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 Tale Of Two Cafes (In Color)

The Girl From The Double R
 By BETTY BLOCKINGER

CHAPTER XI

"Nope," said Hank. "I warn't. He got an idea someone'd been snakin' cattle out, one by one. Figured he'd found the trail they was usin'." "Steak of comin' right out and sayin' he was figurin' on investigatin', he sneaks out and goes it alone. One of them new hands was ridin' range over in the rock lot and heard a shot. He rode over, found your uncle and brung the old fellow in."

"New hands. . . Which ones? I mean which set of new hands, the two or the three?"

"The two that came in first."

"Hank, could he be?"

Hank gave her a withering look. "Now see here, young un, if he'da been primed to do 'way with Jed, would he a-brung him in?"

"I don't know," Rusty admitted. "If he knew Uncle Jed was going—if he was seriously wounded—Is he, Hank?"

"I don't know. He's tough, but—well, we all got to take that last trail some time."

"Was he conscious at all? But then he couldn't have known who fired the shot. It could have been this Hank."

"Now, look-a-here," Hank protested. "But Rusty shook her head. In whom could you trust in such days as these?"

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asked me to convey a message to you if I saw you. He's coming in to take you home, at your mother's request, he said."

Decker called for Rusty at the hospital late that afternoon, after picking up her bags at Westmore's place.

He was in a gay mood, insisting they remain in the city for dinner. He deposited Hank with some old cronies, then took her to a dining room on the roof of a hotel.

As they dined, they watched a young spring storm come in, turning the world to greenish gold, saving that gold to throw in jagged lines against a purpling night. And perversely, Rusty thought of another storm and another man. . . .

"After we're married, we'll run in here often. The trouble with us ranchers, Small Fry, is we stick too close to the spread; our perspective narrows down to weather—and cattle. That's not living. A person needs to get out and meet all kinds of people. Right?"

Rusty supposed it was, yet the radio and the automobile had so narrowed the distance between ranches, and between ranches and towns, she'd never felt the need of anything more.

"I'm going East next week, and when I return—" Decker left that in the air. "Meanwhile, how would you like to borrow a few of my hands for your roundup? I'll have Slim Jack pick up the best of the lot and ride over when you whistle."

Hank made an able chaperon and the three of them sang as they loosened by the "doggone hair-off" his cronies had served him, he regaled them with yarns of the country's early days.

Decker turned on the car radio and the three of them sang as they sped through the misty prairie night. It was fun, it was pleasant, it was "home folks," thought Rusty. It was good to be back with her own people.

"Sleepy?" asked Decker, as they turned off the main highway.

She was. Except for a short nap on a hospital divan, she'd had no rest. Decker rolled a car robe into a head rest, tucked another about her, and muted the radio.

She awakened once to become dimly aware of Decker's arm replacing the rug roll, but was too deeply steeped in sleep to do anything. Then she awakened completely a second time, conscious of chill and silence. The driver's seat beside her was empty.

"Hank," she whispered.

"Sh," warned the old man behind her, and then, leaning close, "Decker figured he heared shootin' and druv off the roa 'n' turned off the lights. He's gone back afoot to look 'round. I got me a gun here."

"The two of them sat waiting, listening, every sense acutely alert."

A few months previously, she had sat on this same prairie without thought of fear, had spent the night in company with a stranger. She marveled now at the foolishness of her conduct. How quickly crime could stain a countryside, how quickly fear be implanted in its people!

"There—both she and Hank jumped—a truck motor, a heavy double-decker, they estimated.

A few moments later, they heard the soft "squash" of Decker's footsteps.

"Awake?" he asked unnecessarily, as he slid in behind the wheel. "Not afraid, were you? Ran into a truck out there. The driver thought he'd heard something and was playing it safe."

"It's wrong to live under this tension," Rusty said angrily.

"Wrong?" chuckled Decker. "Why, half-pint, this is fun! We used to bemoan the lack of excitement."

"I guess," she sighed. "I prefer my excitement relayed by screen and radio."

But Decker was enjoying life. She could tell by the lilt in his voice, the way he handled the car. He quick gay smiles he sent her from time to time.

"What shall I bring you from New York?" he asked as he drove into the Double R. "Diamonds, a fur coat—name it. Engagement present," he explained.

It would be so easy to accept him, have her future settled. Ralph would become resigned in time. And she'd be living alongside her beloved home ranch. The Nopocoe would shelter her for the rest of her life.

"Name it," he insisted.

"Empire State Building," she replied. "Oh, here we are."

Her mother and Manny, Pedro and his wife, Piny and the back—all smiled across, looking

questions. And then they dispersed, even Manuel going to his room—propelled, it was true, by his mother.

"Mind if I stay a while?" Decker asked Rusty. "I have something to settle with you over."

Rusty sank onto the divan before the fire in the living room.

"What is it," she asked.

"Rusty, I had Doctor Mason up from Bodenville to handle my stock. I told him you were going to need him."

"Deck!"

"You can call Westmore and tell him you won't need him. I'm not going East leaving you with that doubtful character having the run of the place. I owe that much to Ralph."

"Deck, I couldn't refuse Doctor Westmore's help now, not after what he's done for me."

"And why do you suppose he put himself out, busy as you say he is, to ingratiate himself with you ranchers? Brotherly love? Or freedom of your ranges?"

