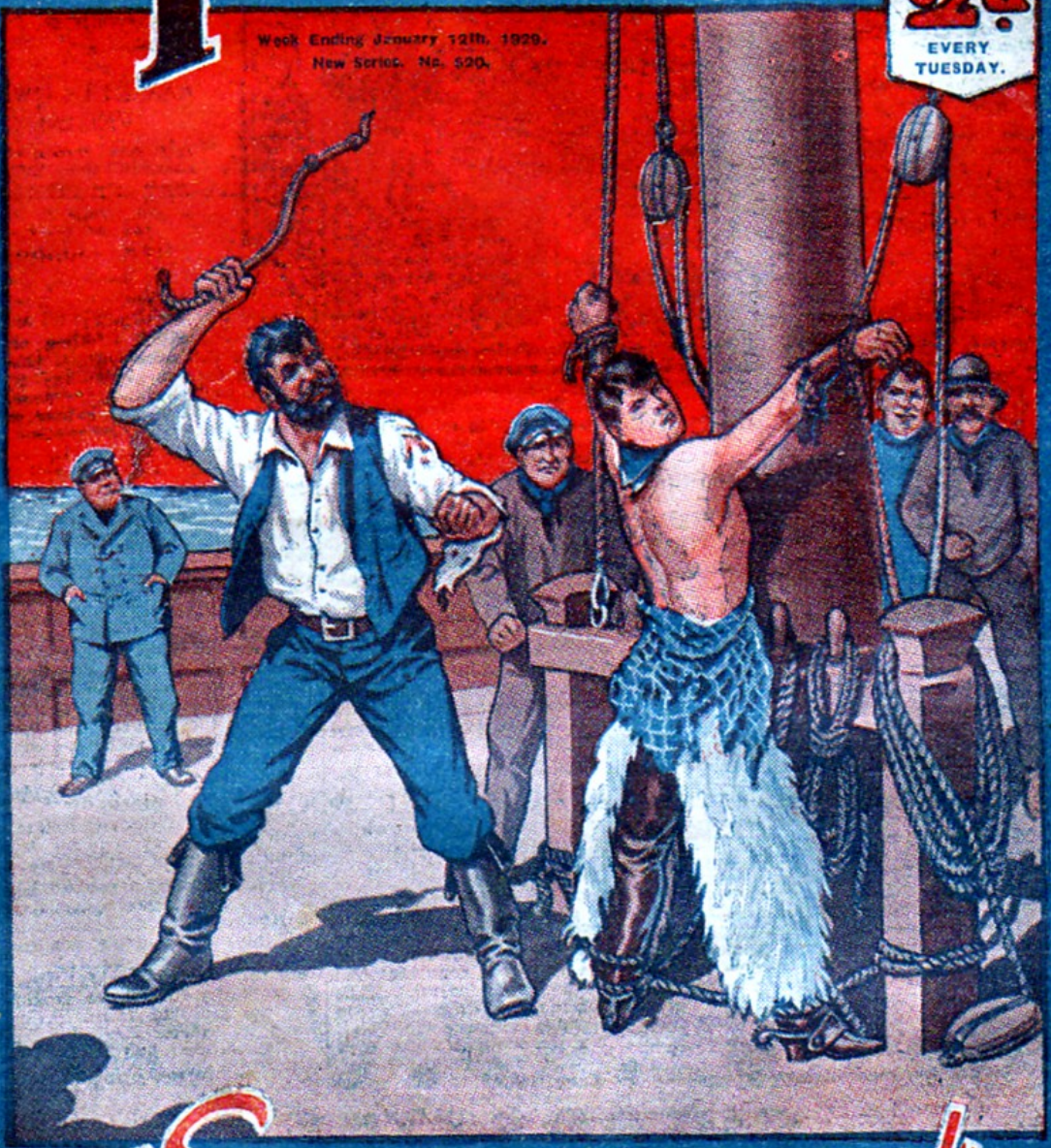


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# The POPULAR

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EVERY TUESDAY.

Week Ending January 12th, 1929.  
New Series, No. 520.



## "SHANGHAIED!"

Sensational Story of The RIO KID, BOY OUTLAW, at Sea —

**THE PLIGHT OF THE RIO KID!**

The Rio Kid has been in many tight scrapes in his adventurous career, but never so amazing and perilous a plight as the one in which he finds himself this week!

# SHANGHAIED!

By Ralph  
Redway



## THE FIRST CHAPTER. Afloat!

**W**HAT had happened the Rio Kid did not know.

He knew there was a terrible ache in his head, and he knew that he was lying in black darkness, and that the hard boards on which he lay were in motion, rocking like a buck-jumper.

That, for a long time, was all he knew.

In that semi-conscious state, lying in darkness and pain, it seemed as if days, weeks, years, passed. But it could only have been a matter of hours. Twice or thrice he made a movement, only to sink back again. He was hurt. He knew that he was hurt. But what had hurt him, and why, he did not know, and was in no state for guessing.

Slowly, slowly his dazed mind struggled back to fuller consciousness. His head still ached bitterly, and his throat was dry with thirst. Blackness lay on him like a blanket. He was lying on hard boards, and for a long time his dizzy brain puzzled with the mystery of it, how those boards could be in incessant motion. He fancied that he must be dreaming. If he was lying on the floor of the bunkhouse that floor was as solid as the earth under it, and only in a fantastic dream could it be pitching like this. But his brain grew clearer, and he knew that it was no dream. He was in motion. At one minute his feet were higher than his head; the next minute his head was higher than his feet. There was no possibility of doubt, though it was inexplicable.

He tried to remember.

There was a nauseous smell about the place. The Kid did not know the smell of bilge. But he knew that this was no ranch smell. He was not at the Sampson ranch now. That was a cinch. But if he wasn't at the Sampson ranch where was he? In some building in the little coast town of San Pedro? But no building ought to have been rocking like

this, unless San Pedro, and the whole coast of Texas, was in the grip of an earthquake. Earthquakes were not unknown in the Rio Kid's experience. But he knew that this was not an earthquake; the motion was too regular for that. It came into his mind with a sudden flash that he was afloat.

Afloat!

He started up to a sitting position, and the pang of pain that passed through his bruised head was so sharp and terrible that he sank back again on the plank floor, dazed and bewildered, and for many minutes he did not move again. Could he have seen his face he would have seen that it was as white as chalk under its tan. But his thoughts were getting busy again; he knew that he was afloat on some vessel, and he was trying to figure how it had happened, and what he was doing there.

He remembered turning out of the bunkhouse at the ranch that morning. Jeff Barstow, the ranch foreman, had sent him and Santa Fe Sam down to San Pedro. Since the Kid had become Old Man Sampson's partner in the ranch he had still remained a member of the outfit, bunking with the rest, riding range with the rest, a cow-puncher, like the rest. Jeff had wanted two men to ride down to the coast town from the ranch with a bunch of cows that had been sold to a San Pedro man. The Kid remembered the drive down to the coast, the blue brilliance of the Gulf of Mexico in the sunlight. The cows had been handed over to the buyer. Santa Fe Sam wanted to roll round town a piece, looking for pulque in the Mexican posada there. The Kid had no taste for pulque, or any strong liquor, and he had strolled down to the inlet to look at the shipping, while he waited for Sam to rejoin him. They had left their horses hitched to the big ceiba that stood in the plaza of San Pedro, and separated, to meet again in an hour or two. That was all clear in the Kid's mind. It was what followed that had him beat.

## OUR ROARING WESTERN YARN—STARRING THE RIO KID, BOY OUTLAW!

He pressed his hands to his aching head and wondered.

What in thunder did it all mean?

He could recall strolling along the bank of the swampy inlet that jutted in from the sea at San Pedro. There were a couple of luggers there, and a schooner, and three or four seafaring men had been hanging about. The Kid remembered that he had seen a seafaring man come stamping back from the town, swearing—a hefty man, with cross-eyes, who seemed to be in a rage, and from what he said, loudly and profanely, the Kid understood that he was mate of the schooner, and that he had been after two members of the crew who had got ashore and deserted. The Kid had reflected that it showed boss-sense on the part of the deserters to hustle ashore and vamoose, considering the extremely unpleasant looks of that cross-eyed man. The Kid had seen him take boat for the schooner and heard his profanity floating back across the sluggish water. After that—

After that the Kid's mind was a blank.

He had a vague recollection of the earth and the sky suddenly falling to pieces round him, and that was all.

