



THE STORY SO FAR: Ellen Carey seems interested in Jeff Brand, dashing rustler, and Calhoun Terry, ranch manager. Four rustlers are mysteriously killed. Suspicion fastens on Terry and his associates. But Jeff kills Jack Turley.

CHAPTER XXVIII

"Better lie there on the bed," Terry said, without looking round. "Let Larry have your rifle."

Jeff looked at Terry's flat, strong back with cold dislike. This was a nice pickle to be in. Without knowing it, he had come to rescue an enemy, and by another queer topsy-turvy quirk the man had saved him.

"How soon will your friends get here?" Larry asked. "I reckon they are gathering quick as they can."

"I sent Lee Hart out to pass the word. My guess would be, in another hour and a half."

After a pause, "We can't stand there off another hour and a half," Terry said.

A sinister light quickened Jeff's face. He said ironically: "You'll be able to make a nice deal for yourselves now. They won't have two to hang, but one is better than none."

Terry did not answer. Larry flushed angrily.

"You have a fine way of making friends, Jeff," he said.

"I'm particular about who my friends are," Brand jeered.

"I've noticed that. A scoundrel like Lee Hart who shoots from back of a wall at a man not expecting it. A bulldog ruffian like Jack Turley. A scawlag like—"

"Don't talk about Turley being my friend," Jeff interrupted. "I killed him this morning."

Larry stared at him. "How come you to kill Turley?"

"We found out he was the traitor who shot Jim Tetlow and the other boys. I gave him an even-Stephen break, which was more than the skunk deserved. We found the blood money in his cabin."

"They've stopped the wagon," Larry interrupted. "Someone has brought in a horse without a rider. Looks like the roan you were on. Bet a dollar they have recognized the horse and are having a pow-wow about it."

"It looks like only one of us may be dead in ten minutes," Jeff snarled. "I'll take that rifle now, Larry. I aim to go out in smoke."

Larry looked at the Diamond Reverse B manager.

"Give it to him," Terry said, his gaze fixed on the outlaw. "But don't make a mistake, Brand. I wouldn't have chosen it that way, but we're all in this tight together. We all come out of it alive or none of us do. Let me do the talking; that is, if any of us get a chance to do any with these fellows."

"We're getting a chance, all right," Larry cried. "Someone is running out a white flag from back of the barn."

Terry walked to the door, unbolted it, and waved the flour sack. Ellison and Sunday Brown came out of the barn and walked toward the house. When they were about forty yards distant the No. By Jo manager shouted a question.

"What made you run away, Terry?" he demanded irritably. "You might have got killed."

The Diamond Reverse B man waited until they were nearer. "So we might," he agreed, sarcasm riding his voice. "Whether we ran or whether we stayed. Your hired killers are too ready with their guns, Ellison. I told you it would be that way."

Into Larry's face beneath the tan dark blood swept. "Your hired killers have been plugging at us for a couple of hours. You're no better than that dead wolf Turley you were telling us about. The sooner you are run out of the country the better."

Larry had made a slip, and Ellison pounced on it. "Did I mention Turley? How do you know he was the man?"

"Never mind how I know. He has nothing to do with our complaint against you. I'm going to see that it gets into the Denver papers that you attacked us."

Sunday Brown spoke for the first time. "Who is the man that slipped into the cabin a little while ago?"

Terry looked at him bleakly. "You wounded the man, whoever he is. That's enough for one day. I advise you—all to mount your horses and get out of here while you can."

"Don't try the high and mighty with me, Terry," the No. By Jo manager advised, restraining his temper with difficulty. "I'm asking you two questions, and I don't intend to leave till I get answers. The first is, how do you know Turley was killed, unless you were in on the job? The second is, who did you carry into the cabin a little while ago?"

"You're out of luck in your questions, Ellison," drawled Terry. "We won't answer either of them."

A man appeared in the doorway of the house. He leaned against the jamb for support, but the rifle in his hands was quite steady.

"You've got me so plumb scared that I expect I'd better answer yore questions, Ellison," he said, not raising his voice. "I'm the guy in the cabin, and I'm the one who told them about Turley. I knew about it because I shot him this morning. Maybe I'm one of the men you're looking for."

INSTALLMENT FOURTEEN

ley, who turns out to be a spy for the big ranchers. The latter bring a lot of Texas ex-peace officers to wipe out the rustlers by actually killing them off. Calhoun protests and persuades the owner of his ranch to sell it in small parcels to small ranchers. Terry and his foreman, Larry, are fired upon by the big owners' invading army and they find cover in a small cabin. There, too, Jeff goes. Wounded, he is dragged into the cabin by Terry.

for you. Only trouble is two other guys were the heroes."

