

The FORESTERS DAUGHTER



A ROMANCE OF THE BEAR TOOTH RANGE

By **HAMLIN GARLAND**

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CHAPTER XI.

The Camp on the Pass.

As soon as she was alone with her father Berrie said, "I'm going home today, dad."

"Going home! What for?"

"I've had enough of it."

He glanced at her bed on the floor.

"I can't say I blame you any."

"Oh, I don't mind sleeping on the floor," she replied. "But I want to get back. I don't want to meet those women. Another thing, you'd better use Mr. Norcross at the Springs instead of leaving him here with Tony."

"Why so?"

"Well, he isn't quite well enough to run the risk. It's a long way from here to a doctor."

"He'll be on deck this morning. Besides, I haven't anything in the office to offer him."

"Then send him up to Meeker. Landon needs help, and he's a better forester than Tony anyway."

"I don't know but you're right. Landon is almost as good a hunter as Tony and a much better forester. I thought of sending Norcross up there at first, but he told me that Frank and his gang had it in for him. Of course he only nominally in the service, but I want him to begin right."

Berrie went further. "I want him to ride back with me today."

He looked at her with grave inquiry.

"Do you think that a wise thing to do? Won't that make more talk?"

"We'll start early and ride straight through."

"You'll have to go by Lost Lake, and that means a long, hard hike. Can he stand it?"

"If I find we can't make it I'll pull into a ranch. But I'm sure we can."

When Wayland came in the supervisor inquired, "Do you feel able to ride back over the hill today?"

"Entirely so. It isn't the riding that uses me up, it is the walking, and, besides, as a candidate for promotion I must obey orders—especially orders to march."

They breakfasted hurriedly and while McFarlane and Tony were bringing in the horses Wayland and Berrie set the cabin to rights. Working thus side by side, she recovered her dominion over him and at the same time regained her own cheerful self confidence.

"You're a wonder!" he exclaimed as he watched her deft adjustment of the dishes and furniture. "You're ambidextrous."

"I have to be to hold my job," she laughingly replied. "A feller must play all the parts when he's up here."

It was still early morning as they mounted and set off up the trail, but Moore's camp was astir, and as McFarlane turned in—much against Berrie's will—the lumberman and his daughter both came out to meet them.

"Come in and have some breakfast," said Siona, with cordial inebriety, while her eyes met Wayland's glance with mocking gleam.

"Thank you," said McFarlane. "we can't stop. I'm going to set my daughter over the divide. She has had enough camping, and Norcross is pretty well battered up, so I'm going to help them across. I'll be back tonight and we'll take our run up the valley tomorrow. Nash will be here then."

Berrie did not mind her father's explanation. On the contrary, she took a distinct pleasure in letting the other girl know of the long and intimate day she was about to spend with her young lover.

Siona, too, adroit to display her disappointment, expressed polite regret. "I hope you won't get storm bound," she said, showing her white teeth in a meaning smile.

"If there is any sign of a storm we won't cross," declared McFarlane. "We're going round by the lower pass, anyhow. If I'm not here by dark you may know I've stayed to set 'em down at the mill."

There was charm in Siona's alert pose and in the neatness of her camp dress. Her dainty tent, with its stools and rugs, made the wilderness seem but a park. She reminded Norcross of the troops of tourists of the Tyrol, and her tent was of a kind to harmonize with the ten houses on the path to the summit of the Matterhorn. Then, too, something trimly and femininely about her bright eyes and glowing in her softly rounded cheeks. Her hand was little and pointed, not fitted like Berrie's for tightening a cinch or wielding an ax, and as he said "Goodby" he added, "I hope I shall see you again soon," and at the moment he meant it.

"We'll return to the Springs in a few days," she replied. "Come and see us. Our bungalow is on the other side of the river. And you too," she addressed Berrie, but her tone was so conventionally polite that the ranch girl, burning with jealous heat, made no reply.

McFarlane led the way to the lake rapidly and in silence. The splendors of the foliage, subdued by the rains; the grandeur of the peaks, the song of the glorious stream, all were lost on Berrie, for she now felt herself to be nothing but a big, clumsy, coarse handed tomboy. Her worn gloves, her faded skirt and her man's shoes had been made hateful to her by that smug, graceful, play acting tourist with the cool, keen eyes and smiling lips. "She pretends to be a kitten, but she isn't. She's a sly grownup cat," she bitterly accused, but she could not deny the charm of her personality.

