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## FROM OUT THE WEST

By MARY WOOD  
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Missoula Ann gazed across the frozen stretches of the park with a delightful sense of ownership. The chill wind which had deterred all other wayfarers was as the breath of her own prairie.

"Just the sky for a norther, Teddy," she said exultantly. "Seems like old times, it does."

Teddy was not looking at the sky. Around a bend in the road came a horse, jet black, well groomed, head high, while the delicate nostrils sniffed the wind, and saddle invitingly empty; not ownerless, for a policeman walked close beside. But Teddy had eyes only for the horse. In a moment possession would be his and Missoula far behind. He set off down the walk as fast as his chubby legs would carry him.

Too late Missoula awoke to the realities of her position. She broke into a frightened run, and her voice rang out in command: "Teddy Barker, come back! Do you hear? Come back, I say!"

If Teddy heard he gave no sign, except to redouble his efforts. But verily the way of the transgressor is hard! There was an innocent appearing strip of ice gleaming in the pallid glow of the wintry sun. Teddy's foot encountered it. He threw out both hands and slid forward on his nose. It is a tender member, and Teddy complained loudly.

The late Missoula was now on the scene. Even the policeman offered his services to restore peace. Together they picked up the fallen, whose cries redoubled under the effect of Missoula's vigorous shakings. The policeman interfered.

"See here, now," he said good-naturedly, "I'll have to arrest you if you make such noise. Come and see Jim Crow. You can have a ride on him if you aren't scared."

Teddy stiffened at the implied insult. "That's all I wanted to do," he protested stoutly, "only Missoula, she wouldn't let me."

"The man looked at the girl eagerly. 'Be you from Montana, miss?' he asked. Missoula nodded.

"I hail from west Texas myself," the policeman hastened to explain, "but I reckon there's much of a sameness about them both."

Missoula Ann seized his hand joyfully. "I been watching you other days, I just knowed you was from the west the way you sat your horse."

By this time Teddy was safely ensconced on top of Jim Crow. "It does seem as if most of the folks here made riding a hard matter," the policeman said reflectively. "And it's worse for the horse than it is for them. Why, the ladies have the poor beasts cinched up so tight they can't draw a full breath. Wish they'd just try it on a broncho. There'd be some tail bucking." And he laughed.

Missoula joined in. "I believe I could show them a thing or two myself," she said slyly, "even if I ain't got one of them swell riding skirts. But I jest better not be saying too much about it," she added sadly. "I might've forgot. It's so long since I was on a horse. Mr. Barker, he got one of those automobiles, but I can't abide the creature."

The tall policeman agreed. "Just give me a good horse," he declared, "and a clear road, and I'd ride and ride to—"

"Clear out to the west," the girl interrupted eagerly. There was a wistful look in her eyes.

"Be you long from there, miss?" he asked respectfully.

"Only since last fall, but it seems an age," Missoula Ann said with a sigh. "You see Mr. Barker, he's the biggest man out our way. He rules jest about everything but his wife, and she rules him. So when she took it into her head to come to New York for the winter we all had to cum. I cum on 'count of Teddy. Seems as if he can't get along without me. I've had the care of him ever since he was born." She smiled up at the child affectionately.

"I'm not saying but what I was tickled over the idea. They'd been telling me all sorts of foolishness about the city. But it's not a bit like what I expected. Perhaps the fault lies in me, but I feel sort of smothered all the time. It's bad enough on the street with people pushing of you out of the way, but indoors it's worse. Things are so awful dear here that Mr. Barker, for all he owns 'bout a whole section out our way, can't hev a whole house to himself. It's worse than the boys' quarters at a roundup the way folks crowd together. But you must excuse me for saying so much," she broke off in conclusion as she looked up and met his dark eyes fixed admiringly upon her. "Only it's so long since I had the chance to free my mind. You're mighty good to listen. But come, Teddy, it's time we were making for home."

Teddy did not agree, but the tall policeman cut short his remarks by lifting him down in a peremptory fashion. "I'm much obliged to you, miss," he said gratefully. "It's been as good as seeing one of the boys. But perhaps you'll be coming this way again tomorrow perhaps," he asked insinuatingly.

Missoula Ann thought that perhaps she might. Teddy was quite sure that he would be ready for another ride. The tall policeman leaned lightly into his saddle, and she watched him with a thrill of pride. He was certainly quite imposing in his blue uniform with the brass buttons, and his friendship was a thing to be desired. And then he came from the west! He could sympathize with her longing for

that faraway land. Yes, Missoula was sure to come that way tomorrow.

