

The Three Spears

By Maud J. Perkins

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A girl was riding toward Holcomb, riding like the wind on a wiry pinto. Behind her was an escort of four Yaqui maidens, who did not display the grace and abandon of their leader.

She brought her horse up standing within a few feet of Holcomb's own, and the adventurer said that she was not Indian at all, but pure Spanish. Her creamy, oval face, full scarlet lips and eyes like pools of black water made her very attractive.

The black eyes appraised Holcomb swiftly. He sat his horse like a cowboy, but the pack animal behind was laden with the outfit of the prospector. He was bronzed by hot suns, and his handsome face carried an expression of bold fearlessness that just escaped recklessness.

"Senor," she said abruptly in Spanish, "don't go to the 'Three Spears.'"

"Why?" demanded Holcomb abruptly. For an instant his eyes sought the shimmering southwest, where three slender peaks arose from the gray of the desert into the hard blue of the sky.

"Danger!" With the single word the girl wheeled her horse abruptly and set off at a gallop toward the river with her cavalcade. Their goal was a herd of cattle which was straying from the vicinity of the settlement.

Holcomb, pondering, rode on to the Yaqui town. It was situated near the only water within forty miles, a stream sunk deep in a cleft of the rocks. It was far below the level of the half desert prairie that stretched away to the mountains. The huts and tents of the town were grouped on a shelf just above high water.

Twoscore yards below the town, near where the women were washing clothes, the river dived into a deep orifice in the mountainside. Running at right angles with the stream was a



Riding Like the Wind.

range of mountains to the west, terminating in the distance with the "Three Spears."

Picking his way down to the river, along a trail steep and dangerous, Holcomb replenished his water supply, bought meal of the sullen Indians, and set out on his way to the west again. As he climbed to the plateau a chief halted him with upraised hand—a tall man with stern brown face and narrow eyes.

"The stranger must not go to the 'Three Spears,'" he grunted.

Holcomb returned the hostile gaze with calmness. He rolled a husk cigarette, lighted it and shook the reins. "I heard you, chief," he answered. The Indian stepped ungraciously aside.

An hour later Holcomb noted four dots on the northern horizon—two mounted Yaquis with pack horses, swinging out and ahead of him in a wide half-circle.

Holcomb was up next morning at the earliest break of dawn, for the "Three Spears" were less than a day's journey away and he was anxious to reach them. At noon, when he stopped for a hasty lunch, he was within the mouth of the defile which led to the higher fastnesses.

He was tightening the cinch of his horse, for the trail ahead was steep and narrow, when a sound caused him to wheel. The Spanish girl of the day before was coming toward him.

Her thin dress was torn and her moccasins were cut to shreds. There were angry bruises on her bare arms and she limped as she walked.

"You must go back!" she cried urgently in Spanish; "the 'Three Spears' mean death."

His mouth set in an obstinate line. "I've traveled for six weeks to see the 'Three Spears.' Say there's gold there; that's why the Indians guard them so closely."

The girl laid an imploring hand on his arm. "No, no!" Her earnestness could not be mistaken. "There is no gold there. But in the valley of the 'Three Spears' is the burial-place of the tribes. The Great Father comes there. And the white man must not see."

"If he profanes the valley with his footsteps, he dies. Even now the guards are waiting. They will kill you if you go on."

Holcomb's face fell. "I don't care much about graveyards," he muttered. "If there's no gold, I'm not curious. But," he asked abruptly, "what are you doing with this tribe?"

"My father had a ranch—there." She pointed to the southwest. "He died three months ago, and the Yaquis seized our cattle and horses. I am a prisoner, though they treat me kindly. They are afraid I would bring the rurales if they freed me."

"How did you get here?" "The senor saw where the water flows into the mountain? At sundown when they were not watching, I let myself into the river, and was carried through to the other side. I had seen the boys do it in play."

"It was very dark, and the current is swift. Sometimes I struck upon the rocks, but the dear Virgin protected me, and I came into the blessed air again. After one passes through the mountain there is a secret path, much shorter than the horse must take, to the 'Three Spears.' So I was in time to warn the senor."

Holcomb seized the girl's hands impulsively in his own. "You did that for me?" he asked wonderingly. "But you were hurt—you must have been injured on the cruel rocks."

"No," she replied; "a few bruises. They are nothing. And I did it for myself, too, senor. I wanted to be free again."

The cowboy-pro prospector burst into English: "You're sure a plucky little kid! I'll get you back to civilization, or bust a leg!" "Texas Holcomb may have been a pretty tough citizen, but he ain't an ongrateful one. How do we get out of here? Them Injuns may come surgin' down any time. An' I ain't goin' to take chances—with you alone."

