

The Free Press Short Story

A GOOD INDIAN

By FAYE N. MEHRIMAN

GRANT STONE came into the room impatiently. "It's just as I thought," he said. "You will have to get rid of that fellow. He's a bad Indian."

"Who—Joe?" cried Luther, the younger brother, in surprise. "What are you talking about? What's the matter with Joe?"

"Take a look at him and you'll see. You had better discharge him as soon as he is in condition to know what you are talking about."

For a moment Luther sat as if stunned. Joe was a half-breed in whom he was interested to the extent of permitting his older brother to give him a place on the ranch. On the reservation, Joe had been the ring-leader of a group that rebelled against certain unpleasant conditions. The notorious result, while serving to produce a reform, had given him an unenviable reputation. Luther sympathized with the Indian boy, and stood up for his copper-skinned friend so staunchly that some persons laughingly referred to Joe as "Luther Stone's Indian."

"Where's Joe?" he asked Tim, the Irish farm hand as he came out of the door of the ranch house.

"Tim averted his gaze. 'You'll find him in the cabin by the creek,' he replied. 'I put him to bed there. You don't need to go in; he'll be all right.'"

The boy, however, strode rapidly toward the cabin. When he pushed open the door, a strong and unpleasant odor greeted his nostrils. He crossed over to the bunk and stood looking down at the Indian lad sorrowfully. "Joe—intoxicated! I can't believe it. He knows that he's been trying to do away with the whiskey runners, and he admits that the stuff is bad for his people; and then he returns to the ranch in this condition."

Joe's outer clothing had been removed and hung upon a chair by the window. Luther absentmindedly picked it up. Evidently a quantity of liquor had been spilled upon it, for it was wet and sodden. With the intention of taking it out and rinsing it in the creek, he walked outside with it. As he reached the open air, he thought he heard the other call his name. So throwing the clothes down on the grass, he returned to the room. The man in the bunk was tossing and muttering something.

"Wonder what he is saying?" Luther bent over the Indian lad. When he straightened, there was a strange expression upon his face. Again, as if uncertain, he bent low and held his nose to Indian Joe's lips. "Punny!" he exclaimed.

After the garments were rinsed in the creek, the boy opened them upon the fence to dry in the sun, and perched upon a rail beside them, his eyes thoughtfully sweeping the ridge of low hills to the west. Tim came down and spoke to him, went inside the cabin, and came out again.

Luther returned to the house, called up Doctor Kacyne on the telephone, and then, acting upon sudden impulse, returned to the creek cabin. Here he shook out the almost dry garments and put them on.

"If Grant comes home this evening, and I am not here," he told Tim, "tell him I have gone over toward Marble Dome. Remember."

It was nearly dusk when the boy came out into the timber surrounding Marble Dome. He walked in a peculiar manner which would have attracted attention had there been anyone to attract—and Luther was pretty sure that there was. He had been reconnoitering for more than an hour, and had caught a glimpse of two figures—moving through the trees. A stone slipped from underneath his stumbling feet, and went skimming noisily down the path.

"Say—" came a voice in a relieved, laughing tone. "It's just the Indian again. Didn't expect to see him out this quick. Hello, Joe."

Luther shrank back into the shadows, his heart beating with mingled fright and triumph. He muttered unintelligibly.

"Guess he hasn't quite recovered yet," one of the voices sneered. "Let him alone—he's harmless. If he had any sense, he wouldn't come back fooling around here again. Go home, Joe."

Luther stepped back a little, and then apparently collapsed upon the ground. One of the two came over, kicked at him none too gently, and then as if satisfied, returned to his companion.

"He's dead to the world," he said. "I thought that pretty little medicine we gave him would finish him. Likely as not they kicked him out of the T-bar Ranch just as we figured. Leave him until he comes to, and we will be able to use him as we planned."

Luther felt his figure stiffen, and only with difficulty could he relax again. His nose had worked; the men in the half-darkness, deceived by Joe's queer, flapping coat and wide-brimmed hat, took him for the Indian. The poor old fellow had not been drinking. The villainous plotters had given him a dose of something to make him unconscious, and then poured the whiskey on to his clothes. They wanted to get hold of him and force him to help in their plot of selling liquor to the Indians on the reservation.

"If it hadn't been for that Stone kid, we might have done things with him before," muttered one of the men. "The Indian set a store by him, and wouldn't

go against anything he said. We had to hold him to get him to swallow that stuff, and I reckon he spilled a good bit of it before he got away. But he had enough so that it worked. The Indians have no use for a drunken Indian, and have sent him packing."

