

On Little Peak

A Story of a Western Blizzard
By CLARISSA MACKIE

When they rode up to the gate their young faces seemed to reflect the glory of the sunset. Owen Morgan's was aglow with love and pride, and Annie Bell's was pink flushed and shyly happy.

Annie's father, Peter Bell, saw them coming and strode across the yard with thunder in his voice and lightning in his eyes.

"You clear out of this, young fellow!" he growled as he snatched the bridle of Annie's pony and led the animal away. "You've done about all the mooning around these diggings that's allowed by me—see?"

"Father!" cried Annie indignantly, snatching at the bridle rein.

For reply the gruff old man lifted his daughter's slender form from the saddle and pushed her toward the house. "Go inside and stay there till I come," he added, and because Peter Bell's word was law in his house Annie went, with a single heart-breaking glance at her recently declared lover.

Owen Morgan stared after her with eyes that saw not. The whole scene appeared to be some grotesque comedy that was being enacted for his benefit. Perhaps he was expected to laugh at Peter Bell's joke.

"Understand—you?" rasped Peter Bell unpleasantly.

"You mean it?" Owen managed to ask, with stiff lips. "You mean that I'm not to come and see Annie again?"

"That's just what I do mean! Why, you must think I'm a fool to let you run after my girl after the way your father has treated me!"

"You mean about the boundary line?" asked Owen, wheeling his horse about.

"Yes, I mean about the boundary line!" roared Peter. "When then papers were served on me this afternoon I vowed this would be the last ride your father's son ever took with my girl. Now that's all plain, and you're invited to go."

Owen's face was very white and his lips were compressed to a straight line as he rode home at breakneck speed. His own father was smoking in the porch of the ranch house, and the old man's calm demeanor served in a measure to cool Owen's wrath at Peter Bell.

"Careful, lad!" warned Mr. Morgan as his son brought the dripping horse to a standstill. "Don't you know how to treat a beast, Owen? Take Brownie and give him a rubdown and come back to me."

Although Owen was twenty-four, he obeyed his father as meekly as though he were still in his early teens. After he had made the rocking horse as comfortable as possible for the time he walked slowly back to the veranda, where his father sat enveloped in overcoat and hat, for it was January and the thermometer had been near to 20 degrees all day. Now it was a little milder, for the wind had died down. The sunset clouds had lost their delicate colors even as Owen's face had lost its glow of happiness.

"It's going to snow," prophesied Mr. Morgan, with an eye turned toward the weather.

"Then I ought to get that bunch of cattle in from the lower range," remarked Owen rather listlessly.

"Morning will be time enough. Where you been—riding with Annie?" Owen's face reddened to the ears, and he avoided his father's searching eyes.

"Yes," he replied constrainedly.

"Have a good ride."

"Went over to the Little Peak."

"Hum—same place I went with your ma once. It ended in our getting engaged."

"It didn't end that way with me, dad." Owen's eyes still sought the distant horizon.

be found in sheltered nooks. Shortly after he started the plain was obliterated from view by the thickly falling flakes, but his pony knew the trail and seemed to realize that perhaps their lives depended upon his speed, for he raced across the whitening earth with undiminished speed until the frightened herd of cattle was located and started on its homeward way.

It was harder going back to the ranch. The snow was driving in their faces now and clung mostly to every inch of exposed surface. Just as the last frightened beast was driven into the corral and Jose, the Mexican stableman, had closed the gates there came the sound of shouting from the front of the ranch house.

By the time Owen had floundered around there he knew the shouting voice to be that of Peter Bell, and he wondered what sudden accession of anger had driven the old man forth in the midst of what promised to be a blizzard.

But Peter Bell was not angry. He was a terrified and grief-stricken old man, who was being thawed out before the big coal stove in the sitting room of the ranch. Mrs. Morgan was holding a cup of something hot and steaming to his bearded lips, while Owen's father was pulling on fur lined boots with great haste.

"What is the matter?" demanded Owen, standing in the doorway.

"It's Annie—she went out for a ride before the storm and she hasn't returned," explained Mrs. Morgan quickly. "All of the Bell ranch men are away, and so Mr. Bell came over to see if you and father wouldn't help."

"Of course I don't deserve it after what I said to you yesterday," broke in Peter Bell tremulously, "but—"

"Which direction did she take?" interrupted Owen ruthlessly.

"Toward Little Peak. I warned her it was going to snow, but she said she'd be right back. It's a bad trail, you know, Owen," ended Peter Bell pitifully.

"I'll bring her back," promised Owen confidently. "You have everything ready to thaw us out when we come, and, brother, just give me a flask of that brandy in case—in case Annie should be pretty cold."

A little shudder ran through the older people. They knew the chances of finding Annie Bell cold in death—were very strong. But Owen, fired by his great love, would leave no place unexplored. If any one could find the girl it would be the man who loved her.