That, of course, never had happened. But that recollection, coupled with the big bruise he could feel under his hair, and the pain of it, put him wise. He had been knocked on the head and stunned. Some sneaking coyote had dealt him a sockdolager from behind, and the Kid had fallen like a roped steer, insensible. He knew that now. The blank that had followed was explained; he had lain insensible since that fearful crash on his head. And now—the Kid's brain jumped to it—he was on board one of the vessels he had seen lying in the inlet. His thoughts, working further, figured it out that the vessel was now at sea. The Kid knew little of ships or shipping, but he knew that a ship would not be pitching like this in the waters of the San Pedro inlet. He was on one of those craft, and the craft he was on had put to sea while he was unconscious.

How long it had taken the Kid's aching head to work all this out he never knew—hours, as likely as not. But he had it all clear at last—he had been stunned by a blow from behind in San Pedro and roped in on board a ship, and the ship was at sea. The reason was still to seek. It couldn't be robbery, he reckoned. The Kid's roll was safe at the ranch, in Old Man Sampson's iron safe. He hadn't more than half a dozen dollars about him, and, anyhow, nobody at San Pedro knew anything about his roll. Besides, if they robbed him they would leave him where he was robbed. What would be the use of carrying him off to sea? It sure wasn't that. But what was it?

"Oh, shucks!" murmured the Kid.

In that corner of Texas, on the coast of the Gulf of Mexico, three hundred miles and more from the Rio country, the Kid had felt certain that he was unknown, unsuspected. Nobody in that section knew that he was the Rio Kid, with a thousand dollars reward offered for him at Rio. To all who knew him there he was just Curfax, a puncher on the Sampson ranch. But had some galoot from the valley of the Pecos or the Rio Grande happened into town and recognised him? Had that galoot knocked him on the head, as the easiest way of cinching him, to carry him back to where he belonged, a prisoner, to be handed over to a sheriff?

It seemed unlikely, yet it was the only explanation that the Kid could think of. He was a prisoner on this vessel, that was certain, and it was only as the outlaw of the Rio Grande that he could be wanted.

His hand went to his belt. He was not surprised to find that his guns were gone.

Since he had joined the Sampson outfit the Kid, outlaw no longer, had still packed the old walnut-butted guns that had served him so well, though he had packed them chiefly for old times' sake. They were old friends, with whom he couldn't bear to part. They had been holstered to his belt when he came down to San Pedro, and they had been taken from him. The Kid was disarmed.

These galoots had lifted his guns, but had not taken the trouble to bind him, having him safe on the ship. But any man who had roped in the Rio Kid knowingly would have bound him fast enough. He concluded that it wasn't that, after all. It was no sheriff's deputy or reward-hunter who had cinched him. But what, and who, was it? The Kid had to give up that puzzling problem.

But his strength was returning now, and he rose from the hard floor on which he had been lying. There was a slightly uneasy feeling inside the Kid. He was not accustomed to the motion of a ship. The smell, too, was nauseous. He reckoned that this ship, whatever it was, wasn't a clean ship.

Having gained his feet, the Kid groped his way about carefully. In the darkness he felt the outlines of several bunks, not unlike those in a ranch bunk-house, but close packed. He stumbled at last on some wooden steps, and groped his way up them, and felt the outlines of a door. But the door was fast.

A lurch of the ship sent him stumbling down the steps, and he found himself on the floor again.

"Thunder!" ejaculated the Kid.

He picked himself up.

His head still ached, and he was dizzy. To get at the men who had made him a prisoner he had to get through that locked door. The Kid sagely opined that he could wait. Sooner or later they would come to

him; and then he would know what to do. Whoever they were, and whatever they intended, they would find a tough mouthful in the Rio Kid. That uncertain feeling in his stomach troubled him, too. The Kid groped to a bunk, crawled into it, lay down on a rough mattress, and slept.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Shanghai'd!

SHAKE, shake, shake!  
The Rio Kid opened his eyes.  
He had slept soundly.

The strange position in which he had found himself had not disturbed the Kid's slumbers.

The Kid had slept soundly in a calaboose, with a Lynch mob growling round the walls. He had slept soundly in a dug-out in a chaparral, with a sheriff's posse hunting him, passing and repassing. And he had slept soundly in the bunk on the unknown ship on which he had been brought a kidnapped prisoner.

He opened his eyes on the light of day, as a rough hand shook his shoulder, and stared up at the man beside the bunk. With the first glance he recognised him as the cross-eyed man who had gone off in the boat swearing over the missing seamen.

The man glared down at him.  
"You want to sleep all the way to Jamaica?" he bawled. "Say!"  
"Oh, sho!" said the Kid. "I guess not! If you figure that I'm going to Jamaica, feller, you've got another guess coming. Dog-gone my boots if I know where it is!"

"Get out!"  
The Kid stretched himself and yawned.

There was still an ache in his head, but it did not trouble him very much now. The Rio Kid was as hard as nails.

He rolled out of the bunk.  
The cross-eyed man pointed to the steps, on which the Kid had stumbled the previous night. The door at the top was open, letting in light and air.

"Get on deck, you!"  
"On deck?" repeated the Kid.  
The Kid was quick enough on the uptake, but he was unaccustomed to nautical terms.

"Blue blazes!" howled the cross-eyed man. "You pesky puncher, don't you know what a deck is?"  
"I guess I've handled a deck of cards," remarked the Kid.

"A deck of cards! Holy smoke! Git!" roared the cross-eyed man; and he followed up the order with a string of oaths.

The Kid eyed him for a moment. The cross-eyed man was a powerful fellow; but the Kid would have had no hesitation in handling him. But he decided to know more about this strange matter before he started anything. He tramped up the steps, and came out on the deck of the schooner.

Sunlight was on the rippling waters of the Gulf of Mexico. Far away to the west was a dim purple line, which the Kid figured to be the coast of Texas. Somewhere beyond that purple blur lay the Sampson ranch and the outfit he had been riding with. They were far enough away now. The Kid hoped that Santa Fe Sam had taken his mustang safely back to the ranch. It was like the Kid to think of his horse at that moment.

But his thoughts came quickly back to his surroundings.

The Kid knew a lot about horseflesh and saddlery and ranching and cows; but he knew little about ships and their

ways. Still, he knew that he was on a schooner; Santa Fe Sam had pointed out this craft to him in the inlet, and told him it was a schooner, rather proud of his knowledge.

Mainsail, topsail, and foresail were spread to the breeze, and were drawing; and the schooner was pitching at a good rate over the shining waters of the Gulf.

Five or six men stared curiously at the Kid and grinned. A cowboy in goatskin chaps was doubtless new on board the schooner.

On the afterdeck was a fat man in a peaked cap. He had a face tanned to a mahogany colour, a pair of fierce, sharp eyes deeply sunken, and a big Mexican cigar stuck, unlighted, in a corner of his mouth. The Kid, glancing at him, guessed that he was a man in authority. The fat man, for the moment, was staring up at the canvas, and did not heed the Kid.

A burly man who carried a whistle slung to a lanyard, came across to the Kid and stared at him.

"You been punching cows?"

"Sure!"

"Oh, thunder! Go and tell the old man."

"The old man?" repeated the Kid.

"The skipper, you durned hobo!"

"Skipper?" said the Kid.

"Carry me home to de!" ejaculated the boatswain. "The captain, you dog-goned cowman!"

"Oh!" said the Kid. "I got you. Who's the captain?"

The boatswain pointed to the fat man aft.

"That's Captain Shack. Mind how you speak to him, if you don't want blazes knocked out of your carcass!"

The Kid's eyes glinted.

"I guess there'll be loose hair flying around, afore blazes are knocked out of me to any extent," he remarked. "So that's the captain, is it? I guess I'll ask him what this stunt means, anyhow."

The Kid walked aft.

On the pitching deck of the schooner it was not easy for a landsman to keep a steady footing. The Kid was accustomed to something more solid under his high-heeled boots. He gave a lurch as the schooner rolled and unexpectedly tumbled over, and there was a chuckle from the seamen who were looking at him.

The Kid picked himself up, a little breathless. He glanced at the grinning seamen, with gleaming eyes. The Kid had never felt clumsy before; but any landsman requires time to get on his sea-legs, on a small sailing vessel on a choppy sea. The Kid wished he could have had that bunch on cow-ponies on the Sampson ranch; he opined that the chuckle would have been on his side then.

But he was anxious to know what all this meant, and he continued on his way aft. A grip on a rail helped him to the after-deck without another tumble.

Captain Shack withdrew his gaze from the canvas aloft and shifted it to the newcomer.

He stared at him blankly.

"Who the thunder are you?" he demanded.

"You can call me Curfax," answered the Kid. "But I reckon it's me that's going to ask questions. I want to know what this hyer game is, and I want to know it quick!"

"What?" roared Captain Shack.

