

wife and four little children, Mr. Tarrant.

Tarrant's face set like a flint. He already understood. This girl had come to plead the cause of the man he had seen fit to discharge—he, Tarrant. He would not even deign to answer. The steady scratch, scratch, of Trent's pen was apparently the only sound in Red Gulch. Yet Trent, in the most businesslike manner, was giving himself to trivialities. He was making numberless copies of Brig Foster's song.

"One of the children is a little cripple," suggested Katie, thoughtfully, throwing aside the shawl, and tossing back the straying curls with an upward fling of the deer-like head.

No answer.

"We think if she were sent east to one of the great hospitals she might be cured," said Katie, unconsciously giving a tighter roll to one of the blue sleeves that had begun to slip down.

Trent looked at the round, white arm that was rather near him.

"That is what Foster has been working for—to save that money," said Katie, a little more distinctly. "That is what has kept him a sober man for months and months."

She spoke so quietly that Tarrant was deceived, and thought a sneer would be opportune.

"I didn't notice any particular soberness about your friend to-day," he said, in a nasty tone.

Her voice was sweetness itself. "No; the gangs had to be laid off to-day, on account of the weather, and he fell into temptation, I suppose—there's plenty of it. But that doesn't mean he's to be kicked just because he's down. It's the hope for that little child that's going to make him a good man—and that hope's not going to be taken away from him while I live in Red Gulch."

Mr. Tarrant was irritated, and delivered himself at large.

"If you are trying to induce me to take the fellow back, you may save yourself the trouble," he said, brusquely. "He is discharged and done with so far as this road is concerned. He should not be taken on again even as a section-hand. And if he isn't out of the company's house by night I'll have his things thrown into the street."

Katie laughed, a little ripple of laughter that brought out unexpected dimples at the corners of her mouth and a wholly unwarranted one by the side of her chin.

"Now, do you know," she said, sweetly, "you won't do anything of the kind. Isn't it funny that you should think you would? But you won't put Brig's wife and babies into the street, and you won't discharge Brig. In fact, you never have discharged him. It wasn't your place to come out here discharging workmen, anyway. Nobody but Mr. Trent could do that, and he won't give up a good man like Brig. The end of it is that you realize you have acted like a meddling old woman, and you are going to apologize for it and promise never to do so again."

Tarrant's face crimsoned with fury, and he started up from his chair.

"Will you have the goodness to tell me what you mean, young woman?" he demanded.

Then Trent also rose, and spoke with labored politeness.

"Will you have the goodness to listen to me a few moments, Mr. Tarrant? You told me a little while ago that I didn't understand Red Gulch, that I didn't understand anything about conditions in the West. I saw the Vigilance Committee once in this town, wild with fury against a young fellow, whom they were about to hang to that tree—you can see it from where you stand. It was a girl who broke through the crowd, mounted the box beside the prisoner, and with her arm over his shoulder, talked, and told funny stories, and sang, and recited negro dialect, and so beguiled and befooled the crowd that the officers got here and saved the boy—who was innocent, by the way. When Fung Long over there came in here and opened his laundry, and a crowd

of drunken cow-boys came in one night to have fun with him, it was a girl who hid him in her kitchen, and stood in the door, pistol in hand, and kept the boys back, and talked to them so sweetly that the last one of them promised to give Fung Long work if he had to wear a 'biled shirt, once in a while to do it. When Black Ike was cut to pieces out yonder in the First and Last Chance, it was a girl he sent for, and she sat by him in that saloon and held his hand while he talked—Harvard and football, and home. In fact, Mr. Tarrant, that girl is one of the conditions of the West—she owns Red Gulch—she is Red Gulch—besides which, she's my friend—and if I were you I would be a little more careful in my manner of speech."

Mr. Tarrant had heard, and his eyes shifted uneasily. He remembered that the girl still held the pistol, and his mouth was dry.

"You don't imagine that I can be intimidated into taking back a man I have already discharged?" he demanded, with what loftiness he could.

The girl laughed again. She had the delicate skin that goes with red-brown hair, and a warm color had swept up into it.

"Who spoke of intimidating?" she retorted. "I am simply asking you to leave Brig in his place, and being a wise man, you are going to do it."

"I certainly am not!" he replied, regaining confidence. "He stands dismissed, and I mean exactly what I have said."

"Then I shall have to use moral suasion," she replied, mildly, getting down from the table and throwing the white shawl over her head. "Did you bring any food and bedding with you, Mr. Tarrant? I hope you did, for it is a long stretch from now to eleven o'clock to-morrow morning—and the nights are cold."

She had moved to the door, her hand was upon the knob, when Tarrant started up.

"What the—what do you mean?" he cried, biting back the oath with a furious glance at Trent.

The girl looked at him between the eyes, her head up.

"Simply that I am going out now to send word around the town; and you will neither get bite nor shelter in this place after that word is sent. My uncle keeps the hotel. In five minutes you will find your luggage on the front step. It is as Mr. Trent says, Mr. Tarrant. I am Red Gulch. These people love me—they are my people. You shall not come out here and trample down a man who has fought such battles as you never dreamed of. I know the East, too—I am a college girl, Mr. Tarrant—but this is the West, Mr. Tarrant—this is Red Gulch—and you and your methods are out of place. And—as I said—the nights are cold."

