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THE PRAIRIE

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER



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CLASSICS Illustrated APRIL, 1949 Number 58 Published monthly by GILBERTON COMPANY, INC., 824 Broadway, New York 3, N. Y. Subscription \$1.00 for 12 issues Entered as second class matter March 10, 1940 Registered as second class matter March 28, 1942 at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. MAILED at ADDS, Washington, D. C. JERRY A. RAPLAN, Editorial Assistant Copyright 1949 in U.S.A. and all foreign countries. All rights reserved including the right to reproduce the publication or portions thereof in any form. Printed in U.S.A.

THE PRAIRIE

by JAMES FENIMORE COOPER

ILLUSTRATED BY RUDOLPH PALAS



SOON AFTER THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE IN 1803, GREAT NUMBERS OF TRAPPERS AND SQUATTERS FROM THE EAST BANKS OF THE MISSISSIPPI BEGAN THEIR TREK WESTWARD THROUGH THE GREAT STRETCHES OF SANDY WASTES KNOWN AS THE GREAT PRAIRIE. UNWINDFUL OF THE TRIBES OF SAVAGE INDIANS WHO RESENTED THE ENCRoACHMENT OF THE WHITE MAN ON THEIR LAND, FOREMOST AMONG THE BANDS OF STURDY WANDERERS WERE THE FAMILIES OF ISHMAEL BUSH AND HIS WIFE'S BROTHER, ABRAHAM, WHO, AFTER A WEARY ALL-DAY MARCH, WERE SEEKING A SUITABLE SPOT TO CAMP FOR THE NIGHT.

A AS THE SUN FELL BELOW THE NEAREST HAZE OF THE PRAIRIE, A HUMAN FORM APPEARED IN THE CENTER OF THE FIERY FLOOD OF LIGHT.



KEEP YOUR GUNS READY UNTIL WE CAN BE SURE TO HIS BEING FRIEND OR FOE!



SEND THE BOYS OFF TO THE RIGHT! WARRANT ME, AGA OR ABERN WILL GIVE SOME ACCOUNT OF THE CREATURE!



IT MAY BE WELL ENOUGH TO TRY THE RIFLE! THE PIAWNEE-LOUPS ARE SAID TO BE HUNTING BY HUNDREDS IN THE PLAIN. IF SO THEY'LL NEVER MISS A SINGLE MAN FROM THE TRIBE!



STOP HIM, ITHUAD! IT MAY BE A FRIEND!



PUT BY THE PEEB, ABERN! MY JOB IS NOT YET ENDED. LET US FINISH THE LITTLE THAT REMAINS IN PEACE!

AS THE PARTY APPROACHED THE SOLITARY FIGURE, THE TALL, GAUNT, FOOTLESS HOUND BEGAN TO BELLOW...

DOWN, HECOR, DOWN! WHAT HAVE YE TO DO, PUP, WITH MEN WHO JOURNEY ON THEIR LAWFUL WAY?



STRANGER... IF YOU ARE MUCH ACCQUAINTED IN THIS COUNTRY, CAN YOU TELL US WHERE I MAY CAMP FOR THE NIGHT?

COME WITH ME, THERE'S LITTLE MORE I CAN OFFER ON THIS HUNGRY PRAIRIE.



THE STRANGER LED THE LITTLE BAND TO A GURGLING STREAM, SURROUNDED BY FOLiage AND TREES...

WELL, STRANGER, DO YOU THINK THIS SPOT SHOULD PROVIDE THE NEEDED CONVENIENCE?

AYE, THIS MAY DO! BOYS, YOU HAVE SEEN THE LAST OF THE SUN... BE STRONG!



HIS ELDEST SON, ASA, STEPPED FORWARD AND WITHOUT ANY APPARENT EFFORT, BURIED HIS AXE IN THE SOFT BODY OF A COTTONWOOD TREE...



HIS COMPANIONS ADVANCED IN A BODY TO THE WORK, AND HAD SOON STRIPPED A SMALL BUT SUITABLE SPOT OF ITS BURDEN OF FOREST...



THE OLD MAN'S ATTENTION WAS ATTRACTED TO ISHMAEL AND HIS COMPANIONS AS THEY ROLLED ONE OF THE WAGONS AWAY FROM THE OTHERS...



CURIOUSLY A TENT AROUND THE WAGON, THEY PULLED THE EMPTY VEHICLE FROM ITS PROTECTIVE COVER, WITHOUT REVEALING WHAT WAS HIDDEN UNDERNEATH THE TENT...



HIS CURIOSITY AROUSED, THE ALSO WANDERER APPROACHED THE TENT AND WAS ABOUT TO PEER BETWEEN THE FOLDS...

