

FIVE SPLENDID STORIES INSIDE!

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2<sup>D</sup>



HUMAN GLIDER ON SKIS!—See page 5

# The DEATH RIDE

All that a horseman could do in the way of wild riding the Rio Kid was prepared to put over for the films . . . but this was a movie stunt gone crazy!

\*\*\*\*\* By RALPH REDWAY \*\*\*\*\*

## Neck or Nothing!

CYRUS FUNK lifted a fat finger and pointed.

"I'm telling you this is going to be the big punch of the picture," he said. "I'll say that some will sure get the fans yelling!"

"I guess they'll sure yell a few," agreed the Rio Kid.

The Kid stood with Side-Kicker's reins looped over his arm, staring up at the soaring cliff. The director of Gorpous Pictures stood by his side—on the other side stood Chick Chew, assistant director. On Chick's face was a faint grin.

The Kid was not disposed to grin. His sunbaked face was serious as he stared up at the torrent dashing down a fissure in the face of the high cliff. From rock to rock, from ledge to ledge, it dashed and foamed and sprayed, till it reached the bottom of the cliff, and flowed away in a little stream across the valley. The slope of the high cliff was steep, and the winding fissure split it from top to bottom, almost filled by the torrent.

If a mountain goat could have descended that perilous path, down with the splashing water, the Kid reckoned that it would be a spy goat. And if a horseman could ride down, the Kid was ready to pass it up to that horseman. The Rio Kid could ride, but he figured that he would have jibed at riding down that break-neck arroyo even had Mule-Kick Hall and the Texas Rangers been hating the wind behind him.

He had expected to take some risks when in the name of Carfax he joined up with the Gorpous Picture Company, on location in the Santa Monica Mountains, to play a part on the film. All that a horse and a horseman could do in the way of wild riding stunts, the Kid was prepared to put over. But there was, he reckoned, a limit. He was in California chiefly to ride clear of pressing perils in his own country of Texas. But he reckoned that sheriffs and rangers, in Texas, were pie to this. A guy could make the grade—a guy who did not care a red cent for his neck—but he had only one neck, and he had a use for it.

He did not look at Chick Chew, but he knew that the assistant director was grinning, and he knew why. Chick knew that no guy who was not plumb loco would take on that ride down the arroyo, and he expected the Kid to turn down the stunt on the spot. Cyrus, evidently, expected nothing of the kind. He was a whale on realism in pictures. No dud stunts were good enough for him.

"You got the idea?" pursued

Cyrus. "The outlaw's riding for his life—you're the outlaw! After him come the sheriff's posse, hell-for-leather! They pull in up there, at the top of the cliff. Only one rider on after the outlaw—that's Brian Bennett. You ride down—Bennett after you! You got it?"

The Kid looked at him. "Feller," he said soberly, "you got to think agin. You want to cut that out, and you want to cut it out right now."

Chick Chew winked at the splashing torrent. Cyrus Funk stared at the Kid, his fat face growing purple.

"You got cold feet?" he booted.

"Not so's you'd notice it," said the Kid. "But—"

"Ain't I picked you out to play the outlaw in this here picture?" roared Cyrus. "Ain't you taken on the part of the Rio Kid, for this film? And ain't that just the ride that the Rio Kid'd make, if the Texas Rangers was after him? Ain't you got the sand to do what the Kid'd do?"

The Kid grinned.

"I guess I could do anything that the Rio Kid could do," he answered. "There ain't no two ways about that, Mr. Funk."

"Want, then," growled Cyrus, "guess agin! From all they say about that Texas flogging, the Rio Kid, he can ride where any guy can ride—and that ride's been done. It was ridden by a greaser in the old days—Spanish John's grandfather rode down that arroyo, when the Vigilantes got after him up pender, and there was no other way out. D'you figure that a greaser can lay over a Texas preacher?"

"Nep!" said the Kid at once. "If a greaser rode it, I guess the Rio Kid could ride it, and I can do all that the Kid can do! But—"

"I'm telling you, that arroyo is



"You got the idea?" said Cyrus, pointing to the break-neck fissure. "You ride down there, Bennett after you."

