

RAILS END



SECOND INSTALMENT

Bar the sun-baked station the town of Marston straggled informally, a single dusty street with a few swindling offshoots on each side. In the door of the postoffice a young man appeared, looking up the road toward the station. He was tall and sun-browned, but without the weather-beaten, desert dried look he had an arrogant nose with pride in every line of it, and a pleasant, finely carved mouth, curiously at war with the grumpy nose. He caught sight of a shabby automobile over by the station, and a faint grin twitched at the corner of his mouth. He was wondering what some people of his acquaintance would say if they ever came to Marston and had to be met by that car.

"It looks like an old hobo," he reflected, "but Petry loves it like a baby. . . . Guess I'll go over and wait there."

He strolled on down the dusty street. It was by no means a crowded street but the few people he met all seemed to know him. Their greetings were friendly, although perhaps not so familiar as they might have been, say to Boone Petry, who worked for him, or to Jim Bagley who kept the general store, or any of the few scattered ranch owners who occasionally came in for supplies. He seemed, in a way, just a little apart from their everyday familiar interests. Only when he passed the deserted real estate office his face darkened slightly. The forlorn little building, slacking revealing its weakness to any scornful eye, was undoubtedly a long standing offense to him.

Out of the shimmering distance a dark blob had appeared. At the station a few loungers came to life for one of the major events of Marston's day. Boone Petry, propped contentedly against the weathered boarding a few feet away, awoke to a mild interest. The operator grinned.

"Exceptin' company?"

"Some stuff for the boss."

"He gets a lot of stuff, don't he? Must have some real money to spend."

Petry blinked at the glinting tracks and apparently forgot to answer. The operator took another tack.

"Jim Bagley says he hears Duane's out 'most every day, pokin' the old Junipero full of holes. Barry's a nice fella, but if he keeps on like that he'll end up the same way his uncle did."

"Maybe, and maybe not. I ain't inquired his destination, but wherever Barry aims to go, he most generally arrives at."

The conversation seemed unprofitable, but the operator was a hard man to down.

"Speakin' of destinations, I saw the whole Simpson tribe headin' out of town this mornin', bag and baggage. If they'd piled anything more on that fliiver it would of laid down and died. They're movin' over to the county seat."

Petry grinned. The Simpsons' nearest neighbor — a trifling matter of five or six miles — was Barry Duane, and it could not be denied that there had been no great amount of neighborly visiting between Eagle's Perch and the little ranch where the Simpson family dribbled out its happy-go-lucky existence.

"What's happened?" he inquired mildly. "Somebody leave Sim ten dollars or did he just get too exhausted to work?"

"Don't talk about a triflin' ten dollars to Lonzo. He's sold us place, and from the general excitement in the Simpson family I'd say it must've been a pretty good cash payment."

The jar of the two-thirty-eight closed the conversation abruptly. Number Twelve clanked to a stop with a long sigh. Petry looked along the line of dusty coaches, nodded familiarly to the brakeman, gallantly laden with somebody's suitcases, and started toward the forward end. Then he stopped, as abruptly as though he had been jerked at the end of a halter.

Silken ankles and beautifully shod feet were coming down the griddy steps of old Number Twelve. Petry looked up dizzily at a slim young woman clad trimly in blue. She was appealingly young and she had the loveliest skin that Boone had ever seen and an engaging little mouth which looked rather sober just

now but would surely show lovely teeth when she smiled, and lustrous big eyes with a growing dismay in them as they looked beyond the ugly little station toward the forlorn straggle of houses which constituted the town of Marston. That was Marston's first glimpse of Anne Cushing as she stepped from the two-thirty-eight directly into the path of Boone Petry, ex-cowman, ex-ranchman and general factotum to Barry Duane.

Involuntarily he swept off his battered hat, showing a grizzled head, a skin weathered to a leathery brown and light blue eyes which gave him a deceptively innocent air. The girl smiled at him. Some of the dismay retreated.

