



**NYMPH OF THE WEST.**  
*BY HOWARD SEELY*

COPYRIGHTED 1893 BY D. APPLETON & CO.  
PUBLISHED BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT WITH THEM.

So saying he turned his back upon the discomfited horse trader, and Mr. Buck Jerrold sprang at once into the saddle. Before he was fairly seated the vicious Buckshot essayed to repeat his previous exploit, but he reckoned without his host. Mr. Jerrold had improved the interval to lash a small stick back of the pommel, and now, braced firmly by his viselike thighs, he drove his cruel spurs into the flanks of the horse at every bound and ruthlessly applied the heavy quirt.

"Everything's fair in a horse trade," he shouted, apparently enjoying the animal's gymnastics. "I swapped this critter yesterday for a pair of leather leggings and a horse hair larriat to boot. The horse I got rid of, though, had the lamps, an was dog poor at that. The first time the other fellow attempts to put him on grain he'll find he's got a leasin' contract."

He clapped his spurs again into the discomfited Buckshot, and whedling him sharply around by a jerk on the bridle was off like a thunderbolt. Bruce was already far away in pursuit of the flying mallow. He had marked them down in a long water hole bordered by low bushes. As he crept up to the edge of the pool he caught a glimpse of the "green head" drake, a startled silhouette against the misty bank, with neck outstretched and eye alert. His glossy mates swung silently upon the silver mirror of the pool in the morning's gray.

In an instant the wary bird was up and away, but Bruce stopped him with his right barrel, and he fell with a heavy plump upon the further bank, his red legs straddling awkwardly as he came down. The next moment the air was full of flying teal, rising with frightened clamor and whirring away to the left. Bruce let the other mallow go and gave the teal his left barrel, thinking of Cynthia and her damaged bonnet. Three dropped to his shot. He picked up his game hurriedly, not without a little inward exultation. There was one drake among the teal. The bright little fellow fairly gleamed in brown and emerald—his head a banded flash of color, his wings a fluttering revelation.

Bruce stood still a moment, regarding admiringly the beauties of the dying bird. A light film was setting on the flashing eye. He could not help thinking what an improvement he might make in Cynthia's appearance were he enabled to preserve the beauty of the plumage for her adornment. With masculine self confidence he aspirated for the moment to become her milliner.

"Ain't he a daisy?" said a musical voice. He turned in surprise. Cynthia stood before him—a blushing Aurora, the roses of the dawn in her dimpled cheeks, the amber of the sunrise in her golden hair. With the occasional recklessness of her sex, she had arrayed herself more with an eye to picturesque effect than common prudence. She recognized the fact that there was an observer upon the scene of action more appreciative than usual.

Under the circumstances her defiance of season and climate had a touch of sublimity. She had donned a pale blue muslin dress, exquisitely becoming, in grant, but a relic of the previous summer and of a much higher temperature. The hat on her head was of straw and supported a whole parterre of roses and a long, curling feather, and she had on a pair of high heeled French slippers. They were quite wet through, and the embroidered stockings, which a charming sense of consistency in dress had impelled her to wear, were beaded and flashing with dew.

Immediately after addressing Bruce she glanced down at her feet with some solicitude, her light skirts gathered daintily in her left hand. She frowned at the slippers, already turning purple at the toes.

"I reckon I've spoiled 'em the first time I put 'em on," she said. "However, there's lots more where they came from!" tossing her head where they came from with the general suggestion that French slippers are a gratuitous donation from obliging shoemakers to the fair sex—an attitude quite carefully preserved by womankind toward eligible bachelors, along with a becoming disregard of the necessity of capital. "Is that green wing for me, Mr. Bruce?" she inquired, with a politeness of manner which seemed quite as unseasonable, in her own case, as her faultless attire, and in a sense to have been assumed with the gorgeous hat. She glanced eagerly at Bruce as he stood separating the bright pinion from the duck's body and flashing the gleaming plumes in the sunlight.

"I clean forget," she said finally, "whether father calls the 'Husband's Lament' or the 'Texan Honey-moon,' but it don't make much difference much alike, and if ye remember that his tunes all have something to do with marryin you can't be very far wrong, no matter what you call 'em. I reckon mother didn't give him very much variety in her housekeeping, for it's had an awful monotonous effect on his music. Don't speak to him now, Mr. Bruce. He's allus easier in his mind if ye let him play a tune through. To stop him short in the middle is harrowin to his feelin's, and generally crops out arterwards. Come in right away and have breakfast."

