• THURSDAY, MAY 27, 1920.

Crooked

Trails

and

Straight

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SYNOPSIS. Part I.

CHAPTER L-Adventurous and reck-CHAPTER L-Adventurous and reck-less, rather than criminal, and axcited by liquor, Curly Flandrau and his chom. Mac, both practically more boys, become involved in a horse stealing adventure. Disposing of the stock in the town of Baguache. 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. Overtaken next day, Mac tis killed by the posse and Curly made captive, after he has shot one and him-self been wounded. The mills shot is-Luck Cullison. Luck Cullison.

CHAPTER II.-Cullison's friends, all cattlemen, determine to lynch t'uriy as an example to cattle theres. With the mpe around his neck he is saved by the intervention of Kate Cullison, Luck's daughter.

CHAPTER III.-IIIs wound dressed, and further violence not apprehended, Curty is sant for by Cullism. He ques-tions the two concerning a potorious out-law, Soupy Stone, real leader of the rus-liers who had been Curty's undoining Fiandrao learns that Soupy Stone is Lui-beous Litter enemy and excertises a bale ful influence over the exceletific son Sam, who has quarreled with his father Cullism goes half for Curty.

CHAPTER IV --Curly remnes Scaps Stone from a bear trap into which he has stumbled, and discovers that the cutlaw is young Sam's rival for the hand of Lau-ra London. She gives Curly a note to deliver to Sam, and Flandrau and Stone set out for the latter's ranch.

CHAPTER V.-There Curly meets his companions of the rustling expedition and delivers Laura's note to Sam. Young Cullison believes Stone is his friend and says he will stick by him. Finderau sees some more is being planned and becomes convinced it is train robbery. Sam leaves the ranch to go to Seguache. Curly accompanies him.

CHAPTER VL - Eavesdropping at a CHAPTER VL - Eavesdropping at a meeting place. Curly hears Stone and his lieutenant, Lute Blackwell, arrange to hold op the train at a crossing known as Tin Cup, and after the robbery shoot young Cullison and leave his body on the scene. Stone thus glutting his revenge on the ex-sheriff through his son's death and disgrace. Curly is accused by Sione of being a spy of Luck Cullison's. They are separated, but part with the understand-ing that their next meeting will mean a fight to the death. Curly makes a con-fidant of Dick Maioney, cattleman, and they inform Luck Cullison of Stone's plot spainst his son. against his son.

Part II.

CHAPTER L-After an all-night sea-sion at the Roundup club, in which Culli-son has lost beavily there is an exchange of sharp words between Luck and a sheepman. Cass Fendrick, with whom Cullison has a feud.

CHAPTER 11.-Saguache is electrified by the news of the holdup of express measurages, the bandits securing \$50,000. Cullison pays his poker debts and shortly afterward Mackensie and Alex Flandrau, his closest friends, learn he is suspected of the express robbery, his hat having been found on the scene and he being mission missing.

Flandrau demanded, his hard eyes fastened to her timorous ones.

"1-1-1 don't know what you mean." "No use. We're here for business, Dick, you stay with her. Don't let her leave or shout a warning."

He passed into the back room, which was a kind of combination living room, kitchen and bedroom. A door led from the rear into a back yard littered with empty packing cases, garbage cans and waste paper. After taking a look around the yard le locked the back door noiselessly. There was no other apparent exit from the kitchen-bedroom except the one by which he and his uncle had entered from the shop. But he knew the place must have a cellar, and his inspection of the yard had showed no entrance there. He drew back the Navajo rug that covered the floor and found one of the old-fashloned trap doors some cheap houses have. Into this was fitted an iron ring with which to lift it.

From the darkness below came no sound, but Curly's imagination con-



From the Darkness Below Came No Sound.

ceived the place as full of shining eyes glaring up at him. Any had men down there already had the drop on them. Therefore neither Curly por his uncle made the mistake of drawing a weapon.

