

The background of the entire image is a solid pink color. In the lower half, there is a dense field of gold glitter. Above the glitter, there are several out-of-focus, circular gold bokeh lights of varying sizes, creating a shimmering effect.

***DANE
COOLIDGE***

***SILVER
AND GOLD***

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AND GOLD***

Dane Coolidge

Silver and Gold

A Story of Luck and Love in a Western Mining Camp

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CHAPTER I

THE GROUND-HOG

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The day had dawned on the summit of Apache Leap and a golden eagle, wheeling high above the crags, flashed back the fire of the sun from his wings; but in the valley below where old Pinal lay sleeping the heat had not begun. A cool wind drew down from the black mouth of Queen Creek Canyon, stirring the listless leaves of the willows, and the shadow of the great cliff fell like a soothing hand on the deserted town at its base. In the brief freshness of the morning there was a smell of flaunting green from the sycamores along the creek, and the tang of greasewood from the ridges; and then, from the chimney of a massive stone house, there came the odor of smoke. A coffee mill began to purr from the kitchen behind and a voice shouted a summons to breakfast, but the hobo miner who lay sprawling in his blankets did not answer the peremptory call. He raised his great head, turned his pig eyes toward the house, then covered his face from the flies.

2There was a clatter of dishes, a long interval of silence, and then the sun like a flaming disc topped the mountain wall to the east. The square adobe houses cast long black shadows across the whitened dust of the street and as the man burrowed deeper to keep out the light the door of the stone house slammed. The day seldom passed when Bunker Hill's wife did not cook for three or four hoboes but when Old Bunk called a man in to breakfast he expected him to come. He stood for a minute, tall and rangy and grizzled, a

desert squint in one eye; and then with a muttered oath he strode across the street.

"Hey!" he called prodding the blankets with his boot and the hobo came alive with a jump.

"You look out!" he snarled, bounding violently to his feet and dropping back to a crouch; but when he met Bunker Hill's steely eyes he mumbled something and lowered his hands.

"All right, pardner," observed Hill, "I'll do all of that; but if you figure on getting any breakfast you'd better come in and eat it."

"Huh!" responded the hobo scowling and blinking at the sun and then without a word he started for the house. He was a big, hulking man, with arms like a bear and bulging, bench-like legs; but the expression on his face above his enormous black mustache was that of a disgruntled groundhog. His nose was tipped up, his eyes were small and stubborn and as he ate a hurried breakfast he glanced about uneasily as if fearful of some trap; yet if Bunker Hill had any reservations about his guest he did not abate his hospitality. The coffee was still hot, there was plenty of everything and when the miner rose to go Old Bunk accompanied him to the door.

"Going to be hot," he observed as the heat struck through their clothes; but the hobo omitted even a nod of assent in his haste to be off down the trail.

"Well, the dadblasted bum!" exclaimed Bunker in a rage as the miner passed over the first hill and, stumping across the street, he rolled up the tumbled blankets. "The dirty dog!" he grumbled vindictively, hoisting the bed upon his

shoulders; but as he started back to the house he heard something drop from the roll. He paused and looked back and there on the ground lay a wallet, stuffed with bills. It was the miner's purse, which he had put under his pillow and forgotten in his sudden departure.

"O-ho!" observed Bunker as he picked it up. "O-ho, I thought you was broke!" He opened the purse with great deliberation, laying bare a great sheaf of bills, and as his wife and daughter came hurrying down the steps he counted the hobo's hoard.

"Over eight hundred dollars," he announced with ominous calm. "Some roll, when a man is bumming his meals and can't even stop to say thanks—"

"He's coming back for it," broke in his wife anxiously. "And now, Andrew, please don't—"

"Never mind," returned her husband, slipping the wallet into his pocket, and she sighed and folded her hands. The hobo was walking fast, coming back down the hill, and when he saw Hill by the blankets he broke into a ponderous trot.

"Say," he called, "you didn't see a purse, did ye? I left one under my blankets."

"A purse!" exclaimed Bunker with exaggerated surprise. "Why I thought you was broke—what business have *you* got with a purse?"

