

ROBBERS' ROOST

by ZANE GREY

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SYNOPSIS

Jim Wall, young cowpuncher from Wyoming, in the early days of the cattle industry, seeks a new field in Utah. He meets Hank Hays, who admits being a robber, and tells Wall he is working for an Englishman, Herrick, who has located a big ranch in the mountains. Herrick has employed a small army of gun-fighters, and Hays and others are plotting to steal their employer's cattle and money. Wall saves Hank's life by bluffing a gambler out of shooting. With Hays and two other rustlers, Happy Jack and Lincoln, Jim Wall goes to Herrick's ranch. Herrick announces that his sister, Helen, is coming to the ranch. Hays unfolds his plan for getting possession of Herrick's 12,000 head of live stock. He and his lieutenants ride away to drive off the first bunch of cattle.

CHAPTER III—Continued

"Smoky, it's shore a big idee," declared Hays, enthusiastically. "But what about Heeseeman?"

"Let's clean out his bunch." Hays shook his head.

"Fellers, if we pick a fight with that outfit some of us will get killed an' others crippled. Then we couldn't pull the deal. A better idee is for one of us to kill Heeseeman."

"Reckon it would be. They'd bust the outfit."

"Who'd you pick on to do that, Hank?"

Jeff Bridges boomed out: "Why, Smoky, of course, or Brad."

"Nope," said Hays, shaking his head. "With all that's due Smoky an' Brad I wouldn't choose either. Jim, here, is the man for that job."

"Mebbe we could drive off six or eight thousand head of stock before Heeseeman ever found out," put in Smoky. "What's the sense of fightin' it out till we have to?"

The suggestion found instant favor on all sides.

"But we don't want Heeseeman trailin' us," expostulated Hays.

"You mean after we pull the deal?" queried Brad, incredulously.

"Shore I mean after."

"Wal, what in thunderation do we care for him, when we've got the coin an' are on our way to the roost we're due to find?"

"I don't just like the idee, fellers," replied Hays, evasively.

Jim Wall, studying the robber leader closely, imagined that Hays was not exposing all the details of his plot.

"Let's put my idee to a vote," said Smoky.

When this suggestion was solemnly complied with, making use of the deck of cards, it was found that Slocum had won.

"So far, so good," said Hays, as if relieved. "Now let's see. . . Smoky, tomorrow you take your gang, includin' Brad, an' quit. Pack a slew of grub an' grain, an' hide out below. Cache what you don't need. I'll go to Grand Junction for new hands. See? But all I'll come back with will be instructions for you to follow. Then you can go drivin'."

"Good. An' how about the cash?"

"Wal, them buyers won't pay me in advance, you can gamble on that. But they'll pay you. Just divide with your outfit an' save our share."

"Short an' sweet. I like it more all the time," declared Smoky.

"We'll want to know where your camp is," went on Hays. "Reckon I'd better ride out with you tomorrow."

"No. You rustle for Grand Junction. We'll see that Happy an' Jim know where to find our camp."

Jim thought of something: "Men, has it occurred to you that you can't drive cattle up this road and through the ranch?"

"Shore. No need. It'd be a seventy-mile drive if we came this way. But we'll drive round by Limestone, an' up the other valley road. About the same distance to Grand."

The conference ended. Hays turned to the open fire, and seeking a seat in the shadow by the chimney he pondered. It was Jim's opinion that the chief had vastly more on his mind than he had divulged. Lincoln gave him a suspicious stare. The others seemed eminently pleased with the outlook, though no more was said in Jim's hearing. They joked and smoked. Jim bade them good night and went out. His last glimpse of Hays was thought-provoking. Lighting another cigar, Jim strolled up and down the porch, revolving in mind the conference.

It was a spring night, starry, with an edge on the mountain air that meant frost in the morning.

Was it possible that this lantern-eyed robber had evil intentions toward Herrick's sister? Jim scouted the suspicion.

"Hang the girl part of it, anyhow," he muttered, flinging his half-smoked cigar out into the noisy brook. Why did a woman have to come along to upset the best-laid plans of men?

The next morning brought somber faces and action. Five of Hays' outfit rode away with six of the pack horses and most of the supplies. Hays watched them until they disappeared among the cedars.

"Wal, now I'll brace the boss," he said.

"What excuse will you give him?" asked Jim.

