



Reading for Women and all the Family



Nan of Music Mountain

By FRANK H. SPEARMAN
Author of "WHISPERING SMITH"

(Continued)
SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTER I—On Frontier day at Sleepy Cat, Henry de Spain, gunman and trainmaster at Medicine Bend, is beaten at target shooting by Nan Morgan of Music Mountain, Jennies, division superintendent, asks De Spain to take charge of the Thier River stage line, but he refuses.

CHAPTER II—De Spain sees Nan dancing with Gale Morgan, is later derisively pointed out to Nan on the street by Gale, and is moved to change his mind and accept the stage line job.

CHAPTER III—De Spain and Lefever ride to Calabasas inn and there meet Gale Morgan with Deaf Sandusky and Sassoon, gunmen and retainers of the Morgan clan. Morgan demands the discharge of a stage driver and De Spain refuses. De Spain meets Nan but fails to overcome her aversion to him.

"After him!" cried Lefever hotly. De Spain looked inquiringly at the guard. Scott shook his head. "That would be all right, but there's two other Calabasas men in the gap this afternoon it wouldn't be nice to mix with—Deaf Sandusky and Harvey Logan."

"We won't mix with them," suggested De Spain.

"If we tackle Sassoon, they'll mix with us," explained Scott. He reflected a moment. "They always stay at Gale Morgan's or Duke's. We might sneak Sassoon out without their getting on. Sassoon knows he is safe in the gap; but he'll hide even after he gets there. I've got the Thier River run this afternoon—"

"Don't take your run this afternoon," directed De Spain. "Telephone Sleepy Cat for a substitute. Suppose we go back, get something to eat, and you two ride singly over toward the gap this afternoon; lie outside under cover to see whether Sassoon or his friends leave before night—there's only one way out of the place, they tell me. Then I will join you, and we'll ride in before daylight, and perhaps catch him while everybody is asleep."

"If you do," predicted Scott, in his deliberate way of expressing a conclusion, "I think you'll get him."

It was so arranged.

De Spain joined his associates at dark outside the gap. Neither Sassoon nor his friends had been seen. The night was still, the sky cloudless, and as the three men with a led horse rode

neut capture. Bob Scott, who knew the recess well, repeated his explicit directions as to how De Spain was to reach Sassoon's shack. He repeated his description of its interior, told him where the bed stood, and even where Sassoon ordinarily kept his knife and his revolver.

De Spain gave his horse his head—it was still too dark to distinguish the path—and advanced at a snail's pace until he passed the base of El Capitan, when of a sudden, as he rode out from among high projecting rocks full into the opening, faint rays of light from the eastern dawn revealed the narrow, strangely inclosed and perfectly hidden valley before him.

De Spain caught his breath. No description he had ever heard of the nook that screened the Morgans from the outside world had prepared him for what he saw. From side to side between the frowning cliffs which rose, at points, half a mile into the sky, it was several miles, and the gap was more than as much in depth, as it ran back to a mere wedge between unamed Superstition peaks.

Every moment that he pushed ahead warned him that daylight would come suddenly and his time to act would be short. The trail he followed broadened into a road, and a turn brought him up startled and almost face to face with a long, rambling ranch-house. The gable end of the two-story portion of the building was so close to him that he instantly reined up to seek hiding from its upper and lower windows.

From Scott's accurate description he knew the place. This was Duke Morgan's ranch-house, set as a fortress almost at the mouth of the gap. To pass it unobserved was to compass the most ticklish part of his mission, and without changing his slow pace he rode on. No bullet challenged him and no sound came from the silent house. He entered away from the peril, thinking with a kind of awe of Nan, asleep, so close, under that roof—confident, too, he had not been seen—though, in matter of fact, he had been.

Other cabins back toward the north wall could be seen dimly to his right, but all were well removed from his way. In due time, as Scott had advised, he saw confronting him, not far ahead, a small, rufous-looking cabin shack. Dismounting before this, he threw his lines, shook himself a little, and walked up to the cabin door. It was open.

