

**THE DESERT MOON MYSTERY**  
BY KAY CLEAVER STRAHAN

"Danny," I said, straight out, never caring much about mincing words, "I know that something is troubling you. Why don't you tell John, or Sam, or even me about it? Just tell us the truth. We'd all go far to help you, if we could."

Her eyes filled with tears. "Bless your heart, Mary," she said. "Bless all of your hearts. You are all so good, here—"

I was enough annoyed with John for coming up right then, to have slapped him. I answered his question for Danny.

"There is plenty you could do for her," I said. "You could shut off that screeching radio, for one thing. And you could quiet down, and get the others quieted down. Nobody ever told me that noise like this was a remedy for a splitting headache; did they you?"

"The dickens! By Gollies! It is a wonder you wouldn't have told me before, Mary." Man fashion, putting the blame on me.

Danny wouldn't hear to John's stopping the racket. Everyone was having such a good time. Bed was the place for her. She couldn't hear any noise in her room, with the door shut. And off she went.

I know now that she would not have told me anything that could have helped matters. But I did not know it then, and I was sorely disappointed. For those sudden tears in her eyes, and her voice when she had said, "bless your heart," had convinced me that there was sincerity behind them, and honesty, and good.

In the black days that followed, when all of us were living in the dark shadows of doubts, and confusions, and fears and suspicions, I was thankful, time and again, for those certainties, for that one fleeting but sure insight into Danny's soul.

**CHAPTER XIII**  
**The Quarrel**

The morning of the third was biting hot, with that stinging, piercing heat that we have, when we have heat at all, in this high altitude. The sixty mile trip across the deserts to Telko, on a day like this, would be at the right heat for a roast of beef.

Nevertheless, before seven o'clock that morning, every man-jack of a puncher on the place, with all of his trimmings and trappings, including wives, squaws, papooses, children and firearms, had set off in flivvers or on horseback, bound for the celebration, leaving the place hole-empty, as Sam said, when he came into my kitchen with a gallon of cream from the dairy.

He pulled the stool out from under the table, perched on it, and remarked, as cheerfully as if he were reading it off a tombstone, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

I didn't want him bothering me in the kitchen, when I had everything to do, with Belle, Sadie and Goldie gone gadding; but being a woman, normal I hope, I asked him what he meant by that.

"I'm not going to be surprised," he answered, "if we have another visitor, one of these days."

"Nor me either," I said, though much astonished, because it was as if he had read my mind. At that minute I had been worrying about Sadie. She was expecting her baby, before long, and Land only knew what such a trip as she was taking now, and the celebration to boot, might precipitate. "That fool girl," I went on. "It wouldn't surprise me a bit if this was the death of her—not a bit."

**Hotels and Prohibition.**

From Hotel Reporter. The air is thick with straw votes. Prohibition is being probed and poked at, talked about and written about, fought and defended as never before. The Literary Digest has sent out 20,000,000 questionnaires. Hotel World has queried all the hotels of the country of 50 rooms and more in order of every description in the order of the day. What, if anything is it all about?

It seems to us that certain well founded deductions may be made of interest to the public generally and to hotel men especially:

(1) Everyone is talking about

"Pshaw!" Sam said. "What have you found out, Mary?"

"She told me herself, the last of July."

"Yes? I thought all along that she knew."

Since he seemed as sober as an owl, and as serious, I decided that there was no answer to make, and I made none.

"She's off a few weeks, though. I sent a telegram, and got an answer yesterday. It is the fourth of July."

"Sam," I found my breath to retort, "one of us is plumb crazy. I think it is you. Do you think it is me?"

"Not to make any bones about it," Sam said, "I have thought, here lately, that every dang soul on the place was only saved from being in the asylum because of the ignorance of the authorities. But, in this case, I think I am sane and certain. I wired the warden of the penitentiary. He said that Daniel Canneziano was to be released on the morning of the fourth of July. Gaby told you the last of July? Probably some time off, for good behavior."

"I wasn't talking about Canneziano," I snapped. "And how did I know you were? I was talking about Sadie's baby."

I dropped into a chair, feeling sort of weakened from the news about Canneziano, and waited with what patience I could for Sam to stop laughing.

"You mark my words," I said, when the laugh had gone down to a silly giggle, over which I could make myself heard, "all these queer actions around here have something to do with that man's release."

"I'll bet you," Sam said. "But blame my soul if I know what to do, about anything."

"I know what I'd do about Canneziano, if he shows up here," I told him.

