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## Passing the Love Of Women

—BY EDWIN BLISS.

### PART II.

You can't argue with women or men like Podner. His imagination was hitched to the idea of guarding my location, and anything that appealed to his imagination plumb tickled him. I finally took him to the vein, gave him my old Colts .45 on a .38 carriage, and left him there—proudest little fighting cock that ever hit the mountains; feeling that he was sacrificing himself and his poem to a generous idea. That was Podner all the time. Foolish? Of course it was. But somehow, the memory of his standing guard for me, his soul crying out for the poem and his heart giving it up for me, well, it made my legs eat up the miles between me and Ozone, made Hell Diver sore as the itch. Just three days took me to town, got me outfitted, and ready for the return trip.

And all the way back I was chuckling for joy at thinking of Podner's sacrifice. Doc used to tell me he was a selfish little prig and I an old fool, and I was happy to think of what Doc would say when I told him of this. It was near the end of the sixth afternoon that I sighted land-marks and knew I was close.

Then a bullet whined over my head, singing a most uncomfortable tune. I laughed still, as I rose, seeing the surprise on Podner's face, but the laugh wandered off somewhere else as I found my eyes staring into the black holes of a Winchester, and I chind that hole, into the toughest, black-bearded pirate's features I'd ever seen.

"You're wandering on my location, stranger," he growled. "Vamoose molly pronto!"

"You're location like hell!" I came back quick, cussing myself as I recollect leaving my new gun back with Hell Diver, riled at knowing my own helplessness.

"Vamoose," he repeated, rocking the gun in my direction. "I've got this location staked neat and business-like. Just wander on till I see what your back looks like."

Little ants' nests of nerves began tickling the back of my neck while the icy fingers played along my spine, for a thought—a horrible thought—hit me between the eyes as I looked on his ugly face. What had this pl-

rate done with Podner—the little fellow—Podner, whom I had left in charge? For a second I was ready to spring at him, to choke the truth out of him, and the Winchester grew steady as a rock when he saw my thought.

"My podner," I asked, trying to keep my voice steady; "what did you do to my podner? I staked this location and you know it; I left my podner in charge. If you've hurt him I'll skin you alive. Jump my claim all you want, but tell me about my podner. What have you done with him?"

"Nobody was here when I lit," he answered, his face showing me plain that he was telling the truth. "I ain't seen hide nor hair of a human in thirty miles." My heart sank low as I looked helplessly about; the great rough country around me menacing the little fellow. Then a light lit up the fellow's eyes. "Hold on!" he called, as I started to walk off. "I did speak to a runty, long-haired lunatic dancing like a tarantula, down to Red Mesa. I spoke to him, but he didn't see me. Plumb loco, he was."

Sudden, as you go round the Devil's Slide, I came upon him. He was sitting as I'd seen him sit so many days, sitting as I had left him mornings and I would find him nights—facing Red Mesa. His back was hunched over.

Soft, I slipped up behind him, hating him for sleeping—sleeping while my location was being jumped; sleeping there away from my location which he'd volunteered to guard, against my return. Worthless, a loafer, an ant! Doc had told me, had seen his real nature. Doc had been right, and I was an old fool. He knew, Doc did, why the paper pad was always empty. I picked it up from the ground, sneering on the little fellow's back. But the pad wasn't white now, wasn't empty. It was covered with writing, writing which I started to read, sneering on the back of the man who slept three miles from the location he allowed to be stolen. And then I sneered no more, nor I didn't hate no more, for I was reading Podner's poem.

