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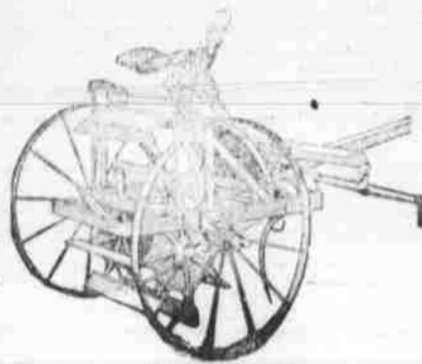
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W.P. KNOWLES

The GIRL and the GAME

A Story of Mountain Railroad Life
By FRANK H. SPEARMAN

AUTHOR OF "WHISPERING SMITH," "THE MOUNTAIN DIVIDE," "STRATEGY OF GREAT RAILROADS," ETC.

NOVELIZED FROM THE MOVING PICTURE PLAY OF THE SAME NAME. PRODUCED BY THE SIGNAL FILM CORPORATION. COPYRIGHT, 1915, BY FRANK H. SPEARMAN.

SYNOPSIS.

Little Helen Holmes, daughter of General Holmes, railroad man, is rescued from imminent danger on a scenic railroad by George Storm, a new boy. Grown to young womanhood, Helen saves Storm, now a fireman, her father, and his friends from a disaster. Storm, and his friends, Spike and Rhinelander, fight a threatened collision. Spike, a safeworker employed by Seagrue, steals General Holmes' survey plans of the cut-off line for the Tidewater, fatally wounds the general and escapes. Her father's estate badly involved by his death, Helen goes to work on the Tidewater. Helen recovers the survey plans from Seagrue, and though they are taken from her, finds an accidentally made proof of the survey blueprint. Storm is employed by Rhinelander. Spike, befriended by Helen, in his turn saves her and the right-of-way contracts when Seagrue kidnaps her. Helen and Storm win for Rhinelander a race against Seagrue for right-of-way. Helen, Storm and Rhinelander rescue Spike from Seagrue's men. Spike obtains records to protect Rhinelander, and Storm and Helen save Spike from death in the burning court house. Vein in Superstition mine pinches out. Seagrue sells it and sells it to Rhinelander.

TWELFTH INSTALLMENT BURIED ALIVE

Seagrue's sale to Rhinelander of the Superstition mine did not go through as smoothly as he had expected. Meeting Rhinelander at the office of an attorney in Las Vegas, the details of the transfer were arranged without much difficulty. Rhinelander's only care was to be sure that the conveyance should give him a clear title to the valuable property, and having satisfied himself on this point, the minor details were easily arranged.

While the attorney was embodying these items in a supplementary agreement, Rhinelander wrote out a telegram to Helen telling her that he was completing the transfer of the mine and would come up on No. 8. When the final draft of the contract had been made in duplicate, and signed by the two parties, in due form, Rhinelander handed over a second check to Seagrue, and putting the agreement in his pocket, left the office.

Seagrue watched him go with something of relief and a great deal of satisfaction. The whole scheme he had so successfully compassed looked to him almost too good to be true, and he had a hearty laugh with the attorney before they left the office together.

But, unexpectedly enough, opposition developed in an unlooked-for quarter, namely, among minority stockholders of the mine itself. Rumors flew thick and fast, and at Oceanside Seagrue was openly accused of underhanded work in parting with the property. To afford a clear understanding of his position, a meeting of the stockholders of the mine was called, and Seagrue, when the time came, addressed the gathering in explanation of the sale.

"I have understood," he began, "there has been some criticism of my action in disposing of the Superstition mine to the Copper Range and Tidewater people. Some of our stockholders have been unkind enough to hint



Helen Told of the Disaster.

that there was treachery in my part of the proceedings. I have called this meeting to explain without any mingling of words why I was forced to act as I did on my own responsibility and to act quickly."

He related in detail the story of the sudden word received from the mine foreman announcing the pinching out of the vein. In more veiled language, but still making himself plain enough to be understood, he disclosed the thought that had come to him of getting the mine ready for sale by salting it, and of his subsequent success in unloading the property on Rhinelander without serious loss to any of the shareholders.

