

A Tough Life—That of a Forest Ranger

The life of a forest ranger is not all it's cracked up to be. Instead of spending the summer hunting, fishing and trapping, the ranger is busy protecting game and scenery from visitors and answering their questions.

In the winter, he and another ranger hole themselves up in a log cabin, patrol the boundary of their domain on skis and protect the wild life under their care from the attacks of predatory animals and the guns of men. At night their leisure time is spent in assembling food, wood and clothing to keep warm, and preparing for the next day's tasks.—Washington Post.

PATTERNS OF WOLFPEN



CHAPTER XV—Continued

Jasper hurried in after Abrah. "What is it, Jasper?" Cynthia cried. "Jasper! Tell me! What is it?" Jasper was getting the lantern from the medicine-room, very calm. "I don't know," he said. "The Finemare's down there in a hot shiver. She's been running hard. The horse's gone and the saddle's slipped."

"But how would she get through the mill gate, Jasper?" "How do I know?" They were already going through the door. Cynthia in a panic of fear seized a shawl and ran after them.

"Wait, Jasper! Wait! I'm coming, too," she cried. "No, you're not!" Jasper shouted. "You stay right here and look after things till we get back."

It was so sudden and imperative that it halted her on the porch. "That mare's run three or four miles," he was still shouting from the yard. "We'll get back as soon as we can."

Jasper fed the Finemare and quieted her in the stall while Abrah got the saddle mules, and then they rode fast down Wolfpen. Cynthia alone, watched the jostling lantern disappear in the cold night. Then she turned and went back through the yard to the square of light in the open door.

"Women always must sit and wait and suffer while the menfolk get relief in doing something," she sobbed at the door.

The house was deathly silent. She dropped into the chair by the smoldering logs and began the long waiting.

Time was no longer going on. It was waiting with her. Cynthia, yearning for it to move on, felt the hysteria of being imprisoned in an arrested moment which would not end. She paced the floor, pushing against it. She put a log on the fire, watching it burn without exploding the stopped instant of time.

"How does a body live in eternity?" She stood in the open door looking at the mass of Cranesnest, a little blacker than the dark. She imagined each possible accident that could happen, enacting it sharply in her mind, shuddering at it, dismissing it, creating another in its place. She filled the sputtering teakettle which had boiled dry in the motionless time of the waiting.

It continued for three hours. Cynthia felt that more hours had passed by her in this one lone evening than had gone through Wolfpen since April of a year ago. Then, hardy. Was that Sparrel's mare? It wouldn't hardly have thrown Sparrel"; the growing body of men searching on up the creek toward Stepstone.

Among the great stones by the cliff at the upper ford where the bridge trail branches off for Pikeville, they found Sparrel Pattern crumpled up in the sand. His boots still glistened with the wet from the ford. He lay on his right side, his left leg bent, his right hand clutching at the small pebbles. His head was crushed and fallen on the sand. Under the pale light of the lanterns shone sand crystals clinging to the blood on his forehead above the dead eyes and in his hair.

They carried him over to Ferguson's place for the night. Jasper would stay there and ride over for Jesse and the girls at daybreak. She seemed not to be hearing Abrah's words now, only looking at the fire unseeing, feeling herself being crushed to death among the stones while a lantern beam fell on the sand gills in the blood. It was too much after the house alone, waiting. She collapsed into the chair and buried her face deep in both hands and cried; not hearing Abrah saying, "The stumpy-squatin' cowardly devils. Waylaying him, knocking in his head from behind."

They laid Sparrel among the sandstones on Cranesnest Shelf. The crowd of people was so great that it filled the house, the yard and the barn-lot. All down Wolfpen as far as the mill those who felt themselves strangers stood in little groups paying respect to Sparrel Pattern.

Doug Mason came as far as the bend below the orchard, and sat there on his mule, the handless arm thrust into his coat, and the slightest eye turned aside, watching them bear Cynthia's father up the path. The people wept. Lucy and Jenny cried from the house to the grave. Cynthia had wept in the night. Sparrel's voice was stopped and his feet were still, the medicine-room was empty, the desk by the mantel was closed and the ledger was ended. There could be no more grief now, only the lonely and silent and fruitless ache of the days and the nights after the people were gone away.

