

Montana Rides Again

A RAPID-FIRE ROMANCE BY EVAN EVANS.

Chapter 45
LOVE SONG
ROSITA reached out her right hand, shouting. Every sound of her voice struck through the heart of the Kid like a mighty chord sung by a thousand sweet voices.

"The black horse for you, Pascual!" he called over his shoulder. "Steady all, I throw on the brake!"

It screamed, the wooden blocks grinding on the iron tires as the Kid checked the rush of the horses with all his might. And then down into the tangle. He caught the knife from the hand of the girl and slashed.

The leather traces were short, the long reins gashed in two, and in a moment Mateo Rubiz, on the bare back of the white wheeler, was galloping straight ahead down the road.

For he knew that the girl's Mustang, the red mare, and the black horse were all fresh, but the white was tired, very tired, already and with no feather's weight on its back.

They reared their horses for distance. And then they were running for time, with a sun that sloped with a maddening slowness towards the western horizon. For the pursuit could not gain and the weary white horse held back the four fugitives.

More than once, bullets sang in the air, but the distance was entirely too great; only a random shot could strike them.

At last the Kid brought Sally close beside the white. He took the hand of Rubiz and lifted twenty pounds, thirty pounds, forty pounds of the bulk of the big rider, transferring it thus to the strong back and the tireless, iron legs of red Sally.

There was no faltering in her, and it was her strength that carried them into the red of the sunset, and suddenly into the quick twilight that securely covered them from further pursuit at that moment.

All pursuit was not ended, of course, unless those savage riders from the Valley of the Dead gave a little more thought to their memory of Juan-Silva, smiling open-eyed at the sun. But the truth was that they had neither sight nor sound of an enemy all the way to Duraya.

But the taste of life was so exceedingly sweet to them all, after the Valley of the Dead, that the precious trinket inside the bit of chamol was never unwrapped once during the entire journey.

Perhaps there never was a happier journey, in spite of the sand-filled winds that whipped and choked them, and the foul water, and the starvation rations most of the way, and the reason for that happiness was that here were four who had been through fire together, so that they knew the temper of one another. And what is happiness in this world?

They had come into the green of living mountains—living with grass and with trees and with water after the naked desert they had crossed.

The Kid himself as the evening closed in, had brought down with two shots from one of Estrada's revolvers a deer that leaped out before them from a thicket.

ROSITA stood leaning against a tree, just then, tapping with her slender fingers against the rough of the bark.

"Tell me, Mateo," she said, "if you have forgiven this gringo? Have you forgiven him, and forgotten?"

"I?" exclaimed Rubiz—but even he guarded his voice so that it might not enter the sleep and disturb the dreams of Pascual. "If I forgive him, may San Juan of Capistrano never forgive me or be aiding me again! What? A man-stealer who caught away Tomio from me? Forgive him? I'll see him damned before I forgive him."

He half raised himself and glared at Montana, who lay flat on his back now, with his hands cupped at the back of his head.

"Ay, Mateo," said the Kid, dreamily. "I've always known it. Some day I'll have my thumbs in the soft of your throat and break your wind-pipe between them."

Rubiz made a sound as though he were drawing water, not air, through his set teeth.

"But when you are dead," said Rubiz, "San Juan strike me if I shall not be a little sad."

"Well," said Montana, in his gentle voice, "when I've buried you, I'll get a thick-headed bulldog and call him Rubiz, and that will take your place well enough."

"Ah-b-b!" murmured Rubiz, coming softly, catlike, to his knees and one hand.

"Be still, Mateo!" commanded the girl.
"You would help him, eh?" demanded Rubiz. "And yet God knows how many of your countrymen he has butchered like sheep."
She went to Montana and leaned over him.
"What am I to you, devil of a gringo?" she asked.
"Sit down here and I'll tell you," said Montana.
She sat down at once, and he moved until his head rested in her lap.
"Now tell me," said the girl.
"Afterwards," said he, "I'll tell you how much I love you, but now I wish to sleep. Sing to me, Rosita."
"Ah," said the girl, "tell me if I hate you or love you most!"
"Sing to me," insisted Montana, "and you'll find the answer in the songs."
She laughed a little, and then she began to sing in a voice smaller than speech. Rubiz strained his ears to catch the sounds. He could see the dimness of her hands smoothing the brow of the Kid.

When they came into Duraya, in the middle of the night, they climbed, all four, to the room of the bishop.
He rose from prayer to greet them. He was very tired, very weary. But when he saw them a strength flowed suddenly back through him.
"My children," he said, "are you the ones who went to the Valley of the Dead and undid the work of the devil there? Was it you who turned the slaves loose?"
"Loose!" exclaimed Rubiz. "Do you mean to say that the slaves broke loose?"

"WE ONLY have rumors and whispers," said the bishop. "I know nothing for certain except that the soldiers are rushing towards the Valley of the Dead and extending long cordons to sweep up the escaped men."
"And inside the valley, Juan-Silva and the general himself were found dead and terribly mangled, and that Alvarez and another man were killed, also, together with a great many of the guards."
"It is a dreadful thing—and it happened, I hear, while most of the guards were rushing away to try to recapture daring prisoners who were escaping in the carriage of Juan-Silva himself! Ah, El Keed! Do I see you holding the reins? But I have been kneeling here in prayer for Juan-Silva!"

