

# THE ADVENTUROUS LIFE OF JIM

By  
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## CHAPTER 1

James Bradford entered the world on August 12, 1890, in Warner City, Kentucky. His Dad, Burt, had been married to Jewel for only two years when James was born. He was named after his uncle James Butler but he soon became “Jimmy.” Then when he became 18 years old, they began to call him “Jim.”

Jimmy’s mother was in poor health and died when Jimmy was just four years old. His earliest memory of his mother was when he was three-years-old. At that time she was already sickly and was unable to show Jimmy much love in his raising.

His dad was heartbroken and only survived his wife by two years. And after that his dad’s sister, Ruby, took care of Jimmy.

She was a very particular lady with strict rules on behavior, whether it was at the table or sitting in the living room. So James, as she called him, got his knuckles whacked whenever he didn’t use the proper manners at the table.

His mandated manners included eating with one hand while the other hand was on his lap. Of course when it was necessary for him to use his knife to cut up his meat, he was allowed to hold the fork in his left hand, above the table. He also had to keep a napkin neatly tucked in the top of his shirt when eating.

He could speak only when he was spoken to, and had to ask for permission to leave the table. And some of the manners stayed with him all his life.

Jimmy was fortunate and was able to attend the twelve years of school. He really liked school and was a very good student, particularly in mathematics. He was also a good student in all his other classes: History, Health, Geography, and Economics.

In addition he was a good student of the Bible, thanks to his Aunt Ruby. She saw to it that Jimmy studied the Bible and attended the Baptist Sunday School and Church. Then when he was eleven years old he accepted Jesus as his Lord and Savior, and became a member of the church.

Aunt Ruby also saw to it that he learned all about work in life on a farm. He learned to milk cows, gather eggs, cut wood for the cook stove and the heating stove.

He didn’t like chores and made himself a promise he would get out of doing them as soon as possible.

He worked for Aunt Ruby until he was sixteen, and then he got a job working on a farm and ranch owned by George Hayes. There he learned to break horses to ride and to pull farm implements.

Then after he had worked four years for Mr. Hayes, he got a letter from an uncle in South Texas and learned that the Military Academy there was hiring men to train horses at ten dollars per horse. The horse had to be broken to ride, neck rein, and to stop and stand still when the reins were dropped.

So he went to South Texas, next to the Mexico border, in his Model T Ford to get a job breaking horses at the Military Academy. He had no trouble convincing the Head Trainer at Military Academy that he was very good at breaking and training horses; he just told him of his four years of breaking horses for Mr. Hayes.

There was no housing available at the Military Academy so Jim rented a bungalow in Florien. Fortunately, it was only three miles from his house to the corral where he did the horse training.

The job he had was a very good one; he got ten dollars for every horse he trained. And as he had no reason to spend any money except for food and rent, he accumulated a lot of money in a very short time. (And at that time in history the dollar had a lot of purchasing power.) But unfortunately, Jim finally got all the horses trained and was now out of a job.

He thought about trying for a job on the huge ranch that bordered on the Mexican border next to the Military Academy; the ranch was owned by Harry Clifton. So he drove over there and had an interview with him.

After Jim had finished telling him about all of his experiences, Mr. Clifton said, "Jim I have also heard about your talent as a cowboy and horse trainer, so I will be glad to hire you. I am expanding my pasture land and buying some more cattle; so I will need another cowboy when I get them in two weeks.

"I will pay you six hundred dollars a month and provide you with food and a room in the bunk house. Would that be acceptable to you? If it is, you can start working here in two weeks when I get the extra cattle."

"Yes, Mr. Clifton, all that is very acceptable so I'll be here in two weeks ready to go to work; and thank you for the job."

He shook hands with Mr. Clifton, and then drove over to Jamaica, Mexico.

## CHAPTER 2

Jamaica was a medium sized city, and just across the border from Texas. The stores in it had a lot of trade from Americans because their merchandise was usually cheaper than its American counterpart.

The Americans had no problems with speaking English in Mexico because the Mexicans had been taught to use English as a second language in school and at home.

Jim drove to the Hotel Juarez and got an upstairs room for two weeks. Then he decided to go down to the street and wander around—just sight-seeing for a while.

As he wandered along the street he came to a place that had a beer advertisement on its window. Jim had never tasted beer so he went inside and bought a bottle.

He sat down at a table, opened his bottle of beer, and took a swig. It was so bad tasting that Jim almost upchucked it. So he got up and walked out of the place and left the beer behind.

And as he was sauntering down the street, he discovered a dance hall that was only a few blocks from the hotel. Since Jim loved to dance, he made a mental note of the location of the dance hall. Then he decided to get a Coke as that might take the taste of beer out of his mouth.

He had only walked a few blocks until he found a grocery store that was not crowded, so he walked in. The place was evidently managed by a young lady that looked like she was about twenty years old.

She was a very pretty young lady, and she asked Jim in perfect English: “Sir, may I help you?” Jim was pleasantly surprised by her speech and very impressed by how pretty she was; he immediately ordered a Coke.

