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finching.

"Everything is tolerable clear to us already," Simon said, "except your sentence."

"I want you to know that I refuse to be impressed with this judicial attitude of you and your blackguard followers," Bruce went on. "This gathering of the group of you doesn't make any evil that you do any less wrong, or the payment you'll have to make any less sure. It lies wholly in your power to kill me while I'm sitting here, and I haven't much hope but that you'll do it. But let me tell you this. A reign of bloodshed and crime can go on only so long. You've been kings up here, and you think the law can't reach you. But it will—believe me, it will."

"And this was the man who was going to renew the blood-feud—already hollering about the law," Simon said to his followers. He turned to Bruce. "It's plain that Dave isn't going to come. I'll have to be the chief witness myself, after all. However, Dave told me all that I needed to know. The first question I have to ask of you, Folger, is the whereabouts of that agreement between your late lamented father and the late lamented Matthew Ross, according to what the trapper Hudson told you a few days ago."

Bruce was strong enough to laugh in his bonds. "Up to this time I have given you two murderous crowd credit for at least natural intelligence," he replied, "but I see I was mistaken—or you wouldn't expect an answer to that question."

"Do you mean you don't know its whereabouts?"

"I won't give you the satisfaction of knowing whether I know or not. I just refuse to answer."

"I trust the ropes are tight enough about your wrists."

"Plenty tight, thank you. They are cutting the flesh so it bleeds."

"How would you like them some tighter?"

"Pull them till they cut my arms off, and you won't get a civil answer out of me. In fact—" and the man's eyes blazed—"I'm tired of talking to this outlaw crowd. And the sooner you do what you're going to do, the better it will suit me."

"We'll come to that shortly enough. Disregarding that for a moment—we understand that you want to open up the blood-feud again. Is that true?"

Bruce made no answer, only gazed without flinching into his questioner's face.

"That was what my brother Dave led me to understand," Simon went on, "so we've decided to let you have your way. It's open—it's been open since you came here. You disregarded the warning I gave—and men don't disregard my warnings twice. You threatened Dave with your rifle. This is a different land than you're used to, Bruce, and we do things our own way. You've hunted for trouble and now you've found it. Your father before you thought he could stand against us—but he's been lying still a long time. The Rosses thought so, too. And it is part of our code never to take back a threat—but always to make it good."

Bruce still sat with lowered head, seemingly not listening. The clansmen gazed at him, and a new, more deadly spirit was in the room. None of them smiled now; the whole circle of faces was dark and intent, their eyes glittered through narrowed lids, their lips set. The air was charged with suspense. The moment of crisis was near.

Sometimes the men glanced at their leader's face, and what they saw there filled them with a grim and terrible eagerness. Simon was beginning to run true to form. His dark passions were slowly mastering him. For a moment they all sat as if entranced in a communion of cruelty, and to Bruce they seemed like a colony of spotted rattlesnakes such as sometimes hold their communions of hatred on the sun-blasted cliffs.

All at once Simon laughed—a sharp, hoarse sound that had, in its overtones, a note of madness. Every man in the room started. They seemed to have forgotten Bruce. They looked at their leader with a curious expectancy. They seemed to know that that wild laugh betokened but one thing—the impact of some terrible sort of inspiration.

As they watched, they saw the idea take hold of him. The huge face darkened. His eyes seemed to smolder as he studied his huge hands. "We've decided to be merciful, after all," he said slowly. But neither Bruce nor the clansmen understood him or were deceived. They only knew that these words were simply part of a deadly

jest that in a moment all would understand. "Instead of filling you full of thirty-thirty bullets, as better men than you have been filled and what we ought to do—we're just going to let you lay out all night—in the pasture—with your feet tied and your hands behind your back."

No one relaxed. They listened, staring, for what would follow.

"You may get a bit cold before morning," Simon went on, "but you're warmly dressed, and a little frost won't hurt you. And I've got the place all picked out for you. And we're even going to move something that's laying there so it will be more pleasant."

Again he paused. Bruce looked up.

"The thing that's laying there is a dead yearling calf, half ate up. It was killed last night by the Killer—the old grizzly that maybe you've heard of before. Some of the boys were going to wait in trees tonight by the carcass and shoot the Killer when he comes back after another meal—something that likely won't happen until about midnight if he runs true to form. But it won't be necessary now. We're going to haul the carcass away—down wind where he won't smell it. And we're going to leave you there in its place to explain to him what became of it."

Bruce felt their glowing eyes upon him. Exultation was creeping over the clan; once more their leader had done himself proud. It was such suggestions as this that kept them in awe of him.