De Spain called gruffly to the cabin inmate. There was no answer. He hitched his trouser band near to the butt of his revolver with his right hand, and laid his left on the jamb of the door, his eyes meantime boring the darkness to the left, where Sassoon's bed should be. The utmost scrutiny failed to disclose any sign of it or any sound of breathing from that corner. He took a few steps toward where the man should be asleep, and perceived beyond a doubt that there was no bed in the corner at all. He turned toward the other corner, his hand covering the butt of his gun. "Hello, Shike!" he called out in a slightly strained tone of camaraderie, addressing Sassoon by a common nickname. Then he listened. A trumpeting snore answered. No sound was ever sweeter to De Spain's ear. The rude noise cleared the air and steadied the intruder as if Music Mountain itself had been lifted off his nerves.

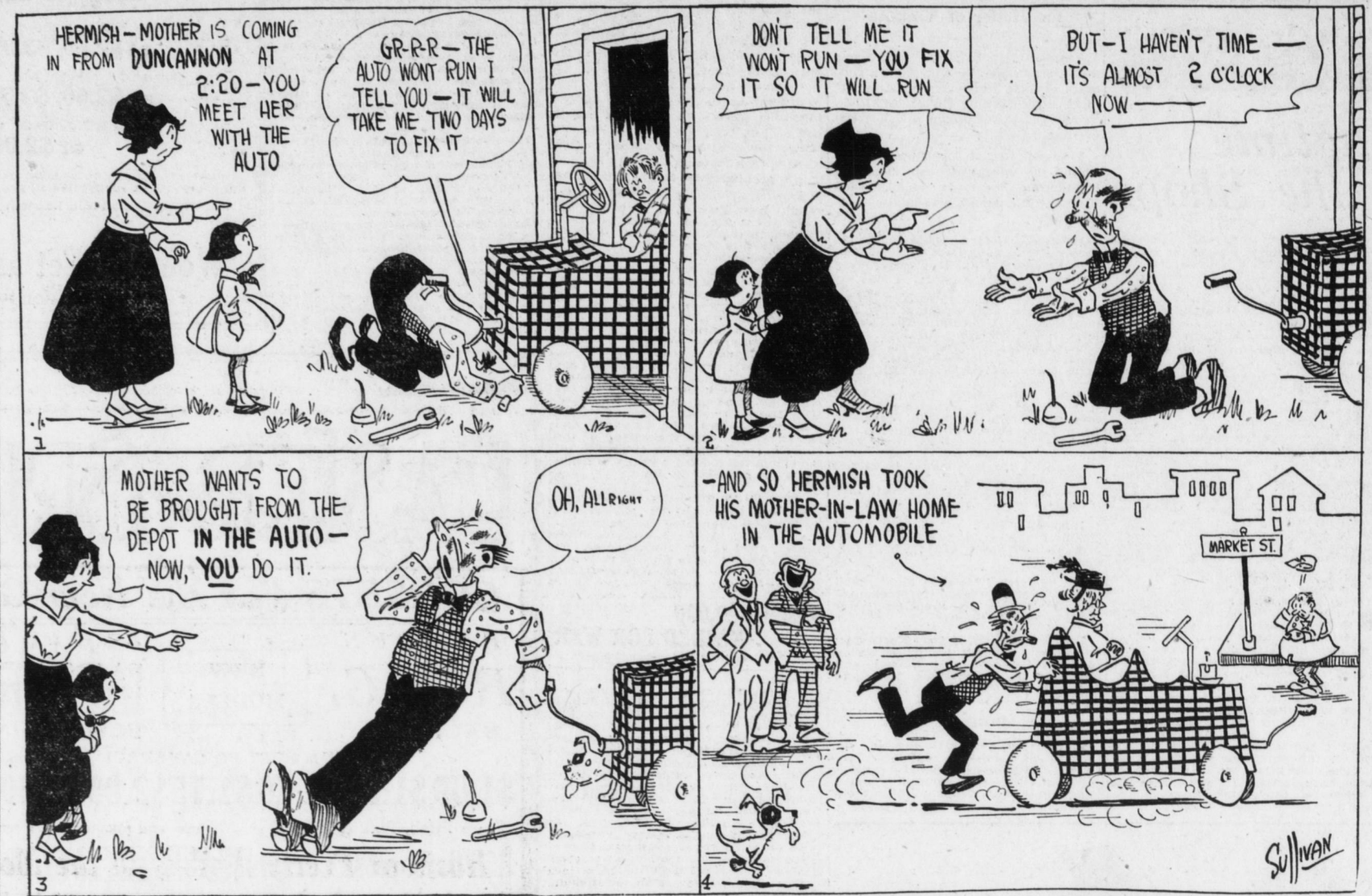
De Spain got up and shook off the chilliness and drowsiness of the night. It had been agreed that he, being less known in the gap than either of his companions, could best attempt the dis-

