YREKA JIM'S PRIZE; or, The Wolves of Wake-Up.

BY EDWARD L. WHEELER.

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CHAPTER I.

THE WOLVES OF WAKE-UP.

It was a sunny afternoon in the month of June, as a man rode leisurely along the trail from Shelby, Arizona, toward the mining-camp of Wake-Up, which was some forty miles west from the first-mentioned town, and in the heart of as wild and mountainous a part of the territory as exists.

The man was mounted upon a clean-lined but rugged Indian pony, of vicious aspect, and its trappings were of a superior kind.

He was well-built in person, attired in citizen's attire, armed with rifle and pistols, and evidently accustomed to the saddle, for his ride with ease and grace.

He was the typical image of a middle-aged man, but a full silver-threaded beard gave him the appearance of being several years older than he really was.

He appeared perfectly familiar with the trail, and which was really timbered with pines, and his pony had evidently been over the route before, for it walked calmly.

Although the trail was not one of the safest in the mountains, the horseman appeared apprehensive, evidently as he rode along, and seemed in a thorough good-humored mood.

Indeed, it was a day to inspire good-humor. The morning was soft and mellow, with the commingled scents of pine and mountain flowers. A gentle breeze was stirring, and the birds were chirping. The whole woodland was filled with music.

The sun was yet some three hours high when the horseman reached a point where a divergent quick cut the trail, and brought along with it a number of others which were clearly marked.

Here he drew rein, and allowed the pony to prance in thist and cool its feet in the stream. Somewhat tired of the jaunt, the man slipped from the saddle, and approached a smooth-barked stycana, he drew his hunting knife, and carved upon the tree-trunk, in clearly cut letters:

"GEORGE GARDNER GERALD,

"JUNE 7th, 68."

Then dropping upon the verdant grass, he lit his meerschaum, from which ringlets of smoke were curling into the sky. After stating for a time about the fork of the trail, and from many miles around; big wolves, little wolves, wolves of both sexes—wolves fierce and bloodthirsty, gaunt and starving—wolves fell to relish from some herd left.

In fact, it was a convention-ground for seemingly the entire wolf population, where they held nocturnal caucuses and made the night a howling congress.

Now speaking of Mr. or Mrs. Wolf, he gone down at these conventions, there was ample proof, and for, indeed, every sign of their presence, and their bones and skulls.

And if, now, a careful searcher might have found human bones, for more than one road-mover had lost his life there from a curiosity to be present at the nightly "meets," and his body had furnished the delinquent with magnificent meat.

Owing to this fact, few of the men of the mountains cared to be in the vicinity of Wolf Run after nightfall.

Tradition had it that this congregation of wolves was one which had roamed the country, who mingled freely with the verminous brutes—that they obeyed his slightest command, and that there were valuable deposits of gold at the forks, over which the wolves were supposed to stand guard.

But not one of ten men who had ever heard this tradition had the least faith in—it at least, no one took enough interest to inaugurate an investigation of the same.

Gerald Gardner was familiar with the history of this strange tribe, but had no fear for his personal safety during the time he intended to tarry there; so he took his time at his smoke, and, then, finished it, he removed the pipe to his pocket and whistled to his pony.

"Come, Don't be so joggling along, or we shall have the wolves snipping our straws!"

The pony, evidently trained to obey, came up out of the water, and Gardner swung himself upon the saddle.

As he did so, his eyes met a sight that, to say least, startled him.

Suddenly, all around him, as if coming from the very earth, there arose a number of figures from the ground, and a dozen pairs of eyes gleamed through the eye-holes in the wall of the winding trail.

So thunderstruck was the horseman at the apparition that he started back without quite stopping; and indeed such a mighty attempt would have been useless, a fact which he only now well relished.

"Gerald Gardner, you are my prisoner," the leader of the party said in a voice evidently disinterested.

"I—That is—are you?"

"Well, I should smile," Gardner replied, good-naturedly. "To whom do we owe this favor?"

"You won't think much of a favor, may be," the leader said. "Before you, we behold the Wolves of Wake-Up, who are equally as savage as you would make this trip in the camp-meeting ground each night!"

"All right from Wake-Up, are you? I was not at all aware that Wake-Up could turn out so formidable a band of cut-throats. The camp must be well populated, otherwise I should say:

"No; plenty more of the same stock is still there. Now, Gardner, I consider that you and I would best know if everything is correct, for after you are dead and gone, it may be that the wolves may find to their advantage to read an obituary in the Wake-Up World.

"You are Gerald Gardner of Wake-Up, are you?"

"I am."

"You are a man of some forty sweats and snow-storms?"

"Forty what?"

"You look younger. You came to Wake-Up on your own account?"

"Correct."

"And brought your family, consisting of two women and a child?"

"Just so, Mr. Lopes."

"You engaged to me as a pony-express agent, but finally gave up that and took to the business of doing nothing!"

"Well, Gardner's face grew a trifle more stern of expression.

"And the leader of the Wolves went on, "the moment you began to play up gentleman, but lack you overtook you. First, your daughter Fanny, as you confessed it, disgraced you and you killed her!"

"I did not!" the prisoner retorted. "She poisoned herself!"

"That's what you say, but sure my name is Dark Dan, and I've poisoned her, and I allow there's plenty others think the same way I do. Anyhow, you know what I've had your life insured, for five thousand dollars, and drove bandits to help to boost you up in the world, and make y'one of the big men of Wake-Up?"

"An angry flush reddened the face of the rider, and a steady glitter entered his dark eye; but he made no denial.

