

Starting this week : " **THE BLACK MONK** " — The Most Amazing Mystery-Story Ever Written !

# *The* **PILOT** 2<sup>D</sup>

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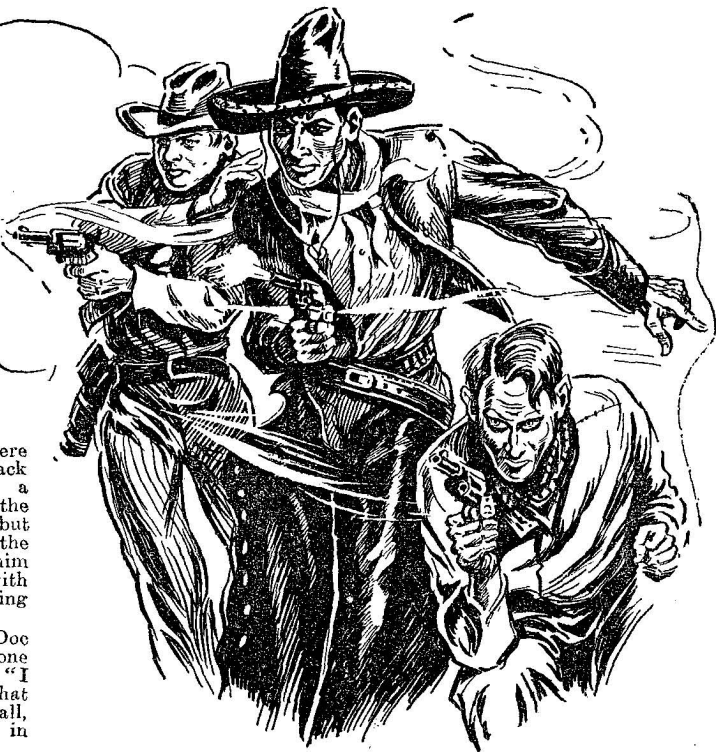
As the oxy-acetylene blow-lamp burned through the escaped prisoner's handcuffs, there came a hoarse whisper : " There's a cop coming ! "

*A Startling Incident from*

## **WHO KILLED THE GOALIE ?**

*Our Special Long Complete Football-Adventure Yarn*

# The Outlawed THREE



"OPEN up in the law's name!"

Knock! Knock!

Doc Baker, the six-gun doctor of Arizona, made no attempt to answer the door. Kid Byrne stood very still, his hand on the butt of his Colt.

It was the voice of Hardfist Hall, marshal of Bullwhacker, that rasped in the porch.

The first glimmer of dawn was coming up over the prairie and the straggling street of Parksville. In the shadowy yard that surrounded the doc's cabin, dim figures lurked, stetson hats looming through the gloom. The cabin was hemmed in by Hardfist Hall and his men—and the Kid was trapped!

"By the great horn spoon!" breathed the doc.

His hand went to his hip-pocket.

Kid Byrne caught his arm.

"Forget it, doc!" he whispered. "You ain't hornin' into this rookus, doc! You can't stand agin the law, I'm telling you—"

"Can it!" snarled the doc. "Guess I know you're an outlaw, same as your pards, Dan and Red, but I reckon that coyote outside drove you to it, and I'm standing by you!"

Knock! Knock!

"Say, you, doc!" came Hardfist's deep, savage voice. "I guess you better open up—and you want to do it quick! You got Kid Byrne, the outlaw, there! Open up, or, by thunder, we'll break in the door!"

"Open up, doc!" breathed the Kid. "I got to think of old Sam—"

He made a gesture towards an adjoining room, where old Sam Oak lay in slumber. Sam had been near to death's door, and Kid Byrne, Dan Oak, and Tom Redway, his nephews, had been framed by the marshal of Bullwhacker on a charge of shooting the man who had looked after them from childhood.

But the Outlawed Three knew now that it was Hardfist Hall himself who had shot old Sam, so that he could lay hands on the secret gold-mine which had been discovered on the Rojo Ranch. Now Sam was slowly mending in Doc Baker's expert care.