## The Death Ride

called Pedro's Ride to this day, because Spanish John's grandfather rode it after he was hoisted off his ranch where Hollywood now stands. He wore rodeo clothes, with the Vigilantes at the top of the cliff, throwing lead after him. They say his horse was wounded, too—hit in the leg. But he made the grade, and got away clean—and lived to be lynched.

"He was sure some rider!" said the Kid. He looked up again at the figure in the high cliff, with the torrent foaming down.

"And ain't you?" started Cyrus. "Didn't I rope you in because I saw you jump your Mustang over a car in Magnolia Boulevard? You going to let me down now? You creeping round a corner, when Brian Bennett's got to have an outlaw ahead of him, when he rides down on his pinto?"

The Kid drew a deep breath.

"That guy Bennett is riding it?" he asked.

"Sure! You figure that I've got him here just to mess around looking pretty, for the extra girls to make eyes at?" teased Cyrus. "Of course he's riding it. He's said so."

The Kid made up his mind. It was a wild ride, but if it had been done by a greaser, it could be done by a Texas puncher—and if Brian Bennett was going to do it, the Kid was going to do it. He more than suspected the Handsome Hamble of the films of a streak of yellow in him, and to be out-done by a man he despised was more than the Kid could stand for. He revolved on the spot.

"It's a cinch!" he said.

Cyrus Peck nodded, and stalked away grinning. Chick Chew lingered to speak when his mate chief was gone.

"You guess you can ride it, Mr. Carfax?" he asked.

"I guess so!" answered the Kid. "I sure ain't be surprised a whole heap if it's my last ride, feller. But if Pedro Valdez rode it, this baby can ride it—I'll sure ride it backwards if a greaser had done it before me. But I'll say that hamble Bennett has got more sense than I ever reckoned, to face a ride like that on his pinto."

Mr. Chew chuckled.

"Face nothing!" he said. "You don't want to shoot that I mentioned it, puncher—but I guess Mr. Bennett was banking on you turning it down. He ain't no such member to throw away the only neck he's got, to please Cyrus with his darned big punches."

"Oh!" ejaculated the Kid.

Mr. Chew favored him with a wink, and walked away after his chief.

The Kid shrugged his shoulders.

It beat him to a frazzle, to think of the film star facing that desperate ride, after what he had seen of him. Bennett performed many daring and even desperate riding stunts for the pictures—but this was outside the limit. The Kid reckoned that Mr. Chew was right. Two riders were wanted in that scene, and if one backed down, the other could call it off. The Kid's face set grimly. He had given his word now, and not to save a thousand lives would he have

backed down—and if Brian Bennett wanted to call it off and eat his own words, that was his funeral!

## Firing Point-Blank!

BRIAN BENNETT came out of Mr. Peck's office with a face so white and savage that everybody in sight turned a curious glance on him.

It was not uncommon for the arrogant film star to give free rein to his quick and passionate temper. He was a wonderful actor and a wonderful rider, and up to a certain point, fearless. All the film fans from the Atlantic to the Pacific knew the "Handsome Hamble," and his wonderful feats on his prize horse. It was not surprising, perhaps, that so much admiration got into a head that he was not particularly level, and that Brian had fallen into a way of throwing his weight about. But never had the film star's passionate temper been so openly and savagely displayed as at the present moment.

Whatever his interview with Cyrus had been about, it was clear that it had got Brian's goat sorely. Generally he scattered with an elegant air, which many of the male members of the company thought bohemian. But there was nothing bohemian about him now. He strode rapidly, leading for the frame-house where "Boy Carfax"—otherwise the Rio Kid—had his quarters.

In all the Gorgeous Company, there was only one man who did not treat Bennett with the respect that he reckoned was his due. The Kid had as great respect to waste on a guy whom he had rescued from Spanish John's gang, and who had left him in the lurch when he was doing it. But the Kid was always civil, and he avoided the star as much as he could. Now, however, that they had to rehearse scenes together, the Kid as an outlaw and Bennett in the character of a rancher, avoidance was impossible, and every meeting bred both of them.

