

The Fighting Tenderfoot

By William MacLeod Raine
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CHAPTER XII—Continued

Manuel himself was usually inclined to agree with this verdict. He did not worry about the morrow. Manana was another day and would take care of itself. But just now he was somewhat disturbed. He was a law-abiding peaceful citizen who liked to work in harmony with the leading Americans in the county. The reappearance of Bob Quantrell made a shadow on the sunny outlook. The young outlaw's popularity was great among the countrymen of Gomez. A dozen times Quantrell had stolen cows or horses, driven them far, and made a present of them to the poor natives who sheltered him. His name was becoming a legend among the poor. Gomez could not, without sacrificing his position as leader, turn his back on the bandit.

Moreover, the relation of Quantrell to his daughter Dolores complicated the situation. The young people were in love with each other, and he knew that there could be no happiness for the girl with such a man. After Quantrell's escape from the dance hall Gomez reproached Dolores for having hindered the sheriff. It had been neither wise nor ladylike, he told her. The girl's answer ignored argument, went through his protests to the quintessential fact.

"I love him," her low, sweet voice said in liquid Spanish, and against that emotional reaction her father's logic beat in vain. The natives buzzed like excited bees. Their sympathies were all with the wild young scamp wanted by the law. He must be helped to escape. Gomez knew he was expected to assist Quantrell. His prestige was at stake. As soon as he had got his wife and daughter home he set out to find Quantrell and to arrange for horses upon which he and his men could make their getaway. The outlaws must be hidden until such time as mounts could be gathered for them and brought to the cabin where they were keeping under cover.

As Gomez moved down the walk in front of his house two men rose from the shadow of a plum tree where they had been lying and confronted him. "Just a moment," one of them said. The speaker was O'Hara. Gomez made the most of his English. "You weesh to see me?" "I want you to take me to the place where Bob Quantrell is hidden."

The Mexican shrugged his shoulders and shook his head. To simulate ignorance of English is an old Mexican trick. O'Hara repeated what he had to say in the best Spanish he could muster. "But senor, I do not know," Gomez fell back on his own tongue and poured out a flood of protest. Was he not a good citizen? Did he not pay taxes to establish law and order? Had he not campaigned for the election of Senor O'Hara?

Worrall murmured a suggestion to his friend. "No luck, Garrett. You're wastin' yore time. Manuel won't spill a thing." A quick light step sounded on the hard-packed snow. The sheriff caught at Gomez' arm, whispered an imperative in his ear, and drew him back into the shadows. They waited, listening. The crunching of the boots on snow had ceased. Presently they could hear someone wading through the drifts in the orchard. Whoever he was, the man was moving warily. More than once he stopped, as though to make sure he was not walking into a trap. He circled the house toward the rear.

O'Hara gave quick directions to his deputy and vanished. He ran along the walk and around the house in the opposite direction to that taken by the prowler. At the back corner, close to the adobe wall, he once more stopped to listen. Some one, not ten feet from him, was whistling to attract attention. It was the low, shrill whistle of a man who wants only one person to hear. To the sheriff there flashed a plan. He remembered Pankey's lameness and his stutter.

"B-b-bob," he called, and limped around the corner of the house. "B-b-bob, the s-s-sheriff!" Quantrell's six-shooter seemed to bob to his hip as he crouched like a cornered wolf. It was the first instinctive reaction to the surprise of the other's presence. The point of the revolver dropped. "What about him?" the outlaw snapped. "D-d-delgado's s-s-stable."

"Spit it out, man!" Quantrell's voice showed irritation. O'Hara had been moving forward as he struggled with speech until he was close enough to touch the other. Not before he plunged at Quantrell did the latter realize his mistake. A startled oath leaped from the killer's lips as he jerked up his six-shooter. He was too late. O'Hara's fingers closed on his wrist. An arm locked around his body. His feet were swung into the air and he was flung heavily to the ground, the sheriff's weight pinning him down. Quantrell struggled furiously. He tried to free the hand with the revolver. He thrashed to and fro, using hands and feet as levers to throw off the incubus clamped to him. Almost he succeeded. In the struggle the revolver went off, flinging a wild shot skyward. O'Hara was not a large man, but he had fifteen pounds' advantage of his opponent, and he needed every ounce of it to keep the

outlaw's right arm extended from the body that tossed itself about so violently. The sheriff knew that if for one instant Quantrell could flex the muscles of that arm a bullet would crash into his brain. To keep his place astride of that writhing torso was like riding a bucking bronco. The officer clamped his knees and spread his feet to give him more purchase. He burrowed his face into the sloping neck of his foe and with all his strength clung to the wrist he had gripped.

