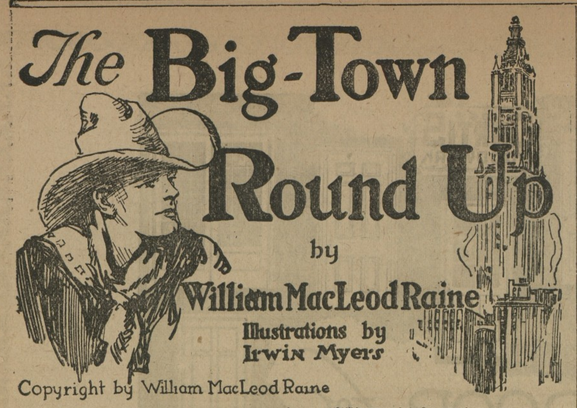
The Big-Town Round Up



by

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SYNOPSIS

FOREWORD.—Motoring through Arizona, a party of easterners, father and daughter and a male companion, stop to witness a cattle round up. The girl leaves the car and is attacked by a wild steer. A masterpiece of riding on the part of one of the cowboys saves her life.

CHAPTER I.—Clay Lindsay, range-rider on an Arizona ranch, announces his intention to visit the "big town," New York.

CHAPTER II.—On the train Lindsay becomes interested in a young woman, Kitty Mason, on her way to New York to become a motion-picture actress. She is marked as fair prey by a fellow traveler, Jerry Durand, gang politician and ex-prize fighter. Perceiving his intention, Lindsay provokes a quarrel and throws Durand from the train.

Before his dull brain had functioned to action an iron grip had him by the back of the neck. He was jerked to his feet and propelled forward to the curb. Every inch of the way the heavy stream from the nozzle broke on his face and neck. It paralyzed his resistance, jarred him so that he could not gather himself to fight. Clay bumped him up against a hitching post, garroted him, and swung the hose around the post in such a way as to encircle the feet of the man.

The cowpuncher drew the hose tight, slipped the nozzle through the iron ring, and caught the flapping arms of the man to his body. With the deft skill of a trained roper Clay swung the rubber pipe round the body of the man again and again, drawing it close to the post and knotting it securely behind. The Swede struggled, but his furious rage availed him nothing. When Clay stepped back to inspect his job he knew he was looking at one that had been done thoroughly.

"I keel you, by d—n, ef you don't turn me loose!" roared the big man in a rage.

The range-rider grinned gayly at him. He was having the time of his young life. He did not even regret his fifty-five-dollar suit.

"Life's just loaded to the hocks with disappointment, Ollie," he explained, and his voice was full of genial sympathy. "I'll bet a dollar Mex you'd sure like to beat me on the head with a two-by-four. But I don't reckon you'll ever get that fond wish gratified. We're not liable to meet up with each other again pronto. Today we're here and tomorrow we're at Yuma, Arizona, say, for life is short and darned fleetin', as the poet fellow says."

He waved a hand jauntily and turned to go. But he changed his mind. His eye had fallen on a young woman standing at a French window of the house opposite. She was beckoning to him imperiously.

The young woman disappeared as he crossed the street, but in a few moments the door opened and she stood there waiting for him. Clay stared. He had never before seen a girl dressed like this. She was in riding boots, breeches and coat. Her eyes dilated while she looked at him.

"Wyoming?" she asked.

"Arizona," he answered.

"All one. Knew it the moment I saw you tie him. Come in." She stood aside to let him pass.

That hall, with its tapestried walls, its polished floors, and oriental rugs, was reminiscent of "the movies" to Clay. Nowhere else had he seen a home so stamped with the mark of ample means.

"Come in," she ordered again, a little sharply.

He came in and she closed the door.

"I'm sopping wet. I'll drip all over the floor."

"What are you going to do? You'll be arrested, you know." She stood straight and slim as a boy, and the frank directness of her gaze had a boy's sexless unconsciousness.

There came to them from outside the tap-tap-tap-tap of a policeman's night stick rattling on the curbstone. "He's calling help."

"I can explain how it happened."

"No. He wouldn't understand. They'd find you guilty."

To a manservant standing in the background the young woman spoke. "Jenkins, have Nora clean up the floor and the steps outside. And remember—I don't want the police to know this gentleman is here."

"Yes, miss."

"Come!" said the girl to her guest.