In spite of his explanation, protest was heard almost at once against his summary action in selling out without authority from the directors. Seagrue met the criticisms firmly. "If I had stopped to ask the directors for au-

thority as to what to do, the news of the failure of our principal vein would have been all over Nevada. It would have been too late to sell the property at any price to anybody."

"If the vein could be recovered, what difference would that make?" asked one of the disaffected shareholders.

"It would make the difference that you would be holding the sack instead of the other fellow," retorted Seagrue, bluntly.

The chairman, one of the larger minority stockholders, proved one of the least tractable of the disaffected. He rose to reply to Seagrue's address. "You are telling us," he said coldly, "that you disposed of one of the best quartz properties in the Superstition mountains for a song because your foreman told you the vein had pinched out. And you say your expert corroborated his statement. By what right did you go ahead in this fashion without calling us together to decide whether we did not want further expert advice on the possibility of locating the vein?"

"That part of the matter has been threshed out already," said Seagrue angrily.

"No, it hasn't," retorted the chairman. "Not to our satisfaction. Where the investment is so large, our interests should have been given the most careful consideration before you disposed of them."

"You wouldn't have got ten cents out of your interests," exclaimed Seagrue, "if you had tried what you now propose."

"Even that wouldn't have been a serious matter," persisted the chairman, "as compared to what you have done. None of us here are dependent on dividends from the Superstition mines for our bread and butter. We feel, as business men, that we are entitled to consideration. You haven't given us that. By your own confession, you have disposed of this property under false pretenses. You have, by your conduct toward your competitors, justified the suspicion that has arisen among your own associates, Mr. Seagrue."

"I don't wish to make any unfair insinuations or to assert what I cannot prove, but," interposed a second shareholder from the foot of the table, "I want to call forth your attention and the attention of every man in this meeting to the fact that the moment it is discovered by the Tidewater people that this mine was salted, we shall be called on to refund every dollar of the money paid to us."

"If that is the case," sneered Seagrue, "I should say you fellows had better stop talking. Your greatest safety," he added, without much display of sympathy for the uneasy ones, "lies in keeping your mouths shut."

"It is a matter of no moment whatever," declared the stubborn chairman, "how much the thing is discussed. You know the men in this room, Mr. Seagrue, well enough to know that we should all take the same position concerning what you confess you, yourself, have done in this matter. No matter what happened, we should never approve such proceedings."

"As things stand, I don't know what else you can do," said Seagrue, sulkily. "You talk here as if you owned this mine. I want you to understand that I hold the control of it, and you will do as I say."

"No," declared one stockholder, jumping up, "I won't do any such thing."

"Then you may do as you wish," replied Seagrue, loftily, "but I am through with the Superstition mine." The heated discussion continued. Almost everyone in the room took sides against Seagrue. Finally, at bay himself, and realizing the trouble the minority stockholders could put him to, he made a further conciliatory proposal. "As we cannot agree," he said, "I am willing to buy your shares in the mine at their par value."

This seemed to pour a little oil upon the troubled waters. After some further wrangling, details were actually arranged then and there for the transfer of the minority shares, and the meeting closed in a better feeling than it had opened.

At the mine, Helen and George Storm were talking together when the foreman joined them. Helen asked him about the work.

"If you'll come this way," he suggested, "I'll show you exactly where we're going to drill today."

A messenger handed Helen a dispatch. It was from Rhinelander announcing the completion of the transfer and advising her he would arrive on No. 8.

"First, we'll go down and meet Mr. Rhinelander," said Storm to the foreman. "When we come back we'll see where you're working."

Rhinelander returned we'll pleased

with the result of his trip.

They walked over to the mine together and entered it. While they were talking, a man came to Mr. Rhinelander, saying that the foreman had asked to see him. Accompanied by Helen and Storm, Rhinelander walked down the tunnel to where the men were working.

"The foreman turned from his work. 'How are things looking?' demanded Rhinelander.

"Why, to tell the truth," answered the man reluctantly, "they are not looking as good this morning as they were yesterday."

"What do you mean?" "We had trouble with this vein once or twice before," began the foreman, guardedly, "but it didn't turn out very serious. This time it looks as if the vein had pinched out on us. Just come over this way."

Rhinelander stood as if rooted to the ground, looking significantly the while from Helen to Storm. "Helen," he said quizzically, "what does that sound like to you?"