"Well, I had a few keep-sakes and—"

"You're a liar!" rapped out Bunker and his sharp lower jaw suddenly jutted out like a crag. "You're a liar," he repeated, as the hobo let it pass, "you had eight hundred and twenty-five dollars."

“Well, what’s that to you?” retorted the miner defiantly. “It’s mine, so gimme it back!”

“Oh, I don’t know,” drawled Bunker hauling the purse from his pocket and looking over the bills, “I don’t know whether I will or not. You came in here last night and told me you were broke, but right here is where I collect. It’ll cost you five dollars for your supper and breakfast and five dollars more for your bed—that’s my regular price to transients.”

“No, you don’t!” exclaimed the hobo, but as Bunker looked up he drew back a step and waited.

“That’s ten dollars in all,” continued Hill, extracting two bills from the purse, “and next time you bum your breakfast I’d advise you to thank the cook.”

5“Hey, you give me that money!” burst out the miner hoarsely, holding out a threatening hand, and Bunker Hill rose to his full height. He was six feet two when he stooped.

“W’y, sure,” he said handing over the wallet; but as the miner turned to go Hill jabbed him in the ribs with a pistol. “Just a moment, my friend,” he went on quietly, “I just want to tell you a few things. I’ve been feeding men like you for fifteen years, right here in this old town, and I’ve never turned one away yet; but you can tell any bo that you meet on the trail that the road-sign for this burg is changed. I used to be easy, but so help me Gawd, I’ll never feed a hobo again. Here my wife has been slaving over a red-hot stove cooking grub for you hoboes for years and the first bum that forgets and leaves his purse has eight hundred dollars-cash! Now you git, dad-burn ye, before I do the world a favor and fill you full of lead!” He motioned him away with the muzzle

of his pistol while his wife laid a hand on his arm, and after one look the hobo turned and loped over the top of the hill.

"Now Andrew, please," expostulated Mrs. Hill, and, still breathing hard, Old Bunk put up his gun and reached for a chew of tobacco.

"Well, all right," he growled, "but you heard what I said—that's the last doggoned hobo we feed."

"Well-perhaps," she conceded, but Bunker Hill was roused by the memory of years of ingratitude.

"No 'perhaps' about it," he asserted firmly, "I'll 6run every last one of them away. Do you think I'm going to work my head off for my family, only to be et out of house and home? Do you think I'm going to have you cooking meals for these miners when they're earning their five dollars a day? Let 'em buy a lunch at the store!"

"No, but Andrew," protested Mrs. Hill, who was a large, motherly soul and not to be bowed down by work, "I'm sure that some of them are worthy."

"Yes, I know you are," he answered, smiling grimly, "that's what you always say. But you hear me, now; I'm through. Don't you feed another man."

He turned to his daughter for support, but his bad luck had just begun. Drusilla was shading her eyes from the sun and staring up the trail.

"Oh, here comes another one," she cried in a hushed voice and pointed up the creek. He stood at the mouth of the black-shadowed canyon where the trail comes in from Globe—a young man with wind-blown hair, looking doubtfully down at the town; but when he saw them he stepped boldly forth and came plodding down the trail.

“Oh, not this one!” pleaded Mrs. Hill when she saw his boyish face; but Bunker Hill thrust out his jaw.

“Every one of ’em,” he muttered, “the whole works—all of ’em! You women folks go into the house.”

7CHAPTER II

BIG BOY

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He was a big, fair-haired boy, blue-eyed and clean limbed, and as he came down the trail there was a spring to his step that not even a limp could obliterate; and at every stride the great muscles in his chest played and rippled beneath his shirt. He was a fine figure of a man, tall and straight as an Apollo, and yet he was a hobo. Never before had Bunker Hill seen a better built man or one more open-faced and frank, but he came down the trail with the familiar hobo-limp and Bunker set his jaws and waited. It was such men as this, young and strong and full of blood, who had kept him poor for years. Hobo miners, the most expert of their craft, and begging their grub on the trail!

“Good morning,” nodded Hill and squinted down his eyes as the young man boggled at his words.