The girl smiled and colored at the look in his brown eyes. "The four horses are hidden just below," she replied, also in English and without accent. "We must take them and go north. If you do not come soon into their valley, they will creep back and find our footprints. If we leave the horses they will follow."

"Good; we'll take the horses then. Lead on; I'll follow. What may I call you, ma'am?"

"My name is Isabella de la Barro, but father called me 'Chiquita.'"

"'Chiquita'—that means 'little one.' Chiquita it is!"

They found the hidden animals without trouble. The pack animals were laden with food, and with water in skins. This, explained Chiquita, was because the two Yaquis were going on a search for poorly-guarded cattle after Holcomb had been disposed of and his belongings appropriated.

The girl swung into the saddle of one of the horses, and they were off. By sundown they had put several miles between themselves and the dangerous "Three Spears." Chiquita cooked supper on the fire which Holcomb built, and never had the prospector tasted a meal more delicious.

Holcomb treated her as he would have his sister treated under similar circumstances. At night she slept the sleep of innocence and honest fatigue in his one blanket, while he shivered and dozed, since it grew chill when the sun went down.

By day they plodded northward at a good pace, Holcomb, "with his head on his shoulder," for there was danger of pursuit. But the Yaquis, evidently discouraged because of the start which the fugitives had obtained, and the number of fresh horses at their command, did not follow them.

Chiquita was an ideal traveling companion. She was always bright and gay, delighted with what the moment brought, and taking no thought of the morrow. She was quick to see the changing beauties of the vast country and point them out to Holcomb. Sometimes, with childish impulsiveness, she tugged at his sleeve or clasped his browned wrist, and he thrilled at her touch as the strings of the harp respond to the hand of the player.

After two weeks they came at last to the sight of a town nestling in a hollow below the ridge of hills on which they stood. It was mid forenoon. The clear air etched the hamlet with wonderful distinctness. They could see the toy men and women in the streets.

"There's Ascension, Chiquita," said Holcomb; "ain't you glad?"

"Yes," replied the girl, listlessly. The adorable sparkle had died out of her piquant face.

"So am I," went on the prospector. "Do you know why, little one?" She turned grave eyes upon him. "Why, my friend?"

"Because there's a priest there. Unless—" he added humbly, after a pause, "you don't want me. I know I ain't good enough."

The girl, rosy with happiness, flung herself into his arms. "Why, dearest one," she said, in her liquid Spanish, "I have loved thee always!"

Rising to the Occasion.

"Fifty dollars!" cried Batkins, after the judge had named the fine. "Why, judge, that's an outrage. I admit I was going too fast, but \$50—"

"Them's the figgers," said the judge, coldly.

"All right, I'll pay," said Batkins, "but I'll tell you right now I'll never come through this town again."

"That's so," said the judge. "Wa-al, by gorry, I'm sorry. You've been a mighty good customer. Bill," he added, turning to the sheriff, "hang crape on the courthouse, will ye? This here gentleman's about to pass on forever."—Harper's Weekly.

The English as Klaw Sees Them.

Mr. Marc Klaw, the American theatrical manager, who was quoted as saying that the English "are just about as emotional as a Limburger cheese," writes that what he really said was: "The English are a warm-hearted people, but are usually about as demonstrative as fromage de Brie" (a large flat cheese).

His Captive Princess

By Clarissa Mackie

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"Evan is a dear," lamented Amy Durland, "but there isn't a spark of romance in him—that is, not the right kind!"

"You mean the kind we have just witnessed?" asked her friend, Hester Blake, they left the theater and walked down the street.

"Yes—" hesitated Amy with a swift upward glance at Hester's rather severe profile. "Evan Gates isn't the sort of man to do anything romantic—oh, you know what I mean, Hester—we have just seen it at the matinee. Fancy Evan rescuing me from captivity in a lonely tower! Evan would call out the fire department to run a ladder up to my window and I would be released by the most prosaic method, while Evan would stand at the foot of the ladder looking at his watch and grumbling because he might miss an important business engagement!"

"Nonsense!" laughed Hester. "You underestimate Evan's chivalry because the opportunity has never been offered him to display it."

Amy tossed her pretty head in utter scorn of Hester's matter-of-fact opinion and as they entered a bus and went their way uptown her mind was busy with little plans whereby she might prove to herself that the man she was engaged to and who really was a most devoted lover, should prove further devotion by some romantic deed of chivalry.