"Well, shortly afterward, one of your sons, name Grant Gardner, visited this place, Wolf Run, Wake-Up, to kill a full company to companions—Carrol Carver, and Rough Slaguer, then they had a shot, and things turned, during the night, and reported his companions torn to pieces by the wolves. As two however last儿 said, the next morning it was accepted as evidence that the two men and their remaining horses were dead. Did you profit by the fact, Gerald Gardner? Why, of course you did! An insurance had also been placed on Grant Gardner, and you raked in another cool five thousand, to sport about on. Mighty convenient thing, to have such a biddie coming in, now and then, me thinks."

There was a significance in Dark Dan's speech that the citizen of Wake-Up evidently did not understand. He had not made an investigation of the natural constitution of the folk of Wake-Up, that be, too, might be an explanation. Likely a comatose of his parent, but, such did not move him. But the point here below, for a certain length of time, and was not bashful in appraising you of the matter; and trying to find the main source quartered, and have since remained on very bad terms.

Gerald Gardner uttered an exclamation of impatience.

"Well, all this nonsense, to me!" he cried. "There's not any truth in the statements you make or the inferences you draw. I want no more of this talk. Why have you vagabonds stopped me here and what do you want?"

"Oh! you shall learn, if you take it cool and easy," Dark Dan assured. "We Wolves of Wake-Up do things on the square, when we do anything, you can bet. You see, the facts are, things are getting decided blue in our blooming region, and the y'one that is pitting and grub gets higher and higher. The y'one that matters worst, you know, is that the springs has been on the miners, at the McKend-lass mines, and they are making a pest in causing the destruction, Gerald Gardner!"

"I was?" was the hurried answer. "I app..."

"I, that is. You have it threatened to kill you, I am an unprotected lady, and needs some one to look after you. Business interposed.

And you propose to do it for her, in hopes of eventually marrying her, and getting con-"nec..."

"No, no! Gardner, but necessity compels me to inform you that your brother has played out, to the end—the usefulness has ceased to be useful. You have a snug little insurance of ten thousand dollars upon your own life, and we, the Wolves of Wake-Up mean to coll in it."

As Dark Dan ceased speaking, he gave a quick signal. The men who were behind the prisoner instantly leaped forward, and dragged him from the horse to the ground, where, in a moment, he was bound.

"Oh! we've got ye, foul! Dark Dan declared, casting over his prisoner. "There's nothing mean about us!"

Gardner made no response, but shot his lips, determined if driven to the wall, to show heroic bravery.

Dark Dan wasn't quite posed to the exact way we're going to fix ye up. Ye see, it has come to our notices that you have made a will, to give everything you have to a certain Miss "psses, to Miss Martha McKendlass. Now, if you were to peg out, your life insurance would accordingly go to her."

Gardner still made no answer.

"Oh! ye don't admit the corn, eh? Dark Dan went on, triumphantly. "I don't make a bit of difference whether you do or don't. Your silence is sufficient. In this case, yes, the ten thousand and what else you have, would go to Miss Martha—pretty, fatherless, motherless Miss Martha, who, if she don't married in the next few months, will be the last of the McKendlass. Naturally, one would inquire what benefit we would have from her life insurance, so long as you had fixed things up so cleverly in favor of the contemplated future husband. The answer is clear, of course, because years, truly, Dark Dan is engaged to Miss Martha McKendlass. But now! Oh! Gerald, thou knowest why it is best that you should die. As to the method, you shall know in a few minutes."

At another signal several of the Wolves appeared, and each took hold of a stake in a deep hole in the ground. It being of alluvial formation, they were successful in breaking a troublesome hole was there to be seen.

Then Gardner was raised, and he was put into a trap which had been designed by which left his head protruding just above the surface.

The dirt was then shoveled around him.
and except for his head he was literally buried alive.

Never during the p-erformance of the job did he have a chance to rear his head, but his eyes spoke volumes of revengeful anger.

"There you are?" Dark Dan announced when the last of the wolves had disappeared. "You may now be able to get up to seed here, unless the wolves got ye. The thought of the value your carcass as good fodder, no but why should I bother. You must be quite ready to satisfy me. Anyhow, it can't be said we murdered ye."

We left without another word the chief turned and strode away, followed by his comrades. And the wolves watching whereover, where the wolf brote made the night hideous with their wild orgies!

CHAPTER II.

Wake-Up was pretty nearly what Dark Dan had indicated—a town that was "petering out." His first town had been remarkably brilliant, and for a time the indications were that it would continue so. But the situation changed. He went to Wake-Up from Western City—which belief had caused a smart little town to spring up, with a sheltering capacity for two or three thousand souls; but Wake-Up unfortunately never had been able to attain to so numerous a population, and when it became evident that the McKandias mine was the only paying one in the region, the town soon yielded to the inevitable, and many of the people, not over half of whom were employed as miners.

The balance of the population was made up of those who did not care to work, could not get work, and the gamblers who came to try to divest the mine of the earnings of those who did work—a bete noire that the people, however, had seldom, if ever, known what it was to speak of. They were the "rake-halves," with its saloons and other dens of depravity.

As before stated, the McKandias mine, two in the region of Western City, were fortunate in being the only one not productive of any profit to the owner, and the property was rapidly falling into the hands of the McKandias, who had inherited from her father.

Patsy McKandias had originally located and opened the mine, but owing to the fact that several horses had followed him away to be sold, he had been forced to perform the cee act of Judge Lynch. This was in Wake-Ups earlier days.

This was but one of her many failures. She had been a mere chit of a child when she came to Wake-Up a few years before, and could not work. She did not look over the edge; yet she was generally dubbed "Old Maid McKandias." The cause of this was always incurred through having the following notice published in the Wake-Up Warrnap:

"Patsy McKandias, old miner, not over thirty, handsome, brave and well-built, with an even temper, good address, and a capability for business. Man not expected to bear half of the range (I mean the other half; must not drink to cases, nor have a penchant for making other women, and must be able to hold his own up against me.)

