The Girl from Tim's Place

BY CHARLES CLARK MUNN

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SYNOPSIS.

Chip McGuire, a 16-year-old girl living at Tim's Place in the Maine woods is sold by her father to Pete Boldue, a half-breed. She runs away and reaches the camp of Martin Frisbie, occupied by Martin, his wife, nephew, Raymond Stetson, 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 Boldue who escapes with her in a canoe. Chip is rescued by Martin and Levi as they are returning from the settlement. Boldue escapes. Old Cy proposes to Ray that he remain in the woods with himself and Amal 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. Boldue 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. Chip runs away from Aunt Comfort's and finds another home with Judson Walker. She gives her name as Vera Raymond.

CHAPTER XXI.—Continued.

And so her new life began.

But the change was not made without some cost to her feelings, for heartstrings reach far, and Miss Phinney and her months of patient teaching were not forgotten.

Aunt Comfort and her benign face oft returned to Chip, "and dear Old Cy," as she always thought of him, still oftener. Ray's face also lingered in her heart. Now and then she caught herself humming some darky song, and never once did the moon smile into this quiet vale that her thoughts did not speed back to that wildwood lake, with its rippled path of silver, the dark bordering forest, and how she wielded a paddle while her young lover picked his banjo.

No word or hint of all this bygone life and romance ever fell from her lips. It was a page in her memory that must never be turned—an idyl to be forgotten—and yet forget it she could not, in spite of will or wishes.

And now as the summer days sped by, and Chip helping Uncle Jud in the meadows or Aunt Mandy about the house, and winning love from both, saw a new realm open before her. There was in the sitting room of this quaint home a tall bookcase, its shelves filled with a motley collection of books; works on science, astronomy, geology, botany, and the like; books of travel and adventure; stories of strange countries and people never heard of by Chip; and novels by Scott, Lever, Cooper, and Hardy. These last, especially Scott and Cooper, appealed most to Chip, and once she began them, every spare hour, and often until long past midnight, she became lost in this new world.

"I know all about how folks live in the woods," she said one Sunday to Uncle Jud, when half through "The Deerslayer." "I was brought up there. I know how Injuns live, and what they believe. I had an old Injun friend once. I've got the moccasins and fur cape he gave me now. His name was Tomah, 'n' he believed in queer things that sometimes creep an' sometimes run faster'n we can."

It was her first reference to her old life, but once begun, she never paused until all her queer history had been related.

"I didn't mean to tell it," she explained in conclusion, "for I don't want nobody to know where I came from, an' I hope you won't tell."

How near she came to disclosing what was of far more importance to herself and these people than old Tomah's superstition she never knew, or that all that saved her was her reference to Old Cy by that name only.

More than that, she had no suspicion that this kindly old man, so much like him in looks and speech, was his brother.

With the coming of September, however, a visitor was announced. "Aunt Abby's comin' to stay with us a spell," Uncle Jud said that day; "she's Mandy's sister, Abigail Bemis, an' she lives at Christmas Cove. It's a shore town, 'bout a hundred miles from here. She ain't much like Mandy," he added confidentially to Chip; "she's more book larned, so you'll have to mind your p's and q's. If ye like, ye can go with me to the station to meet her."

And so it came to pass that a few days later Chip, dressed in her best, rode to the station with Uncle Jud in the old carryall, and there met this visitor.

She was not a welcome guest, so far as Chip was concerned, wonted as she had now become to Uncle Jud and Aunt Mandy, whose speech, like her own, was not "book larned," and for this reason Chip felt afraid of her. So much so, in fact, that for a few days she scarce dared to speak at all.

Her timidity wore away in due time, for Aunt Abby—a counterpart of her sister—was in no wise awe inspiring. She saw Chip as she was, and soon felt an interest in her and her peculiar history, or what was known of it. She also noted Chip's interest in books, and guessing more than she had been told, was not long in forming correct conclusions.

"What do you intend to do with this runaway girl?" she said one day to her sister, "keep her here and let her grow up in ignorance, or what?"

"Wal, we ain't thought much about that," responded Mandy, "at least not yet. She ain't got no relations to look arter her, so far ex we kin larn. She's company for us, 'n' willin'. Uncle Jud sets lots of store by her. She is with him from morn till night, and handy at all sorts o' work. This is how 'tis with us here, an' now what do you say?"

For a moment Aunt Abby meditated. "You ought to do your duty by her," she said at last, "and she certainly needs more schooling.'

"We can send her down to the Corners when school begins, if you think we orter," returned her sister, timidly; but we hate to lose her now. We've kinder took to her, you see."

