The Girl from Tim's Place

BY CHARLES CLARK MUNN

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SYNOPSIS.

Chip McGuire, a 18-year-old girl living at Tim's place in the Maine woods is sold by her father to Pete Bolduc, a half-breed. She runs away and reaches the camp of Martin Frisbie, occupied by Martin, his wife, nephew, Raymond Steeman, and guides. She tells her story and is cared for by Mrs. Frisbie. Journey of Frisbie's party into woods to visit father of Mrs. Frisbie, an old hermit, who has resided in the wilderness for many years. When camp is broken Chip and Ray occupy same canoe. The party reach camp of Mrs. Frisbie's father and are welcomed by him and Cy Walker, an old friend and former townsman of the hermit. They settle down for summer's stay. Chip and Ray are in love, but no one realizes this but Cy Walker. Strange canoe marks found on lake shore in front of their cabin. Strange smoke is seen across the lake. Martin and Levi leave for settlement to get officers to arrest McGuire, who is known as outlaw and escaped murderer. Chip's one woods friend, Tomah, an Indian, visits camp. Ray believes he sees a bear on the ridge. Chip is stolen by Pete Bolduc who escapes with her in a canoe. Chip is rescued by Martin and Levi as they are returning from the settlement. Bolduc escapes. Old Cy proposes to Ray that he remain in the woods with himself and Amos and trap during the winter, and he concludes to do so. Others of the party return to Greenvale, taking Chip with them. Chip starts to school in Greenvale, and finds life unpleasant at Aunt Comforts, made so especially by Hannah. Old Cy and Ray discover strange tracks in the wilderness. They penetrate further into the wilderness and discover the hiding place of the man who had been sneaking about their cabin. They investigate the cave home of McGuire during his absence. Bolduc finds McGuire and the two fight to the death, finding a watery grave together. Ray returns to Greenvale and finds Chip waiting for him. Ray wants Chip to return to the woods with them, but she, feeling that the old comradeship with Ray has been broken, refuses. When they part, however, it is as lovers.

CHAPTER XX.

For a few more days Chip lived the life that had now become unbearable, and then the end came. It was hastened, perhaps, by Hannah, for that ill-tempered spinster had been ever watchful, and with shrewd insight had seen or guessed all that had transpired.

"I a'pose ye know why the Frisbies hurried away so soon after Ray got back," she said to Chip that last day. "If you don't, I can tell ye. It was 'cos they noticed the goin's on 'tween you an' him an' wanted to head it off."

Not a word of protest came from the poor child in response to this sneer, and that night she wrote two notes, one to Miss Phinney, the other to Aunt Comfort. Then, making a bundle of the few belongings she could call her own—the beaded moccasins, cap and fur cape old Tomah had given her, and other trifles—she waited until almost midnight and stole out of the house.

Where to go, she knew not nor cared—only to leave Greenvale and all the shame, sorrow, and humiliation it held for her, and make her own way in the world as best she could.

The village street was as silent as midnight always found it. The low murmur of the Missy Falls whispered down the valley. A half-moon was just rising, and as Chip reached the hilltop where she had waited for Ray, she halted. From here must be taken the last glance at Greenvale, and as she turned about a sob rose in her heart, in spite of her stern resolve, for ties cannot be sundered easily.

And how vivid and life-lasting was that picture! The two long rows of white houses facing the broad street, the tall-spired church in the middle of them; scattered dwellings to the right and left; away to one side the little brown schoolhouse that had been her Mecca; the stream that wound through the broad meadows; and over all the faint sheen of the rising moon.

Only for a moment she paused for this good-by look, then turned and ran. On and on she sped mile after mile, up hill, down hill, halting now and then for breath until a cross-road was reached, and here she stopped. Here also came the question of direction. To follow the main road was to reach Riverton, between which and Greenvale the stage journeyed. To go there meant being recognized perhaps. In her study of geography, she had found that the village which was her birthplace lay northeast from Greenvale. She meant sometime and somehow to reach that spot and visit her mother's grave once more, and also, if possible, to send word to Old Tomah.

From now on the road became narrow. Miles slapped between houses, and Chip, wearied and heavy-eyed, could only creep along. The way became more devious now, bending around a wooded hill and then crossing a wide swamp to enter a stretch of forest. Direction became lost in these turnings, the road grew hilly and less traveled. The moon scarce showed it; and Chip, almost exhausted, stumbled over stones and felt that she was becoming lost in an unsettled country. And then, just as she emerged from a thicket and ascended a low hill, the light of coming dawn faced her, and with it the need of sleep and concealment.

Full well she knew she must avoid all observing eyes and place many more miles between herself and Greenvale to be certain of escape. And then, as the daylight increased, she caught sight of an old, almost ruined dwelling half hid among bushes just ahead. Even if empty, as it appeared, it would serve for shelter, and finding it so, she crept in, so wearied that she fell asleep at once on the warped and moldy floor.

