

# The Girl a Horse and a Dog

By FRANCIE LYNDE

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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," 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, Angela, where he finds that Atropia was originally Placerville, his destination. Unable to secure a conveyance at once to take him to Placerville, Broughton seizes a motor car and escapes, leaving the 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 that Stanford is a stranger, Hiram 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 does so, glad of an excuse to be near Jeanie, in whom he has become interested, and she engages in the first real work he has ever done.

**CHAPTER VIII.**—Broughton and Hiram get the pumps started, but are unable to make an impression on the water. Bullerton, apparently an old friend of Hiram, Twombly, visits the mine. He offers to drain it in consideration of Broughton's giving him fifty per cent of the property. Stanford refuses. Then Broughton offers to buy the mine outright for \$50,000. It had cost Broughton's grandfather more than half a million. Stanford again refuses.

**CHAPTER IX.**—Jeanie cautions Broughton against selling the mine, under any circumstances, and, apparently in a spirit of mischief, alludes to his her. After conversation with Daddy Hiram, Broughton decides he will stick to the property.

**CHAPTER X.**—Next day, during Stanford's temporary absence from the mine, an enemy, without doubt Bullerton, wrecks the pumping machinery. Broughton decides to have it out with him next day.

**CHAPTER XI.**—In the morning he finds Bullerton and Jeanie have disappeared, apparently eloped. He also discovers that his deed to the mine has been stolen, and as it has not been recorded, he has no proof of ownership. Mysterious actions of the dog cause Hiram and Broughton to take the trail in search of Jeanie.

**CHAPTER XII.**—They find Jeanie's pony, abandoned, but no trace of the girl. When they get back to the cabin, Bullerton is there, apparently awaiting their return.

**CHAPTER XIII.**—Believing Jeanie to have gone with Bullerton, the sight of the man is too much for Broughton, and he uses him roughly. Bullerton denies knowing the whereabouts of Jeanie, and Broughton orders him off his property, and he departs vowing vengeance. Satisfied Bullerton fortifies himself in the mine shaft-house and prepares for a siege. Broughton comes with a crowd of desperadoes and on their refusal to vacate, begins an attack.

At the halt in the glade one of the party—Bullerton, we guessed it was—broke a branch from a pine, stripped the twigs from it, and made it a flag-staff for his white handkerchief. Under this flag of truce he and two of his

mine buildings stood, so we got a fairly good look at the peace party before it came within talking distance. Bullerton still had a slight touch of the wry-neck, and the devil-may-care launtness which had been his chief characteristic as a guest of the Twomblys had been wiped from his face and manner like a picture from a black-board.

As the three of them topped the rise in the ore road I reached behind me and got one of the Winchester.

"That's near enough!" I called out. "Do your talking from there, if you've anything to say."

The delegation halted and Bullerton took a paper from his pocket.

"I'm serving legal notice upon you, Broughton," he said, waving the paper at me, "and I have two witnesses here, as the law requires. I represent the Cinnabar Mining company of Cripple Creek. You are trespassing on our property and I am making a formal demand for possession."

"So that's the new wrinkle, is it?" I laughed. "I was hoping you might spring something a little more original. How are you going to prove ownership?"

"The burden of proof isn't on us; it's on you!" he ripped out. "You haven't a shadow of claim to this mine. I've got your so-called deed right here"—and he shook that at us. "It's a forgery; a clumsy, childish forgery that wouldn't impose upon a blind man! I can send you to the rock pile on the strength of it if we want to!"

Since he had stolen the deed out of my pocket, I thought, of course, that he was just bluffing about its being a forgery. He must have known perfectly well that it wasn't. But Daddy was whispering in my ear as he sat behind me. Something like this: "Gosh—Friday, Stannie, he's got you goin'! He's made a copy of the deed and thrown the 'riginal away—burnt it up, 'r somethin'!"

"You have it all your own way, Bullerton—or you think you have," I told him; and if I didn't get all of the self-confidence into the words that I tried to, I am persuaded that he didn't know the difference. "I might even concede that you have everything but the mine itself. If you want that, you may come and take it; but you'll permit me to say that when you break into this shaft-house there will be fewer people alive on Cinnabar mountain than there are at the present moment. I shall quite possibly be one of the dead ones, but before I go out I shall do my best to make you another."

"All right," he snapped back; "you're speaking for yourself, and that's your privilege. But how about you, Twombly? This is no quarrel of yours. Suppose you go over yonder to your cabin and stay out of the fight. Nobody wants to hurt you."

"That put it pretty squarely up to me, too, so I turned to the old man at my side.

"It's good advice, Daddy," I said; "and this isn't your quarrel. You'd better duck while you can."

Daddy Hiram made no reply at all to me; didn't pay any attention to me. Instead, he stood up on the door-sill and shook his fist at Bullerton.

