The Lamp in the Valley

BY ARTHUR STRINGER

W. N. U. Service

THE STORY SO FAR

Sidney Lander rescued Carol Coburn from the annoyances of Eric (the Red) Ericson. She is returning to her native Alaska to teach. Her father, a sourdough, died with an unproven mine claim. Lander, an engineer for the Trumbull Co., which is fighting the Coburn claim, breaks with Trumbull. But he remains engaged to Trumbull's daughter, Barbara. Carol tells Barbara she is not after Lander. Salaria Bryson, an outdoors girl, is also in love with Lander. Trumbull invites Carol to fly with him to the scene to see that her father had no real claim. She declines, however, and her manner nettles the mine king. He is used to having things his own way. Father and daughter were both rather imperious.

INSTALLMENT XI

But his voice, when he spoke, was both suave and controlled.

"Don't run away with the idea this Chakitana claim is my only trouble," he said. "I've got mine interests that take me from the Circle right down to Mexico. And I like to clear things up as I go along."

Once again I recognized the deep rumble of big business. But the thought of my father's lone grave somewhere out along the tangled trails of the Chakitana confirmed me in my own blind course of opposition.

"We turn in here," I explained, indicating the oozy path that led to my shack front.

"Do you mean you're satisfied with this sort of thing?" he demanded, his contemptuous gaze on my littered dooryard, left so unlovely by the spring thaw.

"I'd like it better if I had a school," I said.

John Trumbull sat watching me as I climbed down from the car seat.

"What would you say if I put a few thousand into a school for you," he said with what impressed me as a purely achieved matter-of-factness "as good a school as they've got anywhere in this Territory?"

It was my turn to remain silent as I looked up into those glacier-ice eyes of his. And I remembered my old school maxim about fearing the Greeks when they come bearing gifts.

"Does my claim impress you as worth that much?" I found the courage to demand.

His color deepened, apparently with the embarrassment of a contestant who has underestimated the power of his opponent.

"What it's worth won't be decided by either you or me," he said in an unexpectedly sharpened voice. "But I was hoping we could get together on it in some friendlier way."

"I happen to be Klondike Coburn's daughter," I reminded him.

That brought a steelier look into his averted eyes.

"I was trying to forget that," he retorted, almost in a bark. "But hate and stupidity, you'll find, won't get you far."

"I'll get along," I said, forcing a smile of assurance. And as I stood confronting him I began to nurse a new and sharper fellow feeling for Sidney Lander. He too had refused to be crushed by that human car of Juggernaut.

John Trumbull started his engine and threw in his clutch.

"You may not last here as long as you imagine," he asserted as he swung about my dooryard and headed for the road.

CHAPTER XIII

Saturday, of course, meant a day off for the valley chalk-wrangler.

But a day off didn't mean idleness. I had my mending and darning to do, my sourdough sponge to work into loaves, and my house to put in order after six days of neglect. I'd baked my bread, and finished my washing and ironing, and with the fortitude of the true frontiersman was just filling my big woodbox with neatly split spruce boles when a truck rumbled up to my door.

It was a rather official-looking truck of battleship-gray, similar to those I'd seen of late about the Administration Camp at Palmer. And it startled me a little when Lander swung down from the driver's seat. He looked tired and a trifle solemn.

"I suppose you know what that means?" he said as I continued to stare at the truck. He laughed, rather curtly, when I told him I was entirely in the dark. "It means I'm field manager for the Matanuska Valley Project."

From my silence he seemed to reap some final impression of disappointment.

"I suppose you think I've failed you?" he said, more solemn than ever.

"In what?" I asked, resenting his power to interfere with my heart action.

"In marking time this way about your Chakitana claim," he observed as he followed me into the shack.

"I can live without that mine," I found myself saying.

"But nobody likes to be robbed," Lander observed as he thrust some papers into my hand. One of those papers, I noticed, was my father's dog-eared certificate of citizenship. And as I glanced down at the faded portrait appended to it I realized I was looking at the face of a fighter. It made me stiffen my shoulders.