"Yes, I know. But he is Danny's father, and Danny is going to marry John. After all, money is not much good unless you take it to market. If I could come to a decent agreement with the fellow—And if he'd take that Gaby with him, I'm dead certain that her hanging around here isn't going to contribute any to John's and Danny's married life—"

"What do you mean by that, Sam?" Gaby asked the question, walking right into the kitchen. I was all taken aback; but Sam didn't seem to be.

"Eavesdroppers, my girl," he said, "hear no good of themselves. I mean that I don't think any girl who wanted to act right would treat her sister's betrothed as you treat John."

"You," she said, very slowly, to make insult baste each word, "are a damned old fool, Sam Stanley."

I shook in my shoes. I had not dreamed that there was a living human being who would dare say that, in that tone of voice, to Sam.

He stood up. He put his hands on her shoulders, gently though, and turned her around.

"You are a bad, wayward girl," he said, "march out of here, now and get your manners mended before I see you again."

He sobered even her, for a minute. She walked to the door, without another word. There, she whirled around like a crazy thing, and I declare to Goodness, I don't know what she said. It was the sort of talking I had never heard in my life; my ears were not enough accustomed to the words to take in their meanings. But one thing that she kept screaming so loudly

prohibition. No one knows much about it. The wets talk watter and the dries talk dryer, but neither side has so far proved its case conclusively or with incontrovertible evidence.

(2) Up to now the members of congress have voted dry with increasing definiteness because their constituents have seemed to demand it. But in the Digest poll, in which over 3,000,000 votes have been cast to date, 42 per cent are for repeal, 39 per cent for modification, and only 28 per cent are for enforcement.

(3) The dries have consistently maintained that modification would

that she could be heard all over the place, was that Sam had threatened her once too often. Sam stood there, paralyzed, I think, as was I, for perhaps a couple of minutes, before he turned and walked off, into the backyard.

Hubert Hand came rushing in. Gaby threw her arms around his neck, and kept on with the screaming and sobbing. Chad came in through the pantry. Mrs. Ricker opened the door that was at the foot of the back stairway.

She stood there in the doorway, watching Hubert Hand, with both his arms around Gaby, petting and soothing her. She dampened her tight lips with her tongue; but, without saying a word, she went back up the stairs, closing the door behind her. Hubert Hand led Gaby into the dining-room, and through it into the living-room.

"What in God's name happened?" Chad said to me.

I went and washed my face and took a drink of water. "Chad," I said, "Gabrielle Canneziano has lost her mind. She is insane."

His face went white as lard. "I don't believe it."

"Either that," I said, "or else she is the wickedest, the—"

"Stop it," he shouted at me. "You, nor anyone, can talk to me like that about the girl I love."

"Love! Love your foot!" I snapped at him. The idea of mooning about love to me, at a time like that.

"None of you understand her," he said, "nor tries to. She is in some sort of trouble—terrible trouble. Anyone can see that. I'd give my soul to help her—To serve her—"

"If you are so crazy about serving her," I said, "you might go into the dining-room and set the table, and help me serve her, and the rest of you, some breakfast."

He went into the yard. Like a lot of men, I thought, who want to give their souls and so on to women, he didn't care to be bothered with smaller details, such as feeding them.

I wronged him. Whether or not a man has the giving of his soul, in his own hands, I do not know. A man can give his life. That is what Chad gave.

**CHAPTER XIV**  
**Two Departures**

After dinner, which we didn't have until nearly one o'clock on the fourth of July, owing to Chad's not getting the ice-cream frozen on time, John surprised us all by saying that he was going to take the sedan and drive down to Rattail for the mail.

I suspicioned, right then, that he was up to something. He could not fool me into thinking that he would take a fifty mile trip—twenty-five miles each way—through the desert heat for no other reason than to get the mail. He couldn't do any trading, since all of Rattail would be off to the Telko celebration. When Danny seemed hurt and troubled about him going, and when he went riding right off, anyway, I decided that Sam must have sent him, expecting some word concerning Canneziano. I was wrong.

We had had a stiff breeze, with a promising sprinkle of rain in the morning; but it had died down about noon and, at two o'clock it was too tarnation hot to do anything but try to keep cool. I stacked the dinner dishes, to wash in the evening, and joined the others sitting around in the living-room with the electric fans going full blast.

Sam, chess board in hand, stopped long enough by my chair to say in an undertone, "What did I tell you, Mary? It is always darkest, just before the dawn."