Cynthia felt through the first days that this sorrow could not be eased. She dreamed it at night, seeing her father not Sparrel and yet her father among the stones which were both the stones at the upper ford and those on Cranesnest Shelf. It came over her in the daytime when, forgetting it for a time, she would feel a wondering unhappiness for an instant before there burst upon her the full weight of the sorrow.

And yet the grief did mysteriously lose its sharpness under the compulsion of daily living and working, the finality of the past event, and the gradual reassertion of young life. Jesse stayed on restlessly at the house for a few days and then went back to his law. Jenny stayed on for two nights, crying, and then went back to Horsepen Branch. Abrah went again to Dry Creek where the first March rains were flooding the dam for driving the logs. Jasper rode over to town with Jesse, and when he returned he mentioned that he was marrying Jane in a few weeks now. Lucy stayed on through the week, but Cynthia could not determine whether it was better or worse to have her in the house talking.

She would hide herself away from Lucy and go over it all in her mind; the joy of the spring before Shellenberger came, the foreboding when Sparrel sold the land, the wonder of Reuben Warren on that afternoon with a compass on his arm, the slow and sinister way the outside world had pushed into Dry Creek and then reached out for Doug Mason, for her mother Julia, for the father Sparrel, for the old way of life Wolfpen had known so long. She thought of the brutal irrelevant of the blunt stone on her father's skull in the hands of wicked men. And nothing to do about it except wait for Sheriff Hatler to find the murderer and kill him under the law while her father met the dissolution on Cranesnest. Now they were both gone and Jasper would bring Jane Burden to this place in Julia's stead. In Cynthia's mind it was all done now. Surely whether Reuben were still out in the hills and where, and if he knew.

And while she was yet wondering he came. It was late afternoon on a warm day in March a week after the burial of Sparrel. There was a moist wind in the hollow with the breath of spring in it, and the sun almost ready to move the col-

orless days out of the hills, foreseeing April on its slow way up from the south.

Cynthia was bending over a skillet with an iron spoon in her hand when she heard the gate click. She laid the spoon on the back of the stove before she went to the door to see who it could be. She stood transformed in the doorway looking at him, not daring to believe it was Reuben, thinking he must be far away at the other end of the river. She was wordless before him in her joy. For one brief instant she looked down reflectively at her dress to make sure she was not relieving those humiliating moments of the late spring, hot, burned, weeping, spattered with corn-meal. But she was cool and unburned, and the tan dress was clean and fresh. Reuben saw at once that under the responsibility and sorrow of the months she had grown in character and loveliness. She was a woman and not a child, but it was the woman the girl of the summer had pertended.

They looked at each other in complete silence and without movement. Then Cynthia stepped through her transfiguration down to the porch, and Reuben came to her with his eyes shining. She felt herself swept toward him, and away from grief.

"Reuben!" "Cynthia!"

Then she gave him her hand, bringing the moment back from this exalted reach to the more familiar plane where human beings meet in speech.

"You know?" she said. "Yes, Cynthia. I am sorry." "How did you learn?" "It was in the paper at home day before yesterday, I started as soon as I heard."

"I am glad you came, Reuben." "I wish I could have come sooner."

Lucy had come in haste to the kitchen and then to the door. "Cynthia, I smell supper. . . Oh!" The beautiful moment of their meeting was ended.

The coming of Reuben seemed to break into the fixed mood of solemnity that had settled over the house since Sparrel's death. Sometimes at the supper, without forgetting the dead, they almost recaptured the excitement of the spring before. And after they had talked over in hushed words all the story of the past weeks, it did not seem inappropriate to think of themselves and to mention other places.

The sun continued through the following day, the warmth flowing down the hollows.

"It begins to have a touch of spring," Reuben said. "You said you would come back in the spring."

"Yes. Let's walk a little way." "Up to the rock by the sycamore," she suggested.