Owen's mother kissed him and the two men gripped his hand as he closed the door behind him. Jose had brought around one of the farm horses, a great heavy animal, whose enormous strength could better combat the snow than the lighter animals.

Out of sight of the ranch house, all bearings were lost in the white world of snow. A small pocket compass warmed in his hand guided him to the westward, where Little Peak reared its height.

The trail up the mountain side was narrow and precarious in fair weather. Owen, strong as he was, shuddered as he thought of Annie Bell riding down there in the face of the first flying flakes. Even if she reached the foot of the peak there was the deep canyon to ride through, and if her pony stumbled—why, he did not dare to think of the soft mound of snow that might even now cover pretty Annie Bell, who only yesterday had whispered that she loved him. It had happened on this very self same peak, and Annie had gone back there today!

Owen struck the horse sharply, and the big body heaved convulsively forward, and the great hoofs dashed through the fast forming drifts. They covered the three miles to the canyon in a half hour, and Owen was another thirty minutes finding the narrow entrance. There was not a foot of ground that he had not scanned with his eyes as he rode, and his voice had been lifted in continuous shouting, but so far only the dumb silence of the muffling snow had answered him.

In the ranch house Mrs. Morgan had completed her preparation for the restoration of the half frozen ones when they returned unless—there should be two lost instead of one. Owen's mother was holding her husband's hand, and his other hand was unconsciously gripped by Peter Bell, who had forgotten his anger over the boundary fence and had become the father of the missing Annie—and that was all.

"Hark!" cried Peter Bell after three hours had passed in agonizing silence. There was no audible sound, but an instant later the outer door burst open and Owen staggered in, holding a snow-wreathed burden in his arms.

"She's alive!" he panted. "Take her—I can get along all right!" and to prove that he could Owen Morgan gave Annie Bell safely into her father's arms and sank unconscious to the floor.

When Owen awoke between hot blankets, with a restorative burning its way down his throat, his first thought was for Annie Bell. At his first stir in came Peter Bell, leading Annie by the hand. She was pale, but her eyes shone happily.

"Owen, lad," said Peter Bell in a shaking voice, "you saved my girl's life, and it belongs to you. I give her back to you!"

Biting. Spinks—What made him so annoyed? Winks—He told his wife she had no judgment, and she just looked over him critically from head to foot and said she was beginning to realize it.—New York Journal.

Took Away Her Opportunity. "What's the matter with your wife?" "Oh, I've just acknowledged that I made a fool of myself in lending Hammersley \$25, and she's mad because there's no chance to go on arguing about it."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Drummers. The custom of calling traveling men "drummers" originated in the fact that in the early days peddlers who sold goods about the country announced their arrival in town by beating a drum.

GREENLAND'S ICEBERGS.

Their Progress Southward Lasts From February Till August.

Those monsters of nature to navigation, icebergs, are formed from huge pieces broken from the glaciers of the north, which the Arctic currents carry southward until they melt away in the warmer waters of the gulf stream. The terrible procession begins in February, and not until the end of August is the ice season supposed to be over in the north Atlantic.

Each year brings its regular reports of thrilling sights and collisions and losses in the ice fields from the incoming steamers during the spring and summer months. Certain years stand out as unusually late ice years, but the general story is much the same. Once during the month of May, 143 icebergs were sighted off Cape Race in a single day.

One of the largest icebergs on record towered 830 feet above the surface of the sea. As hardly more than one tenth of the berg is out of water, this would mean a mass of ice 7,000 feet (one and one-third miles) from top to bottom. Its volume was calculated to be about 580,000,000 cubic feet and its weight some 16,000,000 tons!

Icebergs need not be extraordinarily high to be stupendous. Lieutenant Peary reported a berg 12,500 feet long (over two and one-half miles), 11,000 feet wide and 186 feet high. It was estimated to weigh 1,292,388,000 tons. Another measured farther north contained 27,000,000,000 cubic feet of ice and weighed no less than 2,000,000,000 tons.—New York World.

BOGUS GEMS.

Imitation Diamonds of Paste Are the Best Counterfeits.

It is always wise when buying a white topaz to purchase it from a reliable dealer, inasmuch as rock crystal and even lead glass are often sold under that name.

Colorless beryl yields a very brilliant and diamond-like stone when properly cut. Indeed, many gems and even phenacite and rock crystal often passed in former days as diamonds, even under the scrutiny of experts, such exact tests as refraction and specific gravity being unknown until comparatively recent years.

No imitation of the diamond, however, is so brilliant as a skillfully cut piece of the kind of lead glass known in the trade as "paste." The play of color in these counterfeits is often very beautiful, but the glass "diamond" possesses no luster, this term being applied to the light reflected from the top surfaces of a gem.

The flashes of light and color that give brilliancy come from the interior, being thrown from the rear surfaces of the stone.

The glass diamond is soft and is attacked chemically by a number of things with which it comes in contact by wear, for both of which reasons it soon becomes dulled.—Philadelphia Saturday Evening Post.