"All the saints praying would never be any good to the soul of Juan-Silva," said Rubiz.

"Perhaps not," said the bishop, "but I like hard tasks. What is this brother?"

For Pascual, patiently, was holding up the broken half of the emerald crown in one hand, and the lost jewel of Alvarez lay in the other palm. The bishop took up the treasure as though it were truly composed of green fire. He raised it in his joined hands high above his head.

One could forget, then, his meager nightgown, his bare feet with the wind blowing on his shanks. Perhaps it was unclear for a bishop to be seen in this informal garb by a woman, but since he had one arm, at that time, about the shoulders of Rosita, the bishop did not seem to be troubled.

"Well," said Rubiz, "the devil had no commission for this job, except that most of the work was done by a gringo."

"Hush!" said the bishop. "Who can speak of the devil where there has been the manifest hand of God?"

He went on talking to Rubiz, for a time, and to big Pascual, who was smiling like a child, his two great hands clasped together.

And at last Bishop Emiliano said: "But I have not said a word of thanks to my son Montana. Where has he gone? And where is Rosita?"

"El Keed," said Rubiz, "why should he care about thanks when he has Rosita?"

And all three of them, on a sudden impulse, leaned out of the window and looked down. There in the thick gloom of the street they could see a man and a woman walking slowly, their heads bowed close together.

"Hah!" said Rubiz. "Can't he find women in his own country? Does the gringo dog come down here to steal our girls away from us?"

"And our hearts, brother," said Pascual.

"Ay," grunted Rubiz, "these gringos they stop at nothing—they will have all!"

THE END

OREGON WOMEN IN DRIVE FOR LINEN INDUSTRY FUNDS

PORTLAND, Ore., March 16.—(AP)—Pine Linens will catch the eye of almost any woman, but the flax and linen industry itself has caught the eye of a group of Oregon women.

Under leadership of Mrs. W. W. Gabriel of Portland, the Oregon women's campaign for development of the flax industry has rallied widespread support. Government co-operation in financing is sought.

Encouraging words and support were received by the group from Senator Charles L. McNary of Oregon, the minority leader.

"I am so happy to know of your splendid co-operation and that of your committee in the matter of promotion of the linen industry," Senator McNary wired Mrs. Gabriel.

"I hope we may succeed in obtaining government aid in a practical way."

The new group will amplify previous efforts which have been made to secure funds. Authorization of a large PWA loan for development of the Willamette valley flax industry was made, but funds were not allocated.

Backers of the former movement have hopes of receiving that financial aid under new PWA funds expected to be appropriated by congress. But without resting on previous efforts, the present campaign has been launched to rally to the support of

DOMESTIC LAUNDRY REMODELS OFFICE

In cooperation with the local campaign to promote remodeling work, Glen Fabric of the Medford Domestic Laundry reports they have completely refurnished the office. The walls are finished in buff and grey and the equipment has been rearranged for quicker service.

Mr. Fabric says, "This remodeling work is only a part of the improvements we are constantly making in equipment, quality of work and service."

The Medford Domestic Laundry has just added another service by improving the packaging of laundry. All shirts are now returned in cardboard boxes which keep them from being crushed and brings them to the wearer in perfect condition.

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JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL ANNUAL OPERETTA TO BE GIVEN ON APRIL 5

"Don Alonso's Treasure," has been chosen for the annual Junior High school operetta, to be given April 5 under direction of Mrs. Evelyn Nye.

The plot concerns adventures of some American sightseers in Spain and entails many unique situations and beautiful stage settings. Colorful costumes are worn by a general chorus, tenor chorus, and girls' dance chorus. Mrs. Condor is assisting Mrs. Nye in rehearsing the large cast. Other teachers are making part of the costumes.

