

# The GIRL HORSE AND A DOG

By  
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(Continued).  
SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTER I.—Under his grandfather's will, Stanford Broughton, society idler, finds his share of the estate, valued at something like \$400,000, lies in a "safe repository." It is a long and longitude described, and that is all. It may be identified by the presence nearby of a brown-haired, blue-eyed girl, a piebald horse, and a dog with a split face, half black and half white. Stanford at first regards the bequest as a joke, but after consideration sets out to find his legacy.

CHAPTER II.—On his way to Denver, the city nearest the meridian described in his grandfather's will, Stanford hears from a fellow traveler a story having to do with a flooded mine.

CHAPTER III.—Thinking things over, he begins to imagine there may be something in his grandfather's bequest worth while, his idea finally centering on the possibility of a mine, as a "safe repository." Recalling the narrative on the train, he ascertains that his fellow traveler was a mining engineer, Charles Bullerton. Bullerton refuses him information, but from other sources Broughton learns enough to make him proceed to Placerville, in the Red Desert.

CHAPTER IV.—On the station platform at Atropia, just as the train pulls out, Stanford sees what appears to be the identical horse and dog described in his grandfather's will. Impressed, he leaves the train at the next stop, Angels. There he finds that Atropia was originally Placerville, in the Red Desert. Unable to secure a conveyance at once to take him to Placerville, Broughton seizes a construction car and escapes, leaving an impression on the town marshal, Beasley, that he is slightly demented.

CHAPTER V.—Pursued, he abandons the car, which is wrecked, and escapes on foot. In the darkness, he is overtaken by a girl on horseback, and THE DOG. After he explains his presence, she invites him to her home, at the Old Cinnabar mine, to meet her father.

CHAPTER VI.—Broughton's hosts are Hiram Twombly, caretaker of the mine, and his daughter Jeanie. Seeing the girl, Stanford is satisfied he has located his property, but does not reveal his identity.

CHAPTER VII.—Next morning, with Hiram, he visits the mine. Hiram asks him to look over the machinery, and he does so, glad of an excuse to be near Jeanie, in whom he has become interested, and he engages in the first real work he has ever done.

While in was cudgeling my brain in a vain effort to recall what, if any, memory association there should be awakened in me by the mention of an "Ike" person, this particular Isaac presented himself at the cabin door and clumped in with the stiff-legged walk of a man who has ridden horseback far and hard. I knew then why I should have been able to dig that memory association. This was Mr. Isaac Beasley, my Angelic friend of the overgrown silver star and the unshaven countenance.

"Huh!" he grunted, "them griddle-cakes shored do look mighty righteous to me! I been ridin' sense two hours afore sun-up; wild-goose chase clear over on 't'other side o' Lost mountain. Couple o' prospectors blew into Angels day afore yistidday and said they'd seen that con-dummed lunatic that got loose from us and busted up a car 'r the railroad; them yoddleheads said they'd seen him workin' in the Lost Creek placers."

"A looney?" said Daddy Hiram, as innocent as a two-weeks-old lamb.

"Yep; that feller that stole an inspection car and got it smashed up, and then took to the hills. You hain't seen anything of him, have ye?"

"Nary a lunatic," said Daddy Hiram calmly.

His breakfast eaten, Friend Isaac showed no disposition to hurry away—much to my chagrin. He took time to smoke a leisurely pipe with Daddy Hiram and to ask a lot of indifferent questions about the drowned mine.

"Hain't heard nothin' fr'm yer owners yit, have ye, Hiram?" he wanted to know, after—as it seemed to me—the subject had been pretty thoroughly talked to death.

I heard Daddy's reply, made as to one with whom the matter had been canvassed before.

"Nothin' but that clippin' from some newspaper back East, tellin' about Mr. Dudley's passin' out."

"Kind-a curious somebody don't tell ye somethin', ain't it?" the marshal put in. "Looks like the heirs 'd be either fishin' 'r cuttin' bait on this here Cinnabar layout—not as it'd do 'em any good if they did. Didn't any letter come with the newspaper piece?"