"You pack up your rag!" snapped the doc curtly to Kid. "I'm the guy that gives orders in this shanty!"

He seized the Kid's arm, and drew him towards a door at the back of the living-room. The Kid started and stiffened in resistance. It was the room occupied by the old negress who cooked for the doc.

"I ain't hiding behind no woman, doc!" said the Kid stubbornly.

"You doggoned young piecan, old Louie ain't there!" snapped the doc. "She's gone to see her folks at Mule Pack for three days! Get in!"

The Kid passed through the open doorway into a little room; the doc drew the door shut on him. He stood in darkness, his gun in his hand; but he did not see the use of hiding, when Hardfist and his men would search the place from end to end.

As Doc Baker crossed the living-room, the door rang under a blow from a revolver-butt. Hardfist was impatient.

In the flicker of the candlelight, Doc Baker removed the bars from the door and threw it wide open. The burly, brawny marshal of Bullwhacker stood there; behind him, five or six roughnecks. There was a gun in every hand.

Hardfist's lips were set under his black beard. He made a forward stride as the door flew open, but halted suddenly as the doc's gun looked him full in the face, with the doc's eye glittering over it.

"Go slow!" said Doc Baker, in a low tone of deadly menace. "I guess I'll ask you what you want, Bill Hall, afore you come in here!"

Hardfist's fierce glance shot past the doc, searching the room for sign of the Kid.

"I guess we want Kid Byrne, and we're going to get him, Doc Baker!"

"You figure that the Kid's here?" drawled the doc.

"He was seen coming; we found his cayuse tied at the gate. He's here, and we want him! I'll tell you, hombre, this ain't no guesswork! Them Rojo cowboys got a message that old Sam Oak was dying here. I banked on that message bringing them down from their hide-out in the mesa—and I'll say I got by with it!

"They been watched for on the trail to Parksville, and I got the signal from Jake Sanders that they was coming. Two of them, I reckon, never made the grade—I guess Dan Oak and young Tom Redway got shot-up. Anyhow, they never got through. But Kid Byrne was watched riding into town—and we know he's here. I'm going to search this shebang end to end, and then some!"

The gun was steady in the doc's hand. He stood like a rock in the way of the marshal and his men.

"Pack that gun, doc!" said Hardfist. "You won't be such a fool as to burn powder for an outlaw, I reckon! And I guess if you do, you'll get what's coming to you for resisting the law!"

"You pesky piecan, what you got to do with the law in this hyer burg of Parksville?" snapped the doc. "You may be the big noise at Bullwhacker, and you can throw your weight around all you want in your one-horse little cow town, but you don't cut no ice here! I'll open up this shack to the sheriff of Parksville, if he comes around asking, but no roughneck from Bullwhacker ain't putting a hoof inside—not without getting hot lead through his works!"

The marshal ground his teeth with rage. The doc was right—he had no rights outside his own territory. In Parksville it was for Sheriff West to act in the name of the law. Not that it made a whole lot of difference, so far as Hall could see.

The sheriff was a friend of the doc's—every man in Tontine County was the six-gun doctor's friend. But the sheriff would not stand for letting an outlaw escape.

"You goldarned coyote!" hissed Hardfist. "I guess you want to gain time for the Kid

to vamoose! Forget it! I got my men all round the shebang, with orders to shoot on sight! I'll tell you—"

"You sure do chew the rag a whole lot, Bill Hall!" drawled the doc. "Now you listen to me! You burn powder here, without authority of the sheriff, and you and your bunch will get wiped out so quick, it will make your heads swim! I guess all Parksville will be around as soon as the shooting starts, and, I'm telling you, it's going to start if you put a foot inside that door!"

Hardfist's eyes burned with rage. He was tempted to begin gun-play, but he paused. Muttering voices behind him warned him that his men would not stand for it—against the law!

"Say, Hardfist," muttered one of the bunch, "I guess it's O.K.—you only got to get the sheriff here."

Hardfist drew a deep, deep breath.