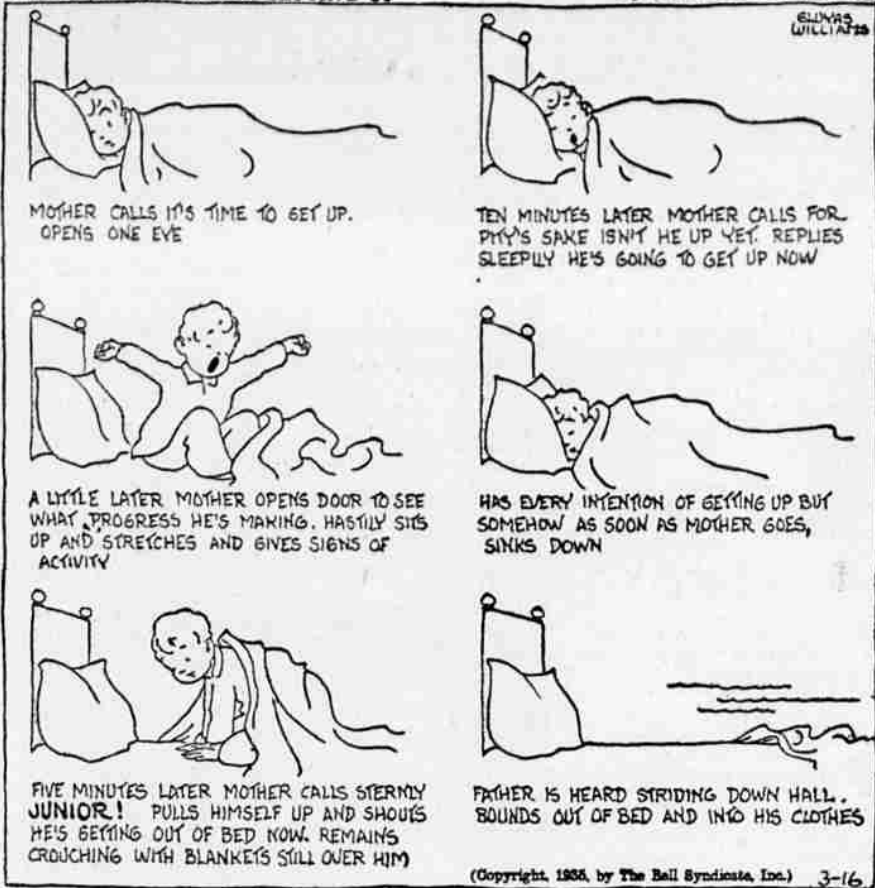
The Junior High has gained a high reputation for their annual operetta productions and it is believed "Don Alonso's Treasure" will maintain the high standard.

Principle roles include: Don Diego, elderly Spanish nobleman, George Gates; Suzanna Diego, wife of Don Diego, Barbara Dorris; Dolores, daughter of Don Diego, Rebecca Chaney; Lolita, another daughter, Josephine Bullis; Manuel, a servant, Ted Marshall; Paula, a servant, Catherine Conroy; Ajax, Wallop, American sausage king, Alvin Thurbus; Mrs. Wallop, Hulda Rose; Elaine Wallop, a daughter, Jeanne Salade; Shorty, a sailor, Ray Huson; Billy McNoodie, an American who poses as a tenor, Franklin Jones.

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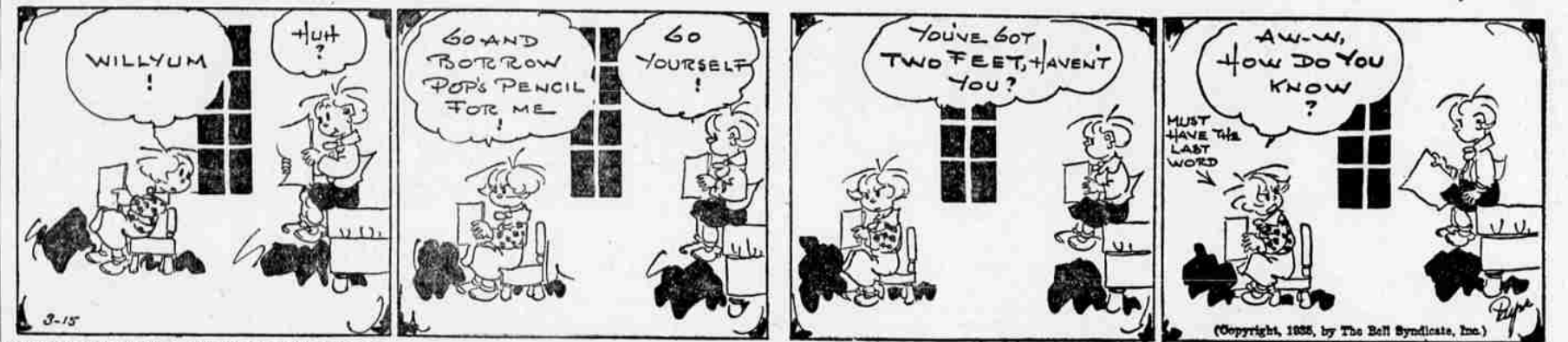
SNAPSHOTS OF A BOY GETTING UP

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



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TAILSPIN TOMMY—Circumstantial Evidence



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BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—The Discovery



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THE NEBBS—The Mystery



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BRINGING UP FATHER



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THE NEBBS—The Mystery



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BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—The Discovery



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THE NEBBS—The Mystery



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BRINGING UP FATHER



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MEDICAL SOCIETY HEARS DR. DODSON

ASHLAND, May 16.—(Sp.)—Dr. and Mrs. Charles A. Haines entertained 35 members of the Jackson County Medical Society at their regular meeting Wednesday night at the Civic club house.

New Colonial Chef Prepares Dishes A Bit Different

B. J. Limie, the Colonial's new chef, carries out his slogan "Just a little different" in preparing foods which not only taste delicious but are artistic and appetizing to look at. Lunches and regular dinners are served daily and at night short orders are featured.

SALES BOOKS and office furniture at Elliott's 116 N. Central.