at midnight into the mountains, the great red heart of the Scorpion shone afire in the southern sky. Spreading out when they rode between the mountain walls, they made their way without interruption silently toward their rendezvous, an aspen grove near which Purgatoire creek makes its way out of the gap.

Scott was the first to reach the trees. The little grove spreads across a slope half a mile wide between the base of one towering cliff, still bearing its Spanish name, El Capitan, and the gorge of the Purgatoire. To the east of this point the trails to Calabasas and to Sleepy Cat divide, and here Scott and Lefever received De Spain, who had ridden slowly and followed Scott's injunctions to keep the red star to the right of El Capitan all the way across the sinks.

Securing their horses, the three stretched out on the open ground to wait for daylight. De Spain meditated first on how he should capture Sassoon at daybreak, and then on Nan Morgan and her mountain home into which he was about to break to drag out a criminal. Sassoon and his malice soon drifted out of his mind, but Nan remained. Her form outlined in the mists that rose from the hidden creek seemed to hover somewhere near until Scott's hand laid on the dreamer's shoulder drove it suddenly away. Day was at hand.

The Scribb Family---They Live Right Here in Harrisburg---By Sullivan



DON'T FLIRT; IT IS SILLY HABIT

Beatrice Fairfax Points Out Dangers; Don't Let Strange Men Stop You

By Beatrice Fairfax
Don't flirt! Don't risk chance acquaintances! Don't encourage what you take for admiration on the part of people you happen to pass on the street! Don't ever permit strange men to talk to you, or even to imagine that they might if they chose.

The girl who flirts lays herself open to a number of charges. That she is undignified and lacking in modesty is true enough. But she may sacrifice dignity and modesty because she is desperately lonely and has no better way of making acquaintances. But there could be no worse way of making acquaintances—and it means that hardly ever will she make friends.

The girl who flirts gives the man with whom she flirts what he considers a right to go on being free and easy with her, since that is how he began to know her. She classes herself in with women of no dignified or even moral standards. She fairly brings upon herself unpleasant familiarities which the man she has so lightly met either imagines she will welcome or uses to test her.

She cuts herself off from knowing fine men, since they would be almost ashamed to have as a friend a girl whom other men can sneeringly claim they met through flirtation.

If because you like a man's looks you let him talk to you, and he turns out to be an unspeakable person whom you should never have known, you have placed yourself in the way of two dangers. The "unspeakable person" can boast that he knows you and knows you because you were weak enough to permit him to sneak into your life by way of a cheap flirtation.

In flirting a girl sacrifices reputation and the right to demand dignified treatment, for the one chance in a million that the man who meets her lightly and idly and to gratify the fancy of a moment is going to be worth knowing, or to believe that she is worth knowing.

plung her hand into mine, pressed close to me.
Tom glanced down at her with a bitter little smile.
"She doesn't seem overjoyed," he murmured. "I wish I had known her."
But I pretended to be thinking of other matters and made no reply.
(To Be Continued.)

Miss Fairfax Answers Queries

Dear Miss Fairfax:
I have been going about with a young man for quite a while now, and it is a settled matter that we are to be married. We are not engaged as yet because he thinks it is not a good idea to get engaged when he doesn't earn enough to get married on, but expects to get a good position soon. Now this is all right, as I know he is earnest, but the other night he told me that a woman was greatly interested in him and was going to give him a very good position, such as he could not obtain without her influence. I have questioned him about this woman and he said there is absolutely nothing between them, only her interest in him. Although I trust him, it seems almost impossible these days to believe that a woman would do such a thing for interest only. What do you suppose the truth can be?
WORRIED.
Do you mean that it seems impossible nowadays to believe in disinter-

WHY NOT BELIEVE HIM?

