

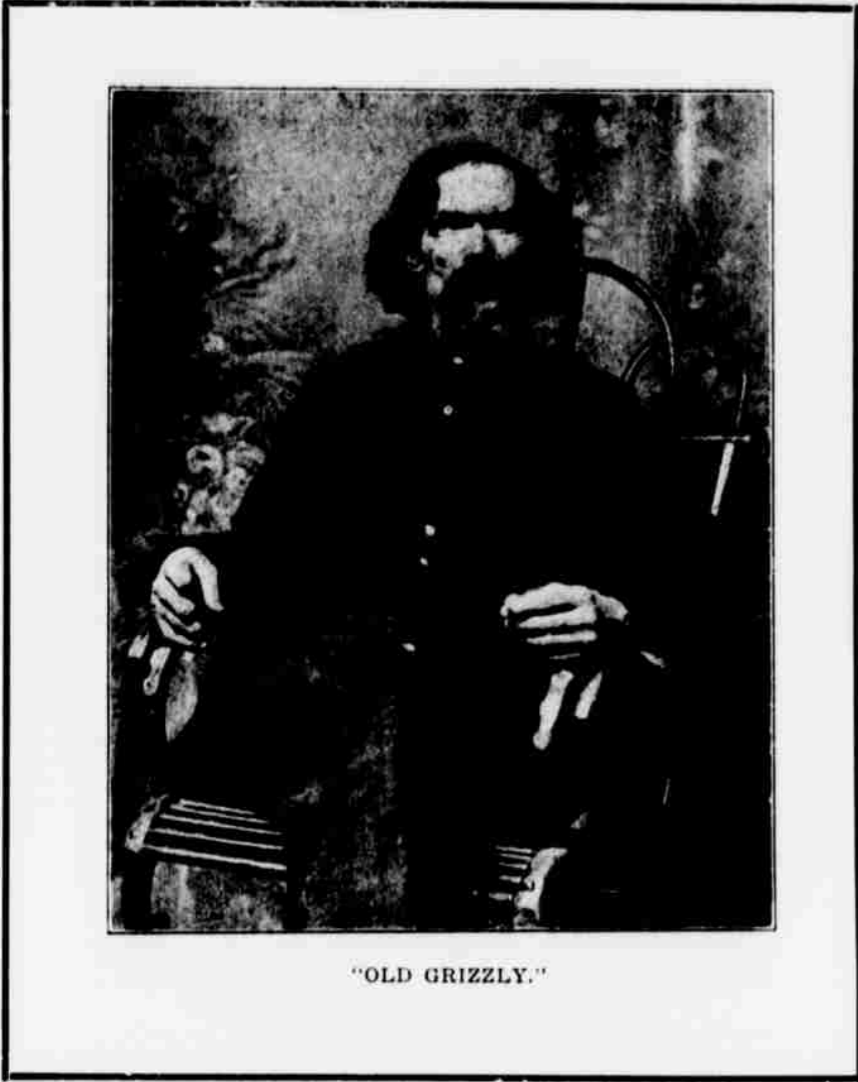
Old Grizzly Swears Vengeance on Bears

Wandering over the mountains of northern California Old Grizzly has killed bear for forty years. Nearly half a century ago he vowed never to eat any meat but bear meat, never to live in a house, never to speak to a man and never to drink another drop of spirits. When he must communicate he does it by writing on a slate he carries tied around his neck. Winter and summer he wanders over the hills avoiding the chatter prospectors and the miners and the hunters. He has no vow against woman-kind and will gladly talk to the gentler sex. He is an Irishman. Once a year he comes into Sonora, sells his bear hides, buys his one suit of clothes which he allows himself and his small supply of beans and flour. Then he goes on to the next town, Columbia, and stays all night at the grave of his wife in the quaint old miners' bury-

but a big grizzly. He growled low and looked at me and kept his ugly head rolling and then he tried to sneak out behind me, but he didn't make a go of it, for I got him. He was too heavy with eating to run or fight and it was war in the room.

"I picked my wife up and she just opened her eyes and she smiled in my face and said low-like, 'Tommie,' and then she gave a shiver and shut her eyes and she hasn't ever said anything since, not anything at all. I knew there was no use looking for the kid.

