



WHISPERING SAGE

By HARRY SINCLAIR DRAGO AND JOSEPH NOEL
COPYRIGHT, 1923 BY NE A SERVICE, INC.

BEGIN HERE TODAY

Dick Acklin, big boss of the Double A ranch, calls on Jose Arascada, most powerful of the Basque gente in Paradise Valley. Jose is owner of the Rancho Buena Vista and is father of Mercedes, Esteban and little blind Basilio. Buck Bodine, new owner of the old Webster place, is visiting Esteban. He meets Acklin and later they plan to rob the Basques of their water supply. Acklin rides to Bodine's ranch for instructions.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY

Acklin nodded in assent. "Well, when the night comes I want you to have your men ride your line. Don't let any one through. Keep your boys there for a few days. Pass the word that some one's runnin' an iron on your stuff. That'll be excuse enough. We'll be safe then." Acklin had not even reached home before Bodine had started Shorty on his way to Malheur Lakes, to find Gloomy and his other men. And once Acklin had reached the Bull's Head, he immediately set for Morrow, his foreman.

"Cash," he said, "we've been thick-headed. This fellow Bodine has put his finger on the thing we should have seen first shot."

He repeated their conversation to him. "Well, I'm tempted to risk it, Cash. Suppose we string along for a while. Let him and his men do the actual work. Lou just drape around about the time they are there—you know, casual-like—if you ever have to swear to it. In the meantime send some of the boys down to the Benoit water-hole. We are having trouble enough with the calves. Don't tell them anything else is in the wind. Give them the word not to let any one through. Make Skip the straw-boss down there. I rather fancy him. We can go that far without a hitch. If Bodine turns the water, you run a drift fence along our line across the valley. Straight east and west with those dead trees is near enough. We've got the wire and posts. Most of the boys will be back from the north tomorrow. You can hat fence up in a hurry if you to."

CHAPTER IV.

BLAZE KILDARE ARRIVES.

Ten days later a stranger crossed the desert from Golconda. He headed due north for the Benoit water hole. He knew he was entering Paradise Valley by forbidden ways. The hint that he take the south road had reached him a day back.

The stranger sent his horse ahead at a hard gallop. He found that the springs had made a small pool in the willows. He swung to the ground and loosened the cinches, but almost instantly the animal lifted his dripping muzzle and turned an inquiring eye behind him. The stranger followed suit. In the shadow of the trees two men sat.

The older of the two, a black-visaged fellow spoke: "Howdy, stranger!"

It was Skip Lavelle, Acklin's straw-boss. "Howdy!" Kildare responded in the same flat, tell-nothing tone in which he had been accosted. His keen eyes took in the rifles reposing so conveniently in their laps, the soiled cards, and the interrupted game of monte.

The man who had addressed him got to his feet.

"What's your name, stranger?" "Kildare; Blaze Kildare."

"Yuh ain't aimin' to linger around here, be yuh?"

Blaze eyed him thoughtfully as he drew his reply: "Why, that all depends, don't it?"

He turned and started to lift the saddle off his horse.

"No use takin' that-down, mister; nary nit!"

For answer, Kildare pulled it to the ground.

"Now listen to me, muchacho," he purred. "I'm going to breathe my horse, and we're going to drink our bellies full of water before we light out of here. What's all the big excite, anyways. I got a permit to cross this country."

"Let's see it," Skip and the other, Chet Devine, demanded.

"Now what did I do with that permit?"

He took off his hat, and peered into it.

"Oh, yes!" He laughed. "Here it is!"

And in his hand Kildare held a derringer that had been strapped in his sash.

"Stick 'em up!" he said in velvety tones.

"Well, I'll be damned!" Skip began. He stopped short, and instinctively Blaze sensed that some one was back

of him; but he dared not turn around. Before Skip could recover his tongue, a voice droned in sweet and dreadful tones in Kildare's ear: "That's good! That's awfully good! It's your turn to elevate, stranger!"