“Good morning,” replied the hobo and then, after a pause, he straightened up and came to the point. “What’s the chance to get a little something to eat?” he inquired with a twisted smile and Bunker Hill sprang his bomb.

8“Danged poor,” he returned, and as the hobo blinked he spoke his piece with a rush. “I’ve got a store over there where you can buy what you want; but I’ve quit, absolutely, feeding every hobo that comes by and batters my door for grub. I’m an old man myself and you’re young and strong—why the hell don’t you get out and work?”

“Never you mind,” answered the hobo, his eyes glowing angrily; and as Old Bunk went on with his tirade the miner’s

lip curled with scorn. "That's all right, old-timer," he broke in with cold politeness—"no offense—don't let me deprive you. I don't make a practice of battering on back doors. But, say, I'm looking for a fellow with a big, black mustache—did you see him come by this way?"

"Did I see him?" yelled Hill flying into a fury, "well you're danged whistling I did! He came in last night and bummed his supper—my wife had to cook it special—and I gave him his bed and breakfast; and this morning when he left he didn't even say: 'Thanks!' That's how grateful these hoboes are! And when I went out to pick up his blankets a thumping big purse dropped out!"

"Holy Joe!" exclaimed the hobo looking up with sudden interest, "say, how long ago did he leave?"

"Not half an hour! No, not ten minutes ago—and if my wife hadn't been there to hold me down I'd have run him till he dropped. And when I opened that purse it was full of money—there was eight hundred and twenty-five dollars—and him trying to tell me he was broke!"

9 "That's him, all right," declared the hobo. "Well, so long; I'll be on my way."

He started off down the trail at a long, swinging stride, then turned abruptly back.

"I'll get a drink," he suggested, "if there's no objection. Don't charge for your water, I reckon."

It was all said politely and yet there was an edge to it which cut Old Bunk to the quick. He, Bunker Hill, who had fed hoboes for years and had never taken a cent, to be insulted like this by the first sturdy beggar that he declined to serve with a meal! He reached for his gun, but just at that

moment his wife laid a hand on his arm. She had not been far away, just up on the porch where she could watch what was going on, and she turned to the hobo with a smile.

"Mr. Hill is just angry," she explained good-naturedly, "on account of that other man; but if you'll wait a few minutes I'll cook you some breakfast and—"

"Thank you, ma'am," returned the miner, taking off his hat civilly, "I'll just take a drink and go."

He hurried back to the well and, picking up the bucket, drank long and deep of the water; then he threw away the rest and with practiced hands drew up a fresh bucket from the depths.

"You'd better fill a bottle," called Bunker Hill, whose anger was beginning to evaporate, "it's sixteen miles to the next water."

The hobo said nothing, nor did he fill a bottle, and as he came back past them there was a set to his jaw that was eloquent of rage and disdain. It was the custom of the country—of that great, desert country where houses are days' journeys apart—to invite every stranger in; and as Bunker Hill gazed after him he saw his good name held up to execration and scorn. This boy was a Westerner, he could tell by his looks and the way he saved on his words, perhaps he even lived in those parts; and in a sudden vision Hill beheld him spreading the news as he followed the long trail to the railroad. He would come dragging in to Whitlow's Wells, the next station down the road, so weak he could hardly walk and when they enquired into his famished condition he would unfold some terrible tale. And the worst of it was that the boys would believe it and repeat it to all

who passed. Men would hear in distant cow camps, far back in the Superstitions, that Old Bunk had driven a starving man from his door and he had nearly perished on the desert.

"Hey!" called Bunker Hill taking a step or two after him, "wait a minute-I'll give you a lunch."

"You can keep your lunch," said the man over his shoulder and strode doggedly on up the hill.

"Gimme something to take to him," rapped out Hill to his wife, but the hobo's sharp ears had caught the words and he wheeled abruptly in his tracks.

"I wouldn't take your danged lunch if it was the last grub on earth," he shouted in a towering rage; and while they stood gazing he turned his back and passed on over the hill.