They went by the desolate garden which had been full of Julia's flowers last July, and came to the stone where they had first sat together. The sun lay warm on the stone. The brown pods on the sycamore tree jangled in the wind at the end of yellowing limbs barren of leaves.

"It seems like she ought to be there in the garden," Reuben said. "You thought that, too?" Cynthia cried.

"Yes. I have thought of this place often," he said. "I have not been here since," she said, "but I have thought myself here. Do you believe some places—like this—get to be a part of—of what two people are to each other?"

As she talked, she drew nearer to him and it was wonderful to her to feel the miracle of the burden lifting and the heart being purged of its heaviness. Reuben put his hand on her cheek, pulling her face gently to confront his own. There were tears in her eyes. His arm tightened around her. It did not seem forward to her now to be in his arms in this hollow. The growth of their affection had been constant in the months of separation and needed only this brief intimacy to reveal itself full blown.

"Cynthia," he said. "She looked at him, "I've been thinking and making a lot of plans since I left here."

He hesitated an instant, looking into her eyes. Then he continued: "There's two or three years of work down in Boyd and the neighboring counties just surveying the land the iron works companies are buying up. They're putting up another blast furnace and a nail mill. I do nearly all the field work now. And Catlettsburg is a pretty place. After you pass the center of town and the stores you come to a wide street with sidewalks and trees and nice houses in big yards. Then the hill begins, not a high hill, just a river hill. And about half-way up there is a little house in a garden behind it. It's painted white and has a wide porch and there are three sets of steps up from the street. You look right out over the town and the treetops to the Ohio river and where the Big Sandy comes around West Virginia, and across to the farms in Ohio all the way back to the hills. You can see the big boats on the river, and the little ones on the Big Sandy and the rafts that come floating down both rivers. There's a new steam ferry to South Point and a new wharf. You can see the trains going up to Richardson and down to Ashland and Cincinnati. It's not like here on Wolfpen, but it is a nice place."

"It sounds like a right nice place. Does somebody live in it?" "Right now some people live in it, but next month they're going to move to a place over in Coalgrove in Ohio where he's going to work, and then it will be empty."

She was trying to picture this place and all the bustling life it looked out upon, laying it in her mind's eye beside the quiet and seclusion of Wolfpen where she had spent her life.

"Cynthia." She blotted out everything else and looked up into his eyes.

"I love you more than anything. Will you do me the honor to be my wife and come down there and live with me?"

It wasn't that she was surprised or actually taken unawares. It was just the hearing of it. A warm flush overspread her face. She dropped her eyes to the moss on the stone and then lifted them beyond it through the bare sycamore limbs to the cloud fluff above the Pinnacle golden in the sun.

"Will you?" he said.

"Yes, Reuben, if you want me to," she said.

"When?" "April."

He kissed her, holding her tight in his arms, and it was natural and inevitable like a curled wave forming far out under the sky and moving always shoreward till it breaks at last on the rim of warm sand.

"I love you more than anything," he said.

"And I love you, Reuben." Every burden oppressive to men, commanding pity for their unhappy lot, writing the marks of suffering below their eyes, and warping the lines about their mouth, was removed from them as they walked slowly down the hollow while the sun was hurrying out of the valley in its endless light before the stars. And through their eyes made bright by the high passion of their hope, the world was a new and beautiful place wherein no sorrow and no failure could ever intrude.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Athlone, a Gateway that part of Ireland lying west of the River Shannon, and to two literary shrines: Lissoy, to which Oliver Goldsmith gave fame as "Lovely Auburn," and Edgeworthstown, where Maria Edgeworth, the novelist, lived.

Freedom for Elders—

The Ruling of Parents by Grown Children Often Amounts to Tyranny

RECENTLY, says a woman writer of note, I read a letter from a young married woman, who, having a house in large she evidently took pride, and large enough to accommodate her mother, was disturbed. She resented the fact that her mother refused to live there, although she had been invited to do so. She complained of her mother's travels, and her insistence in keeping her own home.

A Strange Plight.

It was impossible not to consider what were the reasons underlying the invitation. The young woman said her friends thought the situation strange, and she feared they blamed her for not having her mother with her. Such super-sensitiveness is certainly a mistake. It can scarcely be taken as the real reason for her annoyance. The home atmosphere would scarcely be improved by having a reluctant member included in the family life, even though the husband agreed to it willingly.