Blaze felt a gun-barrel boring into his neck. He obliged with glaciality. With nimble fingers his guns were taken from him.

This detail attended to, the man at his back continued not unpleasantly: "Take your hands down, and shake. I'm Cash Morrow, the foreman of the outfit these innocent little lambs belong to; but I can appreciate art when I see it. Shake!"

The bronzed, lean, sinewy Cash, for all his years, was a fit mate for the big man before him. Kildare grinned at him as Cash handed back his guns.

A freckled face topped by a shock of red hair appeared above a green mahogany bush. The red-haired one sized up Blaze.

"Say, pardner," he asked, "who are you ridin' for?"

"Why," and although Kildare answered the man with the flaming hair, his eyes flitted Cash. "I'm riding for the Double A, if the foreman gets the right dope. We," nodding toward his horse, "been getting our cats from the Lonely O up in Monty. Old Ted reckoned I'd wind up here."

"Take him on, Cash," the owner of the freckles urged, coming out of the



struggling in the water at the burro's head was a girl; a most beautiful girl.

shelter of the bushes. Cash cut in. "It'll be forty and cakes until the fall round-up is over, Kildare. Are you on?"

Blaze grinned.

"You've sure hired a man, mister."

"Skip will tell you that, do," Cash went on. "You better drift into the valley tonight, Skip. String out along the old Webster wash. Don't let any one through. Here, Kildare, you take my rifle."

He mounted his horse and rode off.

"Here's where the boscos get it," Melody said gloomily as he made coffee for Blaze. Skip and Chet were asleep. "All this talk of losin' stock is bunk. We're just gettin' ready for another grab. I got eyes and sense."

"Land?" Blaze queried.

"No. We got all the land in the world. It's water this time."

As Blaze ate, Melody explained himself, and his surmise was more correct than he knew: "There wasn't a thing in the wind until this fellow buys in the old Webster place."

"The big boss and he's been gettin' thick. We're goin' to have trouble. If you're done let's ride up and have a look at the valley."

They sat in their saddles and smoked as the red-haired man talked.

"That's a big place there in the bend, just before Rebel Creek gets to the river," Blaze drawled.

"That's the Rancho Buena Vista. Wait till you see the girl that lives there—Old Ironside's daughter. She's the reason they named this place Paradise. Her daddy is the king-pin of the Basques. He's got a son, too. Always pullin' on the bit, that boy. Too much fire in him! Then there's a blind kid—Basilio. No mother, either. Pretty tough that, eh? I guess the old lady. Wasn't any Basque. Guess that's how the Senator sees her spunk. But wait till you see this Mercedes girl. Man, when I look at her I don't miss sugar. She's sweet. . . . Gwan, you old fool," he growled to his horse. "Let's go back."

"You go on, Melody. I'm going down to the river and let my horse roll around in the water. He needs it if I'm going to use him tonight."

CHAPTER V.

A CHANCE MEETING.

The first cool hint of evening reach-

ed Kildare as he picked his way along the Little Washoe. The water gurgled at his feet. He pressed his knees into his horse's sides and was about to ford the stream when the animal threw back its ears. It was an unmistakable sign. Some one was coming! Kildare reached for his gun. As he did so, he heard a child crying. He wheeled his horse and sent him along the soft bank about fifty yards to where the river turned.

A burro stood knee-deep in the middle of the river. Marooned on his back was a frightened child, handly clutching a fishing-pole in one hand, while in the other he held a string of small bass. Struggling in the water at the burro's head was a girl; the most beautiful girl Blaze had ever seen.

Neither the girl nor the boy had seen Blaze. Suddenly the girl slipped, as she tugged at the rein, and the water unceremoniously in the sat. Blaze laughed outright at that, and then, unmindful of his clothes, jumped in and picked her up.

As he waded out to get the boy, he then waded up to his hands to lift him, he spoke.