Clay followed his hostess to the stairs and went up them with her, but he went protesting, though with a chuckle of mirth. "He sure ruined my clothes a heap. I ain't fit to be seen."

The suit he had been so proud of was shrinking so that his arms and legs stuck out like signposts. The color had run and left the goods a peculiar bilious-looking overall blue.

She lit a gas-log in a small library den.

"Just a minute, please."

She stepped briskly from the room. In her manner was a crisp decision, in her poise a trim gallantry that won him instantly.

"I'll bet she'd do to ride with," he told himself in a current western idiom.

When she came back it was to take him to a dressing room. A complete change of clothing was laid out for him on a couch. A man whom Clay recognized as a valet—he had seen his duplicate in the moving-picture theaters at Tucson—was there to supply his needs and attend to the temperature of his bath.

"Stevens will look after you," she said; "when you are ready come back to dad's den."

His eyes followed to the door her resilient step. Once, when he was a boy, he had seen Ada Rehan play in "As You Like It." Her acting had entranced him. This girl carried him back to that hour. She was boyish as Rosalind, woman in every motion of her slim and lissom body.

At the head of the stairway she paused. Jenkins was moving hurriedly up to meet her.

"It's a policeman, miss. 'E's come about the—the person that came in, and 'e's talkin' to Nora on the steps. She's a-jollyin' 'im, as you might say, miss."

His young mistress nodded. She swept the hall with the eye of a general. Swiftly she changed the position of a Turkish rug so as to hide a spot on the polished floor that had been recently scrubbed and was still moist. Then she opened the door and sauntered out.

"Does the officer want something, Nora?" she asked innocently, switching the end of a crop against her riding-boots.

"Yes, miss. There's been a ruffian batin' up Swedes an' tyin' 'em to posts. This officer thinks he came here," explained Nora.

"Does he want to look in the house?"

"Yes, miss."

"Then let him come in." The young mistress took the responsibility on her own shoulders. She led the policeman into the hall. "I don't really see how he could have got in here without some of us seeing him, officer."

"No, ma'am. I don't see how he could." The patrolman scratched his red head. "The janitor's a Swede, anyhow. He jist guessed it. I came to make sure av it. I'll be sorry for troubling yuh, miss."

The smile she gave him was warm and friendly. "Oh, that's all right. If you'd care to look around . . . But there really is no use."

"No." The forehead under the red thatch wrinkled in thought. "He said he seen him come in here or next door, an' he came up the steps. But nobody could have got in without some of youse seein' him. That's a lead pipe." The officer pushed any doubt that remained from his mind. "Only a muddle-headed Swede."

CHAPTER IV

Clay Takes a Transfer.

While Beatrice Whitford waited in the little library for the Arizonan to join her, she sat in a deep chair, chin in hand, eyes fixed on the jetting flames of the gas-log. A little flush had crept into the oval face. In her blood there tingled the stimulus of excitement. For into her life an adventure had come from faraway Cattleland.

A crisp, strong footstep sounded in the hall. Her fingers flew to pat into place the soft golden hair coiled low at the nape of the neck. At times she had a boylike unconcern of sex; again, a spirit wholly feminine.

The clothes of her father fitted Lindsay loosely, for Colin Whitford had begun to take on the flesh of middle age and Clay was lean and clean of build as an elk. But the westerner was one of those to whom clothes are unimportant. The splendid youth of him would have shone through the rags of a beggar.

"My name is Clay Lindsay," he told her by way of introduction.

"Mine is Beatrice Whitford," she answered.

They shook hands.

"I'm to wait here till my clothes dry, yore man says."

"Then you'd better sit down," she suggested.

Within five minutes she knew that he had been in New York less than three hours. His impressions of the city amused and entertained her. He was quite simple. She could look into his mind as though it were a deep, clear well. There was something inextinguishably boyish and buoyant about him. But in his bronzed face and steady, humorous eyes were strength and shrewdness. He was the last man in the world a bunco-steerer could play for a sucker. She felt that. Yet he made no pretenses of a worldly wisdom he did not have.

A voice reached them from the top of the stairs.

"Do you know where Miss Whitford is, Jenkins?"

"Hin the Red room, sir." The answer was in the even, colorless voice of a servant.

The girl rose at once. "If you'll excuse me," she said, and stepped out of the room.

"Hello, Bee. What do you think? I never saw such idiots as the police of this town are. They're watching this house for a desperado who assaulted some one outside. I met a sergeant on our steps. Says he doesn't think the man's here, but there's just a chance he slipped into the basement. It's absurd."