That piece of optimism from him was due, in part, to the extra good holiday dinner he had just eaten; and in part to a sense of quiet, edging close to peace, that had pervaded the place since morning. I had noticed it, too, with thankfulness, and had accounted for it with the sup-

satisfy no one—that light wines and beers would be only the first step toward a return to the unrestricted sale of liquor and to the corner saloon. But the Hotel World poll indicates that 77 per cent of the hotel men would confine their personal drinking to legalized wine and beer, that with modification, 78 per cent would be willing to convict the seller of illegal hard liquors and that 79 per cent would not reopen public bars in their hotels, either with modification or repeal.

Prohibition in all its many phases has become the great engema of the day. A dry minister runs on a

position that Gaby had spent all of her energy in meanness the day before, and was obliged to rest up for a spell.

"That's a nice little piece," I answered Sam. "There is another one, though, isn't there, about a lull before the storm?"

That was not pure contrariness on my part. I was expecting, every minute, to see Gaby break out again. She didn't. She yawned around and fussed about, and then went and sat beside Danny who was looking at the pictures in The Ladies Home Journal, and put her arm around her, and petted her up a little—a most unusual performance for her.

When Chad, who had been monkeying with the radio got a rip-roaring patriotic program from Salt Lake, the two girls went upstairs together.

A few minutes later I had an errand upstairs—a real one. I wouldn't have taken myself up in that heat to satisfy any curiosity—so, out of habit. I stopped at Gaby's door to listen. I heard the girls giggling in there; and knowing no great harm is afoot when girls giggle, I went on, got my scrap of pongee silk to mend Sam's shirt, and came downstairs again.

Sam and Hubert Hand were deep in their chess game. Mrs. Ricker was tattling. Chad and Martha were playing dots and crosses. In spite of the noise from the radio, there was a comfortable feeling about the room that made me lonesome for the days we had all had together before the Canneziano girls had come.

The radio program, which was to last from two until four o'clock, had just that minute stopped. Martha, who when she didn't forget it, usually fed her rabbits about that time of day, had gone out to do it. Gaby came downstairs, humming a tune.

She had on the tomato soup colored wrap that she had worn on the train, and the hat to match the wrap. She was carrying a headed bag. She never dressed up like that, to go walking around the place; a wrap, even such a light one, in the heat of that day, was downright ridiculous.

Chad said, "All dressed up and no place to go?"

She tossed her head at him, and hurried straight down the room and out through the glass doors. Chad followed her. They stopped together on the porch. She stood with her back to me. Chad faced me. In a minute, I saw his mouth bend up into a grin of bliss. Nothing would have surprised me more. For this reason.

As that girl walked through the room, I had seen that she walked in mortal fear. In spite of her humming, in spite of her attempted swagger, fear was in her widened eyes, in her drawn chin, in the contraction of her shoulders. Wherever it was that she was going, she was afraid to go. But where could she go? John had the sedan. Except for the trucks, which she couldn't drive, and her pony—she surely would not be dressed like that to ride horseback—there was no way for her to get off the place. It must be then, that someone was coming to the place, and that she was going out alone to meet them. Who? Canneziano? Not unless Sam had been mistaken about the time when he was to be released from prison. Usually, when people think at all, they think quickly. All this had gone through my mind while she had walked the forty feet to the door. Before Chad smiled, I had spoken to Mrs. Ricker.

"That girl," I said, "is afraid of something."

Mrs. Ricker darted her tattling shuttle back and forth. She moistened her lips, with her tongue; but changed her mind and said nothing.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

**Invitation.**

He: You are the breath of my life.  
She: Let's see you hold your breath.

wet ticket. Bootleggers vote dry. Rich men have liquor lockers in their clubs. Poor men have lost their only club—the corner saloon. Great industrialists want prohibition for their men and liquor for themselves.

What does it all mean and where are we headed? Certainly it would seem that after 10 years of experimentation the country is ready for a showdown.

Q. Of the working population in the United States, what percentage is composed of stenographers? E. S. A. Stenographers form one and four-tenths per cent of the workers.

