

JAGGERS, Flying
Detective, **TRAILS THE RADIO OUTLAW!**

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THE RIO KID SHOWS HOLLYWOOD HOW!—See story inside

Rio Kid, Talkie Star!

The two-gun Texas outlaw had come to Hollywood to escape from Sheriffs and Rangers . . . now he was booked to impersonate himself on the silver screen!

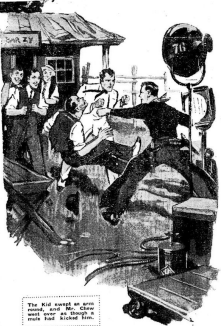
By
RALPH REDWAY

Leaping for Life!

THE Rio Kid was taken by surprise when the car rushed down on him. It was not often that the boy outlaw of the Rio Grande was caught napping, but on the wide, sunny boulevard of Hollywood he was not looking for perils—neither had peril, in this strange and startling town, ever threatened him before.

The Kid was feeling good that morning—chiefly because he had made up his mind to ride. He was in California to keep clear of rangers and sheriffs in Texas, but a few days in Los Angeles had been enough for him. Streets and houses, the din of traffic, the smell of gasoline, and the honking of motor-horns worried the puncher who was accustomed to the wide open spaces.

The Kid would have hit the trail sooner had it been possible. He had had to bring on for some days, owing to having mixed it with Spanish John and his gang. He had treated Brian Bennett, the kidnaped film star, to Spanish John's house in the hills, and rescued him there—leaving the most desperate gangster in California tied to his veranda rail, and shooting up two of the gang who had tried to stop him when he was getting the film star back to Hollywood. For the first time, the police had got the goods on Spanish John,



The Kid swept an arm round, and Mr. Chow went over as though a train had kicked him.

and the Kid's evidence was wanted. He was rather glad that Spanish John had successfully made his getaway; otherwise, there was no telling when he might have been able to pull out of Los.

Now he was pulling out, riding Side-Kicker down Magnolia Boulevard, heading for the road out of the film town, to hit the Santa Monica hills and the open spaces. He glanced at the gateway of the Gargoons lot as it came in sight, and snarled.

In the gateway stood two figures—a fat one and a slim. The first was Cyrus Fink, Director of Gargoons Pictures. The second was Brian Bennett, the "Handsome Member" of the film, the star that the Kid had rescued.

This was the first time he had seen the film star since the night of the rescue at Spanish John's stables, and he reckoned that Bennett did not have to see any more of him. The wild rider of the screen had shown a conspicuous lack of mind in dealing with the gangsters, and the Kid opined that he was likely to feel some grudge towards the rescuer whom he had left in the lurch.

Cyrus Fink gave him a grin and a friendly wave of the hand; Brian Bennett turned away and affected not to notice him, which made the Kid snarl. He reckoned that Bennett was feeling a small size when he was around. But the Kid was good-natured, and had no wish to rub it in. He shook out his reins to pass the Gargoons lot at a gallop. Side-Kicker swept along the boulevard at a trot.

It was then that the car horned in. There were no many autos around that the Kid was not likely to notice one especially. Neither was he likely to guess that Spanish John, with the cops on his track, was in Hollywood that morning, sitting at the wheel of a car. Neither, indeed, would he have recognized the gangster had he looked at the driver of the car, for John's face was mostly hidden by beard and goggles. And the idea of a car rushing down a boulevard was a new one on the Kid.

It was a little black car, with only the driver in it. It was coming down the boulevard at a moderate pace, right in front of the Kid. But just as the Kid put Side-Kicker to the gallop, the car leaped into breakneck

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speed and they rushed down an one another like lightning.

The two men in the Gorgous gateway fairly jumped. Cyrus Pank's fat red face turned quite pale. Brian Bennett stared, transfixed. In an instant, it seemed, the car would be crashing into the horseman—and whatever happened in the car and its reckless driver, there was no doubt what would happen to horse and rider—crashed and battered, rolled in sudden death on the boulevard.

The Kid hadn't a dog's chance of dodging the collision. The swift screech would only have caused the rushing car to crash into the Mustang's flank instead of his head and shoulders.

There was one chance for the Kid—a dog's chance, but he took it on the instant. A touch of the quirt, a stab of the spurs, an iron hand on the rein, and the Mustang rose to the leap of his life.

