



THE LIGHT OF WESTERN STARS A Romance

by Zane Grey

Illustrations by IRWIN MYERS

(Continued from last week.)

Madeline's quick, varying emotions were swallowed up in a boundless gladness.

"Danny Mains!" she said, tremulously and smilingly. "If you are as glad



"If You Really Think I Merit Such a Reward, You May Kiss Me Out-right."

as your news has made me—if you really think I merit such a reward—you may kiss me outright."

With a bashful wonder, but with right hearty will, Danny Mains availed himself of this gracious privilege.

Stillwell snorted. The signs of his phenomenal smile were manifest, otherwise Madeline would have thought that snort an indication of furious disapproval.

"Bill, straddle a chair," said Danny. "You've gone back a heap these last few months, frettin' over your bad boys, Danny an' Gene. You'll need support under you while I'm throwin' my yarn. Story of my life, Bill."

He placed a chair for Madeline. "Miss Hammond, beggin' your pardon again, I want you to listen, also. You've the face an' eyes of a woman who loves to hear of other people's happiness. Besides, somehow, it's easy for me to talk lookin' at you."

Walking off the porch, he stood before the weary horse and burro. With the swift violence characteristic of

men of his class he slipped the pack from the burro and threw saddle and

bridle from the horse. He untied the pack and, taking a small, heavy sack from it, he came back upon the porch. Deliberately he dumped the contents of the sack at Stillwell's feet.

Pieces were sharp, ragged, evidently broken from a ledge; the body of them was white in color, with yellow veins and bars and streaks. Stillwell grasped up one rock after another, stared and stuttered, put the rocks to his lips, dug into them with his shaking fingers; then he lay back in his chair, head against the wall, and as he gaped at Danny the old smile began to transform his face.

Danny regarded Stillwell with lofty condescension. "Now, Bill, what've we got here, say, offhand?"

"Oh, Lord, Danny! I'm afraid to say. Look, Miss Majesty, jest look at the gold. I've lived among prospectors an' gold mines for thirty years, an' I never seen the beat of this."

"The Lost Mine of the Padres!" cried Danny, in stentorian voice. "An' it belongs to me!"

Stillwell made some incoherent sound as he sat up fascinated, quite beside himself.

"Bill, it was some long time ago since you saw me," said Danny. "Fact is, I know how you felt, because Gene kept me posted. I happened to run across Bonita, an' I wasn't goin' to let her ride away alone, when she told me she was in trouble. We hit the trail for the Peloncos. Bonita had Gene's horse, an' she was to meet him up on the trail. We got to the mountains all right, an' nearly starved for a few days till Gene found us. He had got in trouble himself an' couldn't fetch much with him."

"We made for the crags an' built a cabin. I come down that day Gene sent his horse Majesty to you. Never saw Gene so broken-hearted. Well, after he sloped for the border Bonita an' I were hard put to it to keep alive. But we got along, an' I think it was then she began to care a little for me. Once I went to El Cajon an' run plumb into Gene. He was back from the revolution an' cuttin' up some. But I got

away from him after doin' all I could to drag him out of town. A long time after that Gene trailed up to the crags an' found us. Gene had stopped drinkin', he'd changed wonderful, was fine an' dandy. It was then he began to pester the life out of me to make me marry Bonita. I was happy, so was she, an' I was some scared of spollin' it. Gene's dog-gone hard to buck against! I had to give in, an' I asked Bonita to marry me. Well, she wouldn't at first—said she wasn't good enough for me. But I saw the marriage idea was workin' deep, an' I just kept on bein' as decent as I knew how. So it was my wantin' to marry Bonita—my bein' glad to marry her—that made her grow soft an' sweet an' pretty—as a mountain quail. Gene fetched up Padre Marcos, an' he married us."

Danny paused in his narrative, breathing hard, as if the memory of the incident described had stirred strong and thrilling feeling in him. Stillwell's smile was rapturous. Madeline leaned toward Danny with her eyes shining.

"Miss Hammond, an' you, Bill Stillwell, now listen, for this is strange I've got to tell you. The afternoon Bonita an' I were married, when Gene an' the padre had gone, she left me for a little, an' when she came back she wore some pretty yellow flowers in her hair. She said some queer things about spirits rollin' rocks down the canyon. Then she said she wanted to show me where she always sat an' waited an' watched for me when I was away. She led me around under the crags to a long slope. It was some pretty there—clear an' open, with a long sweep, an' the desert yawnin' deep an' red. There were yellow flowers on that slope, the same kind she had in her hair."