"We can't, of course, pick our ground for this particular fight," Lander was saying. "We have to know our enemy's line of attack. And in this case he seems to be playing safe and turning to court procedure and trying to make everything look legal."

"Then what can we do?" I asked.

"I have Canby working for us at Juneau," Lander explained. "He's both dependable and resourceful. But you can't, of course, hurry those Record Office chair-warmers. And we'll have to depend on Canby."

"Trumbull's going to lose out, remember, on his first round," Lander was explaining. "That report shows your father's naturalization papers can be confirmed. It'll leave the issue hinging on the question of clear or clouded title definition. And that issue may have to be decided out on the Chakitana."

He then turned to the task in Matanuska.

"Things are going to be different around here," he confidently affirmed. "They've got to, or there'll be hell to pay. And it'll be a man's size job, making this muddle ready for those two hundred families."

"Isn't it a trifle late for that?" I asked as I filled my two crockery cups with hot tea.

Lander admitted that it was. But that, he contended, was just why we had to pitch in and help.

"You'll get a school, of course," he went on as he abstractedly stirred his tea. "And we'll have to have a hospital of some sort. And a Red Cross nurse. And a marshal to keep order in those transient-camps. And someone to speed up the building-gangs and stop all this bungling about supplies and the eternal buck-passing that's mainly responsible for the mess they're in."

"I want to help," I said. Something in my voice brought an approving smile from the man across the bald pine table.

"In two weeks," he said, "we'll have a radio station here, to link

"You'll get a school, of course."

us up with the outside world. That'll take us out of the wilderness, at one jump. And before winter we'll have electric lights and telephones and cold storage and a cannery and snug homes for every one of those two hundred families."

I thought of the undug wells and the unfinished roads and the carloads of cement that had been left to harden along the railway siding.

"You know, of course, that your friend Ericson is in the transient-camp here?" Lander asked.

I disclaimed any friendship between Eric the Red and myself.

"That's just the point," proceeded my visitor. "He's as yellow as they make them. And two days ago he had a talk with John Trumbull up at the Happy Day."

"What's that to me?" I asked with what was only a pretense at indifference.

"Trumbull," he explained, "is pretty ruthless. There are mighty few road rules left when he starts steamrolling toward his own selfish ends."

"I've been talking with Colonel Hart," he added. "And he agrees with me we've got to have a medical man here. There's a chance he'll bring Doctor Ruddock over from Toklutna. And I've put in a word for your friend Katie O'Connell. There's no reason she couldn't swing in as a Red Cross nurse."

A wave of joy went through me. Katie, I realized, would be an answer to prayer.

Just then Salaria appeared at my door, brown and wind-blown. In the crook of her arm she carried a rifle and over one shoulder swung a full game bag. Her dusky eyes rested rather hungrily on the silent Lander.

"You goin' my way, old-timer?" she inquired, indicating the truck in the dooryard.

Lander's gaze met mine for a moment. I could see the heat-lightning smile that hovered about his lips.

"Right to your door, S'lary," Lander answered her, with a hand-wave toward his truck.

It was while the Artemis with the rifle was still frowning over some faint tinge of mockery in his voice that Lander turned back to me.

"How about coming to Wasilla tonight?" he asked. "They have a roadhouse dance there, every Saturday night, for our relief-roll tollers. And I want to get a line on the bad actors in that bunch."

"I'll be seeing you," I acquiesced in the offhanded note of the frontier.

"Fine," said Lander as he waited for Salaria to climb into the truck.

It was many a year since I'd seen an Alaska jamboree of that kind, and it left me wondering if life hadn't rather spoiled me for such affairs. For along with the dancing was much brawling and lovemaking and the imbibing of a local brand of hooch known as moose-milk. The orchestra was merely a tinny old piano helped out by a fiddle and accordion. Even as we pushed our way into that crowded roadhouse with its open bar I wondered if the natives weren't doing the best to revive the old Klondike days. Men in flannel shirts and high-tops gyrated about with gum-chewing white women in slacks or held well-rouged and sloe-eyed half-breed girls in calico close to their Mackinawed bosoms.