"I have been killing bears ever since and I'm going to kill them as long as ever I live. I have no call against anything else in the world, but the bears and me will never be quits. They know it. They used to fight and they used to hide, but



"OLD GRIZZLY."

ing ground where many a man "went in" with his short shrift and a long rope and the good priests put on his epitaph only "May God have mercy on his soul," and the only name they knew for the wanderer. Before any one is stirring Old Grizzly, whose other name has long been forgotten, goes back to his homeless wandering, hunting his enemy, the bear. I found him, an old man with long wavy black hair and alert blue eyes, stooped, but strong, and glad to exchange a few words with a fellow human being.

"Some think I am a bit cracked. I don't know whether it's me that's cracked or them. When a man talks for forty years to the stars at night and the hills in the daytime he comes to know things that he doesn't talk about. Anyway, I know I'm getting to be a better man. I ain't lied to any one and I ain't wasted any time hanging around and talking or I haven't got drunk for forty years, and that is saying a good deal."

Grizzly's Story.

"I'd been in town that day. It was pretty cold and I didn't lock forward with joy to riding home five miles in the snow with the wind blowing tip saws. It was the year after the drought and there hadn't been any mast and the bears and wild hogs came right up to the houses to get food and were so fierce they would attack any one. Some had been killed by them when the snow came deep, for there was nothing much for the bears to eat. My wife never did like it over there beyond Sonora. She was dead afraid of most everything. The rattlers and Indians and wild things that got out in the hills and hollered half the night. There was only the kid with her and I'd use to go to town and hang around every chance I got and I'd hardly ever take her because a woman is in the way.

"When I came riding up the road that night I see that there was no light in the house, but it was pretty late and thinks I, 'she's gone to bed.' There was a big fire place and the fire lighted up a good deal, but I wondered when I got near enough and see the door was open. I looked in quiet like and in the corner I saw my wife and somebody with her sitting on the floor. 'So that's what you are up to, is it?' I says. You see I was the ornariest cuss that ever got licked. I went in and I heard a queer sound and then I was just going to fire off my gun when I heard a growl and I saw it wasn't a man on the floor,

now they never have time for anything but just to get as far away as ever they know how. You think they don't know? Why, bears knows things. Just tell me how they know they can't be killed around Lake Elnore any more. It's government reservation now and it's only the second year. Inside the reservation are young cubs and cubs. Just outside around Strawberry I have only found one cub this summer. How is it? They never used to lay up around Elnore. The cattlemen don't like the reservation, because all the wild things have doubled since they have a quiet place to breed in and when they get big, out they come and then they eat the cattle and the stockmen don't like it.

"They want me to kill lions, too. Now, I have no grudge against the lions. I keep out from under the trees at night and don't give them a chance to jump on me. The coyotes and such, they have just as much a call to make a living as the stockmen. They do it just the same. The stockmen skin the cattle and the folks they sell to and the lions and coyotes they skin the cattle and it's all turn about.

"There's one bear that has been coming here every summer for nine years. I am going to meet that bear some day and I hope it will be pretty soon, for I'm getting old and not so spry as I used to be. Them fingers? Yes, he chewed them off. He pretty nigh done for me, but God Almighty knew I wasn't ready to go home yet. It takes lots of knocks to make anything worth having out of an ordinary cuss like me. I am willing for Him to keep on hammering just as long as it's any use and I'm glad He thinks it's worth while. He does it because my wife keeps at him, I guess.

"I am going to have an overcoat this year though. I am getting old and God Almighty isn't finished with me yet. I'll be glad when He is. Nobody else could have made anything out of me. I'll be glad when He's done with the hammering and I guess Mary and the kid will be glad to see me, too."

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I CAN BUT THEN HE HAS BEEN
AT IT LONGER THAN I
HAVE. HE LUST PRINTS AND PRINTS
AND PRINTS. THEY ALL SAY HE'S THE
PRINCE OF PRINTS.
RUTH

(Ruth forgot to state that her papa is STONECYPHER, Omaha's printer, whose place of business is 1291 Howard Street, and whose Telephone is 1310.)



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