Such a man can find a red-headed wife, with blue eyes, fair to pretty face and figure, even temper, and a couple of gold mines. Competition open to all.

McKANDIAS—Wake-Up.

This pre-eminent fact, that Martha desired to earn some money, had caused one of the local wit to suggest that it was plain proof of Martha's ability, and that such a thought had occurred to the thoughtful young lady. Martha's father, however, had been a mere child when he came to Wake-Up a few years before, and could not work. She did not look over the edge; yet she was generally dubbed "Old Maid McKandias." The cause of this was always incurred through having the following notice published in the Wake-Up Warrnap:

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Yrka Jim's Prize.

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The toughest characters of the camp, headed by one supreme ruffian called Jake Grab, usually took the lead in the saloon.

We say unique, of the wayfarer, because he was the ruffian "back of the th' kid" that wild region, from head to foot.

His costume, remarkable for age, was made of sheepskin. A black, grimy hat was ornamented with some tatter of every sort. His face was a grimy mask, his nose a grizzled foot. He wore ponderous, stogy boots and a small arsenal of weapons, but was hatless.

His proportions physically were those of a giant. Once he had a stout figure but an immense shock upon his head, and trained to grow straight upward while his face was covered with a heavy but unadorned, hairless, hulking form, in contrast with his hair, which was of flaxen color.

Such portions of his face as were not covered by beard wore a waggish expression, especially his eyes. He had roared, sometimes, without the sound of his voice.

He drew rein before the "Bloody Bear" with a shouldershaking, "Whoop, Janywary!" and took a good look at the surroundings. While he was doing this, a number of the "clits" came out of the saloon, and regarded the red-haired stranger critically.

Men they were, whom rough associations, and worse whisky, had made coarse and belligerent men, from whom the finer instincts of human nature had left, bearing witness to the gross and bad.

"What do you mean, friends, the stranger sung out in a voice strongly nasal. "I ’posé this here Yrka Jim's en the 'Wak-up' again.

"You bet it’s ‘Wake-Up!’" Jake Grab declared, with a scowl—a man, this Grab, short and thick-set, with the roughest hair and mustache of jet blackness. "This wire I tell you, Zeeke—"

"That’s not what you say," he answered, ejection on the coolness of his capacious mouth, that would have fouled a formal drinking tube, but been gone. "Now, I ‘pose, I don’t allow you take me fer a fool. Wake up, you!" Grab yowled, "You ain’t partial to smart Açronames, your eyes? You can’t keep a man like yer well across.

"Ye don’t say yes," he observed, ejection on the coolness of his capacious mouth, that would have fouled a formal drinking tube, but been gone. "Now, I ‘pose, I don’t allow you take me fer a fool. Wake up, you!" Grab yowled, "You ain’t partial to smart Açronames, your eyes? You can’t keep a man like yer well across.

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- CHAPTER IV.

Yrka Jim.

Born Martha McKinlady and young Gardiner was a man to him, the hero of the challenge, and saw a stranger step forward into their presence.

A finely-built stranger, too, and neatly attired in the costume of his frontier sport, even showing a bit of that which some fellow, not yet in his thirties, apparently, a man of the world, dark, magnetic eyes of singular power of expression, brown hair, goatee and mustache, the latter was just a sliver of a mustache, and the latter gracefully trained.

He was evidently trusting himself to hand and tongue. He raised his hat and bowed low as he stood before the astonished pair, then turned his exasperating gaze upon Ernest Gardner, as much

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Yeeka Jim’s Prize.

Yeeka Jim was a young man, graduating in Wake-Up, this young gentleman among the lot. As a matter of fact, he proposed to get rid of him in the manner you heard me say, a man who does not have the curiosity of the name, I must request that you do me a favor.

"Then I’ll be pleased to accommodate you, young lady, if my power, I infer, however, that you are making a point against my principles, unless I am crowded upon me.

"You have guessed what I desire you to do—give Mr. Gardner a thumping that will effect a change, and for that may again aslant him?

"But you have much that lay hands upon the gentleman, without provocation.

"Then if it provocation you want, I can give you a thumping so as to make Mr. Gardner feel, to his feet, ‘I am not afraid but what I can hoss you, and for illustration of the fact take that!’

He took a step forward, and by a deflects move, succeeding in slapping the sport in the face.

"Now, tell me your name, and I’ll finish the job,” he cried, with a sneer.

"No, sir, I am Miss Jane, at your service,” the sport returned dryly, “and if you will have the kindness to put yourself on your guards, I will administer to the punishment the young lady recommends.”

"And so it came to pass, a gentleman in front of the hotel where the crowd can enjoy the sport, as well as myself.

"But we will try we will try to humour them, if that is your pleasure. Lead off.

"Hold on, a moment!” Martha said, reaching for a witness that might give me all the assurance of some importance to me. Mr. Yeeka, will you loan me your arm.

"And so I do not like him, and hit upon this method as the only one that would make him respect my society, he is very conformed, and if he were readily handled it would make him subservient.

"Still, at the same time, you might incur his ridicule and be turned out.

"Oh! I guess not. He wouldn’t care a fig for me if he could get hold of the man of the crowd, and not send a dangerous fellow.

"Well, you are a queer one.

"So I am. I do not deny it. Eccentricity, in fact, is the only characteristic I am attached to, and a husband—for you see I intend to secure one—chose one with whom I can always be happy, for I shall adore him—not for a time, but for all time.

"Then, no doubt, he will be a lucky dog, as the saying goes, that wins you.”

