

# Montana Rides Again

A RAPID-FIRE ROMANCE BY EVAN EVANS.

**SYNOPSIS:** The Montana Kid and Brother Pascual meet Rosita on the edge of the Valley of the Dead. They are there to try to save Mateo, who was captured by the unscrupulous governor of Oregon while he and Rosita were attempting to do the Church a service. No man leaves the Valley of the Dead alive, yet Rosita and Pascual expect to enter it, leaving Rosita to watch their horses for them. They await the caravan bringing Mateo.

## Chapter 33 REPENTANCE

"THAT'S the meanest, is it?" Montana asked Rosita. "All the way across the desert you were not afraid?"

"I marked all your camping-spots. Where you had dug the trench I could find the water. I had an easy way."

"I wonder over you, child," said the friar.

"Why do you wonder?" asked the girl. "Has he told you that I sold him to General Estrada? Has he told you that?"

If there were Indian in the girl, there was Indian in the friar, also. He showed it now because he opened his mouth in astonishment and put his hand over the gap like any red man.

"Ten thousand pesos—dead or alive—He kept—dead or alive—a tall man who smiles a great deal, with blue eyes and black hair. His ways are graceful—and he smiles a great deal. I sold him, Brother Pascual. I sold him to a dog—I sold him to Estrada!"

The Kid stood up. "Don't come near me—don't forgive me!" she gasped.

And she went on in a sort of soft chant: "I was going to be a great lady with a carriage and ten servants. I'd have rings and bracelets and necklaces. And I sold El Kid to get them. What is the hell for traitors, Brother Pascual?"

The tears began to roll down her face. The Kid sat down beside her and dried the tears with a handkerchief. "Look," said the friar. "He forgives you."

"All men are fools," answered the girl. She put her head back on the shoulder of the Kid and looked up at him from under wet lashes. "Dying would do no good," she said to him. "What's the death of a creature like me? How would it help El Kid?"

"There is no mountain," exclaimed the friar, lifting his hands, "that repentance will not move."

"Ay," said the girl. "Go away from me, and take El Kid away, so that I can repent. I'm not repenting now."

"Ah, child," said the simple Pascual, "you must repent!"

"Have I two hearts?" she answered. "At one moment can I repent and love him, too?"

"Shall I go away?" asked the friar. "Why should you?" she asked. "Do you think that I'm ashamed of this? I was never so much—in church!"

This idea of hers made her begin to laugh. She sat up away from Montana and began to shake her head.

"You two have done your poor cooking. But I have jerked venison, and two canteens of fresh water. Cool water, because I kept the sacks wet around them. Now I shall cook for you, and you shall see the difference. Also I have one little flask of good brandy. You have to eat and to drink, because tomorrow—"

IN THE dawn of the next morning they saw the dust cloud coming up the road, and before morning was far advanced they had sight of the caravan of the damned who were marching towards the Valley of the Dead.

There must have been forty men, and perhaps ten or a dozen women, with a long cattle chain running from one to one, looped around the necks. The drivers went up and down the line. Three of them, with whips and guns, guarded the condemned, and in addition there was a rear guard of half a dozen Rurales.

At the same time, there came out of the lower mouth of the Valley of the Dead a pair of men naked to the waist, in short, wide-flaring trousers, with red sashes about their hips.

They had on their heads straw sombreros with great brims broader than their shoulders. But, even so, those shoulders were sun-blackened. Their legs were bare from the knees to the sandals they wore.

They were not Indians. They must, therefore, be a pair of the precious devils incarnate who superintended, for Juan-Silva, the immediate affairs of his belt.

## MEDFORD HOTEL HEAD ROUNDS OUT 2 YEARS OF SUCCESSFUL WORK

Today marks the completion of the second year of F. O. Denson's active management of the Hotel Medford and, in celebration of this occasion, February has been the most successful business month for the hotel for several years.

In commenting upon his two years in charge of the Medford Hotel, Mr. Denson voiced his appreciation for the splendid cooperation and patronage accorded by the people of Medford and southern Oregon.

Many important improvements have been made in the Hotel Medford since Dr. Denson assumed the helm of that hostelry. Extensive remodeling and redecorating has been executed, and, at the present time, contractors are at work in the installation of sixteen new showers in Hotel Medford rooms.

The present remodeling program, tying-in with the national modernization activities, call for 29 new showers to be completed within the next three weeks. Other extensive improvements will be made, bringing the Hotel Medford up to a strictly modern basis.

The Hotel Medford remodeling program has included the establishment of attractive bridge and party rooms available to members of local women's clubs.

Mr. Denson is receiving congratulations from his patrons and friends throughout this city, upon the completion of two years of active participation in Medford business circles.