It was not until she was dropping off to sleep that night that the great plan came to her and it immediately banished all sleep from her violet eyes. Amy lived with an uncle.

Several days afterward Evan Gates scanning the pile of morning mail on his desk picked out a small grayish blue envelope and opened it with a tender, expectant smile.

It was from Amy and bore most astonishing tidings:

"Dearest Evan: Come to my rescue at once—Uncle Bert has locked me in



"Somebody's Crazy as a Loon."

the tower at Hilltop because I will not marry Terry Bannister and give you up. There are rats and mice here—and you know how I hate them! I shall drop this letter from the window and trust to some one mailing it for me. Come quick, dearest, before I die of fright and starvation.

"Your distracted Amy."

P. S. "Please come yourself and do not have any publicity."

Evan read and reread the hastily written, tear-blotted missive.

"Somebody's crazy as a loon and it may be me!" ejaculated Mr. Gates.

He picked up the telephone receiver and called the number of Mr. Frake's town house where he had seen Amy only two days before. As he talked into the transmitter his face changed from perplexity to surprise, disbelief, impatience, anxiety, and back to perplexity again.

"Now, what do you make of that?" he frowned as he leaned back in his chair.

A servant had answered the telephone. She had said that Mr. Frake had sailed for Europe that morning and that Miss Durland had gone away the day before—it was not known just where but on a week-end visit somewhere.

As Amy and her guardian-uncle composed the family, there was nothing for Evan Gates to do but to take the next train for Hillside and unravel the hideous plot and rescue the unfortunate damsel from the tower.

"Somebody's crazy!" repeated Evan as he hurried up to the station for his train.

He decided it was Terry Bannister when that joyous youth collided with him at the Central station and instantly grabbed him by the lapels of his coat.

"The greatest news ever!" bleated Terry grinning widely.

"Well, what is it?" snapped Evan, remembering that this was his rival, and also that he had a train to catch.

"I'm engaged—she's said yes—the dearest girl in the world!" chorled Mr. Bannister, announcing his engagement in his usual spectacular manner.

Evan's blood ran cold. He turned away from the entrance to the train sheds. "Her name?" he asked crisply, he thought he could guess.

"I should think you might guess—Gladys Hallman, of course—Hi, where you going?"

"Congratulations—got to make this train!" shouted Evan over his shoulder as he sped away.

"I wonder what's eating him?" reflected Terry as he went on his glad-some way.

Anxiety and bewilderment were gnawing at Evan's mind as the train ran out into the open country.

Some one tapped his shoulder gently and he turned around to see Hester Blake's plain, pleasant countenance. He instantly found a seat beside her and learned that she was going to the next station beyond Hillside for a short visit.

Because Hester was Amy's dearest friend and because he knew she was loyal and utterly practical, Evan showed her Amy's letter and related his interview with the servant at the Frake house and his meeting with Terry Bannister.

"What does it mean, Hester?" he asked anxiously.

To his surprise Hester leaned back in her seat and laughed until she cried. "The foolish little girl!" she uttered at last.

"Foolish?" queried Evan more puzzled than ever.

Hester nodded and related her suspicions. She told of the talk they had had after the matinee and what Amy had said about Evan's lack of chivalry. "The child must have planned this whole thing since then for Mr. Frake has been expecting to go abroad for some time—in fact he sailed with father and we both know him to be utterly incapable of treating Amy in this manner. What shall you do, Evan?"

"Rescue her in a good old-fashioned way," said Evan grimly but he could not suppress a smile—a tender smile it was—over the romance of Amy Durland. "I don't mind," he said to himself sturdily; "she'll get over it soon enough."

Hester waved him a laughing farewell at Hillside and Evan tramped on the tall tower that was visible for miles around. He saw a speck of white on the tiny observation platform and as he entered the grounds of the estate it disappeared within.

The big house appeared to be vacant. The tower he knew contained a little room at the top prepared for comfort and the service of refreshments. It was approached by a winding iron stairway within and entrance was by a solid oak door at the bottom.

Evan looked over the situation carefully and changed his plan of rescue. He whistled a familiar note and Amy instantly appeared on the balcony.

"You dear! You have come!" she called down in a tremulous whisper. Amy was enjoying herself.

"Yes, I've come, dear," called up Evan suppressing a smile. "I come at once—I met Terry Bannister and what do you think?"

"What?" asked Amy feebly.

"He's engaged to Gladys Hallman—told me so."

"The—the horrid thing! Why, Gladys has a glass eye." Amy was plainly disconcerted.

