

JOAN OF THE SWORD HAND

S. R. CROCKETT, Author of "The Raiders"
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CHAPTER XXIX.—Continued.

"Madam," said Werner, with dignity, "go to Kerns; you must. The enemy is near to the city, and your Highness might fall into their hands."

"You have heard what I have said!" Joan tapped the oaken floor with her foot.

"But, madam, let me beseech you—"

Joan turned from her chief captain impatiently and walked toward the door of her private apartments. Werner followed his mistress, with his hands a little outstretched and a look of eager entreaty on his face.

"My lady," he said, "thirty years I was the faithful servant of your father—how I have served you. By the memory of those years, if I have served you faithfully—"

"My father taught you little, if after thirty years you have not learned to obey. Go to your post!"

Werner von Orseln drew himself up and saluted. Then he wheeled about and clanked out without adding a word more.

For a moment after the door closed upon the men, Joan and Margaret stood in silence regarding each other. Suddenly Margaret ran impulsively to Joan, clasping her about the neck.

"I know!" she said, looking up into her face.

With a great leap the blood flew to Joan's neck and brow, then as slowly faded away, leaving her paler than before.

"What do you know?" she faltered, and she feared, yet desired to hear.

"That you love Conrad!" said Margaret, very low. "Joan, I am so glad—so glad!"

"Margaret, I am ashamed for ever—it is sin!" whispered Joan, with her arms about her friend.

"Joan, you will yet be happy."

The Duchess shook her head.

"It were best for us both that I should die—that is what I pray for."

"May heaven avert this thing—you know not what you say."

And the two women went into the attiring room with arms still locked about each other's waists. And as often as their eyes encountered they lingered a little, as if tasting the new knowledge which they had in common. Then those of Joan of the Sword Hand were averted, and she blushed.

It was night in the city of Courtland, and a time of great fear. Ever and anon from the east, where were the camps of the opposed forces, there came a sound, heavy and sonorous, like distant thunder. Whereat the frightened wives of the burghers of Courtland said, "I wonder what mother's son lies a-dying now. Harkened to the talking of Great Peg, the Margraf's cannon!"

At the western or Brandenburg gate there was yet greater fear. For the news had spread abroad the city that a great body of horsemen had paused in front of it, and were being held in parley by the guard on duty, till the Lady Joan, Governor of the city, should be made aware.

The Governor of the city, roused from a rare slumber, leaped on her horse and went clattering with an escort through the unsleeping streets.

Looking out, Joan could see a dark mass of horsemen, while above them glinted in the pale starlight a forest of spearheads.

"Whence come you, strangers?" cried Joan.

"From Plassenburg we are!" came back the answer.

"Who leads you?"

"Captains Boris and Jorian, officers of the Prince's bodyguard."

"Let Captains Boris and Jorian approach and deliver their message."

"With whom are we in speech?"



"And what of Prince Conrad?" cried the unmistakable voice of long Boris.

"With the Princess Joan of Hohenstein, Governor of the city of Courtland," said Joan, firmly.

"Come on, Boris; those Courtland knaves will not shoot us now. That is the voice of Joan of the Sword Hand. There can be no treachery where she is."

"Ho, below there!" cried Joan. "Shine a light on them from the upper gallery port."

The lantern flashed out, and there, immediately below her, Joan beheld Boris and Jorian saluting as of old, with the simultaneous gesture which had grown so familiar to her during the days of Isle Rugen. She was

moved to smile in spite of the soberness of the circumstances.

"What news bring you, good envoys?"

"We have brought the most part of the Palace Guard with us—five hundred good lances and all hungry-bellied for victuals and all monastically thirsty in their throats. Besides which, Prince Hugo raises Plassenburg and the Mark, and in ten days he will be on the march for Courtland."

"God send him speed! I fear me in ten days it will be over indeed," said Joan.

"What, does the Muscovite press you so hard?"

