

THE OUTLAW

(Continued From Page Two.)

By Arthur Stringer

gry I am," he equivocated as he fell to work preparing supper.

She did what she could to help him in that jovial task, both marveling at the adroitness of the old time camper beside her and protesting that she loved to see life made so simple it approached the primitive. An odd spirit of hilarity, indeed, seemed to overtake Caroma during that meal in the waning evening light. She appeared waywardly youthful and carefree, impressing the brooding eyed Cosgrave as very much like a child intent on getting the most out of her holiday. He tried not to think of the future, but he was not of the breed that can live its moment alone. Yet he wished, above all things, that the clock of the world would stop.

The clock of the world, however, does not stop at the wish of mere mortals. Even the girl looked up, eventually, from the narcotizing glow of the embers, with a glance about at the gathering dusk.

"Don't you think we ought to be starting back?" she asked out of the silence which had fallen over them.

He sat studying her face. "Supposing we don't go back?" he suggested, more solemnly than he had intended.

She looked up at him and laughed. And he found something fortifying in her matter-of-factness.

"I'm afraid I haven't any choice in the matter," she asserted. "No, we haven't much choice in the matter," he repeated as he watched her rise to her feet.

"There are certain rules of the game, of course, that have to be observed," explained the girl as she busied herself in gathering up the camp outfit.

"Laws that mustn't be broken?" he supplemented, as he, too, rose tardily to his feet.

"Or some solemn eyed person will be stepping up to remind us that we've broken them," she was inconsiderate enough to assert.

Cosgrave seemed unable to find any adequate reply to this thrust. He remained oddly silent as they picked their way out to the narrow curve of the beach where they had first landed from their canoe.

The enormity of his offense was not at the moment troubling him. He was too occupied in wondering how she was going to accept the situation with which she was about to be confronted. Yet faintly but persistently the solitariness of her figure as she stood scanning the lonely shore line disturbed him.

He began to realize that he had carried her a long way off from the world where she belonged.

She stopped suddenly and looked down at the sand, where the mark

of the canoe keel was still discernible. Then she glanced about the shallow cove.

"Where's our boat?" she asked with her eyes directly on Cosgrave's face.

Instead of returning that gaze he preferred looking out over the darkening lake water.

"It's gone," he announced.

"But how could it go?" she asked, much more quietly than he had expected.

"It must have got adrift and blown away in this offshore breeze," he told her.

She was silent a moment.

"Have we any other way of getting back?"

"None whatever," he was compelled to acknowledge.

"Then what can we do?" she demanded.

"We'll have to wait here until somebody comes and takes us off."

Still again she stood silent. A loon cried, upwind, and a star or two showed in the high arch of the sky. There was a lonely sound in the lip of the water at their feet.

"Do they know where you are?" she asked in a slightly sharpened voice.

"Who?"

"Anybody."

"No," he replied. And still again she stood silent.

"I told Kenzie I was coming here," she finally said. "But they'd never think of looking for us till morning. And then it would be too late."

"Too late for what?" asked the man at her side. And the girl's laugh was a slightly acidulated one.

"For our good friend, Mrs. Grundy," she explained.

"I thought that lady belonged to the Victorian era," he contended.

"On the contrary, she still moves in the very best circles. And the better the circle the more terrible you'll find her disapproval."

"What does that mean?"

"It means I'm lost," was her dolorous reply.

"Lost to what?"

She preferred apparently not answering that question. And Cosgrave began to see that the situation wasn't as simple as he had imagined.

"I can swim for it if you want me to," he told her.

"How far is it?" she asked.

"It's seven miles to the nearest mainland. I think I could make it in a couple of hours."

She looked at the water and turned away with what he thought was a shudder.

"No, no; you mustn't do that! Something might happen!"

"Would you care?" he asked.

And for the second time she left one of his questions unanswered.

"I suppose we could try a signal fire?" she finally suggested.

"Yes, we could do that. But I don't imagine they'd understand."

"No, I don't imagine they'd understand," she admitted as she sat down on the sand. He unfolded the waterproof camp blanket and draped it about her shoulders.

More than ever she impressed him as something infinitely fragile, as something infinitely fragile betrayed into hands unworthily rough.

"What are we going to do?" she asked, staring at him through the uncertain light.

"We're going to stay here," he proclaimed.

"No, no; I don't mean that," she corrected. "I mean afterward."

"I'm afraid you'll have to marry me," he announced, as impersonally as he was able.

He waited for her to speak, scarcely breathing.

