

# DEATH WRITES THE LAST EDITION

By Adeline McElfresh

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## UNEXPECTED CONTESTANT

CHAPTER X  
MIDVALE, by the time Sam Blair drove his cruising car down Main street to the police station, had settled itself for another afternoon that might bring forth anything.

The police chief parked the car and went inside to find Dave Elson lounging at his desk, puffing contentedly at a cigar that Blair knew had come from the box in his filing cabinet.

"Elson," he said, gruffness falling to hide entirely the humor in his voice, "I hope none of the boys saw you hook that smoke. They think I use the ones on the desk."

"Dave grinned. "Do they?" he remarked, and Blair braced himself, knowing from the old days that when Dave Elson gave you that cunning tone something good was coming. Dave let him have both barrels. "Not if they have any sense of smell," he flashed. "One whiff of that rope..." He held his nose suggestively.

"All right, all right," the chief admitted his defeat with a good-natured grunt, "just don't let it get around."

"If you'd like your chair—" "I would provided you find the energy to take your feet off the desk." He draped his coat carefully over a chair and took off his hat before he turned around. Finally he sighed, almost inaudibly. "No luck again, Dave. Unless—"

"Unless what?" Dave was all ears.

"Did you ever hear of George Rand?"

The blunt question puzzled Dave for a moment, then he shook his head. He never had heard of the man.

"Me, too," Blair said caustically, and went on to relate what had happened that morning.

THE Express office was strangely quiet when Dave Elson entered. Something was wrong. He sensed that almost before the door closed behind him, and one glance at Elmer Roberts proved it. The girl's blue eyes were wide—and slightly stunned.

"What's up, kid?" Dave paused beside her desk. "Somebody else get rubbed out?"

She shook her head numbly. "Mr. Parker didn't leave a will," Elmer finally whispered, nodding toward the news room, "and now some relative—a niece or something—is here. She says she's going to sell the Express."

"Sell the Express!" Dave whistled his astonishment. "She can't do that! Why, I didn't even know Parker had any relatives."

"He most certainly did, Mr. Elson."

Dave whirled on his heel as the cold voice sent a warning tingle up his spine.

The woman—she was in her late thirties—looked him over with cool indifference for a long moment and Dave saw in her glance that hard-as-nails quality he had detected in her voice.

"How do you do?" she said archly. "I am Myra Rose, of New York and Miami."

"New York, eh? I've been there for a few years myself, Miss Rose."

"Mrs. Rose, Mr. Elson," she corrected him. "My husband is a lawyer."

"And just how are you related to Mr. Parker?"

"I am his niece," Mrs. Rose answered evenly. "My mother was his sister. She has been dead for many years and I have never associated with—Uncle Joe, but there's nothing to keep me from having his estate now. I'm his only living relative."

"You're very sure of that, Mrs. Rose," Dave could not keep the bitterness from his tone. "Aren't you?"

"Indeed, I told you my husband is a lawyer."

DAVE'S anger blinded him to everything but the haughty face in front of him. He didn't know that Clem and Mary Evans were standing in the news room door or that Rod Thomas, the advertising manager, was right behind him.

"I see," he grated through clenched teeth, and his listeners stiffened in anticipation of the blast they knew was coming. But Mrs. Rose just stood there, calm and serene and queenly, confident

that she had won her point.

"Mrs. Rose," Dave finally said, "you have no idea how much this paper meant to Joe Par—your uncle. It was his life. He died for it. A letter we found proves that, for it threatened him if he ran a certain story. We have not been able to find out what that story was, but when we do we'll have his murderer. And, Mrs. Rose, a man who gives his life for an ideal is a hero."

Dave drew a deep breath. He felt some of the anger oozing from him. Somehow, just talking about his old boss helped him a lot, so much that he was unprepared for the sharp thrust from Mrs. Rose.

"Dave," she said, "I'm sorry about your uncle. He was a hero. But I'm not a hero. I'm just a woman who wants to see her husband's name in the paper. I'm not interested in your uncle's story. I'm interested in the money."

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"All of which means nothing." There was scorn in her gray eyes and hatred in the hard curve of her lips. "I'm selling the estate just as soon as proper arrangements can be made."

An icy wind might have caused the chill that swept over Dave Elson, but it could not have been more penetrating or so thoroughly cutting. There was a flutter in the pit of his stomach that faded into a sick, empty feeling. He had no doubt that the woman was not within her rights, a court would prove that before anything was done, but...

"Well, Mr. Elson?" Dave shrugged. He met her challenging eyes without flinching. "I'll buy the Express," he told her, "and the house." To himself he added: "For Pat, if she'll still have me."

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## Out Our Way

By J. R. Williams



THE OPEN RANGE

Parachute jumpers are initiated at an altitude of 1000 feet, but succeeding jumps are from lower levels. Average combat jump is 300 feet.

First Flag Day association was formed at Chicago in 1894. All fire apparatus in Hawaii has been painted green to lessen visibility.

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## Our Boarding House

With Major Hoops



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