Married the Family. When Lafcadio Hearns married his Japanese wife all his wife's family accompanied him to his new quarters. He mentions that he had nine lives dependent upon him—wife, wife's mother, wife's father, wife's adopted mother, wife's father's student, then servants and a Buddhist student. This wouldn't do in England, but it is nothing in Japan.—Lafcadio Hearns—His Life and Work, by Nina H. Kennard.

Quite Different. Mother—Fritz, I thought I told you a little while ago not to make that noise. Fritz—This is quite a different noise, mummy. The first was with a drum, and this is with a trumpet.—Flegende Blatter.

France May Have a War In Morocco on Her Hands



AFTER all the delicate negotiations which endangered the peace of Europe, but resulted in giving to France a free hand in Morocco, it appears that the French protectorate over the north African sultanate is likely to be maintained only at the cost of a long campaign. Recently the inhabitants of Fez, the capital, rose and massacred French soldiers and civilians, the pretext for the outbreak being that the life of the sultan was threatened by the French. Fearful barbarities were perpetrated upon the inhabitants of the Jewish quarter as well as upon Europeans, and some of the worst offenders are said to have been Moorish women. General Moinier, the French commandant at Fez, has asked for reinforcements, which have been promised him. One prominent French military authority says that it will require twelve years to subdue Morocco.

He Spoke to Her.

A Virginia farmer was driving a refractory cow down the road one morning. The cow and the driver came to a crossroad. The man wanted the cow to go straight ahead, but the cow picked out the crossroad. A negro was coming along the crossroad.

"Hald her off! Hald her off!" yelled the driver.

The negro jumped about the road and waved his arms. The cow proceeded calmly on her way.

"Hald her off! Hald her off, nig-ger!" yelled the driver.

"T's a-tryin' ter!" replied the negro. "Speak to her! Speak to her and she'll stop!"

"Good mawnin', cow—good mawnin'!" said the negro politely.—Saturday Evening Post.

When You Crack Your Hat. If you are ever unfortunate enough to smash a new derby hat, so that it cracks and in spite of vigorous rubbing and brushing refuses to resume its pristine smoothness of surface, try the simple expedient of holding a lighted match inside the hat close to the broken spot. By the time the match has half burned out you will find that the hat has become soft. If you will then brush it vigorously with a stiff brush for a moment it will regain its former smoothness and look as if nothing had ever marred its surface.—New York Sun.

A Russian Santry. In 1859 the Russian emperor saw a soldier in the middle of a grass plot in the palace grounds. Why was there a daily guard, relieved at stated intervals? No one knew. Curiosity was aroused, and at last a veteran was discovered who remembered hearing his father say that the Empress Catherine—she died in 1727—once saw a snow-drum in bloom at that point unusually early and asked that a guard be stationed there to protect it. And there a sentinel remained for at least 132 years; no one knew how much longer.

Horses in Battle. Arabian horses show remarkable courage in battle. It is said that when a horse of his breed finds himself wounded and knows instinctively that he will not be able to carry his rider much longer he quickly retires, bearing his master to a place of safety while he has yet sufficient strength. But if, on the other hand, the rider is wounded and falls to the ground the faithful animal remains beside him, unmindful of danger, neighing until assistance is brought.

Sunday Card Playing Laws. There was a time when people in England were forbidden by law to play at cards, even in their own houses, on Sunday. In the royal proclamation against vice, profaneness and immorality, read at every session of court, is the following passage: "And we do hereby strictly enjoin and prohibit all our loving subjects, of what degree or quality soever, from playing on the Lord's day at dice, cards or any other game whatsoever, either in public or private houses or other places whatsoever."

Mother—Fritz, I thought I told you a little while ago not to make that noise. Fritz—This is quite a different noise, mummy. The first was with a drum, and this is with a trumpet.—Flegende Blatter.

THEY DO SAY

That a bachelor girl is a spinster with money.

That a rolling stone gathers some hard knocks.

That too many people mistake gall for genius.

That one man's folly may be another man's widow.

That engagement rings are still popular in court circles.

That many a tailor's goose lays golden eggs for its owner.

That while all the world's a stage some of it is a treadmill.

That when some people air their knowledge, they hot air it.

That even a cat has too much sense to cry over spilled milk.

That no accident policy can help a man when he falls in love.

A Musical Whistle. A gentleman who was becoming rather deaf was crossing over a railroad bridge just as a train underneath uttered a deafening whistle.

"First robin I have heard this spring," murmured the old gentleman.

A New Kind of Cow. Saphead, living in a city, wrote to a farmer stating that having arranged to spend the summer in the country, he desired to purchase an ice-cream cow. The farmer replied that he had a nice cream cow that would just suit him.

It is more difficult to shoe a horse than it is to shoe a hen.

Saved! "I refused to be operated on, the morning I heard about Cardui," writes Mrs. Elmer Sickler, of Terre Haute, Ind. "I tried Cardui, and it helped me greatly. Now, I do my own washing and ironing."

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