"Nary a pen-scratch."

"Whereabout was the envelope posted?"

"Washin'ton."

"Aha!" said I to myself, "I have you, Cousin Percy! For some reason best known to yourself you didn't want Daddy Hiram to get hold of Grandfather Jasper's proper address!"

His pipe smoked out, the marshal prepared to take horse. Daddy went with him to the far side of the dump and the murmur of their voices came to me in diminishing cadences. After a bit Daddy came back and called up to me in the sing-song of the miners after the final blast has been fired: "A-a-l-1-1-1-1 over now, Stannie. I reckon ye 'an come down now and get you some breakfast."

Jeanie served me in silence when I took my place at table and the good old man stood in the doorway, keeping watch, as I made no doubt, against a possible second-thought return of

Friend Isaac, the bristle-bearded. Throughout the working day which followed he never made the slightest reference to the episode of the morning and, truly, I think the whole incident would have been buried in oblivion by those two simple-minded souls if I hadn't first spoken of it myself.

This I did in the evening of the same day, when Daddy had gone to make his entirely useless night round of the mine property. As on most evenings, Jeanie sat at her corner of the hearth, knitting, and I was filling a bedtime pipe.

"Jeanie," I broke out, "I wish you'd tell me why you and your father are so good to me. How do you know that I'm not the crazy criminal that other people believe me to be? I did steal the car and get it smashed, you know."

"You are not a criminal and I am sure you didn't mean to get the car smashed. Besides, you had taken shelter under our roof."

"You are true Bedouins," I laughed. "Is that the code in the West?—your code?—to defend anybody who has eaten salt with you?"

"I should think it would be anybody's code."

"You and your father were expecting this man Beasley to come here looking for me?"

"Daddy thought he might just happen along. We are only four miles from Atropia, you know."

"And was that the reason you put the old transit at the window?—so you might watch for him?"

"Of course."

By Jove! Another woman, any other woman in the world, I thought, would have let some little shred of sentiment show; she couldn't have helped it. But this one didn't. A boy couldn't have looked me in the eyes any more frankly and squarely than she did when she said "Of course." Since I had eaten their bread, I was, for so long as I chose to stay, a member of the clan.

It was near the end of the fortnight, and Daddy Hiram and I had scoured and rubbed and scraped and reassembled the engine and pumps, and were finishing the cleaning of the boilers. These were pretty badly rusted and scaled, and to do the job properly, we had taken the manhole heads out of the holes left to give access to the interior of the shells, and had had a good-natured squabble as to which of us should crawl inside to do the scraping; Daddy insisting upon doing it, because as he pointed out, he was the smaller man, and I arguing that I should because I was the younger and stronger.

To settle it finally we flipped a coin—one of those inch-wide copper pennies that Daddy carried for a pocket-piece—and I won the toss. The job wasn't exactly a picnic, but I got along all right until we came to the last of the battery. I found that the repairers had at some past time inserted a couple of extra stay-ropes, so that there was little enough room left in the old steel shell for a professional boiler-monkey to wriggle about in, to say nothing of a husky young chap who tipped the beam at around a hundred and seventy pounds, stripped.

Just the same, I made shift to knock the worst of the scale off and rattle it down so that it could be washed out from below, and was backing out to make my escape, when I found that one of the extra stay-ropes was loose. At my asking, Daddy screwed up the nut on the outside of the boiler head to tighten the rod, and then passed the wrench in to me so that I could screw up the nut on the inside. To this good day I don't know just what'd happened, but I guess the big S-wrench must have slipped off the nut while I was pulling on it. Anyhow, something hit me a stunning crack over the eye, and I promptly faded out, blink, like a penny candle in a gust of wind.

When I came to myself again it was night, and I was lying undressed and in a real bed in a room that was totally unfamiliar. In the looking-glass which hung on the opposite wall I got a glimpse of myself with a regular Turk's turban of white stuff wound around my head and skew-angled to cover one eye. When I stirred, Jeanie popped in from somewhere to ask what she could do for me.

"What was it?" I asked; "an earthquake?"