On other occasions, the Kid carefully kept his distance—which Bennett was glad enough to allow him to do. Now he was walking out the Kid, and as he strode savagely along, his hand slid towards his hip pocket, where he packed a gun.

The Kid saw him coming while he was yet at a distance. The Kid was not wanted to rehearse that afternoon, and he figured on going over Pedro's Ride, and getting the lay of it in his mind, ready for the task he had undertaken to perform. He was going to ride it on the black-muzzled Mustang with the cameras grinding when the scene was "shot"; but he reckoned on going over it on foot first, clambering up the arroyo from the valley to the uplands at the top of the cliff.

The Kid was seated on a bench outside the frame-house, thinking it over, when he sighted Bennett, and smiled faintly. It was plain that the star's "mad" was up, and the Kid figured that he could guess why. In a wilder country, he would have reckoned that he needed a gun hazy when a guy came hunting him with

that look on his face. But gun-play was not in the picture in this country, and he had left his gun-belt, with the walnut-butted gun, in the house.

Having glanced at Bennett, he avoided looking at him again till the film star came to a halt directly in front of him.

It was clear from Bennett's face he came hunting trouble. But he checked his angry excitement as he came to a halt and glanced right and left, evidently to make sure that no other cars were within hearing when he spoke. And his voice, though savage and bitter, was low.

"I've just seen Cyrus! He allows that you've agreed to ride down Pedro's Ride! Is that correct?"

"You've said it!" answered the Kid.

"What's your game?" hissed Bennett. "The ride's impossible—Cyrus is mad even to think of it. If Pedro Valdez ever rode it, he was a mad man. It can't be done, and you know it."

"I guess it can be done, Mr. Bennett, and I'm sure trying it on, whether it was or not!" said the Kid quietly. "You've got no kick coming, that I can see. I'd never have taken it on, if you hadn't taken it on first. I reckon I can ride where any other guy can ride."

"I'm not riding it!" hissed Bennett. "Do you figure that I'm breaking my neck to please that fat old fool? I allowed I would, if he found a man to ride ahead—"

"He's sure found one!" said the Kid.

"It's a lie!" said Bennett hoarsely. "You're putting up this bunk to fool me to back out."

The Kid looked at him quietly under the rim of the stetson hat. He had no respect for a man who lacked the grit to stand by his own words. Chick Chew had read the star correctly—Brian had backed on as other men being found to make that mad ride. But what he had said, he had said; and Cyrus was holding him to it.

"It's a lie!" repeated Bennett. "Your game is to drive me into backing down—me, with my reputation to keep up! I can't back out. It would be all over Hollywood—would kill my pictures. You reckon that you've got me fixed?"

"I guess," said the Kid, "you got the proof coming, if you want it. When the scene's shot, I get to make the grade first—I go down Pedro's Ride on my Mustang, and you ride after me on your pinto. If I don't ride down, you don't ride after me. Leave it at that!"

In spite of himself, in spite of his determination to believe that the Texas puncher was only fooling in order to force him to admit that he dared not make the ride, Bennett had to see that the Kid was in earnest. Unless the Kid lied, he was not called on to follow. If, when the scene was shot, the Kid backed out, the wild ride would have to be cut—the blame on Carfax, and the laugh on Bennett's side.

"You mean what you said to that old fool?"

"I mean what I said to Mr. Peck!" answered the Kid. "I guess I ain't

the guy to shoot off my mouth promises, and then back down! I got to make the grade now, whether you follow me or not, Mr. Bennett."

"You'll break your neck."

"Melch! I've ran that risk afore, more'n a few times. I guess," said the Kid slowly, "that if any guy's got a kick coming, it's me, Mr. Bennett, not you. You've landed me in this, with your tall talk to Mr. Peck. I'd have said naps fast enough, if he hadn't been able to tell me that you was fixed for the scene."