Then the young lady asked, “Sir, would you like your Coke in a glass over ice, or would you rather drink it from just a cold bottle?”

He decided that a very, very cold Coke would be the best, so he ordered the Coke in a glass with ice in it.

### CHAPTER 3

When he had gained a little courage he asked, “Ma’am, may I ask you your name? My name is Jim Bradford.”

She smiled, and said, “Yes, sir, you may ask my name; it is Juanita Shaw. My father was an American named Jerry Shaw, and my mother’s name is Delilah Shaw.

“My father was killed in an automobile accident two years ago; and in his will he left this business to mother and me, as I was his only child.”

Then she quickly added, “I shouldn’t have told you all of that; after all you just asked for my name.”

Jim replied, “That was perfectly all right. I was glad to learn your family names, but I am very sorry about the loss of your father.

Then Jim said, “Juanita, forgive me for asking, but does your mother allow you to go to dances with a gringo?”

“Well, to be perfectly honest I have never been asked to go to a dance by a gringo, although I have been several times to a dance with a young Mexican lad.

“We have a good dance every Saturday night from seven o’clock to midnight. But in case you’re wondering, I don’t have a steady boyfriend to take me to dances.”

Jim then asked, “Would you go to the dance with me tonight if your mother would allow you to do so?”

Juanita laughed and said, “Jim, you don’t waste any time about asking for dates, do you? But in answer to your question, yes, I will go with you to the dance tonight if my mother says it’s alright. She is in the storage room getting some supplies, so why don’t you come with me and we will go find out if I can go to the dance with a gringo.”

Jim said, “Just lead the way, please.” So Juanita led him to the storage room and said, “Jim, this is my mother, Delilah; and Mother this is Jim Bradford; and he wants to take me to the dance this evening. Would that be okay with you?”

Mrs. Shaw turned around, took a good look at Jim, and then said, “Mr. Bradford, are you a Christian?”

Jim had not expected such a question, but he was prepared to answer it. “Yes ma’am, I’ve been a Christian since I was eleven years old; and I don’t believe it is right for a Christian to smoke, drink alcohol, chew tobacco, swear, or commit adultery.”

Mrs. Shaw was surprised by such an answer, but was glad to hear it.

“Jim, I will allow you to take Juanita to the dance if you will let me come over to the dance hall after I close the store. I am not trying to be nosy; I just want to see how well you two dance together. And I don’t want you two to be hugging each

other while you dance. In fact I would like to see at least a four inch space between you.

“And if I find you dancing properly, I will just come back home and wait for you to get Juanita home by eleven o’clock. Now do you understand all my restrictions?”

Jim and Juanita looked at each other for a moment, then Jim said, “Yes, ma’am I believe we do. And I’m sure we will do our best to abide by them.

“Juanita, I will meet you at the dance hall at six forty five, and I’ll have a chair saved for you.”

Then he turned to Mrs. Shaw and said, “Goodbye Mrs. Shaw, it was so nice to meet you; and I will see you at the dance hall this evening.” And with that statement, Jim made his way back to the street and on to a café near the hotel. He ate his supper and then he went to his hotel room.

## CHAPTER 4

He washed up, put a little tonic on his hair, and neatly combed it. And since he wanted to make a good impression on Juanita and Mrs. Shaw, he put on his best looking clothes and his new cowboy boots.

When it became six forty five he walked to the dance hall and found a good place to sit. It was at a small table located in an obscure location, and it just had two chairs. He wanted as much privacy as possible because he wanted to learn more about Juanita.

At six fifty five Juanita came into the dance hall and started looking for Jim.

He saw she was looking for him so he hastily walked over to her and said, “Good evening, Juanita, I am so glad that your mother allowed you to come to dance with me tonight.

“Now let me lead you to the little cove I have picked out for us. It’s a place where we can see what is taking place on the dance floor, but I doubt that anyone will notice us.

“Also, we will be able to hear each other’s voice with having to talk loud. And I hope to learn about your life, and then I will tell you about mine—if you want me to. Does that sound fair to you, Juanita?”

Juanita replied with a smile, “Jim, you sound like you are experienced in getting acquainted with a girl. Are you?”

Jim was a little embarrassed and with a straight face answered, “Honestly, Juanita, I’m not. I just did some thinking about what I should do in order to get better acquainted with you, and this is what I came up with. So would you like for me to be first to tell about our lives?”

Juanita said, “Yes, Jim, I would be very pleased for you to be first.” So Jim began his story.

“I was born August 12, 1890 in Warner County, Kentucky. My mother was a sickly lady and died when I was four years old. My dad died from grief two years later.

“So my dad’s sister, Aunt Ruby, took me in. She taught me how to be polite, and to keep my mouth shut unless someone asked me something. And she also taught me how to do all the chores on the farm and how to work in the fields behind a team of horses.

“When I was eighteen I got a job breaking horses for our neighbors for five dollars per horse there in Kentucky. Then after two years I got the job of breaking horses and training them for the Military Academy just across the Rio Grande in Texas. And modestly I will say I was good at it and got ten dollars for each horse I trained.

“The bad thing was that I got all their horses trained and had to look for another job.

