

LUCKY STRIKE CIGARETTE

GET a package today. Notice the flavor—the wholesome taste of Kentucky Burley tobacco.

Why do so many "regular men" buy Lucky Strike cigarettes? They buy them for the special flavor of the toasted Burley tobacco.

There's the big reason—it's toasted, and real Burley. Make Lucky Strike your cigarette.



Guaranteed by The American Tobacco

Crooked Trails and Straight

By William MacLeod Raine

Copyright by G. W. Dillingham Company

SYNOPSIS. Part I.

CHAPTER I.—Adventurous and reckless, rather than criminal, and excited by liquor, Curly Flandrau and his chum Mac, both practically mere boys, become involved in a horse-stealing adventure. Disposing of the stolen stock in the town of Saguache, Ariz., the band separates. Curly and his partner staying in town. They are awakened and told a posse is in town in pursuit of them. They elude their pursuers. Overcast next day, Mac is killed by the posse and Curly made captive, after he has shot one and himself been wounded. The man shot is Luck Cullison.

CHAPTER II.—Cullison's friends, all cattlemen, determine to lynch Curly as an example to cattle thieves. With the rope around his neck he is saved by the intervention of Kate Cullison, Luck's daughter.

At that an amused laugh rippled out. It came from Maloney. He was leaning against the door jamb with his hands in his pockets. Nobody had noticed him before. He had come in after the girl. When Curly came to think it over later, if he had been given three guesses as to who had told Kate Cullison what was on the program he would have guessed Maloney each time.

"Now that you've relieved your mind proper, Miss Cullison, I expect any of the boys will be glad to escort you back to the house," Kite suggested with an acid smile.

"What have you got to do with this?" she flamed. "Our boys took him. They brought him here as their prisoner. Do you think we'll let you come over into this county and dictate everything we do?"

"I've got a notion tucked away that you're trying to do the dictating your own self," the Bar Double M man contradicted.

"I'm not. But I won't stand by while you get these boys to do murder."

Kite laughed sarcastically. "You hear your boss, boys."

"You've had your say now, Miss Kate. I reckon you better say good-night," advised Buck.

She handed Buck and his friends her compliments in a swift flow of fem-

inine ferocity.

Maloney pushed into the circle. "She's dead right, boys. There's nothing to this lynching game. He's only a kid."

The tide of opinion was shifting. Those who had been worked up to the lynching by the arguments of Bonifis began to resent his activity. Flandrau was their prisoner, wasn't he? No use going off half-cocked. Some of them were discovering that they were not half so anxious to hang him as they had supposed.

The girl turned to her friends and neighbors. "I oughtn't to have talked to you that way, but you know how worried I am about dad," she apologized with a catch in her breath. "I'm sure you didn't think or you would never have done anything to trouble me more just now. You know I didn't half mean it." She looked from one to another, her eyes shiny with tears. "I know that no braver or kinder men live than you. Why, you're my folks. You been brought up among you. And so you've got to forgive me."

Some said "Sure," others told her to forget it and one grass-widower drew a laugh by saying that her little spiel reminded him of happier days.

"I'm so glad you've changed your mind. I knew you would when you thought it over," she told them chatily and confidentially.

She was taking their assent for granted. Now she waited and gave them a chance to chorus their agreement. None of them spoke except Maloney. Most of them were with her in sympathy but none wanted to be first in giving way.

She looked around from one to another, still cheerful and sure of her ground apparently. Two steps brought her directly in front of one. She caught him by the lapels of his coat and looked straight into his eyes. "You have changed your mind, haven't you, Jake?"

The big Missourian twisted his hat in embarrassment.

"Sure. Whatever's right suits me."

"Well, you know what is right, don't you?"

"I expect."

"Then you won't hurt this man, our prisoner?"

"I haven't a thing against him if you haven't."

"Then you won't hurt him? You won't stand by and let the other boys do it?"

"Now, Miss Kate—"

She burst into sudden tears. "I thought you were my friend, but now I'm in trouble you—you think only of making it worse."

Jake gave in immediately and the rest followed like a flock of sheep. Two or three of the promises came hard, but she did not stop till each one individually had pledged himself.

The young man she had saved could

not keep his eyes from her. He would have liked to kneel down and kiss the edge of her dress and put his curly head in the dust before her. The tee in his heart had melted in the warmth of a great emotion. She was standing close to him talking to Buck when he spoke in a low voice.

"I reckon I can't tell you—how much I'm obliged to you, miss."

She drew back quickly as if he had been a snake about to strike, her hand instinctively gathering her skirts so that they would not brush against him. "I don't want your thanks," she told him, and her voice was like the drench of an icy wave.

But when she saw the hurt in his eyes she hesitated. Perhaps she guessed that he was human after all, for an impulse carried her forward to take the rope from his neck. While his heart beat twice her soft fingers touched his throat and grazed his cheek. Then she turned and was gone from the room.

It was a long time before the bunk-house quieted. Curly, faint with weariness, lay down and tried to sleep. His arm was painful a good deal and he felt feverish. The men of the Circle C and their guests sat down and argued the whole thing over. But after a time the doctor came in and had the patient carried to the house. He was put in a good clean bed and his arm dressed again.