"Anythin' would do to tell Herrick. But Heeseeman will see through me, I'm afear'd."

"Very well. You tell Herrick that your outfit split over me."

"Over you? Dog-gone! That ain't so poor. But why?"

"Both Slocum and Lincoln are sort of touchy about gun-throwing, aren't they? Well, tell him how queer that

brand of gunman is—how he instinctively hates the real gunman. And that Slocum and Lincoln made you choose between them and me."

"Ahh. Sort of so the idee will get to Heeseeman's ears that in a pinch with guns I'd rather have you backin' me than them?"

"Exactly."

Not long afterward Hays returned to the cabin jubilant. "You'd never guess, Jim. That Englisher laughed like the very devil. An' he ordered me to ride off after some desperadoes who're not afraid of Jim Wall."

"Ha! Ha! But Heeseeman won't get a laugh out of it."

"Shoot the lights out of him," said Hays, fiercely. "Wal, I'm off for Grand. Happy, pack me a snack of grub."

"How long will it take you to ride over?"

"Eight hours, I reckon. An' I'll be back tomorrow night."

"Certainly these buyers will know you're selling stolen cattle?"

"Oh, shore."

After Hays had gone Jim settled himself to pass the hours away.

"Mebbe it won't be so tedious," observed Happy Jack, dryly. "We've got three rifles an' a sack of shells right handy. So let 'em come."

Jim half expected a visit from Herrick, but the morning dragged by without any sign of anyone. About mid-afternoon, however, six riders appeared coming down the lane along the bench.

There had been no hesitation about Hank Hays declaring himself in regard to Heeseeman. Callous, contemptuous, Hays had indicated the desirability of riding the range of Heeseeman. But Heeseeman had been subtle. Unquestionably his motive had been to undermine Hays in Jim's regard. And a few questions and an assertion or two had had their effect. Jim made the reservation that he had not accepted Hays on anything but face value. Still the robber had gradually built up a character of intent force, cunning, and strength. These had crashed, though there was no good reason for that. Jim had not accepted Hays' word for anything.

Hays was not a square partner! This stuck in Jim's craw.

Why this seemed true puzzled Jim. Heeseeman had simply verified a feeling but still disputed suspicion in Jim's mind—that Hank Hays had evil designs upon Herrick's sister. Heeseeman and Hays had probably known for weeks that this English girl was expected to arrive.

Suppose he had! What business was that of Jim's? None, except that he now formed one of Hays' band and as such had a right to question activities. Rustling cattle, at least in a moderate way, was almost a legitimate business. Ranchers, since the early days of the cattle drives from Texas, had accepted their common losses. It had been only big steals that roused them to ire and action, to make outlaws out of rustlers. Nevertheless, it was extremely doubtful, out here in the wilds of Utah, that even a wholesale steal would be agitating. To abduct a girl, however, might throw western interest upon the perpetrators. Hays' object assuredly was to collect ransom.

Still that had not been Heeseeman's intimation, nor had it been Jim's original suspicion. He gave it up in disgust. Time would tell. But he did not feel further inclined to call upon Heeseeman. He would stick to Hays, awaiting developments.

The ensuing day passed uneventfully. No one of Smoky's outfit showed up, nor did Hays return. Jim waited for Herrick to give him orders, which were not forthcoming. The rancher was chasing jackrabbits and coyotes with the hounds.

Next morning Jim made it a point to ride over to the barns. The rancher came down in a queer costume. The red coat took Jim's eye. A motley pack of hounds and sheep dogs was new to Jim, as he had not seen or heard any dogs about the ranch. Jim was invited to ride along with Herrick and the several cowboys. They went by Heeseeman's camp, which was vacant. Jim was to learn that the rancher had put the Heeseeman outfit to work on the cutting and peeling of logs up on the slope, preparatory to the erection of a new barn.

Jack rabbits were as thick as bees. The cowboys led the dogs, which soon became unmanageable and bailed. Then the race was on. Where the ground was level and unobstructed by brush or cut up by washes Herrick did fairly well as to horsemanship, but in rough going he could not keep to the English saddle. He would put his horse at anything and he had a jarring fall.

Notwithstanding this, Herrick finished out the hunt. He was funny and queer, but he was game, and Jim liked him. On the way back Jim amused the Englishman by shooting jack rabbits with his revolver. He managed to kill three out of five to Herrick's infinite astonishment and admiration.