Helen looked at him evenly. "It sounds," she replied, "very much like Mr. Earl Seagrue."

Followed by his companions, Rhinelander joined the foreman. They examined the rock in turn and held a long discussion. The foreman suggested calling in an expert.

"No," said Rhinelander, stubbornly; "I just bought this mine on the recommendation of an expert; all I want is a little hard-headed, common sense here, and I am going to have it. The best authorities in the mining world told General Holmes he had a property here that would last as long as these mountains lasted."

"But Seagrue must have known all this," interposed Helen.

"He thought it time to unload, beyond a doubt," answered Rhinelander. "Helen," he exclaimed, "I know Seagrue better than you do. I know how full his head is of schemes and all that. But I want to tell you it is a fact that Earl Seagrue is a quitter. He gives up too quick and starts a new scheme. Now, I am not going to quit on the Superstition mine until I've made a thorough investigation of this trouble. I am not a miner," he

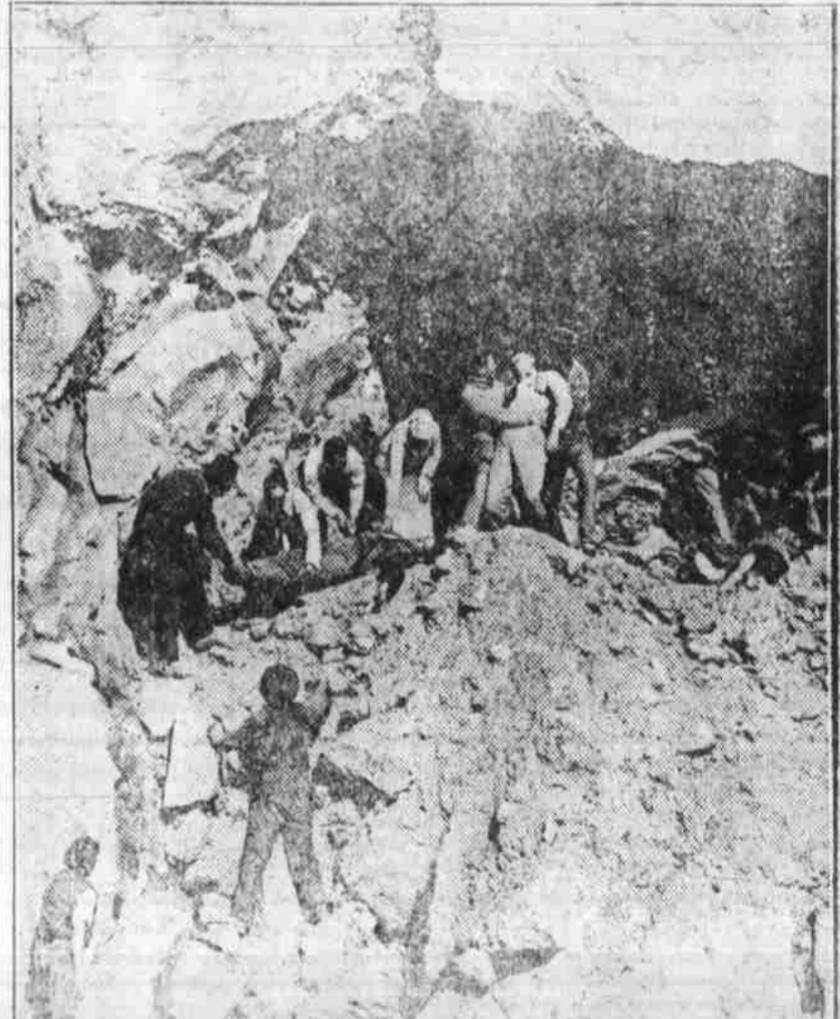
Rhinelander, Storm and the foreman went over to examine the break. All waited on the old miner for a verdict as to the condition of the roof. He made a pretty careful examination and seemed satisfied there was no danger. "That roof," he declared, "will never cave in."

"If that is so," said Rhinelander, "and you ought to know, if anybody knows—send the men back to work."