“Fortunately, there is a very large ranch just across the border in Texas, and I applied for a job there and got it; and I will start to work there in two weeks. However, I’m sure I will be able to date you at least every Saturday night; that is, providing you would like that.”

“Well, Jim, I believe it would be very nice for you to date me that often and take me to all the dances. You see I don’t have a steady boy friend, so I never know whether or not I will get asked to go to the dance.

“I’m sure you have already realized that my mother is very adamant about having the right kind of man take me to the dances. And my guess is that she would be pleased if you were always the one to take me.”

Juanita smiled and continued, “Now to be fair about this, if it turns out that you aren’t really the kind of man you appear to be, I’ll drop you like a hot potato.”

Jim replied, “That is fair enough, Juanita, I want my date to be completely happy with me.”

Then he said, “Now please tell me about your life.”

“Well, Jim, there isn’t much to tell, but here’s the little I have. I was born in this city on April 5, 1891. I went through all twelve grades in the school system here. I had intended to go on to college and get a degree in Business and Economics. But before I got started to college my dad was checking the roof on our store. He slipped, fell off the roof, and landed on his head; the fall broke his neck and killed him. Ever since then I’ve had to take over my father’s role in helping mother run the store because we couldn’t afford to hire a man to replace Dad.

“But to make it physically possible for me and mom to keep the store in business, we shortened the opened period to nine hours: eight a.m. to five p.m. And thank the Lord we make a good profit from our work at the store. Also, we can keep the store closed on all the holidays without losing any money. So there you have it, Jim: The ‘exciting’ life of Juanita Shaw.

“And Jim, I’m sure you have already figured it out that my mother and I have to work hard every day, except Sunday, to keep up our income. But I can be your girl friend as long as you treat me right.”

Jim replied, “Juanita, I understand perfectly what you’re saying. So I’ll certainly try to treat you right. But for now let’s put everything else behind and try the dance floor.”

## CHAPTER 5

Then Jim took Juanita's hand and led her onto the dance floor. She was a very good dancer so Jim let her do the leading. And he remembered what her mother had said, so he was careful to keep himself at least four inches from Juanita.

A little later Juanita's mother appeared and sat down close to the door. So they danced over to her and sat down beside her.

"Good evening, Mrs. Shaw. Have we been dancing in an acceptable way?" Jim asked with a big smile on his face.

Mrs. Shaw replied with a laugh, "Well, Jim, you were doing just fine; just keep it up and go on with your dancing."

So the couple said goodbye to her and went back to dancing; and in a few minutes Mrs. Shaw went back home and left the couple dancing—four inches apart. And although Jim found it very difficult to dance four inches away from Juanita, he managed to do so.

At ten forty-five they decided it was time for Juanita to go home; so they left the dance hall rather tired but happy for the good time they had experienced.

They walked the short distance to Juanita's apartment, and stopped at the porch. Then Jim said regretfully, "Juanita, I must let you go now. But I will be here next Saturday evening to take you to the dance." Then Jim said goodbye, turned, and walked away.

The following Saturday Jim arrived at the store just as they were getting ready to close it for the evening. So he asked Mrs. Shaw and Juanita if he could take them to supper at the café just across the street; they accepted the invitation.

They all scanned the menu, and then made their order. They continued their visiting until they got their order.

Jim thanked the Lord for it and then they continued visiting while they ate their meal; and when they had finished their meal it was time to go to the dance hall.

Mrs. Shaw now had a good opinion of Jim so she no longer checked on them when they went dancing.

But while they were dancing Juanita mentioned that their business had picked up so much that they needed to hire a young lady to be an assistant to help them. Unfortunately they had no clue as to where they could get one.

Jim thought a minute and then came up with a possible solution to their situation. He said, "How about getting a capable young lady from the Orphan's Home; and I can take you and your mom out there tomorrow, and then take you back home."

Juanita thought that was a good idea, and she was sure her mother would also think Jim's suggestion was a very good one.

So when Jim took Juanita home from the dance she asked him to come in with her and tell her mother about his suggestion.



## CHAPTER 6

So Jim went in with her and told her mother his suggestion, and she was very pleased with the idea.

Then Jim said, "Tomorrow is Sunday, so I will come and get you at ten o'clock and take you to the Orphan's Home." So he picked them up at that time the next morning and drove them out to it.

When they arrived at their destination, they went to the receptionist's desk, introduced themselves, and asked to see the Manager.

The young lady took them to Mrs. Brook's office and knocked on her door; she said, "Come in, please."

So they went in, introduced themselves, and told Mrs. Brooks they were looking for a young lady who would like to live at no cost in a private apartment adjacent to the grocery store. She would be paid one hundred dollars a week as an Assistant Manager of the store.

Mrs. Brooks, said, "We have a nineteen-year-old young lady who graduated from our school two years ago. Her name is Rosa Juarez and she is looking for a job and a place to stay; and it sounds like you folks might have just what she is looking for. I'll go get her and you can have a talk with her."

In a few minutes Mrs. Brooks came back with Rosa. She introduced her to the Shaws and Jim; and then Jim explained just what the Shaws would expect from her.