"Doggone you, Doc Baker!" he muttered. "You ain't getting us into a rookus with a Parksville crowd! I'll get the sheriff here, and, while he's coming, pack my men round your shebang, and if that outlaw makes a break I guess he'll be filled up with lead! I guess—"

"I ain't got up so early to lissen to you chewing the rag, Bill Hall," said the doc coolly. "You can say your piece to your side-kickers." And the doc shut the door in the face of the marshal of Bullwhacker.

KID BYRNE looked round the door of the inner room.

He had heard every word, and wondered. The doc had gained time—a quarter of an hour, perhaps, before the sheriff could be brought on the scene. But there was no escape.

Armed men circled the cabin, ready to riddle the Kid with lead if he made a break. And when the sheriff came, the building would be searched.

"Say, doc, I don't get you!" he whispered. "What's the use? I'd sure rather handle a gun agin Hardfist than agin the sheriff. He's a man I respect. I'd sure hate to throw lead at him. But I ain't going to be taken, doc."

"You sure ain't!" said the doc. "Quit chewing the rag, you bonehead! Sheriff West ain't going to find you here."

Some plan was working in the mind of the six-gun doc, though what it was the Kid could not guess. It was death to quit the cabin—arrest to remain, and the Kid was not going to be taken alive.

The doc lifted the candle from the table and stepped into old Louie's room, pushing the Kid before him. He set the candle down and looked round him, with a faint grin breaking through the anxiety in his anxious face.

"I guess I told you, Kid, that Old Black Louie was on a visit to her folks at Mule Pack," he said.

"You sure did!" said the Kid, in wonder. "I never told you that her niece Judy was coming to cook for me while she was away, though, did I?"

The Kid could only stare. "She ain't here, doc. There ain't no coon girl about the place."

"There's going to be!" said the doc. He lifted a striped print dress from a hook on the wall. The Kid watched him blankly. He wondered for a moment whether the doc had gone loco.

"Get into that!" snapped the doc. "Put on them shoes—I guess they'll go over your boots. I got a bandanna here to put on your head instead of that stetson, and if I can't fix you up a coon complexion, it'll be because there ain't no blacking left in the bottle."

The Kid's face crimsoned. He understood now. His jaw squared and his eyes gleamed.

"Doc, I know you mean it well—I know you want to save my neck—but I ain't standing for it! I ain't hiding that-a-way from a pizen polecat like Hardfist!"

Doc Baker looked at him quietly. "You left Dan and Red wounded on the prairie when you got through," he said. "Don't you aim to get back to them and help them? You want old Sam Oak to wake up and see you being shot to pieces? I'm sure surprised at you, Kid!"

The Kid gulped. "I take it back, doc," he said humbly. "It's your play, and I'll stand for anything you durn well like."

In a few minutes the Kid was draped in striped print dress, his feet encased in sloppy shoes that easily went over his boots, his head wrapped in a coloured bandanna. Then Doc Baker got busy with a bottle of blacking, rapidly changing the outlaw's face, neck, and hands to the deepest dye of a black coon. The doc held up a mirror, and the Kid stared into it with unbelieving eyes.

Kid Byrne had disappeared from existence. The reflection in the glass was that of a young negress. A coloured shawl over his shoulders added to the effect.

"This way!" grunted the doc. He led the Kid into the lean-to kitchen at the back of the cabin. Glimmering dawn was showing through chinks in the shutter. Hardly a word was needed for the Kid now. He was quick on the uptake, and ready to play his part—a part on which his life depended. He packed pine chips into the iron stove and set it going. He handled the fry-pan and beans and bacon, as he was well used to handling them in the hide-out up in the mesa.

The doc watched him and grinned. "You ain't so bad, Kid," he said. "I guess it's even money! You're cooking when they come—"

"I see cooking, massa!" grinned the Kid. Doc chuckled as he went back into the living-room. He gave a glance into old Sam's room. The old rancher was awake now, and his eyes turned questioning on the doc.

"I sure guess I heard Hardfist's voice, doc!" mumbled old Sam. "Or was I jest dreaming?"

