

Gunfighter's Return

By LESLIE EARNENWEIN

(AP Newsfeature)

Chapter 2

At nine o'clock Eve Odgarde blew out two brackets, lamps in a room that had once been the parlor of a private residence but now held half a dozen oilcloth-covered tables. Because steamy warmth still flowed from the kitchen where Limpy Smith was washing dishes, Eve left the street door open.

Eve stopped in the doorway for a breath of fresh air, and recalled the talk she'd heard about Sam Maiben. According to Lew Stromberg, owner of the Big Roman Four outfit, Maiben had been caught red-handed with a fresh-killed yearling that had a plainly boled brand. Eve sighed, wondering if posse riders still searching for Maiben would capture him tonight, and at this moment heard a man shout, "Roman Four! Roman Four!"

Stepping quickly out to the stoop, Eve saw a rider pulled up in front of Gabbert's Livery. His face was shadowed by a down-turned hat but she thought at once: Sam Maiben!

Astonished that Sam should show himself in town, Eve watched young Buck Aubrey ease from the stable doorway with a gun in his hand. She heard the Roman Four rider say, "You've butchered your last stole, beef!"

Lew Stromberg and Ernie Link came running from the Shiloh Saloon. Other men came from Steinfield's stoop and the hotel

veranda; townsmen prompted by curiosity, and a few horseheads from Spanishisip—grim-eyed men like Al Shumway, Swede Severide, and Charley Bonn, who were friends of Sam Maiben.

Sheriff Robillard hurried over from the courthouse. "No shooting, boys! No shooting!" he warned.

And now, as the tall rider nudged back the brim of his battered hat Eve Odgarde stared at him in wide-eyed wonderment. The man sat high and lean-shaped in the saddle like Sam Maiben. He wore a black, flat-crowned Texas hat and rode a roan horse, like Sam. Even his moonlit face was familiar. But it wasn't Sam Maiben's face!

He had perched at Buck Aubrey in frowning silence for a long moment. Now he said, "Quit pointing that gun at me."

Eve recognized him then. "Jim!" she exclaimed, and saw Aubrey's mouth go loose-lipped with puzzlement. She heard him blurt, "You ain't Maiben!"

Lew Stromberg and Ernie Link came up to stand beside Aubrey. Stromberg peered at Rimboud in narrow-eyed hostility, commanding, "Who are you?"

Rimboud ignored the question. With his right hand close to his holster he said rankly, "Get out of my way."

There was a moment of re-remembering. Lew Stromberg's high-backed face; white men out in the street stepped cautiously aside, leaving a wide lane beyond Rimboud. The smell of trouble was that plain.

Eve watched Stromberg, fearful that he would draw. Lew Stromberg wasn't accustomed to taking orders. No man who knew him would be brash enough to give him one, for he was an uncrowned king in Quadrille Basin. She called urgently, "That's Jim Rimboud," knowing what the name would mean to Stromberg and to every man who heard it. They might fail to recognize Rimboud's whisker-shagged face here in the moonlight, but they wouldn't mistake the name that had become a sun-smoke legend on both sides of the border these past two years.

Lew Stromberg stepped aside, making room for Rimboud to ride on into the barn doorway. "What you doing back here?" he asked. "Minding my own business," Rimboud said.

Eve watched him dismount, observing how gaunt and worn-out he looked, how much older and tougher and shabbier than when she'd last seen him. Like a border-jumping renegade, she thought, and heard him say to Joe Gabbert, "Give this horse a double ration of grain and all the hay he'll eat."

"Sure, sure," Gabbert agreed in the glib way of a free-talking man stirred up by excitement. "How's my old friend Francisco Durango?"

"Dead," Rimboud muttered.

Lew Stromberg, who'd turned away, swung around in anger and demanded, "You sure about that?"

Rimboud looked at Stromberg, remembering now that this man owned the Roman Four, which had supplied Durango with free horses in return for range privileges across the line.

"Yes," Rimboud said. "I was with him when he died."

For a moment no one moved or spoke. It was as if every man on this street was momentarily shocked to speechlessness.

Lew Stromberg cursed and said, very distinctly, "The revolution is lost and so is my Mexican grave."

Jim Rimboud could easily understand that part of it. Stromberg's reaction was that of an ambitious man who'd back a loser he had hoped would win. But Rimboud looked at Stromberg and the other men, townsmen and horseheads, seemed equally disturbed by news of Durango's death. As he strode through the crowd, Rimboud heard a man announce apprehensively, "Now there'll be more trouble. Bad trouble."

Rimboud nodded a wordless acknowledgment of Sheriff Robillard's curt greeting and stopped in front of Eve Odgarde, inquiring, "Am I too late for supper?"

"Not if you'll eat in the kitchen," Eve said, showing him a composed and unsmiling face.

(To Be Continued)



2446
SIZES 12-46

Spring Enorel! Diagonal detail does much to minimize the figure! This dress with its buttons sewed to one side could be finished as a short sleeve showing, or collar; or a three-quarter sleeve Spring print.

No. 2446 is cut in sizes 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, 32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 44 and 46. Size 18: short sleeve dress takes 1 1/2 yds. 36-in. or 37 yds. 39-in. Send 30c for PATTERN with NAME, Address, Style Number and Size. Address PATTERN BUREAU, Capital Journal, 602 Mission Street, San Francisco 5, Calif.

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ROOM & BOARD By Ahren

HAVING A MUCH YOUNGER NOSE THAN THE OTHER ANTIQUATED BEANS IN THIS HOUSE YOU HAVE A KEENER SENSE OF SMELL, SO TELL ME WHAT YOU THINK OF THAT EXQUISITE PERFUME SAMPLE... I'LL NAME IT 'BREEZE OF BALI,' BECAUSE IT HAS THE EXOTIC AROMA OF FLOWER-AND-SPICE-LADEN AIR!

GOSH... THIS BRINGS TO MIND MY UNCLE RUDY'S PICTURE-FRAME SHOP... THE MINGLED SMELL OF BANANA OIL, SHELLAC, GLUE, WOOD AND PAINT!

HE GETS A VARIETY OF REACTIONS

STEVE ROPER



POGO



MARY WORTH



RADIO PROGRAMS

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