It was over in a split second. One moment the black car was rushing the horseman down, the next Side-Kicker was leaping in the air, and the car shot under the leaping hoofs. Crash, clatter came the Mustang's hoofs again as the road behind the car—and the black auto shot on.

A moment, and the Kid had his horse in hand again, and was whirling round, his eyes like blue flames, his hand whipping a six-gun from a holster. But the black car had shot away like a bullet. Already it was fast disappearing among a score of other autos.

The Kid gritted his teeth and jammed the gun back. It got his goal to let his enemy get by with this; and though he had hardly seen the driver of the black car, he did not need telling who the guy was—Spanish John or nobody. They had told him at the police depot that the gangster would be after his scalp.

He sat in the saddle, staring savagely after the vanishing car—which vanished as he looked.

"Say, big boy!"

Cyrus Pank scudded out of the gateway of the Gorgous lot—Bennett had gone in. The film director waved excited fat hands at the Kid. Then he grasped Side-Kicker's bridle.

The Kid looked at him.

"What's got you, feller?" he asked.

"This way," said Cyrus.

"Say!" said the puzzled Kid, as Cyrus led his horse towards the Gorgous gateway. "I guess I'm pulling out, hombre! What's hitting you, Mr. Pank?"

"I guess I got to chew the rag with you a piece, pancher!" said Cyrus, grinning. "This way for you. I guess I want you, pancher!"

And the Kid, puzzled but polite, allowed the film director to lead the Mustang in at the gate of the Gorgous studio.

beautifully cut clothes. His face, with its straight nose, well-cut lips, and dark eyes and lashes, was strikingly handsome. It was no wonder that tens of thousands of romantic fans adored him.

As the Handsome Hombre in thrilling Wild West drama, he played his part wonderfully well, performing desperate stunts—or what looked like desperate stunts—on his horse. Probably nobody but the Rio Kid knew of the streak of yellow in the film hero. Perhaps he had not known of it himself till that night among the gangsters, when he had led and left his rescuer to face the music.

But that was a bitter memory to the film star. That the Texas pancher had said nothing, he knew, or it would have been all over Hollywood. But if the Kid had not spoken, the mere sight of him was gall and wormwood to the man who could not help despising himself.

The star's handsome brow darkened as the Kid, leaving his Mustang in the yard, walked in with Mr. Pank. There was no room for the two of them in all Los Angeles—much less in the Gorgous studio! Why the director was bringing him in, Bennett did not know. But he scowled and turned away, anxious to avoid the pancher. The crowd grew blacker on his face, as the door of Mr. Pank's office closed after the director and the pancher.

"Say, Brian!" Mr. Pank called, as he was closing the door. But the star affected not to hear, and Cyrus, with a grunt, shut the door.

The Kid smiled faintly. He guessed the film star's feelings, and had no desire to hurt them. It was not by his wish that he was in contact with Bennett.

"Squat down, pancher!" said Mr. Pank, pointing to a chair with the butt of a cigar.

The Kid sat down. He could not begin to guess what the director wanted; but he was always a civil guy, and if Cyrus wanted to chew the rag, he was willing to give him a loose rein.

"I guess I ain't wise to your name!" said Mr. Pank, sitting on the swivel chair at his desk and whirling it round to face the Kid. "Spill it!"

"Call it Carfax!" said the Kid amiably.

"You can ride!" said Mr. Pank.

"A feller!" agreed the Kid.

"That guy, Bennett, can sure sit a horse!" said Mr. Pank. "I guess you seen him on the pictures, even in your cow towns in Texas. But could that guy lift a horse over an auto?"

The Kid grinned. He had no doubt that, so far as riding went, Bennett could have done it. But he doubted a heap whether the guy would have the nerve to put it through. Leaping a Mustang over a car at full rush was not pie, even for a Texas pancher, raised on horses.

"Nape!" said Mr. Pank, answering his own question. "I'll say, nape! And then some! But you did it,

pancher. I'm mentioning that you can ride."

"You ain't walked me in here to tell me that?" asked the Kid. "Maybe you've got something to spit, Mr. Pank?"

"What are you doing in Hollywood?" asked Mr. Pank.