HOLD ON, STRANGER!
IT'S AN HONEST
REGULATION, AND
SOMETIMES IT IS A
SAFE ONE WHICH SAYS,
"WALK YOUR OWN
BUSINESS!"

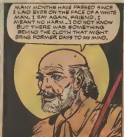


NEVER BELIEVE BRING
ANYTHING TO BE
CONCEALED INTO THE
DESERT... AND I
HOPED NO OFFENSE
IN EXAMINING
YOUR COMFORTS.

OUR COMFORTS ARE
WELL PROVIDED
FOR, STRANGER, AND
I WILL NOT
BROOK ANY PEERING
INTO THEM!



MANY MONTHS HAVE PASSED SINCE
I LAID EYES ON THE FACE OF A WHITE
MAN, I SAY AGAIN, FRIEND, I
WANTED NO HARM... I DID NOT KNOW
BUT THERE WAS SOMETHING
BEHIND THE CLOTH THAT MIGHT
BRING FORTUNE DOWN TO MY HAND.



THE PRAIRIE

AS NIGHT APPROACHED, CHYMAEL INVITED THE STRANGER TO PARTAKE OF THEIR EVENING MEAL.

I TAKE IT YOU'RE AN OLD SETTLER IN THESE DISTRICTS. YOU'RE THE FIRST WHITE FACE WE'VE SEEN IN A GOOD FIVE HUNDRED MILES.

I'M A TRAPPER AND HAVE BEEN SEVENTY AND FIVE YEARS ON THE ROAD.



YOU'VE FOUND IT NO EASY MATTER TO FORD THE WATER-COURSES... AND TO MAKE YOUR WAY SO DEEP INTO THE PRAIRIES, FRIEND, WITH TEAMS OF HORSES AND HERDS OF HORNED BEASTS!

WE LOST SEVERAL OF OUR CATTLE AT THE CROSSING OF THE MAIN RIVER, BUT SINCE THEN, WE HAVE DONE BETTER BY BRIDGING A CREEK EVERY DAY OR TWO!



THE MEAL FINISHED, THE MEN WITHDREW AND BEGAN PREPARING FOR THE NIGHT...



THEY SOON COMPLETED THE WORKS OF DEFENSE. ARMED WATCHES WERE PLACED ON EITHER SIDE OF THE ENCAMPMENT FOR PROTECTION AT NIGHT.



THE TRAPPER, WHO HAD LEFT THE CAMP, WAS STARTLED BY A GROWL FROM HIS DOG.

WHAT NOW, HECTOR? WHAT IS IT, PUP. SPEAK PLAINER.. WHAT IS IT!



SUDDENLY, A FEMALE FORM APPEARED OVER A RIDGE IN THE BACKGROUND AND THE TRAPPER RECOGNIZED THE GIRL WHO HAD BEEN ADDRESSED AS ELLEN WADE BY ISHMAEL...



I THOUGHT YOU WERE GONE - THEY SAID WE SHOULD NEVER SEE YOU AGAIN.

TELL ME, GIRL, HOW IS IT I SAW NO DOGS AMONG THE TRAILS OF YOUR FATHER?



FATHER! I HAVE NO FATHER, OR ANY FAMILY, FOR THE MASTER! PERHAPS YOU CAN CALL ME A WARD OF ISHMAEL, AS I HAVE CHOSEN TO CAST MY FORTUNE WITH HIS PEOPLE IN THE DESERT!



AS ELLEN SPOKE, SHE CAST FURTHER GLANCES ABOUT HER, AS THOUGH SHE WERE EXPECTING SOMEONE... AGAIN THE DOG GROWLED.

THE DOG SCENTS MISCHIEF IN THE AIR! THERE'S A FROWLER ABOUT WHO MAY BE DANGEROUS!



QUICKLY, THE TRAPPER LEVELLED HIS GUN...

FOR GOD'S SAKE BE NOT TOO HASTY! IT MAY BE A FRIEND, AN ACQUAINTANCE... A NEIGHBOR!





A GAIN THE TRAPPER'S BOO-BAYE ALARM.

CHILDREN, WE'RE NOT ALONE IN THESE DREAKY FIELDS! IF YOU'LL HARKEN TO THE VOICE OF AN OLD MAN, YOU'LL QUICKLY SO DIFFERENT WAYS TO YOUR PLACES OF SHELTER AND SAFETY!



THE OLD MAN IS RIGHT, PAUL! MY TIME IS OUT, AND WE MUST PART, SO...

HEH! DO YOU HEAR NOTHING? THAT SOUND BEATS THE EARTH LIKE A HERD OF MAD, STAMPEDING BUFFALOES!



THE UNUSUAL SOUND NOTED BY PAUL NOW BECAME MORE DISTINCT AS THEY DREW EVER CLOSER...