Wayland was forced to acknowledge that Berrie in this dark mood was not the delightful companion she had hitherto been. Something sweet and confiding had gone out of their relationship, and he was too keen witted not to know what it was. He estimated precisely the value of the malicious parting words of Siona Moore.

That Berrie was suffering and that her jealousy touchingly proved the depth of her love for him brought no elation, only perplexity. He was not seeking such devotion. As a companion on the trail she had been a joy; as a jealous sweetheart she was less admirable. He realized perfectly that this return journey was of her arrangement, but McFarlane's, and while he was not resentful of her care, he was in doubt of the outcome. It hurried him into a further intimacy which might prove embarrassing.

At the camp by the lake the supervisor became sharply commanding. "Now, let's throw these packs on livery. It will be slippery on the trail, and you'll just naturally have to hit leather hard and keep bouncing if you reach the wagon road before dark. But you'll make it."

"Make it!" said Berrie. "Of course we'll make it. Don't you worry about that for a minute. Once I get out of the green timber the dark won't worry me. We'll push right through."

In packing the camp stuff on the saddles Berrie, almost as swift and powerful as her father, acted with perfect understanding of every task, and Wayland's admiration of her skill increased mightily.

She insisted on her father's turning back. "We don't need you," she said. "I can find the pass."

McFarlane's faith in his daughter had been tested many times, and yet he was a little loath to have her start off on a trail new to her. He argued against it briefly, but she laughed at his fears. "I can go anywhere you can," she said. "Stand clear." With final admonition he stood clear.

"Goodby!" he called. "If you meet Nash hurry him along. Moore is anxious to run those lines. Keep in touch with Landon, and if anybody turns up from the district office say I'll be back on Friday. Good luck!"

"Same to you. So long!"

Berrie led the way, and Norcross fell in behind the pack horses, feeling as unimportant as a small boy at the heels of a circus parade. His girl captain was so competent, so self reliant and so sure that nothing he could say or do assisted in the slightest degree. Her leadership was a curiously close reproduction of her father's unburied and graceful action. Her seat in the saddle was as easy as Landon's, and her eyes were alert to every rock and stream in the road. She was at home here, where the other girl would have been a bewildered child, and his words of praise lifted the shadow from her face.

Wayland called out, "The air feels like Thanksgiving morning, doesn't it?"

"It is Thanksgiving for me, and I'm going to get a grouse for dinner," she replied, and in less than an hour the snap of her rifle made good her promise.

After leaving the upper lake she turned to the right and followed the course of a swift and splendid stream which came churning through a cheerless, mossy swamp of spruce trees. Inexperienced as he was, Wayland knew that this was not a well marked trail, but his confidence in his guide was too great to permit of any worry over the pass, and he amused himself by watching the water robins as they fitted from stone to stone in the torrent, and in calculating just where he would drop a line for trout if he had time to do so, and in recovered scenery enjoyed his ride. Gradually he put aside his perplexities concerning the future, permitting his mind to prefigure nothing but his duties with Landon at Meeker's mill.

He was rather glad of the decision to send him there, for it promised absorbing sport. "I shall see how Landon and Belden work out their problem," he said. He had no fear of Frank Meeker now. "As a forest guard with official duties to perform I can meet that young savage on other and more nearly equal terms," he assured himself.

The trail grew slippery and in places ran full of water. "But there's a bottom somewhere," Berrie confidently declared, and pushed ahead with resolute men. It was noon when they rose above timber and entered upon the wide, smooth slopes of the pass. Snow filled the grass here, and the wind, keen, cutting, unimpeded, came out of the desolate west with savage fury, but the sun occasionally shone through the clouds with vivid splendor. "It is December now," shouted Wayland as he put on his slicker and covered low to his saddle. "It will be January soon."

"We will make it Christmas dinner," she laughed, and her glowing good humor warmed his heart. She was entirely her cheerful self again.