"Getting out of it this morning," answered the Kid. "I should sure be hitting the hills by this time if that guy hadn't hoaxed in with his auto."

"You ain't hitting no hills!" said Mr. Pank. "Not all Gorgous goes on location, at any rate. You ever done anything for pictures?"

"You can search me!"

"Well, you'll learn," said Mr. Pank. "I guess you and Brian will run together. Rio! You for the rough stuff. You've come here from Kansas—"

"Texas!" said the Kid.

"Yep—I mean Texas. You've come here to break into the films—"

"Not in your lifetime!" gasped the Kid.

"What you doing in Hollywood, if you ain't aiming to break into the films?" demanded Mr. Pank.

The Kid grinned again. He did not intend to confide to Mr. Pank that he was in California because it was long ways from Texas sheriffs, and Mile-Kick Hall and the rangers. "Just rubbering around a piece!" he answered.

"What did they pay you on your stunch?" said Mr. Pank. "Twenty dollars and grub stakes, I guess. I'll start you at fifty."

The Rio Kid blinked. He realized that the film director was offering him an engagement on the films. The Kid had not been long in Hollywood, but long enough to learn that the burg swarmed with guys whose one ambition was to "break" into the films. There were a thousand of them, probably, within pancher, who would have been tickled to death to hear those words from the director of Gorgous Pictures. But the Kid was not one of them.

"Me for the pictures!" he ejaculated.

"You!" said Mr. Pank. "When I see you make that jump, that first st. I'm signing you an right now." "You sure ain't!" grinned the Kid. "I guess I ain't no hunch for making pictures, Mr. Pank. And I sure ain't no hunch for bedding down in a town. I'll tell a man, them dog-goned banking autos have got me tired."

"You're going to ride for Gorgous," said Mr. Pank. "Hiding stunts—that's our long suit in Gorgous—and I'll whisper to you that you can lay over Brian's play and leave him standing. Maybe," he added amiably. "Hollywood hasn't a thing on the cow town you come from—maybe it's some big name of a cow town! But we go on location to make that picture, and if you've a hunch for sleeping on the earth in a blanket, nobody's going to stop you. Up at Bucking Bronco, you could sure fancy yourself back on the Panhandle."

"Bucking Bronco?" repeated the Kid. The name sounded more home-like to him than Hollywood.

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Pank Springs a Surprise!

BRIAN BENNETT was standing by the door of the director's office in the film studio. He looked a handsome and elegant figure in his

"That's the location," explained Peck. "Up in the mountains. We got things there—you can live soft or you can live hard. You can sure look down on a heap of lava, with a rock for a pillow, if you want."

"I got the idea," went on Mr. Peck, "for a big picture, you and Brian in costumes. Get me? Brian's our pretty boy—the Handsome Hombre—I guess you know his stuff. But I want another man for the picture I got in mind! You look the part as if you were born for it—and I guess you can ride 'it. Ever heard of the Rio Kid?"

"Wh-?" stammered the Kid. "Mind, I ain't saying he's real," said Mr. Peck. "I guess if they followed him home, that Texas outlaw that they talk so much about would show up to be some whilkered old-timer with a face like the hind leg of a mule. But never mind that! From what they say, that Texas outlaw is just a kid, no older than yourself, maybe—"

"Just about the same age, I guess!" said the Kid.

"You've heard of him?"

"I've sure heard of him," agreed the Kid. "I've heard a whole heap about that hombre, in Texas."

"He's a real guy, is he, and not just reporters' guff?" asked Mr. Peck.

"I guess he's sure real—as real as me, Mr. Peck."

"I've had this picture in mind for dog's ages," said Mr. Peck. "I want a guy to ride the part. When I see you jump that auto, I knew I'd got the goods! You for the Rio Kid?"

The boy outlaw gazed at Mr. Peck, speechless. The Kid knew—only too well—how far his wild reputation had spread. But that a film producer in Hollywood had ever thought of fitting the Rio Kid had certainly never occurred to his mind! And to be picked to play the part—to play the part of himself on the screen—tickled the Kid to death.

"You could do it!" said Mr. Peck. "What you don't know, you'll learn! You look the part and can ride 'it! Why, on your looks, I guess you're no small piece like that outlaw, from the descriptions they spill. You for the Rio Kid?"