"I hardly think that will do," answered Aunt Abby, knowing as she did that the three R's comprised the full extent of an education at the Corners. "What she needs is a chance to mingle with more people than she can here, and learn the ways of the world, as well as books. Her mind is bright. I notice she is reading every chance she can get, and you know my ideas about education. For her to stay here, even with schooling at the Corners, is to let her grow up like a hoyden. Now what would you think if I took her back to Christmas Cove? There is a better school there. She will meet and mingle with more people, and improve faster."

"Her Goin' Away Seems Like Pullin' My Heart Out."

"I dunno what Judson'll say," returned Aunt Mandy, somewhat sadly. "He's got so wonted to her, he'll be heart-broke, I'm afraid." And so the consultation closed.

The matter did not end here for Aunt Abby, "not in her way," as Uncle Jud had often said, yet in reality only advocating what she felt was best for the homeless waif, now began a persuasive campaign. She enlarged on Christmas Cove, its excellent school and capable master, its social advantages and cultured people, who boasted a public library and debating society, and especially its summer attractions, when a few dozen city people sojourned there. Its opportunities for church going also came in for praise, though if this worthy woman had known how Chip felt about that feature, it would have been left unmentioned.

"The girl needs religious influence and contact with believers, as well as schooling," she said later to Aunt Mandy, "and that must be considered. Here she can have none, and will grow up a heathen. I certainly think she ought to go back with me for a year or two, at least, and then we can decide what is best."

"There's one thing ye ain't thought 'bout," Mandy answered, "an' that's her sense o' obligation. From what she's told me, 'twas that that made her run away from whar she was, 'n' she'd run away from here if she didn't feel she was earnin' her keep. She's peculiar in that way, 'n' can't stand feelin' she's dependent. How you goin' to get round that?"

"Just as you do," returned Aunt Abby, not at all discouraged. "We live about as you do, as you know, only Mr. Bemis has the mill; and she can help me about the house, as she does here."

But Chip's own consent to this new plan was the hardest to obtain.

"I'll do just as Uncle Jud wants me to," she responded, when Aunt Abby proposed the change; "but I'd hate to go 'way from here. It's all the real sort o' home I've ever known, and they've been so good to me I'll have to cry when I leave it. You'd let me come here once in awhile, wouldn't ye?"

As she seemed ready to cry at this moment, Aunt Abby wisely dropped the subject then and there; in fact, she did not allude to it again in Chip's presence.

But Aunt Abby carried her point with the others. Uncle Jud consented very reluctantly, Aunt Mandy also yielded after much more persuasion, and when Aunt Abby's visit terminated poor Chip's few belongings were packed in a new telescope case; she kissed Aunt Mandy, unable to speak, and this tearful parting was repeated at the station with Uncle Jud. When the train had vanished he wiped his eyes on his coat sleeves, climbed into his old carryall, and drove away disconsolate.

"Curis, curis, how a gal like that un'll work her way into a man's feelin's," he said to himself. "It ain't been three months since I picked her up, 'n' now her goin' away seems like pullin' my heart out."

CHAPTER XXII.

Christmas Cove had entered its autumn lethargy when Aunt Abby Bemis and her new protege reached it. Capt. Bemis, who "never had no say 'bout nothin'," but who had cooked his own meals uncomplainingly for three weeks, emerged white-dusted from the mill to greet the arrivals, and Chip was soon installed in a somewhat bare room overlooking the cove. Everything seemed slightly chilly to her here. This room, with its four-posted bed, blue painted chairs, light blue shades, and dark blue straw matting, the leafless elms in front, the breeze that swept in from the sea, and even her reception, seemed cool. Her heart was not in it. Try as she would, she could not yet feel one spark of affection for this "book larned" Aunt Abby, who had already begun to reprove her for lapses of speech. It was all so different from the home life she had just left; and as Chip had now begun to notice and feel trifles, the relations of the people seemed chilly as the room to which she was consigned.

When Sunday came—a sunless one with leaden sky and cold wind bearing the ocean's moaning—Chip felt herself back at Greenvale with its Sundays, for now she was stared at the moment she entered the church. The singing was, of course, of the same solemn character, the minister's prayers even longer, and the preaching as incomprehensible as in Greenvale.

With her advent at school Monday came something of the same trouble she had met at Greendale, for the master, a weazen, dried-up little old man, who wore a wig and seemed to exude rules and discipline, lacked the kindly interest of Miss Phinny.

