The Heritage Of The Desert

Continued from Page Three the sheep, Jack accompanied Naab to

"I've brought up your saddle," said

Naab, "and you can put it on any mustang here." What a pleasure it was to be in the saddle again, and to feel strength to remain there! He rode with August all

over the western end of the plateau. They came at length to a strip ground, higher than the bordering forest, which was comparatively free of cedars and brush, and when August had surveyed it once he slapped his knee with satisfaction.

"Fine! better than I hoped for! This stretch is about a mile long and narrow at this end. Now Jack, you see the other side faces the rim, this side the forest, and at the end here is a wall of rock; luckily it curves in half-circle, which will save us work. We'll cut cedars, drag them in line, and make a big corral against the rock. From the opening in the corral we'll build two fences of trees; then we'll chase Silvermane till he's done, run him down into this level, and turn him inside the fence. No horse can break through a close line of cedars. He'll run till he's in the corral, and then we'll rope him."

"But isn't it going to take a lot of

"Rather," said August, dryly. "It'll take a week to cut and drag the cedars let alone tire out that wild stallion. "Peon is blanketing his fire. See the be on that ledge where we'll have the Now for the answer."

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ed, and, later, Dave and Billy on jaded mustangs. Black Bolly limped behind, stretching a long halter, an unhappy mustang with dusty, foam-stained coat and hanging head.

"Not bad," said August, examing the front of him. He shot away to the left lame leg. "She'll be fit in a few days and flashed through the glades belong before we need her to help run yond. The brothers saved their steeds down Silvermane. Bring the liniment content to keep him cornered in that and a cloth, one of you, and put her end of the plateau. Then August in the sheep corral to-night."

Mescal's love for the mustang shone in her eyes while she smoothed out one piece of rising ground beyond the the crumpled mane and patted the level, and stood looking backward toslender neck.

"Bolly, to think you'd do it!" And Bolly dropped her head as though his sight he leaped as if he had been really ashamed.

When darkness fell they gathered on the rim to watch the signals. A triangle, Dave and Billy at the broad fire blazed out of the black void be- end, August at the apex, and now the low, and as they waited it brightened real race began. August chased him up and flamed higher.

"Ugh!" said Piute, pointing across

to the dark line of cliffs.
"Of course he'd see it first," laughed Naab. "Dave have you caught it yet? Jack, see if you can make out a fire over on Echo Cliffs."

"No, I don't see any light except that white star. Have you seen it?" "Long ago," replied Naab, "Here sight along my finger and narrow your eyes down."

"I believe I see it-yes, I'm sure." "Good. How about you, Mescal?" "Yes." she replied.

Jack was amused, for Dave insisted that he had been next to the Indian, "Great!" said Jack, all enthusiasm. and Billy claimed priority to all them. To these men bred on the desert keen sight was preminently the chief

When the finish comes, you want to flicker? One, two-one, two-one.

They returned to camp and prepared space, star-studded above, ebony beinto desperate headlong flight. He showed scratches, but none cut into
into desperate headlong flight. He showed scratches, but none cut into
upper. Mescal and Piute soon arrivlow. Far across the depths shone a
saved nothing, he had found his the flesh. After a while he rose, pantinto desperate headlong flight. He showed scratches, but none cut into supper. Mescal and Piute soon arriv- low. Far across the depths shone a pin-point of steady light. The Indian grunted again, August vented his "Ha!" and then Jack saw the light blink like a star, go out for a second, and blink again.

"That's what I like to see,' said August. "We're answered. Now it's all over but the work."

Work it certainly was, as Jack discovered next day. He helped the brothers cut down cedars while August hauled them in to line with his roan.
What with this labor and the necessary camp duties nearly a week passed, and in the mean time Black Bolly recovered from her lameness. Twice the workers saw Silvermane standing on open high ranges, restive and sus picious, with his silver mane flying, and his head turned over his shoulder

watching, always watching.
"It'd be worth something to find how long that stallion could go with-out water" commented Dave. "But we'll make his tongue hang out tomorrow. It'd serve him right to break him with Black Bolly."

Daylight came warm and misty eils unrolled from the desert; a purple curtain lifted from the eastern rags; then the red sun burned.