It was only a brief nap, for soon the rattle of a passing farm wagon woke her, but refreshed somewhat by it, she again pushed on.

Soon a brook, singing cheerfully as it tumbled down a ledge, was reached, and here Chip bathed her face and hands and drank of the sweet, cool water.

Hunger also asserted itself, but that did not daunt her. She had faced it once before.

Then something of a plan as to her future movements began to shape itself in her mind, following which came an increased courage and self-reliance. Not a cent did she now possess. Food could not have until she had made good her escape and could earn it somewhere.

But the sun was shining, the birds were singing, her young, supple body was strong, life and the world were ahead; and, best of all, never again would she have to feel herself a dependent upon any one.

With these blessings, scant to most of us, hardened as she had been by servitude at Tim's Place, came a certain buoyancy of spirit and defiance of all things human.

No wild beasts were here to menace, no spites to creep and crawl along fence or hedgerow, no hideous half-breed to pursue, and as she counted her blessings, while her spirits rose, a new life and new hope came to her.

And now another feeling came—the certainty that she had come so far that no one would recognize her. At first that morning, when she heard a team coming or overtaking her, she had hidden by the roadside until it passed. When a house was sighted ahead, she made a wide detour in the fields to avoid it. Now this sense of caution vanished, and she strode on fearless and confident.

Watched Her Second Old Cy Pulling Trout from Each Pool and Cascade.

When night came again she crept into an unused sheep barn, and when daylight wakened her, she hurried on once more.

All that second day she plodded on that same patient up-hill, down-dale journey, never halting except to pick a few berries, or where a brook crossed the road to obtain a handful of watercress or some sweet-flag buds.

Now and then villages were passed, again it was country sparsely settled, where farm-houses were wide apart, and when this day was waning, even these had vanished and she found herself in almost a wilderness once more.

Hills now met her already weary feet; they seemed never ending, for as the crown of one was reached, another met her eyes. The roadway also became badly gullied, always stony, with grass growing in the hollows.

By now she was faint and dizzy from two days' fasting, and so footsore that she could scarce limp along. So far her defiant pride had kept her from begging food, but now that was weakening, and at the next house she would have asked a morsel. But no next house came. Only the same scrub growth along the wayside with now and then a patch of forest, with never a fence even, to indicate human ownership.

The sun had now vanished. Already the stretches of forest were shadowy, and as Chip reached the apex of another long hill, beyond and far below she could see another darkened valley. Night seemed creeping up from it to meet her. Not a house, not even a fence or recent clearing—only the unending tangle of green growth and this dark vale beyond.

"I guess I'll starve 'fore I find another house," poor Chip muttered, and then as the utter desolation of her situation and surroundings were realized for a moment, her defiant courage gave way.

For two days and half a night she had plodded on without food and with scarce a moment's rest. Her feet were blistered, her eyes smarted from sun and dust, her head swam. She was miles away from any human habitation, footsore, weary and despondent, with night enclosing her—a homeless waif, still clinging to the small bundle that contained her all.

"I ain't so bad off as I was then," she said. "I'm sure of finding a house to-morrow."

And now, as if this moment marked the turning point of her fortunes, from far down the hill she had climbed came the faint creak, creak, and jolting sound of an ascending wagon. Slowly it neared, until just at the hilltop where Chip sat, the tired horse halted, and its driver saw her rise almost beside the wagon.

"Mister," she said, "I'm nearly tuckered out and 'bout starved. Won't you please give me a lift an' a chance to earn my vittles for a day or two?"

The man gave a low whistle.

"Why sartin, sartin," he answered in a moment, "but who be ye? I thought for a minute ye was a spirit. Git up here," he added, without waiting for a reply and moving to make room. Then as Chip obeyed, he chirruped to his horse and down the hill they rattled.

"Who might be ye, girlie, an' what'd ye come from?" he asked again, as they came to another ascent and the horse walked.

"My name's Vera, Vera—Raymond," answered Chip, "an' I run away from where I was livin'."

"That's curis," answered the old man, glancing at her; "what'd ye run away from, some poor farm?"

"No, sir," replied Chip, almost defiantly, "but I guess I was a sort o' pauper. I was livin' with folks that fetched me out o' the woods an' was schoolin' me, and I couldn't stand it, so I run away. I don't want to tell where they be, or where I came from either," she added in a moment, "for I don't want them ever to find me."

"Wal, that's a proper sort o' feelin'," responded the man, still looking at his passenger, "an' I don't mind. I live down beyond here in what's called the Holler. Somebody called it Peaceful Valley once. We'll take keer o' ye to-night 'n' to-morrer we'll see what's best to be done. I guess ye need a hum 'bout ez bad ez a body kin, anyway."