"Wash it out, then!" started Bennett. "I've got a reputation to lose—you haven't! Nobody cares a hoot what you do, or don't do! If I back down with Cyrus, I drive a nail in my coffin. It's six to you. You're a nobody from nowhere—a cowpuncher from Texas! If you mount your horse and ride away, nobody's going to miss you. I'll make it worth your while."

"Meaning?" said the Kid quietly, but with a glint in his eyes.

Bennett laughed snuffingly. "You haven't broken into the pictures for your health, I guess. You're after dollars, like all the rest. Pack a thousand-dollar bill in your chaps, and ride away, and the sooner the better."

"And break my word to Peck?" asked the Kid.

"I'll put up an extra fifty for that, if it worries you!" answered Bennett.

The Kid rose to his feet. His face was calm, but it was grim. He was breathing hard.

"I guess you want to quit, right now, Mr. Bennett," he said. "I've taken more from you than I've ever taken from any guy afore. You got to the end of the rope now! Quit!"

The film star's temper, hard-held up to that moment, flamed out in ungovernable rage. He struck out fiercely at the cool face under the stevedore hat. The Kid's hand came up like lightning, knocking the blow aside. The sharp rap on his wrist drew a cry of mingled pain and rage from the star.

"I guess you've tried that afore, Mr. Bennett, and you sure fell down on it," said the Kid. "Forget it, hombre."

Bennett stood panting for a moment, then, with a sudden dive at his hip pocket, he whipped out his revolver. In a split second he was firing point-blank at the Rio Kid.

#### Bennett Bells!

THE Rio Kid had seldom been closer to death than at that moment. Unarmed, he faced a man utterly reckless in his rage. It was only the Kid's swift watchfulness that saved his life. The moment Bennett's hand whipped to his hip, the Kid knew what was coming, and, had he had a gun on him, he would have pulled. But his guns were in his room in the frame-house behind him. He had only a second before the revolver cracked—but a lightning-like leap aside saved him.

And even so Bennett was pulling trigger again, he made a desperate backward spring into the porch of the

frame-house. The shot grazed his shoulder as he disappeared.

Bennett rushed after him, still firing. They were both in the single street of Backing Essence, and shouts could be heard from all over the location. A hundred pairs of eyes stared at Bennett pursuing the Texas puncher into the porch, firing as he went. Crack, crack! rang the film star's nickel-plated revolver, and the bullets whizzed and crashed into woodwork. Shotgun and loader came the roar of a six-gun from within the house—the Kid's swift rush had reached his room and his gun-belt—and with a gun in his hand, the Kid was not the man to flee from a foe, or a dozen foes.

In an inner doorway stood the Kid, his eyes like flame, a long-barreled gun in his hand, bursting powder. And as he fired across the hallway at the enraged star, Bennett seemed to come to his senses.

Back leaped Bennett to the middle of the street, the smoking revolver staking in his hand. Farth from the porch rushed the Rio Kid, his gun up, his eyes blazing over it.

A hundred voices shouted, unheeded by either. Had Bennett carried on with the game he had begun, the Kid's next bullet would have gone crashing home, and Gorgeous Pictures would have lost their star.

But as the Kid came rushing out, the film star hesitated, backed, and then started at a run down the street towards the Gorgeous location.

"Stand to it!" roared the Kid. "Stand to it, you yellow coyote!"

The Kid, enraged as he was, could not fire on a running man. He fired after him, knocking up a spout of dust at Bennett's heels. He fired again, knocking up another little dust-cloud in front of him. From the fleeing film star came a hoarse gasp; he had no doubt that the puncher was firing at him, narrowly missing. But he did not turn and handle his gun. The handsome little nickel-plated revolver dropped from his nerveless hand, and he tore on.

The Kid had had the closest call of his wild life, and he reckoned that he was going to make the Handsome Hombre tired of gun-play. The six-gun in the puncher's hand roared again and again, the bullets scattering the dust round Bennett's flying feet.

The film star leaped and bounded. He was heading for Cyrus Peck's office, in the doorway of which stood Cyrus, staring like a man in a dream. Bang, bang, bang! roared behind him as he flew.

