

CATTLE KINGDOM

By ALAN LEMAY

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WNU Service

CHAPTER IX—Continued

“Not very much. Aren't you going to help me find some breakfast?”

“You bet I am.” They went into the cook shack, and he lighted the lamp again.

Moving slowly, he quietly shoved wood into the banked fire, and got bacon into a skillet. “I'm sure sorry I can't stay while this cooks,” he said. “But I've got to make a ride.”

“Maybe I'll go with you.”

“I'm afraid,” he said gently, “you wouldn't want to do that.”

“You mean you don't want me.”

“It isn't that. But—”

“If you had any imagination you'd know I got up at this unearthly hour because I want to talk to you.”

He waited, disturbed. She stood close to him, talking almost in whispers. He knew he must get going, but he could not bring himself to move away.

“You see—I heard part of what you and Uncle John said last night.”

“You heard—what?”

“Uncle John has a voice like old Rock in full cry,” she explained. “My room isn't next to his, but it isn't far away. And when he's angry, I'll bet he can be heard ten miles back into the Tuscaroras. I couldn't help hearing what you said about Bob Flagg being dead. And if that's true—”

Wheeler was startled. “Marian—” he looked at her square—“what else did you hear?”

Her eyes did not waver. “That was all.”

He thought he detected a faint wicked gleam in her eyes, but he kept his face expressionless, and stood pat.

“We've got to find Old Man Coffee,” she said.

“Seems like he's left, Marian.”

“You've got to take me to him,” the girl said. “You can find him—I know you can find him.”

“What makes you think so?”

“Can't you?”

Wheeler hesitated; what Old Man Coffee had told him had been told in confidence. Yet, invariably, he found it almost impossible to speak untruly to this girl.

His hesitation was fatal. “You know where he is,” she said suddenly.

He picked up his bridle. “I've got to get out of here.”

“Billy—you're riding out to meet Old Man Coffee?”

“Tell your uncle I'll be back tonight,” he said abruptly, and moved toward the door.

“I'm going with you.”

“I'm sorry,” he said, “but you're not. You're a pest, that's what you are! Go on and eat your breakfast.”

Yet he knew that he could not bluff this girl, nor control anything that she did; and what was worse, she knew it too. As he left her she was writing a note to her uncle, telling him where she had gone; and she was with him, mounted on her own pony, as he left the layout.

Wheeler pressed his pony along steadily, eyes to the front; and he was combating his keen awareness that the girl was at his side. He had loved this gaunt, clear-colored country of blasting sun and sharp shadows; differently than he had loved the girl, but as a man loves his home. But now he knew he would need another different country, a new type of grazing land, if he was ever going to forget this girl who rode beside him, whom he could never possess.

They were almost in the shadow of Lost Whiskey Butte when she broke the silence between them.

“Billy—I told you something that wasn't so.”

He waited.

“It was when we were talking about Bob Flagg, and how I heard what you and Uncle John said about that. And I said that was all I heard. Well—that wasn't all.”

“What else did you hear?”

“I heard—it all.”

Unexpectedly he found it difficult to tell himself that it didn't matter. But now he realized that she was waiting for him to answer, and he managed to say, “That's all right.”

“Isn't it better,” she said, “that we both know now how things really stand—between us, I mean?”

He made himself say, “I guess so, Marian.”

“It is better,” she said, and he wondered why her voice seemed so sad. “Because—don't you see?—there's nothing to keep us from being friends now—really friends. And each of us—all of us—are going to need what friendliness there is left in the world, I think.”

“Nothing.”

“Something did, though,” Wheeler contradicted. He told Coffee of the shot from the brush.

The old hunter scowled; he looked as nearly startled as they had ever seen him look. “This changes the whole set-up,” he complained. “I thought I had it licked. I thought I could pretty near give names and cases. But—this smears it.”

“I don't follow that,” Marian said.

“Neither do I,” Coffee said, dismissing discussion. He turned to Wheeler. “You told her what we aimed to try?”