"You are Mr. Simpson, aren't you? I am Anne Cushing."

"Why, no ma'am." Petry gulped visibly. "My name is Petry, Boone Petry. If you're lookin' for Lon Simpson, he—he's moved away from here. He sold his place just recent."

"Yes, I know. I bought it. But I thought he might be here to—well, to show me the place, I suppose. I'm afraid that was a rather silly idea."

"No ma'am," said Petry helplessly. The dismayed look was hovering in her eyes again. He shifted his weight from one foot to another, and thought earnestly of things he would like to do to the departed Simpson.

"I guess Sim's kind of careless that way," he added apologetically. "But don't let that bother you, ma'am. If there's anything I can do, or the boss either, we'd sure be pleased to."

The local groaned in all its length and gathered its complaining joints into motion again, leaving them standing there. At a little distance, just beyond the platform, the young man who had come over from the postoffice stood and watched them with puzzled curiosity. The few dawdling loungers had frankly turned their heads in the same direction.

The girl's eyes were sweeping the sun-warmed platform and the hot road beyond. They hesitated for an instant as they caught the unobtrusive scrutiny of the brown young man, and then passed on composedly. They came back to Boone Petry.

"It's awfully kind of you to take so much trouble. If you could just tell me where I can get a stage or rent a car, I think I can manage all right."

"It ain't a bit of trouble, but there ain't any stage, because there ain't any place in particular for a stage to go. And there ain't any garage, either, not for hirin' cars. But that needn't matter a bit, because our place is just a spell beyond yours, and we can give you a lift easy. Any time you like."

Petry rubbed his chin nervously with a mahogany paw. Here was a situation calling for diplomacy, and diplomacy, he felt, had never been one of his stronger points. He sent a hunted look around, caught the eye of the watching young man and signaled him with a furtive thumb. The girl was thanking him.

"That would be splendid, but I hate to be such a nuisance."

"Not a-tall, ma'am." The young man was at his elbow now, looking interested. Looking more than interested. "Miss Cushing, meet my boss, Mr. Barry Duane. Barry this lady's just bought the Simpson place, and Sim's lit. I've told her it's right on our way and we can take her out any time she wants to go."

"Of course we can. Very glad to." Not a single blink betrayed that the Simpson place was out of their homeward way by some miles of singularly bad road.

"It's awfully good of both of you. I didn't expect to be a charge on the community as soon as I arrived."

"The community," said Barry Duane, "considers itself in luck. Now about this new place of yours. When do you get possession?"

"I've got it now."

"Yes—of course." He hesitated, and caught Petry's nervous eye. Petry cleared his throat.

"I was thinkin'," he ventured, "seeing there's nobody out there now, maybe the lady might like to put up at the hotel here, until her folks come?"

"But you see, there isn't any one else to come." Anne Cushing laughed, for the first time, in three long weeks and Barry Duane thought it was the loveliest laugh he had ever heard.

"You really mustn't be worried about me," she said in that lovely voice. "I'm not a bit of a friend of staying alone. I thought I'd try to stay with a man and his wife

I meant to leave an advertisement for them before I started for the ranch. Can I do this?"

Barry laughed. "No, I'm afraid you can't. There's no paper to advertise in this side of the county seat. At least there's no printed one. The unofficial way is to mention whatever you want over at Jim Bagley's general store, and then wait for the returns to come in. Any other suggestions, Petry? How about Martha Larrabee?"

"First rate!" Petry cheered visibly. "Martha ain't exactly a man and wife, but she's pretty near as good."

He bent over and plucked up a fat suitcase. Barney did the same.

"And now," he said, "for Martha Larrabee and the general store."

"This," said Anne Cushing to herself, "is a funny dream. Pretty soon I shall wake up and find that it isn't so at all."

Her spirits had soared unaccountably. She wanted to laugh as she was politely herded toward the shabby car. It was less than five minutes since she had stepped from the train and here she was, trotting confidently along with two perfect strangers who had taken herself, her luggage and apparently all her problems into their capable hands.