The man underneath of a sudden relaxed, ceased his struggles. O'Hara became aware that some one had intervened. Siney fingers gripped the outlaw's throat.

A voice said, "I've got the gun, Garrett." Steve Worrall had heard the shot and had arrived in time to decide the issue. A bony man of great strength, the deputy soon had Quantrell helpless. He held him trussed while O'Hara fastened handcuffs to the prisoner's wrists.

Now that he knew it to be useless Quantrell made no further effort to resist. The fury of fight had apparently gone out of him. He was still panting from his exertions, still swallowing to get breath through the throat Worrall had manhandled, but when he could speak there was no rancor in his voice, rather a note of ironic derision.

"Better—iron my legs—too," he gasped. "If necessary I shall," O'Hara answered. "Now I've got you I mean to keep you."

"How long, fellow? Those may be yore notions. Different here, I'm with you only for a short visit." O'Hara did not bandy words with him. "Where had we better keep him?" he asked the deputy.

Worrall considered. The jail would not hold a child. It was built of soft adobe, and the last prisoner had dug his way out. "How about the Concho house?" suggested Quantrell. "You want to treat me right or I'll not stay."

"There's that log house where Two-Ace Burke usta live—only it ain't half furnished. I reckon Bob's idea is about as good as any. We've got to keep him guarded, anyhow. The food would be right handy."

O'Hara nodded. "All right. We'll keep him at the hotel. It won't be for long. I'll take him to Aurora. They've got a new jail there."

"I'm not going to Aurora," the outlaw announced. "Never did like the town. It's a two-bit burg. I'll stay right here till I get ready to say 'Adios.' See you get me a good room."

Gomez came around the corner of the house and joined them. In Spanish he asked Quantrell reproachfully why he had come back when he knew the officers were so hot on his trail. "Don't worry about me, Manuel," the manacled man answered gaily. "I kinda want to stick around awhile, anyhow. Might as well let the county feed me till I'm ready to go."

A casement window opened above and a head appeared, shadowy in the darkness. A voice murmured a question in soft Spanish. Was anything wrong? Quantrell lifted his face and grinned toward his sweetheart. "Nothing at all, chachita. I've got a real urgent invite to be Mr. O'Hara's guest at the hotel for two-three days. Suits me fine. I'm right tired of sleepin' with snowdrifts for pillows. Adios, chiquita. Poco tiempo." He raised his hands and flung a kiss at her.

"We'll be going," O'Hara said curtly. "That's the major-domo crackin' his whip," explained Quantrell impudently. "The 'll' tenderfoot sheriff blowin' off steam."

He went jauntily to confinement as though it were a joke. *****

CHAPTER XIII
A Round-Up
Brad Helm eased his massive body up from the chairs he was occupying. His astonishment at the sight of Bob Quantrell in handcuffs had not yet had time to subside. "Why, I can fix you up with a room, Sheriff. I would of liked to of kinda fixed it up some, but that doggone Chink is up to the Gold Nugget playin' the wheel."

O'Hara. "But understand that orders come from me and not from Bob. He's just a prisoner. I'd put him in the jail if it would hold him."

"Just a prisoner, is he?" Quantrell asked with mock politeness, looking down at his slim, long girlish hands. "An' how long will he be one, Sheriff?" Brad had picked up a lamp to lead the way to the room. He stopped to listen. There had come the sound of shots, a scattered fusillade of them.

"What's up, do you reckon?" he asked. The sheriff turned to Worrall and spoke quickly. "Take Bob to the room, Steve. Tie him with a lash."



A Startled Oath Leaped From the Sheriff's Lips as He Jerked Up His Six-Shooter.

He ran out of the hotel and down the street in the direction of the Delgado stable. He passed people emerging cautiously from saloons and gambling houses. One called to him. "What's the fireworks about, Sheriff?" He did not answer. His business was to get to the scene of action as soon as possible.

Some one in the road halted him. "Hold on there. Not so fast. This road's closed."