"I've been knocked on the head and brought here," said the Kid. "I belong to a ranch back of San Pedro, and I reckon I'm honing to get there, pronto."

I want to know who brought me here; I guess I'm going to make that galoot feel pretty considerable sick of himself!"

The captain glared at him and then shouted:

"Starboy!"

The cross-eyed man, who had come up out of the fore-castle, hurried aft.

"Ay, ay, sir!"

"What's this?" roared Captain Shack, pointing at the Kid. "Mean to say you've shanghai'd a gold-darned puncher on board this hooker?"

"Ain't we four men short?" demanded Starboy. "Was it a time for picking and choosing? He's a handy lad, from the look of him, and can be lickered into shape."

Captain Shack poured out a stream of profanity. The Kid looked at him. He had heard some tall language on the ranches, but he had never heard anything to equal this seafaring man's flow of eloquence.

"Lickered into shape!" snorted the skipper, when he had come to an end of his expletives. "How long is it going to take to lick a cowboy into a seaman? I guess he'll be trying to cinch the helm, and hog-tie the binnacle. You durned goat, what's the good of a puncher on a ship?"

"Give me two days, and I guess I'll make a handy man of him," answered Mr. Starboy. "I've made a seaman out of a Jamaica plantation nigger. I'd make a seaman out of the Governor of Texas, if I had him on this hooker, with a length of rope. That boy's all right."

"Well, the job's yours," snarled Captain Shack.

"Leave him to me," said the mate. "I guess he won't look so durned unhandy when he's got them rags off, and some seaman's clothes on. Git back to the fo'c'sle, my man, and I'll tell the bo'sun to chuck you some dungarees."

The Rio Kid had listened, almost like a fellow in a dream. He hadn't known what to make of this strange turn of affairs, and even yet he did not quite know what to make of it. Of what went on in the rough coasting towns of the Texas seaboard, the boy puncher was quite ignorant.

"Let up a piece, you'uns," said the Kid, quietly. "I don't rightly get on to this. What's the game?"

The captain, who was turning away, turned back and stared at him.

"You don't savvy, you mossheaded puncher. You're shanghai'd!"

"Shanghai'd?" repeated the Kid.

The word was quite new to him.

"Blue bizias!" gasped Mr. Starboy.

"He don't know what shanghai'd is,"

"Put a pilgrim wise," suggested the Kid.

"You pesky mosshead, you're a seaman on this hooker now—can you understand that?"

"I reckon not," said the Kid. "I ain't looking for a berth on any hooker. I sure belong to the Sampson ranch."

"You belong to the Pond Lily, now," grinned the skipper. "Forget all about that ranch, my man, and turn to and obey orders."

"I guess I ain't obeying any orders in this outfit," said the Kid. "I reckon I ain't going to sea, neither. I'm asking you to turn this gold-darned tub round, and take me back to San Pedro, pronto."

Captain Shack eyed him for some moments, in dumb amazement. Then he burst into a yell of laughter.

"Take him away Starboy," he gasped. "Take him away! He's yours."

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Starboy tapped the Kid on the shoulder.

"Git foward!" he rapped.

"Go slow a piece," said the Kid. "I'm asking you now, which galoot it was tapped me on the cabeza and roped me in."

"Here, Hacker," called out the mate. "This boob wants to know who tapped him one in the cross-trees." The boatswain came up grinning. "Give him another of the same, if he keeps fresh."

"You bet," said the boatswain.

The Kid looked at him.

"It was you that gave me that sock-dolager, and roped me into this outfit?" he asked.

"Sure," answered Hacker.

"Then I reckon you're the galoot I want to see," said the Kid.

And with the spring of a tiger, he leaped at the boatswain of the Pond Lily.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### Hard Measures!

**C**RASH! The burly boatswain of the schooner hit out savagely as the Kid came at him.

But that did not save him. The Kid's left came like a lump of iron into his eye, and as he staggered, the Kid's right drove on his jaw, and he went to the deck with a terrific crash.

He lay where he had fallen, gasping faintly.

There was a howl from the hands forward on the schooner. It seemed like a miracle to them, to see the burly boatswain handled in that style. Hacker, powerful as he was, was quite knocked out by those two fearful blows. He lay on the deck half-stunned.

The Rio Kid turned to the captain and mate, who stood rooted, as if in a trance with astonishment.

"If you'd left me a gun," said the Kid, between his teeth, "I'd sure waded in and wipe out this durned rustling outfit to the last dog-goned scallywag in it. Make me a seaman, will you, you dog-goned ginks! You'll rope me in and put me into this outfit whether I like it or not, will you, you gold-darned looted jaspers! By the great horned toad, I reckon you've got another guess coming."

Captain Shack, gasping, dragged a revolver from his hip pocket. He backed off, and leveled it at the Kid.

"Hold on," shouted the mate. "Leave him to me."

"Ain't this hyer mutiny?" yelled the enraged Shack.

"I guess I'll farn him to toe the line, captain," said Mr. Starboy. "We only got six hands on this hooker, and we sure can't afford to throw a man into the Gulf."

The Kid was tensed for a struggle. He was watching the captain like a cat, ready for the shot if it came, ready to make a desperate attempt to seize the revolver. Once he had a six-gun in his grasp, there were not enough men on the Pond Lily to hold the Kid. The Kid would have given all the roll that lay in Old Man Sampson's safe at the ranch, for a loaded six-gun, at that moment.

But Captain Shack was not intending to pull the trigger on the shanghai'd cow-puncher. It was fear for his own safety that had made him draw the weapon. Undoubtedly, he would have shot the Kid dead on the deck, had the puncher advanced on him. But the Kid knew too much to rush on a leveled six-gun.

The boatswain was sitting up on the deck, holding his head in both hands. He rocked himself dizzily, and groaned.

"You sure can use your hands some," said the mate, as if half admiring the prowess of the new member of the schooner's crew. "But you're too fresh, boy, you've got to farn. Git foward."

"Guess again," sneered the Kid.

Starboy grinned.

"You ain't obeying orders?" he asked:

"Not any."

"Hyer, you loafin' lubbers," shouted the mate, addressing the staring crew. "Get a hold of that man, and trice him up to the rigging."

And as the seamen came forward, the mate led them, with a jump at the Kid. The next moment, the Rio Kid was mixed up in a wild struggle.

There were six men to him, and all of them were husky fellows, rough and muscular. But the Kid was like a wild-cat in their hands.

By the time he was got down on the deck, every man in the crew had damages to show.

But he was got down at last, and a rope run round his limbs, and drawn tight, and knotted.

Helpless now, the Kid was triced to the rigging, and his shirt was torn away by a rough hand, leaving the back bare.

"Git a move on, Hacker," snapped the mate.

Hacker had staggered up now. He still seemed dazed, and one of his eyes was blackening fast, and almost closed.

His rough stubble face was convulsed with fury.

He knitted a length of rope, and stepped up to the bound Kid.

What followed was like an evil dream to the Rio Kid. He had been in many a "rough house" in the ranches, in the cow towns, in the round-up camps. But he had still something to learn, and he was learning it now. The roughest bulldozer on a ranch, or in a rodeo, was a gentle Rube compared with the boatswain of the Pond Lily. The boatswain's sinewy arm rose and fell in incessant blows. The Kid was hard as nails, and he shut his teeth to keep back a cry. But the pain of that fearful lashing was too much for flesh and blood, and at last the shanghai'd puncher hung fainting in the ropes that secured him, and the mate signed to Hacker to quit.

"Give him salt water," snarled out Captain Shack. "Give him plenty, and chuck him into the fo'c'sle."

Salt water was swamped over the Kid's scored back, and he was roughly dragged away and tossed into the fore-castle. He was only half-conscious now, and he lay where he had fallen.

Mr. Starboy walked back aft, smiling.

"That boy'll be useful yet, captain," he opined. "I've had 'em as fresh before, but in two days, I got 'em to feed out of my hand! He's sure fresh, but he'll toe the line, I'll tell a man."

"If he don't toe the line," said Captain Shack, with a string of oaths. "I'll make him believe that the deep pit is a pleasant place to this hooker. I sure will, and you can bet your bottom dollar on that!"

### THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

#### Getting a Gun!

**T**HE Rio Kid lay in a bunk in the dirty fore-castle of the Pond Lily, for the rest of that day, undisturbed. When the rough crew of the schooner came down, they looked at him and grinned, but gave him no other heed. With a captain and mate like Esau Shack and Bill Starboy the schooner was not likely to have a choice crew, and her company was made up of the roughest scum of New Orleans. The Kid crawled painfully out of his bunk for food and water, and crawled back

again, jeered by the crew, and answering no word. It was not till sundown that Mr. Starboy looked into the fore-castle, grinned at the Kid, and looked him over.