NOW THEY'RE IN THE BOTTOM WHERE THE GRASS IS HIGH, AND THE SOUND IS DEADENED! ARE THERE THEY GO ON THE HARD EARTH! THEY'RE COMING UP ON THE SWELL CRAD UPON US!

COME, ELLEN...



TOO LATE... TOO LATE! A BLOODY BAND OF ACCURSED SQUIGS! THEY ARE, BY THEIR THINNING LOOKS, AND THE FASHION IN WHICH THEY RIDE! DOWN INTO THE GRASS!

INDIAN TRIBE!



AND SOONER HAD THEY THROWN THEMSELVES DOWN INTO THE GRASS WHEN A FIERCE BAND OF SAAGE TRIBESMEN APPEARED IN THE DISTANCE, RIDING HEAD-ON IN THEIR DIRECTION...



THEY'RE GOING
DOWN THE
SWELL TOWARD
THE ENCAMPMENT
BY THE LIND.
THEY'VE TURNED
AND ARE HEADED
THIS WAY!



AS THE SAVAGE HORDE APPROACHED THE
SPOT WHERE THE THREE WERE HIDDEN IN
THE GRASS, SOME OF THEM DEMONSTRATED AND
SCOLLED THROUGH THE BRUSH.



ONE OF THE WARRIORS, WHO SEEMED TO BE THEIR LEADER, SUMMONED HIS
CHIEFS AROUND HIM FOR A CONSULTATION...



LAY DOWN YOUR
PIECE SHOULD THE MOON
TOUCH THE BARREL, IT
WILL BE SEEN BY THE
DEER-WOODS EYES
ARE KEENER THAN
THE SHARPEST OF SIGHTS!

SUDDENLY PAUL FELT
A HARD HAND LAD
SLID ON HIS
SHOULDER...



QUICKER THAN THE FLASH OF HIS OWN
SUN... WILL SPRING UPON THE SAVAGE...



A PALE, FORTENED, HIS GIBB, AROUND THE INDIAN'S THROAT, HE FELT THE POWERFUL ARM OF THE TRAPPER AROUND HIS BACK.

THERE ARE TOO MANY OF THEM FOR US, SON! WE MUST YIELD, AND TRUST TO OUR WITS TO GET OURSELVES OUT OF THIS!



FORCED TO SURRENDER TO SUPERIOR NUMBERS, THE WHITE MEN WERE STRIPPED OF THEIR ARMS, AND ANOTHER CONSULTATION WAS HELD BY THE CHIEFS.

FROM WHAT I CAN UNDERSTAND OF THEIR TONGUE, THE INDS. ARE ON THE SCENT FOR FLINTS! I FEAR THE SETTLERS IN THE ENCAMPMENT ARE IN GRAVE DANGER!



I CAN MAKE YOURSELF HEARD A MILE IN THESE FIELDS, AND SHAGBARK CAMP IS BUT A SHORT QUARTER MILE FROM US!

AND GET HADDED ON THE HEAD FOR YOUR PAINT? NO...NO! CURRING MUST MATCH CLANNING...OR THE DEVILS WILL MURDER THE WHOLE FAMILY!



LOOK HERE TRAPPER, FEW MEN LOVE ISHMAEL BUSH AND HIS SEVEN SLIDEGHAMMER SONS LESS THAN I DO. IF IT COMES TO A FIGHT, THERE ARE FEW WHO COULD STAND UP AGAINST THE BLOOD!



THE ENTIRE INDIAN BAND DISMOUNTED, BRING THEIR HORSES TO THREE OF THE PARTY, WHO GUARDED THE PRISONERS, THEN, GATHERING IN A CIRCLE AROUND THEIR CHIEF, THEY MOVED CAUTIOUSLY FROM THE CENTER IN OVERLAPPING LINES!



THE PRAIRIE

SOON, THE INDIANS CAME STRAGGLING BACK.

THEY'VE FAILED TO FIND THE ENCAMPMENT! OUR TIME IS AT HAND... WE'RE ABOUT TO BE QUESTIONED!

A TALL, HALF-BRAIDED INDIAN APPROACHED THEM.

I KNOW THE LANDINGS OF THE SIOUX, AND WITHOUT PERMISSION, I WILL ACT AS BROKERSMAN!

AS THEY EXCHANGED GREETINGS, THE INDIAN ACCUSED HIMSELF TO THE TRAPPER, WHO ANSWERED HIM IN HIS OWN TONGUE.

HAVE THE PALE-FACED TAKEN THE SHINE FROM YOUR OWN EYES? THAT THEY COME TO COUNT HOW MANY ARE LEFT AMONG THE PRAIRIES!

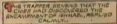
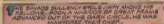
IS A FRIENDLY INDIAN TRIBE, BUT A BITTER SOB OF THE SIOUX...

