

And its flavour is the finest in the world.

"SALADA"

TEA
Fresh from the gardens'



BY HARRY SINCLAIR DRAGO AND JOSEPH NOEL
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BEGIN HERE TODAY!

Dick Acklin, big boss of the Double A ranch, plots with Buck Bodine, now owner of the old Webster place, to rob the Basques of Paradise Valley of their water supply. Jose Avera, head of the Rancho Buena Vista, is the water master. Esteban, Esteban and Little Esteban, sons of the Double A's Basque stable boy, are the Double A's due protectors. In the meantime, Buck has plotted much more than just a simple plan.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY.

My rights have nothing to do with water rights in the valley," said Acklin. "Buck tried to drop this statement like a bombshell. He gazed about the room to catch its effect.

John Acklin is held judicially. "Again I say, the law will decide. Acklin builds a fence on his own property to keep out the Basques. If we destroy it, or trespass on his land, and resort to our guns, then we are outside the law. We want to go into court with clean hands."

"My bet," a researcher claimed, "in this week will find out where Mr. Acklin is."

We all know Tom Brand, he's been on the square with us every time I'll run down and see him."

The little man stopped short.

He was single out before me.

"Now, suppose you beat it out of here big fellow. The going may be rough if you wait until this meeting breaks up."

"Don't come back either," some one told him.

Esteban's eyebrows flattened out.

"I'll go," he muttered. "But not because any one here looks bad to me. I came to talk peace, but all I've heard is a lot of mouthin' about the law."

He had reached the end of the veranda and was about to open the gate when he almost stumbled over Basilio.

Mercedes held him by the arm. When she had held him, the world was his; when he had been held by her, the world was hers. She had been held by the world, but now she was held by him.

In a second she was up with him, and took the little fellow into her arms.

Basilio crossed his arms and Mercedes started him into the path, but she stood her ground and fought him to a standstill at her chest.

Esteban's cruel mouth had its diabolical grin as he sat upon his saddle. Mercedes held him by the horse on its hind legs and pushed him down, caught the surprised rider around the waist and lifted her to sit behind him. She bit and scratched him, but he was too strong for her. Bentling his head, he kissed her passionately on her unpeeled lips. Her fingers nail-tripped his face as he put her down.

CHAPTER XII.

THE LAST TRAIL.

Esteban's ignominious retreat smarted him to the heart. He rode and fumed for a long time before he found the courage to face Romero and the caustic Salvator.

While he had been outside venting his wrath on the desert night, they made plans of their own. Romero had passed the word to those apparently dissatisfied with the way Esteban was going to be at their place at midnight. They did not mention Esteban's name, but the rest of the outfit had immediately solved so good.

He had brought his team to his room, and when he had opened his window he quickly closed the rope over a two-post and stood noiselessly to the ground.

It took him some time to reach Fermi's house.

"We have our point with us," Mercedes was saying as Esteban arrived. "We'll get to town. Come as fast as we can."

The wire. We'll get to town as fast as we can. Come as fast as we can."

They had all been there with some men who were short of that table. A short while later, the men who were short of that table.

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