

Second Time West

by
T. C. BRIDGES

CHAPTER XIX

"There's not time," said Jim as he drew Joan behind the trunk of a great tree. "Besides, that's not Lopez or any of his crowd. He wouldn't be riding like that."

The rider, whoever he was, came up at a hard gallop and rode right into the grove. Jim stepped out from behind the tree.

"Hello, Nat, what's the trouble?" "Hell's loose, Grant," snapped back Nat. "I don't know what you done to him but that son of a dog, Diego Lopez, is out to get you." He saw Joan and stepped short, lifting his hat. "Beg pardon, Miss Chandler. Hadn't a notion you was here."

"Never mind me. Get Jim away." A puzzled look crossed Nat's face, but he made no comment on this new name for his friend. "Where is Lopez?" Joan went on.

"Can't say for sure, but it's a bet he's watching the road back to Painted Cross."

"Then you'll have to ride round by Last Chance Canyon," Joan said swiftly.

"That's what I reckoned on doing," Nat answered.

"But you, Joan?" Jim said anxiously. "They won't hurt me," Joan assured him. "I go for a ride most evenings. They'll never dream I've seen you. Go—go quickly, Jim."

"But we haven't settled anything," Jim protested. "When and where can I see you again?"

"I'll write. I'll let you know. But go—go now. There's always the chance someone may have followed Nat." She ran towards her horse.

"She's right, Grant," said Nat. "Sooner we get going the healthier for both of us. And it's a hell of a long way around by the Pass." In spite of Nat's urging Jim waited until Joan had started. Then he flung himself into the saddle and followed Nat who headed almost due south. Both kept looking back over their shoulders, but there was no sign of pursuit and presently they pulled their beasts to a steady, mile-eating lope, and swung in a southerly direction towards a line of hills, whose peaks were etched black against the moon-lit sky. Last Chance Pass for which they were making cut through the hills near the southern end of the alley of the Painted Cross. It was a long round and meant more than twenty miles of hard riding before they reached the ranch.

Jim knew that Nat was burning with curiosity to know how this stranger cowboy, Grant Andrews, came to be on such intimate terms with Joan Chandler, and that he was equally puzzled as to why she had called him Jim. He knew, too, that Nat would rather die than ask either question. The code of the cowboy is simple but strict. He decided that the best—indeed the only—course was to tell Nat everything. He would go far before he found a better friend or one more dependable than Nat Vedder. But he waited until they reached the foot of the Pass and eased their horses to a walk, before speaking.

"Nat," he said, "I'd like to know how you found me."

"I see you as you rode out of the town and watched the way you was going. I'd seed Miss Joan riding that way a few minutes before." Jim laughed.

"And you put two and two together and found yourself right. Nat, you never saw me till this week, but you may have heard of Jim Preston." It took a good deal to startle the hard-bitten Nat, but for once he was struck speechless. "I'm Jim Preston," Jim went on and then Nat found his voice.

"The fellow that shot Wesley Garrett?" "I couldn't help that," said Jim. Nat turned and looked at him. "And you come all the way back here to help out Miss Joan. And risked hanging to do it. I reckoned you was white first time I seed you. Now I know it." He paused. "Does Dave know?" "Dave knows and the chap we call Chip Wilson. And of course Ward Haskell. But I don't want it spread around." Nat nodded.

"Reckon you know what you're bucking," he said presently.

"I know," said Jim gravely. "And I wish I hadn't happened to run against Farne and Lopez today."

"How come?" Nat asked. "Lopez looked like a horse had kicked him in the face. Did you do that?" For a second time Jim related his encounter with Farne and Lopez in the livery stable. Nat chuckled delightedly.

"Knocked 'em both out. Gee, why wasn't I there to see? Only pity is you didn't hit a bit harder, Grant. If you'd broke Lopez' neck you'd have saved a heap of trouble."

"I may get the chance yet," said Jim quietly. "Anyhow I gave him something to remember me by."