"We had better have him carried upstairs," Ellen said to her father. "He can have the spare room."

Jeff shook his head. "Sorry, but I have to say 'No, thanks,' lady. If I stay here these Texas wolves would be liable to collect the only scalp I have. The boys are going to take me to Round Top in your wagon."

Ellen had Jim bring down a mattress and put it on the porch. The wounded man lay down on it, protesting that there was no sense in babying him. The girl made him a pitcher of cool lemonade and he drank several glasses of it. She waved a good-bye at him as the guarded wagon rolled down the road.

Watching her, Terry thought there was a kind of light, flying grace in the girl's movements.

"Will you tell me all about it—just what happened?" she asked.

Larry described their adventure in detail.

"I expect they hated to let Jeff go," Larry concluded. "The blamed idiot stood in the doorway and told Ellison he was the man who had killed his spy Turley."

Ellen gave a little groan. "Did you say that Jeff . . . killed Turley?" she asked.

"Yes."

The color had washed out of Ellen's face. "I'm responsible for Turley's death," she said in a low monotone. "I . . . told Jeff the man might be Turley, and I said the writing on the note left by the killer looked like his."

"Then you did a service to this district," Terry told her bluntly. "Don't worry about that. The fellow had to be killed."

"Yes, but why did I do it? I might have known what Jeff would do. And I wasn't sure. Maybe—maybe—maybe Turley wasn't the right man."

"They found the money in his cabin. He was the right man," Larry nodded reassurance. "He's better dead. Don't waste any pity on him."

"You're so sure about that, aren't you?" the girl cried in passionate protest. "Only God can make a life, but it's all right to cut one off if you take a fancy to play at being His agent."

Terry explained gently: "When a mad dog is loose it has to be shot to protect people."

"Calhoun is right, Ellen," Carey agreed. "You are not in the least to blame, but you surely would have been if you had concealed any information you had about the identity of the killer." Lane brushed the doubts of his daughter aside as of no weight. "What happened to any number of better men is of importance. I am thinking about the outcome of this raid. I don't see how a pitched battle can be avoided, and if that your view, Calhoun?"

"Yes, and Ellison's men will be defeated in the end. This invasion has been botched from the beginning. The Texans won't escape without heavy loss unless they get out at once."

"Why did Mr. Ellison start so crazy a thing?" Ellen cried. "Isn't there any way to stop it? Can't you do something, Mr. Terry?"

Calhoun shook his head. "How can I, since both sides distrust me and I have influence with neither? I have thought of one thing—to ask the government to send troops from Fort Garfield to stop the war. I have no influence at Washington. Mr. Powers probably has, if I could get word to him. Larry and I are going to town. I'll see Horace Garvey and try to get him to join me in a wire."

"Good. I'll come to town as soon as I can get off. That will be after the dawn stage passes," said Carey.

Larry went with Carey to saddle fresh horses from the Box 55 corral. Terry started with them but was detained by Ellen's voice, smaller in volume than usual.

"Just a minute, please, Mr. Terry."

He waited, his gaze on her.

"I want to 'fess up,' she said at last. "You must think I'm a dreadful little prig, the way I have treated you."

His voice sounded cold, because he was keeping a tight rein on his emotions. "I haven't any complaint, Miss Carey," he began.

"I didn't like you," she admitted. "I thought you were horrid. And I was wrong. In all this dreadful business nobody has been as right as you." The color in her eyes deepened as she looked at him. Her heart was fluttering against her ribs, and she told herself not to be a fool.

"It was splendid, the way you ran out of the cabin to get Jeff. I know you don't like him. But you went just the same."

"I like him as well as he does me," Calhoun said wryly.

The girl was in love with Brand, of course. He had no doubt of that. He nodded good-bye to her stiffly and walked away to join her father and Larry at the corral.

"Back from the war," he told Ellen. "With a sure-enough hero story

guns. If you feel lucky, start smoking. "I don't fight duels with outlaws," Ellison replied curtly.

"No, you hire killers to shoot 'em down from ambush. You go raiding their homes with sixty gunmen at yore back." Brand's voice was heavy with scorn. "When you open the pot you have a pat hand, and you sure play it close to the belly."