"You're sure had a rest," he remarked. "I guess we ain't running a hospital ship. It's your duty."

The Kid made no reply. He had learned to school his emotions, and he gave no sign of the fierce and deadly rage that was burning like a flame in his breast. With his hands, good as they were, he could do nothing against the odds; he could do nothing till he got a grip on a six-gun. Until that happened the Kid had to talk turkey, and he knew it. But when once his grip closed on the butt of a gun—

"You obeying orders now, Carfax?" chuckled the mate.

The Kid followed the mate on deck, with his cowboy garb under his arm. Starboy waved his hand to the rail.

"Chuck them into the Gulf." The Kid hesitated. A moment's hesitation was enough for the mate. He clenched his huge fist and drew back his arm.

Splash! The cowboy garb went into the sea.

"Jest in time!" said Mr. Starboy

watch, and he eyed the Kid malevolently. Sick and weak as the Kid was feeling now, there was a look in his eyes that warned the bully to keep his hands off him. But all through that weary watch his savage voice was heard cursing and threatening.

The Kid said no word. What he was told to do he did, but his thoughts were elsewhere. Somewhere on the schooner were the old



**STRAIGHT FROM THE SHOULDER!** "It was you that gave me that sockdolager and roped me into this outfit, was it?" said the Kid. "Then I reckon you're the galoot I want to see!" And he leaped at the boatswain. Crash! The boy outlaw's left came like a lump of iron into the ruffian's eyes, and the man went to the deck with a crash! (See Chapter 3.)

"Sure!" said the Kid. "What's the good of a cayuse kicking agin the wall of a corral?"

"I reckon that's boss sense," said the mate, with a nod. "You've had yours, and you've had it hard; and if it's taught you manners already, so much the better for you. I'm goin' to make a seaman out of you, boy; and afore we hit Jamaica I'm goin' to have you feedin' from my hand. You get me?"

"I sure get you," said the Kid.

"Tumble up, and get on deck."

"It's your say-so," said the Kid. He rolled out of the bunk quietly, though every movement cost him pain. The mate eyed his cowpuncher garb contemptuously.

"Strip off them rags and get into these," he said, and he threw down a dirty suit of dungarees. "Sharp!"

It was bitter to the Kid to discard his puncher outfit. But, for the present, the Kid was playing a soft game. There was nothing else for it, until he could get hold of a gun.

He stripped off the cowboy clothes and dressed in the dungarees. The change they made in his looks was remarkable.

"Bring them rags on deck," said Starboy.

grimly. "Only jest! You're l'arnin', boy—you're l'arnin' fast. How's your back?"

"Purty considerable painful," answered the Kid.

The mate chuckled.

"Nothin' like what it'll be if you don't jump to orders," he said. "I ain't holdin' it agin you that you was fresh when you come aboard. That was nat'ral, seeing as you was a puncher afore you took to the sea. But if you don't jump to orders now you're a seaman, I pity you, I sure do. You're in the port watch, if you've got savvy enough to know what that means, and you're under Hacker's orders. Chew on that!"

The mate strode aft.

It did not take the Kid long to learn that the crew was divided into two watches, port and starboard, alternately on duty; though he learned also that the Pond Lily was so short-handed that both watches were sometimes wanted together. There had been desertions at other places as well as at San Pedro; and the Pond Lily was large for a schooner, and needed a good many more hands than sailed in her at present. Hacker, the boatswain, was in the port

notched, walnut-butted guns that had been taken from him. The Kid thought of the guns with a fierce longing. Once they were in his hands he was ready to face the whole crew of the schooner, with a smile on his face, and show them how he had learned to shoot on the Double-Bar ranch in the Frio country. The captain and mate packed guns, he knew, but there was little chance of getting hold of them. More than once, during the watch, he eyed the boatswain. Hacker berthed forward with the men, and if he packed a gun—the Kid's thoughts ran on that.

The Kid heard eight bells strike, without knowing what it implied. The starboard watch came up, and the port watch went to their bunks; and as the Kid went with them, Hacker, who was going into the fore-castle, shoved him roughly aside.

For an instant the Kid turned on him with a blaze in his eyes. The boatswain caught that blaze and jumped back, his hand going to his hip.

The Kid went quietly into the fore-castle.

His heart was beating fast. THE POPULAR.—No. 520.

The boatswain packed a gun; that instinctive movement towards his hip-pocket told as much. There was a gun in the fore-castle, where the Kid bunked; and if the Rio Kid had not lost all his cunning, that gun would be in his grip before the night was out.

There were four men below—the boatswain, the Kid, and two seamen. There were bunks for twice as many, but the Pond Lily was short of hands. The Kid turned in very quietly, but not to sleep. The boatswain had flung himself into his bunk fully dressed as he was, and his deep breathing soon announced that he was asleep.

The Rio Kid's eyes were closed, but he had never been wider awake.

A dim, smoky lamp swung in the foul fore-castle of the schooner, shedding a dim light. From his bunk the Kid watched, while he waited. But he did not wait long.

The three men slept very soon. The night was warm, and the scuttle was open, and at intervals a sound of voices came from the deck. The Rio Kid slipped from his bunk.

He knew that he might be seen from the deck, but he had to take chances. Taking chances was not a new experience to the boy outlaw of the Rio Grande.

He stopped beside the snoring boatswain.

The ruffian was lying half on his back, the hip-pocket beneath him. To get at the gun without awakening him was impossible. The Kid had no weapon—nothing but his hands. With a grim

look on his face, a glitter in his eyes, he bent over the boatswain.

Hacker suddenly awakened, with a grip of iron on his throat. His eyes came wide open, and he glared at the Kid. Before he could utter the yell which trembled on his lips, the Kid had lifted his head and dashed it with fearful force against the wooden head of the bunk. It was a crashing blow that might have cracked a thinner skull, and it stunned the boatswain of the Pond Lily. One faint groan came from his bearded lips, and he collapsed insensible in the bunk.

"I guess I owed you that, feller," murmured the Rio Kid. "You was altogether too handy knocking a galoot on the cabeza from behind. I kinder reckon that puts paid to you, you dog-goned coyote!"

He rolled the huge body over, and groped for the revolver in the hip-pocket. His eyes danced as his fingers closed on it and he drew it out. He stepped back from the bunk, and examined the weapon swiftly. It was a heavy Navy revolver, six-chambered and loaded in every chamber. The Kid hummed a tune as his grasp closed hard on the butt. Two startled faces stared at him from two bunks. The seamen had been awakened by the crash of Hacker's hard head on the solid wood.

The Kid smiled at them pleasantly. "You 'uns want to keep quiet," he said in a soft drawl. "I ain't got any hunch for spilling your vinegar; but if you let out so much as a yaup, you get yours, and you get it sudden."

"'Jumpin' Moses!' murmured one of the men. "What do you reckon you're goin' to do with that gun?"

"I kinder reckon I'm goin' to talk with the galoots that shanghaied a cow-puncher, as they call it," said the Kid. "I've got a hunch that this outfit is goin' to turn right round an' take me back to San Pedro. I reckon that is a sure cinch, feller; and if you want to take a hand in the game, you only got to get on your legs and say so."

"No sugar in mine!" answered the scaman, with a grin; and he settled down in his bunk again, the other following his example.

"You're sure wise," said the Kid agreeably. "You're an ornery bunch of dog-goned coyotes, but I ain't got no hunch to spill your juice, if you stand clear of the rocks." But I'm sure honing to get a bead on that dog-goned mate and skipper. If you don't want yours, keep where you are, and don't horn in."

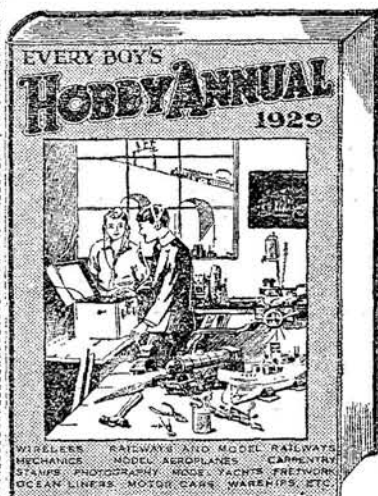
He stepped to the door of the fore-castle. From the deck came the sound of Starboy's rough voice, cursing one of the watch. The Kid listened and smiled. Overhead sailed a full, round moon. The schooner floated in a sea of silver. The Rio Kid ran lightly up the steps and stepped out on the deck.

THE END.

