" "I think you'll find him down by the spring-house. Can I do anything for you?"

"None!" Stover sighed heavily, and got his frame gradually into motion again. "You're not looking well, Stover."



"This Grubslinger Thinks He Can Run."

Are you ill?" inquired Miss Chapin. "Not physical," said the foreman, checking the movement which had not yet communicated itself the entire length of his frame. "I reckon my sperrit's broke, that's all."

"Haven't you recovered from that foot-race?" "I have not, and I never will, so long as that ornery Centipede outfit has got it on us."

"Nonsense, Stover!" "What have they done?" inquired Miss Blake, curiously. "I haven't heard about any foot-race."

"You tell her," said the man, with another sigh, and a hopeless gesture that told the depth of his feelings.

"Why, Stover hired a fellow a couple of months ago, as a horse-wrangler. The man said he was hungry, and made a good impression, so we put him on."

Here Stover slowly raised one booted foot and kicked his other calf. "The boys nicknamed him Humpy Joe."

"Why, poor thing! Was he hump-backed?" inquired Helen. "No," answered Still Bill. "Humpy Joe is lucky. We called him Humpy Joe because when it came to running he could sure hump himself."

"Soon after Joseph went to work," Jean continued, "the Centipede outfit hired a new cook. You know the Centipede Ranch—the one you see over yonder by the foot-hills."

"It wasn't soon after, it was simultaneous," said Stover, darkly. "We're beginnin' to see plain at last. He went on as if to air the injury that was gnawing him. One day we hear that this grub-slinger over yonder thinks he can run, which same is as welcome to us as the smell of flowers on a spring breeze, for Humpy Joe had amused us in his idle hours by running jack-rabbits to earth."

"Not really?" said Miss Blake. "Well, no, but from what we see we judge he'd ought to limp a hundred yards in about nothing and three-fifths seconds, so we frame a race between him and the Centipede Cook. With tumultuous joy we bet our wages and all the loose gear we have, and in a burst of childish enthusiasm we put up—the talking-machine."

"A phonograph?" "Yes. An Echo Phonograph," said Miss Chapin.

"Of New York and Paris," said Stover. "Our boys won it from this very Centipede outfit at a bronco-busting tournament in Cheyenne."

"Wyoming," Stover made the local pronoun definite.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

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CHAPTER II.—Continued.

"The Centipede crowd took their defeat badly on Frontier Day, and swore to get even."

"And was Humpy Joe defeated?" asked Helen.

"Was he?" Still Bill shook his head sadly, and sighed for a third time. "It looked like he was running backward, miss."

"But really he was only beaten a foot. It was a wonderful race. I saw it," said Jean. "I made me think of the races at college."

Miss Blake puckered her brows trying to think. "Joseph," she said. "No, I don't think I have seen him."

Stover's lips met grimly. "I don't reckon you have, miss. Since that race he has been hard to descry. He passed from view hurriedly, so to speak, headed toward the foot-hills, and leaping from crag to crag like the hardy shamrock of the Swiss Alps."

Miss Blake giggled. "What made him hurry so?" "Us!" Stover gazed at her solemnly. "We ain't none of us been the same since that foot-race. You see, it ain't the financial value of that Echo Phonograph, nor the 'double-cross' that hurts: it's the fact that the angeliest outfit in the Territory has trimmed us out of the one thing that stands for honor and excellence and 'scientific attainment,' as the judge said when we won it. That talking-machine meant more to us than you Eastern folks can understand, I reckon."

"If I were you I would cheer up," said Miss Blake, kindly, and with some importance. "Miss Chapin has a college friend coming this week, and he can win back your trophy."

Stover glanced up at Jean quickly. "Is that right, Miss Chapin?" "He can if he will," Jean asserted. "Can he run?"

"He is the intercollegiate champion," declared that young lady, with proud dignity.

"And do you reckon he'd run for us and the Echo Phonograph of New York and Paris, if we framed a race? It's an honor!"

But Miss Chapin recalled her brother's caution of the day before, and hesitated.

"I—I don't think he would. You see, he is an amateur—he might be out of training—"

"The idea!" exclaimed Miss Blake, indignantly. "If Culver won't run, I know who will!" She closed her lips firmly, and turned to the foreman. "You tell your friends that we'll see you get your trophy back."

"Helen, I—"

"I mean it!" declared Miss Blake, with spirit.