"I'm coming down, boys," young Flandrau announced in a quiet confident voice. "The place is surrounded by our friends and it won't do you a whole lot of good to shoat me up. I'd a lyise you not to be too impulsive."

He descended the steps, his face like a stone wall for all the emotion it recorded. At his heels came the older man. Curly struck a match, found an electric bulb above his head and turned the button. Instantly the darkness was driven from the cellar, The two Flandraus were quite alone in the room. For furniture there was a table, a cot which had been slept in and not made up, and a couple of rough chairs. The place had no window's, no means of ventilation except through the trap door. Yet there were evidences to show that it had recently been inhabited. Half-smoked cigars littered the floor. A pack of cards lay in disorder on the table. The Seutine! with date line of that day lay tossed in a corner,

CHAPTER V.

State 1

THE SPRINGFIELD NEWS

A Message in Cipher.

While Kate listened to what Curly had to tell her the dark eyes of the girl were fastened upon the trembling little woman standing near the door.

"Do you mean that she we going to let my failier be killed rather than tell what she knows?" Her voice was sharply incredulous, touched with a horror scarcely realized.

"I-1 don't know anything about it." the harassed woman iterated.

"What's the use of saying that when we know you do? And you'll not get out of it by sobbing. You've got to talk. You've got to tell-you've just got to," Kate insisted.

The little woman shrank before the energy of a passion so vital. No strength was in her to fight. But she could and did offer the passive resistance of obstinate allence.

Curly had drawn from his pocket the newspaper found in the cellar. His eyes had searched for the date line to use as cumulative evidence, but they had remained fastened to one story. Now he spoke imperatively. "Come here, Miss Kate, 1-belleve

this is a message to us." "A message?"

"From your father, perhaps."

"How could it be?"

"I found the paper in the cellar where he was. See how some of these words are scored. Done with a finger nnil, looks like,"

This was the paragraph upon which his gaze had fastened, and the words and letters were scored sharply as shown below, though in the case of single letters the mark ran through them instead of underneath, evidently that no mistake might be made as to which was meant:

J. P. Kelly of the ranger force reports over the telephone that by unexpected good luck he has succeeded in taking prisoner the notorious Jack Foster of Hermosilla and the Rincons notoriety and is now bringing him to Saguache where he will be locked up pending a disposition of his case. Kelly succeeded in surprising him while he was eating dinner at a Mexican road-house just this side of the border.

"Do you make it out?" Maloney asked, looking over their shoulders. Curiy took a pencil and an envelope from his pocket. On the latter he jotted down some words and handed the paper to his friend. This was what Maloney read:

...... luck prisonerJack of He Saguade locked up pending a disposition of his case. succeeded in surprising him

"Bend that right ahead." Dick did not quite get the idea, but down into the cellar. Before he came to himself his hands were tied behind his mark"

"And then?"

"They watched him day and night. Fendrick himself did not go near the place-if it was Fendrick, Blackwell swore to kill Mrs. Wylie if she told. They held him there till tonight. She thinks they were trying to get father to sign some paper."

"The relinquishment, of course. That means the other man was Fendrick."

Kate nodded. "Yes."

Curly rose. The muscles stood out in his jaw hard as steel ropes.

"We'll rake the Rincons with a fine tooth comb. Don't you worry. I've already wired for Bucky O'Connor to come and help. We'll get your father out of the hands of those hell hounds. Won't we, Dick?"

The girl's eyes admired him, a lean. hard-bitten Westerner, with eyes as unblinking as an Arizona sun and with muscles like wire springs. His face still held its boyishness, but it had lost forever the irresponsibility of a few months before. She saw in him an iron will, shrewdness, courage and resource. Out of ten thousand men there were none whose voice drummed on her heartstrings as did that of this youth.

. Two men sat in a log cabin on opposite sides of a cheap table. One of them was immersed in a newspaper. His body was relaxed, his mind apparently at ease. The other watched himmalevolently. His tingers caressed the handle of a revolver that protruded from the holster at his side. He would have liked nothing better than to have drawn it and sent a bullet crashing into his unperturbed brain of his prisoner.

