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The Fighting Ranger

BY F. J. MCCONNELL and GEORGE W. PYPER.

CHAPTER XX.

IDAHO BILL JOINS UP.

Hanging up the telephone receiver, Buck McLeod strode swiftly out of the Spear Ranch house, mounted a horse, and galloped off.

From a clump of bushes where he had been waiting a mysterious looking renegade type of man in rough clothes and a slouch hat, watched Buck riding off. When he seemed at a safe distance the stranger emerged from his hiding place, leading his horse. He mounted, and followed stealthily.

Buck rode up into the hills to the nest where his gang was encamped, the stranger trailing him cautiously. The lookout on guard, waiting alert, recognized Buck, and passed him in. "We're making another raid of the Bar M. to-night," Buck called as he came up to the men, sitting on the ground, smoking and playing cards. "An' this time it's a clean sweep of the whole Marshall herd—don't forget that."

They were startled by the sound of a shot.

The mysterious stranger who had followed Buck had approached too close and the lookout had fired.

Buck and the others ran out to see what was happening. They saw the stranger running to a spot where the stranger lay inert on the ground. Then, as the lookout came up, the man on the ground suddenly rose up, knocked his gun out of his hand, and bowled him over. Buck and the others rushed up and jumped the stranger. After putting up a strong fight, he was finally overpowered. Buck tore his gun from his hands.

"This is sure a fine way to treat a friend," drawled the stranger, trying to grin affably.

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on, because we've had so much trouble with rustlers."

Stella, affecting a coy embarrassment, said:

"I think I will take a little run out and see him—I won't be long."

Mary picked up a book and settled down to read as Stella went out the door.

Stella found Bud at the gate, in wistful meditation. Her coming surprised him.

"Oh, Bud, on a night like this I couldn't resist the temptation to come and chat over old times with you," Stella told him.

She exercised all her most alluring wiles, and soon had Bud's heart going faster than it had in years, and his tongue gently rolling over soft words of sentiment.

Meanwhile Stella's eye was furtively watching something lurking in the brush just outside the gate. While Bud, oblivious to everything but Stella, poured out his heart to her, she let her handkerchief drop to the ground.

There was a crackle of breaking twigs; several forms leaped out of the darkness and rushed upon Bud, taken completely off his guard. Screaming, Stella fled, as one of the attackers started to tie Bud up with a coil of rope.

"Now then," said Bud McLeod, "we'll lock the ranch hands in the bunkhouse and drive off the herd—we don't want any shootin' if we can help it."

They rushed off toward the cowboys' quarters. One lingered a moment, drew a knife from his pocket and slashed the ropes that bound Bud. It was Idaho Bill, the new member of the gang, but before Bud could catch a glimpse of him, he had hastened off in the dark to join his fellows.

The rustlers crept up on the bunkhouse, where the ranchmen were playing cards, and drew the heavy bar across the door, locking it. Then they sneaked back swiftly to get their horses. Again, unnoticed by the others, Idaho Bill lingered. He withdrew the crossbar, looked back cautiously, saw Bud running toward the bunkhouse, and disappeared in the direction of the ranchhouse.

Bud flung open the bunkhouse door, crying "Rustlers." Miquel and the other men jumped to their feet, whipped out their guns, rushed out to the stable, and mounted horses.

Buck McLeod and his gang, now re-mounted, were dashing back. The light shining from the open bunkhouse door showed them they had been fooled in the attempt to put over the job quietly. Then they saw the ranchmen come flying around from the stable on their horses.

"Gotta be shootin' after all," muttered Buck with a curse.

They opened fire. It was returned by the oncoming cowboys. A running battle was on.

CHAPTER XXII.

MARY MEETS IDAHO BILL.

At the sound of the shots Mary dropped her book, and jumped to her feet in frightened alarm. Uncertain what to do, she clutched a revolver in her hand and started for the door. Before she reached it, it was flung open, and a rough looking figure, his face half concealed by a huge sombrero, broke in and faced her.