"When I heard the strange crack of rollin' rocks—heard them rattle down an' roll an' grow faint—I was some out of my head. But not for long. Them rocks were rollin' all right, only it was the weatherin' of the cliffs."

"An' there under the crags was a gold pocket."

"Then I was worse than locoed. I went gold-crazy. I worked like seventeen burros. Bill, I dug a lot of gold-bearin' quartz. Bonita watched the trails for me, brought me water. That was how she come to get caught by Padre Marcos an' his guerrillas. Sure! Pat Howe was so set on doin' Gene dirt that he mixed up with Don Carlos. Bonita will tell you some staggerin' news about that outfit. Just now my story is all gold."

Danny Mains got up and kicked back his chair. Blue lightning gleamed from his eyes as he thrust a hand toward Stillwell.

"Bill, old pal, put her there—give me your hand," he said. "You were always my friend. You had faith in me, Well, Danny Mains owes you, an' he owes Gene Stewart a good deal, an' Danny Mains pays. I want two partners to help me work my gold mine. You an' Gene. Go fetch him; an' right here in this house, with my wife an' Miss Hammond as witnesses, we'll draw up a partnership. Go find him, Bill. I want to show him this gold, show him how Danny Mains pays! An' the only bitter drop in my cup today is that I can't ever pay Monty Price."

Madeline watched the huge Stillwell and the little cowboy, both talking wildly, as they walked off arm in arm to find Stewart. She imagined something of what Danny's disappointment would be, of the elder man's consternation and grief, when he learned Stewart had left for the border. At this juncture she looked up to see a strange, yet familiar figure approaching. Padre Marcos!

Mention of Padre Marcos, slight of him, had always occasioned Madeline a little indefinable shock; and now, as he stepped to the porch, a shrunken, scooped, and sad-faced man, she was startled.

The padre bowed low to her. "Senora, will you grant me audience? It is a matter of great moment, which you might not care to have any one hear."

Wonderingly Madeline inclined her head. The padre gently closed one door and then the others.

"Senora, I have come to disclose a secret—my own sinfulness in keeping it—and to implore your pardon. Do you remember that night Senor Stewart dragged me before you in the waiting-room at El Cajon?"

"Yes," replied Madeline.

"Senora, since that night you have been Senor Stewart's wife?"

Madeline became as motionless as stone. She seemed to feel nothing, only to hear.

"You are Senor Stewart's wife. I have kept the secret under fear of death. But I could keep it no longer. Senor Stewart may kill me now. Ah, Senora, it is very strange to you. You were so frightened that night, you knew not what happened. Senor Stewart threatened me. He forced you. He made me speak the Spanish yes.

And I, Senora, knowing the deeds of these sinful cowboys, fearing worse than disgrace to one so beautiful and so good as you, I could not do less than marry you truly. At least you should be his wife. So I married you, truly, in the service of my church."

"My God!" cried Madeline, rising.

"Hear me! I implore you, Senora, hear me out! Do not leave me! Do not look so—so— Ah, Senora, let me speak a word for Senor Stewart. He was drunk that night. He did not know what he was about. In the morning he came to me, made me swear by my cross that I would not reveal the disgrace he had put upon you. If I did he would kill me. Life is nothing to the American vaquero, Senora. I promised to respect his command, but I did not tell him you were his wife. He did not dream I had truly married you. He went to fight for the freedom of my country—Senora, he is one splendid soldier—and I brooded over the sin of my secret. If he were killed I need never tell you. But if he lived I knew that I must some day."

"Senora, I pray you, do not misunderstand my mission. Beyond my confession to you I have only a duty to tell you of the man whose wife you are. But I am a priest and I can read the soul. The ways of God are inscrutable. I am only a humble instrument. You are a noble woman, and Senor Stewart is a man of desert iron forged anew in the crucible of love. Quilen sabe? Senor Stewart swore he would kill me if I betrayed him. But he will not lift his hand against me. For the man bears you a very great and pure love, and it has changed him. To love you above the spirit of the flesh; to know you are his wife, his never to be another's except by his sacrifice; to watch you with a secret glory of joy and pride; to stand, while he might, between you and evil; to find his happiness in service; to wait, with never a dream of telling you, for the hour to come when to leave you free he must go out and get himself shot! Senora, that is beautiful, it is sublime, it is terrible. It has brought me to you with my confession. So I beseech you in my humble office as priest, as a lover of mankind, before you send Stewart to his death, to be sure there is here no mysterious dispensation of God. I pray you, Senora, before you let Stewart give you freedom at such cost be sure you do not want his love, lest you cast away something sweet and ennobling which you yourself have created."

CHAPTER XXI

News of Stewart.