"Rosa, you would be living in the apartment next to Juanita; and you would be an Assistant Manager in the grocery store. Your salary would be one hundred dollars a week."

Rosa replied, "I would like very much to go to work for you, Mrs. Shaw. It sounds to me like it would be a good job. When would you like for me to begin working for you?"

"Well, Rosa, I would like for you to start tomorrow. If that is okay with you, we would like for you to get your belongings and go with us now."

"That would be just fine with me, Mrs. Shaw; and I'm really looking forward to working for you and Juanita."

Rosa put her belongings in two suitcases, and then put them in Jim's car. They all got in and drove to Juanita's apartment.

As soon as they arrived they helped Rosa get her belonging into her apartment which was next to Juanita's and Mrs. Shaw's.

Then Mrs. Shaw took her down to the store and got her acquainted with it. Rosa was very intelligent and learned very fast the fundamentals of working in a grocery store. Mrs. Shaw and Juanita were very pleased with Rosa, so Jim told them all goodbye and drove back to the ranch.

## CHAPTER 7

Jim dated Juanita every Saturday night. And then one night Jim suddenly had a heart-skipping thought: “I’m in love with Juanita and really want to marry her!”

Jim was astounded by those thoughts and took Juanita to their table and explained them. Juanita was a bit surprised, but not much.

She said, “Jim I have been in love with you for a long time, but I thought I should wait for you to tell me that you loved me. I guess I wanted to be sure that you really did love me; and now I’m sure.”

Then Jim said, “Now darling I know this must sound crazy, but I want to marry you immediately. And if you feel the same way about me, I will marry you this coming Monday; and I’m sure I’m doing the right thing. But I want to check with your mother to see if she approves—and I’m sure she will.”

So they left the dance hall and went to Mrs. Shaw’s home and asked for her approval to marry Juanita. She was not surprised at their question and said, “You two are old enough to know all that is involved in being married. So if you are convinced that you want to live together, happy forever, then I certainly give you my approval.

“And besides that, you are both old enough that you don’t legally need your parents’ approval. But just for your sakes, I hereby give you the approval to get married. Now do you have plans as to where you are going to live?”

Jim replied, “Mr. Clifton has a very nice, well furnished house, just at the edge of the ranch, and we can move into it today; and all we will have to pay to live in it is to pay the water, gas, and phone bills.

“And I figure Juanita can drive to work because I have no need for a car, and she can come home whenever she finishes work. Juanita, does all of my gabbing meet with your approval?”

“Yes it does, Jim, and I am ready to get married and move into that house at anytime.”

“Well sweetheart, tomorrow is Sunday so we won't be able to get married until Monday. We can go to a Justice of the Peace then and get married.

“Then I’ll ask Mr. Clifton if he can let us take our honeymoon. I suspect he will say we can start on it tomorrow because he is a very understanding man, and can certainly get by without me for a week or two.”

So Sunday they moved all their belongings into the “new” home; and Monday they got married and got Mr. Clifton’s permission to take a two week honeymoon,

## CHAPTER 8

They packed their suitcases Monday morning and put them in the trunk of Jim's new Buick. Then an hour later they became married, and immediately they were ready to start their honeymoon. So they got in Jim's car and as they drove away they waved goodbye to the people that had attended the wedding,

They had driven only a few miles into Texas when Juanita said, "Jim, this is the first time I have been into Texas further than a mile. We were too poor to own an automobile so we never got very far from home."

Jim replied, "Juanita darling, I'm going to take you to California, then up the coast to Canada. You will get to see some beautiful country, the Pacific Ocean, some mountains, the Grand Canyon, and a lot of other magnificent scenes." He kept his word and eight days later they were in a cottage in Kingston, Canada.

Then Juanita decided to call her mother and find out how everything was going. But much to her surprised, Rosa answered the phone. Juanita recognized her voice and immediately asked, "Rosa, is something wrong with Mother?"

Rosa answered, "Yes, Mrs. Bradford, three days ago your mother had a fall in the supply room when she was trying to get a box off the top shelf. I heard her scream and I rushed in to see what was the matter with her; she was lying on the floor in agonizing pain. She told me she had fallen off the ladder and probably had broken her leg. She said for me to call an ambulance immediately so they could take her to the hospital.

"So I called your hospital and told them what our problem was, and asked them to send an ambulance quickly.

"They asked for our address and phone number and assured me they would have an ambulance on the way in two minutes. They got here in about five minutes, carefully loaded her in the ambulance, and told me they would call me as soon as they finished their diagnosis.

"It was an hour later when they called and said she did have a broken leg. They also said she would have to be hospitalized several days before she could be moved to a bed at her home.

"Of course I wanted to call you but I didn't have your phone number. So I got my Aunt Verde to come to the store immediately and help me out. She is a good helper and we have been doing business as usual. And by the way, how soon will you be home?"

Juanita said, "We should be home in four or five days; and please relay this message to mother. And Rosa, we are very proud of you for keeping things going in the store."

It was still early in the morning so Jim suggested they pack and get started for the hospital in Jamaica. Juanita agreed with that, so in thirty minutes they were checked out and on the road.