THE TRAPPER WAS NOT OCCUPIED BY THE ATTEMPT AT DECEPTION BY THE SAVAGE. HE WELL KNEW THAT HE AND HIS COMPANIONS WERE NOT THE CAPTIVES OF THE FRIENDLY PRAIRIES, BUT IN THE HANDS OF THE TREACHEROUS SIOUX.

IF THE PRAIRIES ARE THE OWNERS OF THE LAND, THEN WHITE AND RED ARE HERE BY EQUAL RIGHTS! THE PRAIRIES AND THE WHITE MEN ARE BROTHERS BUT A SIOUX CANNOT SHOW HIS FACE IN THE VILLAGE OF THE PRAIRIES!

THE DANGLING EARS HAVE NO FEAR! SPEAK! WHAT BRINGS YOU SO FAR FROM THE VILLAGE OF THE PALE FACED!

ANOTHER NAME FOR THE SIOUX...



THE PARTY WAS BROUGHT TO A HALT WITHIN SIGHT OF THE ENCAMPMENT. THE WARRIORS DISMOUNTED, FOLLOWING THEIR CHIEF STRAIGHTLY IN THE DIRECTION OF THE SLUMBERING SETTLERS. THE INDIAN HORSES WERE TETHERED TOGETHER WITH A SINGLE THONG, AND LEFT GUARDED BY WELCHA AND TWO OTHER CHANGES.



AFTER A LONG SILENCE, A WILD CONVICTION APPREHENDED THE PROBABLE OF THE RETURN OF THE INDIANS.

LOOK! THEY HAVE ROBBED THE SOLATTER OF HIS BEASTS! THE REST OF US HAVE LEFT HIM AS HOPELESS AS A BEAVER!



WHILE ALL EYES WERE DIRECTED TO THE INDIAN HORN, HORN OF HORN AND BEASTS, THE OLD TRAPPER CAUGHT THE GAZE FROM THE HANDS OF HIS WARRIORS GUARD, AND AT A SINGLE STROKE, SEVERED THE THONG CONNECTING THE INDIAN HORSES.



THE EXCITED BEASTS REARED UP AND SPED AWAY IN ALL DIRECTIONS WITH THE INDIANS IN WILD PURSUIT.

THAT WAS A DEFT AND COURAGEOUS STROKE, TRAPPER! HAD WE NOT BETTER FOR HIMSELF BUSH THERE'LL BE A REGULAR FIGHT WHEN HE FEELS HE'S BEEN ROBBED OF HIS BEASTS!

NO, BULL! YOU'LL NOT BE SEEN DOWN THERE! GO, THE TRAPPER WILL TAKE CARE OF ME!



AS THE HUNTER RELUCTANTLY LEFT, THEY COULD SEE THE INDIAN HORSES HORN UP FROM BELOW.

I'LL GO DOWN TO MEET THEM, BULL, YOU MUST CHANCE STAYING HERE TILL THEY HAVE RETIRED AGAIN FOR THE NIGHT!



SAVING ALLEN TO CONCEAL HERSELF, THE TRAPPER WALKED DOWN TOWARD THE PARTY, HE WAS RECOGNIZED, AND A MOMENT LATER.

DO YOU SEE THE TRAPPING SAWARD WHO STOLE MY CATTLE?

YES! THEY HELD ME PRISONER WHILE THEY WENT INTO YOUR CAMP!



4 SEIZED BY THE OLD MAN THAT THEY WOULD NOT AGAIN BE ATTACKED THAT NIGHT. THEY ALL REVERED, WHEN ALL WERE ASLEEP, ELLER STOLE BACK INTO THE ENCAMPMENT AND REACHED THE PARTY THE NEXT MORNING.

TELL ME, TRAPPER, DO YOU KNOW OF A PLACE WHERE WE CAN PITCH OUR CAMP WHERE WE WILL BE BETTER PROTECTED FROM THE SANGERS?

THREE LONG MILES FROM THIS SPOT IS A PLACE WHERE A STAG MIGHT BE MADE!



WE'VE NO BLASTS TO HELP PULL THE WAGGONS, BUT IF YOU'LL SHOW US THE WAY, WE HAVE THE MANPOWER THAT WILL GET US THERE!



IN A FEW MINUTES, THE WAGGONS, DRIVEN BY THE POWERFUL BOYS OF SHARAH, WERE BEING HAULED IN THE DIRECTION THE TRAPPER HAD INDICATED.



THE TRAPPER WATCHED AS THE SQUIPPER AND ABRAHAM SACKED THE LITTLE WAGON INTO THE MYSTERIOUSLY COVERED TENT.