"Carry me home to die!" gasped the Kid. His eyes danced. "You're askin' me to play the Rio Kid for your pictures! Oh, jumpin' pointers!"

"My assistant, Chick, will take you in hand!" said Mr. Peck. "You'll pick up the game. It's a cinch?"

"You sure do tickle me a whole lot, Mr. Peck!" chuckled the Kid. "Yep—if you're looking for it, feller, I'll say it's a cinch."

The telephone buzzed, and Mr. Peck—the busiest man in Hollywood—waved the Kid away. The Rio Kid left the offer, chuckling. He wondered what the director of Gorgoona would have thought had he known exactly who the guy was that he had picked to play the Rio Kid!

No doubt Mr. Peck always did his best to get his actors to look as much like their part as was possible, but the Kid had a feeling that that gentleman would have been consider-

ably surprised to find how well he had succeeded this time.

The Kid walked away, wondering if Mule-Kick Hall ever found time to go to the pictures.

Ordered Out!

"H A, HA, HA!" roared the Kid. He could not help it. The more he thought of Mr. Peck's offer, the more it tickled him.

A pair of handsome dark eyes flashed fire at the Kid as he burst into that laugh. He did not notice them. He did not see Brian Bennett, as he strolled in the studio. The Kid was thinking his own thoughts. The Kid had a sense of humor; and the idea of Cyrus Peck picking the Rio Kid himself to play the part of the outlaw of the Rio Grande appealed to it.

Mr. Peck wanted to see him again before he left the lot; and the Kid killed in time walking about the studio. He did not dislike the idea of trying his luck at acting for the films. The chance had some unthought, but it was not unwelcome. Those who hunted him were not, he reckoned, likely to follow him so far as Southern California; but if they did, they surely would never dream of looking for him in a film bunch. On location with Gorgoona, the hunted outlaw was so safe from pursuit as if he had got into a hole and pulled it in after him.

He was moving along by a set which represented a Western bunkhouse and corral, unaware that an elegant figure stood there, eyeing him moodily as he came along. He had forgotten Brian Bennett's existence. But Brian had not forgotten him. He was waiting impatiently till he was sure the Texas puncher had gone, before he went to Mr. Peck's office. The Kid was looking at the set, and did not see the film star, but he was hardly six or seven feet from Bennett when he burst into that laugh. The film star's handsome face blazed crimson.

"Park it up, you roughnecked rube!" he snarled.

The Kid, starting, looked round at him. The rage and fury in the film star's face startled him.

He had guessed already that Bennett did not want to have him around, and had deliberately avoided him; but in his talk with Cyrus, he had quite forgotten him. But why the man was staring at him so savagely and furiously had the Kid guessing for the moment.

"Say, what's hitting you, feller?" asked the Kid good-temperedly.

He did not like the guy's tone, nor the words he used, but he was not on the Gorgoona lot to pick trouble with their pet star, if he could ride clear of it.

"You heard!" came almost in a hiss from Bennett. "You guess you can laugh in a man's face because—because—"

He choked with passion.

The Kid stared—then he understood. His feeling, for the moment, was compassion for the man. The over-sensitive star, tormented by

humiliating recollections, had taken it for granted that the Kid saw him there—that he had laughed at the remembrance of Bennett's fight, intending to show his scorn for the man who had fled and left him to face the danger.

"I guess you're hitting the wrong trail, feller!" said the Kid quietly. "I sure was snickering a few, but—"

"You dare!" breathed Bennett. "You cattle-punching roughneck, you dare—"

"Aw, don't go off on your ear for nothing, hombre!" said the Kid. "I sure was snickering at something Mr. Peck said, along with his offer, and I'm telling you that I never saw you there, nor thought of you, neither."

"Liar!"

The film star spat out the word. The Rio Kid breathed hard and deep. He did not want trouble with Mr. Peck's pet star, but he was not taking this from any man. But if he had thought of still dodging trouble, he had no chance, for the film star came towards him with blazing eyes and clenched fists. The Kid backed a pace or two, and Bennett followed him up.

"Maybe," said Bennett, in a low, thick voice—"maybe I shook up on my nerve that night—I'll say I'm not so used to gun-play as a gunman from Texas. But who asked you to butt in? You butted in where you had no business, you piece! Who asked you to get me away from Spanish John? I'd sooner have paid fifty thousand dollars or twice as much, and never seen you."