"Let 'im go!" grumbled Bunker pacing up and down and avoiding his helpmeet's eye, but at last he ripped out a smothered oath and racked off down the street to his stable. This was an al fresco affair, consisting of a big stone corral within the walls of what had once been the dancehall, and as he saddled up his horse and rode out the narrow gate he found his wife waiting with a lunch.

"Don't crush the doughnuts," she murmured anxiously and patted his hand approvingly.

"All right," he said and, putting spurs to his horse, he galloped off over the hill.

The old town of Pinal lay on a bench above the creek bed, with high cliffs to the east and north; but south and west the country fell off rapidly in a series of rolling ridges. Over these the road to the railroad climbed and dipped with wearisome regularity until at last it dropped down into the

creek-bed again and followed its dry, sandy course. Not half an hour had passed from the time the second hobo left till Old Bunk had started after him, yet so fast had he traveled that he was almost to the creek bed before Bunker Hill caught sight of him.

“Ay, Chihuahua!” he ejaculated in shrill surprise and reined in his horse to gaze. The young hobo was running and, not far ahead, the Ground Hog was fleeing before him. They ran through bushy gulches and over cactus-crowned ridges where the sahuaros rose up like giant sentinels; until at last, 12as he came to the sandy creek-bed, the black hobo stood at bay.

“They’re fighting!” exclaimed Bunker with a joyous chuckle and rode down the trail like the wind.

After twenty wild years in Old Mexico, there were times when Bunker Hill found Arizona a trifle tame; but here at last there was staged a combat that promised to take a place in local history. When he rode up on the fight the young miner and the Ground Hog were standing belt to belt, exchanging blows with all their strength, and as the young man reeled back from a right to the jaw the Ground Hog leapt in to finish him.

“Here! None of that!” spoke up Bunker Hill menacing the black hobo with his quirt; but the battered young Apollo waved him angrily aside and flew at his opponent again.

“I’ll show you, you danged dog!” he cursed exultantly as the Ground Hog went down before him, “I’ll show you how to run out on me! Come on, you big stiff, and if I don’t make you holler quit you can have every dollar you stole!”

"Hey, what's the matter, Big Boy? What's going on here?" demanded Bunker of the blond young giant. "I thought you fellers were pardners."

"Pardners, hell!" spat Big Boy, whose mouth was beginning to bleed. "He robbed me of all my money. We won eight hundred dollars in the drilling contest at Globe and he collected the stakes and beat it!"

13 "You're a liar!" retorted the Ground Hog standing sullenly on his guard, and once more Big Boy went after him. They roughed it back and forth, neither seeking to avoid the blows but swinging with all their might; until at last the Ground Hog landed a mighty smash that knocked his opponent to the ground. "Now lay there," he jeered, and, stepping over to one side, he picked up a purse from the ground.

It was the same bulging purse that he had forgotten that morning in his hurry to get over the hill, and as Bunker Hill gazed at it two things which had misled him became suddenly very plain. The day before had been the Fourth of July, when the miners had their contests in Globe, and these two powerful men were a team of double-jackers who had won the first prize between them. Then the Ground Hog had stolen the total proceeds, which accounted for his show of great wealth; and Big Boy, on the other hand, being left without a cent, had been compelled to beg for his breakfast. A wave of righteous anger rose up in Old Bunk's breast at the monstrous injustice of it all and, whipping out his pistol, he threw down on the Ground Hog and ordered him to put up his hands.

“And now lay down that purse,” he continued briefly, “before I shoot the flat out of your eye.”

The hobo complied, but before he could retreat the young miner raised himself up.

“Say, you butt out of this!” he said to Bunker Hill, waggling his head to shake off the blood. “I’ll ’tend to this yap myself.”

He turned his gory front to the Ground Hog, who came eagerly back to the fray; and once more like snarling animals they heaved and slugged and grunted, until once more poor Big Boy went down.

“I can whip him!” he panted rising up and clearing his eyes. “I could clean him in a minute-only I’m starved.”