THERE'S SOMETHING STRANGE AND MYSTERIOUS ABOUT THE GONGS-ON IN THIS TENT.



SOON AFTER, ISMAEL AND HIS ASSISTANT EMERGED FROM THE TENT, AND WITHDREW THE WAGON, WHICH WAS NOW COVERED.



THAT OLD MAN MEANS NO GOOD BY STICKING HIS NOSE INTO OUR BUSINESS!

STRANGER, I DO NOT LIKE YOUR PEEVING INTO OUR AFFAIRS. AS THOUGH WE WERE CRIMINALS, TO WHAT LAWYER OR SHERIFF DO YOU CALCULATE TO SELL YOUR NEWS?

I HOLD LITTLE DISCOURSE EXCEPT WITH ONE... A JUDGE... AND JUDGE OF ALL LITTLE WILL YOUR WISH TO KEEP ANYTHING SECRET FROM HIS PROFIT YOU... EVEN IN THE OBSCURE?



THE HOUSTING TENDERS OF HIS UNWANTED LISTENERS WERE REBUKED BY THE SIMPLE SOLEMN MANNER OF THE TRAPPER... THEY FOLLOWED Sullenly IN THE WAKE OF THE OTHERS...



A WEEK PASSED, IN WHICH THE SQUATTER AND HIS FAMILY HAD TOILED HARD AND LONG IN PREPARING A STRONGHOLD THAT WOULD WITHSTAND AN ATTACK FROM THE RED-MEN...



AMID THE MONOTONOUS ROLLING OF THE WAGONS, A SINGLE NAKED AND RAGGED ROCK AROSE ON THE MARGIN OF A LITTLE WATER-COURSE. HERE, AMONG THE REMAINDER OF LOGS AND STONE, THE SQUATTERS HAD BUILT THEIR FORTRESS---



WE WILL DIVIDE OURSELVES INTO TWO GROUPS... ONE TO HUNT FOR FOOD... THE OTHER TO REMAIN ON GUARD HERE!

FRANKIE, WITHIN A SHORT DISTANCE OF THE ENEMY TRENCH, THE TRAPPER WAS ENTERTAINING PAUL WITH A SANDY DISH OF BIRD'S ELM.

I SHOULD SWEAR THIS IS THE STRONGEST MEAL THAT WAS EVER PLACED BEFORE THE MOUTH OF MAN.



AND! WELL, YOU MAY CALL IT STRONG! STRONG IT IS, AND STRONG IT MAKES HIM WHO EATS IT!



SUDDENLY...

HOW NOW, WHO COMES HERE!



As there was nothing hostile in the appearance of the stranger, the trapper invited him to share the meal.

HOW MANY WEEKS ARE YOU FROM THE SETTLEMENTS, BOY?

'TIS MANY A WEEK, I FEAR IT MAY BE MANY MORE BEFORE I RETURN.



IF I OBSERVE YOUR DRESS AND BEARING CORRECTLY, YOU MUST BE AN OFFICER IN THE SERVICE!

I AM CAPTAIN MIDDLETON OF THE ARTILLERY, AND HAVE COME TO THE DESERT ON A PRIVATE MISSION THAT MAY WELL ASTOUND YOU WHEN YOU HEAR IT!



CAPTAIN MIDDLETON UNFOLDED THE STORY OF HIS MISSION THAT LED HIM ALONE FROM THE SETTLEMENTS INTO THE DREARY WASTES OF THE DESERT, A STORY THAT ASTONISHED HIS LISTENERS, AND DREW THE EYES OF THE TRAPPER TO THE MYSTERIOUS THINGS HE HAD WITNESSED IN THE CAMP OF BIRNIE, EREN.



BACK AT THE ENCAMPMENT, ISHMAEL'S PARTY RETURNED FROM THE HUNTING EXPEDITION...

HALLOO! OLD ESTHER— COME DOWN WITH ALL YOUR YOUNG AND LEND A HAND TO CARRY UP THE MEAT!

 A group of men and women are gathered around a large animal carcass. One man in a red plaid shirt is shouting to another woman. The scene is set in a natural, outdoor environment with some vegetation.

A FEW MINUTES LATER, ESTHER MADE PREPARATIONS FOR THE MEAT.

WHERE IS ASA? HE DID NOT RETURN WITH YOU FROM THE HUNT!

IT WILL BE WELL IF THE BOY HAD ESCAPED THE BOUNT! I SAW TRACKS DOWN THERE THAT LED ME TO BELIEVE THE SAVAGES HAD BEEN HERE!

 Esther is shown in the foreground, focused on her task. In the background, other people are visible, some looking towards the speaker. The scene is set in a simple, outdoor camp area.