Dave and Billy Naab mounted their mustangs, and each led another mount

y a halter. "We'll go to the ridge, cut Silvernane out of his band, and warm him ap; then we'll drive him down to this

Hare, in his eagerness, found the time very tedious while August delay-ed about camp, punching new holes in his saddle-girth, shortening his stirrups, and smoothing kinks out of his lasso. At last he saddled the roan, and

also Black Bolly. Mescal came out of her tent ready for the chase; she wore a short skirt of buckskin, and leggings of the same material. Her hair braided, and fastened at the back, was bound by a double band closely fitting her black head. Hare walked, leading two mustangs by the halters, and Naab and Mescal rode, each of them followed by two other spare mounts. August tied three mustangs at one point along the level stretch, and three at another. Then he led Mescal and Jack to the top of the stone wall above

of a considerable part of the plateau. The eastern rise of ground, a sage and juin per slope, was in plain sight. Hare saw a white flash; then Silvermane broke out of the cedars into the sage. One of the brothers raced him half the length of the slope, and then the other coming out headed him off down toward the forest. Soon the pounding of hoofs sounded through he trees nearer and nearer, Silvermane came out straight ahead on the open level. He was running easily.

the corral, where they had good view

"He hasn't opened up yet," said August. Hare watched the stallion with sheer fascination. He ran seemingly with Black Bolly far behind, but now he out effort. What a stride he had, how could not clude her. peautifully his silver mane waved in the wind! He veered off to the left, out of sight in the brush, while Dave

and Billy galloped up to the spot

where August had tied the first three

mustangs. Here they dismounted, changed saddles to fresh horses, and were off again.

The chase now was close and all lown-hill for the watchers. Silvermane winkled in and out among the cedars, and suddenly stopped short on the rim. He wheeled and coursed away toward the crags, and vanished, But soon he reappeared, for Billy had cut across and faced him about. Again he struck the level stretch. Dave was there in spurred his roan into the scene action. Silvermane came out on

roan crashed through the thickets stung, and plunged away. The Naabs had hemmed him in a and down, along the rim, across to the long line of cedars, always in the end heading him for the open stretch.

ward the brothers. When the great

Down this he fled with flying mane, only to be checked by the relentless brothers. To cover this broad end of the open required riding the like of which Hare had never dreamed of and held firmly. Billy's mount slid on The brothers taking advantage of the his haunches and spilled his rider from brief periods when the stallion was the saddle. Silvermane seemed to be going toward August, changed their tired mustangs for fresh ones.

Her fleetness made the other mustangs stones; and for an instant strained in seem slow. All in a flash she was round convulsive struggle; then fell heaving her and the long fence of cedars. Ut- loosened his lasso over tering a piercing snort of terror the it a halter, and tied the end to a gray stallion lunged out, for the first cedar stump. time panic-stricken, and lengthened his stride in a wonderful way. He raced down the stretch with his head over his shoulder watching the little black. Seeing her gaining, he burst

PUTS HEALTH AND VIM INTO

match; he won that first race down

the level, but it had cost him his best,

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If he had been fresh he might have left

August Naab let him run this time, and Silvermane, keeping close to the whisper. fence, passed the gate, ran down to "But-but Mescal-I love you. You down the stretch.

him, and now Mescal, forcing the run- up here. It was like a kind of dream. ning, caught him, lashed his haunches And after-after you kissed me Iwith her whip and drove him into the I found outgate of the corral.

August and his two sons were close behind, and blocked the gate. Silvermane's race was nearly 'un. "Hold here, boys," said August. "I'll

go in and drive him round and round a simple swain. till he's done, then, when I yell, you stand aside and rope him as he comes

tore at the steep scaly walls, fell back. What kind of a girl are you? and began his weary round again and were not true. Your actions were Silvermane ran round the corral, yet again. Then as sense and courage yielded gradually to unreasoning terror, he ran blindly; every time he passed the guarded gateway his eyes were wilder, and his stride more lab-

"Now !" velled August Naab. Mescal drewout of the opening, and Dave and Billy pulled away, one on each side for the opening with something of his old speed. As he went through, yellow loops flashed in the sun, circling, narrowing, and he seemed to run straight into them. One loop whipped close round his glossy neck; the other caught his head. Dave's mustang staggered under the violent shock, went to his knees, struggled up climbing into the air. Then August Naab, darting through the gate in a "Ho! Mescal!" rolled out August's cloud of dust, shot his lasso, catching voice. That was the call for Mescal the right foreleg. Silvermane landed to put Black Bolly after Silvermane. hard, his hoofs striking fire from the corral, with Silvermane between and groaning. In a twinkling Billy