Lander danced with a smooth sedateness that left us almost conspicuous in that swarm of jigging bodies and flying heels. And I felt oddly small and passive in that strong arm of his. The sense of his nearness, I suppose, should have made me happy.

But I couldn't drum up any enthusiasm for that falsetto and loose-jointed hilarity born of bad music and worse whisky.

I tried to tell my partner that there was something pathetic in such childlike efforts to escape the isolation of wilderness life. But Lander only laughed.

"This is easy," he said. "There'll be a broken head or two before the night's over." There'd even been a stabbing, the week before.

But I had no craving to see fist-fights and knifeplay.

"I want to go home," I said at the end of our dance. For along the line that crowded the bar I'd caught sight of Eric the Red, surrounded by a circle of transients. He was too busy drinking and talking to give any thought to dancing. But his sardonic smile as we passed within six paces of him confirmed my distaste for the place.

"All right," said Lander. Yet I knew by the way his gaze lingered on the flushed and bleary-eyed faces all about him that he would have preferred to stay.

The air outside was sweet with a small wind that blew down from the Talkeetnas.

"I guess this is better," he said as he tucked a blanket about my knees and climbed in beside me. He was silent for a while, tooling the truck along the spectral ribbon of a road.

"I'm afraid I took you away from your work," I ventured.

Lander laughed as that none-too-even road kept our swaying bodies in rough but friendly contact.

"That's about the best I can ask of life," he said. "To be next to you like this."

My answering laugh, I suppose, was largely defensive.

"While we both remember to keep to the center of the road," I suggested.

"It'll be a better road before we're through with it," the resonant low voice beside me announced. He was speaking in riddles, of course. Yet I knew well enough what he meant.

"But where will it lead to?" I asked.

"I don't know, yet," he answered after a moment's silence. "But I don't want it to lead me from you."

"Hasn't it already done that?" I questioned.

It may have sounded a bit cruel. He turned and made an effort to study my face in the none-too-certain light.

"I thought we meant something to each other," he said with a quick and boylike candor that was more disarming than all the earlier riddles. "I rather thought you liked me."

"I do," I said in an effort to match casualness with casualness.

But that, plainly, didn't solve his problem. He drove on in silence until he came to the narrower trail that led in to my shack.

"I suppose there's somebody else?" he finally ventured, coming to a stop in the cabin clearing.

"There's nobody else," I was honest enough to acknowledge.

"That's all I wanted to know," he said with a new resoluteness in his voice.

I was more afraid of myself, I think, than I was of him. I didn't like the way my heart was pounding as he got down from his seat and crossed to my side of the truck.

"With me there is nobody else," I compelled myself to say.

I knew, by the way he stiffened, that my shot had hit its mark.

"You're right," he quietly acknowledged. Then he laughed his curt laugh. "I guess I'm running a little ahead of the game."

I felt like calling after him, as he backed and turned and went lurching out to the highway.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Kathleen Norris Says:

How Much Money Is Enough To Marry On?

(Bell Syndicate—WNU Service.)

ANY steady salary is enough for the right wife, and that no salary—no matter how large, is enough for the wrong one.

MONEY TROUBLES?

"His" salary is small; there's no immediate prospect of a raise; parents can't help; then, what of the future? Should you marry? ANY steady salary is enough to establish the small home in which husband and wife can build for the future, says Kathleen Norris. Read her sound advice to young moderns who hesitate about matrimony.