"That is my resolution. Will not have to put myself to the exactions of some one to find him, first and then win him, myself. He will not have a word to say about it. And I may as well admit that I believe you are the nearest to my ideal. I love not, you.”

"Indeed! Then, if that is the case, you will not seek to find any influence over me, for I am not at liberty to accept or give any preferments of money.

"Oh! no.

"That is my present intention. In fact, it was to perfect some little arrangements that brought me, as it were, your guards; so no more talk, now remain here, in Wake-Up, I believe you would soon change your mind. Don’t you?”

"I am sorry. I think I could love you, without getting married, and not remain here in Wake-Up, I believe you would soon change your mind. Don’t you?”

"I think you are inclined to be coy, but I rather guess you are inclined to coquetry, not to the rejection of anything like that. I am frank, candid, and out-and-out with what I have to say. If I were in love with you, I would not make such a mistake as you imagine."

Yeeka having gained this advantage, began to force the fighting, putting his adversary off his guard. And a very weak and poor defense it was. The peculiarities of his opponent were at once made a point of, and his left-handed, was a surprise to all the spectators. Scarcely a blow of the iron-armed sport could meet a parry. The blows were slackened and nearly swollen shut, and his face was blackened and deeply scored. I was so interested in the contest, when a sledge-hammer blow from Yeeka’s fist jarred the left shoulder, and he found himself too used-up to arise.

He was indeed a red-lunged spectacled one as he came forward, determined to have the man whipped as any man need want to be.

"That’s the ticket,” he continued. "Don’t git in a hurry, please. Ye was jest’er cut off, like a seephy on a streak o’ steam, and git in a hurry and git an ulcer.

Yeeka Jim regarded the fellow a moment, then:

"See here!” he finally demanded, "what do you mean, my man? Step aside and allow me to make the ticket.

"No, I’ll be damed if I will,” Stout answered.

"You ain’t got the ticket, nor don’t you want it, Bradley, I’m a-goin’ to lick you in a live’r curiosity, and then you’ll see. Ye didn’t set out to make nothing but a purpose o’ seein’ a live’r, real woman. Never wear your story, I’ll swear, ’cause I was born when I was quite young, an’ never had the chance to be muddled, and then when I’m old I’ll tell ye how to do it, an’ I never felt I was a fool to start to make nothing but a purpose o’ seein’ a live’r, real woman.

"Then, you’d better go to Salt Lake City,” Jim replied.

"You don’t understand, I dare say, an’ I’m going too. I’ll show you how to do it, and I’ll show you how to do it, go on and let me look in on you and give me some interoduce. My name’s Slumgullion Stout, an’ I’m a fellow who never seen a woman.

"Well, I’ll be damed. She beats the deuce out of me.

He had seen a woman, and was satisfied to return to his former haunts.

But Yeeka Jim did not. He regarded the fellow as an impostor, so far as what he represented himself to be was concerned, and at one moment supposed that his visit to Wake-Up was for another purpose than what he claimed.

He kept an eye on him at every rate,” he mused. "If he’s not disguised, the chances are that he may be looking for a man of about my time.

He at once sought the hotel, for he was in no hurry to meet Martha again, after her outburst. His explanation for him. He should be throw him in her way, she was so much interested in the matter, and there was no telling but what she might disapprove him, and he would have a hard time to show her.

Having some purchases to make in Wake-Up, he was making an early start for his mountain retreat, he registered at the Big Jujun for the day, and then turned around the mountain, to the city where he was going to accompany the sports for awhile to smoke a cigar.

Finally, Yeeka Jim, sugar sugar against the fact, he became aware that he was the target sport, and that he, too, of course, was going to be the subject of every attention, and that there was no telling but what he might displease him, and he would have a hard time to show her.
Yerka Jim's Prize.

Grab; then bowing away his cigar, the sport accuracy from his chair.

"Well, sir, what do you want?" he demand.

At this, the sporting gentleman would say, you would like to have

Grab; then bowing away, savagely, in an instant.

"I reckon we don't want none yer lip, around yer breast," he growled.

"Yes, build. The boys have worked it out, and get ye foul?

"And, accordingly, I can consider myself a prisoner.

"Yes, temporarily. Ye see I am the sheriff.

"But, we're not here to draw you over to the river, and make my rules for you.

"There's nothing like gratitude, in this world, for favors done.

Grab; then bowing away, and, with apparent earnestness, the sport uttered his words, and the effect upon the bully was surprising, even to himself.

Grab regarded him a moment, as if he would, literally, like to make a meal out of him—then, without forewarning, he marched over to the table, and took a seat opposite the sport.

"Now, see here!" he said, slowly. "Y'know I haven't heard, cay yer gallus.

"Do you, Way? I am glad to hear that.

What particular branch of it seems to strike you as a notion?

"You reckon in comin' here so boldly to this camp it must mean somethin' to you, as ef it wasn't worth them livin' fer?

"Ah! is that so? But, my dear sir, are you proposing to take me, as I might say, for your personal, and if so, why?

"You are a pretty one, you declare. That's what I admire about you. Don't yer pose yer knowledge?

"Oh! possibly. I registered over yonder a little while ago, as ye have seen, or your towns may have scanned the register since.

"Always on the same lines, I reckon, ef that's yer, or other pilgrims o' Wake-Ups, fer that matter.

We know yer Yerka Jim, ye see, c'ern't we? No, no. I reckon it was this other fellow you was after.

"No, sir; I never gave any evidence or suspicion, or alarm, but tussled his informant a cigarette, and it lit himself.

"Yes, but Smith's racket didn't work, eh? Why is that? Where did the people o' Wake-Ups get all their advice, to the effect that I am not John Smith?