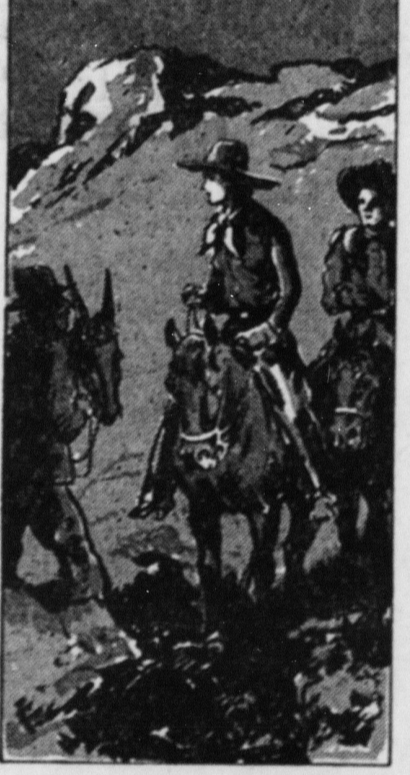
“No.”

“Well, you should have. This is a kind of a sad, dark job we're on today, girl. We're going to try to find the man that was killed at Short Crick.”

“I guessed that,” Marian said.

Old Man Coffee led off to the northeast, his sleepy-eyed mule in an ambling shuffle, and they rode in silence for a little way. Coffee signaled to them to come abreast.

“Maybe you've wondered some,” he said, “why I've been kind of prowling around of nights, as your



“Marian, This Is as Far as You Go.”

wagon boss was at pains to make known. Well, I guess it won't hurt nothing to tell how a thing like this is done. Did you ever listen to coyote voices, of a night, Marian?”

“I couldn't very well help it, could I?”

“There's a funny thing about them. More things interest coyotes than you'd expect. And if something kind of strange and interesting happens on the range, all of 'em know it, all over the desert. We'd learn queer things from 'em if we could understand their talk a little better.”

“Coyotes won't touch a dead man; neither will a loafer wolf. But they'll circle around, and kind of wail, and sing. Once before this I found out where a corpse was hid by listening to the coyote voices at night.”

“This time, we got a break. There's a loafer wolf on the range. He'll only talk about certain things, and maybe speak only two, three times a week. So when he lets out the same kind of queer cry, in the same place three or four nights in a row, a man begins to wonder.”

“That was a long day, and a strange day—the strangest in Marian Dunn's life. Their work carried them a great distance, much of which was wasted in quartering, and the long following of false trails. Some queer geometry of landmarks was working in Coffee's head, but what it was like they could not guess, and he did not explain. Repeatedly Old Man Coffee pulled the dogs off invisible trails which he declared were those of coyotes. It was after noon before a new note came into the howling of the hounds, signaling the trail of the loafer wolf.

“This loafer trail,” said Old Man Coffee, “is three days old. I don't reckon it'll serve.”

It did not serve, though Coffee let it lead them seven miles in no particular direction before he pulled off the dogs.

The sun had gone down behind the Tuscaroras, and the long gray dusk was on the range as they came on to the broken wilderness of up-thrust red rock that was known as the Red Sleep. The dogs were voicing uncertainty here, obviously running no trail, though Old Man Coffee seemed to know where he was going. And now old Rock made a curious play. The old dog had been in a suik all day long, unwilling to quarter the trail of the loafer wolf; but now he sent up a long full-throated cry and drifted swiftly, nose down, a hundred yards along the red rock.

“I'll be eternally damned!” Abruptly the old dog turned to look at Old Man Coffee, let his tail drop again, and quit the trail.

“What's the matter?”

“Everything,” Coffee said. “I never done so much false figuring in my life!” He pushed ahead quickly now, shouting to his hounds, jerking new life into them with guttural Indian words that the others did not understand.

Suddenly the big spotted leader hound sprang ahead, bawling; and in another moment the rest of the hounds were with him, running full cry, outdistancing the horses.

“The wolf again,” said Coffee, a new keen edge on his voice. “Children, we're near the end of the trail!”