The Naabs stood back and gazed at

their prize. Silvermane was badly spent; he was wet with foarn, but no fleck of blood marred his mane; his superb coat muscle. He was a beaten horse; the noble head was bowed; yet he showed no viciousness, only the fear of trapped animal. He eyed Black Bolly and the halter, as though he had divined the fatal connection between

The Breaker of Wild Mustangs For a few days after the capture of Silvermane, a time full to the brin of excitement for Hare, he had no word with Mescal, save for morning and evening greetings. When he die come to seek her, with a purpose which had grown more impelling since August Naab's arrival, he learned to be wilderment that she avoided him. She gave him no chance to speak to her alone; her accustomed restingplace on the rim below knew her no more; early after supper she retired to her tent.

Hare nursed a grievance for fortyeight hours, and then, taking advantage of Piute's absence on an errand down to the farm, and of the Naab's strenuous day with four vicious wild borses in the corral at one time, he walked out to the pasture where Mescal shepherded the flock.

"Mescal, why are you avoiding me?" he asked. "What has happened?" She looked tired and unhappy, and her gaze, instead of meeting his, wan-

dered to the crags. "Nothing," she replied. "But there must be something. You have given me no chance to talk to you, and I wanted to know if you'd let me speak to Father Naab."
"To Father Naab? Why—what

"About you, of course-and methat I love you and want to marry

She turned white. "No-no!" Hare paused blankly, not so much at her refusal as at the unmistakable fear in her face.
"Why-not?" he asked presently,

with an odd sense of trouble. There was more here than Mescal's habitual

"Because he'll be terribly angry." "Angry-I don't understand. The girl did not answer, and looked

so forlorn that Hare attempted to take in his arms. She risisted and broke from him. "You must never-never do that

Hare drew back sharply. "Why not? What's wrong? must tell me, Mescal."

"I remembered." She hung her "Remembered—what?"

"I am pledged to marry Father Naab's eldest son." For a moment Hare did not understand. He stared at her unbelievingly.

"What did you say?" he asked slow

Mescal repeated her words in

the rim and wheeled. The black mus- let me kiss you," said Hare, stupidly, stang was on him again, holding him as if he did not grasp her meaning in close to the fence, driving him back "You let me kiss you," he repeated.

"Oh, Jack, I forgot," she wailed. "It The brothers remorselessly turned was so new, so strange, to have you

"What, Mescal?"

Hare. It was the simple persistence of a simple swain. "Oh, you don't know, you don't

knew. It's impossible!" "Impossible!" Hare's anger flared up. "You let me believe I had won you

were not true. Your actions were lies." "Not lies," she faltered, and turned her face from him.

With no gentle hand he grasped her arm and forced her to look at him. the misery in her eyes overcame him, and he roughly threw his arms around her and held her close.

"It can't be a lie. You do care for me-love me. Look at me." He drew her head back from his breast. Her face was pale and drawn; her eyes closed tight, with tears forcing a way out under the long lashes; her lips were parted. He bowed to their sweet nearness; he kissed them again and



no Chances

For Sale by

again, while the shade of the ceda seemed to whirl about him. "I lov you, Mescal. You are mine—I will have you—I will keep you—I will no

She vibrated to that like a keer strung wire under a strong touch, Al "But Mescal, if you really love me back in his arms, supple, pliant with you can't marry any one else," said quivering life, and for the first time

"I gave him my promise becan there was nothing else to do. I pledged to-to him in the church White Sage. It can't be changed. I'

"Eldest son?" echoed Jack, sudden mindful of the implication. "Withat's Snap Naab. Ah! I begin to light. That-Mescal-"

"You hate him and you're pleds



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let him have you!"

in a flash the trembling, shame-strice ken girl was transformed. She leane shyness, no fear, but a dark smoul ering fire.

"You do love me, Mescal?" "I-I couldn't help it." There was a pause tense with fee

"Mescal, tell me-about you be pledged," he said, at last.

got to marry-Father Naab's elde

"I hate him."

Continued on page 9

unt per annum. T. Merritt

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April 3rd., 1924

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