Blasting their way into the wall where the foreman had indicated, the men, busied with their work, failed to notice a gradual weakening of the tunnel roof. Helen, outside the mine and occupied with other matters, heard the blasting within, but gave the subject no further thought. It was not until a moment following one of the heavy explosions that she heard a great crash behind her, and, looking back, was horrified to see a mass of rock crashing through the roof of the tunnel. She ran forward in dismay. The disaster was complete. Where the tunnel had opened, a great cave-in now raised a solid barrier. Men on the outside ran up, white-faced, to where she stood. Questions flew back and forth. A round-up was hastily made to determine who had been caught on the inside. Rhinelander and Storm were nowhere to be found—they had almost certainly been caught with the crew in the tunnel.

Storm's efforts were made to clear the opening. Men, losing their heads, rushed hither and thither, accomplishing nothing and adding to the panic that possessed everyone at the thought of the tragedy within the closed tunnel. Bidding a man to stop his useless efforts to tear away the fallen rock, she gave him directions as to what to do. "Telephone for doctors," she said hurriedly, "while I go over to the Neighbor mine for help."

Both hunched away, Helen reaching the edge of the cliff, where the aerial railway ran from the mountainside down to the valley below, stopped. It would take her fifteen precious minutes to run down the trail. Could she, by any possibility, ride down the aerial cable? She gramped the hook of the aerial carriage and clinging to it with both hands, pulled the release. Like



The Imprisoned Men Were Passed Out.

said, speaking to the foreman: "I'm just a plain, everyday railroad man. But I've heard that things can be done even when you pinches out. Now, you got busy," he said to the listening foreman, "and tell me, now and here, what's the first thing to do to try to pick this vein up again?"

"You might pick it up," responded the foreman, "for a song, if you're lucky. It all depends. You might spend a million dollars and never pick it up."

"Well, we don't have to spend the million all at once, do we?"

The foreman admitted they did not. "Very well," continued Rhinelander, sharply. "How's the first part of that money to be spent?"

The foreman scratched his head and looked up and down the wall. He selected a place that looked to him like a possibility. Pointing, he said: "Cross-cut through there and we might pick up the vein."

Rhinelander asked further questions; the hard-headed miner seemed to have, he thought, some good ideas. "All right," said Rhinelander, at length, "cross-cut right there, just as you say. We'll see how we come out. If we get beat, we'll try something else."

Under the impetus of new hope, the work went rapidly forward. Every man in the mine took courage. So long as there was a possibility of doing anything they were glad to work to save their own jobs. The crew at hand went vigorously to work under the foreman's directions. In a short time a hole had been primed for a blast, the fuse lighted and the men rushed out. The explosion followed and they went back.

Work was proceeding in this fashion when something occurred that drew Helen's attention. She was looking into the tunnel when she noticed that one wall near the roof seemed to be weakening. A large piece of rock had dropped from it. The men were called out and Helen, with

a bird on wing, Helen shot far off from the mountainside and dropping at a sharp angle down the line, sped suspended between heaven and earth.

At a distance on the desert, the Shay engine of the Neighbor mine was toiling slowly along when the engineer saw the figure of a woman clinging to the aerial carcase of the Superstition mine as it shot through the air down to the valley. Breathless, he watched the wild flight, expecting every instant to see the slender creature let go, to fall, crushed, to the rock below her.

But Helen did not let go. Hanging on with a desperation born of the realization that she must save the imprisoned men, she shot across the dangerous declivity from top to bottom and without mishap, jumped in safety to the foot of the aerial and dashed away for help. She ran toward the little railroad, flagged the engine, got into the cab, and struggling for breath, apprised the crew of the accident. The engineer hurriedly started the engine back to their own mine. Forcing all the speed that he could get, and with Helen urging him to spare no effort, he made the engine bump along over the joints as it never had done before. A dozen times, before they reached their destination, it seemed as if the sturdy little machine must turn turtle.

Jumping from the cab the moment the Shay stopped, Helen told of the disaster. Men ran in from all quarters, and their foreman—an active fellow—gave directions about getting the stuff they should need to work with at the cave-in. With the least possible loss of time, these necessities were assembled and the train loaded with men started back.

In the interval, the news telephoned to Las Vegas had stirred the town. At the hospital a motor car was placed in waiting, and doctors answering the hurry-up call jumped into the machine with their emergency bags and headed for the mine. One of the surgeons recalled that Earl Seagrue was the