"Because the situation demands expiation?" she quietly inquired.

"No; because I want you so much," he just as quietly told her.

"How much?" she asked.

"More than I can ever tell you," he said.

She started to laugh, but it ended in a sigh.

"I'm afraid you're only trying to make the best of a bad bargain," she protested.

"I don't care what it is so long as it brings me you!"

"But how about my feelings?" she demanded with unlooked for spirit.

"Let's not talk about it now," he protested as he reached for his belt hatchet. "I think we ought to go back to the fire, where I can make you comfortable."

"I'm afraid that's out of the question tonight!"

But she let him lead her back by the hand to where the bed of embers still lay. He left her there and groped his way out to the upper end of the island, where the scrub growth was a trifle heavier.

It took him some time to cut enough branches for a windbreak and a bed. When these were carried back he fell to gathering what wood he could find for a fire.

When the smoldering sticks broke out into an open blaze he put up his small shelter of cedar and jack pine. On the windward side of it he built a bed of evergreens, carefully "feathering" the branches so that the softer ends lay along the top. Then he went back to the beach and gathered up the rest of his duffel. When he returned to the fire he found the girl kneeling before it, watching the flames. Her silence filled him with a vague trouble.

"You must be tired," he suggested as he placed the canoe

cushion on the bed of evergreens for her.

"I was never more wide awake in my life."

"But I want you to wrap up and keep warm," he told her, conscious of the sharpening tang in that upland night air.

"All right," she said, with consolatory matter of factness.

She stood docile as he wrapped her up, mummylike, in his camp blanket. She remained equally impassive as he picked her up and carried her to the wind-break and adjusted the cushion for her head.

"You're not going away?" she said, sitting up and leaning on her elbow, a moment later. For he had retreated to the far side of the bed of coals.

"I'll stay up and keep the fire going," he explained.

"That doesn't seem fair," she protested.

He added fresh fuel to the coals before he spoke.

"There's only one thing that keeps this from being the happiest night of my life," he told her as he sat down, with the fire between them.

"What is that one thing?" she asked, staring up at the star-spangled vault of heaven.

"The thought that it's the only night we may ever have like this," he replied. "Do you mind if I smoke?"

"Of course not," she said in a slightly flattened voice.

He filled his pipe and struck a match.

"Which are the Pleiades?" she asked, out of the silence that had fallen over them.

He pointed them out to her with his pipe stem. She stared up at them for a long time.

"Are you comfortable?" he finally asked.

"It's heavenly," she said with a small sigh of contentment.

"And you're not—not altogether sorry?"

"Are you?"

His face was unduly solemn.

"Yes," he said at last.

"Why?" she asked.

"Because I have something on my conscience."

"I can't imagine you doing anything very bad," she said after a moment of silence.

"But I did do it," he asserted.

"When?"

"Today."

"I'd rather not talk about it," she surprised him by saying.

"But I want you to know."

"What is that big star going down in the west?" she quietly interposed.

He told her that it was Venus.

"And is that Orion, almost over our heads?"

He acknowledged that it was.

"And those lights along the water?" she asked a moment later.

"What are they?"

He swung around and stared out over the lake. Then his heart sank.

"That must be the Wolcott launch," he listlessly admitted. "Yes, there's her searchlight! And she's heading directly for us!"

The girl threw off the camp blanket and came and stood beside him.

"Are they coming for us?" she asked in little more than a whisper.

"They must be," he decorously acknowledged.

"You don't seem glad!"

"I'm not!"

She surprised him by moving a little closer to him in the darkness.

"Neither am I," she said, very softly.

"Why do you say that?" he insisted.

"Because I'd rather be here with you," she found the courage to admit.

"But I've got to tell you why you've had to be here with me," he proclaimed.

"Perhaps I know already."

"No you don't understand. But I want you to." He had to take a deep breath before he could go on.

"That canoe didn't go adrift the water and let it go, deliberately."

"Why did you do that?" she asked with her hand on his arm.

"Because I forgot about everything except that I loved you and wanted to be with you."

She moved still closer in under his shoulder.

"Then kiss me quick, before they come," she said in an abandoned small whisper.

He gathered her in his arms and held her close, with her upturned lips warm against his own.

"You know what this means?" he demanded as the voices calling across the water brought him back to a forgotten world.

"What?" she asked with a little catch in her voice.

"That we'll have to tell them," he said as he faced the approaching lights, "how we belong to each other now."

"Perhaps we won't need to," said the girl at his side.

"Why won't we?" asked Cosgrave, with her hand imprisoned in his.