"He has thousands to our hundreds, so that he can hem us in on every side."

"Never fear," cried Boris confidently; "we will hold him in check for you till our good Hugo comes to take him on the flank."

Then Joan bade the gates be opened and the horsemen of Plassenburg, strong men on great horses, trampled in.

Then, without resting, she went to the wool market, which had been turned into a soldiers' hospital. Here she found Theresa von Lynar, going from bed to bed smoothing pillows, anointing wounded limbs, and assisting the surgeons in the care of those who had been brought back from the fatal battlefields of the Alla.

Theresa von Lynar rose to meet Joan as she entered. Silently the young girl beckoned her to follow, and they went out between long lines of pallets.

"Remember, when all is over I shall keep my vow!" Joan began, as they paused.

"And I also will keep mine!" responded Theresa briefly.

"I am Duchess and city Governor only till the invader is driven out," Joan continued. "Then Isle Rugen is to be mine, and your son shall sit in the seat of Henry the Lion!"

"And what of Prince Conrad?" asked Theresa quietly.

Joan was silent for a space, then she answered with her eyes on the ground.

"Prince Conrad shall rule this land as is his duty—Cardinal, Archbishop, Prince; there shall be none to deny him so soon as the power of the Muscovite is broken. He will be in full alliance with Hohenstein. He will form a blood bond with Plassenburg. And when he dies, all that is his shall belong to the children of Duke Maurice and his wife Margaret! I shall never marry!"

"God forbid," said Theresa, looking at her, "that such a woman as you should die without living!"

CHAPTER XXX.

The Wooing of Boris and Jorian.
"Jorian," said Boris, adjusting his soft under-jerkin before putting on his body armor, "thou art the greatest fool in the world!"

"Hold hard, Boris," answered Jorian. "Honor to whom honor—thou art greater by a foot than I!"

"Well," said the long man, "let us not quarrel about the breadth of a finger nail. At any rate, we are the greatest fools in the world."

"There are others," said Jorian, jerking his thumb over his shoulder in the direction of the women's apartments.

"A plague on all women!" growled the little fat man, his rubicund and shining face lined with unaccustomed discontent. "A plague on all women. I say! What can this Theresa von Lynar want in the Muscovite camp, that we must promise to convey her safe through the fortifications, and then put her into Prince Wasp's hands?"

"Think you that for some hatred of our Joan—you remember that night at Isle Rugen—or some purpose of her own (she loves not the Princess Margaret either), this Theresa would betray the city to the enemy?"

"Tush!" Jorian had lost his temper and answered crossly. "In that case, would she have called us in? It were easy enough to find some traitor among these Courtlanders, who, to obtain the favor of Prince Louis, would help to bring the Muscovite in."

"Well," sighed his companion, "'tis well enough said, my excellent Jorian, but all this does not advance us an inch. We have promised, and at eleven o'clock we must go. What hinders, though, that we have a bottle of Rhenish now?"

Thus in the hall of the men-at-arms in the Castle of Courtland spoke the two captains of Plassenburg. All the time they were busy with their attiring. Boris in especial making great play with a tortoiseshell comb among his tangled locks. Somewhat more spruce was the arraying of our twin comrades-in-arms than we have seen it. Perhaps it was the thought of the dangerous escort duty upon which they had promised to venture forth that night; perhaps—

"May we come in?" cried an arch voice from the doorway. "Ah, we have caught you. There—we knew it! So said I to my sister not an hour ago. Women may be vain as peacocks, but for prinking, dandifying vanity, commend me to a pair of foreign war captains. My lords, have you blacked your eyelashes yet, touched your eyebrows, scented and waxed those beautiful mustaches? Sister, can you look and live?"

And to the two soldiers, standing stiff at attention, with their combs in their hands, enter the sisters Anna and Martha Pappenheim, more full of

mischief than ever, and entirely unsubdued by the presence of the invader at their gates.