"Stop—who are you?" Mary screamed, pointing the gun at the man.

"Don't shoot, lady," the man drawled, removing his hat and bowing with mock politeness. "Permit me to introduce myself—Idaho Bill."

He stared at her. Mary was still uncertain what to make of him, and continued to menace him with her gun. Outside the sound of shooting continued.

"Please explain yourself, sir, or I'll have to shoot," threatened Mary.

"Mary, Mary," said Idaho Bill, and his voice changed to one that was familiar to her, "don't you know me?"

Mary lowered her gun, stared wide-eyed, and gasped.

"Terence O'Rourke!"

"The same, alias Idaho Bill, cattle rustler," Terence replied, rushing toward her and enfolding her in his arms.

After a kiss which more than reassured Mary completely of his identity, he said:

"That old Komi sure did a good job on disguising me when even my own Mary doesn't recognize me."

He hastily explained his reported death, how Komi had saved him, and that he had adopted this disguise and

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ISSUE No. 44-25

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The Dr. Williams' Medicine Co. Offer Twenty-Eight Prizes in a Letter Writing Competition.

Some years ago the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., of Brockville, Ont., offered a series of prizes to residents of Ontario and Quebec for the best letters describing benefits obtained through the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People. Hundreds of letters were submitted in this competition, and yet there must have been thousands of other users of the pills who did not avail themselves of the opportunity to win a prize. To all these another letter-writing competition is offered. Thousands have benefited through the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills whose cases have not been reported. These will furnish the material for letters to be written in this contest. There is no demand upon the imagination; every letter must deal with facts and facts only.

The Prizes.

The Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., of Brockville, Ont., will award a prize of \$25.00 for the best letter received on or before the 21st day of November, 1925, from the residents of these provinces on the subject: "Why I Recommend Dr. Williams' Pink Pills." A prize of \$15.00 will be awarded for the second best letter received; a prize of \$10.00 for the third best letter, and twenty-five prizes of \$2.00 each for the next best twenty-five letters.

The Conditions.

The benefit derived from the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills described in the letter may be in the writer's own case, or that of some one in the writer's home.

More than one case may be described in the letter, but every statement must be literally and absolutely true.

Every letter must be signed by the full name and correct address of the person sending it. If it describes the case of some person other than the writer of the letter, it must also be signed by the person whose case is described, as a guarantee of the truth of the statements made.

The writer of each letter must give the name of the paper in which he or she saw this announcement.

Five writing will not win the prize unless you have a good case to describe. The strength of the recommendation and not the style of the letter will be the basis of the award.

The Dr. Williams' Medicine Co. shall have the right to publish any letter entered in the contest, if they desire to do so, whether it wins a prize or not.

The contest will close November 21st, 1925, and the prizes will be awarded as soon as possible thereafter. Do not delay. If you know of a good case write your letter NOW. Observe the above conditions carefully or your letter may be thrown out.

Address all letters as follows:

The Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

Letter Contest Department.

joined the rustlers, the better to finally trap them into the hands of the law.

But I must stay with them as Idaho Bill until I have got more evidence, and run down the wolf who has caused all your trouble," he said, continuing rapidly. "Only yourself and Komi know I'm alive. Keep the secret."

She looked at him with implicit love and confidence.

"I knew all the time you had not deceived me, as they tried to make me believe," she said.

The firing of shots outside continued.

"But we must do something to stop them now and save the herd," said Terence. "They're going to open the corral and run the steers off. Quick, I must go out and do what I can to prevent them."

He started off. Mary, clutching her gun with one hand, and clinging to his arm with the other, cried:

"I'm going with you."

"No, no, Mary," he said, "Stay here."

She would not be thrown off. He tried to dart out alone.

"I shall, I shall," she insisted, following him. There was no time for argument, and Mary was not to be dissuaded.