"Of course it is." There was a ripple of mirth in the girl's voice. "He didn't come in by the basement at all, but walked in at the front door."

"The front door!" exploded her father. "What do you mean? Who let him in?"

"I did. He came as my guest, at my invitation."

"What?"

"Don't shout, dad," she advised. "I thought I had brought you up better."

"But—but—but—what do you mean?" he sputtered. "Is this ruffian in the house now?"

"Oh, yes. He's in the Red room here—and unless he's very deaf he hears everything we are saying," the girl answered calmly, much amused at the amazement of her father. "Won't you come in and see him? He doesn't seem very dest[illegible]

Clay arose, pinpoints of laughter dancing in his eyes. He liked the gay audacity of this young woman.

A moment later he was offering a brown hand to Colin Whitford. "Glad to meet you, Mr. Whitford. Yore daughter has just saved my life from the police," the westerner said, and his friendly smile was very much in evidence.

"You make yourself at home," answered the owner of a large per cent of the stock of the famous Bird Cage mine.

"My guests do, dad. It's proof that I'm a perfect hostess," retorted Beatrice, her dainty, provocative face flashing to mirth.

"Hmp!" grunted her father dryly. "I'd like to know, young man, why the police are shadowing this house?"

"I expect they're lookin' for me."

"I expect they are, and I'm not sure I won't help them find you. You'll have to show cause if I don't."

"His bark is much worse than his



"His Bark Is Much Worse Than His Bite," the Girl Exclaimed to Clay.

bite," the girl explained to Clay, just as though her father were not present.

"Hmp!" exploded the mining magnate a second time. "Get busy, young fellow."

Clay told the story of the fifty-five-dollar suit that I. Bernstein had wished on him with near-tears of regret at parting from it. The cowpuncher dramatized the situation with some native talent for mimicry. His arms gestured like the lifted wings of a startled cockerel. "A man gets a chance at a garment like that only once in a while occasionally. Which you can take it from me that when I. Bernstein sells a suit of clothes it is shust like he is dealing with his own brother. Qvality, my friendts, qvality! Why, I got anyhow a suit which I might be married in without shame, un'erstan' me."

Colin Whitford was of the West himself. He had lived its rough-and-tumble life for years before he made his lucky strike in the Bird Cage. He had moved from Colorado to New York only ten years before. The sound of Clay's drawling voice was like a message from home. He began to grin in spite of himself. This man was too good to be true. It wasn't possible that anybody could come to the big town and import into it so naively such a genuine touch of the outdoor West. It was not possible, but it had happened just the same. Long before the cow puncher had finished his story of hog-tying the Swede to a hitching post with his own hose, the mining man was sealed of the large tribe of Clay Lindsay's admirers. He was ready to hide him from all the police in New York.

Whitford told Stevens to bring in the fifty-five-dollar suit so that he could gloat over it. He let out a whoop of delight at sight of its still sodden appearance. He examined its sickly hue with chuckles of mirth.

"Guaranteed not to fade or shrink," murmured Clay sadly.

He managed to get the coat on with difficulty. The sleeves reached just below the elbows.

"You look like a lifer from Sing Sing," pronounced Whitford joyously. "Get a hair-cut, and you won't have a chance on earth to fool the police."

"The color did run and fade some," admitted Clay.

"Worth every cent of nine ninety-eight at a bargain sale before the Swede got busy with it—and he let you have it at a sacrifice for fifty-five dollars!" The millionaire wept happy tears as a climax of his rapture. He swallowed his cigar smoke and had to be pounded on the back by his daughter.

Jenkins came to the door and announced "Mr. Bromfield."

Almost on his heels a young man in immaculate riding clothes sauntered into the room. He had the assured ease of one who has the run of the house. Miss Whitford introduced the two young men and Bromfield looked the westerner over with a suave insolence in his dark, handsome eyes.

Clay recognized him immediately. He had shaken hands once before with this well-satisfied young man, and on that occasion a fifty-dollar bill had passed from one to the other. The New Yorker evidently did not know him.

It became apparent at once that Bromfield had called to go riding in the park with Miss Whitford. That young woman came up to say good-by to her new acquaintance.

"Will you be here when I get back?"

"Not if our friends outside give me a chance for a getaway," he told her.