"Russ or Turk, Courtlander or Franconian, Jew proselyte or dweller in Mesopotamia, all is one to us. So be they are men, we will tie them about our little fingers!"

"Why," cried Martha, "whence this grand toilet? We knew not that you had friends in the city. And yet they tell me you have been in Courtland before, Sir Boris?"

"Marthe," cried Anna Pappenheim, with vast pretence of indignation, "what has gotten into you, girl? Can you have forgotten that martial carriage, those limbs incomparably knit, that readiness of retort and delicate sparkle of Wendish wit, which set all the table in a roar, and yet never bring the blush to maiden's cheek? For shame, Marthe!"

"Ha! ha!" laughed Jorian suddenly, short and sharp, as if a string had been pulled somewhere.

"Ho! ho!" thus more sonorously Boris.

Anna Pappenheim caught her skirts in her hand, and spun round on her heel on pretense of looking behind her.

"Sister, what was that?" she cried, looking beneath the settles and up the



"My lords, have you blacked your eyelashes yet?"

wide throat of the chimney. "Me-thought a dog barked."

"Or a gray goose cackled?"

"Or a donkey sang!"

"Ladies," said Jorian, who, being vastly discomposed, must perforce try to speak with an affectation of being at his ease, "you are pleased to be witty."

"Heaven mend our wit on your judgment!"

"And we are right glad to be your butts. Yet have been accounted fellows of some humor in our own country and among men—"

"Why, then, did you not stay there?" inquired Marthe pointedly.

"It was not Boris and I who could not stay without," retorted Jorian, somewhat nettled, nodding towards the door of the guard room.

"Well said!" cried Frank Anna. "He had you there, Marthe. Pricked in the white! Faith, Sir Jorian pinked us both, for indeed it was we who intruded into the gentlemen's dressing room. Our excuse is that we are three women, and would fain practise our office when and where we can. Our Princess hath been wedded, and needs us but once a week. Noble Wendish gentlemen, will not you engage us?"

(To be continued.)

Nothing Doing.
A couple of dirty-faced kids stopped in front of the stand of a vender who sells unique toys and began looking at his wares over.

"Want something?" asked the man. "How much is yer rubber ball?"

asked one boy.

"Five cents," he said. The boys were silent.

"Maybe you'd like to have this auto?" said the vender, showing another toy. "It's 15 cents."

To this the boys did not reply. "How about the walking elephant?" asked the man. "I'll let you have it for 20 cents."

The boys said nothing and the merchant showed them half a dozen other toys, quoting prices on them. Finally he grew impatient.

"How much money have you got?" he asked.

"We ain't got no money," came from one boy.

"Well, then, git out," growled the toy vender. And the boys "got"—Kansas City Times.

Disappointed in Roosevelt.
When President Roosevelt visited the Maine state fair in Bangor, three years ago, people came from all the surrounding towns to get a glimpse of and shake hands with him.

was standing in a small crowd just before the President arrived on the fair grounds. Behind me was a large woman in a very conspicuous dress, and evidently from the country. She was standing with her mouth wide open, waiting. When some one cried out, "There he comes!" she made a rush by me that nearly knocked me over, but, when she got a glimpse of him, exclaimed, "Good land! He looks just like any other man," and appeared greatly disappointed.

The Town Jay Gould Founded.
Gouldsboro, Lackawanna county, Pa., which was named for the late Jay Gould, who was the founder of the town, he having operated a tannery at that place before he became either rich or famous, is a deserted village.

According to the report of School Superintendent Taylor of Lackawanna county, its public school has dwindled to a paltry attendance of fifteen pupils and its tanneries and sawmills have entirely disappeared.

SPECTOR DRIVES MAN FROM HOME.

GHOST OF FATHER-IN-LAW CONSTANTLY HAUNTS RETIRED INDIANA MERCHANT.