At the far end of the straggling street a wooden cottage, better kept than most, sat a little back in a yard where neat borders of glowers had been encouraged to grow. They stopped. Petry went in. He was gone five minutes. Anne began to wonder what was happening. Suppose the efficient Mrs. Larrabee should decline to come?

The front door opened and a woman came out. She was tall and comfortably plump, with greyed brown hair and an air of practical competence. Her face was strong and shrewd, and not without humor. Petry came out behind her, with an uncertain grin on his homely face. Evidently the redoubtable Martha had declined to commit herself.

"This is the lady, Martha. Miss Cushing, this is Mrs. Larrabee."

"I hope you can come, Mrs. Larrabee. I really don't know what there is to be done yet . . ."

Martha looked at the girl in the car, a small and slightly anxious face.

"I'll come," she said briefly, and permitted herself a grim quirk of a smile as she nodded to the car's owner. She went on briskly, calmly talking the situation in hand.

"You wait here for me, and I'll go with you to the store. It won't take me two minutes."

She went back into the house. Such trifling matters as wages, duties and hours had evidently not entered into her decision at all.

"Passed with honors!" said Barry Duane. "Martha came out to look you over, and if she hadn't liked your looks you couldn't have argued her into coming at any price."

She laughed and sobered, looking out at the endless waste that went on and on into the hazy distance.

"I knew I was under inspection. I was so afraid I wouldn't pass muster I scarcely dared breathe. She looks so—dependable."

"Martha's pure gold — and here she comes. Now, for the store and your supplies. Another half hour and we'll be on our way."

They were off in much less time than that, thanks to Martha Larrabee's brisk supervision. Marston's brief sensation was over, at least for the time being, but the repercussions still echoed. All Marston knew it now. A pretty young thing with a soft voice and delicate hands had bought the Simpson ranch, thirty miles out across the Junipero, and expected to run it. Male Marston admired, but shook its head. Female Marston snuffed.

"Looks like she had money," said Jim Bagley hopefully. "She sure is pretty."

"She's too pretty," said his wife tartly. "Girls who look like that and wear clothes like that don't go streakin' off to out-of-the-way places unless there's somethin' queer back of it."

The loungers around the store preserved a polite silence.

"And what's more," said the lady heatedly, "that suit she wears is handsome, just handsome, but when she took the coat off, while she was waitin' for Barry Duane to come back and dance around her, I looked inside of it to see where it come from and the tag had been ripped off! That don't look like any accident to me."

Fortunately for her peace of mind, the girl who called herself Anne Cushing had no suspicion of the two eager eyes which had found that evidence of a discarded identity in her coat. She did have a faintly disagreeable memory of a sharp-tongued woman who had been rather offensively inquisitive but that could have meant no more

than the ill-restrained curiosity of a small-town gossip. She put it behind her, and settled back contentedly.

Marston, low against its sands, had vanished in a sprawling blur. The car made excellent time. Petry was driving. Martha Larrabee sat beside him. Barry Duane sat with Anne in the rear seat.

Blazing sunlight beat down, and a long plume of dust waved and wavered in their wake. The road ran on ahead of them, mile after mile, with nothing to impede their view. There was not a house in sight, nothing moving. In the opulent flare of sunshine distance took on strange colors, turning to purple in the folds of those sudden hills.

"You are in the Junipero Valley now," Duane told her. "You must remember that, because it is your next-door neighbor. A few thousand years ago there was a river here, but it has been dry a long time. I suppose it looks pretty ugly to you, but it has its points, and after the rains it will be streaked with purple and gold."

"Purple and gold." She narrowed thoughtful eyes and stared at it, half dreaming.

"No, I don't think it is ugly. It's fascinating. It's empty and brooding and rather terrible, but it beckons you. It keeps promising you something, and you want to go on and on until you find it."