And so Chip McGuire, waif of the wilderness and erstwhile protege of a philanthropic woman, as Vera Raymond found another home, and began still another life with this old farmer, Judson Walker, and his wife Mandy.

But a sorrow deeper far than Chip ever realized fell upon Aunt Comfort when her brimming eyes read her note the morning after her flight.

Dear Aunt Comfort:

I can't stand Hannah or being a pauper any longer. She as good as told me I wasted your money and I never thought of it. She said I wasn't good enough for Ray, either, and that was the reason Mrs. Frisbie took him away so soon. I know I ain't good for nothin' nor nobody, but I didn't ask to be fetched here and I am going away, never, never, never to come back. If ever I can, I will pay you and Mrs. Frisbie for all I've eat and had. Good-bye forever,

CHIP.

CHAPTER XXI.

When the sun rose again and Chip awoke, she scarce knew where she was. Outside, and almost reaching the one window of her little room, was the top of an apple tree in full bloom. Below she could hear ducks quacking, now and then a barnyard monarch's defiant crow, from farther away came the rippling sound of running water, and as she lay and listened to the medley, a robin lit on the treetop not ten feet away and chirped as he peered into her window. A scent of lavender mingled with apple blossoms became noticeable; then the few and very old-fashioned fittings of the room,—a chest of drawers with little brass handles, over it a narrow mirror with gilt frame, two wood-seated chairs painted blue, and white muslin curtains draped away from the window.

And now, conscious that she was in some strange place, back in an instant came the three days of her long, weary tramp, the nights when she had slept in a sheep barn and in a deserted dwelling, and at last, faint, footsore, and almost hopeless, she had been rescued from another night with only the sky for a roof.

Then the quaint old man, so much like Old Cy, whom she had accosted, the rattling, bumping ride down into this valley, and the halt where a cheery light beamed its welcome and a motherly woman made it real.

It was all so unexpected, so satisfying, so protective of herself, that Chip could hardly realize how it had come about.

No questions had been asked of her here. These two quaint old people had taken her as she was—dusty, dirty and travel-worn. She had bathed and been helped to an ample meal and shown to this sweet-smelling room as if she had been their own daughter.

"They must be awful kind sort o' people," Chip thought, and then creeping out of bed she dressed, and taking her stockings and sadly worn shoes in hand softly descended the stairs.

No one seemed astir anywhere. The ticking of a tall clock in the sitting-room was the only sound, the back door was wide open, and out of this Chip passed, and seating herself on a bench, began putting on stockings and shoes. This was scarce done ere she heard a step and saw the old man emerge from the same door.

"Wal, Pattycake, how air ye?" he asked, smiling. "I heerd ye creepin' downstairs like a mouse, but I was up, 'n' 'bout dressed. Hope ye slept well. It's Sunday," he added, without waiting for a reply, "an' we don't git up quite so arly ez usual. Ye can help Mandy 'bout breakfast now, if ye like, 'n' I'll do the milkin'."

And this marked the entry of Chip into the new home, and outlined her duties. No more questions were asked of her. She was taken at her own valuation—a needy girl, willing to work for her board, insisting on it, and yet, in a few days, so hospitable were these people and so winsome was Chip, that she stepped into their affection, as it were, almost without effort.

"I don't think we best quiz her much," Uncle Jud (as he was known) said to his wife that first night. "I found her on the top o' Bangall hill, where she riz up like a ghost; she 'lowed she run away from somewhar, but where 'twas, she didn't want to tell. My 'pinion is thar's a love 'fair at the bottom on't all; but whether it's so or not, it ain't none o' our business. She needs a home, sartin sure. She says she meant to airn her keep, which is the right sperit, an' long as she minds us, she kin have it."

That Chip "airned her keep" and something more was soon evinced, for in two weeks it was "Aunt Mandy" and "Uncle Jud" from her, and "Patty" or "Pattycake," the nickname given her that first morning from them. More than that, so rapidly had she won her way here that by now Uncle Jud had visited the Riggsville store, some four miles down this valley, and materials for two dresses, new shoes, a broad sun hat, and other much-needed clothing were bought for Chip.

Neither was it all one-sided, for these people, well-to-do in their isolated home, were also quite alone. Their two boys had grown up, gone away and married, and had homes of their own, and the company of a bright and winsome girl like Chip was needed in this home.

Her adoption and acceptance of it were like a small stream flowing into a larger one, for the reason that these people were almost primitive in location and custom.

"We don't go to meetin' Sundays," Uncle Jud had explained that first day after breakfast, "We're sorter heathen, I s'pose; but then ag'in, thar ain't no chance. Thar used to be meetin's down to the Corners, 'n' a parson; but he only got four hundred a year, an' hard work to collect that, 'n' so he gin the job up. Since then the meetin'-house has kinder gone to pieces, 'n' the Corner folks use it now for storin' tools. We observe Sundays here by bein' sorter lazy, 'n' I go fishin' some or pickin' berries."