And they thought they understood. They supposed that the night would be of the utter depths of terror to the tenderfoot from the cities, that the bear would sniff and wander about him, and perchance the man's hair would be turned quite white by morning. But being mountain men, they thought that the actual danger of attack was not great. They supposed that the inborn fear of men that all animals possess would keep him at a distance. And, if by any unlikely chance the theft of the beef carcass should throw him into such a rage that he would charge Bruce, no harm in particular would be done. The man was a Folger, an enemy of the clan, and after once the telltale ropes were removed, no one would ask questions about the mutilated, broken thing that would be found next morning in the pasture. The story would carry down to the settlements merely as a fresh atrocity of the Killer, the last and greatest of the grizzlies.

But they had no realization of the full dreadfulness of the plan. They hadn't heard the more recent history of the Killer—the facts that Simon had just learned from Dave. Strange and dark conjectures occupied Simon's mind, and he knew—in a moment's thought—that something more than terror and indignity might be Bruce's fate. But his passion was ripe for what might come. The few significant facts that they did not know were merely that the Killer had already found men out, that he had learned in an instant's meeting with Hudson beside Little river that men were no longer to be feared, and worse, that he was raving and dently from the pain of the wound that Bruce's bullet had inflicted.

The circle of faces faded out for both of them as the eyes of Bruce and Simon met and clashed and battled in the silent room.

## CHAPTER XXI

"If Simon Turner isn't a coward," Bruce said slowly to the clan, "he will give me a chance to fight him now."

The room was wholly silent, and the clan turned expectant eyes to their leader. Simon scowled, but he knew he had to make answer. His eyes crept over Bruce's powerful body. "There is no obligation on my part to answer any challenges by you," he said. "You are a prisoner. But if you think you can sleep better in the pasture because of it, I'll let you have your chance. Take off his ropes."

A knife slashed at his bonds. Simon stood up, and Bruce sprang from his chair like a wildcat, aiming his hardened knuckles straight for the leering lips. He made the attack with astonishing swiftness and power, and his intention was to deliver at least one terrific blow before Simon could get his arms up to defend himself. He had given the huge clan leader credit for tremendous physical strength, but he didn't think that the heavy body could move with real agility. But the great muscles seemed to snap into tension, the head ducked to one side,

and his own huge fists struck out.

If Bruce's blow had gone straight home where it had been aimed, Simon would have had nothing more to say for a few moments at least. The leap had been powerful and swift yet wholly inaccurate. And the reason was just that his wrists and ankles had been numbed by the tight thongs by which they had been confined. Simon met the leap with a short, powerful blow into Bruce's face; and he reeled backward. The arms of the clansmen alone kept him from falling.

The blow seemed to daze Bruce; and at first his only realization was that the room suddenly rang with harsh and grating laughter. Then Simon's words broke through it. "Put back



Simon Stood Up and Bruce Sprang From His Chair Like a Wildcat.

the thongs," he ordered, "and go get your horses."

Bruce was dimly aware of the falling of a silence, and then the arms of strong men half carrying him to the door. But he couldn't see plainly at first. He knew that the clan had brought their horses and were waiting for Simon's command. They loosened the ropes from about his ankles, and two of the clansmen swung him on to the back of a horse. Then they passed a rope under the horse's belly and tied his ankles again.

Simon gave a command, and the strange file started. The night air dispelled the mists in Bruce's brain, and full realization of all things came to him again.

One of the men—he recognized him as Young Bill—led the horse on which he rode. Two of the clansmen rode in front, grim, silent, incredibly tall figures in the moonlight. The remainder rode immediately behind. Simon himself, bowed in his saddle, kept a little to one side. Their shadows were long and grotesque on the soft grass of the meadows, and the only sound was the soft footfall of their mounts.

A full mile distant across the lush fields the cavalcade halted about a grotesque shadow in the grass. Bruce didn't have to look at it twice to know what it was: the half-devoured body of the yearling calf that had been the Killer's prey the night before. From thence on, their operations became as outlandish occurrences in a dream. They seemed to know just what to do. They took him from the saddle and bound his feet again, then laid him in the fragrant grass. They searched his pockets, taking the forged note that had led to his downfall. "It saves me a trip," Simon commented. He saw two of them lift the torn body of the animal on to the back of one of the horses, and he watched dully as the horse plunged and wheeled under the unfamiliar weight.

Simon spoke in the silence, but his words seemed to come from far away. "Quiet that horse or kill him," he said softly. "You can't drag the carcass with your rope—the Killer would trace it if you did and maybe spoil the evening for Bruce."

Strong arms snaked at the bits, and the horse quivered, trembling. For a moment Bruce saw their white moonlit faces as they stared down at him. "What about a gag?" one of the men asked.