Yet because the trail of the wolf was indirect and circling, they spent another hour in following the dogs. The ponies were scrambling over broken rock now, keeping up as best they could. The dusk was very deep when Old Man Coffee pulled up at last and sat waiting.

They did not see what had stopped him at first; but after a few moments they saw that the hounds had made a circle and were coming back. Coffee got down off his mule, called in his dogs, and tied up each of them, separately, to rock or scrub oak. But he had to crack the long dog whip over them more than once before they would lie down, sulking and moaning in their throats. Old Rock, the only one untied, lay down under the feet of the mule, raised his nose to heaven, and let out a long deep-chested wail.

Old Man Coffee tightened his saddle. “Marian,” he said, “this is as far as you go.” “You stay with her, Billy. I don't know how long this will take.”

He said something unintelligible to the dogs, and moved away from them, the dainty feet of his mule picking its way, and old Rock slinking close behind.

They sat there for what seemed like an endless time. Billy Wheeler tried to talk to break the sad terrible stillness, but this place smothered the words in his throat.

The first stars were showing when Old Man Coffee came back to them at last, his black mule moving like a lean tall shadow among shadows. He came close to them, then for a moment sat silent, looking back over his shoulder the way he had come; and Wheeler knew that he was futilely seeking words for what he had to say.

Long before the old man spoke they knew he had found what he had sought.

“It's Bob Flagg,” Old Man Coffee said.

Horse Dunn accepted the news that Flagg was dead more quietly, more steadily, than Wheeler had expected.

“How was he killed?” Dunn asked.

“By a shotgun; the same as Cayetano.”

“Where's Coffee?”

Coffee, Wheeler had found, could not be persuaded to return with them to the 94. It was Coffee's belief that Dunn had made a serious mistake when he had chosen to hold Magoon's saddle instead of turning it in to the sheriff.

“The sheriff will be out here in the morning, sure,” Wheeler said. “I think Walt Amos means to be fair. But there's better than a hundred men in inspiration, all out of outfits that hate the 94. Amos is sitting on a stove, and it's getting hotter every minute.”

“Let him come.”

“Any more dope on the Cayetano killing?”

“I sent Gil Baker to Ace Springs. But he hasn't come back.”

“Val Douglas went to Pahrnanagat, did he?”

“He left this morning. I suppose

it'll be late tomorrow night before he gets back—maybe longer. Steve and Tulare and me, we spent the day prospecting around in the Tuscarora foothills, here.”

“And didn't find anything,” Wheeler supposed.

“Billy,” said Horse Dunn, “there's somebody been slinking around over there. We found the ashes of two different fires. And I'm not a damn bit sure there isn't somebody prowling around there yet.”

“Now who the devil would that be?”

“That's just it—we don't know who that would be. I guess—it doesn't matter, now.”

They had expected Sheriff Walt Amos to appear in the course of the night, or at least no later than the first light; but it was noon before Amos appeared. He again came alone, as he had come after Billy Wheeler.

At the 94 he found only Horse Dunn and Billy Wheeler, for Steve Hurley and Tulare Callahan were in the Tuscaroras in search of the unknown prowler now believed to be hiding there; Val Douglas and Gil Baker had not yet returned; and Marian was out with her pony. Walt Amos climbed out of his car and walked slowly to the gallery of the cook shack, where the 94 people happened to be. They awaited him in silence.

“Horse,” said Walt Amos, “the time has come when I can't put off acting no more.”

“What have you done with Gil Baker?” Horse Dunn demanded.

“He's in inspiration. We had to take him in.”

“Is he hurt?”

“Not bad. He came prowling around Ace Springs, where Cayetano was killed, and one of the deputies hollered to him to halt, but he made a run for it. They had to throw down on him before he'd give himself up. Turned out he was shot in the leg.”

“You're getting almighty high-handed around here, Amos!”

“Sorry. But I reckon it's going to seem still a little more so. Dunn, I got to take you in.”

“On what charge?”

“Held for questioning; concerning murder.”

Horse Dunn stood up, his thumbs hooked in his belt, and his eyes rolled slowly over the foothills of the Tuscaroras; it seemed to Wheeler that he was looking for a sign.