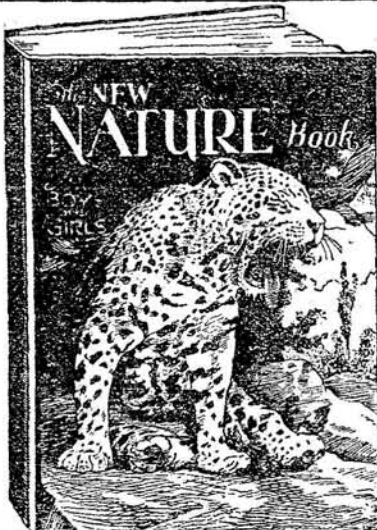
(Captain Shack has certainly caught a Tartar in the Rio Kid. This young outlaw is not a fellow to take a defeat, as he is proving. Don't miss: "TURNING THE TABLES!" next week's roaring Western yarn.)

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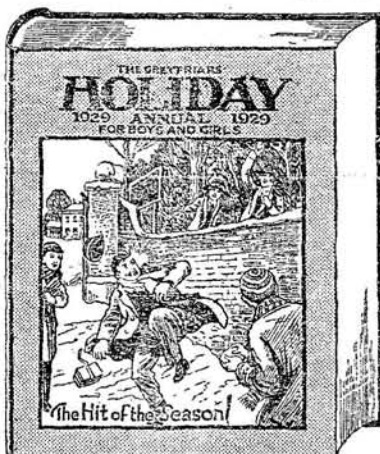
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**AGE SHANGHAIED PUNCHER!**

It's one thing to shanghai the Rio Kid aboard the schooner, Pony Lily, but quite another thing to keep him there, as Captain Shack learns to his cost!

# TURNING *the*

**THE FIRST CHAPTER.****The Missing Puncher!**

**O**LD MAN SAMPSON sat up in his rocker on the porch of the ranch-house, and stared under his knitted grizzled eyebrows at the puncher who came up the trail from San Pedro.

The Old Man frowned grimly.

It was morning on the Sampson ranch, and Old Man Sampson was chewing his siter-breakfast cigar as he sat on the porch and watched the trail.

The Old Man had a heart of gold, as all his outfit knew; but he had also the temper of a Tartar, and the outfit knew that also. When he let himself go, the Old Man had a flow of language that was scarcely to be equalled by any cowman or horse-wrangler in all the ranches of Texas.

As Santa Fe Sam came up the trail, riding his broncho, and leading a black-muzzled mustang, Old Man Sampson removed the cigar from his mouth preparatory to greeting the puncher when he arrived. Jeff Barstow, the foreman of the ranch, strolled along to the porch.

"Hyer comes Sam back from San Pedro, boys," he said.

Sport, from the Old Man.

"I guess I've got eyes, Jeff Barstow! I sure can sight the fog-goned geck. And where's that Carfax? Why ain't

he back? And why wasn't they both back yesterday? Huh!"

"I guess Sam will spill it when he gets right here," suggested Jeff. "They're both good boys—"

"Good boys nothin'!" snorted the boss.

If Jeff Barstow had aimed to avert the storm, he had failed. The Old Man was evidently going to make the fur fly. The fact was, the Old Man was anxious. Santa Fe Sam and the Rio Kid should have been back at the ranch well before sundown the day before. The Kid was a partner in the Sampson ranch, with a share of ten thousand dollars; and the Kid's buying in had saved the Old Man from ruin. The Old Man was not likely to forget that; but apart from that, he liked the handsome, cheery young puncher, and his frank and pleasant ways. Even had he learned that young Carfax was the Rio Kid, the outlaw of the Rio Grande, wanted by a dozen sheriffs in the pecos country, he would probably not have liked him the less. There were a good many questionable characters in the lithe coast town of San Pedro; and the Old Man had been worried when the two punchers did not return. And the sight of Santa Fe Sam returning, leading the Kid's horse, made him all the more worried for the one who had not returned.

Santa Fe Sam hitched the two horses

at the gate, where the wrangler came to take them to the corral, and walked on to the ranch-house. His face was clouded and troubled. The Old Man did not wait for him to begin.

"You pesky, goldarned son-of-a-gun, you've got back!" he barked. "You was sent to drive a bunch of cows, and you kinder reckoned you was going on a bender. I'm sure s'prised you come back at all. You been painting the town red, I reckon, and filling your carcass up to the neck with nooch. You sure are one loafing hombre. Where's Carfax?"

"You can search me," answered Sam distantly.

"You durned gink! You been horn- ing into a rookus with the toughs down in San Pedro, and getting my pardner shot up, or knifed by a degoned greaser," roared the Old Man.

"I guess—"

"You pie faced geck, what's happened to young Carfax?" roared Old Man Sampson. "Can't you spill it, you Gumb hobo?"

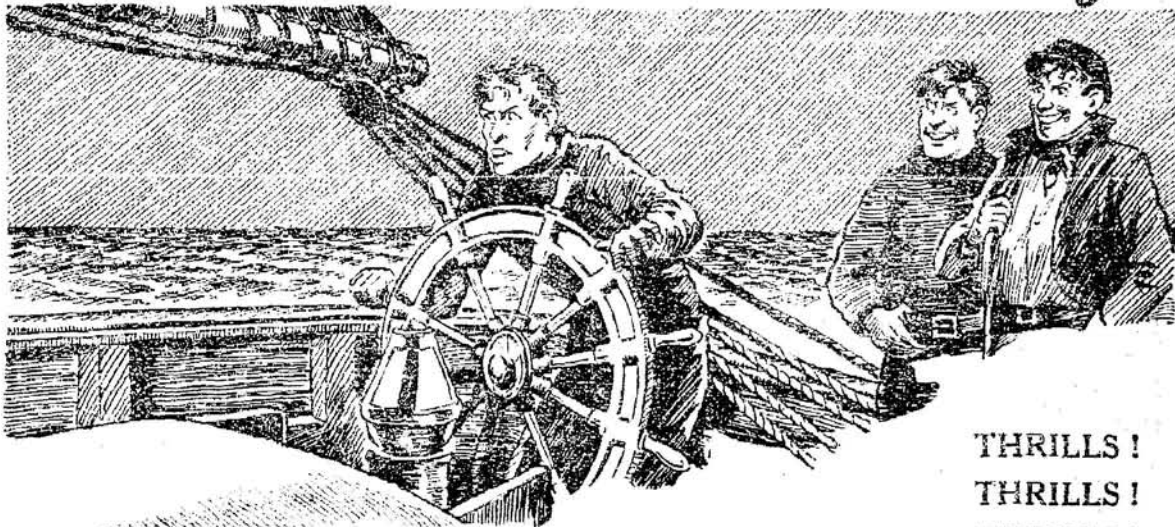
"I ain't wise to it," said the young puncher. "We sure handed over them cows in San Pedro, and I moscayed along to the posada to scare up a drink, and the Kid took a little passag along the shore. He allowed he was goin' to look at the ships while I was hornin' into the posada."

"Ships!" snorted the old rancher.



HERE'S A FINE LONG COMPLETE TALE OF WESTERN ADVENTURE—STARRING THE WORLD-FAMOUS CHARACTER—THE RIO KID!

# TABLES! *by* Ralph Redway



THRILLS!  
THRILLS!  
THRILLS!

"What in thunder does a cow-puncher want rubberin' at ships? You mean he was loafin' around while you was fillin' up on boot-leg hooch, you pesky scully-wag?"

"I looked around for him," said Santa Fe Sam. "I reckon he sure must have dropped into a hole and puled it in after him. Not a hide nor a hair of him was left in San Pedro, and nobody knowed where he had ramoozed to. He left his cayuse tied up along o' mine, so he never his any trail. But he ain't in San Pedro no more, and I stayed on all night huntin' signs—and he hadn't left any sign. So I humped it some."

The Old Man jumped up.

"Some of them dog-goned greasers in San Pedro have got him," he booted. "Mebbe some friends of the beef stealers he rounded up. Thunder! If they've hurt one hair of that Kid I'll sure tie the whole outfit down to San Pedro and shoot up the town."

"It ain't that," said Santa Fe Sam, shaking his head. "I've sure combed San Pedro from the horns to the tail, and no galoot there is wise to it. The Kid never got into any rookus in that burg. He jest walked along to the creek and then he jest dropped out of sight. Unless he's gone on a ship—"

"What would a puncher be doing on a ship?" roared the Old Man. "Talk bossense if you ain't quite loco."

The Old Man stared away towards San Pedro.

From the porch of the Sampson ranch the wide blue waters of the Gulf of Mexico could be seen stretching away to the sky. By the swampy inlet on the shore, the handful of shacks and 'loby houses nested, and the sail of a lugger could be seen.

Jeff Barstow broke in.