Luther gave a sudden start as an idea occurred to him. He had forgotten his brother's intense disapproval of Joe. Suppose Grant should come home and send the Indian boy away. Joe was proud and sensitive. He would go far and probably never return. He had talked at times of going to Mexico. Grant was quick tempered, and given to hasty judgments. He would not be likely to listen to or accept the Indian boy's tale unless Luther were there to confirm it. If he did not show up, Joe would naturally think that his own friend had turned against him.

For a moment Luther lay there undecided. He felt that he was about to discover the secret of the men's business, and that during a few more moments of unguarded conversation they would give more information that he could ultimately use against them. He particularly wanted to find out the place in which they made and stored their supply of poison. He commenced rolling over and over along the path. For a while his surfeitful departure passed unnoted. Then suddenly one of the men shouted. A moment later the boy felt his shoulder jerked, a movement that uncovered his face.

"It's young Stone himself!" cried out the man who held him. "What are you doing here?"

Luther lay motionless, saying nothing. "You dirty spy!" cried the other fellow, shaking him. "What do you mean—trying to pass yourself off as the Indian? How much have you heard?"

The one addressed looked at the man calmly. "I've heard enough to prevent you from framing Joe anyway," he said contemptuously. "Never mind what else."

"Well, since you know so much, you come along with us."

Luther resisted vigorously, but without avail. As the two bore him along, they talked and chuckled.

"Tecken we'll just show him around the joint," the taller of the two said. "Can't tell how long he was creeping around like a snake in the grass straining his ears."

They pulled the boy up an incline which he saw to be the sloping side of the rocky knoll known as Marble Dome. Near the top was a large, spherical rock nearly as tall as a man. This the two rolled away.

"Go down the ladder," one of them commanded. The man immediately descended again proving futile. Luther reluctantly complied. There was a fire in the huge cavern into which he found himself descending, and the unpleasant odor of bubbling mud. A third man came forward, shouting.

"Picked up a helper just like you thought we would," the man immediately above Luther called out. "Course we will have to keep him a little confined, but that won't affect his health anyway. You said you needed another hand here, didn't you?"

The newcomer stared around him. Marble Dome hollow! No one had ever suspected anything like this going on here. His train of thought was interrupted by a poke in the back.

"Get over there and throw some cones and pine branches on that fire," his captor coolly demanded.

"You think I am going to help you make that stuff?"

"Sure you are. We'll keep you here for a few days, and by that time you will be as glibly as we are, and can't put in a complaint. Young Stone, whose uncle is a preacher, turns bootlegger and distiller. Hat tip!"

"I'll not do it. You can't make me."

"We'll see about that." The three men consulted together, pointing to the rope ladder and talking in low tones. Finally the man who had been in charge of the still walked to one side of the rocky cavern, taking his coat and hat from a crock.

"We got plenty of outside work to do," he said. "We'll make our friend here general manager of the cave. Get to work, you, and don't let the fire go out. You can't get away, and we've got the upper hand. Go long."

Luther silently watched his companions drag up the rope ladder. To protest would do no good at all. "Why was I such a boob as to come up this way alone?" he pondered. "I might have known better. But having got myself into this mess, I may as well see what I can do to get out of it."

A pile of cones and resinous branches was heaped at one side of the room and beside the pile lay an axe. Luther picked it up, swept some of the fire out from beneath the still, and heaped on enough wood so that he could see the interior of the cavern plainly. There were two stumps, a rough bench covered with rattan-encased detritus, and in the opposite corner, at least fifty sacks of corn. With an exclamation of anger, the boy examined this. "That's some of our own from the lower barn. I know those patches—we ran out of twine and had to use that red cord. They have been stealing our corn to make the whiskey, and now they think they will make me help them. Well, they won't!"

Swinging the axe high, he brought it

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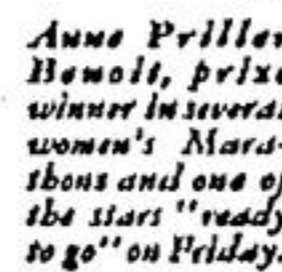
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down first upon the array of bottles, and then upon all the equipment in the room. All of the inflammable substances he piled in a heap in the centre of the rocky floor just beneath the cavern opening. Grimly, but with thorough enjoyment he worked.

Not until all the damage possible had been completed did Luther even consider his own plight. No one had ever heard of this place. There would be a search for him, but he would never be found, of course.

The boy attempted to climb up the wreckage that was heaped in the centre of the room, but it extended only half way to the ceiling, and he knew that even could he touch the rock above, he could not dislodge the stone which covered the entrance way. He commenced a search for another way of escape.

Upon the darkest side of the room he found a wall built in with plastered stones. It was carefully made, but its purpose a puzzle to Luther. What lay behind it? Determined to find out, he raised the axe and applied the blunt end to the wall. Presently a whole section of the rock and mortar fell out, and the boy leaped back with a cry. Through the opening a stream of water as large as a wash tub was pouring.