"And, Amy, dear, shall I effect your rescue before the eyes of all the county?" He swept an arm suggestively around. "Or will you walk down the stair and unlock the door?"

"You are so—horrid and unromantic!" cried Amy tearfully.

"Dear heart, you've got romance enough for both of us. Ah, come down, dear, I want to kiss my captive princess—can't I rescue you by persuasion?"

Evan looked so handsome and captivating at that moment with the love-light shining in his dark eyes that the captive princess merely waved her hand and came down and unlocked the prison door.

"I suppose this is an up-to-date method of release," sighed Amy as they walked back to the station. "It's awfully unromantic but its better than being up there with the spiders!"

CLIMAXES OF SLOW DISEASE

Really, There is No Such Thing as "Sudden Death," as It is Generally Understood.

There is no such thing as "sudden death" from disease. Those deaths appearing to us as sudden are in reality the very slowest forms of disease, so slow and insidious that they often pass unrecognized, as for instance, Bright's disease, rheumatic states and hardening of the arteries.

The conditions which precipitate the result that comes so often in our civilization like a lightning stroke are brought about by slow degrees, which all at once reach a climax—and we are surprised simply because we were not aware of the conditions.

Financiers, statesmen, politicians, professional workers and merchants—men who live well, but under stern stress and struggle—are most frequently subject to the conditions which lead to such sudden terminations. They are the unfortunates who really require more care, on account of their greater burdens, but do not take time to attend to the all-important measures—exercise, rest, etc.—which mean increased activity of the skin and respiratory functions, more perfect elimination and longevity.

Flowers in January.

In a Suffolk (Eng.) village near Bury St. Edmunds the following flowers were picked during the month of January just passed: Pansies, honey-suckle, wild heartsease, carnation, yellow jessamine, antirrhinum, gorse (furze), wallflower, stock, arabis, torch lilies, double violets, Princess of Wales violets, field daisies, double daisies, wild primroses, pink primroses, polyanthus, phlox drummondii, winter aconites, kerria, and marigold.

Robin Adair

By Lester Martin

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"When you have finished picking the berries off that hedge, Jack, I shall be much relieved." Edith leaned over the garden gate and laid a protesting hand upon her lover's arm.

"Don't joke, honey," Jack drew her nearer to him. "I am trying so hard to see your point of view and I simply cannot imagine you all alone in London singing your heart out and no one really caring as I do."

"Why, Jack, you silly boy, don't spoil our last evening together. I expect to be home for Christmas and I should think you would be glad I am going to have such a great opportunity. Just think! how good of the dear old rector to pay all my expenses and give me my training just because he likes my voice and thinks I will make a famous singer. And here you are spoiling it all!" A little sob of self-pity, a sudden sense of loneliness, and the pretty curly head was hidden in Jack's coat.

"Dearest, my love will help me to understand, only—always remember if things do not go just right and you are not happy, why, I shall be longing for you every minute, and the farm, I am thinking, needs a mistress badly."

"There, Jack, I know every word of that story by heart, so don't worry me any more," she said.

A glorious morning and two whole hours before breakfast! Quickly dressing, she crept quietly past her aunt's door, realizing, with a little catch of her breath, that even this home so grudgingly given her would be hers no longer.

Suddenly, through the sharp, crisp air, she heard Jack's clear whistle and her mind unconsciously supplied the words to the old, familiar strain, "And for Bonnie Annie Laurie I'd lay me down and die."

Hiding herself behind some shrubs she waited until the melody died away, then lifting her head she sang Jack's favorite song, "Robin Adair," full of music and purity of tone seldom heard in so young a voice. It seemed as though the birds stopped



She Sang Jack's Favorite Song.

to listen. Haunting in its sweetness, and yet wanting—in what? And Jack, wondering, hoped that the price to be paid for the "something wanting" might be paid by him if possible. Perhaps he was paying a wee bit on account now, and smiling bravely he whistled an obligato to the last few notes.

"A real morning concert, sir, and complimentary at that," said Edith.

"I am glad you sang the dear old song, honey, and I think if ever you needed me I should answer to it even if you were far across the seas."

Slowly the train drew into St. Pancras station. The rector, lowering the window, sniffed the smoky London air with real pleasure. It was neither fresh nor clean, but it was London, and there is nothing on earth like it to an old Londoner.

A confusion of porters, luggage and cabs and they were soon submerged in the endless traffic of Euston road.

Three months passed quickly for Edith. Glowing accounts of her little triumphs found their way to Jack's lonely home, and in the evening he would walk over to the rectory where the two would spend many an hour predicting a glorious career for the girl so dear to them.