O'Hara recognized the voice of Amen Owen and pulled up. "What's wrong?" he asked. "This is O'Hara." A little group of men were standing in the road back of Owen.

McCarthy spoke. "They tried to get the horses from the stable. Four of 'em. We yelled to throw up their hands an' they started shootin'. Course we let 'em have it, an' when the smoke cleared away two of 'em had lit out. The other two we got. One of the birds is ready for Boot Hill. Pankey has got a pill in his arm."

The sheriff stooped and looked at the face of the dead man. He recognized the man as the cowboy who had been known as Mac, one of those who had been with Quantrell when he raided the Hughes place a year or two before this time.

Pankey spoke up coolly. "D-dead as a s-stuck shote. Sheriff. Yore boys drilled him through. Y-yore k-k-kinda out-smarted us that time, looks like."

Some one laughed. Pankey was a bad egg, but he was no quitter. In the current phrase of the time and place, he played his cards the way they were dealt him. The little man walked lame, and would as long as he lived. He owed that to Garrett O'Hara, a memento of the battle at the Cross ranch, but he cherished no grudge on that account. His wound had been given him in fair fight.

Birmingham Man Learns How to Avoid Old Age
"I got fooled by a headline recently," said Banks Talmadge, "for in looking over a magazine I saw 'How to Avoid Old Age,' and while I am not yet worried over the matter, yet I registered attention. Among other ways to keep from getting old it advised: 'Never stop, look or listen at railroad crossings when driving a car; always race with locomotives to crossings, as it gives engineers a thrill; always pass the car ahead of you on a curve; or a hill; always drive as fast as you can on wet, slippery roads and be sure to lock your brakes when skidding, as you can often turn your car clean around; always drive fast out of alleys, for if you do it often enough you may have the good luck

Don Quixote's Cradle City
The past of Valladolid seems to be the chief attraction in the present. Here Columbus died and Philip the Second was born. Here Cervantes published "Don Quixote," and his plays still hold the stage in the famous old Teatro de Calderon. Here was laid the memorable scene of the meeting of Ferdinand and Isabella, as well as the romantic tragedy of Blanche of Navarre. Here lived Calderon, the great Spanish dramatist, also the fanatic Torquemada, who created the Inquisition tribunal. Valladolid was long the city of the auto de fe, which tried to save the souls of men by destroying their bodies.—Washington Star.

"Hadn't been so dark we would have got Deever an' Sommers an' maybe Quantrell, too," said Owen casually.

Almost too casually, in fact. It was Pankey who spoke, after a moment of silence. "C-claimin' they were in this, are you, Amen? G-guess again, old-timer."

"We knew who were in it, Pankey. Don't fool yoreself about that. An' in good time we'll round 'em up like we did you an' Mac."

"You don't s-say," jeered the little rustler. "A 'll' luck sure goes to some folks' heads."

"Did they get the horses?" asked O'Hara. "Nary a bronc," replied one of the Browns.

"Good! You and Baldy stay here and make sure they don't come back. Not much chance of that, I'd say." O'Hara turned to Owen and McCarthy.

"Will you have some one get this body? But first we'll carry Pankey to the Concho house if he's not able to walk."

"I can w-walk all right." The outlaw spoke up. "Good! We'll have Doctor Holloway look after you." Again the sheriff spoke to his allies. "Get together a dozen good citizens and patrol the roads out of town. Maybe we can catch Deever and Sommers as they try to slip away."

"An' Bob Quantrell—what about him? Ain't he worth gatherin' in?" Owen asked with an ironic little grin. "He's already gathered," the sheriff said quietly.

The look of blank surprise on the faces about O'Hara gave place to amazement. There was a chorus of exclamations. "How gathered?" asked McCarthy. "Arrested."

"You mean you've got Bob Quantrell under arrest?" "That's what I mean."

"An' he didn't kill you? Nor you him?" Baldy Brown asked. "Nothing like that."

"Didn't put up any kind of a fight?" "We got him to see reason."

"Where's he at now?" "Being guarded by Steve Worrall at the Concho house."

"Well, I'll be teetotally doggoned!" "How did you arrest him?" Amen asked.

"Oh, just explained he was under arrest. We found him outside the Gomez house. Need any help, Pankey?"