The woman who had fallen got up from the beating and began to scream with her head fallen back on her shoulders; and that was the way she walked on, screaming at the sky, her head bobbing up and down with every step.

THE friar was praying, Montana beat the knuckles of his fist hard and fast against his forehead. Only the girl looked on with calm, wide eyes.

The Kid saw her, at last. And a sort of horror superior to that which had overcome him now straightened him up. He went to the girl and said, "Rosita, is there anything under the skin that you really give a damn about?"

She drifted her eyes over his face. She took out a good, clean white handkerchief and wiped away the sweat that was coursing over his skin. "About you," she said. "I used to care about being a great, rich lady one day. Now I only care about you. All of you. Are you loathing me, Montana?"

"We won't talk," said the Kid. "You want me to do more than you and Pascual when I see a woman beaten?" said the girl. "You want me to shoulder and fall in a faint. But look!" She tapped her fingers against the rock before them, a huge, sun-cracked boulder.

"I am harder than that," said Rosita, and smiled at him. For the first time she had spoken words that he could believe utterly. And yet, instead of wishing her away, he felt only a guilty sense of joy. Hard stone and hard steel—great things can be built with them.

When the caravan of the condemned had reached the mouth of the valley, the mounted guard from the rear came forward and an officer of the Rurales delivered to one of the two men from the valley a long paper, which the other then read over, checking off a list of names, apparently.

After that he walked around the line. A fat man he prodded in the ribs, and laughed. When he came to the woman who had fallen, he shrugged his shoulders and made a gesture of tossing something over his shoulder.

Having completed his inspection, he took from his belt a wallet out of which he slowly counted shining pieces of money. When he had finished, the Rural recounted the cash and burst out in protest.

The man of the valley argued with fewer words but heavier ones, it seemed. And presently the debate ended. The Rurales and the three whip-guards turned their horses and went down the road at a trot, soon lost behind the dust of their own raising.

The two men of the valley examined the string of prisoners again. And when one of them came to the same unlucky woman who had fallen in the grip of the chain, he struck her suddenly behind the knees and sent her down with a short, strangled scream.

The Kid drew a gun, but the girl beside him caught his hand.

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Tomorrow, Montana stages a bloody fight.

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The Grange bill was similar to the county unit plan advanced by the administration, which had passed the house and then met defeat in the senate, except that it would have

## STURGEON START RUN IN COLUMBIA

PORTLAND, Ore., March 2—(AP)—An unusually heavy run of sturgeon, huge boned sea fish, is on in the Columbia river and its tributaries.

Already they have gathered in great numbers in the Willamette river as far upstream as Oregon City, and in the Columbia.

Running up to 700 and 800 pounds in weight, the sturgeon follow the small runs, gobbling as they swim to their native spawning beds.

## Start Sales Tax In Colorado For Relief Purposes

DENVER, March 2—(AP)—Colorado merchants expected to collect today an estimated \$10,000, the first day's receipts from a new two per cent sales tax to raise millions of dollars for relief.

Meantime, the Colorado Liberal league launched an initiative movement to limit the tax to sales of \$25 and up. The petitions will require 31,331 signatures if the measure is to be placed on the ballot.

## BEND WIFE GIVEN TERM IN PRISON

BEND, Ore., March 2—(AP)—Mrs. Merle D. Sage, who confessed she fired a shotgun through a window of her Redmond home at her husband last Sunday night, was sentenced to a term in the state penitentiary not to exceed three years, when she appeared before Circuit Judge T. E. J. Duffy here today.

In passing sentence, Judge Duffy pointed out no motive for the shooting had been established. Mrs. Sage was charged with assault with a dangerous weapon.

Sage went in court, his head swathed in bandages, when sentence was pronounced and with tears streaming down his face walked over to his sobbing wife and embraced her.

Mrs. Sage will be taken to Salem tomorrow.

## RELIEF DEADLOCK HOLDS IN SENATE

WASHINGTON, March 2—(AP)—Senate administration leaders today turned down flatly a proposed "concession" offered by Senator McCarran (D., Nev.), on his prevailing wage amendment to the \$4,880,000,000 relief bill.

McCarran proposed an addition to his proposal which would authorize the president to regulate the hours of 3,500,000 relief workers so payment of the prevailing wage would not involve any increased cost above the \$4,000,000,000 the administration plans to spend on emergency public works.

Senator Robinson, the Democratic leader, with whom McCarran discussed the change, said that negotiations for a settlement of the relief deadlock would continue over the week-end.

## FIREMEN WILL DINE AND DANCE MONDAY

Fire Chief Roy Elliott announced that next Monday the fire department will give an entertainment for volunteer firemen and the "regulars," to be held at the fire hall.