Now Dunn answered him at last, and Wheeler saw that somehow, in the course of the night, the old man had been able to prepare himself for this thing. “When you want to move out?” he asked.

“I'd like to get on back as soon as you're ready, Dunn.”

And now out of a trail that wound through the tall buckbrush back of the layout a rider came. His horse was at a quiet running walk, but the animal shone wet with sweat, and from under the edges of the saddle blanket the lather rolled. It was Tulare Callahan.

He rode directly to the cook shack gallery and swung down.

“Horse, I've seen Lon Magoon!” he announced.

“Tulare, are you sure?”

“We only sighted him far off on a high ridge, at better'n a mile. But Horse, I knew him as sure as I know my name. His horse looked like that good sorrel of ours, we call Brandy. We signed him to come and talk, but he sloped. We took out after him hell for leather—Steve Hurley's trying to trail him yet—but he got loose about four miles up the Tamale Vine. I knew you was looking for the sheriff; and I thought you might want to know this, if you was still here.”

“Amos,” said Horse Dunn, “I'm going to have to ask for a little more time.”

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Year In and Year Out, Bible Society Finds Good Outlet for “Best Seller”

Agencies seeking to promote foreign trade might profit from the annual report of the American Bible Society, observes the San Francisco Chronicle. Year in and year out, the society goes on with increased distribution. Depressions, hard times, wars, political upsets, industrial activity or unemployment do not disturb the distribution of Bibles. If people are in trouble, they need Bibles. If they are not in trouble, a Bible makes good reading for leisure hours.

The society's agents put a touch of zeal in their work that might be envied by a sales manager in any other business. If they encounter a tribe of a few hundred or thousand aborigines, they do not try to force Bibles by teaching the savages our language. They just settle down to a few years of study and translation and first thing you know, there are Bibles in a language of which even the name is unpronounceable.

Also, there is no waste motion in

competition. The American Bible Society, finding British Bible society agents actively at work in South America, promptly hands over Chile to the British distributors and takes Uruguay instead.

Some of the agents are paid, some are volunteer workers. Among the paid workers there are no sit-down strikes, no organized mass demands. The chief incentive is to get Bibles into the hands of people who have none. When Argentina levies a gas tax and proceeds to build roads, motor dealers think about getting into that field; oil companies see prospects of oil sales. But the Bible man sees nothing except a quick way to get to people he never has been able to reach before with a Bible.

Perhaps this helps explain why, with a distribution of 276,354,391 volumes in the 121 years of the society's existence, the Bible has held first place as a “best seller.” The Bible man will insist that it is because it is the best book.

Interpreters of the Mode



SO LONG as you Sew—Your-Own, Milady, just so long will Yours Truly strive to interpret the mode for you. Today the trio brings you frocks for every size (from four years to size 52) for almost any occasion. Each has been designed to bring you the ultimate in style in its particular class and all claim a new high in simplicity and comfort.

Ultra-Smart Dress.

It's nice to know you're easy to look at even if the occasion is only another breakfast session. That's why the ultra-smart dress at the left is so handy to have. Note the clever detail all the way through even to the inverted skirt pleat. See how beautifully the sleeves set-in—you just know at a glance how simple it is to put together. Cotton, of course, is the material.

Typical of Youth.

The surest way to be a big little-body is to wear dresses that are as expertly planned as the grown-ups'. The little number above, center, has the smart styling of a sub-deb's frock. It is typical of youth's freshness and activity, and is one model that gets little girls' complete endorsement. It is the number one dress for the number one sweetheart in anybody's family.

An Orchid to You.

Do you think of a charming sorority tea with lots of atmosphere and plenty of style when you look at the handsome new two-piece above, right? Would you like it made in one color and material, or perhaps with a topper in gold lame or satin combined with a skirt of a rich dull fabric? Why not make it yourself to suit your own fancy and step into a swell little world of glamour crowded with fans and fun and festivity?

The Patterns.

Pattern 1401 is designed for sizes 36 to 52. Size 38 requires 4½ yards of 35-inch material.