Her bright, unflinching eyes looked into his. "You'll come again and let us know how you escaped," she invited.

"I'll ce'tainly do that, Miss Whitford."

"Then we'll look for you Thursday afternoon, say."

"I'll be here."

"If the police don't get you."

"They won't," he promised serenely.

"When you're ready, Bee," suggested Bromfield in a bored voice.

She nodded casually and walked out of the room like a young Diana straight as a dart in her trim slenderness.

Clay slipped out of the house by the back way.

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From the top of a bus Clay Lindsay looked down a canyon which angled across the great city like a river of light. He had come from one land of gorges to another. In the walls of this one, thousands and tens of thousands of cliff-dwellers hid themselves during the day like animals of some queer breed and poured out into the canyon at sunset.

Now the river in its bed was alive with a throbbing tide. Cross-currents of humanity flowed into it from side streets and ebbed out of it into others. Streams of people were swept down, caught here and there in swirling eddies. Taxis, private motors, and trolley cars struggled in the raceway.

All this Clay saw in a flash while his bus crossed Broadway on its way to the Avenue. His eyes had become accustomed to this brilliance in the weeks that had passed since his descent upon New York, but familiarity had not yet dulled the wonder of it.

He had become a fast friend of Miss Whitford. Together they had tramped through Central park and motored up the Hudson in one of her father's cars. They had explored each other's minds along with the country and each had known the surprise and delight of discoveries, of finding in the other a quality of freshness and candor.

The bus jerked down Fifth avenue like a boat in heavy seas, pausing here and there at the curb to take on a passenger. While it was getting under way after one such stop, another downtown bus rolled past.

Clay came to a sudden alert attention. His eyes focused on a girl sitting on a back seat. In the pretty childish face he read a wistful helplessness, a pathetic hint of misery that called for sympathy.

Arizona takes short cuts to its ends. Clay rose instantly, put his foot on the railing, and leaped across to the top of the bus rolling parallel with the one he was on. In another second he had dropped into the seat beside the girl.

"Glad to meet you again, Miss Kitty," he said cheerfully. "How the big town been using you?"

The girl looked at him with a little gasp of surprise. "Mr. Lindsay!" Sudden tears filmed her eyes. She forgot that she had left him with the promise never again to speak to him. She was in a far country, and he was a friend from home.

The conductor bustled down the aisle. "Say, where do you get this movie-stuff? You can't jump from the top of one bus to another. That ain't the system of transfers we use in this town. You might 'a' got killed."

"Oh, well, let's not worry about that now."

"I'd ought to have you pulled. Three years I've been on this run and—"

"Nice run. Wages good?"

"Don't get gay, young fellow. I can tell you one thing. You've got to pay another fare."

Clay paid it.

The conductor retired to his post.

"What about that movie job? Is it pannin' out pay gold?" Lindsay asked Kitty.

Bit by bit her story came out. It was a common enough one. She had been flim-flammed out of her money by the alleged school of moving-picture actors, and the sharpers had decamped with it.

As she looked at her recovered friend, Kitty gradually realized an outward transformation in his appearance. He was dressed quietly in clothes of perfect fit made for him by Colin Whitford's tailor. From shoes to hat he was a New Yorker got up regardless of expense. But the warm smile, the strong, tanned face, the grip of the big brown hand that buried her small one—all these were from her own West. So too had been the nonchalance with which he had stepped from the rail of one moving bus to that of the other, just as though this were his usual method of transfer.

"I've got a job at last," she explained to him. "I'm working downtown in Greenwich Village, selling cigarettes. I'm Sylvia the Cigarette Girl. At least that's what they call me. I carry a tray of them evenings into the cafe."

"Greenwich Village?" asked Clay.

Kitty was not able to explain that the Village is a state of mind which is the habitat of long-haired men and



"Say, Where Do You Get This Movie Stunt Stuff?"

short-haired women, the brains of whom functioned in a way totally alien to all her methods of thought. "Can't you come down tonight to The Purple Pup or The Sea Siren and see for yourself?" she proposed, and gave him directions for finding the classic resorts.

"I'm dressed silly—in bare feet and sandals and what they call a smock. You won't mind that, will you?"

"You'll look good to me, no matter what you wear, little Miss Colorado," he told her with his warm, big brother's smile.

"You're good," the girl said simply. "I knew that on the train even when I—when I was mean to you." There came into her voice a small tremor of apprehension. "I'm afraid of this town. It's so—so kinda cruel. I've got no friends here."