"Daddy says you hit yourself with a wrench. Does it hurt much now?"

"Not more than having a sound tooth pulled; no. But I was inside the boiler, wasn't I? How did you manage to get me out?"

She turned her face away and even with one eye I could see that she was trying to hide a smile.

"It was funny," she confessed, "though we were both scared stiff at the time. Daddy called me and I ran over. You were all doubled up inside of the boiler, and there wasn't room for Daddy to crawl in and straighten you out. And unless you could be

straightened out, we couldn't pull you out."

"I see. What did you do?—send for a boiler-monkey?"

"What is a boiler-monkey?"

"It isn't a 'what'; it's a man; usually the littlest man in the shop."

"I was the monkey," she said.

I tried to sit up, but the blinding headache I had somehow acquired said No.

"You crawled into that rusty old coffin?"

She nodded.

"Daddy lent me his overalls and jumper. It wasn't hard; but when I got in and saw how badly you were hurt . . . then wasn't anything to laugh at, then. Daddy says you'll be apt to carry the scar as long as you live."

"Honorable scars," I muttered. "You straightened me around—I'll believe it if you say so—and then what?"

"Then I got out and we pulled you out—Daddy and I. I was glad you didn't know; that you were past feeling things, I mean. We must have hurt you frightfully. I don't see how you ever crawled in through that little hole."

"It's much easier when you're alive," I offered.

"I'm going to bring you a cup of herb tea, and then I'll go and lie down for a while."

Since, as I afterward learned, the dose she gave me was some sort of home-brewed sleeping draft, I very nearly slept the clock round. Daddy came in and helped me into my clothes—they were eating their noon meal when I woke up and called—and apart from being still a bit headache and tottery, I was all right again. But for two whole days they made me sit around and be waited on, hand and foot, and coddled and petted, those two; for their own flesh and blood they couldn't have done more.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### The Laboring Pumps.

On the third day after I had tried to brain myself in the old boiler I was pretty nearly as good as ever, and my two Good Samaritans reluctantly consented to my going back to work, Jeanie renewing the bandage on my broken head, and laying many injunctions upon Daddy Hiram to send me right back to the cabin if I didn't behave; "behaving," in her use of the word, meaning that I was to take it easy on the job.

That sounded mighty good to me, the way she said it. Most men, I fancy, are only overgrown children in the sense that they like to be fussed over by their womankind. Don't mistake me, please; I wasn't in love with her—then. Candidly, I don't think I knew what a real love was. But it was mighty pleasant to live in the same house with her, and to eat her delicious cooking; to be with her every day, and to have those undisturbed evening half-hours with her in front of the fire. If I had had to get out; or if there had been another man . . . but I won't anticipate.

In due time and after we had completely overhauled the rusted and gummed-up machinery, Daddy and I happened upon a day when we were ready to put fire under the boilers and we did it. If I should live to be a hundred years old, I shall never forget the tense, suppressed excitement that gripped me as we brought the wood for the furnaces that bright, hot, July morning. By eight o'clock we had ninety pounds of steam pressure on the boilers, but we held off until it had climbed to the regular working pressure of one hundred and twenty. Then I started the pumps; two big centrifugal sections, mounted on a platform in the shaft mouth and so arranged that they could be lowered to follow the water level down—if it should go down; pumps that each threw a stream six inches in diameter.

After the pumps were started and the indicators showed, or seemed to show, that they were working up to full capacity, I rigged up a measuring gauge; a bit of wood for a float, with a string tied to it, and the string passing over a pulley in the shafthouse roof-beaming with a weight on the end of it. If the water level should go down, the float would sink with it, pulling the weight up. A smooth board, with feet, inches and fractions penciled on it, was stood up beside the weight to answer for a measuring scale.

At the end of the hour the float hadn't moved a hair's breadth; not a hundredth part of an inch, so far as we could see.

"I don't believe the pumps are working!" I exploded. "Surely they'd make some little difference in the level unless that shaft's got all the underground water in the world to back it up. Those indicators must be out of whack in some way. Where does the discharge water empty itself?"