As they rose the view became magnificent, wintry, sparkling. The great clouds, drifting like ancient warships heavy with armament, sent down chill showers of hail over the frosted gold of the grassy slopes, but when the shadows passed the sunlight descended in silent cataracts deliciously spring like. The cones speared from the rocky ridges and a brace of eagles circling about a lone crag, as if exulting in their sovereign mastery of the air, screamed in shrill ecstatic duo, the sheer cliffs on their shadowed sides were violently purple. Everywhere the landscape exhibited crashing contrasts of primary pigments which bit into consciousness like the flare of a martial band.

It was nearly 2 o'clock when they began to drop down behind the rocky ridges of the eastern slope, and soon, in the bottom of a warm and sheltered hollow just at timber line, Berrie drew her horse to stand and slipped from the saddle. "We'll rest here an hour," she said, "and cook our grouse, or are you too hungry to wait?"

"I can wait," he answered dramatically. "But it seems as if I had never eaten."

"Well, then, we'll save the grouse till tomorrow, but I'll make some coffee. You bring some water while I start a fire."

And so, while the tired horses cropped the russet grass, she boiled some coffee and laid out some bread and meat, while he sat by watching her and absorbing the beauty of the scene, the charm of the hour. "It is exactly like a warm afternoon in April," he said, "and here are some of the spring flowers."

"There now, sit by and eat," she said, with humor, and in perfectly restored tranquillity they ate and drank, with no thought of critics or of rivals. They were alone, and content to be so. It was deliciously sweet and restful there in that sunny hollow on the breast of the mountain. The wind swept through the worn branches of the dwarfed spruce with immemorial wistfulness, but these young souls heard it only as a far off song. Side by side on the soft Alpine clover they rested and talked, looking away at the sliding peaks, and down over the dark green billows of fir beneath them. Half the forest was under their eyes at the moment, and the man said: "Is it not magnificent! It makes me proud of my country. Just think, all this glorious spread of hill and valley is under your father's direction—I may say under your direction, for I notice he does just about what you tell him to do."

"You've noticed that?" she laughed. "If I were a man I'd rather be supervisor of this forest than congressman."

"So would I," he agreed. "Nash says you are the supervisor. I wonder if your father realizes how efficient you are? Does he ever sorrow over your not being a boy?"

Her eyes shone with mirth. "Not that I can notice. He'll be back on Friday. Good luck!"

"Same to you. So long!"

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"You're a good deal like a son to him, I imagine. You can do about all that a boy can do, anyhow—more than I could ever do. Does he realize how much you have to do with the management of his forest? I've never seen you like. I really believe you could carry on the work as well as he."

She flushed with pleasure. "You seem to think I'm a district forester in disguise."

"I have eyes, Miss Supervisor, and also ears, which leads me to ask. Why don't you clean out that saloon gang? Landon is sure there's crooked work going on at that mill—certainly that open bar is a disgraceful and corrupting thing."

Her face clouded. "We've tried to cut out that saloon, but it can't be done. You see, it's on a patented claim. The claim was bogus, of course, and we've made complaint, but the matter is hung up and that gives 'em a chance to go on."

"Well, let's not talk of that. It's too delicious an hour for any question of business. It is a moment for poetry. I wish I could write what I feel this moment. Why don't we camp here and watch the sun go down and the moon rise? From our lofty vantage ground the coming of dawn would be an epic."

"We mustn't think of that," she protested. "We must be going."

"Not yet. The hour is too perfect. It may never come again. The wind in the pines, the sunshine, the conies crying from their rocks, the butterflies on the clover—my heart aches with the beauty of it. It's been a wonderful trip. Even that staggering walk in the rain had its splendid quality. I couldn't see the poetry in it then, but I do now. These few days have made us comrades, haven't they—comrades of the trail?"

"(To Be Continued.)"

Local News

From Friday's Daily.

C. R. Todd and wife departed this morning for Omaha, where they will visit for a short time there with friends.

John Fight and wife returned home this morning from Omaha, where they have been visiting their daughter, Mrs. Thomas Sullivan.

Will H. Tritsch was among those going to Omaha this afternoon to visit for a few hours, looking after securing his new Buick car.

William Fahleson departed this morning for Davy, Neb., where he will visit over Sunday with his family on the farm near that place.