**OF INTEREST TO FARMERS**

**MUST HAVE VIGOR**

Forty per cent of eggs and other poultry products is consumed at a sufficient distance from the poultry yard to require marketing service. Since the bulk of poultry products comes from the farms, this means that the system of feeding farm laying flocks and of growing young stock destined for fattening should be based on the carrying quality of eggs, and supplying what the market wants for the fattening batteries. The farmer has a grand chance to turn both cheeks to the packer who smiles him on one cheek for his carelessness in grading and packing eggs, and on the other for his shortcomings in the quality of fattening stock he ships. One trade journal voices the latter grouch by accusing: "One difficulty in the commercial fattening of poultry is that many birds do not make satisfactory gains when placed on intensive batteries, due to lack of vigor and quality of much of the farm raised stock as it arrives at the packing plant." Which suggests that if farm raised stock is to have the reputation its importance in the part of the nation's agriculture, intensive farmers will find it profitable to consider the marketing qualities of poultry products as well as the poultry markets. Breeding, incubation, brooding, feed and care of farm poultry must include constant thought for vigor. One night of overheating or chilling of eggs in the incubator; one night of crowding and trampling in a cold brooder; one morning of overheating in a closed brooder through which the sun shines on chicks trying to escape from a too hot cover; one experience of chilling and subsequent plucking and tramping under foot of chicks; a struggling brood line because of too few feed hoppers, are all thieves of potential vigor. Productive quality of pullets, and early maturity and easy fattening of surplus cockerels, are not easily secured without vigor. Mating, but vigor is essential whatever the goal, and vigor is within the reach of the poultry breeder. The way the farm flock is cared for and fed up to shipping time will determine how it will lay or fatten. If farm raised stock is to have the reputation of satisfactory gains in the fattening battery, the price of farm range stock for fattening will fall. Since about 40 per cent of poultry products are consumed at a distance to require marketing service, qualities which will insure profitable shipping must be sought. The ultimate measure of success is the finished product and how it will ship. Thin shelled eggs, eggs with cracks, carry their own weight of loss. The cause should be investigated. Aside from the ration, soft shelled eggs may be due to over-fat hens, or diseased egg organs. The farmer's own special market may be next door, but eventually his poultry products may travel hundreds of miles to the consumer. Considering the eventual market pays.

**LOOK TO THE PASTURE**

The livestock man who makes a survey of his pasture situation at this season is acting wisely, for the kind and quantity of pasture available have an important bearing on production costs and income. Over a large part of the country we are inclined to settle back at this season with satisfaction over our luxuriant blue-grass pastures. We are prone to forget the situation which is likely to exist next July and August when blue-grass pastures usually are brown and dry and provide little feed. It is not too late to make a seeding of an annual forage crop that will supplement the blue grass later on. Good pastures throughout the season materially aid in saving feed; especially do they help to save the higher priced protein feeds. The last year in our experiments an acre of rape appeared to save over half a ton of tankage in fattening our spring pigs. Also the excellent vitamin and mineral composition of pasture keeps the animals growing. Pigs and lambs especially need to have a change to live on land which is free from disease organisms and parasites. Providing annual pastures, especially those containing rape, is the simplest method of insuring healthful land for pigs and lambs. Furthermore, the pigs and lambs fed on the rape leaves and thus do not eat so closely to the ground as is the case with blue grass pastures. Our experience tends to show that there is no annual crop better adapted to pigs' or lambs' needs than rape. Seedlings of this crop may be made well up into June, using three to eight pounds of seed an acre. For lambs, a combination of rape and a quarter to three-quarters of a bushel of oats an acre has proved an excellent combination. In this section many farmers practice the seeding of rape between the corn rows at the last cultivation. Where the corn is to be hogged down, this usually works out advantageously.

**GROWING CAULIFLOWER**

Cauliflower is a big eater. Plant-food studies carried on by a leading experiment station for four years indicate that heavy fertilizing pays in increased yields. The results also indicate that manure alone does not furnish plantfood in the right proportions, and that some readily available plantfood applied during the growing season, gives greater yields than when applied before planting. In the tests referred to, the plants were sown in the greenhouse in March and transplanted to the field in May, being spaced 24x30 inches. All fertilizers were broadcast and harrowed in, except where otherwise mentioned. Manure alone, although good as a humus supply, used at the rate of 10 tons and 20 tons to the acre, did not furnish enough plantfood for a successful crop; the lighter application produced 2,121 firsts, and the heavier, 2,400. When the applica-

**APPLYING LIME**

Lime is usually applied at the rate of about two tons per acre and this application should be good for 10 or more years. Very large quantities would need to be added before there would be any injurious effect. Lime is ordinarily applied to land where it is difficult to obtain good stands and growth of certain crops, since these crops require a sweeter soil than ordinary grain crops. Lime may be applied at any time during the year. Owing to its slow action, its effect cannot be determined in less than six months or a year. The best method of application is to apply it to the surface and disc it in. Plowing the