Everybody knows it now, every one's read it; but they don't know it, sleeping there, worn out and happy; Red Mesa blazing at my feet, and off a ways, the black shadows folding up the mountained wilderness of Podner's rocks and tucking them away for the night and there was the poem in my hands that took it all—Red Mesa by day and by night and Red Mesa now, and chucked it all on a piece of paper not much bigger than a patch in my pants. All the colors of Red Mesa were on that piece of paper; every rock in Red Mesa was there; every ravine, canyon, hill, valley of Red Mesa was on it; the Lord, as he chucked Red Mesa out of heaven, was caught in the act. But that wasn't all. As I read it; I could hear the tinkle of a burro's bells, could see a burro's mallet head poking round the corner of a gorgeous ledge—and it wouldn't have been Red Mesa without a burro. And that ain't half. Though there wasn't a word about woman in the poem, there wasn't a word of it all that wasn't woman, didn't make me see woman. It was Podner's woman—the woman he'd seen looking in the book store window, with tear-mists in her eyes which she didn't know nor care about. For my hands, the woman whom he had seen in his mind and only there, the ideal woman he was calling to in the poem.

And because she was the woman he had never seen, the woman who was in his head, the woman he was calling, she was my woman, too. She was the woman I had seen, the woman who was my wife, the woman I had been calling back twenty long years. Not a word of woman in the poem, mind you, and it was all woman, my woman to me; everybody's woman to everybody—and that's why everybody likes it so. She was there all through it and I could see her, feel her near me—the woman who had run away with Joe Ellwood. I must have made a noise for Podner suddenly straightened, his startled eyes meeting mine; then his voice came out, frightened, husky:

"My God! The claim, the location! What is it? What—"

"I'm going back, Pete," he said quietly. "If your location has been jumped, I'll get it back for you. I'm stronger now."

All the three miles I argued, pleaded with him, pointing out how nothing could be done, as how this claim jumper could pot us as we came on him. But as I said before, women and men like Podner ain't reasonable. When we got in sight of the location, the tent the claim jumper had thrown, he made me stop.

"Stay here, Pete, until I call you. If the location is lost I'll get it back. You are strong and I am weak; the



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4365. Here is a charming model, with costume blouse and two-piece flare skirt. The neck is finished with the popular "kerchief" collar. The sleeve may be finished with a wrist length "peasant" portion, or in the newest "short" length. As here shown orange color canton crepe was used, with band of black crepe embroidered in orange floss. This is a good model for linen and pongee.

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Pattern mailed to any address on receipt of 15c in silver or stamps. Write the Wilson Publishing Co., 73 Adelaide St. West, Toronto.

man could fight you and he can't fight me. Stay here until I call you."

Funny how he knew the reason he got things when I'd never been able to. He was weak, and strong men couldn't fight him so they just naturally had to like him. Stay? Of course I stayed. Podner had a way of getting what he wanted. I stayed there, my mind burning up with pictures of that black bearded pirate dancing on the little fellow's frame, my feet itching to get inside that tent. The breeze was getting a file-tip edge on it while I waited, then this claim jumper threw aside the fly of his tent and waved to me.

Don't know why, reckon it must have been the old pirate's manner, made me step soft as I looked inside. At one end of the tent was a table and on the table was a candle and beside the candle was Podner's poem. Podner was occupying the shakedown in the corner, one arm thrown across his chest, the holy sort of look on his face which I knew so well. His breath was coming and going, deep and strong as any one's, his lips smiling gently like—

The fellow who had stolen my claim put his fingers on his lips, tip-toeing to the shakedown and hauling the blanket higher on Podner's neck, then stepped to the table and took up the pad where Podner had written his poem.

"Reckon we'd better build a fire outside," he whispered to me. "The little fellow's plumb wrestled hisself out, fightin' fer you."

"I've been making medicine with th' little feller," he said, after we'd built the fire outside and sat a long time in silence. "He's been beggin' me to give back your location, tellin' me how it happened. Have you read it?" he asked, holding out the pad of paper with Podner's poem on it and waiting till I took it. "I ain't what you might call educated," he goes on embarrassed like. "Th' little feller read it out loud once—would you mind doin' it agin, stranger? I had a notion when

## NURSES

The Toronto Hospital for incurables, in affiliation with Bellevue and Allied Hospitals, New York City, offers a three years' Course of Training to young women, having the required education, and desirous of becoming nurses. This Hospital has adopted the eight-hour system. The pupils receive uniforms of the School, a monthly allowance and travelling expenses to and from New York. For further information apply to the Superintendent.

I heard it that I can't seem to locate in my head."

