

FOREVER

Softly the waves creep up the shore,
Lily the sea gulls dip and soar,
The sunset light grows dim;

Side by side as the years go by,
Under a bright or a cloudy sky,
Close to his heart always,

Ever as sunlit hills grow brown,
Still, as the golden sun goes down—
Out of the dying day.

Feet, that fell on your weary way,
Fast! I follow through night and day
To one blank mystery gown;

Clouds hang low and the stars are dim,
Into the dark I follow him,
Into the far unknown—

—Mary R. Corley, in Boston Transcript.

MONTE HOLLISTER

BY F. D. MILLARD

OR a fact, you never saw a fresher, cleaner cowboy than Monte Hollister.

Monte was from Maine, where they make the boys wash the dishes and knit the socks if there happened to be no girls sent into the family.

He had no sisters and so he was put through the household, which troubled him not at all.

He brought some of his dishwashing notions with him to the range and many other tenderfoot ideas.

Among these latter was the horror of seeing anybody killed.

He was so neat with his kit, washed and shaved so much, and wore such fleckless jumpers and shirts that the boys sometimes called him Girly Hollister.

We were a bad lot at Lucin's. Somebody was always getting killed and buried.

When Pete Orr got three of Bill Somers' bullets in him and died before the clock in old Ashby's grocery could give a dozen ticks, it made some of the boys laugh to see how ridiculously the man squirmed on the floor and with what a flop his head fell back against the piece of zinc by the little stove.

But Monte did not laugh. He just turned away his head and went out and looked over the sagebrush in a very solemn way.

I followed and saw him bend over and wipe his eyes with his white handkerchief.

It affected me more to see him that way than it did to see Pete's mouth open when his head fell back.

Now, you are mistaken about the boy if you think there wasn't any sand in him.

You ought to have seen him ride that buckner up at Mesilla Springs. The beast had never had a saddle touch his hide before, and he threw off every one of the six men who tried to ride him.

You know there is the lack of a regular bronco that comes up like the thing the Philistines or some other fellows used to throw big stones with when they besieged the high walls of Jerusalem.

But this bronco had a double spring. Just when you thought you were coming down all right into the saddle after the first spring he met you half way with the other, and that laid you out cold.

That boy kept on as firm as the saddlehorn and rode the beast six times around the corral and up to the ranch house.

The boss said he was a nailer, but the buckner had spattered Monte's chaparejos with mud, and so he wasn't happy.

The boys need to say that Girly Hollister combed out his chaparejos every night before he got into his blanket, which may or may not have been true.

Now about that affair of the Mormon girl. You couldn't get me to tell the story for a whole band of long-horns if it wasn't for two things.

she pleased, and she always looked trim and interested you.

When Monte first saw that girl she had on a pink something and a little hat, red hat with beads on it, and a dotted veil that came down to her lips.

The combination struck him right between the eyes. He was more babyish than ever after that, and when Shorty Spence laid out Frank Van Zile, he wet his handkerchief so that you could have wrung out enough tears from it to have watered a sheep.

I admonished with Monte. "You can't go in for Mormons, greeny," said I in my off-hand way.

"Why don't you marry a greaser girl, and be done with it? She'd make it lively for you—the greaser would—but she wouldn't be bothering about the ordinances, 'the Paraclete,' 'the imposition of hands,' 'the endowments' and the seven bulls of Bashan."

"I ain't goin' to let her do anything of that sort if I marry her," said Monte, with his Matine twang.

"Yes, you will. And the tribe will curse you for a Gentle and all the people will say 'amen.' You can't get around it. You'll have to enter into Zion yourself and become a saint with the rest of them, if you do this unholy thing."

Monte reflected while he drove a steer into the corral. But what did the sap-headed young bull-puncher do but go over to Beaster's place that very night.

Now, I knew Big Dorkin wouldn't stand much of that sort of thing, and I was glad when Monte told me next day that he had had a big row with the large man, and that he had been ordered off the ranch.

"The coyotes will be eating you in about a week, Girly," I said, "unless you keep away from there. Dorkin is a dead shot."

Monte whipped out his six-shooter, and without glancing at the sight, plunged a nailhead in the door of the dugout fifty feet away.

It was the only nailhead you could see from where we stood, and it was a rattling good shot.

"I kn shoot, too," he said, very quietly.

The baby was getting its teeth. I don't know how he got on with Jess after that, but he seemed to be light-hearted enough, and I take it that she liked his down East ways, his twang and his fresh, clean look, for he got her picture and sent to Eureka for a brooch.

I wondered when Dorkin would kill him. The time would not be far away, I felt sure. The big fellow came up to Lucin's every Saturday night, and I noticed he looked sourer and sourer each time.

All of us made sure there would be a dead Maine man in camp before long, and we were sorry that it was going to be Monte, for he was such a quiet little fellow, and so clean.

The shooting took place just before dusk in the second week of August. Monte had been down to the Beaster's and was coming back to camp.

I was loitering along the trail waiting for him to come up. He was about half a mile away from me when I first saw him coming along in the queer little hop-trot that his buckskin had.

When I looked over there the second time I saw some one on horseback swooping down on Monte from behind.

The boy didn't notice the newcomer at first, but he turned his head when he heard the clatter of the hoofs on the ground, and when he turned I saw he had his six-shooter in his hand.