They slipped out through the back of the house and toward the corral. "I wish you wouldn't do this, Mary," he said.

"You can't hold the fort alone," she answered, "and I can shoot as straight as any man."

CHAPTER XXIII.

STAMPEDES AND BATTLE.

While Buck and the main body of his men kept the ranch defenders engaged by gunfire up front, two of the rustlers had slipped away in the darkness and back to the corral gates.

As Mary and Terence came up the fenced lane into which the corral opened, they were suddenly stricken with horror as a sound of many hoofs pawing the ground broke upon their ears, and they saw the stampeding herd rushing out from the corral toward them.

"We're too late," Terence cried in dismay. "They've already opened the gates."

"What can we do," screamed Mary. They were trapped between the two fences of the lane, and in a moment the steers would be upon them. They could only run back the lane ahead of the steers—but they would never be able to outrun the herd. They would surely be trampled to death. They

started running nevertheless, as there was no alternative.

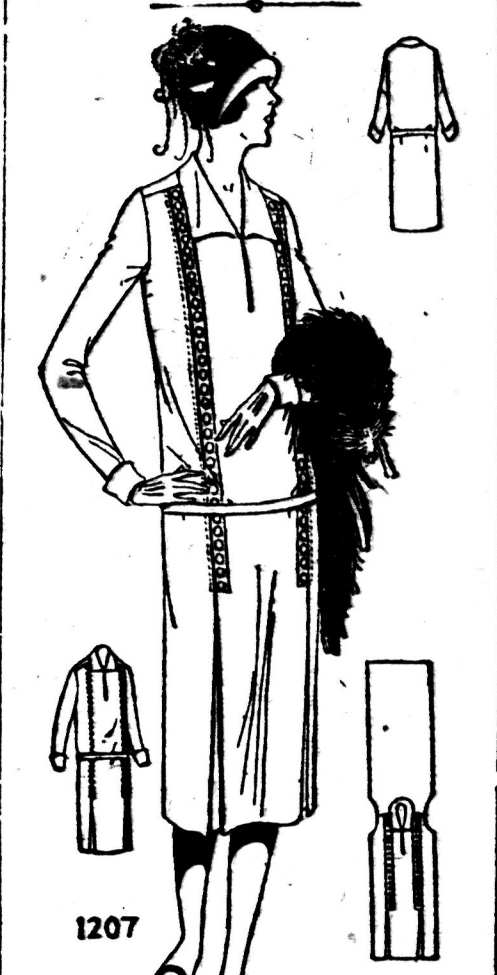
Suddenly they tripped and stumbled. They found they had rolled into a small ditch crossing the lane. Mary started up. Terence held her back.

"Lie still—flat on the bottom," he cried. "This may save us. It's our only hope."

The thundering feet had reached them. The steers were leaping the ditch. Their heads passed through the air close overhead dangerously close to Terence and Mary, but did not touch them.

"I hope they're all sure-footed critters," laughed Terence, trying to inject a note of humor into their precarious situation to cheer Mary. Such thoughts come even in the face of death. "If none of them slip we'll be safe."

(To be continued.)



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A triumph of chic and sanderiness, in navy microfleece. It is most essential that every smart wardrobe should contain at least one frock of this type. In every detail it illustrates the theory that the long line is the shortest route to sanderiness. Two inverted plaits extend full length on either side of the front. A straight piece of the material is folded to form a trimming-band two inches wide, and placed beneath the edge of the outside plait before it is stitched. Flat bone buttons trim the band. The back is plain and extends over the shoulder fastening onto the front in yoke effect. The V-shaped neck opening is very becoming, and is finished with a tailored collar. The diagram pictures the simple design of No. 1207, which is in sizes 34, 36, 38, 40 and 42 inches bust. Size 38 requires 4 yards of 36-inch, or 3 3/4 yards of 40-inch material. Price 20 cents.

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