Shouts of excitement, mingled with laughter, echoed all over the location. But Cyrus Peck did not laugh. He waved his fat hands and glared with fury.

"Let up!" yelled Cyrus. Unheeding, the Kid followed fast at Bennett's heels, his second gun taking up the tale when the first was expended.

His face streaming with perspiration, Bennett dashed past Cyrus, shouldering the film director aside, and scuttled into the office. Cyrus, who had more sand to the square inch than Bennett to the cubic foot,

brandished a fat fist right under the Kid's smoking gun.

"You hear me telling you to let up!" he roared. "Say, you want ten years in the can for throwing lead? You loaded piece, pack that gun!"

The Kid, grinning, packed the gun. Within the office, the film star could be heard panting, but he could not be seen. Cyrus' fat figure blocked the doorway.

"I guess," drawled the Kid, "it ain't my way to play any guy in the back, and Mister Bennett ain't the hombre to show anything but his back in a gun-fight. But you tell that guy to show on this, Mr. Peck—if he pulls hardware on me again, I'll sure plug him good."

With that, the Kid turned and walked back up the street, leaving the director of Gorgeous Pictures apoplecting.

#### The Last Chance!

BRIAN BENNETT stood with a sullen face, hardly uttering a word, while Cyrus Peck talked to him. Cyrus talked loud and he talked long. It had not taken him long to learn how the matter really stood, and Cyrus' wrath had turned from the Kid to the film star, who had asked for more trouble than he could digest, and he turned to him in a strain to which Bennett's ears had long been unaccustomed. Anger and contempt mingled in Mr. Peck's breathless tirade.

Cyrus paused for breath.

"What you got agin that puncher?" he roared. "What you pull on him for? What's biling you? And him the only guy that'll ride the scene in the picture! Why, if you'd stilled holes in him, that scene would have to be cut. You'd lose the biggest scene you ever figured in. You can't ride that scene without Carter to ride it with you! Aw, you sure make me tired."

Still without speaking, Brian Bennett gave him a look of savage bitterness, and pushed past him out of the office. Cyrus had not finished yet, but Bennett seemed to have heard enough from him. He tramped away, leaving Cyrus snorting. The film director was perplexed, as well as angry, for it was certain that the big punch of the "Outlaw" picture would have to be cut, without the Kid, which meant that Brian would lose figuring in the most thrilling scene of his film career. Mr. Peck did not realize that Bennett wanted that scene cut, and was ready to take almost any desperate measure to cut it. Cyrus was too keenly enthusiastic on his realistic stunts to read Bennett as Chick read him.

Brian looked neither to the right nor to the left as he strode away to his bungalow, but he knew that there was a mocking smile on almost every face he passed. His frantic flight down the street got the whole company snickering. He knew that that scene would be talked of, soon, up and down Hollywood. He tramped into his bungalow, drove away his startled Japanese servant with angry curses,

(Continued on page 16)

## The Death Ride

(Continued from page 13)

slammed the door on him, and was shut up alone with his moody and bitter reflections.

His hatred of the Rio Kid was at boiling point. He had to be rid of the puncher from Texas—he had to cut out Pedro's Ride, without confessing why.

He sat down at the telephone at last, with a set, savage face, and called a number in Spanish Town at Los Angeles. He heard a gasp of surprise at the other end when he gave his name, and he was left to wait on the line. That joint in Los Angeles, where Spanish John's gang located, knew Spanish John as more—the gangster was on the run, in the hills, with detectives hunting for him. But his side-kickers were still in their old haunts—though assuredly they had never dreamed of being called up by the film star whom Spanish John had kidnapped for ransom.

Bennett waited a long minute, then a gruff voice said:

"Shooter speakin'! What's this game, Mr. Bennett?"

"I want a word with Spanish John!"

He heard a chuckle over the wires. "I guess John would be glad of another word with you, Mr. Bennett! You sure are a prize-parcel he did not want to lose. But if you want

John, I guess you got to walk over the Santa Mountains to locate him. He ain't here any more since the cops got the goods on him."