There were reasons of pollcy why it were better to curb this fascinating desire, but sometimes the impulse to kill surged up almost uncontrollably. On these occasions Luck Cullison was usually "deviling" him, the only diversion that had been open to the ranchman for some days past,

From time to time as kuck read he commented genially on the news.

Blackwell merely scowled, Given his way, Cullison would not be here to read the Sentinel. But the brains of the conspiracy had ruled otherwise and insisted, too, upon decent treatment. With one ankle securely tied to a leg of the table there was no danger. in freeing the hands of the cattleman. but his hosts saw that never for an instant were hands and feet at liberty together. For this man was not the one with whom to take chances.

Cullison read on :

" Lieutenant O'Connor of the Arlzona rangers left town today for a short trip into the hills, where he expects to spend a few days hunting. Hunting what, do you reckon? Or bunting who, I should say. Ever meet Bucky O'Connor, Blackwell? No, 1 reckon not. He's since your time. A crackerjack, too! Wonder If Bucky ain't after some friends of mine?"

· "Shut up," growled the other.

pray your friends won't find you They can't reach here without being heard. If they get to hunting these hills you sure want to hope they'd stay cold, for just as soon as they get warm it will be the signal for you to shoot the chutes,"

PACER

Luck met his triumphant savagery with an impassive face. "Interesting if true. And where will you be when my friends arrive? I reckon it won't be a pleasant meeting for Mr. Blackweil."

"I'll be headed for Mexico. I tell you because you ain't liable to go around spreading the news. There's a horse saddled in the dip back of the hill crost. Get It?"

From far below there came through the open window the faint click of a horse's hodfs ringing against the stones in the dry hed of a river wash. Swiftly Blackwell moved to the door, taking down a rifle from its rack as he did so, Cullison rose noiselessly in his chair. If it came to the worst he meant to shout aloud his presence and close with this fellow. Hampered as he was by the table, the man would get him without question. But if he could only sink his fingers into that hairy throat while there was still life in him he could promise that the Mexican trip would never take place.

Blackwell, from his place by the door, could keep an eye both on his prisoner and on a point, of the trail far below, where borsemen must pass to reach the cabin.

A rider came into sight and entered the mouth of the canyou. He was waving a white handkerchief. The man in the doorway answered the signal.

"Not your friends fills time, Mr. Sheriff," Blackwell Jeered.

"I get a stay of-execution, do 1?" The cool drawling voice of the cattleman showed nothing of the tense feeling within.

He resumed his sent and the reading of the newspaper. Presently, to the man that came over the threshold he spoke with a casual nod.

"Morning, Cass."

Fendrick mumbled a surly answer, The number of ironical comradeship his captive chose to employ was more than an annoyance. To serve his ends it was necessary to put the fear of death into this man's heart, which was a thing he had found impossible to do. The logic of circumstances was driving the sheepman into a corner. He had on impulse made the owner of the

Circle C his prisoner. Seeing him its there unconscious on the floor of the Jack of Hearts, it had come to him in a flash that he might hold him and force a relinquishment of the Del Oro claim. His disappearance would explain itself if the rumor spread that he was the W. & S. express robber. Cass had dope it to save himself from the ruln of his business, but already he had regretted it fifty times. Threats could not move Luck in the least. He was as hard as lroff.

So the sheepman found himself between the upper and the nether millstones. He could not drive his prisoner to terms and he dared not release him. For if Cullison went away unpledged he would surely send him to the penitentiary. Nor could he hold him a prisoner indefinitely. He had seen the "personal" warning in both the morning and the afternoon papers, He guessed that the presence of the ranger, Bucky O'Counor, in Saguache was not a chance. The law was closing in on him. Somehow Cullison must be made to come through with a relinquishment and a pledge not to prosecute. The only other way out would be to let Blackwell wreak his hate on the former sheriff. From this he shrank with every instinct. Fendrick was a hard man. He would have fought it out to a finish if necessary. But murder was a thing he could not do.

