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WOLF MOON

A ROMANCE OF THE GREAT
SOUTHWEST

BY JOSEPH J. QUINN

CHAPTER XVII.—CONTINUED

"Joey Hathaway! I had no doubt. Take a look at this right hand." Between the index and middle finger was a small brown spot slightly larger than a pin head. "See this little mole. The nurse at the hospital where you were born jokingly said that this would serve as an excellent identification mark. Her words came true. You are, Joey Hathaway. But I never doubted it a moment."

"Think of it, I'm Joey Hathaway. Oh, I'm so happy," burst out the girl. "Can it really be possible? This is my dream come true. I have yearned and longed and hoped for my real name so long. Isn't it wonderful for all of us to be together again?" As Joey paused all eyes were set on her undergoing her happiness. "This is really the happiest moment of my life. I always felt that I was an American but those old gypsies always told me I was the daughter of Esaboi and Lodhka. But I've always had in my memory a picture of walking in a field of cotton and a kind faced woman smiling sweetly down upon me."

"That memory came from Georgia. That was when your parents were living. Of course you don't recall when you were first adopted by John and Margaret here," explained Senior Corcoran. Then turning to the latter he continued: "Oh, I see it all now quite clearly. I understand why I never heard from you or why Joey never came back. The years had covered it all up from my unseeing eyes. But I hoped and prayed always. Those years were unhappy ones for me but not filled with the sadness of yours for I had Jack to comfort me while your child was lost. Now we come together again out here in this country, one big happy family. Jack I see now why you love the West with that sweep of prairie and those stars, look how large and luminous they are. Then, too, Jack you have another reason for loving this Western country," he added with merriment. And before the smiles had subsided he added, "But tell me what are your plans for the future?"

"His plans are, John, that he's going to stay here and direct the ranch for me." "Who me? Not on your life. I'm not capable," and he meant the words as he looked directly at John Trichell. "The most capable man in the West," came the compliment in return. "Well, I'm delighted John. I'm glad to know you have so much confidence in my son. But would it be possible for me to purchase a part of it for him, say a quarter?" "Purchase it? Why I'm going to give him exactly one third and start him in beef. You don't realize that if it wasn't for Jack a third of my head of cattle would have been driven off to Texas. That was a thrilling night, too. It's worth recalling. Jack tell them all about it."

Over near the bunk house sounds of laughter rang out on the evening air. A whinny from the ponies pealed sharply. Twilight crept down between the spreading limbs of the cottonwoods. Far off in the distance a train moaned sadly, puffing on its way back to Kansas and the North. Curling blue smoke arose from lighted cigars and was wafted by a soft breeze that sent cotton bloom floating. The tiny sounds of the insect world, warmed into slumber by the sun, now awakened into harmony. Janet and Joey turned toward the Gulch, the long valley in the west, of which Jack was speaking. His father leaned forward to catch every word as it fell from his son's lips. From off the mesa came a sharp yelp of coyote to be followed by another to the North. Janet seemed to huddle in fear, a soul estranged to the wild things of the night. To Joey it was musical, homelike. Stars shone down through the lattice-work of catpala leaves. A loud puff of wind stirred the branches overhead and blew tendrils of hair across Joey's face. Night came upon the plains, bringing a strange, weird setting for the denouement of Jack's story. Then came a long roll, a wolf call from somewhere out on the plain. It was the twilight serenade, the wolf's good evening to the silver orb that threw its light down between the rocks and crags of Navajo Gulch. It broke in on Jack's story, weaving itself around his words, as music does a song. It was primitive, ancient, the same voice that sounded from the grassy swells when the buffalo herds moved on their migrations, taken up now by gray creatures that sat alone and gave out their message to the hearkening plains. And it continued long after Jack's story was ended and his hearers went to bed to listen to the soft flare of the leaves under the breathing of the night.

CHAPTER XVIII.

EARTH OLD YET EVER NEW

Out toward Navajo Gulch two riders moved into the sunset western horizon. Mrs. Trichell

watched them until the gold filtered down on the plains and filled the air with a haze. She turned to her husband and remarked:

"My, my, what a wonderful change. Out of the sorrow of the past has come joy for us all. It was just heavenly to see that happy expression on John Corcoran's face when he bade us all good bye. I really believe he wanted us to go to the Grand Canyon with them."

"Yes, John hasn't changed much in all those years. He was always that way, good-hearted and considerate. But I'm glad that everything has been cleared up, glad for Joey's sake."