"I been lookin' for you and your kind of a crowd for a year back, Charley Bullerton, and drawin' pay for doin' it!" he shrieked. "Stannie, here, says if you want this mine you can come and take it, and by gum, I say they same identical words!"

"All right," said Bullerton again. "But it's only fair to say that we outnumber you six to one, and we've got the law, and a few deputy sheriffs, on our side. You two haven't as much show as a cat in hell without claws, and when the circus is over, you'll both go to jail, if there's enough left of you to stand the trip." Then, as he was turning to go he flipped the deed into the air so that it fell at our feet.

"You may have that," he sneered. "We'd like nothing better than to have you produce it in court."

It didn't seem just fitting to let him have the last word, so I pitched a small ultimatum of my own after him—as he herded his two scoundrelly-looking "witnesses" into the downward road.

"One thing more, Bullerton," I called out. "Your flag of truce holds only until you get back to your army. If you or any of your men are in sight of Cinnabar property ten minutes after you reach your camp, we open fire."

Since the truce was thus definitely ended, we retired into our fortress and put up the bars. As we were closing the doors and making everything snug I asked Daddy what kind of human timber Bullerton was likely to have in his army, and if there were any chance that his boast about having deputy sheriffs in the crowd was to be taken at its face value.

"There's nothin' to the deputy brag. Ike Beasley is the chief deputy for this end o' the county, and he'd be here himself if that was a posse comytaters down yonder. As for what he has got, there's no tellin'. Most likely he's picked up a fistful o' toughs and out-o'-works down in Angels. There's always plenty o' drift o' that kind hangin' 'round a minin' camp."

"Fighters?" I queried.

"Oh, yes; I reckon so—if fightin' comes easier than workin'."

With the doors shut and barred I climbed up on our breastwork to bring my eyes on a level with one of the high window holes. The "en-minute ultimatum interval had come to an end, but the raiders were making no move to vacate the premises. On the contrary, their cooking fire was now burning briskly and they were apparently making leisurely preparations to eat. It fairly made me schoolboy furious to see those fellows calmly getting their noon meal ready and ignoring my warning.

"Hand me up one of those dynamite cartridges!" I barked at Daddy Hiram; and when he complied, I lighted a match and stuck it to the split end of the fuse. There was a fizz, a cloud of acrid smoke to make me turn my face away and cough, and then a frenzied yell from the old man.

"Throw it—good-gosh-to-Friday—throw it!"

I contrived to get it out through the window opening in some way, and lost my balance on the earth bags doing it,

time from the opposite direction, and it, also, tore through the roof.

"Got us surrounded," Daddy grimaced, when a third shot came from still another point of the compass; and within the next fifteen minutes Bullerton's demonstration was made complete. The shots, fired one at a time, and at intervals of a minute or so, came from all three of the exposed sides of the building, and the time elapsing between the ripping crashes on the roof and the crack of the guns told us that the marksmen were all well beyond the range of our Winchester, even if we could have seen them—which we couldn't.

Bullerton had evidently given his men orders to aim at the roof, for it was only a stray bullet now and then that came through the walls. After a time the purpose of the bombardment became obvious. Bullerton seemed to have absorbed the idea that he could break our nerve—wear us out. After the first fusillade the shots came at intervals of maybe five minutes; just often enough to keep us on the strain; and I don't mind admitting that the object was handsomely gained. I can't speak for Daddy Hiram or the dog, but at the end of the first hour I was little better than a bunch of raw nerves.

As all days must, this wearisome first day came to an end at last, and with the coming of dusk the bombardment stopped—with our roof looking like a sieve.

But after darkness had settled down we were made to feel in another way how acutely helpless we were. We could see nothing, hear nothing. The silence and solitude were unbroken, and the strain was greater than that of a pitched battle. If we were to get any sleep at all, a night watch could be maintained by only one of us at a time; and with our utmost vigilance a surprise attack would be the easiest thing in the world for Bullerton to pull off.

There are no night noises in the high altitudes, unless the wind happens to be blowing; no frogs or tree-toads, no insects; and the silence was fairly deafening—and maddening.

Not wishing to strike a match to determine the exact end of my watch period, I stuck it out, meaning to give Daddy good measure. So I think it must have been somewhere around ten o'clock when the collier woke with a start, jumped up, took the kinks out of his back with a little whining yawn, and trotted to the door—the one opening toward the cabin across the dump head. Screwing an eye to one of Daddy's auger-bored loopholes, I tried to fathom the outer darkness, which was only a degree or so less Egyptian than that of the shaft-house interior.

Though I could see nothing suspicious it was very evident that the dog could hear something. He had his nose to the crack under the door and was growling. I quieted him and listened. Something was going on, either inside of the cabin or back of it; in the dead silence I could distinguish a low murmur of voices and, a moment later, a sound like that which would be made by the cautious opening of one of the sliding windows. While I still had my eye to the peep-hole a jet of flame spurted from the dark bulk of the cabin and simultaneously a bullet tore through the shaft-house roof.