"You can get word to him?"

"Meh-hee!" was the Shooter's cautious answer. "A guy might happen to fall in with him, prominent like. I'm asking you what's the game?"

Bennett went on speaking, in a low, distinct voice. Only a grunt of surprise from the other and interrupted him. For several minutes he talked, the thing in Spanish Town listening.

"You got it clear?" Bennett asked, at last.

"Surest thing you know! I guess I'll put John was pronto! I guess John will jump at the chance to get that puncher who shot up his crowd when they was holding up Bucking Bronco. Haak on it!"

Bennett hung up. He lighted a cigarette, and smiled sourly through the curling smoke. He had found his way out. The Kid had saved him from Spanish John, the kidnapper—got Spanish John, who had kidnapped him, was to serve his turn against the Texas puncher who had rescued him. He would not be called on to ride Pedro's Ride, unless the Texas puncher rode it—and the Texas puncher would not ride it if he was roped up, a prisoner, in Spanish John's hide-out in the untroubled recesses of the mountains.

That "big punch" was going to be cut, and Cyrus Peak, if he liked, could lay the blame on Spanish John!

"Put 'Em Up, Fuzcher!"

THE Rio Kid stood at the foot of Pedro's Ride, looking up. The mare he looked at it the less he liked it. If Spanish John's grandfather, in those wild old days of the American invasion and annexation of California, had ridden down that rugged arroyo with the torrent, the Kid guessed that he must have had a nerve on him. But what a Mexican bandit had come down, the Rio Kid could do, and he had given Cyrus his word, and that settled it. He had to ride it, though he had a big hunch that the Handsome Hombres would never ride over the perilous top, unless Cyrus was there to push him on from behind.

But the Kid was not taking any chances that he could avoid—there were enough that he could not avoid! He was going over the ground, step by step, and inch by inch, to get way to every foot of the way, before he ventured there on horseback. Even an foot, it was no pie. And after a long and keen survey of the deep split riving the cliff, the Kid trumped into the splashing water and started.

Ledge above ledge, rock above rock, like a wild and irregular staircase,

## Most Feared Man in London

(Continued from page 5)

digged. My friend, and I have five pistols between us, and each has a hair trigger!"

But as he spoke, a crowd was collecting in the street, from the maze of courts and tortuous lanes that existed between Drury Lane and the Seven Dials. Rough, ragged fellows, coppers, hawkers, hackney coachmen, and street sellers, armed with staves and brass-backed belts, and ready for trouble and a fight.

There was a roar of angry shouts and protests as the Mohocks were bent from behind, and the street was filled with a howling, milling crowd. The mob was so dense that the Mohocks could not draw their swords; their gay satin coats and flowing wigs were smothered off and thrown across the street, and one by one they were engulfed in the sea of men.

The Mohock chief, attended by one or two of his immediate followers, found himself cut off in the midst of the seething mob.

"What's all this about?" growled a giant ruffian, in a greasy mackin cap, as he spread a great clasp-knife with his yellow teeth. "Hallo, Cavalier Jack! Is't you? What's all the rumpus over?"

"The Mohocks, Dogman," grinned the young highwayman, clearing himself room by free use of his elbow. "And here's the king of 'em!"

"Mohocks, eh?" repeated the giant, with a grin, as a shout of anger rolled up from the crowd at

that hated name. "Now, then, you two, put up your sticks and strip! Strip, and fight it out with the bare knuckles. We'll show those fine gentlemen that they can't land it all their own way in the streets!"

"I've hear them, King of the Mohocks?" said Cavalier Jack, with a tight smile. "The Englishman loses a lord, they say—but only when he behaves like one. You'll have to fight my friend in the Seven Dials fashion—hit a man first and challenge him afterwards!"

"I'm ready!" exclaimed Bob Eeles, pulling off his ruffian, and removing his coat. "I'll fight you here and now!"

