

Up Saltpeper Creek

A Story of Ranch Life

By CLARISSA MACKIE

The Chinese cook had spilled hot bean soup on Harry Barry's immaculate white shirt front, and the scared Celestial had escaped from the room under a fusillade of pistol shots that all found lodgment in the oak beamed ceiling.

"You ought not to put on that blood shirt till after supper," admonished the Crane as the wrathful Harry wiped the soggy mess from his bosom. "It's taking a risk wearing anything decent at this table nowadays."

"And why?" exploded Harry, mindful of the fact that this was his only clean white shirt and his call upon the pretty Widow Clancy must lack that sartorial compliment.

"The chink's in love," was the Crane's reply.

"In love?"

"Who with?"

"Didn't know there was a Chinese girl within a thousand miles of the Lone Bull."

"Can't he find any other way of expressing his love than by acting like a blamed idiot?"

Of course this last remark came from Harry Barry, who was consuming what remained of the soup in his plate.

"They generally do—only it takes different forms," observed Gabriel mildly.

A chuckle ran around the table. Under cover of its good nature Wah Sung pushed open the swinging door, peered fearfully around the edge and sidled in with a great dish of steaming hot potatoes.

Perhaps he was nervous, it might be that he was in love. At any rate, when his mild brown orb met the steely glare of Harry Barry's usually amiable eyes he set the dish of potatoes upon the table with such frantic haste that the largest and hottest rolled from the pyramid and landed upon Mr. Barry's hand.

Wah Sung emitted a desolate wail as Harry Barry leaped from his chair and caught him by the neckband of his cotton blouse and shook him vigorously.

"Suffering cats! What's the matter with you?" yelled Mr. Barry excitedly.

"Can't you throw down a dish of potatoes without stampedin' 'em all over the table?"

"Me solly—velly solly," moaned Wah Sung.

"That helps a lot," observed Harry bitterly.

"Me sick in the head—velly sick in the head; me do' know what to do," added Wah Sung pitifully.

The cattlemen's quick sympathy was to the fore at once. "What's the matter, boy? Have you told the boss that you're sick?"

"No, no; me no tell anybody. Me velly sick here," Wah Sung placed both yellow hands over his heart. "It go what you call lickerty spittly—lickerty spittly all time."

"It's your heart, boy, not your head. You want to see doctor, eh?"

Wah Sung writhed bashfully under the gaze of seven pairs of eyes. "No—no see doctor," he mumbled, edging toward the door. "Me allee light velly soon. Me go for walk. Excuse, I get rest supper."

"Going for a walk, eh?" questioned Gabriel sharply. "You think a walk up Saltpeper creek do you good, Wah Sung?"

The Chinaman shivered as with ague, and his countenance turned from yellow to gray. His lips parted in an attempted smile as he shook his head. "Oh, no, no, me no never walk up Saltpeper creek! Me walk velly diffunt way!"

"Humph! Let 'em go, Harry," was Gabriel's advice. When the Chinaman's slippers were once more slapping around the kitchen floor Harry Barry resumed his seat and joined the broad grin that went around the table.

"What is it—love?" he inquired.

"You oughter know, being a sort of judge of symptoms," commented Jim Lewis dryly.

"What about yourself?" retorted Harry Barry. "You oughter know—been married three months, haven't you?"

"Stop your wranglin', boys," interpolated the Crane, unjoining his lean form and taking advantage of Wah Sung's absence from the room to express his opinion. "Listen to me, I've seen the chink going up the creek every afternoon after dinner."

"What is there up Saltpeper creek?" asked Jim Lewis, lighting a cigarette.

"Nothing but the springs that I know of."

"Anybody ever been beyond the springs?"

It seemed that none of them had ever followed the rocky trail beyond the springs that gave name to the creek.

"Somebody told me that there used to be a prospectors' but up there in the thicket. I've never been there, though, and couldn't say."

"If Wah Sung's in love why don't he marry his girl and live happily ever after?" commented Harry impatiently.

"Afraid of the boss probably. You know Chinese families are not very popular hereabouts."