Daddy knew this, too.

"Over in the left-hand gulch—into the creek."

"Show me," I directed.

We found the discharge from the pumps a little way below the end of the path; a ten-inch pipe which had been laid underground from the shaft-house, presumably to keep it from freezing in winter. The end of the pipe stuck out over the stream and it was projecting pretty nearly a solid ten-inch jet of water. The pumps were working all right; there was no doubt about that. I dug up enough of my college math to figure that two six-inch streams would just about fill a ten-inch pipe, and here it was, running full and pouring like another torrent into the gulch. So back we went to the mine buildings to resume our watching of the indicator and its pencil-marked scale.

Non caught up with us after a while—with nothing doing save that

we were rapidly diminishing our wood-pile. For a solid week we chopped down trees and split them up, Daddy and I, and kept the fires roaring under the boilers and kept those monster pumps whirring and grinding away at the shaft mouth—night and day, mind you; watch on and watch off. And, right straight through it all, that little indicator weight I had rigged up stood stock still; never moved the width of one of the pencil marks I had drawn on its gauge board.

By this time my stubbornness was yielding something to the still more stubborn fact. If all this pumping hadn't even started the flood toward its diminution, truly all the waters under the earth must be backing the unfailing well of that drowned shaft.

Toward the last I think we kept on more from force of habit than anything else, but at the end of the week I gave in and consented to let the fires die down, though it was like pulling teeth to do it. Something, indeed, I brought out of the overtime work, disappointing as it had been in the major sense I was muscled up as hard as a keg of nails; as strong as a mule, and the fleece toll of wood-chopping and boiler-firing had given me an appetite for real work that fairly made me ache when I thought of stopping. We thrashed it out that evening, the three of us before the living room fire, after Daddy and I had finally stopped the pumps and let the steam run down.

"I reckon you hain't no call to take it so hard, Stannie," Daddy said, after I had growled and groused like a bear with a sore head over our failure. "After all, you must recollect that it ain't no skin off 'm you if the



I Consented to Let the Fires Die Down.

old Cinnabar stays right where she is and soaks till kingdom come."

"No skin off of me?" I yelped, with a sort of wild laugh. "Listen—both of you," and then I told them the entire heart-breaking story of Cousin Percy's letter and my grandfather's joke; of my starting out on the fantastic search for the girl, a horse and a dog—a search which would doubtless have failed before it had fairly begun if I hadn't happened to ride in a Pullman smoker with the man, Charles Bullerton.

I remembered afterward that I had got just that far—to the naming of Bullerton—when Barney, the pie-faced collier, got up from his corner of the hearth, stalked to the door and began to growl. The next minute we heard a horse's sh-r-r, and Daddy Hiram rose, pushed the dog aside and opened the door. Then Jeanie and I, still sitting before the fire, heard him say gruffly: "Well, hello, Charley Bullerton! What in Sam Hill are you doin' up in this neck o' woods?"

I turned to look at Jeanie—and missed. In the moment when I had glanced aside she had vanished.

When Bullerton came in, which was after Daddy Hiram had lighted the lantern and shown him where to put his horse, he didn't seem half as much surprised to find me sitting before the Twombly house fire as I thought he might have been.

"Well, well—look who's here!" he bantered. "How are you, Broughton? This old world isn't so infernally big as it might be, after all, is it? Who would have thought that our next meeting would be in such an out-of-the-way corner of the universe as this! I hope you've been well and chipper, all these weeks."

I said what I was obliged to, and wasn't any too confoundedly cordial about it, either, I guess.

Bullerton drew up a chair and began to talk, much as if we'd invited him to, about his hard-working year in South America; about the fabulously rich mines in that far-away Utopia of the gold-diggers; about his voyage up from the Isthmus; about the oddness of his meeting me again, here in the Eastern Timanyon; things like that.

He was just comfortably surging along in the swing of it when a door opened behind us and he jumped up with another "Well, well, look who's here!" and when I turned, he was holding Jeanie's two hands in his and braying over her like a wild ass of the plains. And, if you'll believe me, that girl had gone and changed her dress! That was what she went to do when she slipped out and left me to stare at her empty chair, after she had heard her father say, "Well, hello, Charley Bullerton!"