So the fellow coming in was Big Dorkin, of course, and I was going to see some fire fly. Mind you now, it was their own fight.

Why should I have taken a hand in it? A two-to-one combination is a low-down thing for a man to go into, even though you do feel like helping out a friend.

So I kept out of range and the greasewood sort of hid mt, but they didn't notice me anyway any more than as if I'd been a jack rabbit or a coyote.

It was the prettiest shooting I ever saw for the distance. They didn't get close together. You see Dorkin thought that would be an advantage to him, but he didn't know how much practicing Monte had done at long range.

gave a bound forward, putting me almost in range, but in that second Dorkin raised his pistol with an aim that was as firm as an iron rail and gave another ghastly grin.

He was within ten feet of the boy, who sat there with a smile on his face. Just as I was expecting to hear the pop and see the flash down fell Dorkin's right hand.

His left clutched his side, his head flopped down over his horse's neck and the ball from his pistol nearly took the shoe off from Monte's buckskin.

One of Monte's bullets had done its work, just on the scratch, as you might say.

Monte and I shook hands without a word. No, he didn't cry that time. I saw he needed a doctor, but there was something else to be done just then.

"Do you really want to marry that Beaster girl?" I asked. The young saphead grinned as he said, "Yes."

"Well, you'll never do it in the world till this thing's fixed up all right."

I pointed to Dorkin's well perforated body.

"What do you mean?" "Can't you see? She won't dream of having you if she knew that you plunked the life out of that man. He's been something to her some time, if he isn't now. And then, remember, he was a Mormon."

"Is does look ugly sure," said Monte. "Of course it does. What's to be done? Let me think. Why, I killed him."

"You!" "Yes." And before he could say another word I had peeled off my jumper and put a bullet through one sleeve and another through the loose part of the back. Then I fired another through the top of my hat.

Monte looked on in a dazed sort of way.

"You see, it was about that old TQ brand quarrel of ours. You remember that trouble Dorkin and I had last year? Well, that was it."

"But how about me?" He glanced at his arm as he spoke.

"You—why you've got to go to Eureka in China Jim's wagon on the dead quiet. When you come back in three weeks from now you've had a fight with a man who tried to hold you up, or something."

Monte's eyes were moist with gratitude, but I hastened him away to the lone cabin of China Jim, whom we bought, body and soul, for two gold twenties.

After that when I walked into old Ashby's grocery the boys showed me the utmost respect.

"That's the fellow who laid out big Dorkin," they would say to a stranger in low tones as I passed along. "He's a bad man."

And to save my life I couldn't help swaggering a little as I wore the giant's robe.

No! I wasn't at the wedding. To tell the truth, nobody was invited. The Beaster kept it stiff for fear the elders would make a fuss about Jess marrying a Gentle. They were wedded by that Baptist preacher over from Tewks, which was the more reason for keeping it quiet.

—San Francisco Examiner.

The Migration of Trees.

In a report on the noted trees and shrubs of Nebraska, C. E. Bessey, Director and Botanist of the station, in addition to a classified list of 125 species of trees and shrubs of that State, makes some interesting statements concerning their probable origin.

He tells that a close study of the facts as to the distribution of these woody plants shows that nearly all have probably migrated to the plains from the East. They have in some cases done no more than to get a little foothold in the extreme southeastern counties, to which they have come from the heavy forests of Missouri.

The Coon in a Cage.

A raccoon makes an easily kept cage animal, and it is often found so confined. When awake it is the most restless of all creatures, pacing to and fro incessantly within its bars, being almost always in motion when in its cage and not coiled up in sleep.

It is very fond of sugar and all sweets, meats, and strange to say, it will greedily drink strong, sweet alcoholic cordials so as to become ludicrously tipsy.

Although the raccoon is still a common animal in this country, yet it does not withstand any systematic or persistent hunting from the head of man, and there are to-day many wide sections utterly untroubled by it, where, a few decades ago, it was abundant, the country itself remaining just about the same as to open timber, cultivated fields and dense forest.

The South American form is known as the "crab-eating coon" (Procyon cancrivorus), is very similar in appearance to ours and differs only in possessing much shorter fur and other minor characters; it extends over all South America as far south as the Rio Negro and it is very common in all suitable localities, according to Flower, with the same general habits; only, as there are several species of fresh water crabs in that region upon which this animal is very fond of feeding, it has got the particular name above given.

One form, Procyon lotor, ranges all down from the United States through Mexico well into Central America, and those specimens taken in Costa Rica are said to be the largest of their race, and our name of "raccoon" is an anglicized shortening of an Indian designation, "arathkoon," of the Delaware. The French raton or raton laveur and the German Waschba and similar European names are derived from the curious habit which this animal exhibits when eating of dipping or washing its food in the water if near a creek or pool; it also literally rubs and washes its forepaws in any stream or spring that it may chance to run across when leisurely prowling through the meadows or forests.

The Sign of the Hat.

Swipes—"Hello, Bobbie, old fel, what's the matter with your hat this morning, it's clear down over your ears!"

"Bobbie—"Don't mention it, I was busy last night and couldn't go out with the boys as usual."—Detroit Free Press.

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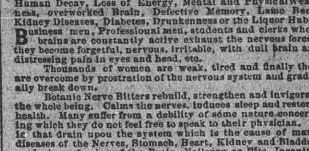
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