

Winnipeg, May, 1910.

in a state to listen gave him grave wisdom. "And it was so foolish to quarrel, darling; you were having a nice time together, and now you have to stay all alone, and—" She broke off suddenly, the color rising slowly to her forehead. Her words hit home startlingly; it was foolish to quarrel! The passionate sense of justification—that her husband was in the right—rose for a moment, then for the first time failed her. After all, Franklin had felt in the right when he demanded his elephant! And Emily was freezing in there, because—

Franklin, spent with emotion, allowed himself to be laid down, and drifted off into sleep. His mother stood hesitating for a moment, then she walked swiftly toward the rear car.

Mrs. Colter Jarvis, muffled in furs, was standing in her tiny kitchen superintending a tray on which her chef was arranging various tempting dishes. She looked up at the sound of steps, and found herself face to face with Mrs. Franklin. Mrs. Colter flushed with a guilty glance at the tray.

"I—I couldn't help it, Ruth; I couldn't stand the thought of your being hungry another minute," she faltered. "I was going to beg you to—" Mrs. Franklin interrupted with a little shaken laugh. "And I was going to drag you out of this cold by main force," she said, "Oh, Emily!"

The next east-bound train, which they passed a few hours later in the wake of a snow-plough, carried letters from both Mrs. Jarvis to their husbands. "After all, he is your brother," was the keynote of each.

Mr. Franklin Jarvis read his gravely, his thoughts flying to an office not two blocks away that he had not entered for more than a year. Finally he went down to the street and turned slowly in that direction. At the end of the first block he encountered Mr. Colter Jarvis, also walking thoughtfully, a letter in his hand. The two hesitated then smiled shamefully.

"Hello, Frank!"

"Hello, Colt!"

They shook hands and spoke of the weather.

Lucy Alden's Capture.

By Rhoda S. Regent



ONE calm autumn evening, while the sun was burning red in the cloudless Western sky, Lucy Alden sat on the threshold of her ranch home in deep thought.

To find this simple homestead one must travel far beyond the end of the railroad, across the flat stretching to the south, ford the clear creek where the pecans hang over and the air is musical with call of mocking bird and canary, up and down arroyos, dry from the drought of the long, hot summer, till on the smooth prairie, just beyond the patch of mesquite, we can see the little dwelling of two rooms, the rough boards beginning to gray with the sun and wind of six months.

And it was this that Lucy Alden was thinking. Not of the rough shanty, 'tis true, but of the great stretch of nothing, as it seemed, to the front and far behind—to this side and to that. And of the mother whose frail health, after the removal to this Western life, had succumbed in a few months. Remembrance brought tears with the picture of the silent little band carrying this loved one to the undulation beyond the corral, where in its warm bosom was laid earth to earth.

Since then Lucy had given way to despondency. She took little interest in the house, passing much of her time on the bed moping or crying, or at the doorstep desolate and melancholy, though the wind petted her with its freshness, the air was so filled with joyous life, and the ever-moving flocks of sheep suggested peace. The men coming to meals unexpectedly worried and fretted her, a fact she always let her father see; though the path to the spring was shady and no water so cool, she saw only the stones, and while she hated the house because it was rough, bare and hot, she persisted in hanging about it and living over and over again the sad last days of her mother's life. Her father and little brother Robert did in their masculine way all in their power to brighten her, but despondency brings selfishness, and as she saw no happiness in living she made life unhappy also for others.

"Cheer up, pet," her father would say, as he left in the mornings. "Thank God, the three of us are yet left together."

Lucy's good angel was near her in the soft air and sweetness of this evening, and conscience suggested that grieving and despair might be ingratitude to her God, her people and herself, and by the time the sun was sinking like a great ball into the vast prairie ocean, and the bluejay's harsh call had died away, and the twitter of the red bird and mocker subdued, she had resolved to make those bare walls inclose a home, to take a mother's place to the growing boy, and

by resolution and self-dependence aid her father in his hard fight with a new country. Many recollection of omitted duties came trooping by in the hush of the short twilight, bringing the consciousness that, after all, hers had been the mission to uplift and to strengthen them.

Far across the prairie came the cheerful song of her father, "Home, home, sweet, sweet home!" then the chunk-chunk of the saddles, and a few minutes brought him and Robert, a boy of ten, to the wire inclosing the houseyard.

"Well, daughter, lonely for father? Come, give me a kiss, and then get me a snack. We've found the sheep to-day in bad condition from scab, and we must finish rounding them up tonight into the corral, ready for a drive to the dipping pen. Don't feel bad over it, Lucy," as the pout came into her face. "Robert will stay with you, and in two hours I'll be home again."

Lucy had run to him bright and eager with her new resolutions, which were now put to the test. A lump in the throat has to be swallowed and the voice steadied before she could bring herself to say, "Why, that's all right, father." Robert uncinched his horse and turned him loose in the inclosure, while Lucy hurried to place supper. They then sat down to the table as she put on it the simple meal of pork and frijoles, of which she had given them a great sufficiency of late. True, there was little else to be had, but, maybe—

"Mat Barnes was killed to-day by a Mexican herder, sis," reported Robert. "What? How? What for?" rapidly cried Lucy, with terrified face.

Mat Barnes had been overseer at a ranch close by, and being of a lively nature, had easily gained the affections of the young folks for miles around. Lucy, in particular, had been drawn to him, and he was the only one of the many that came and passed she made any efforts to entertain.

"Knifed, of course, and killed instantly," Robert liked Mat, too, and was not of a brutal nature, but he enjoyed telling the news and Lucy's terror.

"Mat was put out about the way one of the men was treating the sheep, Lucy," explained her father, "and without a moment's warning Giacomo turned on him and stabbed him."

"That thieving old greaser!" cried Robert. "You remember old Giacomo, sis—the same one that escaped from Sherwood jail? He ought to have been hung long ago, if only for the way he'd cut into the flesh while he was shearing sheep."

"Yes," assented Lucy, in a hushed voice. "What did they do to him?"

"Do? They haven't caught him! It'll take a greaser to catch a greaser. Like as not he's prowling around our place."

"Come, come, Robert, you are frightening sister unnecessarily. Well, daughter,

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