They reached the hospital in the afternoon of the fourth day and went directly to the hospital where Mrs. Shaw was.

She was very glad to see them; and she immediately told them about her accident and the broken leg.

“Well, sweeties, the pain is being kept to virtually none, but the medication makes me sleepy—a side effect for which I am grateful.” They knew she needed the sleep, so they kissed her on the cheek, went back to the car, and drove to the store.

Juanita thanked Rosa’s aunt for the time she had helped Rosa, and she paid her for her help. Then she told Rosa she would be back on the job regularly until her mother got well.

Jim decided that it would be better for Juanita if she stayed in her apartment by the store so she would be quickly available if her mother needed her. Juanita didn’t like the idea, but she realized that it was necessary; so she stayed in her apartment in town.

Jim decided that Juanita was in no need of a car because she was too tied down to leave town; so he kept the car at his house.

## CHAPTER 9

Jim reported for work the day after they returned from their honeymoon. They were just two days earlier than they had planned and Jim explained why.

Mr. Clifton said he was sorry to hear about Jim's mother's accident, but he was glad it was not more serious.

Then he took Jim to the corral and had him pick out the horse he wanted. Jim chose a black gelding, named Midnight. Then he put a rope around his neck and led him to the barn.

There he found all he needed, and saddled Midnight. Then he rode out to the pasture and introduced himself to all thirteen of the other cowboys.

He was soon able to match their names and faces as well as making a good cowboy. But he was getting very lonesome for some time and conversation with his wife. Or if he could not do that, he would like to visit with Patsy, Mr. Clifton's only daughter.

Well, Jim soon got so lonesome for some conversation with a young woman that he decided to spend some time with Patsy—carefully.

She was anxious to spend time with Jim because he was the only young, good looking cowhand on the ranch; but Jim was not yet aware of her feelings toward him.

But one evening after supper Jim went out on the porch and sat down in the porch swing. He was hoping Patsy would take the hint and come out and sit with him. After a few minutes he could no longer wait; so he went back inside and found her alone in the parlor reading a book.

He walked up to her and said, "Patsy, it sure is a lovely evening outside. There is a cool breeze and the moon is coming up full. And to make it even more pleasant, the night birds are beginning to sing to each other;" he grinned as he said this.

Then he said, "Patsy, why don't you come outside with me and enjoy all of these fine things?"

Patsy closed the book, got up, and said, "All right, Jim, it sounds like a pretty nice evening outside; so I'll go out with you."

She took Jim's arm and said rather softly, "Lead on Mr. Bradford." Jim was excited at Patsy's willingness to go outside with him with such a sweet attitude.

They went outside and Jim took advantage of the situation and led Patsy off the porch, and a little distance out onto the grass-covered yard. There were some nice cushioned chairs there, so he escorted her to one, seated her, and then sat down beside her.

She slowly removed her arm from his and said, "Jim, I'm so glad you brought me out here—it is such a lovely evening."

Then she asked him, “Jim, I don’t know anything about you; so would you mind giving me a nice long story about your life; and please start with where and when you were born.”

Jim was both flattered and pleased that she wanted his life’s story. So he cleared his throat a little and started.

“Thank you, Patsy, I’m honored that you would want to hear my life’s story but I’ll be glad to tell you all about my upbringing, and even my adulthood;” so he laughed and started his story.

About thirty minutes later he finished his story by saying, “And I’m so glad that my story ends here with me sitting beside you.”

And then his conscience nudged him and he said, “Oh, I almost forgot; just before I started to work here I married a young Mexican girl named Juanita Shaw. Right now she’s taking her mother’s place in her grocery store because her mother fell and broke her leg. She is still in the hospital, and she will be there for quite a while; and then she’ll have to have care from Juanita at home for a long time.

“So I haven’t been to see her much because she is so busy all the time she couldn’t spend any time with me.”

Patsy expressed to Jim her sympathy about Mrs. Shaw breaking her leg, and Juanita having to work so hard. And then she suggested it was bedtime because it was getting late.

Jim was sorry to hear this, but he took Patsy’s arm and escorted her inside. He said goodnight, squeezed her hand, and went upstairs to bed.

## CHAPTER 10

But the next night he again escorted Patsy to the yard chairs. The moon was still almost full and the evening was cool and with a slight breeze. And Jim thought this would be a good time to get her to tell him her growing-up story; so he asked her to do so.

After a short delay she said, “Well, Jim, since I asked you for your life story, I guess it is only fair for me to share mine with you. But as you will soon find out, there is not much to tell, and it is mostly boring.

“I was born right here on this ranch and went through high school here with my mother and father as teachers. They got certified by the State School System to do home schooling as they both have Bachelor of Arts degrees from Texas State University at Austin.

“After I graduated Dad hired me to be his business manager. He says that gives him more time to buy and sell cattle, buy feed, and so forth.

“I like my job really well because after I get the bills paid at the beginning of the month I have a lot of free time to read books to help me with my job; but some books are just for entertainment. And there you have the story straight from the horse’s mouth,” she said with a little laughter.