The entertainment, which will include a feed, dance and general get-together, will follow the regular volunteer meeting. Volunteers, regulars and their lady guests are invited.

The Mail Tribune wants ads.

## THE FAMILY ALBUM—THE MORNING PAPER

OPENS FRONT DOOR TO GET MORNING PAPER TO READ BEFORE BREAKFAST. PAPER ISN'T THERE

GLARES AT WATCH, TAPS FOOT IMPATIENTLY, AND MUTTERS IT CERTAINLY OUGHT TO BE HERE BY NOW!

KEEPS GOING TO WINDOW TO SEE IF THERE'S ANY SIGN OF PAPER BOY

GOES OUT-OF-DOORS TO SEE IF IT MIGHT HAVE BLOWN INTO SHRUBBERY BESIDE THE DOOR

STRIDES UP AND DOWN HALL MUTTERING IT'S AN OUTRAGE, HE'S GOING TO COMPLAIN, AND HE CERTAINLY WON'T STAND FOR IT

STAMPS OUT TO SIDE-WALK, AND PEERS UP AND DOWN STREET UNTIL HE GETS TOO COLD

SEEMS OUT WIFE IN KITCHEN, BELLOWING THE COUNTRY'S GOING TO THE DOGS! NO NEWSPAPER!

FINDS WIFE TOOK PAPER IN AND LAID IT OUT FOR HIM ON LIVING-ROOM TABLE. READS IT WITH-OUT SAYING MUCH

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By C. M. Payne

## SMATTER POP

I HOPE I DIDN'T SEE YOU PICKING AT THE FRONTING OF THAT FRESH CAKE!

?

I HOPE YA DIDN'T, TOO!

POP!

SOMETHING?

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## TAILOR TOMMY—Nature Defeats El President's Plans!

JEMMY AND SKETTER, LEARNING THAT THEIR FRIEND, BILL M'SUIRE, WAS ABOUT TO BE SHOT BY THE REBELS DECIDED TO FLY BACK TO SANTOS CALIENTE AND TRY TO RESCUE HIM. BUT EL PRESIDENTE GONZALES HAS THOUGHT OF A MORE EXPEDITIOUS PLAN.

2119

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## PEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Complete Surrender?

YOU'RE A SMART ONE, BEN WEBSTER! YOU'VE GOT ME LICKED, SON—WHAT ARE YOUR TERMS?

I WANT THE PAPER YOU HAD MR. CHIRP SIGN—

OH, SAY, THAT'S PRETTY TOUGH—

--Y'AIN'T GOING TO TURN ME OUT IN THE COLD, ARE YOU? GIVE ME A LITTLE TIME TO THINK THIS OVER, WONT YOU? TELL YOU WHAT YOU DO—COME BACK AND---

--SEE ME RIGHT AFTER THE PARADE IS OVER—THEN WE'LL SETTLE THINGS--

THAT'S OKAY BY ME—I'LL BE BACK THEN--

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## THE NEBBS—Good-bye and Good Luck

THE JOY OF NEBB'S SUCCESSFUL LITTLE STOCK VENTURE HAS BEEN SOMEWHAT DAMPENED BY THE REQUEST FOR A LOAN OF \$500 BY THE FELLOW WHO GAVE HIM THE TIP.

MR. NEBB, THERE'S A GENTLEMAN OUT HERE TO SEE YOU—A MR. WEST

TELL HIM I'M OUT AND YOU DON'T KNOW WHEN I'LL BE BACK—TELL HIM NOT TO WAIT

WELL, WHEN HE GETS BACK TO THAT GUY, IT WON'T BE A LIE, BECAUSE I'M OUT. HE'S THE GUY WHO GAVE ME THE TIP ON CARBONATED BEVERAGE!

NOW HE WANTS TO BORROW 500 BUCKS—HE THINKS I BOUGHT A THOUSAND SHARES—I TOLD HIM I WAS BRAGGING AND THAT I ONLY HAD TWO HUNDRED SHARES—IT LOOKS LIKE MY LATEST BRAG IS GOING TO COST ME 500 IF THAT BABY EVER CATCHES UP TO ME!

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## BRINGING UP FATHER

I'D LIKE TO GO TO THE ASH-WAGON DRIVERS' DANCE TO-NIGHT. DINTY AN' THE GANG WILL BE THERE--

MAGGIE? KIN I--?

I KNOW WHAT YOU ARE GOING TO ASK ME--NO! YOU CAN'T GO--YOU ARE GOING TO THE OPERA WITH ME--DID YOU HEAR THAT?

I HEARD IT--AN' AS LONG AS HE CAN'T GO WHERE HE WANTED TO GO, HE KIN GIVE ME THE TICKETS AN' I'LL GO--IT'S GONNA BE A SWELL SHIN-DIG--

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