"Maybe!" said the Kid. "And sure if they get you again, Mr. Bennett, you won't be troubled by this baby learning in. They can have you for keeps next time."

"What are you hanging on in Hollywood for? What are you doing in this studio? What did that old greck Peck drag you in for? Get out of it!"

"Not just now!" smiled the Kid. Bennett's eyes flashed at him.

"I allow I don't take a front seat at gun-play off the films," he said between his teeth. "You're wise to that; but I can use my hands, and I guess you wouldn't last long in them. I'm telling you to get out of this studio, and keep out; and I'm not wasting."

"I guess you got to wait!" said the Kid. "I'm getting out of this shakedown when I digress please, Mr. Bennett; and you can chew on that!"

"Are you going?"

"Not as you'd notice it," drawled the Kid.

The next instant Brian Bennett was springing at him, with lashing fists. He was taller than the Kid, and he never doubted for a second that he could, if he chose, wipe up the Gorgoona lot with the puncher. He was glad of the chance, if only to prove to the Kid himself that he was not wholly a coward. He had fled from the gangster's guns, leaving the Kid to face them; but he did not fear now. He believed that the Kid had laughed in his face, thinking of that night on the hill above Hollywood, and he came at him like a tiger.

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The Kid backed, guarding seven blows.

He almost laughed. It crossed him to think of this soft Hollywood paper fancying that he could handle him. He figured that the Handsome Members of the screen would want piling together with slicking-plaster if he hit him good and hard. He did not want the "pretty boy" of the Gorgeous company found lying around all mangled up. He backed away, but Bennett followed him fast, coming on with a rush that gave him no choice.

Five or six men in short-sleeves gathered round, glaring. A long, lean man with a Derby hat on the back of his head—Mr. Chick Chew, assistant director—came hurrying up.

"Say, what's this?" exclaimed Chick. "Here, you roughneck, what you doing here? Mr. Bennett—Mr. Bennett, sir—"

Bennett did not heed, and the Kid, hotly attacked, had no leisure to heed. Bennett's clenched fist came home on his face and at the same moment the assistant director grasped him by the arm to drag him away from the film star. The Kid, his eyes blazing, swept an arm round, and Mr. Chew went over as if a mule had kicked him, sprawling among the legs of the grinning short-sleeved men. Bennett's fist rapped home again as Mr. Chew spun.

But it was his last rap! The Kid, his eyes ablaze, gave back the rough stuff. What seemed to the film star like a chunk of iron jolted on his jaw, followed by another chunk of iron on his nose. There was a crash as he went down.

The Kid rubbed his cheek. Mr. Chew sat up, then scrambled up, his face red with rage.

What the Kid was doing there the assistant director did not know. He had not seen him since Mr. Peck's interview with the Kid. Intruders sometimes get into the studios, and when they did, they were hooded out again with a conspicuous lack of ceremony. So far as Chick Chew could see, this puncher was some rube who had wandered in where he had no business, and started mixing it with the most important member of the Gorgeous company.

"Fire that roughneck out!" he roared. "Hood him off the lot, and hood him lively!"

"Say, feller—" objected the Kid. But he had no time to explain. When Cyrus Peck was not present, Chick Chew's orders were law on the Gorgeous lot. The studio hands obeyed him at once. Five hefty and hard-handed short-sleeved men circled round the Rio Kid and grasped at him.

The Kid figured that in Hollywood a guy's best guess was not to put a gun, if he could help it. Neither did he need to. He had mixed it often enough in a Boreo rough-and-tumble, and he reckoned that his hands were going to see him through. He hit hard, and he hit quick. The Kid, when he was crowded, could hand out the rough stuff!

One, two, three spun and crashed, then two had the Kid in their grasp. But they might as well have grasped a wild cat. A jolt under the chin lifted one of them off his feet—the other, staggering back from what seemed like a lump of iron jamming in his ribs, staggered against the bunkhouse set, and went crashing over in the midst of the rains.

The Kid stood breathing hard, his eyes flashing—five men sprawling round him, and Chick Chew staring at him like a man in a dream. Brian Bennett eyed him speculatively. This was the guy he had started to handle. "Say, what's the trouble?"

