

Gunfighter's Return

By LESLIE ERNENWEIN

CHAPTER 6
He thought that would end it; that his blunt rejection would convince Bonn so thoroughly that he'd leave him alone with Eve.

Rimbaud went on eating for a moment. Then, observing how surprised and disappointed Bonn seemed to be, he said flatly through sidling underdogs. It's a losing proposition.

Charley Bonn sat there for a moment, absently tracing the steple sweat stains on his hat band with a big knuckled finger. Finally he said, "I calculated you'd be a man who'd pay a debt."

"What debt you talking about?" he demanded.

"You mean you don't know?" Bonn asked. "You ain't fuming?"

Rimbaud shook his head.

"Well, according to what Doc Featherstone said two years ago, Sam Maiben saved your life."

"Saved my life?" Rimbaud echoed.

Then abruptly he understood, and the knowledge shocked him. He hadn't seen Maiben since that eventful night when the home-sick doctor had picked him up on the road and toted him to town in a wagon.

"I'd forgotten what his name was," Rimbaud admitted. Aware of Bonn's intent gaze, he added, "It's my habit to pay a debt."

"Then you'll protect Sam's place?" Bonn asked eagerly.

Rimbaud nodded. He looked at Eve and shrugged, and said, "So I take one more ride with the underdogs."

"Then Roman Four toughs won't be so brash when they hear you're at Boxed M." Bonn predicted, smiling. "They'll think twice before tangling with you."

But Rimbaud paid him no heed. He was looking at Eve's composed unsmiling face, wondering at her gravity and wanting to kiss the soberness from her lips. When Bonn had left, Rimbaud told her, "This deal will delay my plans a trifle, but they still stand, just like I said."

That seemed to embarrass Eve. "I don't think you'd ever change," she murmured, as much to herself as to him. "I thought you'd go on being what you were as long as you lived."

Then she held up her left hand, and as Rimbaud peered at the small diamond ring, Eve said quietly, "I'm engaged to Sam Maiben."

For a moment, while the ironic significance of the news flashed through him, Rimbaud stared at the ring.

A self-mocking smile formed on Rimbaud's whisker-shagged face as he reached for his hat. "A shifless saddle tramp thank you for a fine supper," he acknowledged, remembering what she'd told Lippy Smith.

"Jim, I'm sorry," Eve said in a sincere, subdued voice that was scarcely above a whisper.

"That also is a losing proposition," Rimbaud told her, and went on into the dining room.

Ernie Link had been assigned the chore of watching the rear entrance to Eve Odegarde's restaurant. "Maiben will be getting hungry," Lew Stromberg had predicted. "He might just be fool enough to sneak in for a late supper."

It was a loco idea, to Ernie's way of thinking. A useless waste of time. But there was no use trying to reason with Lew Stromberg. He was in a lather about losing that Max graze in Sonora.

Standing in the shadow of Gabbert's wagon shed, Link watched the restaurant's lamplit doorway and caught a brief glimpse of Jim Rimbaud moving across the kitchen. Ernie grinned, recalling how he'd spooked young Buck Aubrey had been when he found out who it was he'd mistaken for Sam Maiben. Buck wasn't much account with a gun, nor with his fists either, for that matter, and Rimbaud was supposed to be a hellier from here to who hid the broom. Even Lew Stromberg wanted no part of him in a gun fight.

Link shaped up a cigaret and thought how it would be to have Rimbaud's reputation. A man like that could draw top wages anywhere, and have his pick of pretty girls.

Ernie observed Charley Bonn sitting at the kitchen table with Rimbaud. Mildly curious, Link eased across the moonlit alley and was standing close to the doorway when he heard Bonn ask, "Then you'll protect Sam's place?"

"There was a butler before," Rimbaud said, "So I take one more ride with the underdogs."

Ernie wasn't sure what that meant, until he heard Bonn say, "Then Roman Four toughs won't be so brash when they hear you're at Boxed M. They'll think twice before tangling with you!"

That was enough for Ernie Link. Going quickly to Main Street, he hurried toward the Shiloh Saloon. Lew would want to know about this. Perhaps Lew would want Rimbaud stopped right now; tonight. It occurred to Ernie that the man who killed Jim Rimbaud would make himself a rep in one fight. He would be known far and wide as being faster with a gun than Jim Rimbaud.