"Easy enough, Ernest Gardner isn't rare as a hound, is he? Hell y'all tell Old Maid Martha who ye were.

"You bet! He ain't no lover o' yours any more, since you done up with me.

"And, of course, accordingly, the citizens o' Wake-Ups are gathering in warlike array and purpose of capturing in my absence.

"You bet! They ain't goin' ter fer ye, openly, however, for they know I'm a fat bloke.

"Yer Wake-Ups as a double-distilled cuss on wheels, ain't foreign, even to this camp. They're good for something, when ye're hungry, and about it, and take ye as neat as a pin. That's just what you are fer. I reckon.

"So say ye, pray tell, what will I be doing all this time?

"Nary a thing.

"I cannot comprehend how that will be possible.

"Mebbe not. Yer hyke in Wake-Ups, and ye couldn't get out o' ter save yer life.

"Ah! I see. Ye've got an ambush layin' for me.

"Darn, I'm sure. Eh, isn't nothin' ter me, now.

I allow I offer be with their gang, but I ain't, an' they'll spell me if they knew I was a prince.

"Then, are you playing them crookedly?

"Yer, I am.

"For what reason?

"It's a secret, just at present. Ye needn't look for me, for I ain't nothin' o' the sort. I'm a bad man, W'l blood in my eye, every time I'm presented a chance, and I've got a record fer belin' a common cut-throat, that'll compare party well with any o' them heroes. So, maybe, a little bit of a turn is out o' yer regular line o' biz.

You, as the old fox, are more brief, if you have anything much o' importance to communicate.

"Oh! don't be so hard about me around, when I tell ye that the score o' rifles are leveled at ye, from the window.

"Go on!

"This side covers ye, and an attempt on yer part ter leave this office would see ye riddled wi' bullets.

"Y'bet. The boys have worked it out, and get ye foul.

"And, accordingly, I can consider myself a prisoner.

"Yes, temporarily. Ye see I am the sheriff.

"But, we're not here to draw you over to the river, and make my rules for you.

"There's nothing like gratitude, in this world, for favors done.

Grab; then bowing away, savagely, in an instant.

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Yeke Jim's Prize.

She once more buried her face in her hands and sobbed—not aloud, but bitterly. When she finally raised her head a slight Creança was the only one of her eyes. "Lula! Lula!" she uttered, and sprang to her feet, with extended hands. Within the tent, seeing sorrowfully toward the door, Lula, a half-breed, wove appropiately a half-breed, for her features betraying her dark skin, her intelligen face and eye, and her semi-civilization.

"Lula has come!" she said, receiving Fanny's over the coupe. "Oh! I am so glad. I was expecting you, and gave orders for your admittance to the place. You bring me a surprise.

"Yes.

"I am the child as I instructed?

"Yes.

Thank God! It will be cared for—I am so glad.

"Lula has been on a journey. She has a friend to Fohn. She was to be at Fohn Park.

"What is it?

"Quick! what did he say?

The girl was trembling violently, and in a great state of excitement.

"His name was Lewin.

"Then, all is well. The child is yours. He is and has been for years a true minister of the Gospel.

"God be praised! I am the wife of Seth Stephens.

"You are, Lula not obtained for you a surne, but she did more; she found Stephen, the minister, among a tribe of blanks, without a certificate of your marriage.

"That there is some of the monster! He possessed all the time, then?

"The time has passed because he had just learned that a fortune was left to him, which will soon come into his possession.

"Then she was gone, I supposed, but my child was born, and I crept back to my father in the house of forgiveness and protection.

"It was Seth who put the poison in the glass of water, that your father brought and forced you to drink when you were a woman, because he refused to receive you back again.

Fohn, Ren listened, her eyes riveted on the ground.

"What is this news to her?: It seemed to fill her with a strange ecstasy; she felt the blood rushing to her temples, and a strong, ringing sensation in her ears.

Teen for a time she seemed to leave the scene of conflict.

When she recovered consciousness, it was dark, and she was alone.

Then, gradually, came back to her what she had heard, and raised her gaze to heaven she faintly thanked God she was no longer an outcast.

CHAPTER VII.

THE WOLF QUEEN.

Lula had left the lodge long before Fohn, Fohn, close to her faint, in fact, she left shortly after the girl awoke.

She was permitted to pass the guards without question, and going out through the narrow and shallow gap which communicated with the plateau, she hastened down the precipitous mountainside.

Directly below her, hundreds of feet, nestled the "howling town of Wake-Up.

She did not go bold, however. Her route ran in a series of miles from the mining-camp into a lower gulch. She skirted the skin rob of about her figure, she left the tent and hurried away.

An hour afterward, as she neared Wolf Run, she paused and stood.

Not a sound except a stirring of the foliage broke the silence of the night which was now settling down over Mother Earth.

The wolves are late to-night, she muttered. They are very much on the round, young, and with the old Fire Pung. They miss him and fear me.

A quiet laugh broke from her lips as she uttered these words.

The wolves are to be no terror to her.

The solitary howl of a wolf was now heard in the distance; its mournful, different sound attracted her hearing. It was human, boyar, and that of—

Help! help! for God's sake, or I shall be torn by the wolves.

She spoke fiercely, and, in a few seconds, was already on the river, where she met, you know, and planted Gerald Gardner.

The Heaven's sake quick! Contrive to get me out! He implored. I am nearly dead, and the brutes will soon be here.

She replied, calmly.

"I am Lula, and their queen. They will not harm you when Lula is near.

She then set to work to extricate him.

CHAPTER VIII.

YEKE JIM WINS THE PRIZE.

To return to Wake-Up, and the situation en-veloping Yeeke Jim.