"Because I warned Kenzie this afternoon," she said with quiet candor, "that I was going to see that canoe adrift. But you didn't give me the chance, this time, of being the outlaw. And that's why I feel there's still some hope for you!"

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Letters From Happyland Readers

(Continued From Page Five.)

to be in the fifth grade. Please send me a button. I promise to obey the rules. I have one sister, her name is Lavern. I have a pet cat it is gray. I must close, so goodbye.—Helen Goodman, Ohiowa, Neb.

Mary and the Fairy.

Once there was a poor woodcutter who had a little child called Mary. One day Mary's father fell sick. He called to his daughter and said: "Mary, I know my end is coming and I want you to be good to your mother, just as you have been to me." He then gave her a kiss on the forehead, turned his face to the wall and died.

Mary and her mother had a hard time to get enough money to get food and clothing. One day Mary's mother told her to stay at home, as she was going to the store to get a few things to eat. Mary told her mother she would. After Mary's mother had gone, she went upstairs to take a nap. She dreamed that she was crying and that a fairy came to her and asked her what was she troubled about. Mary told her that they had no money to buy clothes and food. The fairy told her not to cry for she would see that they would have plenty of money to buy clothes with. When Mary woke up she was astonished to see her mother standing by her and that she had a new dress on and some clothes for Mary, and that they had a very nice, new house and that it was furnished very nice. I suppose the fairy did this for the little girl because she was good. Well I must close as my letter is getting long.—Ruth Saunders, Twenty-sixth and Harrison, South Side, Omaha, Neb.

A Good Record.

Dear Happy: I have written to you before and received my pin but I lost it at play. If I sent another 2-cent stamp will you please send me another pin?

We raise Boston bull terriers for sale and now have three which

we call Tude, Teddy and Jiggs. They dig up all my mother's flower beds to bury their bones in and she gets pretty sore at them but my two brothers and I think they are better than the flowers. We have a cat, too, and they are nice to the cat in the house, but when they catch it out doors it soon goes up a tree a flying.

Our school will soon begin and I will be glad. I went all last year without being absent or tardy and earned a gold pin. I am going to try to do as well again this year. I will be in the fourth grade.—Clarence Davis, Wolbach, Neb.

A New Member.

Dear Happy: I want to join your happy tribe. I will be in the eighth grade in school this fall. I am 12 years old. I read the Happyland every Sunday. Enclosed please find a 2-cent stamp and the coupon. I would like to have you send me a Go-Hawk button. My letter is getting long so must stop.—Fern Marsh, Jackson, Neb.

Will Help.

Dear Happy: I read the Happyland page every Sunday. I like it very much. When we get the paper I look for the Happyland page if I have nothing else to do. I like it very much. I am sending a two-cent stamp to get a button. I hope I'll get my button soon. I promise to help someone every day. I will try to protect all birds and dumb animals. I would like if some of the Go-Hawks would write. I will gladly answer.—Iva Plumb, Route 6, in care of All Plumb, Harlan, Ia.

A New Member.

Dear Happy: I am writing to join the Happy tribe. I am sending a 2-cent stamp. I wish you would send me my button as soon as possible. I am 11 years old and I am in the sixth grade. I go to the Lone Willows school. Your friend, Batrix Kohrrol, Ohiowa, Neb.

Our Invalid.

Dear Happy: I have been sick three and one-half months. First I had quincy. Now I am getting over diphtheria paralysis. I am enclosing a 2-cent stamp for a Go-Hawk pin. My sister is going to join too. I and another girl are going to start a tribe. I wish some of the Go-Hawks would write to me. I will close for this time.—Nell Louise Kunsch, age 12, 4020 Browne street, Omaha, Neb.

A New Member.

Dear Happy: I would like to be a Go-Hawk. I am 11 years old. We just subscribed for The Sunday Omaha Bee. I am very anxious to be a Go-Hawk. The stories this Sunday were very good. I can sing. I can play the piano. I can play. I hope I can join. Yours truly, Lorene Norton, Brock, Neb.

Will Be Kind.

Dear Happy: I am enclosing the coupon and a 2-cent stamp. I promise to be kind to all dumb animals. I have two dear little kittens for pets. We call them Buff and Pussy. I would like to join the Go-Hawks' happy tribe. My letter is getting long so I will close for this time.—Vera Dykeman, aged 9, Fremont, Neb.

A Fifth Grader.