"Yes, indeed, Jack is happy too. I know. It was such a surprise to Jack to discover that Joey is Janet's sister. Janet is a splendid girl but I don't believe the West suits her. She never appeared very much at home. Her thoughts seemed to be of the East all the time."

"Yes and Janet noticed his love for Joey," Mrs. Trichell added. "It was very evident. I heard her say something to Jack about a palmitist's words coming true and that she was glad the girl was her sister. John Corcoran, too, was not slow to see Jack's affection for Louise, but he seemed to be pleased with the knowledge and when he said, 'take good care of Joey and Jack,' I observed that twinkle. Did you?"

"Yes, I did. But as you said John hasn't changed much. The fact that he made Jack promise to bring Singing-in-the-Rain to this ranch and make him happy the remainder of his life as a reward for saving Joey shows that he is just as solicitous as ever about the welfare of others."

The couple turned and gazed toward the Gulch to see Joey and Jack silhouetted against a cloud bank of maroon. The couple watched them until the dusk threw its haze across the plains and accentuated the rosy nuance that swept the sky. Over at the Gulch twilight came down early. The evening air was motionless, warm, intrusive. Occasionally it flared and rustled in the blackjacks. Joey and Jack dismounted and led Thunderbird and Satchel to the rim of the Gulch. Down below a mist was rising laden with the odor of rank weeds still moist from the recent rains. It was a night of mystery and hush, of calmness and peace, one in which hearts opened in exquisite sensibility, one that brought fine thoughts and sweet sentiments trooping from the soul.

"What 't Shakespeare in the wrote the shortest sentence in the English Language when he said, 'Sit Jessica.' Well I'll say 'Sit Joey!—Joey Hathaway.'" "Oh, Jack it sounds just wonderful to hear you call me Joey Hathaway. It's heavenly to know my name when for so many years it has been a mystery to me."

"Yes, it is Joey. And just think! You and I knew each other in Georgia a long time ago. What marvelous things have happened since that time. I came West to seek a fortune and my fortune was you. But father always declared his prayers would be answered. He prayed unceasingly to the Little Flower. And you see he was rewarded, my footsteps were directed to come here to you."

have brought back my name and have changed my life."

"But you must remember that in helping do that I have done something else."

"What is that?" "Fallen in love with you." The words seemed to hang on his lips. A sudden rush of night that made the stars shine more brightly shot before his eyes as if some great curtain were lowered.

Out in the distance a star fell from its moorings blazing a trail of light across the sky. Jack looked up, his gaze momentarily lost in the Heavens. Louise was whispering, "Jack! Jack!" "Yes, Joey!" "Love has come to me, too." Her words swelled and died like music. He placed his cheek to hers and said:

"Joey are you mine?" "Yours forever, Jack." It was unconditional surrender. "Then can I give you a new name, a new life?" Her answer was to place her head upon his breast. Eternity approached in a wide full sweep that caught them both in its embrace. Jack closed his eyes in a new found happiness. When he opened them a light was tipping the blackjacks. The moon had risen.

Over from the slopes of the western side of the Gulch came a long roll that rose and died and then rose and surged again over the plains. Joey and Jack looked back to see the moon climbing over the cottonwood grove of the ranch. Another roll, a deep one, pealed out slowly. Then appeared on the western rim a lone wolf. It threw its voice to the new born moon, to the stars, staid and shooting, to the universe.

"Wolf Moon," broke out Jack softly. "Wolf Moon is February, Jack." Joey whispered in correction. "February for the Indians and Gypsies but Wolf Moon for us. It's the moon of love and happiness."

"Then it's Wolf Moon, Jack." The voice of love, earth old yet ever new, beautiful, sublime, transporting, came to their listening ears from the leaf harps of the trees and found a response in their throbbing hearts. It brought their lips together as naturally as twilight meets the night. And as they reigned king and queen of the new born paradise the valley at their feet rang with a tremulous voice and the world of shadows and phantoms of the night.

THE END
AT LECKWOOD LIGHT
Sam Wycliff was leaning over the table, whispering to his two confederates.

the sea rose and fell in sullen murmurs. Above, she could just discern the outlines of towering ragged masses of clouds. Night was already at hand. Very quietly she knelt and drew her rosary from her dress.

"O Mary, Star of the Sea," she whispered half aloud, "keep thy children safe from all harm this night!" Suddenly from below she heard a noise, as though a chair had been overturned; then all was silent save the low requiem of wind and wave.

"I wonder if dad, could have fallen from his chair," she thought anxiously, and going to the head of the stairs, she called: "Dad!" "Dad!" but received no reply. "I wonder."