SPARE YOUR BREATH, ABRAHAM. IF YOU CAN USE IT ONLY TO SCARE THE WOMAN! ASA WILL RETURN SOON WITH A FAT BECK, MARK MY WORD!

 Abraham, wearing a red plaid shirt and a hat, is speaking to Esther. She is looking at him with a concerned expression. The background shows some foliage and a simple structure.

ESTHER WAS UNCONFOUNDED. NEXT MORNING, FINDING THAT ASA HAD NOT RETURNED, SHE ADDRESS'D HER HUSBAND...

ISHMAEL, ASA HAS NOT COME BACK! I FEAR SOME HARM HAS COME TO HIM...

EDGE THE BOYS, AND WE'LL ALL GET OUT IN SEARCH OF HIM!

 Esther is sitting up in bed, looking distressed. A man (Ishmael) is lying in bed next to her, looking unwell. The scene is set in a simple room with a window.

ESTHER HAD TO STANDWATCH OVER THE CHILDREN, AND PREPARATIONS WERE MADE AGAINST ANY HOSTILE ATTACK WHILE THE MEN WERE AWAY...

YOU AND THE CHILDREN WILL HOLD THE FORTRESS AND HOLD THESE ROCKS OVER THE SIDE IF ANY INDIANS SHOULD ATTEMPT TO SCALE THE ROCK!

 Abraham is standing in the center, addressing a group of women and children. They are gathered around a large rock formation. The scene is set in an outdoor, rocky area.

A FEW MINUTES LATER, THE SEARCHERS SPREAD OVER THE PRAIRIE IN ALL DIRECTIONS...



AFTER HOURS OF FRUITLESS SEARCH, EITHER SUDDENLY CAME TO A SPOT WHERE THE EARTH WAS TRAMPLED AND BEATEN, AND PLANTY SPINKLED WITH BLOOD.



TELL ME, ANGER, ASHMAN, IS THIS THE BLOOD OF WOLF OR PANTHER?

SHE SPOKE, TRYING NOT TO ALARM HIS WIFE...



A BUFFALO, AND A NOBLE AND POWERFUL CREATURE, WAS IT BEEN?

THEY WHO HAS SLAIN HIM... WOLVES?— THEY DEVOUR NOT THE HIDE! TELL ME, YE MEN AND HUNTERS— IS THIS THE BLOOD OF A BEAST?



AS SHE SPOKE A FLOCK OF BUCKLEBILLS WERE SEEN FLOWING OVER SOME BLUES NEAR THE SPOT WHERE THE BLOOD HAD BEEN DISCOVERED...



THERE'S A MORTALLY WOUNDED CREATURE AMONG THOSE RUBBER! GO IN, BOYS, AND BRING IT OUT!

TWO OF THE BOYS SPREAD QUICKLY INTO THE BUSHES AND EMERGED CARRYING THE STOPPED AND MOTIONLESS BODY OF THEIR BROTHER, ASA...



IT'S ASA... ASA, MY BOY, HE'S BEEN MURDERED!

A SA WAS BURIED ON THE PRAIRIE, AND THE PARTY SADDY WENDED ITS WAY BACK TO THE ENCAMPMENT.



LOOK, ISHMAEL!
LOOK! THE
TENT IS
GONE!

GOOD
HEAVENS!
THERE'S
NOT A SOUL
TO BE SEEN
AND THE ROCKS!



THE MURDERERS
HAVE BEEN HERE,
TOO! MY BABES...
MY BABES!

FOR A MOMENT EMMY ISHMAEL HESITATED BEFORE THE WEIGHT OF SO UNEXPECTED A BLOW, THEN HE PUSHED FORWARD AND RUSHED UP THE ASCENT.



BUT AT THE TIME THAT THE SEARCH WAS BEING MADE FOR ASA, ELLEN WHO HAD COME INTO THE TENT, WAS CALLED BACK FROM HER DUTIES BY A CRY FROM THE CHILDREN.



SEE, NELLY, SEE!
YONDER ARE MEN!
AND THESE SAYS
THAT THEY ARE
SIOUX INDIANS!

THEY ARE HERE FOR NO GOOD... THOUGH I CANNOT MAKE OUT WHETHER THEY ARE WHITE OR RED! COME, CHILDREN, WE MUST DEFEND THE PLACE. TELL OUR MEN RETURN!



INSTANTLY, THE MISCHIEVOUS CHILDREN SEIZED THE ROCKS AND STONES READY TO FEAR, THEM DOWN UPON THE ATTACKERS.