It was all off with me from that time on. For what was left of the evening, Bullerton played a solo. I got full-up on the performance about nine o'clock, and climbed my ladder and went to bed, mulling my head in the blankets so that I wouldn't have to lie there and listen to the bagpipe drone of Bullerton's voice in the room below.

I hoped—without the least shadow of reason for the hope, of course—that the next morning would show me a hole in the atmosphere in the space that Bullerton had occupied. But there was no such luck. He was present at the breakfast table, as large as life and twice as talkative.

I made my escape from the cabin as soon as I could and tramped over to the mine. A glance into the shaft showed the black pool in its depths as placid and untroubled as if we hadn't just lifted a million or so cubic feet of water out of it by hard labor.

In morose discouragement I recalled the few things I had learned about drowned mines while I was knocking about in the Cripple Creek district trying to trace Bullerton. Particularly I remembered my talk with Iltis the man who had finally put me upon what had proved to be the right track in the tracing job. He had talked quite freely. Sometimes the flood was quite freely, sometimes the flood was the tapping of an underground stream, as when one digs a well; in other cases—and these were most common in the Cripple Creek region—the source of the flood would be found in a buried lake or reservoir, large or not so large, as the luck might have it. If the source were a lake—so Iltis had said—there was little use in trying to pump the mine dry.

Mulling over these discouraging bits of information, I was naturally led back to the Pullman smoking-room talk with Bullerton. I remembered, with a sharp little flick of the memory whip, that he had given an expert opinion, which, as it seemed, he had backed up a year earlier with a thousand dollars of real money—the deposit in the Omaha bank made to cover my grandfather's bargain binder. What he had said was, "I'm reasonably certain that I discovered a way in which that mine can be drained at comparatively small expense."

Had he really discovered a way?—and with no better data than a study of the maps? Staring down at the black pool which Daddy and I hadn't been able to lower by so much as a fraction of an inch in a week's pumping, I doubted it.

I was stumbling out toward the engine room with my head down and my hands in my pockets when I heard footsteps coming from the direction of the cabin beyond the dump. Looking out, I saw Bullerton sauntering over toward the shaft-house. Though I knew that some sort of a wrangle with him was inevitable, I was perfectly willing to postpone it, so I edged into the blacksmith shop and sat down on the anvil, hoping he might miss me and go away. But there was nothing coming to me on that bet.

"I saw your lead when you left the house," he began, after he had found me and had dusted off an empty dynamite box for a seat. "Don't you think you've played it rather low down on me?"

"How so?"

"By taking in my story of this mine when I told it to you without giving me a hint that you were the person most deeply interested—since my old gentleman was your grandfather."

"It didn't strike me that way, and it doesn't yet," I shot back. "I notice you were mighty careful not to tell me the name of your old gentleman—or rather, I should say, you lied about it when I wired you."

"An ordinary business precaution," he chuckled. "But we needn't waste our time bickering over what might have been—and wasn't. I have a contract with your grandfather which is legally binding upon you as his heir to this particular piece of property—always provided you can prove that you are his heir. What I'm here to say is that I'm ready to carry out my part of the contract to unwater this mine. What do you say?"

"How are you going to do it?"

"That, my young friend, is particularly my own affair."

I felt pretty scrappy that morning; there is no use in denying it.

"You're not the only pebble on the beach, Bullerton," I said, looking him squarely in the eye. "What you can do with this mine, another mining engineer can do quite as well; and the other man will probably be willing to do it without asking the fenced-in earth for his reward."

"Humph!" he grunted; "so that's your play, is it?" Then, after a scowling pause: "You're licked before you begin. You're fighting without ammunition, Broughton. You haven't any money, and you'll look a long time before you'll find an engineer able to finance his own experiment on your drowned proposition."

"That may be," I retorted. "But if you told me the story straight that night in the Pullman, you can't turn a wheel until I tell you to go ahead. So your contract, if you've got one, doesn't amount to a hill of beans."