Jim said, “Speaking of horses, I noticed you didn’t mention anything about riding horses; why was that?”

“To be honest about it, Jim, I am ashamed by my viewpoint about horses.”

Jim asked, “Why are you ashamed, if I’m not being too noseey?”

“Well, Jim, when I was six years old I was riding old Sig and he got scared when a bunch of quail flew out right in front of him. He began running and I was too small to be able to stop him. I was hanging on for dear life when a jack rabbit jumped out in front of him, scared him, and he jumped sideways and flung me out of the saddle. Fortunately, I got no broken bones, just a lot of bruises.

“But the most devastating thing about the accident was I got a dreaded fear of horses. And since that time I haven’t been very near one.”

Jim said sympathetically, “Patsy, honey, you are missing a lot of leisurely fun and some genuine cattle working. But I’ll bet that if you will let me, I’ll be able to cure you of your phobia without ever scaring you.

“Jim, are you kidding me? Because if you aren’t, I would like to find out right now how you would do it.”

So Jim said, “Are you really serious about being cured of a phobia about horses?” Patsy immediately answered with a “yes.”

“All right, to start with we are going to pretend you have never seen a horse, and therefore you would have no fear of one.”

“Okay and I will do my best to remain calm and unafraid.”

“Great!” Jim said, “Now let’s go to the barn and I know it has only one horse in it. And this particular horse is Daisy, as she is as gentle as any you’ll ever find.”

Then Jim took Patsy by the arm and escorted her to the barn door. He stopped there, took off his neckerchief, and tied it around her head to cover her eyes. Then he took her by the hand, opened the barn door, and led her inside.

As he walked in he pulled a brush off the wall rack, and put it in her hand. He slowly led her up beside Daisy, took her hand with the brush in it, lifted it up and gently placed the brush against Daisy side, and began making short, soft strokes, up and down.

After four strokes he removed his hand from Patsy’s and said, “Honey, you are doing a great job; just keep it up for a few moments, and then we will take another step.”

After a few minutes, Jim took her hand, removed the brush, and led her up to Daisy’s head. He took her hand, straightened her fingers out straight, softly placed her hand on Daisy’s head, and began stroking it with her fingers.

He let her stroke Daisy’s head a few moments then ask. “How does that feel now, honey?”

Patsy answered with a victorious tone in her voice, “Jim, it feels great, and I am not afraid of what I’m doing.”

Jim said, “Now for the acid test,” and he reached up and removed the neckerchief from her eyes. She was a bit surprised but she showed no signs of fear.

“You’ve done a great job of petting Daisy, and I’m very proud of you.” Patsy removed her hand from Daisy’s head, walked over to Jim, and kissed him on the cheek as she said thanks to him.

“But I want you to know all about saddling and riding a horse as it will enable you to have some great adventures. So let’s me show you how to saddle a horse.”

Then Jim went slowly through all the steps necessary to get a horse saddled, and discussed each step. When he finished he stripped everything off the horse.

Then he turned to Patsy and said, “Now let me see you do it; and if you need some help just let me know and I will give you a hand.”

Patsy didn’t tell Jim, but she had watched, at a distance, many horses while they were being prepared for riding. Consequently, she really knew how to do it, and she had the bridle and saddle on Daisy in just a few minutes.

“Patsy, now I want you to get on Daisy, and I’ll get on Kate; and we’ll go for a little ride out in the pasture. And remember, you have nothing to fear; Daisy is as gentle as a lamb and will overlook any of your little mistakes—if you make any.” Then he took Patsy in his arms and gave her a tight hug.

Patsy was a little surprised at Jim’s behavior, but she enjoyed it; she had never been hugged like that before. So she put her arms around Jim’s waist and gave him a good squeeze.



Then he gained control of his thoughts, slowly released Patsy, and said, “Patsy, let me help you into the saddle and then we will take a little ride out to the cattle in the pasture.”

Patsy's heart was beating rapidly, but she walked over to Daisy, grabbed the saddle horn, put her left foot into the stirrup, and swung into the saddle—just like she had seen the cowboys do so many times.

Jim was astonished and said, “Patsy, are you sure you haven’t gotten into a saddle since you were thrown out of one?”

“No, Jim, I haven’t been in a saddle since my little accident, but I just made up my mind I was going to overcome that damned fear of horses. Now let’s go out and check the cattle,” and she started out the barn door.

Jim mounted Kate and followed her as she galloped out of the barn yard and into the pasture. He caught up with her and shouted, “Congratulations!” Patsy just waved at him and kept galloping until she reached the cattle herd; then she pulled Daisy to a halt.

“Jim, I believe I have overcome that demon of fear; and I am enjoying the riding. So why don’t we ride on down to the grove of trees by the creek. There’re some old logs lying on the ground up under the trees, so we can sit in the shade and relax a little.”

Jim replied with eagerness that he didn’t quite understand, “Lead on, Patsy.”

In just a few minutes they were in the grove of trees so they dismounted and found a good log to sit on.

Patsy waited for Jim to open the conversation, and he finally did.