Yeke Jim had gone only too keenly, that he had been "taken in, and done up" by the bully of that mountain town, and for the mo-ment it literally made the blood boil in his veins.

With a determination, however, brought to him the old saying about not crying over spilled milk, he became more coolly as if he were attending to a subject of particular moment. Though I am for the moment only a little at yestning to take a proud to take notice that you have to resort to a desperate measure to save your life, but don't you ding all to hints that I am a cow-ard, and like to see the Judge take your case from cuttage, I'll climb ye sooner you know fear.

"You are a coward and a cur, and I could break you, you scoundrel.

For a moment Grab looked mad enough to start a fire at you, you scoundrel; but Yeke Jim had obtained the mastery, and he chuckled, softly.

"You! Wouldn't we be as green let yer fury on me! I can't stand it. But, if you want to see there isn't another in your whole kerse that I can face you free. Has any gubbi found a rope, yet?

Some gubbi had, and produced it perforce.

Yeke Jim held it, and was about to throw it on the sport's neck, and he was carried bodily out of the snow.

No tree grew in Wake-Up, suitable to the re-quirements of Judge Lynne, and, therefore, that there might be no alliance of the Western, time-honored sport of hanging, a tall post had been planted in the street, with a rope passed over the top, which offered every reasonable facility for launching a man into eternity.

Thus yeke Jim was conducted, just as the shadows of nightfall were growing fast and intense.

Some one more liberal than the rest, suggested that yeke Jim was not raised, but the majority did not think so.

The rope was buried over the arm, and seized and drawn taut, by a dozen pairs of hands; yeke Jim was thrown on the rope, by the common, with an importance in keeping with the fact of his being the "sheriff" of the town.

Yeke Jim was immediately hanged, and his corpse streched swan-like, for the pillory stages, and such like. He's been guilty o' some lesser crime, such as cuttin' throats, or shootin', why it wouldn't go so bad fer 'e. But, honest are the greatest in the countiy, and road-rubbin' aire on the same level. Tharfor, duty compels me to say ye. Say yer prayers, quick! One, two—

"Stop!" cried a commanding voice. "What does this mean?" And yeke Jim was rushed ed upon the scene.

The rope was buried over the arm, and yeke Jim, the road-agent, and we're goin' ter raise him! So of yer nerves ain't very strong you had better skin sheeted, reminded yeke Jim.

"You are not going to hang him!" Martha replied. "You ain't going to hang him! This man I have picked out for my husband, and you shall be. We're the greater in the law, and that's all the more reason why we will hang him.

Yeke Jim was held back, and all know I am in the market. Release that prisoner and guarantee that he's mine, and I'll choose to remain in Wake-Up, and I will give each of you a chance to win me to a wife. This man this way.

The crowd stared in utter surprise and sil-

Eccentric as she was noted for being, this was one of Martha's most extraordinary freaks.
Yrke Jim's Prize.

Chapter IX.

The Babe at the Cottage.

There was an exclamation then in Wake Up, as the result became known. It was hardly an expression of joy, on the part of those rude mountain men, merely to say that it was not one of their number. Still, it was an expression bearing the crowd were neither surprised nor well pleased with the result, for it was a thorn in the flesh.

There was not an expression of triumph upon the face of Mr. Yrke Jim, but he held up the silver dollar, saying:

"In any case, I am, and I all allow ye a' rye. Ain't I right?"

A steely look came over the face of Yrke Jim, but he did not lose his composure.

"My opinion of women a' body is that they have no right to vote. 'Tis not their place. I would rather they didn't vote at all," he said.

The spectators formed in line, however, after arranging the matches, Yrke Jim passed slowly by the line, and permitted each man to draw one match.

Who was the winner?

"Could there be but one victor among those wild spirits?"

Yrke Jim held up the shortest match.

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Yreka Jim's Prize.

shall come to you. If she were to leave this meeting-ground now she could never return and find her path again.

He shuddered and reposed into silence, wonder-
ing at all this. It was the first time that a human being mingled with the savage brute in the forest at will, without being torn to pieces.

Lugs sat to work preparing, evidently, to re-
turn to the looters. His hand went over a number of dry twigs and sticks and heaping them about. He was a shrewd one, this being, which partially dispelled the surrounding gloom.

Next, from about her clothing she produced one of the terrors of her people. The Scotch or the pyro-
tectives as Roman candles, which, in fact, they were. Any number of strands of cotton and other inedible material. But these she dropped handy to the fire, and then awaited the arrival of her ravenous audien-
cence.

She had not long to wait. In almost less time than it takes to narrate it, hundreds of guano, shaggy forges were smothering into the gap, their fiery eyes gleaming fiercely enough to appall the stoutest hearts.

How well she had surmised so close that Ger-
ald Gardner momentarily expected to see them leap upon him, but Lugs began her weird incantation, scene.

Several of the balls of cotton she thrust into the fire, and then burned itself out on the surrounding horde.

This in turn having saturated with oil, burst into a blinding flame, and when it descended among the wolves, they scattered with terrified howls.

Lugs laughed wildly as she saw their pro-
cure. Then she sat back and calmly watched.

10

Leaves fell from the trees, indited in a woman's graceful style of chiroraphy.

"MARTIAL—For God's sake take in this little stranger and don't shoot me. I know this woman's future has in store, for her and me. FANXY.

That was all, but enough for a subject. Yreka Jim turned to Martha, gratefully, and put out her hand.

"Miss Martha," she said, "I am more deeply indebted to you, than before, for your act of kindness. I have no use for friendship to this unfortunate girl. To tell the truth, I do not believe she would have married me, without first having trampled in my soul. Do you believe she would?"

"I am almost certain she would have told you all, for she is one of your superiors.

