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that was a good supper. Only beans and coffee for a bill of fare, but plenty of love and content to flavor it. Don't sit up for me if you are tired, and, Robert, tell sister of our trip over to Hog Back."

Lucy's father kissed her affectionately, and calling the collie, threw himself on to his horse and was off.

As they washed the dishes the children talked little of the day's trip to the divide, and a great deal of the murder, such subjects holding an uncanny fascination over the young mind.

After the work was done Robert started a little blaze in the fireplace of the other room—a bedroom—the wind having risen, and from a northerly direction. Lucy closed the outer door, not without a frightened look into the dark beyond, and felt a momentary wish that the door had a lock to it—something not often seen in the new Southwest, where animals are more to be feared than men. She drew up to the fire and was soon lost in thought, as usual, Robert busying himself in braiding a new quilt, the intricacies of which kept him, too, silent. The wind took on a tone of lamentation, the beams gave out little cracks and creaks, while from far off came the hoarse

fling into a corner of the fireplace, squatted down and wound her arms into her shawl with a shiver.

"Poor thing!" thought Lucy, "she looks cold. Father will be home soon, and he'll know what to do with her." So, after venturing a few remarks, and finding that the woman could understand little and answer less, she attempted to resume her musing. But a covert glance from the stranger set her on the alert, and she felt that she was being watched. She arose, arranged a few things in the room, shook out some goods that were lying on the machine and folded them up, more and more conscious that every action was noted. Why was it? Before five minutes had passed she discovered that the woman's foot was in a boot and spurred! That the peculiar appearance about the Mexican's face was caused by the shaving off of a bristling mustache, and that the features were those of old Giacomo!

No need to tell Lucy that this was the murderer fleeing from the armed men and hounds scouring the country for him—like as not ready with his stiletto to be used on Robert and herself at a moment's warning.



"The last hillock was mounted and the gate of the corral, lighted by a big camp fire, came into sudden view."

ery of the herders and now and then the bark of the coyote. Lucy rose at length and lighted the lamp, for the quiet was painful, and shadows flitted unpleasantly across the one window of the room. She threw another stick on the fire, and the air was alive with sparks and light.

"Whew, but I'm tired!" exclaimed Robert, stretching himself on the boards. "Oh, don't go to sleep, Robert—don't!" pleaded Lucy.

"I ain't sleepy," he yawned; "I'm just tired," and out he stretched again and off he went to sleep.

The clock ticked distressingly loud at first, and the wind continued its sighing; but the busy thoughts soon drew Lucy away again to a fairyland of hopes and plans for an ideal future. She was rudely roused by a knock—a rather hesitating one, it seemed. She had hardly time to rise before the door opened and a Mexican woman poked her head in.

"Buenas tardes, senora!" and her body followed. Such appearances were not uncommon in this scattered community, where Mexican women did the washing for the ranches, though nightfall usually found them in their own "dobe" or that of a dark-skinned friend. The woman's face looked familiar, though, like all her class, little of it was to be seen because of the mullings of a dirty woolen shawl or rebozo. So with a nod Lucy pushed a chair toward her and said, "Well?"

"Poco frio," said the woman, and shut-

Something must be done, and done quickly. Plans flew like lightning through her heated, beating brain. Her father's entrance at any minute might precipitate matters; the sleeping boy was unconscious of any danger; all rested with her. Two things must be done: she must arouse no suspicion, which would make either herself or her brother the victim; and she must capture Giacomo—the soul of her dead friend seemed to appeal for that.

A few minutes elapsed before she could overcome the rapid beating of her heart, and begin to hum a tune. She went out into the lean-to shed.

"Not a drop of water, as usual, when one wants a drink," she muttered, noiselessly pouring out a half-bucketful upon the ground. "I never saw such a bucket for being always empty," as she came into the room. "Rob, Rob! you sleepy head! Go to the spring for some water." She playfully waked him, alternately scolding and laughing while he fussed and complained.

"Oh, lemme alone!" Rob was awake at last at the sight of the stranger. "Hello! how did that old witch come? On a broomstick?"

"Here, Rob, I'll go for the water. But get out the dominoes and we'll have a game. Want to play, senora?"

"Si, si!" The Mexican's eyes twinkled, his native gambling instinct overcoming all prudence, and Lucy with

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