INHERITED PALATIAL PLACE

Apparition of Deceased Relative Follows New Owner Over Premises Continually, Finally Forcing Him to Move.

Elkhart, Ind.—Harassed by the stalking specter of his aged father-in-law, John B. Garman, who died two years ago, John Otterson has abandoned a palatial suburban place which was bequeathed him by his deceased relative. Otterson is a wealthy retired merchant, having been in business in Elkhart for a number of years.

While Mr. Otterson is not prone to believe in ethereal materializations, he asserts that in spirit form his father-in-law haunted him. The apparition followed him over the premises, stood by him when he attempted to do light work about his country home, and frequently was his companion during the dead hours of night. That Mr. Otterson has an ordinary temperament, and is not at all given to nervousness, makes his story of the ghost all the more remarkable. He is a giant physically, and mentally, well-educated and well read.

Otterson claims that he only escaped the apparition when away from the home and without the boundaries of the luxuriant gardens where his deceased relative spent the greater part of his four score years.

The aged Mr. Garman, one of the pioneers of Elkhart county, left a large estate. To his daughter, Mrs. Otterson, and her husband he bequeathed the greater part of it.

The eccentric old gentleman, who has come back from the spirit world to haunt the living, died from a broken heart, his only son having met a tragic death. Dating from that incident to the time of his demise, which occurred six months later, Mr. Garman walked sorrowfully about the premises lamenting through the long hours of the summer days his son's untimely death and refusing to be soled.

His grief was deep seated, and he virtually walked out his life on the familiar paths of the old home-stead.

It is in the picturesque brick mansion about and around his favorite earthly retreats, that the son-in-law in recent months has seen the ghostly form of John Garman. The specter first appeared a few months after the old gentleman's death.

Frequently while he was roaming over the fields, or strolling through

the groves or orchards, the mysterious, unreal and unnerving specter has sprung up beside him, and timing his pace to that of Mr. Otterson has accompanied him about. It makes not their sign nor motion, looks neither to the right nor left, but with folded arms and bent head keeps up its noiseless tread with maddening precision.

Sometimes, asserts the haunted man, upon returning from a drive the unearthly vision appeared to him in the barnyard. As he unhitched and unharnessed his team the apparition watched his procedure with unseeing eyes. The expression of the face was always sorrowful—just as it had been



The Spectre Accompanied Him About.

in life during his days. The materialization to Mr. Otterson was full life size, the very image, he declares, of his father-in-law. No other person has seen the alleged ghost.

Mr. Otterson's experience with the specter but recently became public. He bore the ordeal silently, fearing the taunts and ridicule of his friends. Lately the annoyance became so great that he decided to remove from the place.

The Garman family was one of the most widely known in this city, being among the very early settlers of the county. The family, whose name was formerly spelled "German," came here from Pennsylvania, where John Garman's relatives settled and named the city Germantown. The Ottersons are equally well known. No one here doubts the veracity and sincerity of Mr. Otterson's statements concerning the specter which has haunted him, but all are at a loss to account for the strange incident.

BABE RIDES SAFELY ON AN AVALANCHE

COLORADO CHILD CAUGHT IN BIG SLIDE AND DUG OUT UNHURT NEXT MORNING.

Salida, Col.—Edgar Mason, four years old, is probably the only person of any age who has had the startling experience of being rushed down a



He Went Through the Avalanche Unharmcd.

mountain side in an avalanche of snow, given up for dead and dug out next morning alive and well.

The worst snowslide in the history of this region occurred at Monarch, 18 miles west of here, killing six people outright, seriously injuring one and injuring a dozen more or less severely. But the baby boy was saved.

Monarch is a small camp consisting of a few buildings and nearly all the inhabitants had gone to bed when the slide started with a noise like a cannon shot. Beyond this there was no warning and no chance to escape. The Mason cabin was directly in the path of the huge area of snow, which gathered weight and velocity as it rushed down the mountain side.