Mr. Tarrant's face paled, and then flushed a burning red. Would she dare? But there was no need to ask it. She would dare anything! There was a long silence, during which the wind flapped the ceiling cloth; and a cold shiver seized upon the Eastern man.

"Oh, well," he said, turning furiously upon Trent—he would make Trent suffer for this—"put the hound back in his place again since that suits you!"

"Beg pardon," said Trent, drily, but this is none of my funeral. You discharged him, and I'm afraid you'll have to be at the trouble of putting him back."

"Yes," said the girl at the door, sweetly; "I shall want a written statement to that effect—mentioning that this is not to be held to his prejudice in future dealings, you know, and that nobody concerned is to be persecuted—otherwise, we might all be uneasy. Mr. Trent, will you lend Mr. Tarrant your pen? Thanks, Mr. Tarrant. You have the earnest gratitude of one of—the conditions of the West."

But before she had reached the rickety stairway, Trent came running down after her. There was laughter in his eyes, but a choke in his voice.

"Oh, Katie," he whispered; "Katie,

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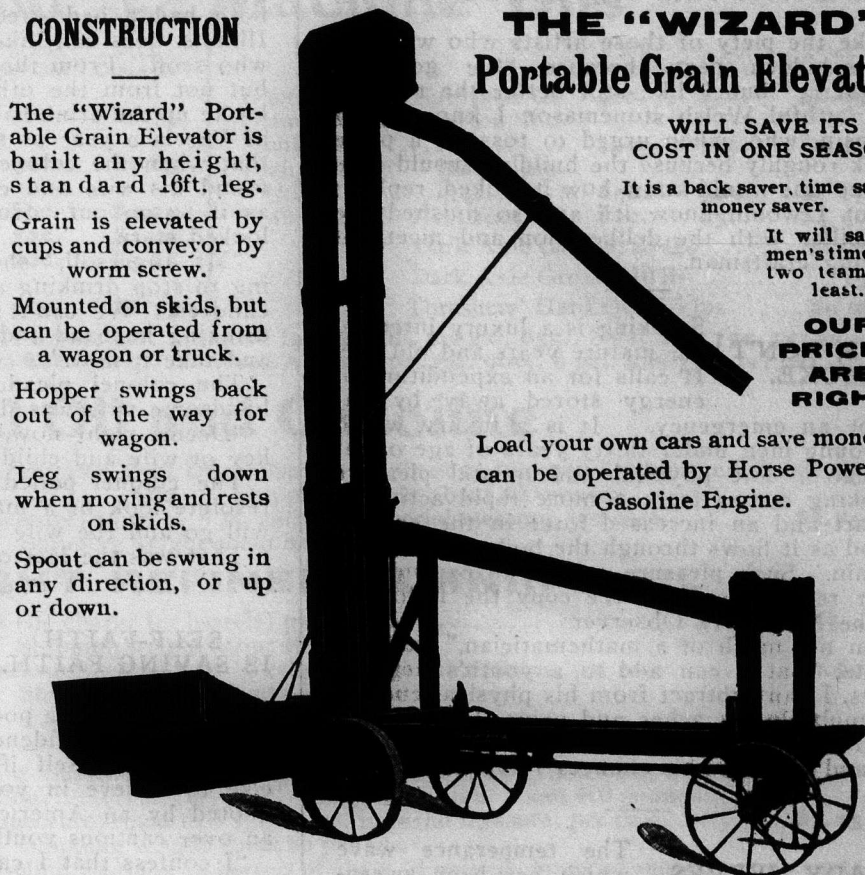
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it's got to be told now. I need you—more than I can tell—and if you'll just love me—"

The girl's face was turned away, but he held her hands.

"Not a bit of it," she cried, and turned her face toward him; upon which he laughed joyously.

"Oh, it's proud of you I was this day!" he cried. "And I want to be president of this road, Katie dear, and President of the United States, and maybe a few other little things—and I can be all of them, with you to help!"

A disgraceful figure, reclining on a box on the station platform, looked in upon a very pretty little scene in the quiet stairway.

"Babesh in zhe wood," he murmured, sentimentally. "Makesh a man wish he wash deshent man. Will be deshent man! Brig, ol' boy, lesh go 'ome an' be deshent!"

Which, with many waverings, but with ultimate success, he proceeded to do.

Knew What He Wanted.

A certain old gentleman's lack of "polish" is a sad trial to his eldest daughter. Not long ago the family were gathered in the library, one of the windows of which was open.

"That air—" the father began, but was quickly interrupted.

"Father, dear, don't say 'that air'—say 'that there,'" the daughter admonished.

"Well, this 'ear'—" he again attempted, but was as quickly brought to a halt.

"Nor 'this ear'; 'this here' is correct," he was told.

The old gentleman rose with an angry snort.

"Look here, Mary," he said. "Of course I know you have been to school and all that, but I reckon I know what I want to say, an' I am going to say it. I believe I feel cold in this ear from that air, and I'm going to shut the window!"



Kakabeka Falls as seen from C.N.R. Trains