"Here we are, Basilio," he said. "Don't drop those fish now."

"Senior," the girl asked, "how you know the baby's name?"

Blaze hung his head sheepishly.

"Why, missy," he stammered, "I just guessed at it. But I reckoned I knew you who were as soon as I saw you. I allowed he was your brother, too."

"How do you know me, then, Senior?" she pursued.

"Well, you see a . . . er . . . a man once told me, that knew his feet were stepping on each other in embarrassment. . . . some day I'd meet a Basque girl here, with beautiful black hair. . . . and black eyes . . . and pearly white teeth. . . . Yes, and when you do," he said, "you'll know why they call this place Paradise."

Blaze regarded his twitching feet.

The girl's long lashes dropped over her eyes.

"Virgin santa," she murmured softly. "But you say very nice things, Senior. . . ."

"Blaze."

"Senior Blaze," she said.

(To be continued.)

Sonnet

Oh, thoughtless one, behold the moments go;
The hours, the days, the years . . .
and soon is flown
The whole of life, and you have been
alone,
Or lonely, that was drunk of youth.
For lo!
Age has you, with a creaking step
and slow.
Now match your dancing gait to his.
Wind-blown
Into the darkness, and what have you
known?
Count out your little days set row on
row.

A moment here, a moment there, of
love
That was too light, and blew away
with dawn.
Nothing but memories of things that
fell

Too soon through careless fingers . . .
nothing of
That beauty never seen, that still has
drawn

Men for, who only ask to serve her
well.

—Rram in The New York World.

Canadian Workers in the United States

Le Monde Ouvrier (Ind.): A Canadian worker with a visa can enter the United States to look for work, and if successful in finding it can stay there in perfect security, but if he is engaged in Canada to go and work in the United States, he enters the country fraudulently—even if he has an American visa—and is liable to a statutory penalty. It is not our intention to take part in the controversy between the Fraser-Brace Company and the American authorities, but one thing is certain—the law must have been broken somewhere. We only wish to warn workers that they cannot enter the United States under contract, even if they are to be employed in the United States by the very company which employs them in Canada. To profit by this incident, to try and make us believe that everything is for the best in the best of all possible worlds in Canada, and everything for the worst with our neighbors across the line, a terrible travesty of the truth.

Check Colds with Minard's Liniment.

If you want to succeed in the world you must make your own opportunities as you go on. The man who waits for some seventh wave to toss him on dry land will find that the seventh wave is a long time coming. You can commit no greater folly than to sit on the roadside until someone comes along and invites you to ride with him to wealth and influence.—John B. Gough.

"Orange Pekoe" is only the name given to a size of leaf—Some good, many poor, Orange Pekoes are sold—The most economical and yet the finest flavoured is "SALADA" Orange Pekoe—Sealed in metal—pure—fresh—delicious—43c per 1/2-lb.



289

Natural Increase in Population of Over 10 Thousand

Vital Statistics For One Month Issued by Bureau of Statistics—More Marriages Than For Years

The last Dominion-wide survey of births, deaths and marriages by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics indicates a natural increase in Canada's population of 10,852 during the month of May. The total number of births in all nine provinces is given as 20,262 against a death toll of 9,410 for the month.

The number of marriages given as 4,534, represents the highest figure since 1921. Ontario was the leader, with 1,577 weddings, while Quebec followed closely behind with a mark of 1,410.

Compared with the same month last year, the birth rate suffered a slight decline, the only provinces to show increase being Ontario and Manitoba. Quebec, however, still leads the other provinces with the highest birth rate, of 33.1 per 1,000 population. During the month 7,420 births were reported in the province, compared with 5,971 in Ontario. Other provinces follow: British Columbia, 228; Alberta, 1,284; Saskatchewan, 1,710; Manitoba, 1,184; New Brunswick, 905; Nova Scotia, 845; Prince Edward Island, 115.