Ellison stood stiff and straight. "I don't explain my conduct to thieves," he said shortly.

"Meaning me, Mr. Ellison?" Jeff asked gently, his light, blank eyes very steadily fixed on the No. By Jo manager.

Terry stepped in front of the leader of the regulators, to prevent the rustler from getting a shot at him.

The three defenders moved back into the house and watched. The invaders ran out the white rag again to indicate the battle was over. Men and horses poured out of the barn and from the creek bed into the open.

Cal gave Brand a wet towel with which to bathe his hot face while he unfastened the bandage around the ankle and washed the wound. He tied another handkerchief around the leg.

The rescuers arrived about an hour later, Roan Alford and Bill Herriott at their head. A flour sack was nailed to the back door of the Hart cabin, but Roan spread his men and approached carefully. The cabin might be filled with enemies ready to turn loose a blast of gunfire at them.

Bill Herriott came forward alone, waving a white handkerchief. Terry stepped out of the house to meet him.

"What are you doing here?" Herriott asked curtly. Full explanations followed.

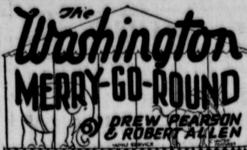
Terry and Richards rode with the party as far as the Box 55. They were not very welcome. The members of the rescue posse made that clear. Wild rumors circulated.

Lane Carey and his daughter came out of the ranch house to get the news. From a little distance Terry watched Ellen's face as the men eased Brand from the saddle so that he would not have to put any weight on his wounded leg. He could see her breath catch and the intent fear in her eyes.

Jeff limped forward, an arm around the shoulder of Roan Alford. "Back from the war," he told Ellen. "With a sure-enough hero story



His guess was that Brand meant to kill him now.



CHANGED CITY

Washington has changed overnight. Washington was a boom town one week; next week it was a war town. The change is partly a matter of visible things, partly things that are felt without being seen . . . Khaki-clad soldiers, with tin hats and bayonets, patrolling two abreast between the White House and the state department . . . Darkness over the Capitol dome, where searchlights are blacked out, for the duration . . . A jam of volunteers for Civilian Defense . . . New flags delivered at Civilian Defense headquarters, two for LaGuardia's car, two for Mrs. Roosevelt's car, six for the motorcycles . . . The residence of German correspondent Kurt Sell is raided at night and Sell is taken into custody by FBI.

Though the department of commerce deals with such innocuous subjects as census figures, its great steel doors are locked, and guards demand credentials at the main entrance . . . Women fliers of America call a hurried meeting to speed up plans for training . . . An extra detail of police strolls on the south grounds of the White House, last trampled by egg-rolling Easter crowds.

In his press conference, the President's voice is so grave and low that a newsman calls out, "Louder, please" . . . Four plainclothesmen, in two cars, sit parked all day on Waterside drive, where the bank rises sharply on the back garden of the Japanese embassy . . . Even Falla, the President's Scotch fella, the change, for the White House guards have less time to play with him, and he curls up disconsolate in his green dog-house, just back of the President's office.

JAPANESE SPIES

Last summer Congressman Martin Dies had investigators make a thorough survey of Japanese activities along the West coast. The results eventually were suppressed by the state department and the President himself, but a brief summary of them indicates that some parts of the United States face a dangerous problem when it comes to fifth column activity.

Hitler had many agents planted through Norway, France and the Low Countries when he attacked, but the Japanese, according to the Dies report, start out with 150,000 of their countrymen in the United States. These are all Japanese second generation Japanese born in the United States. The Dies report shows that 200 key Japanese have been decorated by the emperor during the past two years and that many Japanese are in close cooperation with the homeland through the Central Japanese association which has been directed by consulates in California.

Dies agents have collected photographs of various Japanese truck gardens operated alongside oil tanks and strategic railroads. Also they report 5,000 Japanese residing on terminal islands in Los Angeles harbor, where are located strategic oil tanks, Reeves field and a shipbuilding company. Oil storage tanks blown up in the harbors would endanger all of the Los Angeles area. The most revealing documents seized by Dies' agents are maps, showing all the U. S. strategic points and fortifications, and a naval manual showing the size of all American naval vessels.

The naval manual, published in 1941, is so up to date that it even shows latest models of U. S. mosquito boats together with the Presidential yacht Potomac and the plan of U. S. airplane carriers. The location of guns, engine room, etc., is indicated alongside the photograph of each vessel. It must have taken Japanese agents months or years to collect this data.