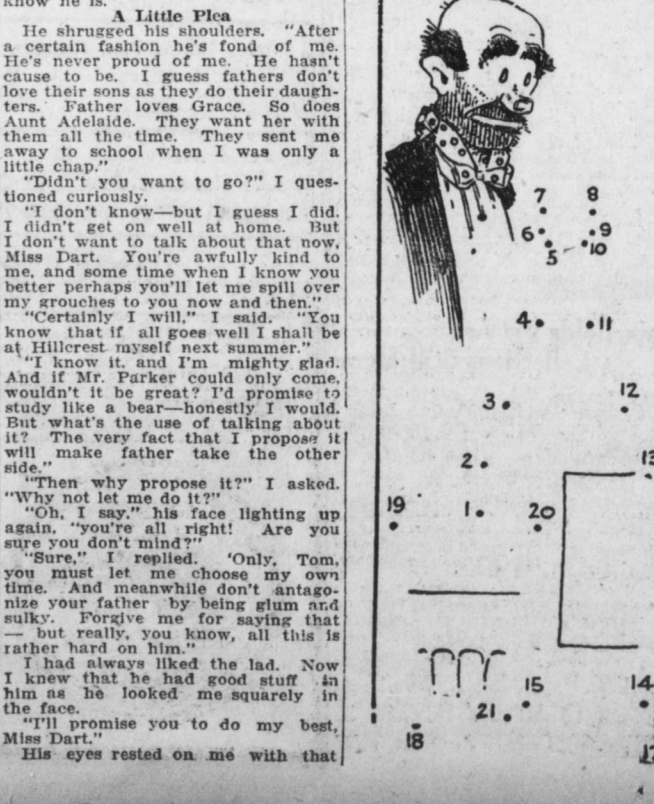
ested kindness? As a matter of fact, this woman may be actuated by motives of impersonal generosity or by a feeling that your fiance is the man for a certain place. If you trust him, why not rely on his honor to meet the situation, whatever it is, instead of making yourself miserable by suspicion and putting the suggestion of dangerous possibilities into his mind?
J. V. L.
A doctor's wife is called on to sacrifice herself again and again for her husband's profession. A physician must minister to others and people do not wait his convenience to die or be born! Unless you are ready gracefully to accept situations where you must put yourself second to his profession, do not marry a man of medicine, for you will not aid him in his career.

"The Insider"

By Virginia Terhune Van de Water

Chapter XXIII
Copyright, 1917, Star Company.
"I wonder," Tom Morton suggested timidly, "if you could coach me."
I laughed aloud. "If I ejaculated, 'Never my dear boy, didn't I confess to you that I myself failed along the same lines in which you failed. As it was, I only passed mathematics by the skin of my teeth. It means a summer school for me.'
"I don't see why," I argued. "Your father could engage some one to come to Hillcrest to coach you. Of course, it would have to be some one whom he liked—some agreeable person. But there are such."
Tom started to his feet, struck by a swift inspiration. "If I could only have a fellow who would want a mother to be," he said unsteadily. "I remember some things about her that people would think I might forget. But I don't and won't, no matter what happens."
Then, as if ashamed of his momentary weakness, he pretended to be looking around for Grace.
I suspected that he turned his eyes away that I might not see the tears that had started there. What Grace had spoken of as the "scolding" from his father, his frank talk with me, his chagrin at his failure, had shaken his usual self-control.
"Where under the sun is that kid?" he demanded in mock irritation. "She's always going off somewhere, raising his voice."
"Come along home with Miss Dart. It's luncheon time, and Aunt Adelaide will be peeved if we're late. There's no use in going more than halfway to meet trouble."
"Don't be so cross," Grace commanded as she joined us.
"I wasn't cross," he muttered. "But it's getting late and luncheon will be ready."
He fell into step beside me and Grace looked at him in surprise.
"Are you going to walk along home with us?" she demanded. Her tone showed that she was not pleased at the idea.
"Yes," Tom nodded.
She made no comment, but, slipping her hand into mine, pressed close to me.

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