Chip, almost a mature young lady, was aligned with girls and boys of 10 and 12, and once more the same shame and humiliation had to be endured. It wore away in time, however, for she had made almost marvelous progress under Miss Phinney. Her mind was keen and quick, and once at study again, she astonished Mr. Bell, the master.

Something of her old fearless self-reliance now came to her aid, also. It had made her dare 60 miles of wilderness alone and helpless, it had spurred her to escape Greenvale and her sense of being a dependent pauper, and now that latent force for good or ill still nerved her.

But Christmas Cove did not suit her. The sea that drew her eyes with its vastness seemed to awe her. The great house, brown and moss-coated where she lived, was barnlike, and never quite warm enough. The long street she traversed four times daily was bleak and wind-swept. Aunt Abby was austere and lacking in cordiality; and Sundays—well, Sundays were Chip's one chief abhorrence.

Another influence — an insidious heart hunger she could not put away —now added to her loneliness in the new life. It carried her thoughts back to the rippled, moonlit lake, where Ray had picked his banjo and sung to her; even back to that first night by the camp-fire when she had watched and listened to him in rapt admiration. It thrilled her as naught else could when she recalled the few moments at the lake men, unconscious of the need of restraint, she had let him caress her.

Then the long days of watching for his return were lived over, and the one almost ecstatic moment when he had leaped from the stage and over the wall, with no one in sight, while he held her in his arms.

And then—and this hurt the most—that last evening before they were to part again, when beside the firefly-lit mill pond he had the chance to say so much and said—nothing!

It was all a bitter-sweet memory, which she tried to put away forever the night she left Greenvale. She was now Vera Raymond. No one could trace her; and yet, so at odds were her will and her heart, there still lingered the faint hope that Ray would sometime and somehow find her out.

And so, studying faithfully, often lonesome, now and then longing for the bygone days with Ray and Old Cy, and always hoping that she might some time return to Peaceful Valley, Chip passed the winter at Christmas Cove.

Something of success came to her through it all. She reached and retained head positions in her classes. A word of praise came occasionally from Mr. Bell. Aunt Abby grew less austere and seemed to have a little pride in her. She became acquainted with other people and in touch with young folks, was invited to parties and sleigh-rides. The vernacular of Tim's Place left her, and even Sundays were less a torture, in fact, almost a pleasure, for then she saw most of the young people she mingled with, and now and then exchanged a bit of gossip.

Her own dress became of more interest to her. Aunt Abby, fortunately for Chip, felt desirous that her ward should appear well, and Chip, thus educated and polished in village life, to a degree which at least, fulfilled Aunt Abby's hopes.

Another success also came to her, for handsome as she undeniably was, with her big, appealing eyes, her splendid black hair, and well-rounded form, the young men began to seek her. One became persistent, and when spring had unlocked the long, curved bay once more, Chip had become almost a leader in the little circle of young people.

Her life with those who had taken her in charge also became more harmonious. In fact, something of affection began to leaven it, for the reason that never once had Aunt Abby questioned Chip as to her past. Aunt Mandy and Uncle Jud had both cautioned her as to its unwisdom, and she was broad and charitable enough to let it remain a closed book until such time as Chip was willing to open it; and for this, more than all else that she received, Chip felt grateful. But one day it came out—or at least a portion of it.

"I suppose you have often wondered where I was born, and who my parents were," Chip said, one Sunday afternoon, when she and Aunt Abby were alone, "and I want to thank you for never asking." And then, omitting much, she briefly outlined her history.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Eating Stew Through Straws.

Doing as my Indian friends did, I seized in my turn a chunk of mutton from the kettle and proceeded to eat it. How I was to get my share of the stew, however, I could not conceive, as licking one's fingers is a slow process and inadequately nourishing. On the floor table, however, was a pile of what looked like dark blue lead pencils. The governor took one, stuck it into the kettle and peacefully sucked until he was satisfied. It was simply sucking—not lemonade—but mutton stew, through a straw. Then he carefully proceeded to eat the straw. Sucking the stew through it had softened and flavored it for eating. I mastered the game at the first trial, writes Frederick Monsen in the Craftsman, and from that time was a devoted adherent to pki bread, as well as to many other dishes and customs of my good friends, the Hopi.

IN FIERCE BATTLE

ENGINEERS FIGHT EACH OTHER WITH LOCOMOTIVES.

End of Struggle Between Hot-Tempered Irishmen Comes with Destruction of Two of Company's Freight Cars.