Rusty arose. "I don't like your assumption that you own me and the Double R. You're not running this spread. You had no right to hire Doctor Mason, and I shall phone him first thing in the morning and tell him so. I made a business arrangement with Doctor Westmore and I intend keeping it. He's the best veterinarian we've ever had around here. That's the type I want handling my stock."

She had reached the door when he stopped her.

"All right, if you won't call Westmore off, I shall. He's not coming onto this place again, nor any other in my district, if I have to put him in jail to keep him away. And I can."

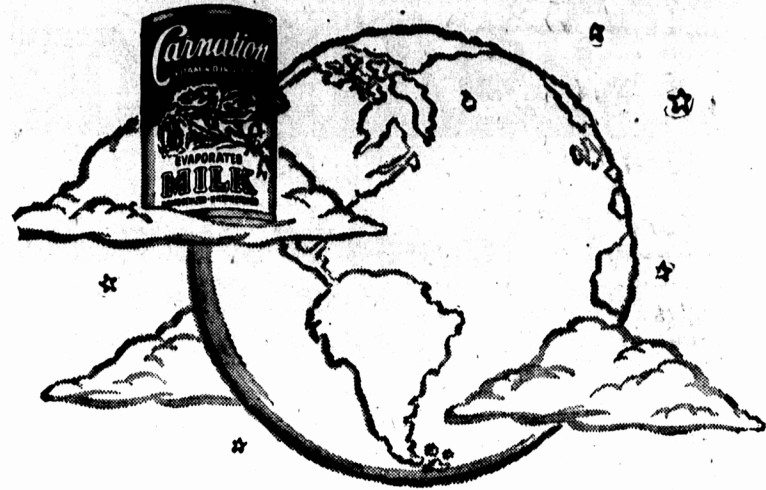
"How?" demanded Rusty defiantly.

"The night of the trouble on my ranch, your Doctor Westmore treated two wounded men. The second man was Slim Jack, the first an ex-Chicago gangster who the authorities believe is mixed up with the black market rustlers operating here. Westmore reported on Slim Jack's wound to the sheriff's office and to the medical board. Giving aid to a wounded man without a report is a felony."

For a moment after Decker's startling assertion, Rusty stood perfectly still, staring at him. Could it be true that Herb Westmore had given medical aid to a gangster as well as to Slim Jack on that night of the trouble at Decker's ranch? And how did Decker know?

She realized that the information fitted into place like the missing piece of a jigsaw puzzle. It explained some of the things she had overheard on the phone that night. It accounted for Herb's harsh order to Adelaide not to answer the doorbell. And it accounted for Decker's listening in on the hospital extension phone until Herb and the men with him came in.

(To Be Continued)



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SCOTT'S EMULSION

Yugoslavs Boycott Final Session

(By Louis Nevin)
 PARIS, Oct. 15—(AP)—The Paris peace conference, boycotted in an 11th-hour withdrawal by the Yugoslav delegation, adjourned today, and many delegates left immediately for the forthcoming meetings in New York of the United Nations General Assembly and the big four foreign ministers.

The conference was declared officially over at 5:25 p.m. by French President Georges Bidault, after delegates gave final approval to the official record of draft treaties with five former Hitler satellite powers—Italy, Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria and Finland.

The withdrawal of Yugoslavia served to emphasize the discord between eastern and western powers which marred the three-month deliberations of delegates from 21 allied countries.

This discord reached a climax when Foreign Minister Molotov accused the United States of attempting to dominate the conference and said he would insist that the big four reconsider disouted sections of the treaties. The four ministers meet in New York Nov. 4.

Vice-premier Edvard Kardelj of Yugoslavia said in a letter to the conference chairman explaining the empty bloc of Yugoslav seats today that his country could not sign the treaty with Italy unless the main provisions affecting Yugoslavia were changed.

In reply, State Secretary Byrnes of the United States declared "just as no one nation had the power to win the war, so no one nation has the wisdom to dictate the peace."

In final summation of Russian views, Mr. Molotov told delegates before adjournment that "irrespective of whether other countries like it or not, the Soviet Union will do all in its power for what it believes essential to a democratic peace."

Despite Mr. Molotov's remarks, Mr. Byrnes assured the delegates that the United States would give their decisions "sympathetic consideration," and would support in the council of foreign ministers those decisions reached by a two-thirds majority.

M. Bidault, in a short speech, criticized the allied powers for attempting to settle the fate of Italy, Finland, Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary before discussing the future of Germany herself.

Foreign Secretary Bevin of Britain, his voice choked with emotion at times, pleaded for conciliation among countries. He warned delegates that "if we take a wrong direction or persist in our own views too far, it is not this generation that will have to pay but a generation yet unborn."

Craftsmen Turn Out Government Bonds



Each Government Bond offered for sale throughout Canada beginning Oct. 15th will carry the reproduction of a fine drawing, shown above. George Gunders is the etcher (right) whose job is to faithfully reproduce the drawing on paper. He does so by scratching lines on a steel plate, with the aid of a magnifying glass. He learned his ex-

acting craft in Paris, Washington and the Ontario College of Art and has been at it for 20 years. He explains the process to Lillian Doolaghan and Helen Christoff (center), both of Ottawa. The bonds will be offered in denominations of \$50, \$100, \$500 and \$1,000, bearing 2 3/4 per cent interest.

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