Cyrus Peck came rolling along from his office. He was looking for the Kid. He found him in unexpected circumstances. He blinked at the scene.

"What—" he gasped. "O.K., Mr. Peck," drawled the Kid. "These guys of yours got a bit too fresh, and I've had to talk to them a few!"

"Search me!" stammered Cyrus. "You pesky pican, if you figure that I'm signing you on to knock spots off my staff, and spoil Brian's good looks—"

"I guess," said the Kid coolly, "that you ain't signing me on at all, Mr. Peck! You can sure go and chop chips, you and your pretty star, and your bunch of bullheads—see for the trail!"

And the Rio Kid walked out of the studio, mounted his Mustang, and rode out of Hollywood.

Guns Out!

THE KID, as he sat in the shade of the rock, resting at noon, heard footsteps on the rugged path up the canyon, without heading them.

Footsteps on the rugged path up the canyon did not worry the Kid. But when the sound of voices followed, he sat up and took notice—for one of the voices he had heard before—that of Spanish John, the gangster.

The Kid's eyes glinted, and he rose on one knee, to peer round the rock. Spanish John was on the run—his house on the hill above Hollywood in the hands of the police. The gangster's voice came clear and sharp.

"I'll say you've found me, Gold-edge, and I guess this will mean a step up for you, if you get me back to Los. I'll tell all California you're no slouch of a detective, and you've sure earned your promotion—if you live to claim it, hombre."

"You for the electric-chair, John, if you pull that trigger!" came the second voice, cool and tense.

There was a laugh. "Who's going to spill the beans, hombre?"

The Kid's gun was in his hand now. Not more than a dozen feet from the rock stood Spanish John—his hard, dark face set and savage. A revolver was in his right hand, his finger on the trigger, his black eyes gleaming over it at the bear, cool man in front of him—cool, though his life hung on a thread.

The gangster laughed again.

"You heck, I had you piped an hour ago. I let you see me twice, to draw you on. I waited to get you where I wanted you! Now I got you! I've been hunted out of Los, after that gold-darned puncher from Texas got that good Bennett away, and the cops got the goods on me—It's me for the mountains now, and I'll say it won't be safe for detective guys to hunt me in the hills. You putting them bracelets on John Valdez, you boob?"

"You got it coming, Gold-edge!" he continued. "Maybe when they pick up what the buzzards leave of you, they won't jump to hunt for Spanish John in these hills! You got it coming?"

Bang! The Rio Kid's six-gun roared, and the gangster's revolver went spinning from his hand. He spun round, staring, and the Los Angeles detective gave a gasping cry. The Kid stepped out from behind the rock, smiling over a levelled gun.

"Put 'em up, John!" said the Kid. "Jump to it, hombre, or you won't live to see the inside of the con."

The Kid was smiling, but it was a grim smile, and there was death in the glint of his eyes. The Californian gangster lifted his hands above his head, and kept them there, glaring rage at the Texas puncher.

The Kid gave the Los Angeles detective a cheery nod, as Gold-edge stared at him in blank amazement.

"You antelope!" said the Kid politely. "I reckoned that if I met up with that pizen pican, I was sure going to shoot him up; but I ain't the guy to stand in the way of the law! No, sir! You want that pesky pican, and I'm making you a present of him."

The detective gasped. "I'll say it was my lucky day when you was paid off your sore, puncher," he said. "Keep him covered."

"You bet!" Gold-edge stepped up to the gangster. Spanish John, breathing fury, lowered his hands for the handcuffs. There was a clink and a click. The Kid holstered his gun. Spanish John ground his white teeth.

"You again—you again, puncher!" The words came grinding between his teeth. "Watch out for me. I'll get you for this—I'll sure get you!"

"See you?" drawled the Kid. "I guess John won't be looking for you for ten years, puncher!" grinned the detective. "He sure is scheduled for ten years in the con! I got a car down on the road, John—I guess you're walking with me to that car!"

The Kid stood looking after them as they went—the detective with a grip on the arm of the handcuffed gangster. He was through with Spanish John, he reckoned, as he mounted Side-Kicker and rode on into the hills. But in that matter, the Rio Kid had another guess coming!

The Rio Kid Annals the five-madness the thrill of a lifetime in next week's full of action story, JUST LIKE A MOVIE! He will thrill you, too!