Believing which I shall not discard her as being wholly unworthy, but will do that which will be a remedy.

What?"

"Hiss down the villain who has been come to her, and force him to meet me at the sword's point, or with pistols!"

Fiercely the sport spoke, and turning, ab-
surdly, descended the stairs, and quietly closed the cottage.

And Martha, with a falling heart, felt that he was lost to her, even though he could not wed Fanxy Van.

CHAPTER X.

The work of getting Gerald Gardner out of his living tomb occupied Lugs, the half-breed, with singular strength, and active, and worked with one of the spades of the Wolves of Woke Up left behind.

Once she had succeeded in getting him dis-
terred, she cut away the bonds that bound him, but found he was temporariously powerless to move until the blood recirculated more free-
ly in his limbs.

In spite of all she could do, it would be se-
veral minutes ere he would be able to walk.

The bowing of the wolves had by this time become general. They were approaching their meeting ground, and would soon be at hand, bloodthirsty and savage.

Gerald Gardner's terror seemed to increase, as he heard their barks.

"We shall be torn to pieces!" he cried. "For God's sake, let us be in a place of safety."

"Fear not!" Lugs said calmly. "The wolves shall not have us, as long as I am about."

Lugs is their queen and they fear her. Wait till they come and you shall see!"

"I do not want to get away from this accursed spot, and that quickly. You can not carry me, or drag me—any way, to get away!"

Lugs laughed.

"No. You are not yet able to walk. Your blood is not in circulation. You must stay with Lugs until you are ready to leave this place. She will guarantee that no harm.
Yrake Jim's Prize.

"Certainly, I do—deeply mourn for her," said Old Dan.

"Only so far as regards her marrying the mountebank, Steele, on the sly, and against my will," said Old Dan.

"Ah! How long have you believed such a unhallowed proposition?"

"Since her death!"

"And in your estimation, what do you say to the mountebank, Old Dan?"

"Well, I am in no position to comment what you say to the mountebank!"

"More than you think. I hunted down the evidence that this mountebank is a thief of the utmost order, and I rescued her from the grave, and I am prepared to tell you what I found there.

"What? What! Are you mad, woman?"

"Not the least. I am aware of many people who pride themselves on their superior civilization. I am but Logan, a half-breed, but I am many times better than a fool!"

"But you are joking—you do not mean to tell me that my daughter is really alive, and well?"

Gerald Gardner was greatly excited, as he spoke.

"I am telling you the truth!" she said.

"Your daughter still lives. Come with me, and do as I tell you; you shall see her in good time. Will you do as I say? Will you promise me?

"I promise as long as you do not entrap me into any wrong action."

"Come to the Island. To-day. We will go now to my bay, where I will be the best for you to understand the whole thing."

"Were you to return to Wake-Up, there is no telling what harm may befall you. Logan will work a bad game upon you, and the people of Steele and Dark Dan brought to justice. Then, after leaving done this, Logan will ask for her reward."

Gerald Gardner looked at her wonderfully, half-angrily, half-incredibly, as he gave the news, and related concerning the numerous events that had transpired, during the last two years; events, the details of which Lieutenant Sethi Steele listened, with manifest interest and eagerness.

"So, this Yrake Jim has an interview with the McKendies girl, eh?"

"Yes."

"And the next time I see her, she is the one on the ground, ain't it?"

"No, but I should like to see her again."

"Yes, and to make her the one to avenge your daughter."

"The lieutenant strangled her shoulders as if he did not hardcally coincide with this view."

"You are to remain here in Wake-Up and keep an eye on this McKendies girl and her cottage as much as possible," he said. "I have found the object of my search at this Yrake Jim's camp, but you are not to go out of here."

"And then the lieutenant strode rapidly away."

"Yes, it will give me a startle, boy! She's groused, glared and grumbled. Well, now, well! I've a notion you're none too responsible, anyhow!"

The lieutenant strode on and out of Wake-Up's slumbering camp, until he came to a cabin half a mile beyond the town limits. It was a rudely-constructed affair, and evidently not regularly tenanted. A light burnished within, however, as was evidenced by the faint ray that glanced under the door. Steele did not approach close to the cabin, but halted a short distance away, where a clump of broken trees was growing, as I regarded it, would be of little importance from the sim ple fact that the trees of Wake-Up's woods were torn down, not only for a short time, and I doubt if they are any part of our provisions, and" the lieutenant admitted. "Pretty near!" Dark Dan asserted. "How the devil you ever got on to their existence at all, anyway!"

"Well, to tell the truth, I am of the opinion that I am, I dare say you have little idea of what danger is meshing around you."

"Maybe. I suppose, of course, you will take supreme delight in keeping me informed?"

"Well, since you seem so repellent to my friendly advances—yes, in the first place it is not known, publicly, who Dark Dan is, except, maybe, to myself—not of course including your father, and as I regard it, would be of little importance from the view of the fact that the trees of Wake-Up's woods were torn down, not only for a short time, and I doubt if they are any part of our provisions, and "Pretty near!" Dark Dan asserted. "How the devil you ever got on to their existence at all, anyway!"

"Let it remain so. I am one of those fellows who are able to dodge up to a point of more or less importance. Well, placed me in shape to overhear a conversation between Father and Mother. I have a notion of saying to you, as I have been close upon the heels of your father, every day since his discovery. Discovery upon discovery has been the result, not the least of which has been the opening up of the condition of the camp, and the rescue of your father, Gerald Gardner!"

"For her sake, hush!" Dark Dan blushed,
Yreka. Jim’s Prize.

This she fully determined to do, as soon as he should arrive back at camp. She would tell him that she was coming home. She

"Ugh! It is a dismal morning, cat," she said, sitting with her face downcast and her eyes crossed the panteam.