The Mohock chief glanced around with cold contempt. His velvet mask had fallen loose in the scuffle, to reveal a dark, narrow, saturnine face, with cynical eyes. He looked a typical man-about-town of the period, as ready for a duel with pistols or swords as for a spell at the card-table.

"Captain," he snapped, to a red-faced man in tarnished copper hose, who looked like a typical bullying swashbuckler, always to be found at the heels of a nobleman, "pray be so good as to kick this rascally and hobnob from my path. I shall have to destroy this coat in the morning. One of them actually touched it with his best fingers."

A yell of wrath greeted those impudent words. The bully captain was heaved up against the wall, his sword broken, his coat ripped from his back.

"You hear them, Lord Mohall,"

smiled Cavalier Jack, recognizing the notorious earl whose escapades were the talk of the town. "You'll have to fight my friend here, or be ducked in the nearest horse-trough!"

"Since I find myself among the dogs," said the Earl of Mohall smoothly, but with his eyes glittering, "I will for the moment lay aside my dignity, and give this impudent fellow a sound thrashing. I hope he is tough enough to bear it!"

"There's a place for a real good fight, just around the corner!" cried Starkey Knight above the din. "A quiet little court, where there's an ash-tray, very soft an' comfortable to fall on."

With a shout of enthusiasm the crowd here Bob and the Mohock along in their rush, till they came to a dirty little court, where a solitary oil-lamp glimmered faintly on the scene. Bob Eeles looked around for the man he had named, but he and his manservant had both disappeared.

The earl smiled, and his black eyes gleamed dangerously as he remarked in a low voice:

"I warn you, my impetuous friend, that I am a favourite pupil of the famous James Figg, o' Marylebone Road, champion prizefighter of England and the world—and look for no mercy at my hands!"

Bob has got into the service of Jonathan Wren, but the number of accidental occasions to have been revealed an even as possible, and the chance comes to next week's great story, **ICE AND CRY**, when Bob and Cavalier Jack have to ride for their lives!

# The Editor Talks



Address your letters to:  
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the steep way rose before him. That old Mexican's Mustang must have leaped from ledge to ledge, rock to rock, where a single false step, a slipping hoof, meant hurtling down to fearful death on the rocky earth below. He had had a tougher proposition than the Kid—for the Vigilantes had been firing on him from above, while in the Kid's case there would be only cameras grinding from below.

Several times, as he clambered, the Kid's riding-boots slipped on wet rock—and he thought of slipping boots when the time came to ride it. The falling forest splashed his boots and his clasp, unheeded. And as he ascended his eyes scanned busily every inch of the way, memorizing every rock, every ledge, every shelf, every straggle of juniper that jutted from a fissure.

His station rose, at last, above the top of the cliff. He looked round and down, with a steady eye. Then he turned again, to clamber out of the ravine, where it split the level upland at the top of the cliff.

He clambered out and stood on the ragged bank. Round him was a desolate expanse of rocky wilderness, with here and there a stunted pine. The Kid did not expect to see any human being there—neither did he see one; but, as he looked round, he heard a voice—a voice he knew:

"Put 'em up, puncher!"

The Kid caught his breath. Over a shoulder, within ten feet of him, rose the dark, swarthy face of Spanish John, and a gun in the gangster's hand bore full on the Kid. Over the levelled barrel the gangster's eyes glared, and he grinned, a mocking and sardonic grin. As the Kid stared at him, another and another head rose into view among the wild rocks, and six-guns in the grasp of Pete Henry and the Shooter covered him. He was trapped. Slowly, he put his hands up above his station.

Spanish John stepped out from his cover, his revolver still at a level.

"Keep 'em up!" he grinned.

The Kid shrugged his shoulders.

"You're the doctor," he said lazily.

"I reckon," said Spanish John, in his soft voice, "that I put you wise that I'd get you, puncher."

The Kid's eyes flashed.

"What deggared, punky coyote put you wise that I was here?" he asked bitterly. "They knowed down in Backing Bronco that I was climbing that rift—but how'd you know? I guess I could spill the name of the peacock that planted you here to wait for me. But how'd he work it? That guy Bennett is sure ahead to step within a mile of you. So how'd he fix it for you to corral me this-a-way? It's got me guessing."