By KATHLEEN NORRIS

"MY DAUGHTER is engaged to a very fine young man," writes a Massachusetts mother. "She has been teaching for two years but would give up work if she married. I have trained her well as a housekeeper and she is not extravagant. But John's salary is only $1,800 a year, and both her father and I feel that is not enough for a young couple who hope for children and who have certain social obligations to sustain. What, in your opinion, is the minimum sum upon which a girl is safe to marry in these days? There is no immediate prospect of a raise for John, and it is hard to condemn them to an indefinite wait. At the same time my husband and I are most unwilling to see Margaret trapped by drudgery and poverty. As we live in an educational institution ourselves, and most of my husband's salary is paid in free board, free rent, and perquisites like laundry, telephone and transportation allowance, we cannot promise much help."

The answer to this is that ANY steady salary is enough for the right wife, and that no salary—no matter how large, is enough for the wrong one. If Margaret is intelligent enough, and strong enough, to marry her John on his $1,800, she will discover that she can live comfortably, keep free of debt, and even save on that sum. If she is going to make her one object in married life the keeping up with more affluent friends, pretending eternally that she can afford what she cannot afford, straining to entertain on their terms rather than her own, then she has lost the fight before she ever began it.

Bank One-Third of Income.

To begin with, she must find quarters for not more than $25 a month. Some budgets say that rent may be as much as one-third of the income, especially if rent includes garage, light, hall service, furnace heat. But I don't. I say that rent should never be more than one-sixth of the income, because when I suggest a budget for young husbands and wives I plan that ONE-THIRD of it shall always go into the bank.

That seems high; indeed it IS high. But there is no safety for married happiness like the safety that financial co-operation gives. To have $600 in the bank at the end of the first year is far better than to have the bills for the arm-chair, venetian blinds, shampoos, daffodils, gasoline and confectioners ice cream that Margaret ordered because darling Johnnie loved comfort and beauty at home, or the higher rent, new car, top coat, club membership, downtown luncheons that John felt were necessary to impress his business associates.

In other words, if you marry on $1,800 a year, live on $1,200. It can be done; it can be done with dignity and comfort. It means that your market bill, including soap and vegetables, never runs over a dollar a day. Rent and food thus come to $55 a month, and $10 a week remai s for other things, with $5 over. No scrap of food must be wasted, no expensive foods, chicken and cream, olive oil and steak, bottled drinks and cocktails, may be bought at all; and such everyday luxuries as telephone, refrigerator, club, car, beauty parlor must be given up for awhile at least.

Successful Families Save.

But that still leaves the soup kettle and the radio and the small home in which a man and a woman are building for a sound future. Ninety-nine out of every hundred successful American lives began that way. I don't mean multi-millionaires, although such fortunes as the Ford and the Woolworth fortunes started with the saving of nickels and dimes. But I mean the hundreds of thousands of prosperous folk who live in the handsome homes we all drive past on Sunday; the big rooms and the big fires, the nice little maid coming to the door, the boys off in college, the girls having glorious times at dances and skiing parties.

And believe me, there's a great relish to life lived on the terms of love in a cottage. There's a great thrill in stretching those seven precious dollars every week to spread over butter and eggs, cornstarch and carrots, apples and bacon. No partnership in life is quite as heart-filling as the partnership of the man and woman who have the courage to withdraw for awhile from the competition of card-parties and dinners, new frocks and new cars, and look ahead to a bigger future. It isn't always easy to do. The impulse to take the car on long extravagant trips, to send just a few flowers to Betty in the hospital, to wire the Browns on their anniversary, or to spend as much for Christmas wrappings as for the gifts within the wrappings, is a very natural one.

Road to Wealth.

But what you learn in the lean years, what you gain from books and walks and plans when you decide to live within—not your income, but two-thirds of it, will be of priceless value to you all the rest of your life. For saving even a little and keeping out of debt is the INEVITABLE road to wealth. You don't understand that truth, and neither do I. But the truth remains. Families that keep absolutely out of debt and that save even a few dollars a month are as inevitably pushed toward prosperity as families, who follow the other course, sink steadily toward habitual financial trouble and incompetence and discomfort.

And the strange thing is that if the thrifty family has to face an expensive illness, a reduction in salary the rule works just the same. A few months, a few years, and they are steadily on the up grade again. Whereas the spendthrift family may inherit $10,000, may inherit 10 times that sum, and within a few years it will be deep in money trouble again.