And without a word to her sire she piloted the amused Bruce past the absorbed violinist, leaving him still fiddling violently upon the doorstep. Aulus stopped at the door to lift his nose to the sky and utter a loud drawn, agonizing howl of protest, with which canine com-

"I reckon I've spoiled 'em the first time I put 'em on," she said.  
"Oh, what a lovely little duck—a bantam!" she exclaimed, with a sudden feminine intuition of ornithology. "Isn't he

mentary upon the unmelodiousness of the old man's music he, too, abandoned him and went within. The day wore away into the early afternoon. The northward shadows of the live oaks were swinging gradually to the east. It was just after dinner, and the wintery sunlight on the southern wall of the ranch beat softly down with a grateful and cheering warmth. In the sunniest angle of the ranch Bruce and his white haired host were seated smoking. The old man, enjoying the aroma of one of the ranchman's cigars, which he mumbled at a very precarious angle between his scant teeth, was in an expectant frame of mind and unusually genial. Cynthia was seated beneath a live oak playing with a fawn. "Do you reckon them folks of your'n'll be anywasy anxious about ye?" old Dallas inquired, blowing out a cloud of smoke as if the chief luxury in smoking was expelling it forcibly.

"I hardly think so," Bruce replied, lazily tilting his chair against the side of the house, with his hands clasped behind his head. He had thrown his hat on the ground, and the whiteness of his forehead contrasted with the bronzed hue of his cheeks and the luxuriance of his square, curling beard. "My partner, Kernochan, understands me pretty well by this time and knows I generally come out all right, so he won't give himself any uneasiness. There may be a little fuss when my horse turns up at the ranch, though. I shouldn't be surprised if Phil rode over here tomorrow."

"Waal, ye're takin' it pretty easy here, seein' ez they ain't the least idea whar ye be," returned Alcides frankly. "But that's what we want to hev ye do, though," he added after a pause, fearing his meaning might be misconstrued. "Visitors with agreeable manners and good terbacker is all fired scace in this country," he continued, with the general air of paying a compliment. He rose from his chair with an effort due to rheumatism and the uncompromising character of his knee joints and swept the horizon with an anxious eye.

"Durn my skin, ef thar ain't the sheriff, after all!" he exclaimed as a small man, mounted on a sorrel horse, rode up to the gate at a fox trot, and throwing himself from the saddle proceeded to tether the animal by the lariat which hung from the pommel. His nimble fingers were quick at the task. He came toward them with a rapid step, his revolvers swinging in their holsters and his spurs clinking as he strode.

"Waal, Ike Mosely, ye've got over here at last, hev ye?" said Alcides, stumbling forward eagerly to meet the newcomer. "I've been a-worryin about this killin' o' my stock. I reckon ye'll believe me when I tell ye I'm right glad to see ye." "Ain't long to stay nuther," returned the sheriff, grasping the proffered hand of old Dallas with a hurried shake and dropping it again immediately. "I never struck such a rush o' bizness in the hull course of my natural life. Ez it is I've had two handin's already this week, to say nothin' o' these rumors o' yours about hoss stealin and hog killin. And now jes' ez I was jumpin in the saddle to ride over here I got word that the road agints have begun ag'in between Lampasas and Belton. That means all I kin swing to for four weeks certain. Ef things go on at this rate, they'll hev Ike Mosely's hide by the time o' the spring roundups."

"But it's mighty dry talkin," he said abruptly, glancing at Dallas with a significant eye. "An I've come all the way from San Marcus to look into this yer bizness o' yours. How did that liquor I recommended to ye turn out?" "I reckon it's pretty near all turned out," replied Alcides ruefully, somewhat discomfited by the urgent business manner of the sheriff. "Ameclyer!" he called, "bring out what's left in that thar bottle, and a glass for Mr. Mosely. Ike, this is Mr. Bruce, of the Mesquite valley ranch, stoppin with us for a spell," he concluded with a grave look, intended to cover all allusion to the ranchman's mishap, but calculated to impress the sheriff with the idea that Bruce was a highwayman in disguise.

"Yer hand, Mr. Bruce," said Mosely, stepping quickly forward, with a keen, penetrating glance from under his shaggy brows and a grip like a steel claw. "Ah, Miss Cynthia! Or is it spring already, and are the bluebirds with us again?" he remarked with easy gallantry as his eyes fell upon Cynthia and her muslin dress.