"That point may make a nice little question for the courts to decide," he snapped. "But I don't want to go to law about this thing, and neither do you. As a matter of fact, you haven't any money to throw away in a legal scrap. You make me a deed to fifty per cent of the Cinnabar property, just as it stands, and then you may go back East and enjoy yourself playing marbles, or pitch and toss, or red dog—whatever your pet diversion may happen to be. Fifty-one per cent and you give me a clear field—not stick around, I mean. That goes as it lies."

"Huh!" I scoffed. "A white back

you were talking about pulling the law on me. You can't make anything like that stand in the courts and you know it mighty well."

"Maybe not; but I can make it stand with you—which is much more to the purpose. You said a minute ago that I couldn't turn a wheel without your consent. You can't turn a wheel at all—without money."

His rubbing the poverty gibe into me made me madder than ever and I thought it was about time to tell him where he got off.

"Then, by Jove, the wheels needn't turn!" I countered. "And that lets you out. If you want to go to law about that contract—sail in. That's all I've got to say."



"If You Want to Go to Law—Sail In."

"Oh, hold on!" he protested, with mock concern. Then he showed me plainly what he'd been doing in the interval between his first and this second appearance in the Red Desert region. "I've had time to look you up, you know. You're engaged to a girl back East and you can't marry her because you haven't money enough. Half a loaf is better than no bread; and I'm offering you very nearly the half loaf. Take a day or so to think it over. I'm in no hurry." And with that he went back to the cabin across the dump and left me warming the anvil.

I guess it will say itself that the next few days stacked up about as wretched an interval as I had ever been called upon to put over.

Bullerton had a masterful sort of grip that seemed to give him a stranglehold upon everything he tackled. At table and in the evenings before the fire he monopolized the talk and the rest of us sat around like stoughton-bottles and let him do it.

It didn't help matters out much when Daddy Hiram, chasing me up on one of the days when I was dodging Bullerton, gave me the sealed envelope which my grandfather had left with him. As will be remembered, it was on the night of Bullerton's arrival at the Cinnabar that I had told Daddy and his daughter who I was, and the subject hadn't been again referred to by any of us. But now Daddy, having overtaken me on one of the trails above the mine, sat beside me on a flat rock and we had it out together.

"You knew who I was from the first, Daddy?" I asked.

"Not right plumb at first, no," he qualified. "You see, I didn't know who I was looking for. Always reckoned somebody'd be along, I guess, but I hadn't had any idea who 'r when."

"I'm afraid I've been a pretty sorry disappointment to you," I muttered. "I have no money and I don't know enough to be any good at the mining game. And that reminds me, my grandfather paid you a regular salary for the caretaking, didn't he?"

"Uh-huh."

"That has been discontinued since his death?"

"I reckon so."

"I have a little income of my own; not much, but enough for the way we're living here. It must be understood that I share it with you and Jeanie, so long as I stay with you."

"Ain't no need o' your doin' that, Stannie. I got a little stake hid out for a pinch."

In all this, you will notice, there was no word said about Bullerton. We sat in silence for a while, Daddy chewing a spear of grass. After a time he called attention to the envelope which I still held unopened in my hands.

"Don't ye want to know what your gran'paw says?" he asked mildly.

At this I slit the end of the envelope. Its contents were a deed in fee simple to the Cinnabar and a note to me, written in Grandfather Jasper's cramped, old-fashioned handwriting.

In the note he merely said that he was leaving me a property which had cost him pretty well up to half a million and that he hoped I'd brace up and go to work and make something out of it, adding that if I hadn't been such a hopeless idler all my life he might have considered the propriety of adding an experimental fund to the gift. As it was, I must work out my own salvation—if I were anxious to possess any of that commodity.

I think it was on the fourth day after his arrival that Bullerton cornered me again and again it was in the deserted blacksmith shop.

"Well, Broughton," he began abruptly, seating himself once more upon the empty dynamite box, "I've given you plenty of time to think it over. Where do you stand now?"

(Continued Next Week.)