A couple I knew lived carelessly and casually in debt for some 10 years. Then the man received a legacy of some $40,000.

Penalty of Extravagance.

"We're going to pay something on the bills," he told me, as they expanded joyfully to a new car, a new home, a trip abroad.

But to come back to Margaret and her John. Yes, I'd marry on $1,800 a year and glory in the adventure. I'd marry on two-thirds of that sum. Thirty-three years ago that's exactly what I did.

CLASSIFIED DEPARTMENT

HOME STUDY COURSES

Have fun and increase your earning power at the same time. Learn shorthand at home in your spare time. Complete $5.00 "Magic Circle" Course for only . . . $1.00

B. & H. DISTRIBUTORS
3454 Park Heights Ave., Balto., Md.

BABY CHICKS

Continually BLOOD-TESTING and BREEDING for Big Eggs, Fast Growth, Long Life and Rapid Feathering produces chicks of unusual Livability, Growth, Fast Feathering and Uniformity

Write today for catalogue and price list

MILFORD BREEDERS HATCHERY, Pikesville, P.O., Rockdale, Md.

TIPS to Gardeners

GARDENS FOR DEFENSE

THE home gardener has an important place in our program of national defense, a much more important role than he played during the first World war.

In the face of these facts, gardeners are advised to do two things: Plan to devote increased space to vegetable gardening; and perfect plans for the 1941 garden so as to get the greatest possible yield from the available space.

In stepping up yield from vegetable gardens of limited size, two major devices should be relied on, first, companion cropping — the planting of fast-growing crops like radishes, spinach, and lettuce between rows of slower-growing vegetables like tomatoes, and cabbage. The fast growers will be pulled and used before the other crops need the space.

Second, succession cropping—the repeated planting of major crops such as beans, sweet corn, radishes, carrots, beets, and lettuce. Moderate-size, new plantings made at regular intervals during the early part of the season will provide a steady supply of fresh vegetables until the season's end.

Beware Coughs from common colds That Hang On

Creomulsion relieves promptly because it goes right to the seat of the trouble to help loosen and expel germ laden phlegm, and aid nature to soothe and heal raw, tender, inflamed bronchial mucous membranes. Tell your druggist to sell you a bottle of Creomulsion with the understanding you must like the way it quickly allays the cough or you are to have your money back.

CREOMULSION
for Coughs, Chest Colds, Bronchitis

Who Is Rich?

He that is proud of riches is a fool. For if he be exalted above his neighbors because he hath more gold, how much inferior is he to a gold mine! — Jeremy Taylor.

Help to Relieve Distress of

FEMALE PERIODIC COMPLAINTS

Try Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound to help relieve monthly pain, headaches, backache and ALSO calm irritable nerves due to monthly functional disturbances.

Pinkham's Compound is simply marvelous to help build up resistance against distress of "difficult days." Famous for over 60 years! Hundreds of thousands of girls and women report remarkable benefits. WORTH TRYING!

One's Best Light

It pays to follow one's best light; to put God and one's country first, and ourselves afterwards.—Samuel C. Armstrong.

DOWN IN THE MOUTH?
Cheer up! Try this time-tested laxative. Relieves constipation effectively. Money-back guarantee. At your dealer or write: H. CLARKE & SONS, INC. BALTO., MD.
15¢ RED CLOUD BERRIES
ALL VEGETABLE LAXATIVE PREPARATION

WNU—4 11—41

Memory Clings

Experience teaches that a good memory is generally joined to a weak judgment.—Montaigne.

Miserable with backache?

WHEN kidneys function badly and you suffer a nagging backache, with dizziness, burning, scanty or too frequent urination and getting up at night, when you feel tired, nervous, all upset . . . use Doan's Pills.

Doan's are especially for poorly working kidneys. Millions of boxes are used every year. They are recommended the country over. Ask your neighbor!

DOAN'S PILLS