

Wah-na-gi looked as if she might faint. Bill said quickly: "Mike, be careful. Wah-na-gi's here."

"Sure, I know she's here," replied the buoyant Irishman. "And if she had the choosin' of her own present, I'll bet I could name it. Wah-na-gi, here's a Christmas present for you," and he went to the clothes-press and tried to open it. To his great surprise he found it locked. Quickly unlocking it, he threw the doors wide and walked away with a supreme air of triumph. When David Ladd, pale and wild-eyed, staggered out and to the table, the sensation was complete. Not hearing the cries of joyous tumult he had expected, Mike turned and saw the agent. He was the most astonished man of the lot.

"Holy Mother of Moses," he ejaculated in a whisper. "Is it one of them cabinet tricks?"

Just then a shot was heard outside. Every one turned from the central figure and listened. Then, by common consent, every man grabbed his hat and rushed out of doors, all except McShay, who made no movement to go but kept his eye on David Ladd.

"What was that, Mike?" said Wah-na-gi in a scared whisper.

Ladd lifted his head. Swiftly it passed through his mind the hope that Cadger had got his man. Just then there were cheers outside, and all the boys came tumbling back, Hal in their midst with a gun in one hand and Cadger in the other. The trader looked sheepish and blood was flowing from a nasty scalp wound over one eye where Hal had clubbed him with the barrel of his own gun.