"Plenty of room on the ranch. There's that little cabin down in the three mile pasture. It's not far from the bunkhouse, and Wah Sung could cook just

the same and not act so confoundedly idiotic over it."

"You're appointed a committee of one to see Wah Sung and straighten the matter out," observed Gabriel as he followed the rest of the cattlemen out of doors, and, although Harry Barry made no assent, he was very thoughtful while he went upstairs to his room and removed the soup laden shirt and put on a gray flannel one, which after all was much more becoming to him than the glossy white one.

On his way out he stopped in the kitchen where Wah Sung was frantically washing dishes.

"You married, Wah Sung?" he asked sharply.

The Chinaman jumped nervously at the question and shook his head in such rapid negatives that his cue lashed back and forth like the tail of an angry cat.

"Malled? Me? Oh, no, no, no, no! Me no like gais—me not malled, oh, no!"

"You got a girl?"

"Oh, no, no, no!"

"Why not? You think boss not like you have a girl?"

"Oh—he not like Chinese gal. Me no have gal till me go back to Canton some day."

"I don't think he'd care if you wanted to get married, Wah Sung. There's a nice little house down in the pasture, and you could come up and cook every day. Why don't you tell the boss?"

"Me no like gais—me no want get malled," persisted Wah Sung.

As he rode over the well worn trail that led to the Widow Clancy's ranch, Harry Barry was firmly convinced that the Chinaman had been lying to him. It was a bright moonlight night, and he resolved to ask Mrs. Clancy to ride with him up Saltpeper creek and investigate what lay beyond. The romance involved might lure her into the evening ride.

It did. She was warmly interested in the story of the despairing Chinaman, and the suspected love affair that might be at the bottom of his erratic actions.

"How long has he acted that way, Harry?" she asked, as they rode side by side up the trail, her hand in that of her sweetheart's.

"About three months. Ever since he came back from a month's leave of absence. He went to San Francisco, and he's acted like a crazy flea ever since," and he told her the story of the bean soup, and the conversation that followed.

"Poor fellow," sighed Mrs. Clancy, and Harry Barry leaned over and kissed her lips.

When they reached the springs they could see that the trail entered a thicket of thorns, but Harry investigated and found that the way had been cunningly cleared of thorns, so that a person might pass through. They left their horses at the springs, and Harry, leading the way, they pushed through the thicket to emerge on the other side into an open sandy space dropping down the hillside that formed one boundary of Lone Bull ranch.

A faint light pricking through the gloom of another thicket on the hillside lured them down until they stood before a small cabin thatched with branches and almost concealed from the view of the casual passerby.

"There is a window. You look, dear," said Harry Barry, and as his sweetheart hesitated he added: "You know it's to help 'em along if it's necessary."

Then Mrs. Clancy looked through a corner of the pane from which the calico inner curtain had swung back, revealing the interior of the one roomed cabin. She looked and looked, finally reaching out and drawing Harry toward her until their faces touched.

They looked upon a little home. It might have been picked up out of any city in China and dropped there on this lonely Montana hillside. What marvelous force had enabled the small Chinaman to secretly bring from great distances all the little household gods that meant home to him? Love, of course.

The walls were hung with gayly printed cottons, and in one corner where a small altar had been erected for his ancestral tablets there was a square of rich silk embroidery. Little bronze vessels stood on the altar, and on a bracket there was an image of a favorite household god, with an offering of incense smoking before it. A roll of quilts was on the built in bed or bunk in one corner, matting covered the rough floor, a couple of Chinese chairs were there and a low table. There was a row of quaint oriental porcelain dishes on a shelf and odd cooking utensils of copper and a brand new American cook stove of the smallest dimensions.

That was not all. There in one of the chairs sat the daintiest little Chinese woman you ever saw. In her arms she held a yellow morsel of babyhood, who was staring up at Wah Sung with beady black slanting eyes and sucking its thumb contentedly.

Last of all there was Wah Sung—not the craven, panic stricken cook of the Lone Bull ranch, but a Chinaman invested with the dignity of the head of a household. He was smiling down at the baby, with nothing but love in his mild brown eyes.