KNEW FORMATIONS

Another Japanese map seized by Dies' agents is revealing in the extreme. It shows the layout of the American fleet in a typical battle formation near Hawaii. U. S. naval officers confirm the fact that the map correctly shows past naval maneuvers.

The documents show the details of Pearl Harbor, the Panama canal, San Francisco, Manila, Guam and Vladivostok. They also give the normal cruising radius of the U. S. fleet out of Honolulu, together with the normal location of airplane carriers, cruising battleships, scouts and auxiliary transports. Maps also show the whereabouts of submarine cables, mines, channels, wireless stations, Japanese consulates and air bases all along the West coast.

WAR CHAFF

It was significant that Japanese struck first not at the Philippines, which is armed to the teeth with heavy bombers, but at Hawaii. Hawaii had sent its best war planes on to the Philippines . . . If the navy had read the newspapers it might have been better prepared. Constantine Brown, foreign affairs expert of the Washington Star, predicted war with Japan 10 days in advance and named Sunday, December 7, as the starting date.



YOU might not know it, but the next spring training trip is just around the corner.

The two managers who can afford to sit back and yawn are Joe McCarthy of the New York Yankees and Billy Southworth of the St. Louis Cardinals.

With most of his stars young and active—with people such as DiMaggio, Gordon and Keller around, with his younger pitchers moving up—McCarthy didn't have to hang out his Christmas stocking. It was already packed.

Billy Southworth's main worry will be getting rid of talent, not taking it on. The Cardinal leader has 19 good-looking pitchers and 11 good outfielders waiting for the spring call.

Billy needs more ball players just as Minnesota needs more tackles or guards. But it's different in 14 other camps.

Larry MacPhail and Leo Durocher understand they can't afford to stand pat, even on a pennant winner. Their World Series pitching staff averaged over 33 years.

The Dodgers need another good pitcher, at least one more good infielder and one more hitting outfielder, to defend their place against a Cardinal club that should be better in the next race.

The Reds still have a great pitching staff on hand, with Vander Meer and Riddle due for even better seasons, plus Walters and Derringer and a rookie or two.

This will be Derringer's sixteenth season and at the age of 35—Paul was 35 in October—the big Red can't be expected to be what he used to be. But there are more than one or two Red spots that need improving, which Bill McKechnie understands better than anyone else.

What the American league can do to keep the Yankees from winning the 1942 pennant around mid-August is something more than we can figure out this far ahead. But it will have to be something on the miracle side.

Leading Grid Section

There is an old saying to the effect that "fools rush in—and get away with it—where angels fear to tread."

Certainly after the emotional swirls of this late football season no sane person would attempt to open a new argument, any more than one would attempt to throw gasoline upon a burning building.

But under pressure from so many inquisitive letter writers an attempt will be made to straighten out this debate—i. e., viz., "What was the strangest football section or sector for 1941?"

My answer is the Middle West, for these five reasons—Minnesota, Notre Dame, Michigan, Ohio State and Northwestern.

The East can counter with Fordham, Navy, Pennsylvania, Duquesne, and Penn State or Harvard.

The South can offer Duke, Georgia, Mississippi State, Alabama and Missouri. Tennessee, Vanderbilt, Tulane or Louisiana State.

The Southwest can present Texas, Texas A. and M., Texas Christian, Southern Methodist and Rice.

From the Far West we get Oregon State, Washington State, and then a terrible snarl from Stanford, Oregon, Washington, Santa Clara and others.

Missouri's elegant team doesn't hold a habitat in any of these locations.

Looking over the lists offered above my vote for the present season still goes to the Midwest when it comes to the combination of size, speed, man power, running, blocking, passing and what it takes in general to win tough games.

Another Argument

"We've always been told to keep your eye on the ball in golf," writes one of the harassed. "I notice the duffer tries to do this and ties himself into knots. The pro gives no sign of this. I don't believe anyone can actually see the clubhouse hitting the ball. What's the use of keeping your eye on the ball if you can't see what happens at impact?"

The main idea back of all this advice is to hold the head in a correct position through impact, and not to swing with a moving head.

There was another slogan—"Keep your mind on the ball." There have been many slogans. But the point to remember is this—"The head is the anchor for the swing"—a Jim Barnes tip.

The fault of head-lifting usually comes from some earlier fault, such as too much tension or from swinging too fast. Also, from thinking ahead of the swing in terms of results and not in terms of what causes results.



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(TO BE CONTINUED)