

ing Mexican, who, seeing his accomplice's plight, came running forward to his aid.

Long shouted to the sleeping cow-punchers, but it would have required a charge of dynamite to awaken them, so soundly does the cowboy slumber after a long day's work in the open air.

Gronson clapped a gag over Long's mouth while Okaxa began to rifle his pockets.

"Haf you got it?" demanded the Swede with an oath.

"No—(curses)—hold him tighter can't you!" Here it is!

Hardly a minute had been consumed in this brief parley but to Long with his hands held behind his back, lying there on his side on the ground it seemed a century. He cursed himself for his blind folly in disregarding Moseley's warning. He should have concealed the money somewhere, as soon as they had ridden in to Hilford's.

"Take his gun den, an' let's beat it," whispered Gronson, impatiently.

"He'll rouse the whole camp. Hadn't we better knock him another on the head? He'll—what's that?" Okaxa broke off sharply.

A quick, light footstep sounded behind them. There was the glint of a revolver in the moonlight, a sharp report rang out, then another. Gronson threw up both arms and fell heavily to the ground shot in the leg, below the knee.

The Mexican, who had the money, made off at a run. He had not been hit.

"Catch him—catch him!" cried the voice of Jessie Norton.

Long did not stop longer than to glance at the small figure in long Japanese kimona with two tousled braids of hair down her back, that stood trembling violently against the corral fence, the revolver fallen at her side. She had heard his first shout.

He chased the Mexican half a mile and then falling upon his stomach by a buffalo-wallow circled around the bend of a large slough and double-crossed the other's trail. Had he had his revolver he could have winged the other in the leg or arm, but Okaxa had both the weapon and the pay of the forty-odd cow-punchers.

Having come up with the Mexican again at the turn of the south trail, Long crept along rapidly amongst the sage-brush and by a final effort of speed, ran and pounced upon his quarry, who had fired half a dozen times without stopping in his tracks. But all of the shots had missed their intended mark, and now the revolver was empty.

Jessie Norton, just at dawn, saw the new foreman returning with Okaxa ahead of him covered by the revolver. Long had, fortunately, found several cartridges in his own pocket and he promptly re-loaded his recovered weapon and marched his prisoner into camp. By this time it was after four o'clock and a number of the men hearing shots, and being aroused by Miss Norton, who had given the alarm at once, were already up. But the girl seeing that Long was unhurt, remembered suddenly that she was in a kimona and darted back to the house.

Imagine a love scene—imagination is so much more vivid and colorful than cold words—with Stephen Long as hero and Jessie Norton heroine. Stage them upon a grassy knoll in the early starlight with no living creature within a quarter of a mile and you have exactly what happened the next night.

"We are a long way from camp," whispered Jessie. "Hadn't we better be starting back?"

"I guess so," replied Long. And neither of them moved.

"Don't stop!" said Jessie. "That's ten times."

"Don't stop? I guess not. I don't intend to!" and he didn't stop.

"I—I'm wondering how Dad'll take the news," said the girl after a moment.

"To be sure! He won't like you marrying his foreman. I—I never thought of that."

"I don't care Mr. Wells, if you're as poor as Job. I guess I've got enough money for both of us."

Long had sobered suddenly. He released the girl and brought himself up with a start.

"Jessie, I—I have a confession to make."

"Out with it. You already have a wife, I suppose."

He looked reproachfully at her, but she still smiled.

"I am an impostor," he went on, "and I have deceived you all."

"How dreadful!" and still she smiled. "My name is not Wells. I am no cow-puncher. I am a real-estate man from the east. I followed you out here and threw up a good deal in Winnipeg so that I should not lose you. I tried

desperately to get a look, a smile, a word from you on the train and I didn't succeed so I decided to trail you to your home. My name is Stephen Long."

"I know it."

"You know it?" he echoed blankly. "How—"

"Listen—I too," she said, "have a confession to make. I—I saw your little ruse with the magazine-boy on the train. I saw you get off at Rosehill and I knew you didn't belong there any more than a Chinaman belongs in the Alps. I told Mr. Hazelton, the agent, who is a great friend of ours, to send you out to our place if you happened to ask him any questions, but not to squeal on me—"

"You did!" interrupted Long, rapturously.

"I blush to own it. It was rude and forward of me I know, but—"

"It was adorable of you. Go on."

"Well—we have the rural telephone in these parts now you know."

"Ah, I see!"

"Mr. Hazelton phoned out—we had had more than an hour's start of you, you remember—phoned out to tell me that you had asked the way to Winters'—"

"So I did," interrupted Long. "Winters' ranch," said Miss Norton, "lies to the northeast, in exactly the opposite direction. Mr. Hazelton told me what he had done, and I—I looked for you all afternoon. Then it occurred to me to ride up the trail after supper

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