“Patsy, I want to apologize for my behavior. I don’t know what came over me that prompted me to hug you, and so tightly. I would be lying if I said I was sorry, or said I didn’t enjoy it. You are a very beautiful young lady and I enjoyed our hugging very much.

## CHAPTER 11

“Now as for my wife, one of my acquaintances, George, called me the other day and told me something that really upset me. Here’s what he said:

“Jim, I’ve a story that you need to hear. Every time I have been in the store to buy groceries this handsome young man is flirting with Juanita, and she seemed to be enjoying it very much. In fact after they had closed the store one evening he took her out for dinner.

“Out of curiosity I followed them to an expensive café. I carefully walked in and took a seat where they couldn’t see me unless they turned completely around, and they never did. They were having a great time holding hands and laughing.

“And after they finished their dinners, he paid the bill and he and Juanita left. I waited a minute and then got up, paid my bill, and rushed out the door. I saw them get into his car and drive away.

“I followed in my car at a safe distance and they soon pulled up at Juanita’s apartment. They got out and walked up to the door. I was able to see them quite well from my car, and when the couple got to the door step, he hugged her tightly and kissed her with a lingering kiss. They talked for a few more minutes, and then kissed again. After this kiss he went back to his car and drove away; and that was the end of her sneaky adventure for the evening.”

“I just thought you would want to know about her two-timing behavior. I hope you can work it out with her. Goodbye Jim.”

“Now that explains why she doesn’t have time to call me, or come to see me; she has been playing around with this would-be Don Juan. Bottom line: Now my conscience won’t bother me when I make love to you.”

And with that confession he slid up close to Patsy, put his arms around her, and gave her a passionate kiss. When he stopped kissing her, she didn’t look surprised or in the least bit offended. In fact she put her arms around him and gave him a little kiss.

Then she said, “Jim I have been wanting you to kiss me ever since you cured me of fear of riding a horse. Actually, I fell in love with you soon after you came to work for Dad. But I knew that you were married, and I didn’t want to interfere with your married life.

“Now I want you to know that if you decide to divorce your wife, I’ll be glad to replace her. But I would want you to be completely sure that you no longer love her, and that you would transfer your love for her to me—with no regrets.”

Jim hesitated a moment, and then he said, “Patsy, it is so good of you to have the attitude that you have; and I want you to know that you are a very sweet and loving lady. And you can be sure that if I do divorce Juanita, I’ll certainly want to marry you.

“But right now I’m not sure if I really hate Juanita, or if I’m I just terribly hurt and wanting to get revenge. So if you’re willing to give me some time to decide what I really want to do, will you please allow me to make love to you while I’m deciding? Right now I believe it will be only a short time before I make my decision.”

“Jim, I think it is only fair, and wise, for us to pretend you have never been married, and see how you feel in a month or two. And if you decide to go back to Juanita, I’ll just have to believe that is a good thing. I will hurt for a while, but there are numerous young men that would like for me to marry them—and surely I can fall in love with one of them.”

Then Jim kissed her again and said, “Patsy, I suspect we should get back to headquarters before they think we have had a mishap. After all, it was bound to have been a real surprise to them when they saw you ride off on a horse at full speed.” Patsy had to agree with Jim because his logic made sense.

So they had a final hug and kiss, mounted their horses and rode back to headquarters.

When they arrived there, the two cowboys that were cleaning out the stable went wild with cheers, whoops, and hollers. And one of them shouted, “Look at our new cowboy!”

Patsy felt so honored that she climbed off Daisy, took off her hat, bowed as she swept the hat across her legs, and said, “Thank you, sir.”

The news spread quickly, and Mr. Clifton came out of the house, hugged his daughter, and said, “Patsy, I’m so proud of you—riding that horse. I’m going to buy you a new set of riding clothes—including a pair of real fancy cowboy boots;” and he did.

## CHAPTER 12

Jim and Patsy didn't think it wise to let her dad know of their love affair, so they put on a good act of just being friends.

And to make it a more convincing act, Jim asked Mr. Clifton if he could take off Sunday to go to see his wife. Mr. Clifton was pleased to allow Jim to take off because he had some suspicion that Patsy and Jim were more than just "friends."

Sunday came and Jim dressed his best and drove into Jamaica. His first stop was at Mrs. Shaw's home.

As soon as he entered the house, Juanita rushed over to Jim and hugged and kissed him. Jim was very surprised, but he accepted Juanita's action and gave her a peck on her cheek in return.

Then he said, "Hello, my sweetheart, it is sure good to see you again." He turned from Juanita and went over to the chair Mrs. Shaw was sitting in. He said, "Hello Mom," and gave her a hug and a kiss on her forehead.

Then he asked her, "How are you doing, Mom? I notice you're still confined to a wheelchair. How much longer will you have to stay in it?"

"Thank you for your love, Jim. But to answer your question, the doctor thinks it will be a least another month. He said that people my age are very slow in healing broken bones. But he did say that when it is really healed, I should be able to walk without any pain or any limp. He also said I should be able to go back to work, but I would have to be careful and not overdo it. But we plan to keep Rosa on as a permanent assistant because our business has picked up quite well, and she is part of the reason."

