

Penny of Top Hill Trail

By BELLE K. MANIATES
Author of "Amarrity of Clothes-Line Alley," "Mildred Manse," etc.

THIS STARTS THE STORY
Jo, a young ranchman, employed at the Top Hill ranch of a Mr. King-

AND HERE IT CONTINUES

POOR little brat!" he thought.
"Who chance does he kind have?

"All through the afternoon while transacting the business that had brought him to town, his heart and his head were having a wrestling match, the former being at the disadvantage of being underworked.

"How presidential!" thought Kurt.
"Why, yes; Mr. Westcott. It is replied: 'We're well up with our work, and I could spare Jo Gary for a few weeks.'

"Jo Gary! May heaven bless you! When can I get him?"
"Going out home now?"

"Step at the ranch and take him along with you. Tell him I said to go. It'll be all right with Kingdon."

Westcott renewed his blessings upon Kurt and drove on.
At the jail Kurt looked on in the latest arrival. She was sitting at a table in Bender's back office, her head bowed in her hands.

"Aren't we going to stop at all, Mr. Sheriff Man?"
"Plaintive note in the voice made Kurt Walters turn the brake of an old, rickety automobile and halt in the dust-whirl road, as he cast a sharply scrutinizing glance upon the atom of a girl who sat beside him.

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as he poured some water from an improvised Thermos bottle into a traveling cup.
"Thanks for those first kind words," she exclaimed, taking the cup from him and drinking eagerly.

"Why didn't you say you were thirsty?" he asked in a resentful tone, without looking at her.

"I'm not used to asking for anything," she answered with a chuckle. "I take what comes my way. 'Taking' is your job, too, isn't it?"

"To hell with my job!" he broke out fiercely. "I've never taken it if I knew it meant this."

"It's your own fault," she retorted. "It wouldn't have been 'this' if you hadn't been so grouchy. We could have had a chummy little gabfest, if you hadn't been bungling holes in the landscape with your lumps all the way."

"No," there's no excuse for you," he declared emphatically. "You are educated. You could have earned an honest living. You didn't have to steal."

"No," she said slowly and thoughtfully. "I didn't have to."

"Then why do you? Bender told me you had a lifelong record of pilfering."

"Lifelong? Kind Kurt, I am young—only twenty."

"There's only one thing I can do, now," he said glumly. "Carry out a bad bargain. I'll see it through."

"Oh, Mr. Brilling!" she murmured sotto voce.
"Nothing. Traveling libraries evidently don't hit this trail. What is it that you're so afraid of?"

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"Did he say I was? Horrid thing! I'm glad I put one over on him and lifted this," and she held up the box.
"Was it?" he demanded sternly.

"His supper. A peroxidized wife brought it to him—just before he presented me to you. I'll come in handy now, or won't you partake of stolen goods?"

"I'll pay him for it the next time I see him."

"Shucks, Kurt! You got such a bad bargain when you drew me, you ought to have something thrown in. It's all done up in a nice napkin—looks as if it would taste good. Oh, what a feast! Pork sandwiches, deviled eggs, dills, a keen-hot bottle of coffee, layer cake and pie. Bender knew how to pick a partner. What shall we drink out of?"

"I don't know. Yes, I do. It was because that Bender woman gave me such a once-over, and decided I was the scum of the earth. Is that the way your topside tavern woman will look at me?"

"No," he replied earnestly. "She's made a woman out of worse than you."

"Thanks!" she said, folding the napkin neatly. "I thought you had my number for the worst ever. It's wonderful what food will do for a man. Hope she will let me stay at the top of the hill while I get an appetite."

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DAILY NOVELETTE THE CONFUSING JACKS

By Dorothy M. Tracy
DOCTOR GRAYSON came on duty tired and was looking. The house doctor at the hospital had been called on during the night to perform an operation on an emergency case and thus it came about that Robert Grayson was not his jovial self.

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Lady of the Night Wind

By VARICK VANARDY
Author of "The Two-Faced Man," "Alias the Night Wind," etc.
The two watchers lost sight of him then, and could not follow. They had thought that he would leave the house by the way he entered it—but Granshaw Belding, otherwise Conrad Belknap, was far too wise for that sort of thing.

"We have lost him," Tom Clancy said.
"Go around to the rear, Tom," Bing replied, and darted away without imparting his own intention.

"Harvard, as it happened, having so often been in the position of fugitive himself, presumed Belknap's movements by what he would have done himself under like circumstances, and his ideas were well assumed. He went to the rose bower, from which he could watch the side entrance.

Belknap appeared at last, moving cautiously. He darted among the shrubbery, and kept himself amid the deepest shadows; but Harvard had seen him lift his head and point, as a hunting dog points, in the direction of his course.

Harvard caught sight of him again as he went out upon the platform at the boathouse.

Belknap secured a paddle and lifted a canoe into the water. He got into it and paddled out upon the lake, making his way directly toward the dam. It had been possible to approach the Nest by that route, Harvard would have thought that he was returning to the chalet.