A select few of the citizens that happened at the time to be lounging or engaged in business about the depot in Wreston, in the middle of the afternoon were treated to the unusual spectacle of two enraged locomotive engineers figting each other with their respective engines.

Freight trains Nos. 28 and 11 were at the depot at the same time, and both out on sidings to permit the afternoon train, No. 5, going south, to pass.

Engineer Dempsey of No. 28, with his big engine, 898, and Engineer Culhane of No. 11, with his big engine, 1112, happened in the course of their switching, to be on the sidetrack farthest west at the same time, Dempsey with one box car and one flat car behind him, and Culhane with three coal cars.

The first outsiders knew of the difficulty was when they heard Dempsey shout to Culhane, "Get off that track, you Irishman! What are you doing there?"

"Irishman yourself," Culhane immediately yelled back in reply.

"Get your old kettle out of the way or I'll smash it for you."

"Smash nothin'," Dempsey shouted, and in a moment more both engines were started slowly forward and began to approach each other, the engineers leaning out of the windows and yelling defiance at each other, while the firemen, evidently knowing something of the tempers of their respective superiors, jumped to the ground and ran to one side.

Almost immediately afterward the huge machines came together with a crash that could be heard a quarter of a mile away, but without injury to either, and no sooner had they touched noses than both engineers turned on full steam, and began a pushing match extraordinary. The gigantic drive wheels of both engines slipped on the track and flew around at a furious rate, while the black smoke and the steam from the exhaust rolled up like clouds.

At first there was no motion either way, but soon Culhane's No. 112 began to give way, and, fighting every inch, was slowly, but surely, driven back down the side-track and across the switch, and there Dempsey left her and started up the sidetrack again.

The moment he started away Culhane shut off the steam, and jumping to the ground, uncoupled the cars, and mounting the engine again, threw the lever forward and dashed recklessly up the sidetrack toward the other engine. Dempsey had not been watching him, but some of the bystanders had, and shouted ta Dempsey to look out. Dempsey took one glance at the approaching engine, and then put on all steam and sent 898 up the sidetrack with all speed.

Culhane pursued him, and in a short time the pace became terrific, and pursuer and pursued vanished in a great cloud of dust out into the level prairie line in the direction of Mercedale. With Dempsey only a short distance ahead they went past the elevator at Croton, two miles up the track at a speed which the men there said must have exceeded a hundred miles an hour, but just beyond that point, on a sharp curve, both of Dempsey's cars left the track and tumbled down a steep bank, without however, causing the engine to leave the rails, and this occurrence seemed to bring Culhane to his senses, for he shut off steam and then reversed the engine and went back to Wreston, followed at a respectable distance by 898.

The two ditched cars were complete wrecks, but the company will retain both men in their service, changing Culhane, however, to a local run away out on the western division. They don't care to have any more trials of either strength or speed for the entertainment of favored spectators.—Wreston letter, in Baltimore Sun.

New Way to Stop Trains.

In Austria and Germany an automobile system of stopping fast railway trains without the co-operation of the engine driver or the brakeman has recently been tried with satisfactory results. The apparatus consists of two parts, one carried by the locomotive, close to the rails, and acting directly upon the brakes of the train, and the other attached to the track and connected with all signal points at curves, gates, etc. If it becomes necessary suddenly to stop an approaching train, the turning of a lever throws up a connection from the track to the apparatus under the locomotive which governs the brakes. At the same time an automatic signal whistle warns the engineer of what has been done. The brakes can be released in a similar manner. Between Vienna and Krems the device has worked successfully with trains running 62 miles an hour.

Left Boy Unharmed.

Joseph Bradley, aged six years, wandered upon the Pennsylvania railroad tracks south of Pottsville, Pa., and was run down by an engine, but miraculously escaped hurt by lying down upon his stomach between the rails. The engine driver saw the boy's predicament too late to stop. Horror-stricken, he and his fireman went back after the engine had passed over young Bradley's body. They found him in tears, but unscratched.

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A Slip.

Jack (studying geography)—Father, what is a strait?

Father (reading the paper)—Five cards of a—that is, a narrow strip of water connecting two larger bodies.—Harper's Weekly.

OVER NINE MILLION (9,200,000) SOLD THIS YEAR.

Sales Lewis' Single Binder cigars for year 1907 more than.....9,200,000
Sales for 1906.....8,500,000
Gain.....700,000
Quality brings the business.

The Age Index.

Ella—You shouldn't look a gift horse in the mouth.

Stella—But how are you going to tell whether the present is new or not?—Harper's Weekly.

It Cures While You Walk.

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