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FOR HONOR'S SAKE

By CATHERINE LEWIS

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There was a buzz of talk at the Three Star ranch, at the Four X ranch, at the road house between them and at the three or four scattered cabins along Whip Snake creek. There had been a clash between Dave Henderson of the Three Stars and Guillo Humayun of the Four X's. It had been expected for long weeks, and finally shots had been exchanged, and Guillo had been slightly wounded. Men had interfered then, but not until a duel to the death on horseback had been arranged to come off a week later.

The widow who had come to act as landlady at the road house a year before was to blame—the widow Huber and her daughter Viola, the latter a girl of eighteen. Their place was a house of call for travelers and was well patronized, although there was no bar and no liquor was sold.

If the seventy-five cowboys employed on the three contiguous ranches were a unit in declaring Viola Huber to be the handsomest, cutest, jolliest girl ever seen on the grazing grounds of the west, there was no one to dispute. If half the number fell in love at first sight, that was only to be expected.

Let it be said, however, that the girl was not a coquette and that the adoration and adulation were entirely unsought for. Nor must one jump to the conclusion that thirty or forty cowboys rode down to the roadhouse and offered marriage in succession. On the contrary, few of them ever passed a word with the girl or got more than a glimpse of her. They simply loved in the abstract. Perhaps ten of the lot in the course of a year had opportunities for conversation, although only two of them dared to flatter her or speak of love. One was Dave Henderson, credited with being one of the smartest of the Anglo-Saxon cowboys, and the other was Guillo Humayun, a Mexican who could trace his ancestry back to kings. All other Mexicans on the ranches were spoken of as greas-



THERE WAS A FLASH, A REPORT AND GUILLO TUMBLED TO THE GROUND. ers. Guillo was always referred to as a senior. It was a compliment to his aristocratic face, to his daredevil riding and to his well known courage. He had flattered the Senorita Huber, as he called her. He had looked at her in a languishing way and had spoken soft words of love, but he had been met by a dignity and a coldness that froze him out.

In the end the field had been left to Dave Henderson, and while the girl's choice had brought to others humiliation and chagrin, it had also been tacitly approved by the majority of the unfortunates. Dave was smart. He was a good fellow. He was on the road to secure an interest in the big Three Stars. Guillo alone was chagrined and vengeful, and it soon became patent that he was biding his time to provoke an affray and to use his guns. It must be brought about diplomatically. It must come in such a way as to prevent an appearance of unfairness or he would be wiped out by Dave's friends. To this purpose he bent all his mental energies. When the clash finally came "the senior," too, had his backing, and when he demanded a duel on horseback he was announced to be within his rights.

Then came a single whisper. Given no attention, it soon became a buzzing. It was said, even by some of Dave's friends, that he had shown a touch of the white feather in the first encounter, and they doubted if he would do the Three Stars credit on the day of the duel.

These whispers reached his ears, and he simply replied, "Wait."

They reached the ears of the girl, and she set forth on her broncho and tried to trace them to their source. Men shook their heads in a dubious way and refused to give her honest answers, and at the end of three days she asked Dave Henderson himself:

"You must know what is being said of you in connection with the duel?"

He nodded his head.

"And what do you mean to do?"

"Kill Guillo!" he curtly replied.

The words were plain enough, but there was something in the lover's general demeanor that sent a chill to the girl's heart. Something—perhaps intuition—told her that the man was

either a coward at heart or he was a brave man who realized his danger and was a bit nervous over it.

"Tomorrow forenoon at 10 o'clock,"

he said the night before the duel. "I shall ride forth from the cottonwoods over there to meet Guillo as he comes out from behind the bluffs, and I shall do my best to kill him. We will not say goodby. I hope to be here at this same hour tomorrow night."

For the first time since the duel was talked about the girl was satisfied. There was no bragging, no vaporing, but a quiet, grim determination.

Only the cowboys were to witness the cowboy duel, and they from points afar off. Not a word was dropped to the stage passengers who stopped for breakfast at 8 o'clock in the morning after an all night ride.

At 9 Viola stood in the doorway at the lean-to, gazing with eyes narrowed to a mere slit—out across the endless stretch of sagebrush. Behind her ran the cottonwood line which marked the river's course, and beyond, the bluffs. But the Three Stars men must come from the prairie road.

Suddenly Viola started. There was a black speck amid the gray tones of the sagebrush. The speck grew and elongated. Then she realized that the upper part of the figure swung uncertainly. It was the movement of a cowboy sodden drunk in his saddle. Viola's lips set firmly and her cheeks blanched, for the pony beneath the figure was the calico colored broncho of Dave Henderson.

The broncho cantered unerringly to where the girl stood, and as it stopped, the figure of Dave Henderson slid limply from saddle to ground. His eyes were bloodshot, his lips torn where his teeth had shut tight upon them. One arm—the right—hung useless at his side and the dull tan of his "chaps" was stained with crimson.

Henderson clutched at his saddle pommel and missed it. He swung around in a half circle and caught at the door jamb.

"The bunch on the Alameda arroyo stampeded last night. Mighty queer—business. And—I—got—this"—He tried to raise the uninjured arm, but failed. "Treachery—treach"—

Then he lurched through the doorway, and lay at her feet, inert.

"The Alameda arroyo! And he has ridden from there to be on time—with his arm like that!"

Something hard and hot rose in the girl's throat, and for a minute she could not move, could not even go to the aid of the man she loved. The paternal instinct of motherhood was hot within her. The light love of the girl was smothered by the stronger emotion.

She called to her mother, and they carried him into the girl's own room and closed the door.

Ten minutes later the Widow Huber was working over the injured cowboy, but the tears rolling down her cheeks were not for the man, for darting toward the grove of cottonwoods the calico pony of Dave Henderson carried a figure that tried to sit up as straight and stiff as the broncho's owner ever had.

The cowboys, grouped on the mesa, watched the calico pony come out of the grove, and the sturdy little gray broncho invariably ridden by Guillo danced gingerly from behind the bluffs. The two horsemen circled around each other with spirited tactics, and then Guillo raised his pistol and shot in the air. But before the cowboys could give vent to their amazement the figure on the calico pony seemed to rise from the saddle, an arm darted forth, there was a flash, a report, and Guillo tumbled to the ground.

With an angry roar at such dishonorable action on the part of a member of their own band the white cowboys tore down the incline, while from the bluff rushed the stream of Mexican retainers.

The two bands reached the spot simultaneously, and their leaders stopped short, for the hat pushed back from the figure on the calico pony showed the face of Viola Huber.

Guillo raised himself on the elbows "Senior Henderson," he sneered, "was afraid. The senorita would save his honor. I do not fight the duello with women!"

The girl turned upon the men with flashing eyes.

"He lies with his last breath! Dave Henderson was shot before he ever reached the dueling ground. Ask him about the midnight assault on Alameda arroya."

Without another glance in the direction of the dying man she sprang into the saddle, and the groups parted to let her pass.

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"Eileen," replied Susan.

"Oh, indeed! Named after some of your relatives?"

"Waal, no. I kinder liked the name mahself. But dat ain't what I called her fust."

"No?"

"No. Fust she was christened Anna Cornelia after a pussion what was a particlar friend ob mine at dat time, but me an' dat pussion had trouble arter dat, an' anyhow she tuk to drink, so I jes' changed dat chile's name fear she might inherit it."—New York Press

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