A cold shiver gripped her heart. For a moment or two she hesitated, looking at the matches in her hand, and then at the lamps that still remained unlit. Should she light them before going down, or should she first see what had befallen her father?"

"I must see what's the matter with dad; it won't hurt for the lamps to wait a minute or two." Suiting her actions to her words, she hastened down the darkened stairs, and flung open the door of the sitting room. All was black and silent within, where only a short time before she had left her father basking so peacefully in warmth and light. What could have occurred?

"Oh, dad, I say, I say!" The rest of the sentence was never completed, for at that instant she felt herself grasped from behind and flung violently to the floor. A scream of terror burst from her lips.

"Oh, father! father where are you? Oh, save me, save me!" "Yell on, my lady," growled a voice from the darkness. "No one will hear ye, anyhow."

She felt her hands being tied behind her. "Say, you over there, can't you strike a light? What youse take dis for?" Out of the darkness a match flared. When the lamp had been lit the girl beheld, to her horror, her father lying on his back, a bright stream of crimson issuing from his breast. Her father had been foully done to death. At that terrible sight she seemed born anew. Forgetful of her own danger, un mindful of the gaze of the three masked ruffians, she flung back her head, her blue eyes blazing with righteous indignation, her breath coming in quick, short gasps.

"You cowards, you murderers," she cried, "to kill a poor old man! God will punish you for this horrible deed."

knew that she must exert the utmost caution, for she could not tell if anyone guarded the doorway that led to the upper part of the lighthouse. She reached the door and tried it; to her joy it was unlocked. They had thought she was so securely bound that it was not necessary to fasten the door.

Once in the open, the fresh salt winds did much to revive her. By the almost unceasing lightning she was able to discover at no great distance from her, the three ruffians, enveloped completely in oilskins. Thank God she was not too late! There was yet ample time. The good God help and aid her!

On the left hand side of the island there was a small cove where a lifeboat swung at anchor. So well was this sheet of water protected from the tossing bay beyond that its surface was now scarcely disturbed. Her plan was to reach this boat and endeavor to steer for the channel. She knew how extremely perilous, and even foolhardy, this was. But her duty was to save the oncoming vessel. She must now take her father's place. This was clear. There was no other way. She must be her father's daughter.

Swiftly, like a shadow she glided towards the boat. So busy were the wreckers talking and gazing seawards that she was not seen by them until, rowing with all her strength, she was swept by them, making for the open roadway. She could hear distinctly their curses and yells, and the bullets from their revolvers whistled all around her, luckily none doing her harm, though two or three struck the boat, sending the splinters flying.

The storm was increasing in fury, but the lightning, which she had prayed would be a means of guiding her, had almost ceased, only illuminating the heavens at rare intervals. She had found in the boat's locker a speaking trumpet; this would be of inestimable value to her. Suddenly as she was just entering the rougher water, she saw, not half a mile away, the oncoming lights of a huge ocean liner. Would she be in time to give the warning? Could she keep the boat from being swamped long enough to save the ship from destruction? She knew that she must make it. God and Our Lady must, would help.

On and on she went, fighting and struggling with the mighty giant waves. Oh, if she could only be in time! Her life mattered nothing to her, if she could only rescue from destruction the lives of so many of God's people. Now, now was her chance. The great ship loomed close and near. Flinging the oars into the bottom of the boat, she raised the speaking horn to her lips.

"Ship ahoy! Ship ahoy! The reefs! O God, the reefs!" That was all. A great billow swept over the fragile boat, carrying the girl into the arms of the sea. At that moment, as though by the beneficence of an all-ruling Providence, the lightning streamed across the heaving waves, and the helmsman saw the white upturned face of a woman and heard a warning, pleading cry. Then the darkness swooped down blacker than before—but the Heloise was saved!

—Charles J. Quirk, S. J., in the Irish Catholic.
ATTITUDE OF IRISH CLERGY ON ELECTION
By J. H. Cox
In the electioneering now rife all over the twenty-six Free State counties, Catholic clerics are interesting only on points that do not involve very acute party or personal issues. They are their best to dispel civic apathy, the symptoms of which were seen in the exceedingly small polls at some recent contests. Speaking at Dromahair, Father Prior said it was almost criminal for serious citizens to abstain from voting.

Other pastors have urged the electors to insist that public work—such as the very necessary work of drainage in low-lying places—shall be provided for the young manhood, which is in danger of being demoralized by enforced idleness. Archbishop O'Donnell, the new Primate of all Ireland, has just declared that "the salve for Ireland's wounds is to make good-will active and mutual everywhere." He emphasized the importance of protecting the rights of the minorities, both in the North and in the South.

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