Blinded, like a wild creature, Madeline Hammond ran to her room. She felt as if a stroke of lightning had shattered the shadowy substance of the dream she had made of real life. The wonder of Danny Mains' story, the strange regret with which she had realized her injustice to Stewart, the astounding secret as revealed by Padre Marcos—these were forgotten in the sudden consciousness of her own love. She liberated the thought that knocked at the gates of her mind. With quivering lips she whispered it. Then she spoke aloud:

"I will say it—hear it. I—I love him!"

In a nature like hers, where strength of feeling had long been inhibited as a matter of training, such a transforming surprise as sudden consciousness of passionate love required time for its awakening, time for its sway.

By and by that last enlightening moment came, and Madeline Hammond faced not only the love in her heart, but the thought of the man she loved.

Suddenly, as she raged, something in her—this dauntless new personality—took arms against indictment of Gene Stewart. Her mind whirled about him and his life. She saw him drunk, brutal; she saw him abandoned, lost. Then out of the picture she had of him thus slowly grew one of a different man—weak, sick, changed by shock, growing strong, strangely, spiritually altered, silent, lonely like an eagle, secretive, tireless, faithful, soft as a woman, hard as iron to endure.

"Oh, it is all terrible!" she cried. "I am his wife. His wife! That meeting with him—the marriage—then his fall, his love, his rise, his silence, his pride! And I can never be anything to him. Could I be anything to him? I, Madeline Hammond? But I am his wife, and I love him! His wife! I am the wife of a cowboy! That might be undone. Can my love be undone? Ah, do I want anything undone? He is gone. Gone! Could he have meant—I will not, dare not think of that. He will come back. No, he never will come back. Oh, what shall I do?"

And on the morning of the next day, when Madeline went out upon the porch, Stillwell, haggard and stern, with husky, incoherent word, handed her a message from El Cajon. She read:

"El Capitan Stewart captured by rebel soldiers in fight at Agua Prieta yesterday. He was a sharpshooter in the federal ranks. Sentenced to death Thursday at sunset."

CHAPTER XXII

The Ride.

The old cattleman stood mute before her, staring at her white face, at her eyes of flame.

"Stillwell! I am Stewart's wife!"

"My Gawd, Miss Majesty!" he burst out. "I knowed somethin' terrible was wrong. Aw, sure it's a pity—"

"Do you think I'll let him be shot when I know him now, when I'm no longer blind, when I love him?" she asked, with passionate swiftness. "I



"I Will Say It—Hear It—I Love Him!"

will save him. This is Wednesday morning. I have thirty-six hours to save his life. Stillwell, send for Link and the car!"

She went into her office. Her mind worked with extraordinary rapidity and clearness. Her plan, born in one lightninglike flash of thought, necessitated the careful wording of telegrams to Washington, to New York, to San Antonio. These were to senators, representatives, men high in public and private life, men who would remember her and who would serve her to their utmost. Never before had her position meant anything to her comparable with what it meant now. Never in all her life had money seemed the power that it was then. If she had been poor! A shuddering chill froze the thought at its inception. She dispelled heartbreaking thoughts. She had power. She had wealth. She would set into operation all the unlimited means these gave her—the wires and pulleys and strings underneath the surface of political and international life, the open, free, purchasing value of money or the deep, underground, mysterious, incalculably powerful influence moved by gold. She could save Stewart.

When she went outside the car was there with Link, helmet in hand, a cool, bright gleam in his eyes, and with Stillwell, losing his haggard misery, beginning to respond to Madeline's spirit.

"Link, drive Stillwell to El Cajon in time for him to catch the El Paso train," she said. "Wait there for his return and if any message comes from him, telephone it at once to me."

Then she gave Stillwell the telegrams to send from El Cajon and drafts to cash in El Paso. She instructed him to go before the rebel junta, then stationed at Juarez, to explain the situation, to bid them expect communications from Washington officials requesting, and advising Stewart's exchange as a prisoner of war, to offer to buy his release from the rebel authorities.

There was a crack, a muffled sound bursting into a roar, and the big car jerked forward to bound over the edge of the slope, to leap down the long incline, to shoot out upon the level valley floor and disappear in moving dust. Madeline endured patiently, endured for long interminable hours while holding to hope with indomitable will.

No message came. At sunset she went outdoors, suffering a torment of accumulating suspense. Night fell. She prayed for the sun not to rise, not to begin its short twelve-hour journey toward what might be a fatal setting for Stewart. But the dawn did lighten, swiftly she thought, remorselessly. Daylight had broken, and this was Thursday!

Sharp ringing at the telephone bell startled her, roused her into action. She ran to answer the call.