For a moment while the water whirled darkly and ominously out upon the floor, Luther stared in blank dismay. The room would soon fill and he would be drowned. Already the fire was sputtering and darkening, and only a tiny crescent of light appeared above. He felt the water rise to his ankles, to his knees, and presently to his waist. The stream poured through the opening he had made in an unending flow. "I guess I am done for," he thought, more calmly than he would have believed possible under the circumstances.

He was floating on his back, scarcely a foot from the ceiling when the stone was thrust aside above his head, and he heard the welcome tones of Joe crying out in mingled hope and fear. Luther paddled to the opening, and was drawn up, chilled and dripping. The Indian solemnly set him on his feet, grinning.

"Why, how did you happen to come?" asked Luther in a shaking voice.

"I find man stealing corn and follow him. Two other fellows come and catch him, and make me drink something," he made a way for himself. "But first I found they took corn into Marble Dome and I nabbed booze. I know where they make whiskey, to poison weak Indians—and white men. When they let me go, I come home to tell you, but sick."

"Yes, I know," Luther shivered. "I heard Tim tell your brother that you go Marble Dome and take my clothes. I think funny and follow. Pretty soon three men pass me, talking lots and laughing. I follow them down to boat, but you no there, so come back and climb Marble Dome—and roll the stone away. Grant say I bad Indian and have to go away."

"He'll say you are a good Indian when he hears about this. Let's get to the phone as quickly as we can. We may have a surprise waiting for those fellows."

The bootleggers, when they returned, evidently were frightened by the water-filled cavity, for they fled, leaving half of their hidden store at the shore unloaded. They were never heard of in that part of the country again. Grant, when he heard the story of his brother's adventure and escape, did agree that Joe was indeed a good Indian, and became as fond of the lad as Luther himself.

Good-bye Asthma. Persons suffering from that extremely trying trouble known as asthma know what it is to long with all their hearts for escape as from a tyrant. Never do they know when an attack may come and they know that to struggle unaided is vain. With Dr. J. D. Kellogg's Asthma Remedy at hand, however, they can say good-bye to their enemy and enjoy life again. It helps at once.

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Acton Fall Fair September 15-16, 1931 Special Prize List