"I'm so glad to hear that, Mom, and anyway it's about time for you to retire and draw on your pension." Mrs. Shaw just smiled and nodded her head.

Jim turned his attention back to Juanita and said, "Darling, why don't you and I go get some lunch and then bring Mom back whatever she chooses?"

Juliana smiled and said, "Jim, that's a great idea; and Mom what would you like for us to bring back for you?"

Mrs. Shaw said, "Oh, I would like to have a cheeseburger with everything on it, and a Coke to help wash it down."

Jim said, "Okay Mom, and we'll bring you some potato chips to go with your cheeseburger and Coke."

Then Jim and Juanita gave Mom a kiss on each cheek and departed for Robert's café; it was so close they decided to just walk to it.

They found a good place to eat in the café, a remote corner where the noise would not be so loud.

They almost instantly had a young lady taking their orders, and taking the order for a carryout for Mom.

Now for the first time, Juanita had the opportunity to ask Jim how his job was going. He gave her a brief answer: “Just fine, Juanita. And how are things going with you?”

He didn’t expect to hear anything about the young man she had been seeing, and she didn’t mention any “young man.”

She started telling Jim how much she missed him, and how she wanted him to come to see her more often.

“Jim, I sure wish I had a car so I could come to see you every weekend. And maybe we could just go over to our new house and have a good time, or get a room in the hotel for an afternoon so we could—well you know what I’m talking about.”

Jim was astounded at her remark, and didn’t really know how to answer it. So he just said, “Yes, Sweetie, that would be nice.”

He was tempted to say he could drive in again next Sunday, and they could go to the hotel. But he wasn’t sure he wanted to go to a hotel because of his relationship with Patsy, and because of Juanita’s relationship with the young man he had heard about.

Juanita was surprised by his manner of reply to her suggestion, so she said, “Jim are you not feeling well? I was expecting a more definite answer.

So Jim had to lie. “Yes, Juanita, I have been working too hard lately and I’m not sure how well I could make love. But as they say ‘I’ll take a rain check on that.’”

Juanita was very disappointed by Jim’s attitude and answer, so she said no more about such a meeting—and neither did Jim.

About that time the waitress brought them their orders and the carryout for Mrs. Shaw.

They hurriedly ate their food, Jim paid the bill, and then they walked back to Mrs. Shaw’s house carrying her cheeseburger and Coke.

Jim went into the house with Juanita and gave Mrs. Shaw her lunch. Then he kissed Juanita and Mrs. Shaw on their cheeks, and left for the ranch with his mind in a whirl; he didn’t know what to do about his relationships with his wife and Patsy.

## CHAPTER 13

The next Sunday another long-time friend, Harry, came to visit Jim. So they saddled a couple of horses, rode down to the trees by the creek, dismounted, and sat down on the “favorite” log.

Henry spoke up and said, “Jim, are you sick or something, you aren't your usual happy-go-lucky self?”

Jim thought about what he should say, and decided to get his problem off his chest as much as possible.

“Harry, I’m going to share with you something that really has me down in the dumps—not knowing what to do. Now what I’m going to tell you is just between you and me. So give me your word that you will not repeat this to anyone.”

Harry replied, “Jim, you have my word; my lips will be sealed, as God is my witness.”

So Jim told him the story of Juanita's stepping out him, but he didn't tell Harry the name of the gossiper.

When he finished his story, Harry looked at him with an astounded look on his face. “Jim, I’m sure you are talking about George, but if I am wrong please correct me; and if George is the one who told you that story, you have just been fed a load of bull. Don’t you believe a word of that tale is true.

“I have been around Juanita enough to know she hasn't been flirting with George. He comes into the store quite frequently and tries to flirt with her, but she just politely speaks to him and goes on about her work. I’ll bet his story was to try to get Juanita to separate from you and allow him to take your place.”

Jim was stunned by Harry’s story but finally got his temper under control and said, “Harry, I’m going to believe your story and go to Juanita and apologize to her for the way I have been treating her.”

So he said goodbye to Harry, jumped on his horse and raced for his headquarters. When he got there he jumped off his horse and told one of the cowboys to take care of her because he is going to town on a very important mission. Then he jumped into his car and headed for Juanita's house.

When he arrived there he stopped just in front of her house, jumped out of his car and rushed up to the door and knocked.

Juliana came to the door, opened it, and looked out at Jim with a question. “Jim, what are you doing here?”

Jim grabbed her, threw his arms around her and pulled her up to himself and said, “Juanita, I have come here to beg your forgiveness for my behavior last Sunday; I was so very wrong. I love you, I love you.” And he kissed her with a very loving and tender kiss.

Juanita threw her arms around his neck, returned his kiss, and said “Oh Jim, I love you too, oh so much, and I am so glad that you are back to my old loving Jim.”

He led her out to his car and helped her get into the front seat. He closed the door, went around to the driver’s side, and climbed in.

He said, “Juanita, I just found out I had been lied to about your dating some other man, so I’m going to take you to our new home and start our lives together again;” and he did.

END