"Yes, that guy is around," answered the doc. "But don't you worry. The sheriff's coming to give this shebang the once-over, but Hardfist ain't putting no hoof in. Hyer, you, Judy!" shouted the doc. "You come and fix up the pillows for my patient!"

Old Sam hardly glanced at the young "negress" who came in and shook out his pillows. The Kid longed to give him a word, but he was silent. He made old Sam comfortable, and hustled out of the room again. Sam Oak settled down to doze.

Doc Baker went to the door on the porch. If the Kid, in his strange guise, had passed

undetected under his uncle's eyes, the doc reckoned that he would pass muster with Sheriff West. Doc threw open the front door and looked out into the reddening dawn.

Hardfist Hall stood in the porch, and his gun half lifted as the door opened. But he lowered it again at sight of the doc. A smell of cooking bacon and beans came from the kitchen, where the doc's new cook was clattering in the fry-pan. A black face, surmounted by a red bandanna, looked across the living-room from the kitchen and scanned the marshal of Bullwhacker for a moment. He paid it no heed.

"Say, have you sent word to the sheriff, Bill Hall?" grunted the doc.

"You said it!" snarled Hardfist. "He's coming right now!"

There was a clatter of hoofs in the rugged street. Sheriff West, big and burly and ruddy, dismounted at the gate, and four of his men followed him up the path to the porch. In the street a crowd was already gathering, early as it was. News was spreading of trouble at the doc's cabin, and the doc had plenty of friends in Parksville, ready and willing to back him if he wanted aid.

"Mornin', doc!" Sheriff West shook hands with the doc, and gave Hardfist a brief nod. "Say, what's this rookus? If you figure on running the rodeo in this hyer burg, Bill Hall, like you do at Bullwhacker, you got another guess coming."

Hardfist's eyes glinted. "Kid Byrne, outlaw, is in this shack," he said, "and it's up to you, sheriff, to rope him in, seeing that it's your beat, and you'll hand him over to me to ride back to Bullwhacker."

"Sure thing, if he's here!" assented the sheriff. "Say, doc, you sure ain't harbouring outlaws from the hills, and you a doctor and a good citizen, are you?"

The doc shrugged his shoulders. "Bill Hall tries to make out that that young firebug is here," he said. "I guess he's got them Rojo cowboys on his nervous system! I ain't letting no bunch of toughs from a cow town root over my shebang, sheriff! Bullwhacker guys don't cut no ice in this burg."

"You said it!" agreed the sheriff. "But I got to search for him, doc, on what the marshal says, and I got to hand him over if he's here."



By the time Doc Baker had finished disguising Kid, the outlaw, dressed in a long cotton dress and with a bandanna wound round above his blackened face, looked a passable imitation of Judy, the darkie cook. This was the doc's scheme for defeating the plans of Hardfist Hall!

"Sure thing!" assented the doc. "Search all you want, sheriff! I'm only asking you to do it quiet, and not disturb my patient. But I'll tell a man, no Bullwhacker guy ain't horning in, and I got a gun here what says the same."

"That's a cinch!" said the sheriff. "I guess I can carry out the law here, Bill Hall; your help ain't wanted none. If that young firebug's here, you'll get him!"

"That's all I'm asking!" snarled Hardfist. "Get to it, sheriff—he's here!" He turned to his men. "Watch out, you 'uns! If that outlaw makes a break, riddle him with lead on sight."

Sheriff West tramped heavily in, followed by his men. Hardfist stood in the porch, gun in hand, watchful as a beast of prey.

DAN OAK lifted his head and listened. The sun was high on the Arizona prairie. The Pecan creek ran low between sloping muddy banks, the water merely trickling, flats of mud and sand. Among the thickets, Red lay on a bed of leaves that Dan had gathered for him—half dozing, his face white and drawn. Dan, by his side, watched over him. And suddenly he lifted his head to the sound of hoofbeats on the prairie.