John Gorder, John Kaffenberger and son, George Kaffenberger, were among those going to Omaha via the Burlington this afternoon on No. 23.

George A. Meisinger was a passenger this morning for Omaha, where he will spend the day with his wife at St. Joseph's hospital in that city.

Mrs. R. E. Foster and children of Union are spending a few days in this city at the home of Mrs. Foster's parents, Mr. and Mrs. L. G. Larson.

County Clerk Frank J. Libershal, wife and little daughter were among the Omaha passengers this afternoon, where they will visit for a few hours.

County Treasurer W. K. Fox departed this morning for Elmwood, where he goes to attend the funeral of his old friend, Joseph Mullin, which was held in that city today at 2 o'clock.

Leon Mote of Plainview, Nebraska, arrived today for a short visit here at the home of County Attorney A. G. Cole and family. Mr. Mote is assistant cashier of the Citizens State bank at Plainview.

Charles Patterson and nephew, Donald Patterson, who have been in Omaha attending the Ak-Sar-Ben for a few days, came down this morning for a visit with relatives for a few days. Donald is a member of the Arapahoe band, which is playing in Omaha this week.

Mrs. T. B. Salmon and son, Tom, of Portland, Oregon, arrived in this city yesterday and will make a visit here with Mr. and Mrs. W. K. Fox, the parents of Mrs. Salmon, as well as their many friends, and it is needless to say that the occasion is one of great pleasure to the parents.

From Saturday's Daily.

John Beck was in the city today for a few hours looking after some matters of business with the merchants.

Mrs. A. H. Graves of Murray was in the city today for a few hours, en route from her home to Glenwood, where she will visit over Sunday.

John Kraeger came in this morning from his country home to look after the week-end shopping and visit with his many friends for the day.

George Budig of Havelock is enjoying a short visit here with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. William Budig, and expects to return home tomorrow.

James Loughridge, who has just taken up a position with the Hudson Thurler Co. of Omaha as a traveling salesman, was here for a few hours today en route to his home at Murray.

Mrs. G. W. Goodman is in the city visiting with her parents for a short time, while Mr. Goodman is getting relocated at Lincoln, where they will make their home after living in Omaha for the past six months.

Henry Schoemaker and son motored up this morning from their home near Nehawka and spent a short time here with friends, as well as looking after some matters at the court house.

Mrs. C. E. Wescott departed this morning for Lincoln, Superior and Red Cloud, Neb., where she will spend a short time visiting with old friends before she returns to her home at Los Angeles.

Secures Fine Apples.

L. B. Egenberger, the lower Main street grocer, has just closed a deal whereby he secures the apple crop of Julius Pitz for this season and will at once make preparations for handling the same. It is expected that there will be close to 1,000 bushels of the apples, which are of a fine quality.

"About two years ago when I began using Chamberlain's Tablets I had been suffering for some time with stomach trouble and chronic constipation. My condition improved rapidly through the use of these tablets. Since taking four or five bottles of them my health has been fine," writes Mrs. John Newton, Irving, N. Y. Obtainable everywhere.

Mrs. George A. Kaffenberger returned home this afternoon from Lincoln, where she had been attending a missionary convention of the Methodist church.

Secures Chamberlain's Cough Remedy.

"Last winter I used a bottle of Chamberlain's Cough Remedy for a bad bronchial cough. I felt its beneficial effects immediately and before I had finished the bottle I was cured. I never tire of recommending this remedy to my friends," writes Mrs. William Bright, Ft. Wayne, Ind. Obtainable everywhere.

LOST—Many hogs representing a large amount of money, by stockmen who don't know the great saving and protection afforded by Vesey's Star Anti-Cholera, or who are too careless or short-sighted to call on Gering & Co. and lay in a supply before it is too late. 10-7-2tw

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JACOB SCHNEIDER AN OLD RESIDENT OF CASS PASSES AWAY

Last evening at 6 o'clock at his home in Cedar Creek, Jacob Schneider, one of the prominent residents of that section of the county, passed away, after an illness covered several months and resulting from a complication of diseases, and thus is brought to a close a life full of usefulness and effort toward the betterment of his community and of helpfulness toward his family and friends.

Mr. Schneider was born in Scott county, Iowa, September 24, 1