"No. Let him shout if he likes. There is no one to hear him here."

Then the tall men swung on their horses and headed back across the fields. Bruce watched them dully. Their forms grew constantly more dim, the sense of utter isolation increased

Then he saw the file pause, and it seemed to him that words, too faint for him to understand, reached him across the moonlit spaces. Then one of the party turned off toward the ridge.

He guessed that it was Simon. He thought the man was riding toward Linda's home.

(To be continued.)

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## Jots and 'Littles

(Continued from page 1)

The Ringos visited Salem Sunday. Mrs. Joseph Hardcastle of Brownsville is 96 years old.

S. G. Holve of Seattle was a business visitor here the first of last week.

W. F. Carter is selling meat at the old stand, having succeeded Falk Brothers.

James Drinkard sports a new Willys-Knight auto which he got at Portland last week.

The Brownsville Pythian Sisters have pledged \$50 towards the new community building.

Mrs. Russ Kneeland returned Saturday from her visit with her blind aunt in Portland.

Mrs. J. Curry and children of Philomath visited Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Curry, over the week-end.

S. P. Barger of Brownsville passed his 86th birthday last week, and it was on Friday, the 13th. What luck!

President Holt of the Eugene Fruit-growers' association is considering the building of a cannery at Brownsville next spring.

Thirteen tons of prunes were dried in Halsey this year. Much fruit went to waste for want of a market or means of preservation.

T. J. Jackson of Lake Creek will probably have a wheat field to be proud of. He got certified winter white seed from O. A. C.

William Templeton of Brownsville, whose illness became alarming a week or two ago and who was sent to Dr. Kent at Salem, is improving.

Mrs. J. C. Standish is home from Portland and those two amateur housekeepers have lost their job, but are shedding no tears over the fact.

George McCart was attacked and some of his bones broken by the head of his Holstein herd on his farm near Harrisburg Wednesday of last week.

A. W. Metzger, long advertising manager, window decorator, salesman and stockholder in the Blain Clothing company, Albany, has withdrawn to go into business for himself. Employees of the company gave him a dinner at the St. Francis Friday night.

The weather clerk was kind to the birds Sunday morning and sent a dense fog that thwarted those blood-thirsty hunters who had planned to be out before day, prepared to slay and spare not.

The new officers of the Ladies' Study club are Mrs. Raleigh Templeton, president; Mrs. J. W. Moore, vice-president; Mrs. C. P. Stafford,

secretary and Mrs. George Laubner, treasurer. American literature is the main topic this season.

Hall's Floral and Music shop, Albany, last week advertised a floral service which nobody in Halsey is ready to perform. Flowers for parties, weddings, funerals, etc. This week the same company tell about phonographs, records, sheet music, etc. It will pay you to read the advertisements in the Enterprise every week.

At the county fair Brownsville, Lebanon and Lacombe and two granges, Mountain View and Sand Ridge, made the largest agricultural displays, while F. M. French with his 11 varieties of winter apples had the largest individual exhibit. On community exhibits the awards were as follows: Mountain View grange of Benton county, first; Lebanon community, second; Sand Ridge community, third; Brownsville community, fourth; Lacombe community, fifth.

John Standish sometimes paints pictures, among his other diversions. He left some with a friend at Yakima who paints and sells pictures and who writes that of John's productions he has sold a 12x16 painting and a number of pencil sketches for a good price to Mrs. McKitchen of Spokane. The painting is a landscape and among the sketches is a series depicting various episodes in the life of a range colt, including the animal's first news of the world, its first meeting with a calf, breaking to saddle, life on the range, meeting the calf when grown up, pulling its friend out of the mud where it had become mired, etc.

(Continued on page 4)

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# PUBLIC SCHOOL

Vote 314 x Yes

The purpose of the compulsory public school attendance bill is to insure the instruction of all Oregon children of grammar school age in a common language, a common history and common ideals, to the end that American unity shall be promoted, American ideals safeguarded and American institutions perpetuated.

This bill is proposed because its supporters believe that only by universal education of our children on standard and uniform lines can these things be achieved.

This bill proposes no religious restrictions. It contemplates no limitation of the right of the parent to teach religion to his child in his own way and according to his own belief. It raises no issue of religious difference.

This bill is purely a measure to insure that all children by attending the public schools shall be taught alike during their grammar school years, so that their outlook may grow to be a unified outlook for the common year and for their country and its institutions.

To make an all-American nation we must have all-American instruction of our children along recognized standard lines. Ignorance of American ideals and institutions and language is the greatest menace to them, because those who do not understand them properly do not support them.

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