He was waiting for them on the next afternoon, and Teddy was swung upon the saddle in a jiffy. But now it was the big policeman who talked, while Missoula listened in shy silence. His name was Jones. "They used to call me 'Shorty' down in the Panhandle because I was so tall," he explained, with a laugh. "No, they don't do it here." In answer to her questioning look, "It wouldn't be healthy for them. The men on the force call me Jim. I haven't any pals up here."

Jim had come to New York with some full blood cattle. But the attractions of the big city proved too much for him, and after a detour of several days he had come to himself only to find that the rest of the crew had gone back, and he was left alone, adrift. There had been some hard days. Jim spoke of them hesitatingly and with a shamed flush on his tanned cheek.

"But then I got on the force—on account of my riding—and I've been over a year. I can't complain of the pay, and the work's light enough. But I get such longing for the sun shining in a perfect blue sky and my pony picking his way among the holes of a dog town—the little beggars sitting up and scolding at us as bold as you please—and then scrambling down through the mesquite bushes into a water hole and letting him drink as much as he pleases, and then riding on till the sun sets as it never does up here, bands of light playing right across the sky and a purple glow over everything. Well, when I get to thinking of all that I get uneasy-like and can't sleep. Some fine morning the feeling will be extra strong, and then—they laughed—the force will be losing one of its ornaments."

Missoula was looking up eagerly. Her eyes were as blue as the Texas sky of which he spoke and wide with longing. "You will be going back, too, some day, Miss Missoula," he asked softly.

She caught her breath sharply. Like one suddenly waked from a dream. "Yes," she said dispiritedly. "I suppose so—when Mr. Barker's ready to go."

The three met often after that. Teddy had come to look on Jim Crow as one of his possessions, while Missoula and his master had become the best of friends, and meanwhile a tardy spring was breathing new life into the half thawed slopes of the park. Timid grass blades appeared.

The afternoon sun shone down warmly, and showed Missoula engaged in restraining Teddy from picking a spray of the enticing "burning bush." The tall policeman came during the altercation. As they walked on together he preserved an unwonted silence.

"Spring's about here," Missoula observed at last. "I've been thinking how the prairie must look by now—jest one big flower bed."

Jim looked off across the tree tops with eyes unseeing of their delicate veil of leaves. "I've been thinking, too," he said, "and I just can't stand the city any longer. I'm going back west." Missoula's face paled.

"I'd have gone long ago if it hadn't been for you, Missoula." He looked down now and as he saw her agitation went on eagerly. "I won't go now unless you will go too. I've been saying money, and I've written out, so there's a position ready. Won't you go, Missoula?"

Missoula's face flushed a rosy red, but she met his ardent gaze frankly. "Yes, I'll go, Jim," she said. "I trust you. Teddy's getting so old now he won't be missing me. And, oh, Jim, we'll be going back to the west together!" There was a choke in her voice.

Jim drew her to him, and it was well that the path was deserted or observers might have been scandalized by the spectacle of one of the force who had quite forgotten his dignity.

**Had the Effect.**  
"Yes," she said in answer to something he had said, "the old songs are very beautiful."

"Beautiful!" he exclaimed enthusiastically. "Beautiful hardly describes them. They are—they are—well, compared with them the songs of today are trash, the veriest trash."

"I agree with you, yet the old songs sometimes contain sentiments that one cannot wholly approve."

"I think you are mistaken."

"I will give you an illustration. There is John Howard Payne's 'Home, Sweet Home,' for instance. You surely do not agree with all the sentiments it contains?"

"Why not?" he asked warmly. "Why not?"

"Because," she said, glancing at the clock, which was marking the hour of 11, "because there is a line in that song which says 'There's no place like home.' You do not believe that, do you?"

Then he coughed a hollow cough and arose and went silently but into the night.

**Hidden Crackers.**  
In the preface to Gail Hamilton's poems, published under the title "Chips, Fragments and Vestiges," the sister of the dead author says that a few yellowed papers exist covered with her verses written in a childish hand.

One such sheet has the heading "Chips and Parings." Another is called "Mary A. Dodge's Scribbles." These were all written before she was twelve years old. But the earliest, written when she was eight, is the best:

When mother hides her crackers in Old coconuts all made of tin, We seldom ever find them out. Although all day we look about.

Now, though we all like crackers well, And bakers have enough to sell, Yet we all eat them up so fast That mother hides to make them last.

This "poem" was solemnly and silently handed to "mother" by the little author after she had discovered where the crackers were hidden.