- HOISE SPECIALS 1 Best High Stepping Horse in harness, 1st, by H. A. Cox, cash, \$5.00; 2nd, by Geo. Edwards, cash, \$3.00 \$ 7 00 2 Best Single Harness, 1st, by Alex. McEwan, cash, \$4.00; 2nd, by W. D. Talbot, cash, \$2.00 6 00 3 Best Light Express Horse in harness, 1st, by B. D. Hachlin & Co., cash, \$5.00; 2nd, by J. H. Lashman, cash, \$2.00 7 00 4 Best Lady Driver, 1st, by J. Stewart, cleaner and dyer, Guelph, cleaning, value \$5.00; 2nd, by O. Hansen, cash, \$2.00 7 00 5 Best Pair of Haddle Horses, to be ridden by a lady and gentleman, 1st, by W. J. Patterson, cash, \$5.00; 2nd, by E. H. Vincent, cash, \$3.00 7 00 6 Best Coll, one or two years old, bred by a thoroughbred horse, suitable for a hunter, by Robert Stewart, Limited, Guelph, cash, 1st, \$5.00; 2nd, \$3.00; 3rd, \$2.00 10 00 7 Best High Jumping Horse, three out of five tests, by the Bank of Montreal, Acton, cash, 1st, \$5.00; 2nd, \$3.00; 3rd, \$2.00 10 00 8 Best Agricultural Bred Mare, 1st, by Geo. Cowie, whittretress, value \$4.00. This special to apply to Class 2, Section 1 4 00 9 Best Draught, Agricultural or General Purpose Animal on the grounds, Championship Judge. 10 Best Agricultural Team, 1st, by Eastern Steel Products Ltd., Preston, Joseph and Tank, 2 Ford by 22 inches by 4 feet, listed at \$10.85. This special to take the place of 1st prize, Class 4, Section 3 10 85 10 Best Groomed Coll, 3 years or under, by A. H. Kentner, cash 2 00 11 Best and Fastest Road Horse, speed 60 per cent.; conformation and soundness, 40 per cent.; to be driven once around the track to a four-wheeled vehicle, without boots or hobbits, to give three exhibitions of speed, 1st, by Bank of Nova Scotia, Acton, cash, \$10.00; 2nd, by J. M. McDonald, cash, \$5.00; 3rd, by W. M. Cooper, cash, \$3.00 18 00 CATTLE SPECIALS 12 Best Herd of Eshorthorn Cattle, 1 bull and 4 females, 1st by Gibson Manufacturing Co., Guelph, 6 show shares, value \$6.00. This special to apply to Class 8, Section 8, first prize 6 00 13 Best Baby Heef, by D. D. Waddie, President, cash, 1st, \$3.00; 2nd, \$2.00 6 00 14 Best Herd of Jersey Cattle, 1 bull and 4 females, 1st by Ontario Bakery, Guelph, bread tickets, value \$4.00; 2nd by J. Mellor, cash \$2.00 6 00 15 Best Dairy Cow, any breed, 1st by Chas. McKeown, cash \$3.00; 2nd by L. Starkman, cash, \$2.00 5 00 SHEEP, HOG AND POULTRY SPECIALS 16 Best Pair of Fine Woolled Ewe Lambs, exhibited by a boy or girl under 14 years, by Fred Smith, Hockwood, 20 pounds honey, to be received at Edwards Bakery, value 3 00 17 Best Three Marketable Wether Lambs, 1st by R. J. Kerr, cash, \$3.00; 2nd, by Acton Branch U. F. C., cash, \$2.00 5 00 18 Best Boar and Sow, most suitable to produce bacon type, 1st by F. H. Black, by Woodhill, Guelph, value \$5.00; 2nd, by Chas. Thatcher, Hockwood, cash, \$3.00 7 00 19 Best Pair of Bacon Hogs, weight from 100 to 250 pounds, 1st by F. H. Black, by Woodhill, Guelph, cash, \$5.00; 2nd, by W. G. Murray, cash, \$3.00 8 00 20 Best Pen of 12 bred-to-lay Pullets, B. O. W. Leghorn or D. P. Rock, by Woodhill & Murray, stock from greenhouse, spring 1932, 1st, value \$3.00; 2nd, value \$2.00 5 00 GRAIN, ROOT AND VEGETABLE SPECIALS 21 Best Collection of Farm Produce, including grain, roots, vegetables, fruit, flowers, domestic science, ladies fancy work and children's work, not more than 40 samples, gardeners not eligible, 1st by Smith Furniture Co., Guelph, furniture, value \$5.00; 2nd, by Dr. Buchanan, cash \$2.00 7 00 22 Best Three Bushels of Onions, any variety, 1931 crop, donor to receive same the evening of the Fair, by The Canadian Industrial, Ltd., D. H. Lindsay, agent, fertilizer, to be taken out in the spring of 1932, first fertilizer, value \$6.00; 2nd fertilizer, value \$4.00 10 00 23 Best Collection, 3 mangolds, 3 turnips, 3 pumpkins and 3 cabbages, 1st by W. J. Akin, secretary, cash \$2.00; 2nd \$1.00 3 00 24 Best Two Bags Cashier Potatoes, donor to receive same, by Dr. J. A. McNeil, cash 3 00 25 Best Bushel Early Potatoes, donor to receive same, by A. T. Brown, cash 1 50 26 Best Bag Potatoes, donor to receive same, by J. A. Smith, cash 2 00 27 Best Bag Potatoes, donor to receive same by John Mowat, cash 2 00 28 Best Bag Cobble Potatoes, donor to receive same, by Thos. Watson, cash 3 00 29 Best Bag Cobble Potatoes, donor to receive same, by J. O. Matthews, cash 1 50 30 Best Peck Danvers Onions, donor to receive same, by E. J. Hassard, cash 3 00 VEGETABLE SPECIALS 31 Best Bushel Spy Apples, donor to receive same in October, sample to be shown, by J. N. O'Neill, Georgetown, wheelbarrow, value 7 00 32 Best Bushel King Apples, sample to be shown, donor to receive same in October, by Dr. E. J. Nelson, cash 5 00 33 Best Bushel McIntosh Red Apples, sample to be shown, donor to receive same in October, by Ballant's Clothing Store, cash 3 00 34 Best Bushel Spy Apples, sample to be shown, donor to receive same in October, by G. H. Lantz, cash 2 00 35 Best Barrel Spy Apples, sample to be shown, donor to receive same in October, by Kenney Bros., pair men's or ladies' shoes, value 5 00 DAIRY AND DOMESTIC SCIENCE SPECIALS 36 Best 2 lbs. Butter in Prints, donor to receive same, by Dr. E. J. Nelson, cash 2 00 37 Best 10 lbs. Butter in Crock, donor to receive same, to be delivered to Nelson & Co. evening of Fair, by Evan Jones, cash 6 00 38 Best 7 lbs. Butter in Prints, donor to receive same, by J. H. Synon, cash 5 00 39 Best 5 lbs. Butter in Crock, donor to receive same, by W. R. E. Blair, cash 5 00 40 Best 5 lbs. Butter in Crock, open to any member of The Women's Institute, by Dublin Branch Women's Institute, cash 3 00 41 Best Pair Chickens, dressed, donor to receive same, by J. W. Jones, cash 5 00 (Concluded on Page Seven)