"He'd be famous," Link thought aloud. Then he skidded to a stop, bareheaded, and looked with Lew Stromberg's daughter, who came out of the Bon Ton Millinery with a huge hatbox in her arms.

She was a brunette beauty, this Della Stromberg, just past nineteen, she seemed more like a big-city girl than the daughter of a Quadrille Basin cowman. She said smilingly, "You're just the man I'm looking for, Ernie," and pushed the hatbox into Link's hands. "Take it to my rig at the hotel while I pick up some yard goods at the Mercantile."

"But I'm in a big rush," Ernie objected. "Got something real important to tell the boss."

Della laughed at him. "It can't be that important," she said, and left him standing there with the hatbox.

When Ernie came to Della's red-wheeled buggy at the Alhambra hitch rack he observed Swede Severide and Al Sunway loafing in front of the hotel. He hoped they wouldn't notice what he was doing, but they peered at the huge hatbox and Swede said wonderingly, "Must be a new style Stetson built special for Roman Four heads."

With a thrusting sense of tremendous outrage propelling him, Link drew his gun, lunged forward with it held head-high, and whipped it down. Severide attempted to dodge, but the barrel caught him across the left temple. He expelled a yeasty high gasp and staggered sideways, colliding with Al Sunway, who tried to prop him up. But Swede went entirely limp, and Sunway, eased his friend to the plank walk.

"That'll learn him not to call me comical," Link muttered, backing slowly out into the street.

(To Be Continued)

Halls Ferry

Halls Ferry — "The Pinetoppers" 4-H Forestry club met Friday evening at the home of Mr. and Mrs. C. R. McFadden, Rt. 3, Salem.

Two new members were admitted to the club, Leroy and Norman Ellingsworth of Rt. 3.

A wire recording of "The Pinetoppers" radio broadcast of Feb. 28 was the high light of the evening.

March 21 is to be the club's tree planting date. All members are to participate.

Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Schubel and Mr. Cassand, all of Rt. 3, were guests.

Mrs. McFadden served refreshments of cake, ice cream and orange punch.

All members pledged to participate in the "Keep Oregon Green" campaign.

Carol Curtis Pattern

Three Children's Quilts. A "Mother Goose" quilt, a "Scottie" quilt and an adorable "Kitten" quilt are in this one pattern. Make three individual quilts using 9-inch blocks with the 8-inch figures applied in bright colors or you may combine the three figures into a single quilt. Figured materials, ginghams, calico, polka-dotted cottons are all good choices to use on pastel cotton backgrounds. You'll have enough applique designs to make perfectly charming crib or small bed spreads, quilts and comforters!

Send 30c for the THREE CHILDREN'S QUILTS (Pattern No. 589) all cutting, applique, sewing and finishing instructions, YOUR NAME, ADDRESS, PATTERN NUMBER to CAROL CURTIS, Capital Journal, 652 Mission Street, San Francisco 5, Calif.

ROOM & BOARD

BEFORE YOU GO OUT, CHATAHORE, I WANT YOU TO SNIFF THIS CHARMING FRAGRANCE I'M CALLING CUPIDS WHISPER!

ANY SENSE OF SMELL HAS BEEN DULLED BY GREASE PAINT AND COLD CREAM OVER THE YEARS AS A SHAKESPEAREAN ACTOR... BUT MY IDEA OF A WONDERFUL SCENT FOR YOU TO CREATE WOULD BE A BAKERY PERFUME... THAT MIXED AROMA OF FRESH-BAKED BREAD CAKES, COOKIES AND CINNAMON BUNS!

AND THE PERFUME OF BROILED STEAK



RADIO PROGRAMS

FRIDAY—P. M.					
KGW	KOIN	KEX	KSLM	KGAE	KOCO
630 KBC	970 CHN	1130 ABC	1200 MBC	1430 K.C.	1490 LRA
6:00 News	News	Paul Harvey	Top Trades	Spidee	News
6:30 News	News	News Edition	News Edition	Spidee	Frank Davah
7:00 News	News	Jack Owens	Jack Owens	Spidee	Spidee
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