"Hello—hello—Miss Majesty!" came the hurried reply. "This is Link talking. Messages for you. Favorable, the operator said. I'm to ride out with them. I'll come a-hummin'."

That was all. Madeline heard the bang of the receiver as Stevens threw it down. Favorable! Then Stillwell had been successful. Her heart leaped.

Suddenly she became weak and her hands failed of their accustomed deftness. It took her what seemed a thousand years to dress. Breakfast meant nothing to her except that it helped her to pass dragging minutes.

Finally a low hum, mounting swiftly to a roar and ending with a sharp report, announced the arrival of the car. If her feet had kept pace with her heart she would have raced out to meet Link.

He gave her a packet of telegrams. Madeline tore them open with shaking fingers, began to read with swift, dim eyes. Some were from Washington, assuring her of every possible service; some were from New York; others written in Spanish were from El Paso, and these she could not wholly translate in a brief glance. Would she never find Stillwell's message? It was the last. It was lengthy. It read:

"Thought Stewart's release. Also arranged for his transfer as prisoner of war. Both matters official. He's safe if we can get notice to his captors. Not sure I've reached them by wire. Afraid to trust it. You go with Link to Agua Prieta. Take the messages sent you in Spanish. They will protect you and secure Stewart's freedom. Take Nels with you. Stop for nothing. Tell Link all—trust him—let him drive that car."

"Link, do you know the roads, the

trails—the desert between here and



"Can an Automobile Be Driven From Here Into Northern Mexico?"

Agua Prieta?" she asked. Can an automobile be driven from here into northern Mexico?"

"Sure. But it'd take time," she went on, in swift eagerness. "Otherwise Stewart may be—probably will be—be shot."

Link Stevens appeared suddenly to grow lax, shriveled, to lose all his peculiar pert brightness, to weaken and age.

"I'm only a—cowboy, Miss Majesty." He almost faltered. It was a singular change in him. "That's an awful ride—down over the border. If by some luck I didn't smash the car I'd turn your hair gray. You'd never be no good after that ride!"

"I am Stewart's wife," she answered him, and she looked at him, not conscious of any motive to persuade or allure, but just to let him know the greatness of her dependence upon him. He started violently—the old action of Stewart, the memorable action of Monty Price. This man was of the same wild breed.

Then Madeline's words flowed in a torrent. "I am Stewart's wife. I love him; I have been unjust to him; I must save him. Link, I have faith in you. I beseech you to do your best for Stewart's sake—for my sake. I'll risk the ride gladly—bravely. I'll not care where or how you drive. I'd rather plunge into a canyon—go to my death on the rocks—than not try to save Stewart."

How beautiful the response of this rude cowboy—to realize his absolute unconsciousness of self, to see the haggard shade burn out of his face, the old, cool, devil-may-care spirit return to his eyes, and to feel something wonderful about him then! It was more than will or daring or sacrifice. A blood-tie might have existed between him and Madeline.

"Miss Majesty, that ride figgers impossible, but I'll do it!" he replied. His cool, bright glance thrilled her. "I'll need maybe half an hour to go over the car an' to pack on what I'll want."

She could not thank him, and her reply was merely a request that he tell Nels and other cowboys off duty to come up to the house. When Link had gone Madeline gave a moment's thought to preparations for the ride.

A number of cowboys were waiting. She explained the situation and left them in charge of her home. With that she asked Nels to accompany her down into the desert.

"Why, Miss Majesty, I'm powerful proud to go. If you're goin' down among the Greasers you want me."

Madeline heard the buzz of the car. Link appeared, driving up the slope. He made a short, sliding turn and stopped before the porch. Link had tied two long, heavy planks upon the car, one on each side, and in every available space he had strapped extra tires. A huge cask occupied one back seat, and another seat was full of tools and ropes. There was just room in this rear part of the car for Nels to squeeze in. Link put Madeline in front beside him, then bent over the wheel. Madeline waved her hand at the silent cowboys on the porch. Not an audible good-by was spoken.

(To be continued.)

LOVE STORY MADE IMMORTAL

Romance of Elaine, the "Lily Maid of Astolat," Subject of Great Verses by Tennyson.

Elaine, "the lily maid of Astolat," loved Sir Lancelot, but was not loved in return. Sir Lancelot was sworn to celibacy, and in addition his interest was centered in Guinevere, the queen. Elaine, realizing the hopelessness of her passion, died of a broken heart. In accordance with her last request her body, clad in white, and resting on the bed on which she died, was placed on a barge and guided by an old dumb servant to King Arthur's palace. In her right hand was placed a lily, and in her left hand a letter declaring her love. When the "dead steered by the dumb" reached the palace wharf, the king requested that the body be brought ashore. The letter was then read, and the departed buried in a manner befitting a queen. On the tomb was inscribed the sad narrative of Elaine's unrequited passion.