"I'll say you did," agreed Nat, and then the pass became so steep and narrow the two could no longer ride abreast. Nat took the lead and Gray Boy struggled after. The trail was a mere ledge cutting across the face of a precipice. To the left was a chasm so steep the moonbeams failed to penetrate it; to the right was cliff broken by deep chasms. The whole of this towering mass of limestone was riddled with caves, many of which were once used as dwelling places by the strange race of cave people who preceded the North American Indians. They lived in the lower caves and used the upper ones for burial places. At the Painted Cross ranch house were some of their baskets woven centuries ago from cactus fibre, but still in perfect preservation.

Jim remembered that he had not yet asked Nat whether he knew of the identity of the mysterious Fishlock, but decided to wait till they reached better ground before doing so. At present he and Nat had their work cut out to keep the path at all. Gray Boy was good as gold. He picked his way as cleverly as a mule, but Nat's beast, younger and less experienced, was scared.

"He ain't never had any of this work," Nat said over his shoulder. "Reckon I'll get off and lead him the last piece." He swung out of the saddle, and as he did so the crack of a shot through the head, fell over sideways and went crashing down into the depths.

The sound had hardly reached Jim's ears before he was off. His quickness probably saved his life for a second bullet hissed overhead, struck a rock and ricocheted away with a vicious ping. Before their unseen assailant could fire a third time Nat, Jim and Gray Boy were behind the shelter of a projecting spur.

"So them hounds got ahead of us," said Nat.

"Outguessed us," said Jim. He glanced round. "Might be worse, Nat. There's a cave mouth just behind us." "Deep pit," growled Nat. "It's a hades of a place. Goes plumb down into the middle of the earth."

"It's shelter anyhow, and I can lead Gray Boy in."

"Come on then," said Nat, "but I warn you it's a bad place."

There was no more firing. Their attackers were not wasting ammunition, and between them Jim and Nat managed to drag Gray Boy up rocks so steep they were like a flight of broken stairs, into the mouth of the cave.

Once inside, it was of course dark as pitch, but Nat struck a match and its glimmer showed a tunnel sloping downwards into the mountain. The cave seemed to be about twenty feet high. The floor was littered with fragments fallen from the roof, the walls were cut with deep crevices.

Into one of these Jim led his horse, and pulled the reins over his head. The match went out, and all that he and Nat could see was the faint patch of moonlight which marked the opening.

"We're safe enough here," said Jim, in a low voice. "We can pile rocks and plug anyone who shows up against the light."

"Which is just what them Kettle Drum fellows ain't going to do," Nat answered, and there was his voice a tone of gloom which Jim did not like at all.

"What will they do?" he asked. "Keep us penned up here till the moon sets, then creep in on us. Likely there are half-a-dozen of 'em, and they don't mean us to get out alive."

Jim was silent for a while. He was thinking hard, and the more he thought the more uncomfortable he felt. The moon would set about two, and then there would be no light for shooting. And with odds which were probably three to one his chance and Nat's were slim. There was no possible hope of help from the ranch, for no one except Joan knew where they were and it would not occur to her that they could have been ambushed in this fashion. If they were to get out with their lives from this trap they had to do it themselves. The urgent question was whether this was possible. Presently he spoke again.

"We've got to outsmart them, Nat. You stay here and keep guard while I go in a bit further and have a look round."

"That won't do you no good," Nat told him. "The cave ends in a pit that ain't got no bottom."

"How do you know? Have you been in to the end?"

"I never been in, but an old chap, a 'arkee' something he called himself, came to the ranch one day and told us about it. If you go in, go cautious."

Jim went cautious, but all the same, he was nearly trapped. The slope grew steeper, and the floor changed to a mass of loose rubble. Suddenly he was on the rim of a black pit; one more step, and nothing could have saved him. He lit another match and saw the pit dropping apparently to the very bowels of the earth.

He looked around and noticed a rock shelf about ten feet up in the left-hand wall. He climbed to it, and found there was room there for a dozen men. Then he came down made his way back to Nat, and told him what he had found.