CHAPTER III.-Kate goes to Saguache for a consultation with Mackenzie, Alex Flandrau and Curly. All are convinced of Luck's innocence. The sheriff reveals that besides the finding of Cullison's hat, and his payment of his debts, Cass Fen-drick had seen the robber and is almost certain it was Luck. Cullison is about to enter a homestead claim which will prac-tically put Fendrick out of business.

CHAPTER IV.-Kate's shrewdness re-veals how Cuillson had taken Fendrick's hat when he left the Roundup club, and suspicion points strongly to a frametip on Fendrick's part and to his being respon-sive for Luck's disappearance. The sher-iff receives a series of notes turning on the "Jack of Hearts." Curly finds a ct-gar store by that name and secures evi-dence that the proprietness, Mrs. Wyle, knows what hannesed to Luck. knows what happened to Luck.

CHAPTER V.-In the celler of the cl gar store Flandrau finds a cipher mea-sage left by Cullison, and follows the scent. Luck is held primmer by Fendrick and Blackwell in a sheep herder's cabin in the mountains. Fendrick wants him to sign a relinquisiment of his homestead rights, conditional to his release.

"First thing is to search the Jack of Hearts and see what's there. Are you with me, Uncle Alec?"

. "I sure am, Curly," and he reached for his bat.

Curly turned at the door with his warm smile. "By the way, I've got some news I forgot. 1 know where your father got the money to pay his poker debts. Mr. Jordan of the Cattlemen's National made him a personal loan. He figured it would not hurt the bank because the three men Luck paid it to would deposit it with the bank again."

"By George, that's what we did, too, every last one of us," his uncle admitted.

"Every little helps," Kate said, and her little double nod thanked Curly

Maloney met them in front of the Jack of Hearts.

"Dick, you go with me inside, Uncle Alee, will you keep guard outside?" "No, bub, 1 won't." I knew Luck before you were walking bowlegged," the old cattleman answered brusquely. Curly grinned, "All right, Don't

plame me if you get shot up." Mrs. Wylie's startled eyes told tales

when she saw the three men. Her face was ashen.

"I'm here to play trumps, Mrs. Wylie. What secret has the Jack of Hearts got hidden from us?" young

"Make anything out of it?" the older Flandrau asked.

"He's been here, but they've taken him away. Will you cover the telephoning? Have all the ranches notified that Luck is being taken into the hills, so they can picket the trails."

"How do you know he is being taken there?"

"I don't know, I guess, Blackwell is in it. He knows every nook of the hills. The party left here not two hours since, looks like."

Carly put the newspaper in his pocket and led the way back to the store.

"The birds have flown, Dick. Made their getaway through the alley late this afternoon, probably just after it got dark." He turned to the woman. "Mrs. Wylle, murder is going to be done, I shouldn't wonder. And you're liable to be held guilty of it unless you tell us all you know."

She began to weep, helplessly, but with a sort of stubbornness, too, Frightened she certainly was, but some greater fear held her silent as to the secret. "I don't know anything about it," she repeated over and over.

Maloney had an inspiration, He spoke in a low voice to Curly, "Let's take her to the hotel. Miss Kate will know how to get it out of her better than we can."

Mrs. Wylie went with them quietly enough. She was shaken with fears, but still resolute not to speak. They might send her to prison. She would tell them nothing-nothing at all, For some one who had made terror the habit of her life had put the fear of deeth into her soul.

Kate, tense with excitement, took the envelope and read aloud ;

"Luck-prisoner-Jack of Hearts -now Sagunche-tocked up pending a disposition of his case-succeeded in surprising him." She looked up with shining eyes. "He's alive somewhere, We'll save him now."