"Any pesky ship gone out since you was there, Sam?"

"Yep; a schooner went out in the night."

The foreman nodded.

"More'n one galoot has been roped on to a coasting craft, at that dog-goned hole at San Pedro," he said. "But I reckon they wouldn't want to rope in a puncher."

The Old Man started. "Snook and blazes!" he ejaculated. "If that's what—"

He broke off. If anything had happened to the Kid in the coast town the Old Man was prepared to ride rough-shod over that town with the Sampson outfit. But if some lawless skipper had shanghaied the young puncher, and run him out to sea, the Sampson outfit were powerless. The Old Man sank back into his rocker.

"If that's what—" he repeated. "I guess that Kid Carlar will sure be a pocket of dynamite if they've got him on a ship," said Jeff Barstow. "I sure wouldn't like to be the skipper that hed the brakin' of him. I'd rather break the oil-dredget buck-jumper in any rodeo in Texas. But—"

Old Man Sampson rose from his rocker. There was a deadly glint in the eyes under the grizzled brows.

"I'm goin' down to San Pedro," he said. "Tall six men to saddle up and fold me, Jeff. If the Kid's there we'll make that pesky burg sorry for itself if they've harmed him. I guess we owe them beef thieves a score, anyhow. Every galoot in that burg is a cow-stealer, or a smuggler, or a shanghai man. We're goin' after the Kid, and if we don't find him safe and sound we're goin' to make that burg sit up and howl. You hear me?"

And in five minutes the Old Man had packed his gun and mounted his horse, and was riding down the trail to San Pedro at the head of a bunch of punchers. If Kid Carlar was not found safe and sound in the coast town, there was a wild time ahead for San Pedro. And the Rio Kid was many a long mile away on board the schooner that was ploughing the blue waters of the Gulf of Mexico.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER. Gun Play!

UNDER the full round moon the wide waters of the gulf stretched like a sea of silver. More than a day's sail from the coast where the Rio Kid had been shanghaied, the schooner Pond Lily was far out of the sight of land.

In his bunk in his cabin, Captain Ezra Shack was sleeping. On deck the mate, Starboy, was in charge of the watch. Under the moon the schooner glided on with billowing sails before the breeze. Starboy, the mate, tramped the after-deck and pulled at a cigar. The man at the wheel chewed tobacco, and methodically squirted juice round about him. Only three other seamen were in the watch on deck; the schooner was short-handed. A bullying skipper and a bucco mate did not make the Pond Lily a popular craft, and there had been desertions from the crew, for which reason the Rio Kid had been knocked on the head and shanghaied. Shanghaing a man for his crew was no new device of Captain Shack's, and Starboy, the mate, prided himself upon the fact that in twenty-four hours—or two days at the most—he could have the roughest and fiercest recruit feeding from his hand. Mr. Starboy's belief was founded upon a long experience; he had shanghaied many a man in his time, and he had never failed.

But it was written that his first failure was to be the Rio Kid.

Mr. Starboy, as he tramped the after-deck, pulled at his cigar, watched the sails, and occasionally flung a curse at the crew, did not suspect what was happening in the fore-castle in those quiet moments. The port watch were below, and the Kid and the boatswain were in the port watch. Hacker, the boatswain, packed a gun, a necessary precaution on a craft like the Pond Lily, and the Kid's guns had been

taken away and were safe in the cabin. Not that the mate expected any more trouble from the shanghai-puncher. The Kid had given trouble, lots of it, but a rope's-end had, Mr. Starboy reckoned, cut the freshness out of him. He might need a few more lashings, and a blow or two from a capstan bar—which Mr. Starboy was ready and willing to hand out. So far, Bill Starboy had not the slightest idea that he had met with his first failure in breaking in a shanghai man.

He was about to make that interesting discovery.

Had Mr. Starboy only known it, the boatswain lay stunned in his bunk in the dingy little fore-castle of the schooner, and his gun was in the grip of the kidnapped puncher. And the two seamen in the fore-castle had only needed a glimpse of that gun, and the glint in the Kid's eyes, to make them decide to remain very quiet in their bunks. They were not looking for any trouble with a reckless puncher who was on the shoot.

So there was no alarm from the fore-castle when the Rio Kid got ready for business; not that the Kid would have cared if there had been. Once he had his grip on the butt of a six-gun, the Kid was prepared to wade in and handle the whole crew of the schooner. There was a lingering ache in the Kid's head from the stunning blow he had received at San Pedro, and his back was sore and burning from the flogging, a first sample of Mr. Starboy's methods of breaking in an unwilling recruit. That had to be paid for, and the Kid was ready to exact payment, now that he had the boatswain's six-gun in his grasp.

It was with a light heart, and with a smile on his face, that the Kid stepped on deck from the fore-castle. The Kid was on the prod now with a vengeance. In a suit of dirty dungarees, the boy puncher looked very little like the handsome, natty Kid, but when it came to shooting, he was the same Rio Kid who never failed to ring the bell every time he pulled a trigger.

The Kid kept his right hand down at his side, the revolver hidden in the baggy dungarees, as he lounged coolly on deck. The men in the watch on deck stared at him without interest, but they looked rather curious as the puncher went aft. After what he had already had from the bucko mate, they considered that the shanghai man would have done well to keep clear of Mr. Starboy; yet it looked as if he was hunting trouble. They looked on with interest to see what would happen.

Mr. Starboy's eyes fell on the Kid, in the bright moonlight that made almost day on deck, and he stared.

"Hyer, you!" he barked.

"Hallo, feller!" drawled the Kid.

The mate glared.

"You pesky land-lubber, don't you know you don't come on deck till the next watch?" snorted the mate. "You got a lot to learn about the sea, you sure have, and, by the holy piker, I'm the man to teach you! Now you're here, you can turn to, and I'll sure give you a job that will keep you busy till eight bells in the morning watch." "You don't say," grinned the Kid, still keeping the revolver hidden in the baggy dungarees.

"I sure do!" barked the mate. "You see that chain piled by the hawser-hole?"

"Yep."

"Get down to scraping it," said Mr. Starboy grimly. "I guess you can see that that chain is some rusty."

THE POPULAR.—No. 521.

"Just a few," agreed the Kid.

"If there's a speck of rust left on it by eight bells in the morning watch, look out for blue blazes," said the mate. "Get down to it!"

The Kid smiled cheerily.

Setting a man to scrape the rust from a chain was one of Mr. Starboy's methods of breaking the heart of an unwilling recruit. No doubt it was a good method, from Mr. Starboy's point of view.

The mate came a few steps nearer to the Kid. There was something in the shanghai man's manner that puzzled him. He had reckoned that the man-handling the Kid had already had, had put him wise, and that he had learned that he had to jump when he was told to jump. But if he wanted another lesson Mr. Starboy was the man to give it him. Indeed, he rather welcomed the task as a relief to the monotony of the night watch. Breaking in a rebellious spirit was pie to Mr. Starboy.

"You sure was fresh when you came on board this packet," said Mr. Starboy. "You look as if you've got it back again."

"Then my looks don't tell no lie," said the Kid. "I'm sure as fresh as ever I was, feller."

The mate grinned savagely.

"You reckon you ain't obeying orders on this hooker?" he asked.

"You've said it."

"I guess I'll give you something to cure all that," grinned Starboy. "I'm the very man you want to meet. I've broke in swabs that was as full of fight as a wild cat, in my time. I reckon when you've polished that chain you'll be ready to feed out of my hand."

"I ain't polished that 'ornery chain yet," drawled the Kid. "I guess I ain't honing for the job. What I want is, to have this pesky outfit turned back to take me to San Pedro."

"Blue blazes!" gasped the mate, more astonished than enraged, and a snicker came from the men on deck.

"That's what I want," said the Kid, with a nod. "That's what's the matter with Hanner, feller. I'm telling you to swing round this outfit and hit the trail for Texas. You want to do it quick."

"Loco," said the mate—"plumb loco! Hacker!" he roared. "Hacker! Turn out, there! Show a leg!"

The Kid chuckled.

"I guess Hacker ain't showing a leg, to any great extent, this side of dawn," he remarked. "He's sure cinched in that hole-up you call a fore-castle. He's had such a sockdolager on the cabeza, that I sure reckon he won't open his peepers before sun-up."

"You've handled Hacker?" yelled the mate.

"Sure," said the Kid.

"Men," the mate yelled to the watch on deck, "seize that man! Trice him up to the rigging!"

There was a forward movement of the rough crew. The Kid's hand leaped out from the baggy folds of the dungarees, with the revolver in it. The moonlight glimmered on the barrel as he raised it.

"Stand pat, you-uns!" he rapped out.