"We'll be safe enough up there," he said, "and if they come in after us we've got them all ends up."

"It's a chance," Nat agreed, but he did not seem very hopeful.

"What's the trouble?" Jim demanded. "Trouble is we ain't got no grub or water, son. Some of 'em may come in after us, but it ain't likely they'll all come. And so long as any is outside we got to stay where we are."

"It's no use worrying about that," Jim told him. "Thing is to pack ourselves up on the shelf without delay."

The shelf was nearly six feet wide, and after moving aside some loose rocks the two were able to spread themselves comfortably. They lay in silence. They dared not talk for fear of betraying their hiding-place. Nor did they dare to smoke. Both had pistols and a fair supply of cartridges. If they had only had a canteen they could have held out for some days, but both knew that sooner or later thirst would drive them out.

Jim's thought went back to Joan. That chance meeting by the river—it seemed an age ago instead of less than a fortnight. What a difference it had made to his life. He wondered what Nita would say or think could she see him crouched here in the blackness of this Western cave, besieged by ruthless enemies. A good little pal was Nita, but Jim was honest with himself. He knew now that he had never been really in love with her, that their engagement was Mrs. Vaughan's doing, and that he had never known what love was until his second meeting with Joan. Nat nudged him.

"What you growning about—cramp or stomach ache?"

"Just thinking," Jim answered. "Don't think so loud, Grant, or them scallawags are liable to hear you." Jim laughed softly.

"All right, Nat." Time passed, the patch of faint light which showed the cave mouth dimmed. The moon was setting. Before long the attack would come. The minutes dragged by but nothing happened. Jim glanced at the luminous dial of his wristwatch. It was nearly half-past two.

Suddenly he heard a slight scraping sound. Nat heard it, too, for Jim felt him move slightly. Then silence again, but that sound had been enough. Both knew that Kettle Drum men were inside the cave. Jim drew a deep breath. He was glad the waiting was over. Anything was preferable to this long drawn suspense. He did not envy those men crawling on the floor below. He felt sure that if they had known of the astonishing quantity of broken rock which littered the place, they would never have risked an advance through it. Another thing that made

NEW MINISTER ARRIVES



Bringing their French bulldog "Roulette" with them, the Count and Countess Robert de Dampierre are shown as they arrived in New York aboard the liner Normandie. Count de Dampierre is French Minister to Ottawa.

their task more difficult was the utter silence which reigned inside the cave. Although these men of Farne's were doing their best to avoid making any sound a series of tiny clicks and rustlings betrayed their steady advance.

Nat moved restlessly, and Jim knew he was longing to start the war. He caught his companion's arm in his fingers with a strong, steady pressure, and felt the other relax. Still the men below came on. They were, of course, expecting to run into a barricade. Then they would leap into action, flash a light and trust to their guns to finish off the two offenders.

"Now's our chance. The men outside the enemy were immediately below them. Then the sounds stopped altogether, and for some moments the pair strained their ears without hearing anything at all. Jim knew what had happened. The invaders had passed the rocks and reached the shale. They were puzzled and uncertain, and well they might be for the slope was so steep that Jim thought they would hardly dare risk going further. Seconds passed before there was any fresh sound, then Nat turned and put his lips against Jim's ear.

"They're turning; they're clearing out," he said in the lowest possible whisper. Jim acted instantly. He got both hands against a great lump of rock which he had ready beside him, and

launched it over the ledge. It fell with a deep crunching sound into the shale below, and the sound of its fall was followed by a noise resembling that of shingle being dragged down a beach by a retreating wave.

Yells of terror rose and echoed hideously along the vaulted roof. It is a strange thing that men who will risk death by bullet go all to pieces when caught by unknown peril.

"Jim, what have you done?" gasped Nat in horror-stricken tone. "Started a slide," Jim answered. "I knew that stuff was loose. That's why I wouldn't let you shoot."

The rattle rose to a roar drowning the cries of the victims. From their safe perch Jim and Nat could hear the stuff cascading into the depths of the pit, carrying with it the bodies of the killers. Before the sound had finished Jim was on his feet.