He would put his horse at anything and he had a jarring fall.

The slight made Jim start. How often had he seen the like—a compact little company of riders, dark-garbed, riding dark horses! It was tremendously suggestive to a man of his experience.

He reached inside the door and drawing out his rifle, advanced to the front of the porch.



He Would Put His Horse at Anything and He Had a Jarring Fall.

CHAPTER IV

When the group of riders reached the point where the lane crossed the brook, just out of pistol range, they halted, and one, evidently the leader, came on to the bridge.

"Hi, thar," he yelled, reining his horse.

"Hi, yourself," shouted back Jim.

The man, who, of course, Jim took to be Heeseeman, walked his horse half the intervening distance and stopped again.

At this juncture Happy Jack emerged from the cabin and carelessly propped a rifle against the wall.

"Who's callin'?" he boomed.

"I don't know," replied Jim.

"I'm Bill Heeseeman, an' I come to talk," called the visitor.

"Friendly talk?" queried Jim.

"Wal, if it ain't you'll be to blame." "Come right over."

Jim leaned his rifle against the rail and stood aside. Heeseeman did not look up as he mounted the steps. He took off an old sombrero to disclose the tanned, clear-skinned face of a man under forty with narrow, blue eyes reddened by wind and dust. It was a more open visage than Jim had expected to see. Certainly Heeseeman was a more prepossessing man, at first sight, than Hays.

"Mind if I set down?" he asked.

"Make yourself at home," replied Jim.

"Air you Wall?"

"Yes, that's my name. And this is Happy Jack, another of Hays' outfit."

Heeseeman nodded to Jack, who replied with a civil "Howdy," and went back into the cabin. Then Heeseeman leaned against the wall and treated Jim to a frank, shrewd gaze.

"You're Hays' right-hand man, just late from Wyoming?"

"Last is correct, anyhow."

"Do you know him?" queried Heeseeman, in lower voice.

"Perhaps not so well as you," replied Jim, who suddenly reminded himself that he knew Hays but slightly.

"I'm goin' to tell you somethin'."

"Heeseeman, you'll only waste your breath," declared Jim, impatiently.

"Wal, I don't waste much of that," drawled the other. "But if you wasn't new to Utah I'd save myself this trouble. An' you're goin' to believe what I tell you."

TO BE CONTINUED.

Hand-Knit or Crochet's the Thing!

By CHERIE NICHOLAS



ARE we knitting and crocheting these days? Well, now, are we? It's a veritable knitting and crochet marathon the fair sex is staging.

For proof positive that fashion's followers are knitting and crocheting like mad in their leisure hours, just try to sidestep the hanks of bright yarn and the balls of gray crochet cotton which pop out at most any time and place from within the depths of the capacious "knitting bag" which most every woman carries along nowadays wheresoever she goes.

Of course there's a reason for this increasing enthusiasm among those who hand knit and crochet, and it's this—the news is going out from style centers everywhere that the vogue for things hand-knit or crocheted is extending not only into the fall but it promises to become even more exciting and fascinating as winter draws nigh.

You can see for yourself from this group illustration that the newer ideas are nothing less than inspiring. Wouldn't you just love to have an ensemble like the one pictured, two views of which are here given? This adorable model is a Hermes creation, comes from the Paris collection of this famous designer of hand-made fashions. The three pieces, jacket, skirt and blouse, are worked of knitting and crochet cotton, a heavy thread which comes in exquisite colors and will wash like new. It is practicable for early fall wear. Notice the cord fastenings, the draped cowl at the back of the jacket and the crocheted covered buttons—style details which fairly tingle with individualized chic. You can get this crochet cotton at most any fancywork department, and it is not at all expensive.

The lines of the handsome suit shown to the left are severely simple but literally packed with smartness.

This model also comes from a celebrated Parisian creator who excels in hand-knit modes. The classic tailored appearance of this patrician two-piece gives it surpassing distinction. It is knitted, as is also the roll-brim hat, of knitting and crochet cotton, the kind that is dependably washable and wearable. New notes are offered for the knitter in its high, round neck, clever hipline which savors of a pepium effect and the unusual trimming detail on the front of the blouse in the form of simulated pockets together with vertical markings which tend to slenderize.