The seamen jumped back from the revolver. The Kid had the corner of his eye on them, but he was watching Starboy like a cat. He knew that it would come to shooting, but the Rio Kid would not shoot a man without a gun in his hand.

The mate, crimson with fury, reached to his hip-pocket for a gun.

"Drop that shooter!" he bellowed.

"Aw, forget it!" drawled the Kid.

"I'm offering to let you off a funeral if you turn this outfit round and hit for Texas."

Starboy dragged out his revolver.

"Drop that gun, or I'll shoot you dead in your tracks!" he roared.

He swung up the revolver, and there was no doubt that he meant every word of it. The Rio Kid had to drop the gun or use it, and he fired without a second's hesitation.

There was a gasping yell from the mate as he crumpled up on the deck. His revolver cracked at random, the bullet flying away through the rigging. The next moment the Kid had kicked the gun from his hand and picked it up. With a gun in either hand now the Kid faced the crew, who were starting forward at him.

"You'uns hornin' in?" grinned the Kid. "Horn in all you want, you dog-goned scallywags."

Two lifted guns, with two glinting eyes behind them, drove the crew scuttling into the fore-castle for cover. The Kid laughed.

He glanced down at the mate.

Starboy lay on the deck, his tanned face white. He had been shot through the chest.

"Mutiny, by the blue blazes!" he gasped. He made an effort to rise, and sank back again helplessly.

"I guess you've got yours," said the Kid coolly. "You sure roped in the wrong steer when you shanghai'd a puncher about my size, feller! Now I reckon I'm honing to see the boss of this outfit."

The Kid had not long to wait for the "boss of the outfit." The roar of the heavy Navy revolver had awakened the captain, and he came tramping up the companion, shouting out angry questions, with a gun in his hand. As he emerged on the deck, he looked two leveled revolvers full in the face.

"Put 'em up!" said the Rio Kid.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### The Kid Takes Control!

CAPTAIN SHACK stared blankly at the Kid.

He made a movement to raise the revolver in his hand, but checked that movement as he caught the cold, bleak glint in the puncher's eyes. He checked it barely in time to save his life.

"You—you—" he stammered. "I've told you to put 'em up, feller," drawled the Kid. "I ain't waiting long when I tell a galoot to saw the air."

"You—you've shot Starboy—" stammered the skipper.

"Sure! I guess I'm ready to let daylight through every galoot in this outfit!" answered the Kid cheerfully. "Drop that gun and put up your paws! Pronto!"

Crash! went the captain's revolver to the deck. Stammering with rage, he put his hands above his head.

"I'll hang you for this!" he yapped.

"I guess you ain't got a rope in the outfit that'll do it, feller," said the Kid. "Jest get it into your cabeza that I'm boss of this shebang now, and it will be good for your health. I'd shoot you as soon as look at you, you durned ornery man-stealing thief! Keep them paws up, if you don't want to hit Jordan so sudden you won't know how you got there!"

"I guess—"

"That's enough from you!" interrupted the Kid. "I ain't woke you up to hear you chew the rag. You've spilled enough for me."

He belted one of his guns, picked up

the captain's revolver, and tossed it into the sea.

"I reckon I can handle all the shooting-irons on this outfit," he remarked. "Keep them paws up, and back across to the fence of the corral."

By which the Kid meant the starboard rail. The captain, white with fury, did as he was bid, for there was sudden death in the Kid's gun, and pitiless purpose in his glinting eyes. Back to the rail, the skipper saved the air with his hands, his eyes flaming.

"You want a seat in this circus?" asked the Kid, glancing at the helmsman, who was staring at him like a man in a dream.

"None," gasped the man. "Not any in mine, thanks. I sure ain't hunting trouble with a gunman about your size!"

"You're wise," smiled the Kid. "I reckoned, when I was getting that rope on my back, that I'd wipe out every galoot in this outfit; but I sure hate to spill a man's juice if he ain't honing for trouble. The boss and the foreman are my game, so long as you other galoots keep quiet. Chew on it that if you begin any shananigan, you get yours so sudden it will sure surprise you!"

"Count me out, pardner," said the helmsman.

The Kid nodded, and turned away from him. He glanced along the deck to the forecabin, where startled faces were peering out at him.

"Hyer, you'uns!" shouted the Kid. "Come out of that! I ain't shooting if you're good little men. Pronto!"

There was a muttering of hoarse voices in the forecabin, but not a man stepped on deck.

"You hear me toot?" roared the Kid. "Step lively, or I'll sure shoot up that bunkhouse of yours!"

And, as the men did not emerge, the Kid fired, and the bullet smashed into the forecabin.

There was a howl.

"Let up, puncher! We're sure coming!"

"Pronto, then!" snapped the Kid.

The crew of the Pond Lily came on deck. Rough and brutal as they were, the scum of New Orleans, they eyed the Kid with uneasy fear. They knew a gunman when they saw one, and never had they seen a gunman so dangerous as the Kid was at that moment.

"Bring out that foreman of yours—the guy you call the boatswain," rapped the Kid. "I guess I want this outfit all under my eye."

"Sure!" gasped one of the seamen. Hacker, the boatswain, was dragged out of his bunk, and dragged up the steps to the deck. He was still insensible.

"Now get hold of a rope, some of you'uns, and hog-tie that galoot," directed the Kid. "It may save his life if he can't use his hands when he comes to."

The boatswain's arms were bound. Some of the rough crew were grinning now. The afterguard of the Pond Lily were not popular forward, and, ruffians as they were, the crew of the schooner could admire courage and reckless hardihood. It was sheer satisfaction

to them to see their captain backed up to the rail, holding up his hands, in terror of his life.

"Now bring a rope hyer, and hog-tie that boss of yours," said the Kid. "Fix him to that fence."

"You dare—" began Captain Shack. The Kid gave him a grim look.

"Ain't I told you you've spilled enough, feller?" he asked. "You want to keep that bully-beef trap of yours cinched tight, if you know what's healthy for you."

The skipper lapsed into infuriated silence.

"I ain't honing to spill your juice," said the Kid. "I got other ideas about you, feller. But raise a dust, and you get yours, same as your gol-darned foreman." He called to the crew.

as the Kid took hold of a length of rope and coiled it.

The rope descended across the captain's shoulders, with all the strength of the Kid's hefty arm. Six times it rose and fell, and Captain Shack yelled with rage and pain.

The Kid paused.

"You sure let out plenty yauping, feller!" he remarked. "You sure didn't hear me yauping to that extent when I was getting it yesterday—you sure did not! You lettin' on where you cached them guns?"

"You darned mutineer—" hissed the skipper.

The coiled rope rose and fell again. "Let up!" shrieked Esau Shack. "Let up, gol-dara you! Them guns are in my cabin shelf over the bunk, durn your hide!"

"I'll go see!" drawled the Kid.

He went down the companion. A kerosene lamp burned below, and by its light the Kid found the walnut-butted guns and the cartridge-belt which had been taken from him when he had been shangaied at San Pedro. Carefully the Kid loaded the guns, and belted them. His heart was lighter with those tried and trusty Colts in his possession. The guns he had taken from the mate and the boatswain he tossed through the porthole into the sea. Then he returned to the deck warily. But he had nothing to fear from the crew of the schooner. They were bunched forward, muttering a mong themselves, and some of them grinning.

"Hyer, you!" called out the Kid. "Carry that galoot down to his bunk!"

He pointed to the wounded man, who had laid unregarded where he had fallen. Starboy was unconscious now.

The mate was carried down and placed in his bunk. And the Kid, his good-nature in the hour of victory getting the better of his resentment, bound up the mate's wound with strips torn from a sheet.

Starboy's eyes opened, glaring at him with hatred.

The Kid nodded to him with a smile.

"I was reckoning I'd make it last sickness for you, you pesky man-stealer!" he said. "But you're sure keneed, and I guess you can take your chance. If we get to a doc, pretty sure, you may pull through, and you're welcome to the chance, you dog-goned rustler!"

And with a deaf ear to the mate's muttering curses, the Kid left him and went back to the deck. Captain Shack eyed him with bitter malevolence. The Kid spoke to the helmsman.

"I guess I don't rightly know the run of this hyer outfit," he said. "Put me on a trail in the sierras or the chaparral, and I sure reckon I'd find my way blindfold; but this outfit has got me beat. I aim to hit the trail for San Pedro, and I aim to hit it pronto. You figure that you know how to work the rifle?"

The helmsman grinned.

"I guess I can steer a course," he



**TIT FOR TAT!** The rope descended across the captain's shoulders with all the strength of the Kid's hefty arm. Shack let out a yell of rage and pain. "You sure let out plenty of yauping, feller," said the Kid. "But you didn't hear me yaup when I was getting the same yesterday!" (See Chapter 3.)