"I can m-make out to get along." The little outlaw looked at the sheriff with reluctant admiration. "I n-never saw the b-beat of you, O'Hara. You look about as dangerous as a b-brush rabbit, but you certainly take the watch. When you hit this country you didn't know s-s-c 'em, but you sure lit all spraddled out. I got to say you're a top hand."

Though Pankey had declined his offer of assistance O'Hara slipped a hand under the uninjured arm of the outlaw. He did not want to have him shot down while trying to escape in the darkness. It was not likely the lame man would be so foolish, but one never could tell.

he would find some way to escape. Therefore O'Hara chose his guards with great care. He selected three: Steve Worrall, Amen Owen, and Buck Grogan. They were to divide the day and night into relay periods. The first two men he picked because they were the best available. Grogan was slower witted, and O'Hara hesitated about appointing him. But the man could be relied on not to relax his vigilance. He hated Quantrell too much to give him any opportunity of getting away.

The instructions given by O'Hara to his deputies were definite. He warned them, too, against letting the prisoner for a single instant get his hand near a weapon.

Owen nodded approval. "Do like the boss says, boys. If Bob ever gets a half a chance you're gone. He's a wonder with a six-shooter. I've seen men with as quick a pull as Bob's. They claim Jesse James was chain lightning on the draw, an' I know Ben Thompson was for I've seen him. Others I've known with as rapid fire, an' still others as accurate. Maybe more so. Take Wild Bill. He was more deliberate in gettin' his guns into action. Fact is, he was so kinda easy about it he looked slow, but, gents, hush! when he onct started nobody could pump lead faster or straighter. He sure was a wonder. But this Kid Quantrell—take it from me that no man ever lived who had the edge on him in combination quick pull, rapid fire, an' straight shootin'."

I'm talkin' about a .44 or a .45, you understand. I can name a dozen fellows in town can beat him with a rifle."

"The long an' short of which is that if any of us throws down on his job he's liable to go to the Happy Huntin' Ground pronto," Worrall said. "Speakin' for Number One, I'll say I think too much of myself to get careless."

O'Hara had further doubts as to the wisdom of his choice of Buck Grogan when he saw the man with the prisoner. The bow-legged cowboy could not keep from gloating over Quantrell.

"Not long now," he jeered. "We're gonna try you down at Aurora for killin' that kid Turner at the Indian agency, an' then we'll hang you by the neck till you're dead. This country's plumb tired of two-gun men who go struttin' around with notches on their six-shooters, so we aim to make an example of Mr. Bob Quantrell right soon."

"That'll do, Buck," ordered O'Hara. "Bob hasn't been tried yet, and anyhow you're not here to devil him. If you can't be civil I'll take you off and put some one else on."

"Let him shoot off his mouth, Sheriff," the prisoner said in his mild way. "Don't hurt me any, seeing as I'm not intendin' to be present at any hangin' with me as the hangee. You know why he's sore at me. Because I had to kill his brother, the Texas Kid, that time I bumped off Sanderson. It was washed on me. You know that, O'Hara, because that same day you called the turn on that same day four-flushers an' made 'em take water."

Buck Grogan's face and wrinkled neck turned brick-red. "Anyone's a liar that claims my brother was a four-flusher," he spluttered.

The pale eyes of Quantrell rested on his guard. "Would he call me a liar, Sheriff, if he didn't have a gun



He Enjoyed Stirring the Anger of the Guard.

In his hand an' I wasn't sittin' here wearin' bracelets an' tied by a lash rope to my bed?" asked the outlaw in his gentlest, most menacing voice.

"It's going to stop, here and now," O'Hara answered. "You know this won't do, Grogan. Either be pleasant to Bob or don't talk with him. If I hear of any more of this sort of thing I'll have to let you go. That's final."

It was final as far as O'Hara was concerned but not with the others. Quantrell was more to blame than Grogan. He enjoyed stirring the anger of the guard. It helped to pass the hours. Moreover, he was watching always for a chance to escape and he felt that Grogan simmering with rage might offer opportunities that would not be given by the same man unmoved by passion.

So when O'Hara asked the prisoner a day or two later whether he had any complaints to make about the treatment he was receiving Quantrell grinned and shook his head. "Nary a one, Sheriff. Grub's O. K. I been improvin' my mind with the books you brought. The boys you leave me so's I won't get lonesome suit me fine. Especially Buck here. We're gettin' to be real tili-cums, ain't we, Buck?"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

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