"Poor devil!" whispered Harry Barry crossly, because his own eyes were full of tears and his sweetheart was wiping the tears from her pretty blue eyes.

"Poor?" challenged Mrs. Clancy, drawing him back to the springs and their waiting horses. "Man alive, Wah Sung is rich! Let us go straight to Boss Clintock and tell him that Wah Sung is married and that he must give them the cabin in the pasture."

"Of course he'll do it. But if he shouldn't?" teased Harry.

"I'll hire Wah Sung myself and build a Chinese temple for them to live in and dedicate it to the god of love," declared the Widow Clancy.

A Story of Malibran.

Among the stories told by Arthur Pough of Malibran, the great singer, is one of her stay in Venice. She was to give six performances at one theater there when Gallo, the director of the Teatro Emeronito, being on the eve of bankruptcy, begged her to give two at his theater, promising her \$120 for each. She consented, but when Gallo went to take her the second payment he entered, saying, "Here is the sum we agreed on." "What sum?" she replied, with an air of surprise. "Oh, the \$120 for yesterday's performance." "I don't want your money. Take it all away and spend it on your children. You shall kiss me and we'll be quits." Did the good fellow believe his ears? His two performances had brought him in \$400 in round figures, had saved him from bankruptcy, and, to crown his joy, he kissed Mme. Malibran. This magnanimity to a poor Venetian was received publicly by a frantic ovation and crystallized in verse, while the theater was renamed Malibran—Argonaut.

Old Egyptian Perfumes.

Priests in Egypt, who were the sole depositaries of science, knew the secret of aromatic substances and prepared them themselves. Egyptian perfumes acquired great celebrity, especially those made in Alexandria. Reserved originally for religious rites, perfumes subsequently became of current use among the wealthy classes. During banquets they were diffused through the halls and were burnt in profusion. The Israelites during their sojourn in Egypt adopted the use of aromatic substances primarily for religious purposes and afterward for personal usage. The Greeks, who loved elegance, were especially addicted to the use of perfumes, and they taught their secrets and usage to the Romans, who were not content to use merely the perfumes of the orient—aloes, myrrh, incense and nard—but also made perfumes similar to those of the present day—essents of lilies, lavender, roses and thyme.

Pretty Lame Excuse.

Out of the crowd in the police court a man was placed before the judge.

"You are accused, sir," said the magistrate, "of being drunk and disorderly. Any defense?"

"I am a respectable man, sir," the prisoner answered, "and this would never have happened only I traveled from Pittsburgh to New York yesterday in bad company."

"What sort of bad company?" said the magistrate.

"Sons of Temperance, sir."

"Sons of Temperance! Why, they are the salt of the earth. I should think they'd be the best company a man like you could ask for."

"No, sir. Excuse me, sir. You're wrong," said the prisoner huskily.

"You see, I'd brought a quart of whiskey for the journey, and on account of the company I had to drink it all myself."

India Spun Cotton Long Ago.

Lancashire's record of 300 years in the cotton trade is far behind India's. Cotton was manufactured in India more than 3,000 years ago. Thus Thomas Ellison in his "Cotton Trade of Great Britain."

"Fabrics as fine as any that can be turned out at the present day by the most perfect machinery in Lancashire were produced by the nimble fingers of Hindu spinners and the primitive looms of Hindu weavers a thousand years before the invasion of Britain by the Romans." When Britons, in fact, were suffering from their skins Indians were "luxuriating in garments of a texture so fine as to have earned the poetic description of 'woven wind.'"

What Lancashire makes today India made the day before yesterday.—London Chronicle.

Your Child.

Does your child break into the conversation when you have visitors?

Does he leave his clothes lying all over the house?

Does he eat surreptitiously between meals?

Does he lay his hands on almost anything he wants to make something out of without asking your permission?

Does he come down late to breakfast?

Does he say "Hub," "Gee?"

And, if not, why not. You are his parent, and he is living in the United States of America.—Life.

The Puzzle of Life.