The grey eyes warmed. They almost blazed. She had a quick feeling that somewhere behind this pleasant, brown young man there was an eager little boy, rather pathetically anxious to have someone admire a thing he loved, but with all a little boy's sensitiveness to rebuff. That was curious, when in other ways he seemed so completely poised and assured, quite as much so as any man she knew. She wondered what had happened, to make him feel like that.

(Continued next week)

TEACHER FINED FOR WHIPPING PARDONED

Oklahoma City, June 31.—Gov. "Alfalfa Bill" Murray today pardoned a rural school teacher who had been fined \$28 for whipping a student, and declared the pedagogues "should have received the thanks of the school community" for administering the chastisement.

The student, Bennie Joe Peters, allegedly wrote an indecent note.

In remitting the fine and costs against Floyd E. Saaser, teacher of the school at Canadian, Okla., Governor Murray said:

"In the performance of his function as school teacher, to train the pupil and to correct bad habits, the teacher was obliged to punish with a switch. It is the only method by which to teach an incorrigible or semi-incorrigible being."

No Advances Allowed

Secretary: "May I have next week's salary? I'm broke."

Boss: "No, my wife made me promise not to make any advances to you."

TEXAS LADY TELLS HOW BLACK-DRAUGHT LAXATIVE HELPS ALL HER FAMILY

Here's how Black-Draught fills the needs of a family laxative in the home of Mrs. J. S. Stoker, Fort Worth, Texas: "The grown-ups in my family," she writes, "have always taken powdered Theodore's Black-Draught for biliousness, headaches and other ailments (due to constipation) and found it a reliable remedy. I was very pleased when I saw Syrup of Black-Draught advertised. I bought it and gave it to my little daughters, ages 6 and 4. They needed something to cleanse their systems and Syrup of Black-Draught acted well. . . . Your druggist sells this reliable laxative in both forms. 'Children like the Syrup.'

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RICHARD DIX MAKES BRIDE OF SECRETARY

Jersey City, N. J., June 29.—Five feet, three, with blue eyes and chestnut brown hair, Virginia Webster resigned today as secretary to Richard Dix, the movie star, to become his bride.

For "purely romantic reasons," said Dix, they came here, where Miss Webster's parents were wed 25 years ago, and interrupted the lunch of Judge Edward J. Makley to be married.

Six months ago the diminutive Miss Webster was just one of 600 girls who sought the job of answering Dix's fan mail, taking his dictation, and attending to general secretarial duties.

Dix's uncle narrowed the list to six, and the actor himself interviewed these applicants, selecting Miss Webster on a basis of ability and background.

The bridegroom, who was married under his real name, Ernest C. Brinmer, said the romance had come about through a "grand friendship."

Shy and reticent, Mrs. Dix said she wants a home and children. She is 24, a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Warren L. Webster, of Los Angeles. Dix is 39, and was married once previously.

NUDIST PAIR ARE WEDDED

Chicago.—Dressed in a smile and—the bride at least, a wedding ring—an Amarillo girl and a Milwaukee bridegroom were pronounced man and wife today in strictly nudist ceremony at the world's fair they call "A Century of Progress."

The bride was Jean May, 23, of Amarillo, Texas, and her husband, Charles Mueller, 24, of Milwaukee.

Of the wedding party or nine, only the minister deigned to wear clothing. He was dressed in a goat skin, and walked about gingerly in bare feet, stubbing his toe now and then.

The nudists had selected as a background for their ceremony the setting of dinosaurs, triceratops, brontosaurus and other denizens of the "world a million years ago" at the world's fair. Cameramen and reporters furnished the necessary blushes, site.

watching the bridal party step into a boat to glide down a "lost river," disrobe behind the scenes and then reappear properly dressed for the wedding.

U. S. PAYS DEPOSITS OF CLOSED BANK

Washington.—The federal government on Monday will make good the deposits of the first bank to fail under its deposit insurance plan, when it began to pay off depositors of the Van Du Lac State Bank of East Peoria, Ill. Leo T. Crowley, chairman of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, said today.

