

Overland Red

visit, nor was it the ragged, unkempt vision Louise had conjured up for her in relating the Old Meadow story. In fact, it was not Overland Red at all, but Jack Summers, the range-rider of the old red Abilene days. He was clean-shaven, vigorous, splendidly strong, and confident. In the saddle, bedecked in his showy trappings, surrounded by his friends, Jack Summers had found his youth again, and the past was as a closed book, for the nonce.

"I'm the boss's envy extraordinary," said Overland, by way of greeting. "Walt said something else, too, about bein' a potentiary, but I reckon *that* was a joke."

"Good-morning! Don't get down! Glad to see you again!"

But Overland was in the road, hat in hand, and Yuma's bridle-reins over one arm.

"'Mornin', Billy! 'Mornin', Doctor! You run right up to the house. I left the gate open."

Then Overland rode back, following them. Later he reappeared, minus spurs and chaps, but still clad in the garb of the range-rider. He was as proud and happy as a boy. He seemed to have dropped ten years from his shoulders. And he was strangely unlike his old boisterous self withal.

The noon sun crept through the moon-vine. Out on the wide veranda was the long table.