Pattern 1366 is designed for sizes 6, 8, 10, 12, and 14 years. Size 8 requires 2½ yards of 39-

inch material, plus 1¼ yards of machine-made pleating to trim, as pictured.

Pattern 1396 is designed for sizes 32 to 44. Size 34 requires 1½ yards of 39-inch material for the blouse, 1½ yards of 54-inch material for the skirt.

Send your order to The Sewing Circle Pattern Dept., 247 W. Forty-Third Street, New York, N. Y. Price of patterns, 15 cents (in coins) each.

New Pattern Book.

Send 15 cents for the Barbara Bell Fall and Winter Pattern Book. Make yourself attractive, practical and becoming clothes, selecting designs from the Barbara Bell well-planned, easy-to-make patterns.

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Still Coughing?

No matter how many medicines you have tried for your cough, chest cold, or bronchial irritation, you can get relief now with Creomulsion. Serious trouble may be brewing and you cannot afford to take a chance with any remedy less potent than Creomulsion, which goes right to the seat of the trouble and aids nature to soothe and heal the inflamed mucous membranes and to loosen and expel the germ-laden phlegm.

Even if other remedies have failed, don't be discouraged, try Creomulsion. Your druggist is authorized to refund your money if you are not thoroughly satisfied with the benefits obtained from the very first bottle. Creomulsion is one word—no two, and it has no hyphen in it. Ask for it plainly, see that the name on the bottle is Creomulsion, and you'll get the genuine product and the relief you want. (Adv.)

Battle Half Over

A man prepared has half fought the battle.—Cervantes.

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in three days
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LIQUID, TABLETS
SALVE, NOSE DROPS Headache, 30 minutes.
Try "Rub-My-Throat"—World's Best Linctus



Uncle Phil Says:

A Wide Difference

The difference between perseverance and obstinacy is that one often comes from a strong will and the other from a strong won't.

Intimate fellowships sail the sea of Give and Take.

Being “resigned to the inevitable” is sometimes an excuse for the yellow streak.

Impudence is not due to lack of respect so much as it is to bad training in manners.

A gossip makes a mountain out of a molehill and then brings it to you.

You're the Smithy

You cannot dream yourself into a character; you must hammer and forge yourself into one.

The increase of knowledge only produces more to wonder about.

By courage and holding one's nose much can be accomplished.

To make a rooster, the vainest of creatures, run, is the first triumph of a very small boy.

Strive to be patient. Work steadily. Remember the dictionary was not compiled in a single day or year.

Not All Can Laugh

A person with a sandpaper tongue may create more gaiety, but he with a velvet one is more comforting.

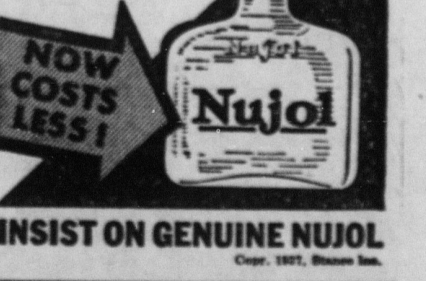
It would be strange if the company a man keeps didn't know him.

A man never forgets a snub. That is the reason it does him so much good, by stirring him into action.

Sport that is sport only for the onlookers, is not sport.

CONSTIPATED?

What a difference good bowel habits can make! To keep food wastes soft and moving, many doctors recommend Nujol.



INSIST ON GENUINE NUJOL

WATCH the Specials

You can depend on the special sales the merchants of our town announce in the columns of this paper. They mean money saving to our readers. It always pays to patronize the merchants who advertise. They are not afraid of their merchandise or their prices . . .

CHAPTER X

As Coffee, with his dogs about him, rode out to meet Wheeler and Marian Dunn from Lost Whiskey Butte, the girl pushed her horse ahead. She stopped close to the old man, facing him squarely.

“He tried to keep me from coming,” she told Coffee, “but there wasn't anything he could really do. Now, if you want me to go back, I will.”

Old Man Coffee grinned. He

Old Man Coffee said under his