He offered instant reassurance with a strong grip of his brown hand. "You've got one, little pardner. I'll promise that one big husky will be on the job when you need him. Don't you worry."

She gave him her shy eyes gratefully. There was a mist of tears in them.

"You're good," she said again naively.

CHAPTER V

Arizona Follows Its Lawless Impulse.

The Sea Siren was already beginning to fill up when Clay descended three steps to a cellar and was warily admitted. A near-Hawaiian orchestra was strumming out a dance tune and a few couples were on the floor. Waitresses, got up as Loreleis, were moving about among the guests delivering orders for refreshments.

The westerner sat down in a corner and looked about him. The walls were decorated with crude purple crayons of underfed sirens. A statue of a nude woman distressed Clay. He did not mind the missing clothes, bue she was so dreadfully emaciated that he thought it wise for her to cling to the yellow-and-red draped barber pole that rose from the pedestal. On the base was the legend, "The Weeping Lady." After he had tasted the Sea Siren fare the man from Arizona suspected that both her grief and her anaemia arose from the fact tnat she had been fed on it.

A man in artist's velveteens, minus a haircut, with a large, fat, pasty face, sat at an adjoining table and discoursed to his friends. Presently, during an intermission of the music, he rose and took the rest of those present into his confidence.

"Bourgeois to the core," he announced, speaking of the United States. "What are the idols we worship? Law, the chain which binds an enslaved people, thrift, born of childish fear; love of country, which is another name for crass provincialism. I—I am a Cosmopolite, not an American. Bohemia is my land, and all free souls are my brothers. Why should I get wrinkles because Germany sunk the Lusitania a month or two ago? That's her business, not mine."

Clay leaned forward on a search for information. "Excuse me for buttin' in, and me a stranger. But isn't it yore business when she murders American women and children?"

The pasty-faced man looked at him with thinly disguised contempt. "You wouldn't understand if I explained."

"Mebbeso I wouldn't, but you take a whirl at it and I'll listen high, wide, and handsome."

The man in velveteens unexpectedly found himself doing as he was told. There was a suggestion of compulsion about the gray-blue eyes fastened on his, something in the clamp of the strong jaw that brought him up for a moment against stark reality.

"The intelligentsia of a country know that there can be no freedom until there is no law. Every man's duty is to disregard duty. So, by faring far on the wings of desire, he helps break down the slavery that binds us. Obey the Cosmic Urge of your soul regardless of where it leads you, young man."

It was unfortunate for the poet of Bohemia that at this precise moment Kitty Mason, dressed in sandals and a lilac-patterned smock, stood before him with a tray of cigarettes asking for his trade. The naive appeal in her soft eyes had its weight with the poet. What is the use of living in Bohemia if one cannot be free to follow impulse? He slipped an arm about the girl and kissed the crimson lips upturned to him.

Kitty started back with a little cry of distress.

The freedom taken by the near-poet was instantly avenged.

A Cosmic Urge beat in the veins of the savage from Arizona. He took the poet's advice and followed his Lawless Impulse where it led. Across the table a long arm reached. Sinewy fingers closed upon the flowing neckwear of the fat-faced orator and dragged him forward, leaving overturned glasses in the wake of his course.

The man in velveteens met the eyes of the energetic manhandler and quailed. This brown-faced barbarian looked very much like business.

"Don't you touch me! Don't you dare touch me!" the apostle of anarchy shrilled as the table crashed down. "I'll turn you over to the police!"

Clay jerked him to his feet. Hard knuckles pressed cruelly into the soft throat of the Villager. "Git down on yore ham bones and beg the lady's pardon. Tell her you're a yellow pup, but you don't reckon you'll ever pull a bone like that again."

The companions of the poet rushed forward to protest at the manhandling of their leader. Those in the rear jammed the front ones close to Clay and his captive. The cow puncher gently but strongly pushed them back.

"Don't get on the prod," he advised in his genial drawl. "The poet he's got an important engagement right now."

A kind of scuffle developed. The proprietor increased it by his hysterical efforts to prevent any trouble. Men joined themselves to the noisy group of which Clay was the smiling center. The excitement increased. Distant corners of the room became the refuge of the women. Some one struck at the cow puncher over the heads of those about him. The mass of closely packed human beings showed a convulsive activity. It became suddenly the most popular indoor sport at the Sea Siren to slay this barbarian from the desert who had interfered with the amusements of Bohemia.