Stover bowed loosely. "Thank you, miss. The very thought of it will cheer up the gang. Life 'round here is blacker 'n a spade flush. I think I'll tell Willie. He shambled rapidly off around the house."

"Helen, dear, I don't want Culver to get mixed up in this affair," explained Miss Chapin, as soon as they were alone. "It's all utterly foolish. Jack doesn't want him to, either."

"Very well. If Culver doesn't feel that he can beat that cook running, I know who will try. Mr. Speed will do anything I ask. It's a shame the way those men have been treated."

"But Mr. Speed isn't a sprinter." "Indeed!" Miss Blake bridled. "Perhaps Culver Covington isn't the only athlete in Yale College. I happen to know what I'm talking about."

"I don't think he will consent when he learns the truth."

"I assure you," said Miss Blake, sweetly, "he will be delighted."

CHAPTER III.

IT was still early in the afternoon when Jack Chapin and the youthful chaperon found the other young people together on the gallery.

"Here's a telegram from Speed," began Jack.

"It's terribly funny," said Mrs. Keap. "That Mexican brought it to us down at the spring-house."

Miss Blake lost her bored expression, and sat up in the hammock. "Mr. Jack Chapin," read the owner of the Flying Heart Ranch. "Dear Jack: I couldn't wait for Covington, so meet with brass-band and fireworks this afternoon. Have flowers in bloom in the little park beside the depot, and see that the daisies nod to me.—J. Wallingford Speed."

"Park, eh?" said Fresno, dryly. "Telegraph office, water-tank, and a

cattle-chute. Where does this fellow think he is?"

"Here's a postscript," added Chapin. "I have a valet who does not seem to enjoy the trip. Divide a kiss among the girls."

"Well, well! He's stingy with his kisses," observed Berkeley. "Who is this humorous party?"

"He was a Freshman at Yale the year I graduated," explained Jack.

"Too bad he never got out of that class." It was evident that Mr. Speed's levity made no impression upon the Glee Club tenor. "He hates to talk about himself, doesn't he?"

"I think he is very clever," said Miss Blake, warmly.

"How well do you know him?" "Not as well as I'd like to."

Fresno puffed at his little pipe without remarking at this.

"Well, who wants to go and meet him?" queried Jack.

"Won't you?" asked his sister. "I can't. I've just got word from the Eleven X that I'm wanted. The foreman is hurt. I may not be back for some time."

"Nigger Mike met me," observed Fresno, darkly.

"Then Nigger Mike for Speed," laughed the cattle-man. "I've told Carara to hitch up the pintos for me. I must be going."

"I'll see that you are safely started," said the young widow; and leaving the trio on the gallery, they entered the house.

When they had gone Jean smiled wisely at Helen. "Roberta's such a thoughtful chaperon," she observed, whereupon Miss Blake giggled.

As for Mrs. Keap, she was inquiring of Jack with genuine solicitude: "Do you really mean that you may be gone for some time?"

"I do. It may be a week; it may be longer; I can't tell until I get over there."

"I'm sorry." Mrs. Keap's face showed some disappointment.

"So am I."

"I shall have to look out for these young people all by myself."

"What a queer little way you have of talking, as if you were years and years old."

"I do feel as if I were. I—I—well, I have had an unhappy experience. You know unhappiness builds months into years."

"When Jean got up this house-party," young Chapin began, absently, "I thought I should be bored to death. But—I haven't been. You know, I don't want to go over there?" He nodded vaguely toward the south.

"I thought perhaps it suited your convenience." His companion watched him gravely. "Are you quite sure that your sister's guests have not had something to do with this sudden determination?"

"I am quite sure. I never liked the old Flying Heart so much as I do to-day. I never regretted leaving it so



"We've Got Another Foot-Runner."

much as I do at this moment." "We may be gone before you return."

Young Chapin started. "You don't mean that, really?"

Mrs. Keap nodded her dark head. "It was all very well for me to chaperon Helen on the way out from the east, but—it isn't exactly regular for me to play that part here with other young people to look after."

"But you understand, of course—Jean must have explained to you. Mother was called away suddenly, and she can't get back now. You surely won't leave—you can't." Chapin added, hopefully: "Why, you would break up Jean's party. You see, there's nobody around here to take your place."

"But—" "Nonsense! This is an unconventional country. What's wrong with you as a chaperon, anyway? Nobody out here even knows what a chaperon is. And I'll be back as soon as I can."

"Do you really think that would help?" Roberta's eyes laughed humorously.