TRAVELLING WITH BUSH AND HIS FAMILY, WAS AN ECCENTRIC NATURALIST, KNOWN AS BY THE FAMILY, OR BATTUS. HE HAD BEEN OUT ON THE PLAIN IN SEARCH OF SOME SPECIMENS, WHEN HE ENCOUNTERED THE DEERMAN AND HIS TWO COMPANIONS. HE STAYED TO HEAR THE TALE RELATED BY CAPTAIN ANDOLESTON; IT WAS THESE FOUR MEN THE CHILDREN ON THE ROCK HAD SPOTTED APPROACHING THEIR ENCAMPMENT.



ELLEN RECOGNIZED DOCTOR BATTUS SHEDDING FEARS FROM THE GROUP...

LAY DOWN THE ROCKS AND STONES... IT IS DR. BATTUS!



WHAT? NO! I SURRENDER YE ALL IN THE NAME OF THE UNITED SOVEREIGN STATES OF NORTH AMERICA TO SUBMIT YOURSELVES TO THE LAW!



I THOUGHT YOU WERE A FRIEND, AND THAT YOU TRAVELLED WITH MY UNCLE IN VIRTUE OF AN AGREEMENT



IT IS NOO! YOUR UNCLE HAS VIOLATED HIS AGREEMENT... AND I WARN YOU TO SURRENDER THE ROCK IN THE SOFT NAMES OF POWER, OF JUSTICE, AND THE LAW!

THE DOCTOR'S SPEECH LEFT ELLEN LAUGHING. THEY, PAUL, STEPPED FORWARD.

ELLEN ELLEN WADE! SURRENDER THE INMATE OF THE TENT, AND I PROMISE YOU NO ONE SHALL BE HARMED!

I HAVE SWORN NEVER TO REVEAL THE CONTENTS OF THAT TENT NOR TO HELP ITS OCCUPANTS ESCAPE!



CAPTAIN ANDOLESTON STEPPED FORWARD AND SPoke TO THE GIRL...

I HAVE RIGHTFULLY CLAIM TO WHATEVER THE TENT HOLD; DEEM ME THIN TO ASCEND THE ROCK ALONE!

I CANNOT I SHALL NOT VIOLATE MY OATH!



AS CAPTAIN MIDDLETON SPOKE, THE FOLDS OF THE TENT SPREAD OPEN... AND A BEAUTIFUL YOUNG GIRL STEPPED OUT...

IN THE NAME OF HIM,
WHO COMMANDS US ALL...
I IMPLORE YOU TO
PAUSE... ALL OF YOU!



NEE! DO I
AGAIN SEE
YOU MINE
SHALL YOU
NOW BE...
THOUGH A
MILLION
DEVILS WERE
POSTED ON
THE ROCK!



DANIE STROKEN AT THE SIGHT OF THE STRANGE GIRL. IN THEIR MINDS, THE DEFENDERS OF THE ROCK LEFT THEIR POST UNLARGED... AND THE ATTACKERS REACHED THE SHANTY IN SAFETY...



TWEE AND HER HUSBAND, CAPTAIN MIDDLETON, WERE AT LAST REUNITED... A COINCIDENCE OF MANY MONTHS SEARCH IN THE DESERT BY THE CAPTAIN, HIS WIFE HAD BEEN KIDNAPPED IN THE SETTLEMENTS BY ISMAEL BUSH AND ABRAHAM... A SECRET THAT HAD BEEN WELL KEPT FROM BERTHER AND THE REST OF THE FAMILY...

LEAVING ISMAEL'S CHILDREN SAFELY TIED UP, BUT UNHARMED, THE RESCUERS MADE THEIR HASTY DEPARTURE, JUST AS ISMAEL AND THE REST WERE RETURNING FROM THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION...



LED BY THE TRAPPER THEY TOOK TEMPORARY REFUGE IN SOME BUSHES...

THESE BUSHES WILL PROTECT US FOR A WHILE IN THE EYES OF CHAMBERLAIN... AT LEAST FOR A WHILE!

THE OLD SQUATTER WILL BE FRANTIC WHEN HE FINDS HIS PRECIOUS TREASURE GONE, AND HE WILL LEAVE NO STONE UNTURNED TO CATCH UP WITH US!



LUCKILY... THEY WERE ATTRACTED BY A LARGE OBJECT IN THE GRASS THAT HAD THE APPEARANCE OF A LARGE BALL COLORED WITH ALL THE COLORS OF THE RAINBOW...



THIS MUST NEED BE A RARE SPECIMEN OF NATURE! BUT ANIMAL, OR IS IT HUMAN?

FROM WHAT I'VE SEEN OF THE TRIBES OF THE DESERT, IT IS AS HUMAN AS ANY OF THE WARRIORS OF THESE PRAIRIES IS EVER KNOWN TO BE.

IN THE LANGUAGE OF THE SAVANNAH TRIBE OF THE GRAND COTAH, THE TRAPPER SPOKE TO THE OBJECT...