Being deep down in the hollow of the low creek, the two outlaws were below the level of the surrounding plain—out of sight, unless a rider came down to the water. And now a rider was coming, the steady strokes of the hoofs ringing nearer and nearer.

Dan's rugged, tanned face set, and he dropped his hand to his gun. That hollow creek was all the cover that he'd been able to find when he had parted from the Kid in the night, with Red helpless and wounded on his hands, after riding through the ambush of Jake Sanders and his bunch. There Dan had waited, long hour after hour, watching over Red—hoping, hoping that the Kid would come, yet dreading that he would never see Kid Byrne again in life.

Old Sam, as he believed, lay dying in the doc's cabin, and only the Kid had been able to ride on, to see the old man before his eyes closed for ever—and the Kid, outlawed and hunted, rode with his life in his hands. Would the Kid come—to help get Red back to the hide-out in the mesa—would he come?

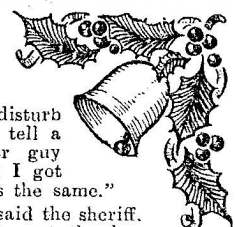
For a moment, as he heard the hoofbeats, Dan wondered if that might mean that the Kid was coming. But the rider was not coming from Parksville; he came from the opposite direction—from the open plains. Was it some puncher riding range, and coming down to the creek to give his horse water, or some outcast of the prairie, who had been riding a night-trail?

Dan could not tell—but his face was desperate as he listened to the approaching hoofbeats. Once the rider came over the brow of the sloping bank he would be in sight—the straggling bushes gave little concealment. Dan Oak rose to his feet, dragging his leg, stiff from the gash of a bullet.

High over the bank a stetson hat showed against the sky—and a horseman came clattering down the dried mud to the shallow stream. "Jadson!" breathed Dan.

He knew the evil, scarred face under the stetson at a glance—the face of Jad Jadson, leader of the Jadson gang. Outlawed by the plotting of Hardfist Hall, the Rojo cowboys had ridden with the Jadsons for a time—only to meet with black treachery from the gang of rustlers. It was shooting on sight if they met up with the Jadsons.

Crack! Jad sighted Dan Oak as he came clattering down the slope of dried mud, and his gun roared. Dan's stetson was torn from his head by the bullet. Kneeling, with eyes blazing over his revolver, he fired back. His bullet would have crashed into the scarred rustler's broad chest, but the tossing head of the bronco stopped it; and, with a squeal, the horse rolled



over, thereby pitching Jad headlong from the saddle.

Instantly the scarred outlaw went scrambling into cover. His bronco, with a bullet in its brain, lay hunched in the mud, and Jad Jadson crouched behind the bulky body of the animal, safe from another shot.

Dan Oak gritted his teeth.

He had no cover—he could not hunt cover, and leave Red. Red's startled eyes fixed on his face. He half rose.

"Keep low!" breathed Dan. "Keep low, Red! It's that doggoned rustler, Jad Jadson! Keep low."

Red sank back. His hand sought his gun—but he was weak from loss of blood, and the weapon sagged in his feeble grasp. Dan shifted, to place himself between his wounded pard and their enemy. His hurt leg ached horribly, but he did not heed the pain.

Suddenly, swiftly, a scarred face rose to view, then a hand with a Colt in it. Crack! Dan felt the sting of a bullet that tore his cheek—the wind of another that clipped his hair. But the rustler dropped back as Dan pulled trigger, and his lead flew harmlessly over the dead broncho.

A fierce, savage, rasping laugh came from the rustler.

"I'll get you, Dan Oak! By the great horn spoon, I'll get you!"

Dan did not speak; hard-lipped, he waited. And he knew why Jad was letting him wait—to rattle his nerves. Minute followed minute—long minute after minute, bitter and tense. From the silence of the upper prairie came a sound.

Thud of hoofs again—this time from the direction of Parksville. Dan felt his heart bound. Was it—could it be—the Kid?

Then he groaned as his straining ear caught other sounds with the beat of hoofs—the clatter and grind of wheels. It was a vehicle that was coming—some buckboard driven across the rugged plain. But whoever it was, it was not the Kid.