tion of 1 tons of manure was supplemented with 1,000 pounds of 4:8:4 to the acre, and with the side dressing of 150 pounds of quick nitrogen, the yields were satisfactory. A two-year average showed an increase of 2,443 firsts to the acre, over the 20-ton manure application alone, and 2,546 firsts over the 10-ton application. When the manure supply was limited, it was found that 2,080 pounds of 4:8:4 an acre could be used profitably. The average yield for four years with 2,000 pounds of 4:4:4 was 4,672 firsts, as compared with 3,650 for 1,000 pounds of 4:8:4. The best yields with 1,000 pounds of 4:8:4 was obtained when this amount, applied before planting, was followed by two side dressings (150 pounds each) of quick nitrogen, one three weeks after planting and the other two weeks later. With 500 pounds of 4:8:4, when 1,000 pounds were applied at planting and 500 pounds three weeks later, the yield was 733 firsts greater than when the whole amount was applied at planting. As the cauliflower plant develops very rapidly, a supply of complete soluble fertilizer should be constantly available, otherwise the growth will be checked and the plant will form premature small heads, called "out-tons."

**TEST SCALES YEARLY**

A man told me recently that his scale wasn't weighing 40-pound test weight showed only 40 pounds on the beam says a farmer who makes a specialty of details. Inspection showed a small pebble wedged tightly between the edge of the scale platform and the coping. This made the weighing lighter. If a heavy load were followed by a light load, the pebble would tend to hold the platform down, thus making the lighter load weigh too heavy. Which shows how important it is to check platform cleanliness of scales. Twice a year scales should often in steady weighing, and every time the scale is to be used if weightings are infrequent. Beam action should be tested frequently. Ice is likely to get into the working parts in winter. Dirt thrown up by rats may cavitary conditions, and should be inspected frequently, and should be kept clean. One scale user says: "I took up the platform and took two wagon loads of dirt out of the scale pit three years ago. Spese it ought to be cleaned out again; rats make their dens down there." Pits should be deep enough to allow ready and easy access to all parts of the scale. Where much business is done over a farm scale, a careful test and thorough inspection once a year should prove a good investment. Some of the scale manufacturers put up book-lets on the care of farm scales.

**SANITATION INCREASES PROFIT**

Much has been written about the greater profit the producer of hogs invariably derives from raising his pigs under sanitary conditions, but the story bears repetition because a comparatively small percentage of the farmers the country over have taken advantage of the sanitation method. A leading western farmer states that one year he had 24 brood sows that raised 122 pigs under the old method of growing in worm infested hog lots. The following year, he reduced the number of his sows to eight, and raised their pigs in clean pasture. Prior to farrowing, he washed the udders of the sows and placed them in clean houses, so that the pigs never came in contact with the old hog lots. The result was that by October 1, the 63 pigs raised by the eight sows weighed 49 pounds more than did the 122 the year before on the corresponding date. It is unnecessary to mention that the profit per pig was very much larger under the sanitation method than under the old hog lot method of raising them, and that the work of caring for them was more enjoyable. Figures gathered from many hundreds of farmers indicate that for every pig eight weeks' time is saved between birth and marketing age by raising spring or fall pigs under sanitary conditions. Besides this, a saving of feed and other items of cost accrues from this better method. Let us keep this spring's pigs out of mud and filth.

**CULTIVATE OLD YARDS**

Every year, there are large losses on account of using old poultry yards that are contaminated with poultry droppings containing disease germs and worms. Poultry authorities have estimated that 95 per cent of the round-worms and from 60 to 70 per cent of the tapeworms can be eliminated by putting poultry on clean ground that is free from contamination. Cockroaches and other parasites on poultry that can be largely eliminated by using clean ground. Old birds are often carriers of the small organism that causes this trouble. Care in handling young chickens in order to prevent contamination will greatly reduce the loss. If it does not eliminate them altogether, Nature will aid in cleaning up disease and worm contamination, if sunshine and air are given a chance to work. If the yard is put into a crop that can be cultivated, the action of the sun and air will be more rapid than where a crop is used that will cover all of the ground. Potatoes and corn are ideal crops for poultry yards, as they use up the fertility from the droppings and require cultivation. If the crop is taken off the ground early in the fall, it can be seeded to rye or some other crop for early spring pasture.

**BE A "MODERN"**

Modern poultry raisers buy their chicks, and let the hens keep to their profitable job of laying.

**WELL WORTH REMEMBERING**

A man cannot be stingy if the feed if his cows are to be liberal at the milk pail.

lime under, however, is not objectionable. On most Western farms the addition of lime to the soil is not beneficial. Certain acid soils are benefited, however.

**A LITTLE REMINDER**

Hens need a green feed or green feed substitute during the winter months. Vegetables such as beets, mangolds, cabbages and potatoes, are good. An occasional flock keeper can get a storekeeper in a nearby city or town to save the lettuce trimmings and other vegetable leftovers. These make excellent chicken feed. Alfalfa in the form of a meal is the most practical substitute.