He was not. He paddled directly to the dam at the opposite end from the Nest, and Harvard, running like a hare, followed along the shore of the lake. But when Bing Harvard got near enough to the dam he could see only an empty canoe that was hugging against it.

"What the dickens—" he began to ask himself, but before he completed the self-asked question he had thrown off his coat, vest and shoes and was in the water.

He swam quickly to the canoe where it was hugging against the dam—and then he discovered that three big spikes had been driven securely into a block of wood which, in its turn, had been ingeniously wedged into the masonry of the dam itself; and that a hemp rope no larger than a clothesline was knotted around the spikes—a knotted rope, to facilitate descent, Bing had no doubt.

It was Belknap's prepared getaway, made on the sly; but it was a daring method. The fall from the top of the dam to the jagged rocks below was sixty feet, as Harvard well knew.

"By Jove," Bing muttered to himself, "the fellow deserves to get away! And he will, if he reaches the bottom in—"

He stopped, fascinated by what he saw. The block of wood into which the spikes had been driven, that had been wedged into the masonry of the dam, trembled; it was coming loose.

Harvard reached out for it frantically. He would have grasped and held it if he could, and saved the life of the man he had been pursuing.

But he was not quick enough. The block of wood came entirely loose before he could seize upon it, and disappeared across the top of the dam. During an instant, which seemed an eternity, Harvard listened; but no cry came up to him from the depths below; only a dull thud, a subdued crash, and silence.

They found Belknap half an hour later. It was apparent that he had been killed instantly. His neck was broken, and there was a jagged wound above his right temple beside. While

Belknap's Prepared Getaway
IT WAS exactly twelve minutes, according to Bingham Harvard's watch, after Katherine entered the Nest, when Conrad Belknap came out of it.

DREAMLAND ADVENTURES—By Daddy

"Peggy, Billy and Rollo, the monkey, go to the rescue of a girl shut up in a tower by her perfectly prim and proper Aunt Prue, who has never let her have any fun or play."

The Escape
PEGGY was a bit doubtful over Billy's wink when Penelope, the girl in the tower, said she would go with them because the fairies she had read about were always perfectly prim and proper. Peggy thought that Billy's wink was mischievous and she knew there were times when Billy was far from being perfectly prim and proper.

But she knew, too, that while Billy liked jokes and a good time, he was a fine, splendid chap who could be trusted to do what was fair and right, and she felt that a taste of fun and play would do Penelope good instead of harm. It was awful to think of any one growing up to eighteen years of age without a single frolic.

So Peggy, after a moment's thought, made up her mind that she would be like the fairy Penelope thought her to be, and try to give the captive, the glad hour of freedom for which she begged.

Penelope glanced at her wrist watch. "I have just an hour," she said. "This is the time when Aunt Prue and the entire castle household take a perfectly prim and proper afternoon nap. I must be back when she awakens."

"Then hasten," cried Billy, leading her to the dangling rope ladder. "I'll go below and hold the ladder steady while you and Fairy Peggy come down." Again he winked at Peggy, and before she could even frown at his joking, he swung himself to the ground.

Penelope looked at the ladder, and her face grew pale. It surely did look frail and dinky, and the ground was far, far below.

"Do you think it is perfectly prim and proper, Fairy Peggy?" she whispered. "Don't be afraid," answered Billy. At that Penelope set her teeth firmly together, shut her eyes tight, and swung out upon the ladder. She was frightened, but brave, and went down step by step until she reached the solid ground.

"My, my, I feel so thrilly—so thrilly," whispered Penelope. "I wonder what is the matter with me?"

Peggy smiled wisely—she felt thrilly herself. It was so much fun riding through the tunnel in a wheelbarrow. Penelope was having fun and didn't know it.

"The monkey," was waiting at the great steel wall. He had carried the rope ladder over the treetops, and now it was hanging ready for them to ascend. It took but a few minutes for them to climb over and down to the bank of the rippling river. Here Billy was puzzled again. He couldn't carry Penelope, as he had carried Peggy!

What should he do? A birdland sounded a familiar voice: "Hee-haw! Hee-haw! I'm off for a lark. Prince Billy and Princess Peggy, where are you?"

Billy gave a glad shout. "Balmy Sam! Balmy Sam! Come here!"

Balmy Sam heard, and in another minute his heavy mule stood on the opposite shore waving his big ears in greeting to them.

"Tomorrow will be told how Penelope laughs for the first time."

DOROTHY DARNIT—Burglars Don't Scare Dorothy!

"I AIN'T AFRAID OF ANYTHING AM I MAMA?"

"YOU BET YOU'RE NOT."

"I WAS ONLY AFRAID ONCE IN MY LIFE."

"WHEN WAS THAT?"

"LAST NIGHT WHEN I WENT INTO THE KITCHEN ALONE."

"WHAT WAS YOU AFRAID ABOUT?"

"I WAS AFRAID I WOULDN'T FIND THE CHOCOLATE CAKE."

"OUTCH."

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