

8 Trails to Two Moons

Original swept off his hat and stood a bit abashed under the girl's steady, impersonal stare.

"Ole Man Ring lives here, I take it," he began tentatively. She curtly nodded.

"Maybe he's out riding round somewhere?" Original ventured after a moment's pause in which no invitation to enter — cardinal courtesy of the Big Country — was forthcoming.

"He's gone to Two Moons," she said. She was standing with arms wide and hands braced against the rough frame of the door. The sunlight cut from the dark background a silhouette of her figure, all blue-gingham clad and cinctured loosely at the waist. A figure of lithe strength, more masculine than suggestive of womanly softness, albeit gloriously rounded. Her pose, blocking the doorway and with competent arms thrown out, emphasized the absence of welcome in her eyes. Original read the subtle hint of challenge in both pose and eyes and was piqued.

"My name is Blunt — inspector for this range. If he was at home I was aiming to ask your father some particular questions, Miss — ah — Miss —"