And then Uncle Jud was so much like Old Cy in ways and speech that her heart was won. And besides these blessings, the old farm house, hidden away between two ranges of wooded hills, seemed set out of the world and so secure from observation that she felt that no one from Greenvale ever could or would discover her. She had meant to hide herself from all who knew her, had changed her name for that purpose, and here and now it was accomplished.

That first Sunday, also, became a halcyon one for her, after chores, in the performance of which Chip made herself useful, Uncle Jed took his fishpole, and giving her the basket to carry, led the way to the brook, and for four bright sunny hours, Chip knew not the lapse of time while she watched the leaping, laughing stream, and her second Old Cy pulled trout from each pool and cascade.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

TO DRIVE OUT REDS

COUNTRY TO BE RID OF BANDS OF ANARCHISTS.

SWEEPING ORDER ISSUED

Secretary Straus of Commerce and Labor Bureau Sends Request for Deportation of All Alien Malcontents.

Washington.—The secretary of commerce and labor Tuesday issued a sweeping order to all commissioners of immigration and immigration inspectors in charge, directing them to confer with the police in their respective jurisdictions with a view to securing the "co-operation of the police and detective forces in an effort to rid the country of alien anarchists and criminals falling within the law relating to deportation." This action was taken at the instance of officials in Chicago, where Chief of Police Shippy was stabbed.

The order of Secretary Straus follows: "To all commissioners of immigration and immigration inspectors in charge: It is hereby directed that, with a view to promptly obtain definite information with regard to alien anarchists and criminals located in the United States, you shall confer fully with the chief of police, or the chief of the secret service of the city in which you are located. You should call to the attention of the chief of police, or chief of the secret service, the definition of 'anarchist' contained in sections 2 and 38 of the act of February 20, 1907, and the provisions of section 2 placing within the excluded classes 'persons who have been convicted of or admit having committed a felony or other crime or misdemeanor involving moral turpitude,' pointing out that if any such person is found within the United States within three years after landing or entry therein he is amenable to deportation under the provisions of section 21 of the act.

OHIO SPURNS FORAKER AND DICK

Taft Given Indorsement by Buckeye State Committee.

Columbus, O.—The Republicans of Ohio who met Tuesday held their state convention, dealing a staggering blow to the interests of Senators Foraker and Dick by wiping off the state central committee every man who was known to have any bias in their favor. Of the 21 members of the new committee 11 were re-elected and of the changes made, seven were Foraker men and all the Foraker men on the committee. The other three who were not re-elected were all for Taft and their retirement was caused by local conditions alone. Every member of the new committee is a Taft man.

CHARGES THEFT OF $70,000,000.

Representative Lloyd of Missouri Scores Roads in Accusation.

Washington.—The charge that the government has been robbed of over $70,000,000 since 1880 by railroads carrying the mails, was made on the floor of the house of representatives Tuesday by Mr. Lloyd (Mo.).

He referred to the new system of weighing the mails recently introduced by the postmaster general and declared that it was an admission that the post office department had allowed the people of the country to be mulcted out of the sum stated. He demanded to know why suits had not been instituted against the railroads to recover this money.

Pass Up Hartje Defense.

Pittsburg, Pa.—Contending that the prosecution had failed to present evidence to support either the charge of conspiracy or subornation of perjury, upon which Augustus Hartje, a millionaire paper manufacturer, John L. Welshons, his friend, and Clifford Hooe, a negro, formerly employed as coachman for the Hartje family, have been on trial for over a week, attorneys for these defendants Tuesday announced that no testimony would be offered in defense.

Asks Roy Extradition.

Washington.—Application was made to the state department Tuesday for the necessary authority to extradite from France Paul E. Roy, charged with responsibility for the death of George A. Carkins in New Hampshire. The action on the application was not announced.

Jury Calls It Suicide.

New York.—Althou Dr. Otto Schultze testified at the inquest Tuesday that an autopsy which he made proved conclusively that Gerolamo Cella, a wealthy importer, was murdered, the coroner's jury returned a verdict that he came to his death by his own hand.

Pleads Not Guilty to Murder.

Las Cruces, N. M.—Wayne Brazle pleaded not guilty to the charge of murdering Pat Garrett, who was shot and killed.

Taft Talks in Boston.

Boston.—A great audience assembled at Symphony hall Tuesday night and heard addresses by Secretary of War Taft, United States Senator Elmer J. Burkett of Nebraska, Gov. Curtis Guild and Lieut. Gov. Eben S. Draper.

Fire Ravages Spring Green, Wis.

Spring Green, Wis.—Fire, which originated in a restaurant owned by Seth Thomas, destroyed a number of buildings in Spring Green Tuesday, the total loss being about $75,000.

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