The story is derived from Sir Thomas Malory's history of Prince Arthur, and has been told in blank verse by Tennyson, forming one of the "Idylls of the King."

—Subscribe for the "Watchman."

POPLAR TREES GIRL'S DOWRY

Planted at Child's Birth, They Provide a "Dot" Demanded on Her Marriage.

In the southernmost part of Italy is the province of Calabria. One of the most charming of the customs here in Italy's toe is that relating to a girl's dowry. For, as in most European countries, a Calabrian girl has a slim chance of marriage unless she is the proud possessor of a "dot."

The Calabrians, to avoid such a tragedy as that of bringing up a daughter and not being able to endow her with a sufficient dowry to attract an eligible husband, make provision in her babyhood against such a misfortune. In some parts of Calabria, when a little girl is born, her father plants a row of poplar trees, which are hers. By the time she is seventeen years old the poplars are fine, large trees and ready to be hewn down. Then their wood is sold and the money is set aside for the daughter's dowry.

Calabria also is rich in historic interest. Scilla is one of the seaports. Across the straits of Messina is Sicily. It was here that the mythological monsters, Scylla and Charybdis, were supposed to menace mariners. Even the brave Ulysses was in never-ending fear of Scylla. It has always been filled with romance, and from this mountainous country come thrilling tales of highwaymen and brigands, for it was a favorite haunt for outlaws.

PLUTARCH'S RULES OF DIET

Philosopher Seems to Have Had the Right Idea Concerning the Satisfying of Appetite.

He that is hungry should eat necessary food and find it pleasant; but when he is freed from his common appetite, he ought not to raise up a fresh one. For as dancing was no unpleasant exercise to Socrates himself, so he that can make his meal of sweats or a second course receives the less damage. But he that has taken already what may sufficiently satisfy his nature ought by all means to avoid them. And concerning these things, indecorum and ambition are no less to be avoided than the love of pleasure or gluttony.

Therefore, when any rare or noble dish is before you, you will get more honor by refraining from it than partaking of it. Remember what Simonides said, that he never repented that he had held his tongue, but often that he had spoken; so we shall not repent that we have refused a good dish or drank water instead of Falernian, but the contrary. We are not only to commit no violence on nature; but when any of those things are offered to her, even if she has a desire for them, we ought oftentimes to direct the appetite to a more innocent and accustomed diet, that she may be used to it and acquainted with it.—Plutarch.

White Buffalo Robe Prized.

In the old days Indians cherished the white buffalo robe as almost beyond price. In 1832 or 1833 the Mandans, hearing that the Blackfeet at the mouth of the Yellowstone had a white buffalo robe, sent a delegation with eight horses and with trading-goods the 200 miles to procure the robe if possible. The delegation left the horses and the goods and returned afoot with the robe. This was consecrated to the Great Spirit and hung upon a pole, out of touch, as powerful medicine.

It is said that not one in a hundred thousand buffaloes was white. Even at that the color was likely to be a yellowish white and the robe was known by the plainmen as a "buck-skin" robe. The pure white robe scarcely existed.

Millet Studio to Be Museum.

The remarkable building in the main street of the art center Barbizon, where Jean-Francois Millet painted "The Angelus" and other masterpieces, is being restored to its exact condition when used by the master. It will be opened officially to tourists and art pilgrims.

The restoration is almost a work of love by Dublin, the last painter of the Barbizon school, who, after discovering a long-hidden set of camera plates showing almost every corner of Millet's home, bought the lease and commenced to rebuild and replace, covering the expense of his operations by the sale of copies of Millet's best known canvases. When completed, the house will be virtually a Millet museum.

Cool-Headed Little Girl.

The coolest at I ever saw, says Mr. Rex Stuart, a railway engineer, in the American Magazine, was some months ago on the run between New York and Albany. We were a little late and were traveling fast when I saw two little girls on the track straight ahead. A freight was coming north on the opposite track. One of the girls saw the danger and jumped clear. The other was caught.

There is only six feet between the rails of the two tracks, and she was trapped in there. She turned sideways, then put her hands straight down at her sides, shut her eyes and stood perfectly still. I looked back after we hit the curve, and she was still standing there as stiff as a poker, waiting for the train to pass. Of course, it would have been better if she had dropped flat on the ground, but she scarcely had time to do that. It was a very cool-headed deed as it was.