Curly spoke to her in a low voice. "You have a talk with Mrs. Wylle alone. We'll pull our freights. She'll tell you what she knows." He smiled in his gentle, winning way, "She's sure had a tough time of it if ever a woman had. I reckon a little kindness is what she needs. Let her see we're her friends and will stand by her, that we won't let her come to harm because she talks"

It was an hour before Kate joined them, and her eyes, though they were very bright, told tales of tears that had heen shed.

"That poor woman! She has told me everything. Father has been down is that cellar for days under a guard. They took him away tonight. She doesn't know where. It was she sent the warnings to Sheriff Bolt. She wanted him to raid the place, but she dured not go to him."

"Because of Blackwell?"

"Yes. He came straight to her as soon as he was treed from the penitentiary. He had her completely terrorized. She gave him money, and he came for more- and more."

Curly nodded. He said nothing, but his strong Jaws clamped.

"He was there that day," the girl continued. "She plucked up courage to refuse him what little she had left because she needed it for the rent. He got hold of her arm and twisted it. Father heard her cry and came in. Blackwell was behind the door as it opened. He struck with a loaded cane and father fell unconscious. He ruised it to strike again, but she clung to his arm and called for help. Before he could shake her off another man came in. He wrenched the club away."

"Fendrick?" breathed Curly, "She doesn't know, But the first thing he did was to lock the outer door and take the key. They carried father

'Sure you'll shut up when p lands on you," retorted Luck cheerfully. Then, with a sudden whoop: "Hello, here's a personal to your address. Listen. "The friends of L. C. serve notice that what occurred at the Jack of Hearts is known. Any violence hereafter done to him will be paid for to the limit. No guilty man will escape.' So the boys are getting busy. 1 figured they would be,"

The former convict leaned forward augrily. "Lemme see that paper."

His guest handed it over, an index. finger pointing out the item, "Large as life, Blackwell, No, sir. You ce'tainly didn't ride herd proper on that opportunity."

"Don't be too sure it's gone, Mr. Sheriff.'

"They've got you dead to rights. Read that personal again. Learn it by heart. 'The friends of L. C. give warning.' You better believe they're rounding up your outfit. They know I'm alive. They know all about the Jack of Hearts. Fretty soon they'll know where you've got me hidden."

"You'd better pray they won't. For if they find the nest it will be empty. Look out of that window behind you." Luck turned. The cabin was built

on a ledge far up on the mountainside. From the back wall sloped for a hundred feet an almost perpendicular slide of rock.

"There's a prospect hole down there," Blackwell explained savagely, "You'd go down the Devif's Stidewhat's left of you, I mean-deep into that prospect hole. The timberings are rotted and the whole top of the working ready to cave in. When your body hits it there will be an avalanche -with Mr. Former-Sheriff Cullison at the bottom of it, You'll be buried without any funeral expenses, and I reckon your friends will never know where to put the headstone."

The thing was devilishly simple and feasible. Luck, still looking out of the window, felt the blood run cold down his spine, for he knew this teltow would never stick at murder if he felt it would be safe.

"So you see I'm right; won'd better

"Price of sheep good this week?" Cullison asked amiably.

"I didn't come here to discuss the price of sheep with you." Fendrick spoke harshly. "Are you going to sign this relinquishment?"

Luck's face showed a placid surprise, "Why no, Cass, Thought I mentioned that before."

"You'd better." The sheepman's harnssed face looked ugly enough for anything.

"Can't figure it out that way."

"You've got to sign it, By Gyou've no option."

"No?" Still with pleasant incredulity.

(To be continued.)

Periodic Billious Attacks.

Persons subject to bilious attacks at regular intervals know about when to expect an attack. They find that they have no desire for food when an attack is due but usually eat because it is meal time. Skip one meal and take three of Chamberlain's Tablets and you may be able to avoid the attack. Persons subject to periodie billious attacks should not drink tea or coffee at any time.

Vegetable Gardening-Now is a good time for the farmers of the Willamette valley for field setting of tomato plants. Other regions can set out the plants a little later.