## THE TOLLER

**RUNNING of A MUDLARK**  
By Curran  
Richard Greenley  
Copyright, 1903, by T. C. McClure

"Mudlark" Jim resented the derisive title and was filled with a longing to fall upon and rend the line of grinning stable boys who yelled and hooted at Joe led Baresbanks out for his exercise. The shabby blanket flapped around the gaunt legs, and the bald Roman nose was stretched to its farthest as Baresbanks snuffed at the wet morning. Out in the east a rim of sickly yellow barred the sky. Jim scrambled up, and they went slowly out on the track to the accompaniment of "Hayrack" "Ki-yi! Get on to de moonshine tru his ribs!" "Three-legged skate!" and a chorus of groans.

Jim's thin little arms went around the bony neck, while a tear trickled a white line down the grime on his cheek. The keen wind cut through the lad's jacket, and the little hands that gripped the bridle were blue with cold. Underneath the track was already sticky. As Jim turned into the field, where later the little red flag would mark the course from one ugly ditch to another, Baresbanks laid down to his work. The slippery turf slid away from under his great hoofs in a green glimmer as they rose from burdle to burdle.

Over and over the course went Baresbanks and Jim, while at the stables, in the doorway of Mayer Bros. quarters, a man stood peering through field glasses at the brown blur that swept around the field.

Jim slipped to the ground, the sweat pouring from horse and boy alike. Joe, his sulky face hid under the peak of his cap, gave him a sly glance as he blanketed the horse and led him inside. Jim turned with a question in his eyes to the man who stood pulling his gray mustache and looking away into space. Jim twitched his sleeve, and he looked down into the small, pinched face, its very eagerness rendering it thinner and more pathetic, and answered the unspoken query.

"Yes, he'll do. In for a penny, in for a pound; but if he falls I'll see that you get back to the old farm, all right."

"And him?" Jim pointed to where the bony nose showed through the open door.

The man laughed shortly. "A bullet through his ugly head." The boy shrank back and slipped through the door. Unperceived, he curled down in the straw almost at the feet of Baresbanks, who munched contentedly at his provender.

Other eyes had watched that morning gallop. Joe, the groom, had finished the rubbing down with an eye on the silent figure outside the door, he snatched from its nail the bridle that Baresbanks must wear in the coming race, drew a bottle of colorless liquid from his pocket and poured a few drops over the bit. Bright eyes watched from the shadow of the feed box, and when Joe, his work done, disappeared Jim leaped the bridge down and snatched it. There was not the faintest scent. He hung the bridle back again and resumed his place between the horse's legs, a look of owlish gravity on the queer, puckered, old young face.

The hours wore on. Over on the track, where a drizzling rain fell steadily, men went up and down in mackintoshes. Women in short skirts gathered in knots upon the grand stand, their eyes fever bright with excitement. The crowd grew steadily. Out there, where the little red flag, like points of flame, marked the zigzag of the burdles, the old wagon drawn by the gray work horse stood loaded with the net, and a scurry of boys blew higher and higher in the wake of the different owners.

There had been wild work when Joe essayed to lead Baresbanks out. An old rope-balter hung where the bridle should have been. Joe turned ashy. Jim stuck like a bur to Baresbanks and trailed at his heels in his patched and stained jacket, a mere apology for an owner's colors. Neither horse, owner nor jockey was a favorite on the Downs. True to the primal instinct, the rout was hostile to the shabby entourage. Nevertheless there was no open affront. Landon evidently possessed some kind of a pull with Mayer Bros., hence his occupancy of one of the stalls and the grudging attendance of Joe.

Jim was ready to mount Baresbanks when the bell tapped, but as he passed the grand stand, still clinging to the old rope halter, the crowd yelled and rose as a man.

Off with the saddle and the weighing done, they were mounted again and filed before the grand stand. Baresbanks' ugly head reared above his fellows. Then as they would have passed into the field a voice from the judges' stand halted them: "What's the matter with that boy on No. 3? That's no bridle. Where'd he get that halter?"

All eyes turned on Jim, who wheeled and snuffed and rode to the front of the judges' stand, while up in the front row a man shook his fist at him and cursed savagely. The small figure straightened in the saddle and, with an appealing glance at the wall of faces, pulled a bridle, bit and all, from the breast of his jacket. An intense silence fell as the childish treble rang out: "Boss, here's the bridle right enough, but I'd ride him with something but a rope halter to Jericho before I'd let it go in his mouth. You can't smell nothing, en you can't see nothing. But I was settin' down in the corner en sayin' nothin' when that black devil poured somethin' out of a bottle at over it, en when he was gone I just up en swiped it, en I ain't let go of it since. You can see for yourself!"

And with a sure aim he bunched the bridle and dung it to the judge.

At the lad's first word there had been a commotion down there among the crowd of grooms in the paddock. A little, black form darted across the course and made for the outer gate. A dozen men seized him at once and then held their breath for the next move in the play.