"Pronto, you galoots—ain't you wise to it that you've got a new boss?" Put his paws along the fence and rope 'em!"

Captain Shack's hands were tied to the rail.

A gesture from the Kid drove the crew back, and he examined the ropes. The skipper was quite secure.

"I reckon you're cinched, feller," said the Kid, smiling at the glare of hatred he received from the captain. "Now, tell me where you cached my guns."

Captain Shack made no answer.

"I've kinder got a hunch to handle my own guns," the Kid explained. "You goin' to put me wise?"

Still the captain did not speak, only his eyes burned with impotent fury at the Kid.

"Hyer, you'uns!" called out the Kid. "Bring a rope here and give that galoot six across the shoulders, same as the boatswain did me yesterday."

The men hesitated.

"You hear me yaup?" asked the Kid. Then he grinned. "By the great horned toad, if you're scared of him, hand me the rope!"

"You—you—" panted the captain,

answered. "But you've got to get the skipper to set a course."

"That so?" asked the Kid. "I reckon I could ride any boss without a boss or a foreman putting me wise. But this hyer outfit is sure new to me, and I allow there may be more to it than I savvy. You can't hit San Pedro on your own."

"None."

"Then I guess the boss will sure blaze the trail for you," said the Kid. He crossed to the captain. "I guess you're going to put that galoot on the trail for San Pedro. Pronto."

"You darned lubbery landseaman!" hissed the skipper. "How you reckon we're to make Texas in this wind?"

The Kid scratched his head.

"I ain't wise to this game," he answered. "Ships is sure different from hosses, and that's a cinch. But you got to hit Texas, and you got to do it quick. I've got a rope here that says you'll find out some way of doin' it, savvy?"

"I tell you—"

"You can't do it?" asked the Kid.

"None!" hissed the skipper.

The rope rose and fell with a mighty lash, and the skipper of the Pond Lily howled.

"You figure you can work the riddle now?" asked the Kid.

"I tell you—keep that rope off!" shrieked Captain Shack. "I reckon we can make a tack."

"I reckon you can make anything you darn well like, so long as we hit Texas," answered the Kid. "If we don't sight San Pedro mighty soon, you won't have much skin on your back to take ashore with you, feller. Get down to it and don't lose time."

Captain Shack, stuttering with rage, hissed orders to the crew. The schooner swung round; and during the remainder of the night the whole crew were kept busy, for it was only by a series of tacks that the schooner was able to retrace her way. The Kid, to whom the sailing of a ship was a deep mystery, was suspicious at first, and disposed to take the knotted rope again to the captain, suspecting him of deliberately losing time. But he gathered from the words and actions of the crew that the skipper was giving the right orders, and settled down to be patient. Progress was slow, but he was on his way back to Texas, and the Kid was satisfied with that.

#### THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Tit for Tat!

**L**AND!"

The Rio Kid's eyes brightened.

The night, and a whole day and another night, had passed. During that time the Rio Kid had not closed his eyes in sleep. That cost the hardy Kid little; on the prairie, and in the chaparral, he had often passed three days and nights waked. In the sunrise the coast of Texas loomed over the blue waters to the west, and the Kid's adventures afloat were drawing near their end. After the first night, the captain had been unbound from the rail, with a warning that at the first sign of trickery he would get cold lead. The warning was more than enough for Captain Shack. The Kid's walnut-butted guns were the only firearms left on the schooner; the Kid had taken care of that. Had he closed his eyes in slumber, Esau Shack might have induced the crew, by promises and threats, to back

him up in making an attack on the puncher who had taken command of the schooner. But the Kid's wary eyes did not close; and so long as he was wakeful, with guns at hand, no man on board the Pond Lily dared to raise a finger against him—least of all Esau Shack. Once the boatswain's hand had lingered over a capstan bar, when the Kid's back seemed to be turned. But the Kid seemed to have eyes in the back of his head, for before Hacker could get a grip on the bar, a puff of smoke came from the Kid's hip, and the boatswain withdrew his hand with a shriek, with a bullet-hole clean through the palm. The boatswain was now carrying an arm in a sling, and the lesson was not lost on the crew, if they had needed one.

And now, in the sunrise, land was in sight; the schooner was approaching San Pedro once more. Captain Shack had been as eager to sight the coast town as the Kid could be. For the long delay in the return was making the Kid suspicious, and the glint that came into his eyes when he looked at the skipper, sent cold chills down Esau Shack's spine. Once the Kid felt sure that the skipper was losing time, Esau Shack was a dead man, and he knew it. And he did not lose time; he was getting better speed out of the schooner than he had ever got before, and he gasped with relief when he saw land ahead.

## THE LATEST CRAZE!

Are you collecting the fine Metal Motor Car Badge, which are being given away every week in the "Magnet" Library? They're the goods—everybody's collecting 'em!

The schooner beat down to San Pedro, and the Kid's eyes glistened at sight of the rolling prairie beyond the coast town.

"That's sure a sight for sore eyes," said the Kid genially, "and it ain't come any too soon for you, feller. I was sure beginning to reckon you was fooling. How long before we bed down at San Pedro?"

The skipper licked his dry lips. His heart was aching with hatred and fury. The humiliation of sailing his ship under the orders of the puncher whom he had shanghaied was gal and wormwood to him. He had been shamed before the eyes of all his crew, and he did not need telling that they had enjoyed his humiliation, and would spit the yarn in port. But there was sudden death in opposing the Kid, and the cowed bully was not prepared to face that. His thoughts dwelt longingly on the near future, when he might have a chance to deal with the puncher. He did not guess what the near future held in store for him. The Rio Kid was not by any means done with him yet.

"I reckon we'll make the inlet in a couple of hours now," he answered sulkily.

"Muy bien!" smiled the Kid.

His eyes dwelt pleasantly on the grass-land beyond the coast, and the Junapa of chaparral, and a grazing herd of cows. The schooner ran down at last to San Pedro, glided into the inlet, and the sails dropped, and the anchor swung down to the mud. Half a dozen loafers on the bank stared curiously at her. The schooner had not been expected back at San Pedro. Captain Shack fixed his eyes, burning with hate, and on the Rio Kid.

"Now get out of my ship, you dog-goned puncher!" he said, between his teeth. "I'll give you a beat ashore. You've made me lose three days and more on my trip—"

The Kid laughed softly.

"That ain't all the time you're going to lose, feller," he said. "You're coming off this outfit with me."

"What?"

The Kid's eyes fixed on him, cold as steel.

"You reckoned you could rope in a puncher, and make a seaman of him, whether he stood for it or not," he said. "Now I guess you're going to get your own medicine, and get it where you've asked for it. You're coming on the ranch with me, feller."

Esau Shack stared at him, open-mouthed.

"Get me?" smiled the Kid. "You ain't made a seaman of me, feller—you sure did slip up on it, and slipped up on it bad. But I'm goin' to try my hand at making a puncher of you, and I reckon I'll have better luck. I've had three days on your outfit. You're going to have three weeks on mine, and then I'll call it square. Get me?"

The skipper could only glare. There was a chuckle from the men on the schooner's deck.

"You—you darn pesky puncher!" gasped the skipper at last. "What you reckon's goin' to happen to my schooner all that time?"

"I sure don't care a continental red cent what happens to your schooner, feller. I reckon that bunch of yours will desert, and I shan't be surprised if they take along with them everything that they can lay their hands on. That's your funeral, not mine. You should sure have thought about it before you roped in a Texas puncher. You're going to punch cows on the ranch for three weeks, feller, and that's a cinch." He turned to the grinning crew. "You 'uns put that boat into the water, pronto."

The boat was lowered.

"You want to step into that boat, and step lively, you Shack," said the Kid pleasantly.

And as Esau Shack, instead of stepping into the boat, raved out oaths, the Kid grasped him in a sinewy grip, one grip on his collar, the other on the back of his belt, ran him to the side, and tossed him bodily into the boat. Esau Shack lauded there with a crash that knocked every ounce of breath out of his fat body. The Kid followed him in, with a jump. The Rio Kid knew how to handle a boat, if not a ship; he picked up the oars, shoved off from the schooner, and pulled for the shore. From the rail of the schooner a row of grinning faces watched them depart—the Kid rowing, the skipper feebly cursing in the bottom of the boat—shanghaied in his turn, and booked for three weeks of cow-punching on the Sampson ranch.

THE END.

(There's sensation and amusement in next week's stirring long Western yarn, entitled: "THE RIO KID'S REVENGE!" You'll miss a treat if you miss this fine story.)