"I'm not thinking of the others, I'm thinking of myself," declared the young man, boldly. "I don't want you to go before I return. You must not! If you go, I—I shall follow you." He grasped her hand impulsively.

"Oh!" exclaimed the chaperon. "This makes it even more impossible. Go! Go!" She pushed him away, her color surging. "Go to your old Eleven X Ranch right away."

"But I mean it," he declared, earnestly. Then, as she retreated farther: "It's no use, I shan't go now until—" "You have known me less than a week!"

"That is long enough, Roberta—" Mrs. Keap spoke with honest embarrassment. "Listen! Don't you see what a situation this is? If Jean and Helen should ever discover—" "Jean planned it all; even this!" Mrs. Keap stared at him in horrified silence.

"You do love me, Roberta?" Chapin undertook to remove the girl's hands from her face, when a slight cough in the hall behind caused him to turn suddenly in time to see Berkeley Fresno passing the open door.

"There! You see!" Mrs. Keap's face was tragic. "You see!" She turned and fled, leaving the master of the ranch in the middle of the floor, bewildered, but a bit inclined to be happy. A moment later the plump face of Berkeley Fresno appeared cautiously around the door-jamb. He coughed again gravely.

"I happened to be passing," said he. "You'll pardon me?"

"This is the most thickly settled spot in New Mexico!" Chapin declared, with an artificial laugh, choking his indignation.

Fresno slowly brought his round body out from concealment. "I came in to get a match."

"Why don't you carry matches?" Fresno puffed complacently upon his pipe. "This," he mused, as his host departed, "eliminates the chaperon, and that helps some."

Still Bill Stover lost no time in breaking the news to the boys. "There's something comin' on," he advised Willie. "We've got another foot-runner!"

If he had hoped for an outburst of rapture on the part of the little gun man he was disappointed, for Willie shifted his holster, smiled evilly through his glasses, and inquired, with ominous restraint: "Where is he?"

Being the one man on the Flying Heart who had occasion to wear a gun, Willie seldom smiled from a sense of humor. Here it may be said that, deceived at first by his scholarly appearance, his fellow-laborers had fished at Willie's affectation of a swinging holster, but the custom had languished abruptly. When it became known who he was, the other ranch-hands had volubly declared that this was a free country, where a man might exercise a wide discretion in the choice of personal adornment; and as for them, they avowed unanimously that the practice of packing a Colts was one which met with their most cordial approbation. In time Willie's six-shooter had become accepted as a part of the local scenery, and, like the scenery, no one thought of remarking upon it, least of all those who best knew his lack of humor. He had come to them out of the Nowhere, some four years previously, and while he never spoke of himself, and discouraged reminiscence in others, it became known through those vague, uncharted channels by which news-travels on the frontier, that back in the Texas Panhandle there was a limping marshal who felt regrets at mention of his name, and that farther north were other men who had a superstitious dread of undersized cowmen with spectacles.

"This here is a real foot-runner," said Stover.

"Exactly," agreed the other. "Where is he?"

"He'll be here this afternoon. Nigger Mike's bringin' him over from the railroad. He's a guest."

"Oh!" "Yep! He's intercollegit champeen of Yale."

"Yale?" repeated the near-sighted man. "Don't know's I ever been there. Much of a town?"

"I ain't never traveled east myself, but Miss Jean and the little yellow-haired girl say he's the fastest man in the world. I-I figured we might rib up something with this Centipede." Still Bill winked sagely.

"See here, do you reckon he'd run?" "Sure! He's a friend of the boss. And he'll run on the level too. He can't be nothin' like Humpy."

"If he is, I'll get him," said the cowboy. "Oh, I'll get him sure, guest or no guest. But how about the phonograph?"

"The Centipede will put it up quick enough; there ain't no sentiment in that outfit."

"Then it sounds good." "An' it'll work Gallagher's anxious to trim us again. Some folks can't stand prosperity."

Willie spat unerringly at a grasshopper. "Lord!" said he, "it's too good! It don't sound possible."

"Well, it is, and our man will be here this evenin'. Watch out for Nigger Mike, and when he drives up let's give this party a welcome that'll warm his heart on the jump. There's nothin' like a good impression."

"I'll be on the job," assured Willie. "But I state right here and now, if we do get a race there ain't a-goin' to be no chance of our losin' for a second time."

And Stover went on his way to spread the tidings.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

The man who flatters himself that he leaves little to be desired should remember that a burglar does the same thing.