Old Colonel Cartwell, the judge, stood up and waved for silence. "Bring him another bridle. I'll take care of this one. Now get to the post."

Jim settled in the saddle. Ahead of him the little flags danced in the wind and the Garrison's Black Seraph wheeled into Baresbanks, and at the end of the line Morgan's Timber Wolf plunged and reared. Three times the red flag fell, three times they struggled back to the post. Then red down, yellow down and a whirl of black, bay, sorrel and gray swept away, nose and nose, with the rain drip on flesh of scarlet and blaze of gold.

"Mudlark!" "Old Skate!" It rang in his ears on the whistle of the wind. The first burdle—Jim felt the long body gather itself, and they were over, leaving the Black Seraph a bulky eddy in the field. Timber Wolf led by a head. There were only four now. Jim grinned and lurched a little forward as Baresbanks' great hoofs gripped the slippery grass. Grant's Derrydown was second, the long stride of English hunters showing its mettle from great-grandfather to son. Maxton's Red Ruin and Long's Wild Irishman nose and nose with Baresbanks. Up the slope and over the second burdle, the great shoulders working with a mighty come and go. Baresbanks forged on, while the Wild Irishman dropped in a heap to scumble out with a wrenched fore leg. Jim laughed aloud as they swept the turn. The third—he had studied it well and knew the rotten bank, where the Timber Wolf landed, struggled a moment and slid down his fore legs fighting the air. They were close together now. Derrydown first by a shoulder length. Baresbanks next, his ugly, lean head stretched out, with red nostrils wide afire, and Red Ruin straggling a sorry third.

Over—over again. They had made the round once and for the second time had passed the first three burdles. Baresbanks crept up a few inches on the home stretch, leaving Red Ruin a dozen yards in the rear. The last burdle lay before them, orange and black-thorn, with an ugly stretch of water beyond. Jim's tense little hands crept up closer to the bit as he poured God knows what prayers and promises into the two ears that lay to the big, ugly head. He felt the great muscles stiffen, the bunching of those awkward looking legs, the surge of the heart beneath the gaunt ribs—up—over—flash—whirl—and the sea of faces rose and surged in the billow of sound as the wild Roman nose was thrust under the wire, winner by a neck's length.

From the stand above men came down hand over hand, men poured in from the pit, and the shrill clamor of excited women's voices shrilled above the dull roar of the crowd. Jim slid from the saddle and went to the block, staggering under its weight, his slender body all a-quiver, then back to sit motionless, enduring, until the moment when Baresbanks' swathe in his shabby blanket, stood the center of the stable's attention and envy, and he awoke and lived again, his arms around the brown neck, his face buried in the seamy mane. There could be no question of a bullet in the head of the winner of the Montgomery steeplechase.

**Gladening a Humorist.**  
The financial burden which Mark Twain carried some years ago weighed on his mind heavily. In these moments of despondency there was one tacit friend who could make the humorist forget his troubles. It was Dan Beard, the artist, who illustrated some of Twain's books.

"Dan Beard, there is no tonic that can equal the company of a cheerful man," said the humorist as he entered the artist's studio.

"Ah, but I have such a pleasant subject to work upon that I am not in need of either man or tonic for my cheerfulness," retorted the artist.

"Beg pardon, it is I that need the tonic, and that is why I am here," said Twain forcibly.

"Then allow me to prescribe a dose of 'your own medicine.' And Mark was handed a copy of his book which Beard had been studying.

"I thank you," replied the humorist. "It took me a year to get that medicine out of my system, and I do not propose to imbibe it again."

A discussion of the book was followed by a hearty dinner, and Twain left his friend, having received the cheer that he needed.

**He Obeded Orders.**  
Old world domestics make the best possible servants because they work like machines, never forgetting an order and doing exactly as they are told, without presuming to think for themselves. But once in awhile this literal adherence to duty produces some awkward result. An American woman living in India, with native servants, once told her butler to see that there was always a napkin at the bottom of the fruit dish, cake basket, etc., when these were brought to the table. The napkin was thereafter always seen in its place. But one day a tureen of vegetable soup was served, and the hostess began to yield the long, old-fashioned silver ladle about in it. Something very like a fringed rag made its appearance in the first plateful. The other was summoned to remove the rag. "It cannot be that the men's sahib found no napkin at the bottom," he murmured, much distressed because of this unexplained disapproval. "For I myself placed there the largest one I could find."



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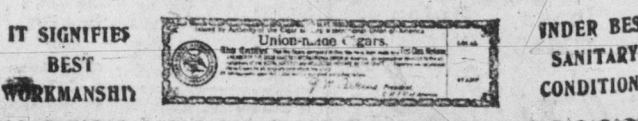
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