But Clay took a lot of slaying. In the rough-and-tumble life of the outdoor West he had learned how to look out for his own hand. The copper hair of his strong lean head rose above the tangle of the melee like the bromidic Helmet of Navarre. A reckless light of mirth bubbled in his dare-devil eyes. The very number of the opponents who interfered with each other trying to get at him was a guarantee of safety. The blows showered at him lacked steam and were badly timed as to distance.

The pack rolled across the room, tipped over a table, and deluged an artist and his affinity with hot chocolate before they could escape from the avalanche. Chairs went over like ninepins. Stands collapsed. Men grunted and shouted advice. Girls screamed. The Sea Siren was being wrecked by a cyclone from the bad lands.

Arms threshed wildly to and fro. The local point of their destination was the figure at the center of the disturbance. Most of the blows found other marks. Four or five men could have demolished Clay. Fifteen or twenty found it a tough job because they interfered with each other at every turn. They were packed too close for hard hitting. Clay was not fighting but wrestling. He used his arms to push with rather than to strike blows that counted.

The Arizonan could not afterward remember at exactly what stage of the proceedings the face of Jerry Durand impinged itself on his consciousness. Once, when the swirl of the crowd flung him close to the door, he caught a glimpse of it, tight-lipped and wolf-eyed, turned to him with relentless malice. The gang leader was taking no part in the fight.

The crowd parted. Out of the pack a pair of strong arms and lean broad shoulders plowed a way for a somewhat damaged face that still carried a debonair smile. With pantherish litheness the Arizonan ducked a swinging blow. A moment, and ne was outside taking the three steps that led to the street.

Into his laboring lungs he drew deliciously the soft breath of the night. It cooled the fever of his hammered face, was like an icy bath to his hot body. A little dizzy from the blows that had been rained on him, he stood for a moment uncertain which way to go.

Then again he became aware of Durand. The man was not alone. He had with him a hulking ruffian whose heavy, hunched shoulders told of strength. There was a hint of the gorilla in the way the long arms hung straight from the shoulders as he leaned forward. Both of the men were watching the cow puncher as steadily as alley cats do a house finch.

"H—l's going to pop in about three seconds," announced Clay to himself.

Silently, without lifting their eyes from their victim for an instant, the two men moved apart to take him on both sides. He clung to the wall, forcing a frontal attack. The laughter had gone out of his eyes now. They had hardened to pinpoints. This time it was no amateur horseplay. He was fighting for his life. No need to tell Clay Lindsay that the New York gangster meant to leave him as good as dead.

The men rushed him. He fought back with clean, hard blows. Jerry bored in like a wild bull. Clay caught him off his balance, using a short arm jolt which had back of it all that twenty-three years of clean outdoors Arizona could give. The gangster hit the pavement hard.

He got up furious and charged again. The Arizonan, busy with the other man, tried to sidestep. An uppercut



The Men Rushed Him. He Fought Back With Clean, Hard Blows.

jarred him to the heel. In that instant of time before his knees began to sag beneath him his brain flashed the news that Durand had struck him on the chin with brass knuckles. He crumpled up and went down, still alive to what was going on, but unable to move in his own defense. Weakly he tried to protect his face and sides from the kicks of a heavy boot. Then he floated balloon-like in space and vanished into unconsciousness.

* * * * *

Clay drifted back to a world in which the machinery of his body creaked. He turned his head, and a racking pain shot down his neck. He moved a leg, and every muscle in it ached. From head to foot he was sore.

Voices somewhere in space, detached from any personal ownership, floated vaguely to him. Presently these resolved themselves into words and sentences.

"We're not to make a pinch, Tim. That's the word he gave me before he left. This is wan av Jerry's private little wars and he don't want a judge askin' a lot of unnicessary questions, y' understand."

"Mother av Moses, if this he-man from H—l's Hinges hadn't the luck av the Irish, there'd be questions a-plenty asked. He'd be ready for the morgue this blissed minute. Jerry's a murderin' divvle. When I breeze in I find him croakin' this lad proper and he acts like a crazy man when I stand him and Gorilla Dave off till yuh come a-runnin'. At that they may have given the bye more than he can carry. Maybe it'll be roses and a nice black carriage for him yet."

Clay opened his eyes, flexed his arm muscles, and groaned. He caressed tenderly his aching ribs.