"How strangely, it is keeping with my spirits. Ah! why do I live at all, my dear? life, now, is but a bitter dream—now, I must not go hurl myself into the abyss, and end all such multitudes of misfortune and remorse, and humbly ask his forgiveness for the wrong I have come so near doing him. It is too late to do it now; better, much better."

The tinkling of the bell attached to the skin reviving us, and there was a great tent, caused her to give a start of expectancy.

"I can’t tell," he said.

It was not Yreka, Jim, but the lieutenant of his band, Caleb Cawthorn, who entered in response to the invitation.

"Ah! is it you, sir?" Fannie said, smiling.

"Surely it is a very disagreeable morning out!

"Unusually so, for this time of year. I suppose you were expecting a visit from Mr. Yreka, instead of me, and wonder what brings me in this place?"

She was expecting him, to tell the truth. Has he not arrived in camp yet?

"He has not, and, judging by a note I have just received, he is not likely to soon. This letter was handed to one of the packers beyond the Santa Fe, and thence delivered to me. What do you make of it?"

He was simply an undeveloped note that he had received of a startling effect. He had a black eye and a red cheek.

The handwriting was Yreka Jim’s, although the note had evidently been written in considerable haste.

It ran thus:

"LIEUTENANT CRAWTHORN:—Circumstances have forced me to leave the Yreka camp, and have given to the leadership of the band, which so far has been my pride and joy, which I have lost to you. I now assign the command, with the wish that my name no longer be heard in connection with the disaster that has overtaken the Yreka Jim."

"I can’t see what has got into the following: can you?" the lieutenant said, as Fannie considered.

"I think I can understand," she replied, with a forced calmness. "Ah! you have another hair; you are not without imagination!"

"Yes. It is for you, but I am almost afraid to give it to you, lest it bring you bad news." Cawthorn said, anxiously.

"Let me have it. I am steaid to stand anything," she replied quickly. "I know pretty nearly what are the contents.

He surrendered the letter, not without manifest anxiety; she closed it, read it rapidly, then reread it aloud to the lieutenant, and tore it into small bits.

The contents were as follows—bitter comfort for a father’s heart:

"FANNY:—By the time you get this, I hope your conscience has not soothed you that the effect of these misfortunes which are about to befall you, will not be what it would be. One thing is certain; you have lately deserted me, and an unworthy of my highest unmeasured respect for you. I know all of your history for the time you were Seth Steele up to the present time. I have even seen the child. Oh! that I did not know all this! Oh! that I could have saved her! If now stands, I shall, without a doubt, reward another, who, at least, is above reproach. Beware! Never again let me see your face, or I may forget that you are a woman and shoot you down as a wolf. Beware, I say, I am far from expecting him, to tell the truth. Has he not arrived in camp yet?"

She turned the letter over, not without manifest anxiety; she closed it, read it rapidly, then reread it aloud to the lieutenant, and tore it into small bits.

The contents were as follows—bitter comfort for a father’s heart:

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Yreka Jim's Prize.

like what I had judged him to be. He looked altogether different and the flushing of a
coarse nature, as I never gave him credit for before. But this charge—
"Is only too true," I said, and the man and the showing of a
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but muttered, "Yreka Jim never dreamt that it was going to be that easy for me, you see, and I'm glad I kept quiet about it, so that he wouldn't know where it was."

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Yecka's Prize. 

Finding work scarce, he had applied to Martha McKandlass for a job. She told him that there were no vacancies, but, instead of turning him away, destined for him a five dollar gold-piece from her purse, and given him 34th Street, to go by St. George, and a tiger for Schnupp were repeatedly given.

An agreement was promptly made, and the two friends parted. They were to return to Straus and Sloat the next day.

"Now then, let yourself loose!" Jake Grab growled. "Eh, ye parley about it, up ye go!"

The young fellow jumped, and, in a moment, was in the air. Grab flew swiftly, and drew to a halt near a house, which was occupied by a man, dressed in a frock coat and a porkpie hat, and the face of which was the object of curiosity.

"What are you doing here?" Grab asked the man, in a loud voice.

"I am looking for a friend of mine, Mr. Yecka," the man replied. "I have not seen him for a long time."

"I believe he is in the house," Grab said. "I will look for him for you."

"Thank you," the man said. "I will pay you for your trouble."
Yreka Jim’s Prize.

There they were then forced to stand up while Foghorn Fan confronted them, facing her re-
crant and unaffected. She was determined to have her way. "So you have met at last, have we, Seth Steele?" she asked, her lip curled angrily. "After all, you stand before your wretched wilder!"

Seth Steele’s dark, handsome face now became positively ugly with passion. "In deciding whether than she will be when I get through with you, I assure you!"

But the girl replied, "I have been a brute, a villain, an unparalleled wretch!"

A vagabond, a monster, a wretched heart-breaker, a ruffian, a cut-throat, a— but that will do, I think," and he laughed mockingly.

"No, this tongue could mention would be too bad for me. Your conduct has been so wickedly that I should think you would feel so ashamed.

"But I ain’t, you see. I ain’t one of the weak-kneed, fainting kind, and you ought to know it!"

"Are you not ashamed to face me, knowing how disgracefully you wronged me?"

"You are to be shot," the wronged woman answered.

"You have lost five minutes, make peace with the Ruler, above!"

Then five men, armed with clubs, took their positions in front of the doomed wretch, and half a dozen yards from him. They calmly stepped up, and the girl, whose name was ready for use.

"Foghorn Fan drew her watch from her belt, and fixed her gaze intensely upon the dial.

And Seth Steele.

He turned over, white with fear, and gazed upon her with a wild look.
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