"Now's our chance. The men outside will be properly rattled. They won't know what's happened and we'll get them before they find out."

(To be Continued)

Globe and Mail: Among the 561 United States citizens who met violent deaths in the Christmas celebrations were 43 in California and the publicity agents are trying to convey the impression that most of them succumbed to sunstroke.

Some Ways of Using the Left-Over Meats

Croquettes, Hash, Stew, Meat Pie, Jellied Meat, etc.

(From Dept. Agriculture, Ottawa) After the festive season is ended, the housewife is often at her wit's end how to make the most appetizing use of left-over meats. These left-overs can be utilized, and it is not necessary to eat cold meat for a week in the event of large left-over roasts and other meats bulking largely in the probable menus. With little time and trouble the left-overs can be made into a variety of tasty and wholesome dishes. Bones from roasts and steaks should be used in making soup. Surplus gravy and liquid from stews may also be used for soups. A few of the uses which can be made of left-over meats are:—

Croquettes
Any kind of ground beef, one part mashed potatoes, or rice and egg, mixed with gravy, stock or white sauce, and fried in deep fat.

Hash
Two parts of any kind of ground beef and one part of mashed or chopped potatoes.

Stew
Cold roast beef, steak, and other meats, may be used in stews instead of fresh meat. Or the cold meat may be cubed and re-heated in gravy or white sauce.

Meat Pie
With stew as a basis, put in baking dish and cover with baking powder biscuits cut about 1 inch in diameter.

Minced Beef on Toast
Chop cold meat, heat in gravy, and serve on toast.

Escalloped Beef
Cut beef in cubes, mix with gravy, and place in baking dish with alternate layers of boiled rice or dressing. Cover with bread crumbs and brown.

Shepherd's Pie
Same as beef pie, except that cover is of mashed potatoes.

Jellied Meat
Cold roast, steak, tongue or tripe. Cut in cubes, add to highly-flavoured gelatin stock. Mould, cool and slice.

Beef Sandwiches
Finely-ground cold beef, seasoned and mixed with salad dressing, Worcestershire sauce and such like condiments.

New Liskeard Kiwanis to Banquet Town Firemen

Reference was made in a recent issue of The Advance to the remarkable record made by the New Liskeard Fire Dept. in the matter of fires. In the year 1937 the total loss by fire in New Liskeard was only \$35. During the year there were 17 calls answered by the brigade but only two of the blazes resulted in any actual loss, and it will be noted that the loss from these two was only nominal. While all the credit for this notable record can not be given to the New Liskeard Fire Brigade—luck being a factor that must be counted upon, and the care and thoughtfulness of the people themselves also being important in keeping down fire losses. The muni-

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cipality also must be credited with its part in supplying necessary fire fighting equipment and encouraging fire prevention measures. But the major credit after all does go to the fire brigade. Indeed, considerable of the "ack" comes from their efforts and interest. The firemen are responsible in large measure for the educative measures that result in the care and attention given to fire prevention by the public. Even the lead given the municipal authorities in the way of equipment and preventive measures may be traced to the interest and effort of the firemen, who think and talk fire prevention and fire fighting much of the time. This is all particularly true of fire brigades like those at New Liskeard, Timmins, Schumacher and South Porcupine,—to name a few of the Brigades of the North. It is pleasing accordingly to note that public honour is to be given this evening to the New Liskeard fire brigade. The business interests of the town, under the auspices of the New Liskeard Kiwanis Club, are tendering a complimentary banquet to the members of the New Liskeard Fire Brigade this (Monday) evening at 30 in the Masonic hall at New Liskeard. The event is in charge of Wes. McKnight and W. A. Taylor, so it may be taken for granted that the affair will be such as will do honour not only to the New Liskeard firemen but also to the town of New Liskeard, its Kiwanis Club and the citizens generally.

Man Who Shot Golden Eagle to be Prosecuted by Dept.