Money Matters.

A reason of money might exist. That is, there is a lurking suggestion that the daughter disliked the mother being at the added expense of keeping up her home, and spending money in travels, which went as far as European tips. The letter said that the mother's health was good. Could it be that the money saved by the mother should she live with the daughter? Or would the mother be expected to pay board, or make some contribution to the home, although of a less stipulated sum?

Freedom for Mother.

Whatever the fundamental reason for the daughter's dilemma, one cannot but sympathize with the mother. Here is a woman who cherishes her freedom, and

is enjoying it evidently. Either she had been accustomed to traveling, and kept it up, or she has not been able to indulge her longing to see the world, until now, when she is free to do so and has the wherewithal.

Freedom for Elders.

A great deal has been said and written about letting children have their right of freedom of action and ideas. It is not they alone that must have this privilege. Parents, when they get older are often ruled with rods of iron by the children who were themselves granted freedom. This ruling of elders is often under the guise of affectionate care, and a patronizing kindness and it sometimes becomes a tyranny, especially over mothers. Such situations are indeed difficult.

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OF INTEREST TO THE HOUSEWIFE

Paper white narcissi planted in a bowl containing pebbles and water will last from November to March if bulbs are renewed as those in bloom fade out.

Sometimes when the gravy from roasts is not quite as dark as you want it to be, try adding a little kitchen bouquet. Just enough to color it.

Sirloin, tip, bouillon or rump are the beef cuts used for pot roasts, which require long cooking. These are cheaper cuts of meats but contain as much nourishment and flavor as the more expensive cuts. The only differences lie in the methods of cooking them.

Powdered borax added to the water when washing fine white flannels helps to keep them soft.

Use scissors for cutting up leftover fish, meat or fowl. This also applies to leftover vegetables.

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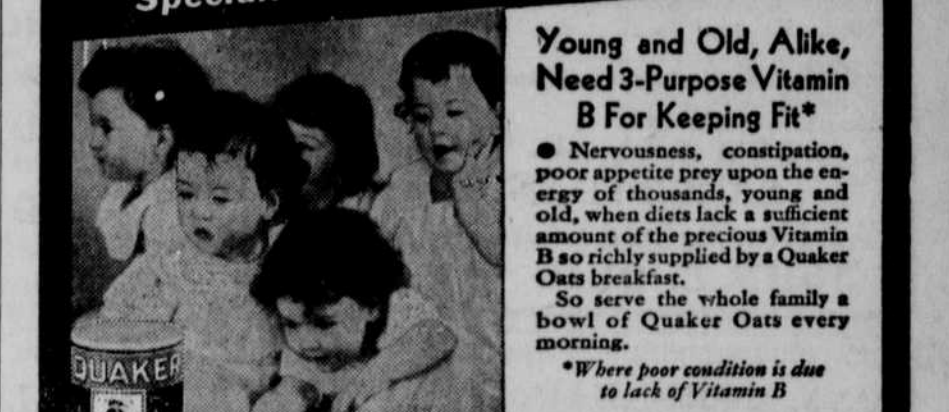
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"Women Always Must Sit and Wait and Suffer."

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Specialists Set Example for Mothers



QUAKER OATS

GETTING DRY

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS

GETS ALL BUNDLED UP IN BATH TOWEL AFTER HIS BATH

DOESN'T MIND HAVING HIS HAIR DRIED BECAUSE THERE ISN'T VERY MUCH OF IT

AND LIKES HAVING FACE WIPED SO HE CAN OPEN HIS EYES WITHOUT GETTING SOAP IN THEM

THEN HIS ARMS

AND GETTING HIS BACK DONE IS FUN

NOW FOR HIS LEGS

BUT OH HE'D FORGOTTEN HOW HAVING HIS TOES DONE TICKLES

AND SO THE DRIVING OF THE LAST FOOT ENDS IN THE USUAL RIOT OF WRIVING ARMS AND LEGS

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