"Some wreck," he gasped weakly. "They didn't do a thing to me—outside of beatin' me up—and stompin' on me—and runnin' a steam roller—over the dear departed."

"Whose fault will that be? Don't yuh know better than to start a fight with a rigiment?" demanded the sergeant of police severely.

"That wasn't a fight. It was a waltz." The faint, unconquered smile of brown Arizona broke through the blood and bruises of the face. "The fight began when Jerry Durand and his friend rushed me—and it ended when Jerry landed on me with brass knucks. After that I was a football." The words came in gasps. Every breath was drawn in pain.

"We'd ought to pinch yuh," the sergeant said by way of reprimand. "Think yuh can come to New York and pull your small-town stuff on us? We'll show youse. If yuh wasn't alfalfa green I'd give yuh a ride." The officer dropped his grumbling complaint to a whisper. "Whisht, bye. Take a straight tip from a man that knows. Beat it out of town. Get where the long arm of—of a friend of ours—can't reach yuh. He's a revingeful inemy if ever there was wan."

"You mean that Durand—"

"I'm not namin' names," the officer interrupted doggedly. "I'm tellin' yuh somethin' for your good. Take it or leave it."

"Thanks, I'll leave it. This is a free country, and no man livin' can drive me away," answered Clay promptly. "Ouch, I'm sore. Give me a lift, sergeant."

They helped the cow puncher to his feet. He took a limping step or two. Every move was torture to his outraged flesh.

"Can you get me a taxi? That is, if you're sure you don't want me in yore calaboose," the range-rider said, leaning against the wall.

"We'll let yuh go this time."

"Much obliged—to Mr. Jerry Durand. Tell him for me that maybe I'll meet up with him again some time—and hand him my thanks personal for this first-class wallopin'." From the bruised, bleeding face there beamed again the smile indomitable, the grin still gay and winning. Physically he had been badly beaten, but in spirit he was still the man on horseback.

Presently he eased himself into a taxi as comfortably as he could. "Home, James," he said jauntily.

"Where?" asked the driver.

"The nearest hospital," explained Clay. "I'm goin' to let the doctors worry over me for a while. Much obliged to both of you gentlemen. I always did like the Irish. Friend Jerry is an exception."

The officers watched the cab disappear. The sergeant spoke the comment that was in the mind of them both.

"He's the best single-barreled sport that iver I met in this man's town. Not a whimper out of the guy and him mauled to a pulp. Game as they come. Did youse see that spark o' the divvle in his eye, and him not fit to crawl into the cab? S'long, Tim. No report on this rough-house, mind yuh."

"Sure, Mike."

To Be Continued

CASTORIA

For Infants and Children

In Use For Over 30 Years

Always bears the Signature of Chas. H. Fletcher.

STAM'S DRUG STORE

THE PRESCRIPTION STORE.

We have on hand a fresh supply of

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Landreth Seed Co. have been in business 138 years.

Buy Landreth's Seeds and have a successful garden.

THE STAM DRUG CO

TWO VALUABLE DWELLINGS IN STILL POND AT PRIVATE SALE.

The dwelling which Mrs. Margaret G. Harris occupied at the time of her death will be sold at private sale. The price of same is $4000.

The other dwelling adjoining the lands of Mrs. Elizabeth Jervis and occupied by Mr. Moore will be sold for $1600.

Terms will be made liberal. The houses can be inspected by any one interested in them applying to any of the heirs near Still Pond, or to

HOPE H. BARROLL, Trustee,
Chestertown, Maryland.
a15-m

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned has obtained from the Orphans Court for Kent County letters of administration on the personal estate of

JAMES W. POORE,

late of said county, deceased. All persons having claims against said deceased's estate are hereby warned to exhibit the same, with the proper vouchers thereof, to the undersigned on or before the first day of January, 1923, otherwise they may by law be excluded from all benefit of said deceased's personal estate.

All persons indebted to this estate must settle at once.

Given under my hand this 27th day of June, 1922.

WM. T. JONES,
Administrator.
july 1-4t.

FARM FOR SALE

Fine farm of 212 acres on state road 2 1-2 miles from town and boat. New outbuildings, about 10 tons of hay and all corn crops goes with farm. Possession time of sale. Very cheap and on very best terms.

CHARLES E. HADAWAY,
Rock Hall, Md.
a27-tf.

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