He staggered and the heart of Bunker Hill smote him when he remembered how he had denied the man food. Yet he bored in resolutely, though his blows were weak, and the Ground Hog’s pig eyes gleamed. He abated his own blows, standing with arms relaxed and waiting; and when he saw the opening he struck. It was aimed at the jaw, a last, smashing hay-maker, such a blow as would stagger an ox; but as it came past his guard the young Apollo ducked, and then suddenly he struck from the hip. His whole body was behind it, a sharp uppercut that caught the hurtling Ground Hog on the chin; and as his head went back his body lurched and followed and he landed in a heap in the dirt.

“He’s out!” shouted Bunker and Big Boy nodded grimly; but the Ground Hog was pawing at the ground. He rose up, and fell, then rose up again; and as they watched him half-pityingly he scrambled across the sand and made a grab at the purse.

“You stand back!” he blustered clutching the purse to his breast and snapping open the blade of 15a huge jack-knife; but before Old Bunk could intervene Big Boy had caught up a rock.

“You drop that knife,” he shouted fiercely, “or I’ll bash out your brains with this stone!” And as the Ground Hog gazed into his battle-mad eyes he weakened and dropped the knife. “Now gimme that purse!” ordered the masterful Big Boy and, cringing before the rock, the beaten Ground Hog slammed it down on the ground with a curse.

“I’ll git you yet!” he burst out hoarsely as he shambled off down the trail, “I’ll learn you to git gay with me!”

“You’ll learn me nothing,” returned the young miner contemptuously and gathered up the spoils of battle.

16CHAPTER III

HOBO STUFF

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“Young man,” began Bunker Hill after a long and painful silence in which Big Boy completely ignored him, “I want to ask your pardon. And anything I can do—”

“I’m all right,” cut in the hobo wiping the blood out of one eye and feeling tenderly of a tooth, “and I don’t want nothing to do with you.”

“Can’t blame ye, can’t blame ye,” answered Old Bunk judicially. “I certainly got you wrong. But as I was about to say, Mrs. Hill sent this lunch and she said she hoped you’d accept it.”

He untied a sack from the back of his saddle, and as he caught the fragrance of new-made doughnuts Big Boy’s resolution failed.

“All right,” he said, making a grab for the lunch. “Much obliged!” And he chucked him a bill.

“Hey, what’s this for?” exclaimed Bunker Hill grievously. “Didn’t I ask your pardon already.”

“Well, maybe you did,” returned the hobo, “but after that call down you gave me this morning I’m going to pay my way. It’s too danged bad,” he murmured sarcastically as he opened up the lunch. 17“Sure hard luck to see a good woman like that married to a pennypinching old walloper like you.”

“Oh, I don’t know,” observed Old Bunk, gazing doubtfully at the bill, but at last he put it in his pocket.

“Yes, that’s right,” he agreed with an indulgent smile, “she’s an awful good cook-and an awful good woman, too. I’ll just give her this money to buy some little present-she told me I was wrong, all the time. But I want to tell you, pardner-you can believe it or not-I never turned a man down before.”

The hobo grunted and bit into a doughnut and Bunker Hill settled down beside him.

“Say,” he began in an easy, conversational tone, “did you ever hear about the hobo that was walking the streets in Globe? Well, he was broke and up against it-hadn’t et for two days and the rustling was awful poor-but as he was walking along the street in front of that big restaurant he saw a new meal ticket on the sidewalk. His luck had been so bad he wouldn’t even look at it but at last when he went by he took another slant and see that it was good-there wasn’t but one meal punched out.”

“Aw, rats,” scoffed Big Boy, “are you still telling that one? There was a miner came by just as he reached down to grab it and punched out every meal with his hob-nails.”