The report and the bullet clatter aroused Daddy Hiram, and when I turned he was at my elbow.

"Done crope up on us, have they, son?" he said in his usual unrefined manner. "Then: 'Maybe this is just a sort o' false notion over here. S'pose you try and get a squint at things over on the blacksmith-shop side, Stannie."

I stumbled across to the other door, taking the collier with me. I could see nothing in that direction; less than nothing, since the lean-to shop building cut off what little light the stars gave. But the black darkness didn't hamper Barney's ears or his nose, and his eagerness to get back to the real battle front was a good proof that there was as yet nothing stirring on our side of things.

Groping my way back to Daddy I found that he had one of the Winchester's and seemed to be trying to fit a ramrod to the barrel. When I finally made out what he was doing I found that he had thrust a piece of heavy wire into the gun-barrel and was impaling one of the dynamite cartridges on its projecting end.

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Heavens! maybe I didn't enjoy a delightful little spasm as I got a flash-light mental picture of that old man fumbling around with a lighted cartridge at the muzzle of his gun, trying to poke cartridge and gun-barrel through a hole in the door that couldn't possibly have been over two and a half inches in diameter—and in the dark, at that! What if he shouldn't be able to find the hole in time? Or if he should succeed in finding it and the rifle bullet should jam on the wire? Or any one of a dozen "ifs" that might fall to rid us of the deadly thing before it should go off and blow us to kingdom come?

But there was no time to haggle about it, and the whang of another high-powered bullet on the iron roof over our heads speeded things up.

"Do your do," Daddy muttered; and I struck a match, sheltered the tiny flame in my hollowed hands until it got going good, and then, with a silent prayer that Daddy might not miss the hole, stuck the blaze to the frayed end of the powder string.

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In the fulness of time the period of suspense came to an end, and we were given audible proof that Bullerton had finally made his "dispositions," as an army man would say. The announcement came in the form of a rifle bullet ripping through the roof of the shaft-house as if the stout iron roofing had been so much paper.

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I stumbled across to the other door, taking the collier with me. I could see nothing in that direction; less than nothing, since the lean-to shop building cut off what little light the stars gave. But the black darkness didn't hamper Barney's ears or his nose, and his eagerness to get back to the real battle front was a good proof that there was as yet nothing stirring on our side of things.

Groping my way back to Daddy I found that he had one of the Winchester's and seemed to be trying to fit a ramrod to the barrel. When I finally made out what he was doing I found that he had thrust a piece of heavy wire into the gun-barrel and was impaling one of the dynamite cartridges on its projecting end.

"Lit' skyrocket," he chuckled; then, with quaint humor: "You stand by with a match, Stannie, and let's see what-all's goin' to happen. When I say the word, you stick your match to the fuse."

Heavens! maybe I didn't enjoy a delightful little spasm as I got a flash-light mental picture of that old man fumbling around with a lighted cartridge at the muzzle of his gun, trying to poke cartridge and gun-barrel through a hole in the door that couldn't possibly have been over two and a half inches in diameter—and in the dark, at that! What if he shouldn't be able to find the hole in time? Or if he should succeed in finding it and the rifle bullet should jam on the wire? Or any one of a dozen "ifs" that might fall to rid us of the deadly thing before it should go off and blow us to kingdom come?

But there was no time to haggle about it, and the whang of another high-powered bullet on the iron roof over our heads speeded things up.

"Do your do," Daddy muttered; and I struck a match, sheltered the tiny flame in my hollowed hands until it got going good, and then, with a silent prayer that Daddy might not miss the hole, stuck the blaze to the frayed end of the powder string.

(Continued next week).

As to provisioning we were not so badly off. Daddy Hiram, well used in his long experience as a prospector to figuring upon the longevity of "grub-stakes," estimated that, what with the canned stuff, part of a sack of flour, and another of cornmeal, we could live for a week, though the cooking was going to be rather inconvenient. For a fire we should have to resort to the forge in the blacksmith shop, and the shop was nothing but an open-cracked shed, as I have described it, entirely indefensible if the raiders should conclude to rush it.

In the fulness of time the period of suspense came to an end, and we were given audible proof that Bullerton had finally made his "dispositions," as an army man would say. The announcement came in the form of a rifle bullet ripping through the roof of the shaft-house as if the stout iron roofing had been so much paper.

"The fun's a-beginnin'," said Daddy; and the words were hardly out of his mouth before another bullet came this

time from the opposite direction, and it, also, tore through the roof.

"Got us surrounded," Daddy grimaced, when a third shot came from still another point of the compass; and within the next fifteen minutes Bullerton's demonstration was made complete. The shots, fired one at a time, and at intervals of a minute or so, came from all three