The sounds reached the ears of Jad Jadson as he crouched in cover. To him, as to the cowboy outlaws, any comer was an enemy. Dan heard a curse from the scarred rustler.

He knew that action was coming—Jad would wait no longer now. He watched—but when the action came, it came so suddenly that he was beaten to it.

Jad rose from cover, and fired at the same moment—and Dan felt a throb of agony along his gun-arm. Jad's bullet crashed on the revolver in his hand, spinning it away, leaving his arm numbed and disarmed.

Dan Oak looked on death as the scarred rustler's fierce eyes glared at him over a smoking gun. Jad rushed on him, pulling trigger as he rushed.

Crack! It was Red who fired.

Lifted on one elbow, his face white as death, Red fired at the rustler with a hand that sagged and shook. It was a desperate effort—he sank back fainting even as he pulled trigger. But the bullet gashed through the rustler's shirt and tore his shoulder—a scratch, but it jerked his arm as he fired again, and the death-shot missed Dan by inches.

Swift as a cougar, Dan Oak sprang at the rustler, grasped his gun-arm, and forced it up. Desperately he flung his weight on his enemy, and Jad crashed over backwards, and the Colt flew from his grip.

"Doggone you!" hissed the rustler.

His fierce and savage grasp fastened on Dan. The cowboy's hurt leg crumpled under him, and he rolled under the burly outlaw.

Jad was uppermost, Dan fighting fiercely to throw him off, and fighting in vain. A sinewy knee was planted on his chest, pinning him down in the dried mud of the bank. Jad groped for the knife in his belt.

The bowie-knife flashed out in the sun. Up went the murderous hand, the knife in it. A second more, and it would have been buried to the hilt.

Neither of them saw the buckboard that pulled in at the top of the high bank, or the startled face that looked down. But even as the knife flashed in the sun the sudden roar of a gun came deafening to Dan's ears—and the rustler lurched over him. The knife fell from

a relaxed hand, and Jad Jadson sank down on his victim, crumpling.

One groan came from the rustler, and no further sound—and Dan Oak, like one in a dream, knew that it was a dead man that lay across him.

For a moment he was still, stunned with amazement. Then he threw aside the body of the rustler and staggered to his feet. He passed his hand across his dizzy eyes. The buckboard stood against the sky at the top of the bank. Down the bank came, running, a man in a red shirt.

"Doc" panted Dan. "Doc Baker!"

He stared at the six-gun doctor. Doc Baker gave Jad a glance and shrugged his shoulders. "I guess that guy has got his!" he said. "I'll say there's a good few galoots in Arizona will sleep sounder at nights when they hear that Jad Jadson has passed in his checks. Say, feller, I guess you was in luck that the Kid put me wise and I humped along here to give you a lift back to the mesa!"

Dan caught his arm.

"You seen Kid?"

"Sure!"

"And old Sam?"

"Mending fast!" Doc Baker stepped to Red. The cowboy was unconscious. "Lend me a hand to get him to the buckboard."

"Sure!" gasped Dan. "But—"

"Say, you honing to chew the rag?" snorted the doc. "You want me to be seen helping doggoned outlaws to get back to their hide-out? Pack it up till we get clear, I'm telling you! You an' Red have got to lie low under a buffalo robe till we hit the hills, and that ain't a short step! I guess I'll chew the rag all you want when we hit the mesa."

## WELL MEANT!



Convict (writing letter): ". . . And thank you very much for the hiking outfit that you sent for my Christmas present."

Dan said no more. With a limping leg, he helped the doc carry Red up the bank to the buckboard.

**H**ARDFIST HALL gritted his teeth with rage. Never had the hard-fisted, bullying marshal of Bullwhacker been so savagely enraged or so bitterly puzzled. Where was Kid Byrne? Where was the outlaw he had tricked and entrapped and counted upon as a certain victim?