Life is a quaint puzzle. Bits the most incongruous join into each other, and the scheme thus gradually becomes symmetrical and clear, when, lo, as the infant clasps his hands and cries, "See, see; the puzzle is made out!" all the pieces are swept back into the box—black box with the gilded nails!—Bulwer-Lytton.

High and Worthy.

She—I'm afraid I cannot marry you. I want a man who possesses a noble ambition, one whose heart is set on attaining some high and worthy object. He—Well, don't I want you? She—Oh, George, darling, I am yours!—Boston Transcript.

The Refrain.

She (at the piano)—How do you enjoy this refrain?

He—Very much. The more you refrain the better I like it.—Judge.

Spiteful.

Miss Joyce—Yes, Jack and I are to become partners for life. Miss Means—And you will be the senior partner. How nice!

Beware of dissipating your powers. Strive constantly to concentrate them.

For Sale.

A ranch 5 miles north of the city of North Platte, consisting of 240 acres, 100 acres in meadow, 90 acres under cultivation, 50 acres in pasture. White Horse creek runs through pasture. A five room dwelling, corals, wind mill and five miles of fencing in place. For price and terms apply to Major L. Walker, North Platte, Neb.

Chance of Life Time.

Splendid hardware stock, long established business. Will be sold very cheap owing to illness of owner. Address Hubbell Bros., Kearney, Neb.

Homestead.

640 acres well improved 6 1/2 miles of Kimball, \$1700. Also 160 acre relinquishment most all good farm land no improvements. 10 miles of town \$250.00 L. E. Lockwood, Kimball, Neb.

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WILLIS J. REDFIELD, Surgeon. JOE B. REDFIELD, Physician.

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"I refused to be operated on, the morning I heard about Cardui," writes Mrs. Elmer Sickler, of Terre Haute, Ind. "I tried Cardui, and it helped me greatly. Now, I do my own washing and ironing."

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The Woman's Tonic

Cardui is a mild, tonic remedy, purely vegetable, and acts in a natural manner on the delicate, womanly constitution, building up strength, and toning up the nerves. In the past 50 years, Cardui has helped more than a million women. You are urged to try it, because we are sure that it will do you good. At all drug stores.

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Notice for Publication.

Serial No. 6257. NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR. United States Land Office. At North Platte, Nebraska, Feb. 3, 1912.

Notice is hereby given that Elmer Cooper of North Platte, Neb., on March 20th, 1907, made homestead entry No. 2235, Serial No. 6257 for the east half of the northern quarter and the east half of the southeast quarter of Section 30, Twp. 13, N., Range 38 W., of the 6th Principal Meridian, has filed notice of intention to make final five year proof, to establish claim to the land above described, before the Register and Receiver at North Platte, Nebraska, on the 5th day of April, 1912.

Claimant names as witnesses: Car W. McGrew, Fred Malone, Julia Malone and Mary Breterritz, all of North Platte, Neb. JOHN E. EVANS, Register.

Probate Notice.

In the County Court of Lincoln county, Nebraska, March 7, 1912.

Notice is hereby given that the creditors of said deceased, Frank Hood, of North Platte, Neb., who on Mar. 20, 1905, made Homestead Entry No. 2119, Serial No. 6256, for the east half and southwest quarter of Section 22, Township 15, North, Range 30, West of the sixth principal meridian has filed notice of intention to make final five year proof, to establish claim to the land above described, before the Register and Receiver at North Platte, Nebraska, on the 10th day of April, 1912.

Claimant names as witnesses: Chris Johnson, Rupert Schweitzer, Richard Ross and Charles E. Breterritz, all of North Platte, Neb. J. E. EVANS, Register.

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is one thing, but putting it into practice is an entirely different proposition.

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We have recently installed a French Dry Cleaner for Men's and Ladies' apparel of all classes, and we guarantee satisfactory work. We are also tailors and know how to repair clothes.

We carry samples of goods and make clothes of all kinds to order, insuring first-class workmanship and perfect fit.

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42-Piece Royal Blue Dinner Set worth \$10.00.

Consign your hay to us and please the ladies and also get a good price for your hay.

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ORDER OF HEARING ON PETITION FOR APPOINTMENT OF ADMINISTRATOR.