He doffed his broad sombrero suddenly, exposing his high forehead and scant hair. His hard, blue eyes were restless and cold, like chilled steel. He twitched his huge mustaches nervously. "It'd be a pretty bold bluebird to shake hands like this with a sparrow hawk!" replied Cynthia with dimpled audacity, coming quickly forward and holding out a little hand. "Glad to see you, sir! How are all the birds down your way—kites, road runners and other jail birds?" "Ho, ho!" laughed the sheriff, "ye're after me this time, aren't ye? Guess ye must hev got up early this mornin'."

"She did!" said old Dallas emphatically, glancing at Bruce—"earlier than I've seen her get up since the last northern. She was that anxious about them bucks this mornin that she turned 'em out afore sun and run 'em more'n a mile up the creek in them new slippers I got her for the 'Round-up Ball.' Strange goin's on for a young gal, Mosely—strange goin's on!" "Sho!" said the sheriff, laughing. "Tain't every day they's a good lookin' young feller 'round to get up for, is it, Miss Cynthia? If they were all old and grayheaded—like me and your old man—I couldn't blame ye, ef ye never got up!"

He glanced around to note the effect of his words, but Cynthia had disappeared. At the first allusion to her early morning ramble, she had stamped the fawn and scampered away in pursuit. Mosely turned and shot a glance at Bruce. He was smoking with easy nonchalance. But here the approach of the ebony Amelia, bearing a frothy mixture which looked uncommonly like a milk punch, interrupted his reflections. "Heah an de boss bev'age arter hoss-back ridin, sah!" exclaimed the sable

**Western Normal COLLEGE.**

The School for the Masses.  
\* \* LINCOLN, NEBRASKA. \* \*  
AN OLD SCHOOL IN A NEW LOCATION  
(FORMERLY OF SHENANDOAH, IOWA).

**25 DEPARTMENTS. 35 TEACHERS.**  
Beautiful, healthy location, 20-acre campus, electric street car line runs directly to campus without change. \$250,000 in buildings, splendid equipments, superior accommodations, strong faculty, experienced management, comprehensive curriculum, thorough work, high moral and Christian influence and low expenses for students.  
DEPARTMENTS AND COURSES:  
We have 25 courses. Our Music, Fine Art, Pen Art, Delsarte, Elocutionary Courses and Kindergarten and Model Training Schools (for both children and student teachers) are not equalled in the West.  
STREET CAR TRANSFERS  
In any part of the city for all who attend the Western Normal. You can enter at any time and find just such classes as you desire. Write, or call and see us.  
Spring term opens April 11, 1903, and continues 10 weeks. Summer term opens June 20, 1903, and continues 8 weeks. You can enter at any time, no matter.  
Address, **W. M. OBOAN, President, or W. J. KINSLEY, Sec'y and Treas.**  
WESTERN NORMAL COLLEGE, LINCOLN, NEB.

**Rudge & Morris Co.**  
Hardware and Furniture.

SOLE AGENTS FOR  
LEONARD HARD-WOOD REFRIGERATORS,  
QUICK MEAL GAS AND GASOLINE STOVES,  
GARLAND STOVES AND RANGES,  
RICHARDSON & BOYNTON CO. FURNACES,  
LAWN MOWERS, ONLY \$4.25.  
LAWN HOSE,  
Best Quality, 12 1/2-c per foot.  
Our Combination Gas Range and Water Heaters is the Best Made.

Chamber Suits,  
Parlor Suits,  
Tables, Chairs and Rockers.  
1118 TO 1122 N STREET.  
**RUDGE & MORRIS CO.**

**MACFARLANE'S**  
ICE CREAM PARLORS  
Are Now Open and we are Serving the Purest and Most Delicious Ice Cream in the City.  
ALL KINDS OF CAKES TO ORDER  
We make a Specialty of Family Orders and will promptly deliver all Supplies at Reasonable Prices.  
Telephone 457.  
**WILLIAM MACFARLANE, Proprietor, McBride Block, COR. 12TH AND P STS.**

TELEPHONE 258.  
**JAMES H. O'NEILL,**  
Fine Plumbing,  
STEAM AND HOT WATER HEATING.  
Gas and Electric Fixtures. Agent for CAPITOL AND BOLTON HOT WATER HEATERS AND COMBINATION GAS MACHINES.  
—125 NORTH NINTH STREET.

**Found it at Last.**  
JUST THE BOOK I HAVE BEEN LOOKING FOR  
And several thousand others. I advise all who would save time to go at once to  
**H. W. BROWN'S., 126 South 11th St.**

**SEWING MACHINE REPAIRING AND GUN**  
We have just employed a skillful workman from the East, who is fully competent to make all repairs in the above lines.  
**T. J. THORPE & CO., 220 South Eleventh St.**