The sun of noon blazed down hot on the street of Parksville. Hardfist and his rough-necks surrounded Doc Baker's cabin, watching. Jake Sanders had come in from the prairie and joined his leader, and he was as puzzled as Hardfist.

The Rojo cowboys had got through the ambush on the trail—Jake knew that! One of them—the Kid—had hit Parksville and reached the doc's cabin—Hardfist knew that. But where was he? It had them guessing.

In the doorway of the cabin a man sat on a bench, smoking, with a rifle across his knees. It was one of the sheriff's deputies, left in

charge. Sheriff West was gone—Doc Baker was gone. Hardfist, with burning eyes, had seen the doc drive away in his buckboard after the search was over—going off on his long medical round, heedless of the bunch watching his cabin.

"I'll say he's there!" said the marshal. "That doggoned doc has got some hide-out in the cabin, and he's got the Kid packed out of sight!"

"Aw, guess agin, marshal!" said Sanders. He shook his head. "There ain't no hide-out in that shack. The Kid's beat it."

"How'd he beat it with a dozen guys watching for him?" raved the marshal.

The marshal's eyes turned swiftly on the porch again as there was a movement. But it was only the negress coming out, with a basket on her arm. Taking no notice of the loafing, lounging rough-necks, the young negress started up the street towards the store.

"That doggoned coon'll sure know what's come to the Kid!" muttered Hardfist Hall suddenly.

"Mebbe!" drawled Jake. "But she won't spill it none."

The marshal gave him a scowl. "Git off'n that fence, you big stiff!" he snarled. "Git on your cayuse and follow me!"

He unhitched his bronco and leaped into the saddle. Jake followed his example, and they rode with a clatter up the street.

Hardfist's eyes were glittering. He reckoned that the doc's black cook would know what had happened to the Kid, and he reckoned, too, that he could make her speak. In the blaze of noon the street was deserted. There was a wide stretch of waste land between the doc's cabin and the store.

"Black Judy" had covered half the distance when they overtook her. The head in the red bandanna turned. The eyes in the black face gleamed as the marshal and his men jumped down from their broncs.

"Pull in, you!" snarled the marshal of Bullwhacker. "I want to chew the rag with you a piece, Judy! I guess you saw Kid Byrne when he hit the doc's shack last night!"

"I see him, massa."

"You're wise to it what's come of him?" breathed the marshal.

"Yes, massa."

"Spill it, Judy, and it's a hundred dollars for you to buy glad rags!" said Hardfist, his voice trembling with eagerness. "A hundred dollars if you put me wise, or—"

Crash!

A clenched fist, that seemed like a lump of iron, crashed full in the face of the marshal of Bullwhacker, knocking him flat on his back in the street.

Jake Sanders gave a gasp of amazement, then the iron-like fist crashed at him, and he spun across the marshal, falling heavily on Bill Hall.

A black hand caught at the reins of the marshal's bronc as it ran free. In the twinkling of an eye the "negress" was in the saddle, the print dress tearing and rending and revealing cowboy's riding boots!

Up the street went the disguised Kid at a wild gallop, kicking off the floppy shoes as his feet sought the stirrups. Hardfist Hall, panting, struggling to his feet.

"The Kid!" he panted. "I'll say it's the Kid! Shoot, you geek! Shoot!"

He fired as he panted, blazing away bullets up the street after the galloping rider. But the Kid rode fast and hard, bending low in the saddle, and at a wild gallop he dashed out of Parksville on to the prairie trail.

Hardfist Hall yelled to his men. There was mounting and spurring in hot haste, and the Bullwhacker bunch swept out on the prairie in pursuit of the Kid. But Kid Byrne had a start, and he did not lose it—and though the bunch rode hell for leather they rode in vain.

Mad with rage, the marshal of Bullwhacker was still hunting him on the rolling prairie when Kid Byrne, weary with hard riding, rejoined his comrades in their hide-out high up in the rocks of the mesa.

**Hardfist tricked—mad for revenge—and then the final show-down between him and the Outlawed Three! Read all about it in next week's vivid Western yarn. Big thrills guaranteed—and big surprises, too!**