The doctor brought him good news. "Cullison is doing fine. He ought to make it all right."

Curly thought about the girl who had fought for his life.

"You'll not let him die, Doc," he begged.

"He's too tough for that, Luck Cullison is."

Presently Doctor Brown gave him a sleeping powder and left him. Soon after that Curly fell asleep and dreamed about a slim dark girl with fine long-lashed eyes that could be both tender and ferocious.

CHAPTER III.

The Cullisons, and Laura London, Curly was awakened by the sound of the cook beating the call to breakfast on a triangle. Buck was standing beside the bed.

"How're they coming this glad morn'ing, son?" he inquired with a grin.

"Fine and dandy," grinned back Flandrau. "How is Cullison?"

"Good as the wheat, doc says. Mighty lucky for Mr. C. Flandrau that he is. Say, I'm to be yore valley and help you into them clothes. Git a wiggle on you."

Buck escorted his prisoner over to the ranch messhouse. The others had finished breakfast but Maloney was still eating. His mouth was full of hot cakes, but he nodded across at Curly in a casual, friendly way.

"How's the villain in the gray this morn'ing?" he inquired.

Twenty-one usually looks on the cheerful side of life. Curly had forgotten for the moment about what had happened to his friend Mac. He did not remember that he was in the shadow of a penitentiary sentence. The sun was shining out of a deep blue sky. The vigor of youth flowed through his veins. He was hungry and a good breakfast was before him. For the present these were enough.

"Me, I'm feeling a heap better than I was last night," he admitted.

"Come pretty near losing you out of the cast, didn't we?"

"Might a-turned out that way if the stage manager had not remembered the right cue in time."

The heart of the prisoner went out to this man who was reaching a hand to him in his trouble. He had always known that Maloney was true and steady as a snubbing post, but he had not looked for any kindness from him.

"Kite just got a telephone message from Saguache," the Bar Double M man went on easily. "Your friends that bought the rustled stock didn't get away with the goods. Seems they stumbled into a bunch of ruffians unexpected and had to pull their freight sudden."

"Make their getaway?" Curly inquired as indifferently as he could. But in spite of himself a note of eagerness crept into his voice. For if the men had escaped that would be two less witnesses against him.

"Yep."

"Too bad, if they hadn't I could have proved by them I was not one of the men who sold them the stock," Flandrau replied.

"Like h— you could," Buck snorted, then grinned at his prisoner in a shame-faced way: "You're a good one, son."

Jake stuck his head in at the door. "Buck, you're needed to help with them two-year-olds. The old man wants to have a talk with the rustler. Doc says he may, Maloney, will you take him up to the house?"

Maloney had once ridden for the Circle C and was friendly with all the men on the place. He nodded. "Sure."

A Mexican woman let them into the chamber where the wounded man lay. Kate was bending over the bed rearranging the pillows, but she looked up quickly when the two men entered. Her eyes were still gentle with the love that had been shining down from them upon her father.

Cullison spoke. "Sit down, Dick." And to his prisoner: "You too."

Flandrau saw close at hand for the first time the man who had been Arizona's most famous fighting sheriff. Luck Cullison was well-built and of medium height, of a dark complexion, clean shaven, wiry and muscular. Already past fifty, he looked not a day more than forty. One glance was enough to tell Curly the kind of man this was. The power of him found expression in the gray steel-chilled eyes that bored into the young outlaw.

"You have begun early, young fellow," he said quietly. "But never mind



"You Have Begun Early, Young Fellow," He Said Quietly.

that. I don't ask you to convict yourself. I sent for you to tell you I don't blame you for this." He touched the wound in his side.

"Different with your boys, sir."

"So the boys are a little excited, are they?"

"They were last night, anyhow," Curly answered, with a glimmer of a smile.

Cullison looked quickly at Maloney and then at his daughter.

"I'll listen to what you've been hiding from me," he told them.

"Oh, the boys had notions, Miss Kate argued with them and they saw things different," the Bar Double M rider explained.

But Cullison would not let it go at that. He made them tell him the whole story. When Curly and Maloney had finished he buried his daughter's little hand in his big brown fist. His eyes were dancing with pride, but he gave her not a word of spoken praise.

Kate spoke to Curly. "Father wants me to tell you that we don't blame you for shooting at him. We understand just how it was. Your friend got excited and shot as soon as he saw he was surrounded. We are both very sorry he was killed. Father could not stop the boys in time. Perhaps you remember that he tried to get you to surrender."

The rustler nodded. "Yes, I heard him holler to me to put my gun down, but the others blazed away at me."

"And so you naturally defended yourself. Father wants it made clear that he feels you could have done nothing else."

(To be continued.)



1919 Model

Cabinet Gas Range

AS nearly perfect as any range can be made. It conserves time, food, fuel --and money. Remarkably easy to keep clean with its white porcelain tray and splasher back. Enables you to do your cooking with a minimum of time and effort, giving you leisure for out-doors. A truly wonderful range for the money and thoroughly guaranteed.

Mountain States Power Co.

PHONE 58

Corner Sixth and Main