Dear Happy: I would like to join the Go-Hawks. I am 10 and in the fifth A. I am sending you a 2-cent stamp and coupon. Yours truly, Milton Frohm, 616 North Thirty-third St., Omaha, Neb.

Forgot Stamps.

The following names have been received by Happy, but the writers forgot to enclose a stamp. So write again and enclose stamp, name and address and your Go-Hawk button will be sent to you immediately.

Jack Tucker, North Platte, Neb.; Fern Fickel, Oakland, Ia.; Basil Johnson, Lexington, Neb.; Helen Doran, Sidney, Neb.; Pauline Paul, McGrew, Neb.; Bernice Bush,

Oseola, Neb.; Bernice Pritchard, Sargent, Neb.; Bette B. Cornelius, Hastings, Neb.; Madie Plotts, Milford, Neb.; Evelyn Frost, Wolbach, Neb.; Lucile Johnson, 901 Avenue C, Council Bluffs, Ia.; Ralph Capazo, 2009 Dorcas street, Omaha, Neb.; Effie Benedict, Glenwood, Ia.; Ruth Saunders, Twenty-sixth and Harrison streets, South Omaha, Neb.; Ruby Warner, Seneca, Neb.; Olaf Nordland, Columbus, Neb.; Anna Marie Johnson, Shelton, Neb.; Eunice Hansen, Tilden, Neb.; Leo Shestak, Dorchester, Neb.; Jeannetta Knutzen; Elinor Geiser, Columbus, Neb.; Byrl Woolsey, Munden, Kan.; Leland K. Surface, Silver Creek, Neb.; Viollinda Liebig, Platte Center, Neb.; Vesta Cronin, Platte Center, Neb.; Viola Hehnke, Scottsbluff, Neb.; Edwin Black; Irma McKinney, Giltner, Neb.

Loves Birds.

Dear Happy: I am sending you a 2-cent stamp for a Go-Hawk button. I am 4 years old and like to hear the stories and letters that are in The Omaha Bee every Sunday. There are some birds who have a nest in our porch post. There are three baby birds in the nest and they will soon be big enough to fly. I watch them every day.—Evelyn Joy Ray, 1603 Towle Street; Falls City, Neb.

Wants to Join.

Dear Happy: I am 7 years old. I want to be a Go-hawk. Please send me a pin. Dear Happy, I have a dog named Tiny. He likes to play and I have a cat named Tommy. She likes to play too. I will be O, so good if you do send me a pin.—Curtis Kubitz, Cedar Bluffs, Neb.

A Wyoming Go-Hawk.

Dear Happy—I read about the Go-Hawks. I would like to be long to the club. I am sending my 2-cent stamp. I will try to do a kindness every day and be kind to dumb animals. I am 8 years old and in the fifth grade.—Ruth McNally, aged 8, Sheridan, Wyo, 343 W. Loucks St.

A New Member.

Dear Happy: I would like to join the Go-Hawk Happy Tribe. I am sending a 2-cent stamp for my button. I am 12 years old and in the ninth grade at school. Please send my button as soon as you possibly can. I wish some of the Go-hawk tribe would write to me. As my letter is getting long I will close.—Ravina Everett, age 12, Union, Neb.

A Montana Go-Hawk.

Dear Happy: I am sending a 2-cent stamp and would like to join the Go-Hawks.

I have four white cats, half a gora, and a dog, Ring. His name is derived from a white ring around his throat. I ride horseback and enjoy it very much. Yours truly, Katherine Smock, Age 12, St. Ignatius, Mont.

First Letter.

Dear Happy: This is my first letter to your page. I am 11 years old and have two brothers and two sisters. I am a member of the Go-Hawks. I go to Sunday school every Sunday. My teacher's name is Mrs. Barlow. We all like her.—Gertrude Mildred Olbrey, Aged 11, Decatur, Neb.

Will the following Go-Hawks please send proper address to Happyland? Buttons have been sent to you and returned for proper address.

Richard Kee Chaney, Ruby Tarr, Wilma Johnson, Esther M. Pulver, Thelma Rauth, Mable Beisy, Lucille Reeder, Grace Flint, Catherine Wisner, Lucille Rose, Rex Leonard, Rollin Warren, Alton Hansen, Guenn Adams, Allison Talbot, Leon Miller, Lawrence White, Lucretia Hill, Ray Mead, Albert Childs, Merrill Warren, northeast Wrennall, Phillip Miller, Geraldine Hall, Delbert Stites, Bertha Davis, Bernard Paul Tappit, Virginia Barbeyette, Josephine Siraunne, Stacey Noday.