“That’s the story,” admitted Bunker, “but say, here’s another one-did you ever hear of the hobo 18Mark Twain? Well, he was a well-known character in the old days around Globe-kinder drifted around from one camp to the other and worked all his friends for a dollar. That was his regular graft, he never asked for more and he never asked the same man twice, but once every year he’d make the rounds and the old-timers kind of put up with him. Great story-teller and all that and one day I was sitting talking with him when a mining man came into the saloon. He owned a mine, over

around Mammoth somewhere, and he wanted a man to herd it. It was seventy-five a month, with all expenses paid and all you had to do was to stick around and keep some outsider from jumping in. Well, when he asked for a man I saw right away it was just the place for old Mark and I began to kind of poke him in the ribs, but when he didn't answer I hollered to the mining man that I had just the feller he wanted. Well, the mining man came over and put it up to Mark, and everybody present began to boost. He was such an old bum that we wanted to get rid of him and there wasn't a thing he could kick on. There was plenty of grub, a nice house to live in and he didn't have to work a tap; but in spite of all that, after he'd asked all kinds of questions, Old Mark said he'd have to think it over. So he went over to the bar and began to figger on some paper and at last he came back and said he was sorry but he couldn't afford to take it.

“‘Well, why not?’ we asks, because we knowed he was a bum, but he says: ‘Well gentlemen, I’ll 19tell ye, it’s this way. I’ve got twelve hundred friends in Arizona that’s worth a dollar apiece a year; but this danged job only pays seventy-five a month—I’d be losing three hundred a year.”

“Huh, huh,” grunted Big Boy, picking up some folded tarts, “your mind seems to be took up with hoboese.”

“Them’s my wife’s pay-streak biscuits,” grinned Bunker Hill, “or at least, that’s what I call ’em. The bottom crust is the foot-wall, the top is the hanging-wall, and the jelly in the middle is the pay streak.”

“Danged good!” pronounced the hobo licking the tips of his fingers and Old Bunk tapped him on the knee.

"Say," he said, "seeing the way you whipped that jasper puts me in mind of a feller back in Texas. He was a big, two-fisted hombre, one of these Texas bad-men that was always getting drunk and starting in to clean up the town; and he had all the natives bluffed. Well, he was in the saloon one day, telling how many men he'd killed, when a little guy dropped in that had just come to town, and he seemed to take a great interest. He kept edging up closer, sharpening the blade of his jack-knife on one of these here little pocket whetstones, until finally he reached over and cut a notch in the bad man's ear.

"There," he says, "you're so doggoned bad-next time I see you I'll know you!"

20 "Yeh, some guy," observed Big Boy, "and I see you're some story-teller, but what's all this got to do with me?"

"Oh, nothing, nothing," answered Old Bunk hastily, "only I thought while you were eating—"

"Yes, you told me two stories about a couple of hoboes and then another one about taming down a bad man; but I want to tell you right now, before you go any further, that I'm no hobo nor bad man neither. I'm a danged good miner—one of the best in Globe—"

"Aw, no no!" burst out Bunker holding up both hands in protest, "you've got me wrong entirely."

"Well, your stories may be all right," responded Big Boy shortly, "but they don't make a hit with me. And I've took about enough, for one day."

He started back up the trail and Bunker Hill rode along behind him going over the events of the day. Some distinctly evil genius seemed to have taken possession of him from

the moment he got out of bed and, try as he would, it seemed absolutely impossible for him to square himself with this Big Boy.

“Hey, git on and ride,” he shouted encouragingly, but Big Boy shook his head.

“Don’t want to,” he answered and once more Bunker Hill was left to ponder his mistakes. The first, of course, was in taking too much for granted when Big Boy had walked into town; and the second was in ever refusing a hobo when he asked 21for something to eat. True it amounted in the aggregate to a heart-breaking amount—almost enough to support his family—but a man lost his luck when he turned a hobo down and Old Bunk decided against it. Never again, he resolved, would he restrain his good wife from following the dictates of her heart, and that meant that every hobo that walked into town would get a square meal in his kitchen. Where the cash was coming from to buy this expensive food and pay for the freighting across the desert was a matter for the future to decide, but as he dwelt on his problem a sudden ray of hope roused Bunker Hill from his reverie. Speaking of money, the ex-hobo, walking along in front of him, had over eight hundred dollars in his hip pocket—and he claimed to be a miner!

“Say!” began Bunker as they came in sight of town, “d’ye see those old workings over there? That’s the site of the celebrated Lost Burro Mine—turned out over four millions in silver!”

“Yeah, so I’ve heard,” answered Big Boy wearily, “been closed down though, for twenty years.”