Also from a recent Paris collection comes the high-style blouse pictured in the foreground. The diagonal stitch which is of unusual interest gives slimming lines and there is a nicety about every detail which makes appeal to discriminating taste. The collar with its frilly jabot and the turned-back cuffs are dramatic touches which greatly enhance. The belt is neatly worked in a tight firm stitch—altogether a model which glorifies the art of crochet.

Speaking of the popularity of hand-knit costumes it is not at all unusual for women to knit not one but several suits and dresses. They are doing it right along this season. Besides the many alluring and novel details which beautify the newer modes, an outstanding play is being made on color. Just now fashion-informed women are choosing rich mossy greens, forest green being a favorite. Wear velvet accessories in matching green including scarf, beret bag and belt and you will be delighted with results. Rust color and allied copperish browns play a close second to the voguish green. Be sure to monogram your sports-knitted and crocheted togs, thus adding a final touch of distinction.

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EVENING CHARM

By CHERIE NICHOLAS



Very flattering are the alluring short capelets of tulle, fluted, flounced or frilled which many of the smartest women are wearing under glimmering evening lights. The model pictured is a Paris creation. Maggy Rouff designs it, using a bright red tulle for the capelet and white chiffon for the dress to the floor. Joining the deep-pleated flounce. The silhouette that drops narrow pleatings from waistline to hemline is a new departure.

DOTTED SWISS AS POPULAR AS EVER

Dear old dotted swiss is with us again. Dear Dotty is never far away, although she retires demurely to the country, from whence she first migrated. She was at Lady D's ball, too, her background white and her dots blue. Her hem had a four-inch ruffle all the way around and was shorter than the majority of her companions. She was accompanied by a cape fitted to the shoulders, tied at the neck with a small bow and buttoned down the front with tiny white linen shirt buttons. The cape was cut square in front and back and edged with ruffles of the same width as that on the skirt. Pale pink satin sandals peeped out from beneath the hem of the skirt.

Long-Handled Bags Back in Limelight of Fashion

Long-handled bags recalling those the belles of the '90s and 1900s carried are being seen again. Though their conception is modern, their inspiration is as old fashioned as a Quaker bonnet. They come in the form of calf-skin or pigskin pouches, sometimes with plain, sometimes with pleated bodies, finished with a double handle whose top comes eight or ten inches above the bag. Black ottoman pouches are being seen in the afternoon and evening.

Novel Earrings

Earrings worn on the tops of the ears are the latest novelty in costume jewelry. They take the form of tiny gold wings.

Coolie Hats Popular

Coolie type hats for women are popular in London.

Housewife's Idea Box



FOR ICE-BOX COOKIES

An ice cream container makes an excellent mold for ice-box cookies. Press your cookie mixture into the carton firmly. Put on the cover. Place it in the refrigerator. When you are ready to bake, tear away the cardboard and you have a perfectly shaped cylinder to cut up into cookies.

THE HOUSEWIFE. Copyright by Public Ledger, Inc. WNU Service.

Concourse of Sweet Sounds as Pigeons Fly

Long before the radio was dreamed of the Chinese had "music on the air," according to Dr. Berthold Laufer, curator of anthropology at Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago. This they accomplished by means of small reed instruments resembling pipes of Pan, which they attached to the tail feathers of pigeons. Whole flocks of pigeons are thus equipped, each bird with whistles producing different notes, and as the birds fly the wind strikes the apertures of the instruments, setting them to vibrating and creating a pleasant open-air concert.

The Chinese explanation of the practice is that the sounds of the whistles are intended to keep the flocks together and to protect the birds from the onslaughts of hawks and other birds of prey. This rationalistic interpretation, however, is not convincing. It is doubtful whether such music makes any impression on either pigeon or hawk, and since this music constantly fills the atmosphere year after year the unrelenting foes of the pigeon would gradually become accustomed to it and disregard it even if it had kept them away at first. It seems more plausible that this quaint custom has no rational origin, but that it rather is the outcome of purely emotional and artistic tendencies. It is not the pigeon that profits from this aerial music, but the human ear. On a serene day one can hear this concert in Peking all day, even in one's house.

Impressable Poultry

"You have lost more chickens?"

"Yes," answered Farmer Corntosel. "It has always been my luck to raise sentimental chickens who were willing to elope with any stranger who came serenadin' around the coop."

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Need a Trumpet

Fishbein—I say money talks.

Tishbein—Yes, but all some of us hear is the echo.—Pathfinder Magazine.

COLDS

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