"Half Cited"

First negro: "Bar, ho, I came near selling ma shoes today."

Second negro: "How come that, brother?"

First negro: "I had them hatched."

NOTICE OF SALE

By virtue of the authority contained in a certain deed of trust executed on the 1st day of December, 1922, by Comodore Hutchens to Southern Trust Company, Trustee, and recorded in book 123, page 229, of the office of the Register of Deeds for Wilkes county, N. C., default having been made in the conditions of said deed of trust, the undersigned Trustee will, on the 23rd day of July, 1934, at 12:00 o'clock noon, at the Court House door of Wilkes county, N. C., offer for sale at public auction to the highest bidder for cash, the following described property:

All those certain lands containing 78 1-2 acres, more or less, situated on the Congo Road, about 6 miles, from the town of Wilkesboro, in Reddies River Township, Wilkes county, N. C., and adjoining the lands of Jefferson Parsons, W. E. Parsons, James Bumgarner and others, and beginning on a forked red oak, now a stone and black gum pointers by the side of the public road, and runs with an agreed line of marked trees as follows: S. 41 degrees W. 3 poles, S. 32 degrees W. 5 1-2 poles, S. 35 degrees W. 5 poles, S. 39 degrees W. 10 1-2 poles in all 24 poles to a small black oak, W. E. Parsons' corner; then with same agreed line as follows: S. 33 degrees W. 11 poles, S. 25 degrees W. 8 poles; S. 26 degrees W. 8 poles, S. 35 degrees W. 18 poles, S. 47 degrees W. 12 poles, in all 67 poles to an apple tree, now down; thence S. 41 degrees W. 10 poles to a persimmon tree by the road; thence S. 34 degrees W. 8 poles to a pine stump; thence S. 43 1-2 degrees W. 24 1-2 poles to a black gum on the top of the hill; thence with an agreed line of marked trees as follows: S. 52 degrees W. 37 poles; S. 45 degrees W. 31 poles, in all 68 poles to a stake in the center of Brown's Road; thence with said road as it now runs, general bearing as follows: N. 46 degrees W. 21 poles, N. 28 degrees W. 13 poles, N. 17 degrees W. 31 poles, N. 48 degrees W. 20 poles, N. 25 degrees W. 10 poles in all 95 poles to a stone on the east edge of said road, corner of the church lot; thence with the line of said church lot N. 56 degrees E. 34 poles to a stone, corner of said church lot; thence S. 27 degrees E. 6 poles and 8 links to a stone; thence N. 68 1-2 degrees E. 28 3-4 poles to a stone; thence N. 37 degrees W. 12 poles and 8 links to a stone; thence N. 2 degrees E. 12 poles to a stake in the mouth of a ditch in Baker's Branch; thence with the center of said ditch N. 21 degrees E. 11 poles; thence N. 68 degrees E. 108 poles; thence S. 65 1-2 degrees E. 30 poles to the beginning. This being part of the tract of land conveyed to Comodore Hutchens by W. A. Bishop and wife, H. A. Bishop, by deed dated April 19th, 1928, and recorded in the Office of Register of Deeds of Wilkes County in Book 103, page 515, reference is made to which deed is hereby made.

A deposit of five per cent of the amount bid will be required of the successful bidder at the hour of sale.

This notice dated and posted this 28th day of June, 1934.

SOUTHERN LOAN & INSURANCE CO. Trustee.
(Formerly Southern Trust Company)

By Worth & Turner, Attorneys
7-16-34

John Ruskin

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MAVANA, the other important reason for why so many men with any sense who see one buy at John Ruskin's store, is because there is BETTER and MORE HAVANA in John Ruskin's store. Try one of John Ruskin's cigars. You'll see that John Ruskin's cigars are better and better because there is BETTER and MORE HAVANA in John Ruskin's store.

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