Spanish John chuckled.

"You forgot the long-distance," he said.

"Aw, search me!" growled the Kid savagely. "Them deggared telephons sure got my goat. Well, you got me, John! I'd sure have been powerful glad to meet-up with you, with a gun in my hand; but you got the gun, and I'm at the rifle end of the barrel! What's your game?"

## MYSTERY OF THE BLUE

**JUNE 1**—Do you remember those cheery chums of the submarine Valon—Lieutenant Gilbert, Harry Lyon, and Petty Officer Smoother? Since? Well, you will meet them again next week in a stirring naval adventure. The story opens sensationally with the Valon creeping up to a smuggler's junk. Suddenly the junk vanishes, blown out of the water by a torpedo. The Valon is the only survivor in the vicinity. She has not fled, but one of her torpedoes is missing. Accused of sinking the junk, things look decidedly bad for the chums now. But I won't tell you any more, but leave you to discover what happens when you read the story.

## DEMON OF THE CIRCUS

back to our pages another old favorite—Don Craddock, the boy lion tamer. But Don's handling elephants this time. Eyes red with rage, Hercules, the monster elephant, stampedes, smashing and biting everything out of his way. After him tears young Don, determined to master the huge beast. What happens then will hold you enthralled when you read this tapping story.

## THE WRECKER PLANE.

Professor Flanagan's workshop on Justice Island hums with activity. The professor and his men are working against time to get a new magnetic-ray generator built and bring the planet Navius back out of space. Suddenly a black aeroplane crashes into the high-tension wires, severing them, cutting off power from the existing ray-machine, leaving Navius to hurtle on at increased

speed. And on the planet Captain Justice and his comrades are facing unknown danger at the hands of huge natives. There isn't a dull moment in this action-all-the-way story, and it comes to you next week.

## COWARDICE

is the last thing of which you fellows who have followed the Rio Kid's adventures would dream of accusing him. But when he is raising after saying he'd risk his neck and ride down the waterfall, the film people say he's a quitter and has gone for good. But there's a surprise coming to them—and to you, when you read **THEY CALLED HIM A QUITTER!**

## HUE AND CRY!

—London of 1724 was a vastly different place to the London of to-day. Then it was the custom of the dandies to ride in Hyde Park masked. It is a custom that proves of great advantage to Bob Eedes, enabling him to join the riders without fear of detection. But suddenly his mask slips, and the short goes up. "It's Bob Eedes, the highwayman!" There's only one thing for Bob to do—ride for all he's worth, get out of the park before he's trapped. Will he do it? You'll know when you read next week's great old-time adventure story!

TILL NEXT SATURDAY!

Spanish John, grinning, signed to Pete Henry, who lobstered his gun, and uncoiled a rope. The Kid's hands were drawn behind him, and the end of the rope knotted over his wrists. He breathed hard, and his eyes burned, as he was bound. But there was no help for it with a levelled gun looking him in the face, and his own gun in the frame-house at Backing Bronco.

Spanish John packed his gun when the Kid was bound. Pete Henry disappeared behind a ridge of rock, and commenced loading a mule. The Kid looked round desperately. Often enough, back in Texas, he'd been freed by levelled six-guns, and often enough he'd got away again, but he had a feeling that if he tried a break when Spanish John and Shooter had got the drop on him, it would be just

about the last thing he'd do. He shrugged his shoulders as Pete Henry reappeared.

Five minutes later the Rio Kid, roped on the back of the mule, was travelling fast, with his back to the location of Backing Bronco—where Cyrus Pook, he reckoned, would soon be wondering what had become of him—though Brian Bennett would not wonder! And the Kid's ghost feeling was a regret that he had not plugged Bennett good and hard!

Back in Texas everyone knows that the Rio Kid would risk his neck with anyone. But in next week's story the Kid is at Backing Bronco, and when he doesn't turn up for his film's big scene **THEY CALLED HIM A QUITTER.**