Announcement was made last week at Toronto by D. J. Taylor, Deputy Minister of Game and Fisheries, that prosecution would immediately be launched against the killing of the huge golden eagle credited last week to the marksmanship of Howard Wright Managing Director of the London Airport, London.

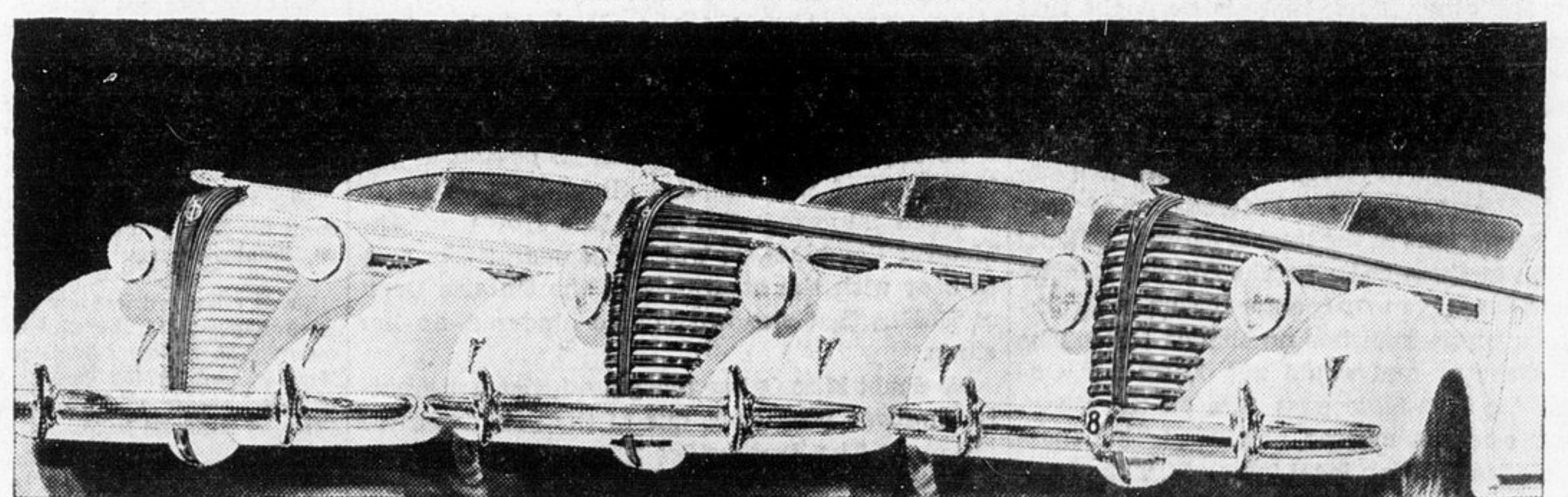
The bird was taken near Ingersoll, and measured 6 feet 4 inches from wing-tip to wing-tip. According to press reports Wright had to shoot the great bird four times to bring it down. Eagles have been on the protected list, under the game laws, for several years now, and in the opinion of the Game and Fisheries Department the only way to make that clear to the sporting public is to prosecute offenders to the full limit of the law.

With regard to the photograph of Mr. Wright and his kill which appeared in The Globe and Mail, Mr. Taylor said:

"We are very grateful to people like this who rush into print and pictures with illegally taken trophies. It makes enforcement of the laws quite a bit easier for us."

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THURSDAY, JANUARY 6TH, 1938
Tickets to U.S. Destinations sold subject to Passengers meeting Immigration Requirements of U.S.A., GOING—and Canada RETURNING.
Tickets valid for travel Train No. 2 from Timmins, Thursday, January 6th, 1938, connecting at North Bay, C.P. Train No. 857 and at Sudbury with C.P. Train No. 28
All tickets valid to return so as to leave Toronto not later than C. P. Train No. 27, 11.10 p.m. Sunday, January 9th, arriving North Bay, and connecting with T. & N. O. Train No. 1—12:45 p.m., Monday January 10th, 1938.
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