"And do you think all is well with her, sir?"

"Of course it is, my dear boy. You must not mind the admiration of others, you of all men. And this agent, Lawler, why, it is just her voice, he is interested in. And that is business, just business."

"Oh, well, that's all right." There was great relief in the hand shake and the cheery good night as Jack took his precious letter and climbed the home hill, whistling for company.

The rector stood listening to the musical voice as it twisted and turned the old melody of "Annie Laurie" into a good marching tune. Then with a whispered "God bless them both," he closed the door.

"And you really want me to sing tonight at the Royal Albert hall in place of Mme. Paula. Oh, Mr. Lawler, do you think I can do it?"

"Why, of course, you can do it. And

if you look—well, the way you look now, you needn't worry about success. Do your prettiest, and I know what wonderful things will come your way," and taking her by the hand he kissed it in mock play.

"What a strange child you are!" said, as she hastily withdrew her hand. "But that soon wears off, and I shall be going now. Don't be late this evening."

As the door closed Edith picked up a fluffy little kitten curled up near the open fire and buried her face in its warm fur.

Not until Edith found herself in a hansom on her way to the hall did she realize how different was her feeling from what she imagined it would be at this moment. Her voice was in good form, everything had gone right, and yet she was not happy.

"Oh, here you are, Miss Martin!" exclaimed Mr. Lawler. "You will see the ladies in there. Don't talk much and keep your throat warm. With a business wave of his hand he indicated the artists' room.

"Nervous?" he added. "Not at all," laughed Edith, "I'm grateful for his impersonal manner, and I hope I shall repay you for all your kindness."

As Edith disappeared a slight smile crept around his thin lips.

Meanwhile Edith, feeling assured her troubles had been wholly imaginary, greeted her fellow artists with a bright smile and felt the warm glow of anticipation that means success to the singer.

The audience had received the announcement of the noted soprano's business philosophically and was prepared to be pleasantly polite to the singer.

"Edith Murden, who is she?"

"I never heard of her."

"I hope she is good."

The orchestra had just finished with a brilliant climax and the audience looked with mild curiosity for the soprano.

From behind the ferns and palms came Edith, the very embodiment of youth and beauty in her simple white gown, here little head held high and a brave smile for this, her first audience.

"If she sings as well as she looks she will be a great favorite," announced one critic.

Softly and sweetly that true ringing voice swelled through the hall, reaching to the uppermost galleries, generous in tone, perfect in production; and the critic, whose good word all musicians coveted, nodded commendingly. But—lacking in soul was his criticism. Perhaps nervous and he waived judgment until her second song.

Captured by her charm of voice and manner the audience expressed itself in recall after recall, until, breathless but happy, she found herself alone with Mr. Lawler in the artist's room.

"A great success, my dear," and before Edith realized his intention he had put his arm around her.

Frightened, but furious at the result, she tore herself away and she looked like a little queen in her indignation.

"How dare you!" she half sobbed.

"I would dare again to see you look like that," he laughed, and his eyes expressed his open admiration.

Thankful for the interruption of the accompanist, Edith hurriedly led the way, a great sense of loneliness enveloping her. Surely months had passed since she had faced that audience.

"Jack! Jack! I want you. I need you!" And she gazed helplessly into that sea of faces.

"Angels ever bright and fair.

Take, oh, take me to your care!"

Her voice, full of entreaty had its intensity and forgetful of all save her need of love and protection, reached the very hearts of her audience. A wave of emotion swept over the house and tears streamed down the faces of men and women.

One breathless minute, then came the thunderous applause.

Was this for her? Through her dazed senses the sharp command, "Pick up your flowers." Instinctively obeying, she stood silent for a moment, then: "Encore!" "Encore!"

The accompanist looked at her. "Robin Adair," she whispered. And like the call of a bird to its mate she sang the song Jack loved.

A man tightly grasping the arm of his chair, with tense face, and eyes aglow with love, gazed at his little sweetheart and knew that she was his. There was nothing wanting now. She was calling to him—to him. As the last note sank into his heart he quickly found his way to the artist's room. Quietly he awaited her as she received the unstinted applause.

"Honey, I am here. You called to me," he whispered. And with a glad cry she took his outstretched hands. "Take me home, Jack! Oh, take me home! I want only you and your love."

The Last Luxury.

Ten-year-old Arthur had been talking impressively of the number of servants employed in his home. He continued: "And our house is fired so that if you want a drink, or anything raised, or to go upstairs, or anything, all you have to do is to pull a chain."