

SERIAL STORY—

Love On  
The Line

By PAUL FRIGGENS

CAST OF CHARACTERS  
CARRIE LANE—an Eastern girl, who came into the frontier west to find a home.  
MARK DEUEL—a homesteader who keeps his business to himself.  
ASHTON OAKS—a land agent, with town lots to sell.

YESTERDAY Carrie is terrified after the shooting. Mackie is an old hand. Newt Gale took care of Oaks all night. But Carrie is worried about him. As he walks back to his room, Newt Gale warns him to look out for the land agent.

CHAPTER FIVE  
THE TAYLORS left Sioux Springs early. Carrie joined them after a hearty breakfast at Ma Parmley's. The wagon was piled high with supplies, most for Carrie's claim. She sat between Mrs. Taylor and big Ed, perched up in front of the land agent.

Carrie would never forget that morning. The sun beat down mercilessly, she thought, and she was glad that Ma Parmley had warned her to wear her biggest bonnet. Mrs. Taylor wore one, too. Big Ed Taylor, busy driving, didn't say much except to note the powdery dryness of the land.

"Seems," Ed said, "this is about the driest spell I've seen in a long time. Little rain would sure help this here prairie grass. Look at how brown it's gettin' now."

She noticed, however, grass was greener along the bottom lands when Ed Taylor whipped his team of grays across Rock Creek an hour before noon and pulled up at Carrie's claim. While Mrs. Taylor got out their lunch, he unloaded supplies, stacked them near the soddy site. Then they sat down and ate as Carrie never remembered eating before.

The Taylors drove on to their own claim, a mile distant, after eating, promising Carrie to return early for her that afternoon.

Carrie waved goodby to the Taylors, standing there on her stack of supplies, and was thankful that such people lived. She watched them down the knoll and out of sight beyond the trees along Rock Creek. She was turning back to survey the things Taylor had unloaded when she saw a lone figure driving across the creek in a buggy toward her claim.

Instantly she was excited. She did not have long to wait. The visitor was Ashton Oaks. Carrie recognized him with a sudden fear, which she could not wholly disguise as she drove up.

OAKS, AFFABLE, immaculate in his cutaway and black hat, jumped down from the buggy, greeted Carrie effusively.

"Just drove out from town," Oaks against the side of his buggy. "Pretty dusty. You homesteaders certainly can stir up the dirt." He laughed and Carrie Lane suddenly had the feeling of being eyed from head to foot.

"Where there's dust, there's action," Carrie retorted. "Why, you won't know this country in six months, Mr. Oaks," using the identical words Oaks had used on the ride out to Rock Creek two days before.

"That's right. That's right." Oaks bowed and laughed again, pushing back his black hat to wipe his forehead. "I'm glad you mentioned that. That's why I'm out here today."

"What do you mean?" Carrie asked.

"Seriously now, Miss Lane," Oaks went on, "you're not going to settle out here on Rock Creek and live in a sod house, alone."

Carrie thought he emphasized the word "alone," though she couldn't be sure. "That's all right for married folks and for men," she went on quickly, "but it's no place for a woman."

"We'll see about all that, Mr. Oaks," Carrie was suddenly defiant. "Besides, you suggested there was opportunity here, yourself."

"There is," Oaks cut in quickly. "Plenty of opportunity, Miss Lane. Plenty. But it's not here in Rock Creek. It's in town. In the town lots. Lots in Sioux Springs and Laurel and Salina and a dozen other towns along the railroad."

"What railroad?"

Oaks colored so deeply that for a minute Carrie wished she had not reminded him of the encounter with Mack in the hotel lobby. But the agent quickly recovered.

"Miss Lane, I don't know this man Deuel, whoever or whatever he is, but I do know the railroad is coming."

HE STEPPED away from the buggy, came closer to Carrie, resting one foot on the pile of tin roofing while he talked. Instinctively, Carrie drew slightly back sensing for the first time the real measure of the man.

"Miss Lane, I understand you have a little money you might well invest out here. I'm prepared to invest that money for you, invest it in good, sound real estate in Sioux Springs or in any other town out here you like."

He reached into his pocket, produced an elaborate lithograph, spread it out before Carrie. It pictured a "State Capital of Tomorrow" with broad streets and humming river and railroad traffic.

"Miss Lane," Oaks pressed on, "the capital must be located in Grove City. Look, hundreds of lots have been sold there already." He produced further evidence of his transactions. "People are coming west on every train out of Chicago. In six months it will be too late to get in on this. You don't need to homestead out here one hour."

Carrie stopped. Carrie Lane was not listening. She was looking toward Rock Creek and the waving sedgegrass and the rolling plains beyond. She turned back, with a look of definite defiance.

"Mr. Oaks, I'm sorry, but I think you'd better drive on."

Oaks flushed. He turned back to the buggy, picked up the reins, but he held them a minute. And then he bowed ever so slightly and smiled a dark, insinuating smile. "I suppose Mr. Deuel is to blame for this."

He nodded his head. In that case I don't think you or Mr. Deuel either have heard the last from me."

He climbed back into his buggy, reached for his long, black whip. "It might be a good thing to remember, Miss Lane, that pretty girls sometimes get mixed up in things out here a lot more than land office across the street. A soli-

## FUNNY SIDE UP

By Abner Dean



COPY 1940 BY NEA SERVICE, INC. T. M. REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.

"I want you to add a convoy!"

HOLD EVERYTHING



COPY 1940 BY NEA SERVICE, INC. T. M. REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.

"Let's not have any arguments! You've had 30 treatments—now pay up!"



COPY 1940 BY NEA SERVICE, INC.

"Be sure and get back here by 10:30!"

THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson



ANSWER—July 28, 1914.

T. M. REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.

they want to." He cracked his whip and the buggy rolled away.

Carrie, trembling, sat down on Newt's. "The time of night. He walked toward the end of the street. Suddenly the figure darted down the side of the building and out of sight. But not before Newt Gale recognized the flat-crowned hat and the cutaway coat of Ashton Oaks.

(To Be Continued)

## THE INDIANAPOLIS TIMES

OUR BOARDING HOUSE

With Major Hoople

YAS INDEED, MR. WHAMNOOPLE, I AM AN EFFICIENCY ENGINEER—HAK-KAFF!—RIGHT NOW I AM WORKING ON A HORIZONTAL ESCALATOR, OR MOVING AISLE, FOR DEPARTMENT STORES, TO BE KNOWN AS THE HOOPLELOW! INSTEAD OF HAVING TO WALK TO A CERTAIN COUNTER, THE HOOPLELOW CARRIES YOU THERE!—IT WILL BE A GREAT BOON TO LUXURY SALES—FOR EXAMPLE, MRS. JONES TAKES HER HUSBAND SHOPPING AND, APPARENTLY BY ACCIDENT, BUT QUITE BY DESIGN, HE SUDDENLY IS IN THE FUR COAT DEPARTMENT!

THAT'S THE ONE I WAS TELLING YOU ABOUT, BRIGGS—the ONE WITH TH' NOSE THAT GOT FOOLED BY A BEAR TRAP!

BY A BEAR TRAP!