IMPOSSIBLE!

"Oh, Tommy," said mother, in dismay, "how did you get that awful black eye?"

"I've been fighting Jimmy Green 'cos he said a lady looked like an old ewe dressed lamb fashion."

"But, dear, it wasn't worth while getting punished for that. I daresay Jimmy was right. You know how silly some women look, with their bare arms, low necks, and foolish short skirts. I myself call such people absolutely—"

"It was you he meant, mums," interrupted Tommy, very red in the face.

"Me, meant me, impossible!"

The automobile has brought former distant places closer and closer together, including our house and the poorhouse.

Naval Programs

London Daily Telegraph (Cons.): America's program of capital ships will, when complete, give her the definite superiority in large craft which she already possesses in respect of destroyers, submarines, aircraft, and naval personnel. These facts, which are well known to our naval experts, and, doubtless, to the Navy Office at Washington also, make it difficult to understand how the President can suppose that Great Britain is seeking to compete with, and even to run ahead of, America in naval armaments.

Minard's Liniment for Asthma.

Mr. Hoover at the Cross-roads

London Daily News (Lib.): The Senate will soon have to decide whether to give priority to the Kellogg Pact or to the Big Navy Bill. The direction in which President Hoover then exercises his powerful influence should give the clue to his future attitude in international affairs. It may well be for the world at large an occasion of criteria importance.

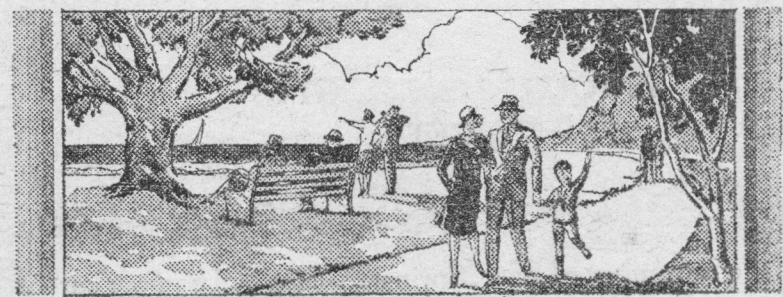
An American physician, Dr. Mafford, now joins in the expert approval of present-day women's dress, and says that by their healthy habit of scanty clothes women are rapidly becoming the stronger sex. One trembles for the time when they will have attained full strength.

WHEN IN TORONTO

Eat and Sleep at
SCHOLES HOTEL
Cafeteria and Short Order Service
YONGE ST., Opposite Eaton's
Hotel Rates: \$1 Per Day and Up.



AVOID WINTER ILLS AND DISCOMFORTS



SPEND WINTER IN THE WARM CLIMATE OF

THE SOUTH

The Gulf Coast

Rich in legend and history. Luxurious hotels, apartments and cottages. The Pan-American, all-Pullman train, leaves Cincinnati 10:20 A. M. daily and arrives at Gulf Coast station next morning.

Florida

Splendid through train service from Detroit, Cleveland, Indianapolis, Cincinnati and Louisville daily on The Flamingo and The Southland. Diverse route includes Gulf Coast one way. Same cost.

New Orleans

Every day is "holiday"—every night is "carnival" in New Orleans. All sports. Historic shrines. Excellent hotels. World famous restaurants. Reached in less than 24 hours from Cincinnati on The Pan-American.

California

The most fascinating way to go "abroad at home" is to follow the sun to the Pacific Coast. The Pan-American connects with finest western trains at New Orleans. Liberal stop-overs allowed. No extra fares.

FREE INFORMATION AND SERVICE
H. E. Porter, T. P. A., L. & N. R. R., Gulf 28-2N
605 Transportation Bldg., Detroit, Michigan.
Send me illustrated literature about: Florida; Gulf Coast;
 New Orleans; California. Also quote winter fares.
Name _____
Address _____

LOUISVILLE & NASHVILLE R. R.