The slide seemed to be the signal for the beginning of a terrific blizzard, which much hampered the rescue party sent from this city. They dug out the bodies of five people, and then about 10:20 next morning came the boy Edgar. He was in the top



FEEDING SHEEP IN OPEN.

How Simple Cheap Shelter May Be Provided for Them.

Sheep are unlike any other live stock in that they do not require much protection from cold. There are a great many farmers who would like to take up the business of sheep feeding, but feel unable to make the necessary expenditure to furnish them with barns or sheds. In such cases, where the sheep are bought in the late fall and fed during the winter months, an arrangement similar to the illustration will be found very satisfactory, remarks Farmers' Review. This trough can be made of any rough material at a moderate cost. Posts should be set firmly in the ground about six feet apart, extending some ten feet above the surface. It is a simple matter to put the rafters on



A Good Rack for Outside Feeding.

and nail a few shingle lath across these sufficient to hold a straw or fodder roof. Racks are built underneath as shown in the illustration, and they are provided with troughs for feeding roots or screenings. An arrangement of this sort can be put up in some place convenient to the barn, and there are very few days in the winter when it will be too stormy for the sheep to feed under it on one side or the other. These feeding sheds should not be over six feet long, as it would be difficult to get the hay in them, but at this length it can easily be poked in from the ends with a long handled fork. With racks of this sort sheep will get along very well except in severe weather, and will need no other protection except at such times.

BACON HOGS.

An Estimate of Cost of Production by Prof. George E. Day.

A very important problem, which has attracted a good deal of attention throughout this discussion and which is worthy of careful research, is the average cost of producing hogs of suitable weight for bacon purposes. Some claim they can raise their hogs at less than four cents a pound live weight, and others that it costs in the neighborhood of six cents. As far as our information goes, if moderate market values are attached to the foods consumed, the cost may range all the way from a little over four cents to somewhere in the neighborhood of five cents. Methods of feeding and the individuality of the pigs influence results.

Feed More Oats.

There is nothing like oats to give snap to a horse. For this reason oats are almost the exclusive grain diet of driving horses. It is well-known that oats possess some property that excites as well as nourishes animals, says Indiana Farmer. The plow horse can be fed corn with some advantage, but the driving horses, the colts, and the brood mares should be given more whole oats and less corn. Don't be stingy when feeding oats to calves or colts. Some claim that crushed oats are better to feed than the whole. They may be for hogs or dairy cows when oats are made only a part of the ration, but for horses, colts and calves, feed them without crushing, and feed good oats. In the absence of oats barley makes a fine feed for colts or pigs.

HOGS AND THE HORSE.

The slipshod, careless man always has a sick horse or one "out of order."

Have plenty of help in handling the heavy hogs.

The small pigs should be well housed and fed until spring or warm weather.

Hogs should be hung until thoroughly cooled out, before handling or removing to the cellar.

A pen for feeding and a pen for sleeping will be found to be more easily kept clean and comfortable.

It costs much less to keep a team in fit and ready condition than it does to let it run down and then bring it up.

Rest and change of diet will do the horses much good; but they should never be allowed to run down or lose flesh.

Because the work is not so severe or so regular, the care and feeding of the horse are apt to be irregular and careless. The matter of watering is still more careless and irregular.

Give the breeding mare liberal feeding and plenty of exercise. If driven carefully she is all right; otherwise she should be turned in a yard or field every pleasant day.

One of the best foods for young pigs is middlings. They will do well on it when mixed with water. If mixed with skimmed milk it is better food, and why is superior to water.

Get the hogs to market when they are properly fitted. When they get heavy and do not eat so readily, they are fitted. When they are fat and up to weight, grain or weight is put on at an increased cost.

Allowances.

Mr. Happy—Yes, sir, I make my wife a regular allowance every week. Don't you yours?

Mr. Henpeck—No-o. She makes me an allowance, when I earn enough.—N. Y. Weekly.