I grinned, for I thought I knew what was pestering him, and read it over once more, finding more wonders in it, forgetting the man across the fire, seeing the woman clear. He reached out and took it away when I'd finished, spelling it out slowly, shaking his head as his dirty thumb traveled down the lines.

"Nary mention of her," he muttered, looking at me queer. "But, stranger, there's a woman in this thing somewhere. It puts me in mind of a woman I married once back in Cripple's old days."

He didn't make a move as I sprang to my feet, my hand jerking by instinct toward the left arm pit where I always stashed my gun. His face was looking into mine, a curious expression on it. And, in that second, I knew him for Joe Ellwood, the one I'd prayed to meet up with for twenty years.

"Sit down, Pete," he said quietly. "We'll wrastle it out. I banked your fires dirty, Pete, but it's tough to love a woman."

"Where is she?" That was my one thought and it came quick. He threw his big hands in a wide gesture that might have meant anything. It riled me bad, for you don't hanker after a woman twenty years as I had, seeing her always before you, hearing her voice always close at hand, without getting shaky when you meet the man who stole her away, especially. When he makes gestures that might mean anything.

"Insinuating?" I asked, cold and deliberate.

"No—a gambler," he answered, sad-like. "He was runnin' the Green Light in Anaconda—Frenchman by name of 'Froggy' Poret, soft spoken and perlitte sorta cuss."

He hauled out his pipe and, after filling her up, tosses the pouch across to me and then we smoked and studied the fire, the embers. Right over the tent where Podner slept, the long-wicked candle of a star was burning, and I felt my eyes moving away from the fire, watching it. I felt pretty good inside, somehow. Joe Ellwood was talking, slow, between puffs at his pipe.

"Pete, me and you picked a woman what naturally liked men who were soft spoken and sorta perlitte. Because we wasn't them things she run away and we thought it was her fault—and the man? Strikes me, we ought to get along pretty fair, bein' as we're kinda alike. Shall we split this here mine three ways?" He was on his feet, walking round the fire to me, his hand out full length, palm up.

When we'd sat down again, filling up our pipes and drawing steady, Joe jerked his thumb in the direction of the tent.

"Th' little feller's too forgetful for this country, Pete," he said. "We'd better stake him back until th' mine gets to payin' his dividends." He hurried away at his brian quite a while, then laughed. "What's wrong with Little Podner fer a han-ler th' mine?" he asks.

That's about all. Podner kicked at Minard's Liniment for Corns and Warts

taking a third, but it didn't do much good. Gold ain't everything but it's comfortable, and it's nice to have it turning out every minute. It got Podner well—I hear how he's making a trip around the world. He had his hour and it was a big one, picture in all the papers, name on everybody's lips, actors reciting his poetry. But it ain't spoiled him a bit—not a mite.

Me and Joe each got his book, couple of years back, and right on the first page he'd written, "To my old pardner." They're lying in our desks in our Little Podner offices, right where everybody can see them. Think of his writing that to us—"To my old pardner!" He still calls me and Joe pardners—his pardners.

Famous, too—Podner is. (The End.)

### Light Giving Mineral.

The people of Cornwall, in England, aver that at night there may be seen there a faintly shining mineral among the rocks rejected from the mines. That this is not pure imagination on their part has been proved by scientific investigation. A specimen of the mineral autunite, which is also found in Wales, was sent to a scientific body in London for examination of its apparently luminous properties. It was found that it closely resembled artificially prepared salts of uranium, and that its luminosity was due to its spontaneous radioactivity.

Minard's Liniment for Coughs & Colds Getting at the Truth. Little Willie came running into the house, stuttering in his excitement. "Mother," he panted, "do you know Archie Sloan's neck?"

"Do I know what?" asked his mother. "Do you know Archie Sloan's neck?" repeated Willie.

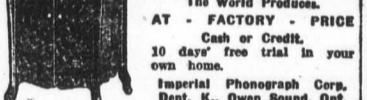
"I know Archie Sloan," answered the puzzled mother; "so I suppose I must know his neck. Why?"

"Well," said Willie, "he's just fell into the water up to it."

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