COME FORTH FROM YOUR COVER, FRIEND. THERE IS ROOM IN THE PRAIRIE FOR ANOTHER WARRIOR!

RECEIVING NO RESPONSE, THE TRAPPER RAISED HIS AMBLET...



I MEAN NO VIOLENCE... BUT THIS WILL BRING THE DEVIL OUT OF HIS AMBLET!

ABRUPTLY, A TALL INDIAN SPRANG FROM BENEATH THE END OF LEAVES AND BRUSH...



WAAH!

THE TRAPPER, WHO HAD MEANT VIOLENCE, DROPPED HIS RIFLE... LAUGHING AT THE SUCCESS OF HIS EXPERIMENT...



I KNEW THAT WOULD BRING HIM OUT! THIS IS A SCOUT IN HIS WAR PAINT! THERE SHOULD BE MORE OF HIS TRIBE AT NO GREAT DISTANCE!

RECOGNIZING THE WAR-PAINT OF THE DAWG-HEADS, THE TRAPPER BROKE TO HIM IN HIS OWN LANGUAGE...



IS MY BROTHER FAR FROM HIS VILLAGE?

IT'S FURTHER TO THE TOWN OF THE BUCK-WHEELS!

ALWAYS GIVEN TO THE WHITE MEN BECAUSE OF THEIR SWORDS...



WHY IS A PRAIRIE SO FAR FROM THE MOUTH OF HIS OWN RIVER WITHOUT A HORSE TO JOURNEY ON AND IN A SOOTY COUNTRY AS THIS?

HE IS SCOUTING FOR THE UNFRIENDLY SMOKE, AND HAS NO DESIRE TO MAKE THE FRIENDLY BUCK-WHEELS!

AT THAT MOMENT, A HORN APPEARED FROM THE THicket LEADING AN INDIAN WAR-HORSE.



HERE IS A BEAST FOR A RED-SKIN TO STRADDLE! HAVN'T THIS A REAL TROTTER, OLD TRAPPER, TO EAT OUT OF THE MANDER OF A SNAKE?

IT IS INDEED A BEAST THAT NONE BUT A POWERFUL CHEF SHOULD RIDE! I WARRANT THE YOUNGESTER IS THE SON OF A GREAT CHEF. MAYBE OF THE MIGHTY HARD-HEART RIVER!



IF I LEAD MY DAUGHTERS TO THE DOORS OF THE FRANKS, WILL THE WOMEN TAKE THEM BY THE HAND? WILL THE WARRIORS SMOKE WITH MY YOUNG MEN?

THERE'S A HILL OF THE EARTH AND ON ITS TOP ARE THE LOGS OF THE PALE-FACES. LET THE WOMEN OF MY BROTHERS RUBB THEIR FEET AMONG THE PEOPLE OF THEIR OWN COLOR.



THE EYES OF A PAUMBU ARE GOOD IF HE CAN SEE A WHITE-SKIN SO FAR.

THE RED-SKIN AND THE BOY-WOMAN AS EARLY AS THE STRANGERS SEE THE BUFFALO, A FRANK IS NOT BLIND THAT HE NEED LOOK LONG FOR YOUR PEOPLE.



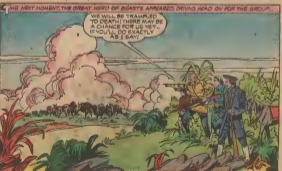
AFTER SCOURING THE PLAIN FOR A FEW MINUTES, THE WARRIOR GALLOPED AWAY.



SOON AFTER THE INDIAN DISAPPEARED FROM VIEW, A GREAT CLOUD BECAME VISIBLE ON THE HORIZON.

CAN IT BE THAT THE INDIAN IS RETURNING WITH HIS FOLLOWERS?

WHAT YOU SEE THERE, MY BOY, IS THE DUST BEATEN UP BY A GREAT HERD OF BUFFALOES, AND THEY'RE HEADED IN THIS DIRECTION!



THE NEXT MOMENT, THE GREAT HERD OF BEASTS APPEARED, DRIVING HEAD ON FOR THE GROUP.

WE WILL BE TRAMPLED TO DEATH! THERE MAY BE A CHANCE FOR US YET - IF YOU'LL DO EXACTLY AS I SAY!

THE PRAIRIE

LACING THE GULE TO THE SIDE OF THE THICKEST PLUMMET FROM THE CHURLING BEASTS, THE TRAPPER SET THE MULE IN THE CENTER, AND THE THREE MEN STOOD FACING THE BEASTS DIRECTLY IN THEIR PATH.



SUDDENLY THROWING DOWN HIS GULE THE TRAPPER STRETCHED NORTH HIS HANDS AND ADVANCED FROM COVER, DIRECTLY TOWARD THE APPROACHING COLUMN...

THE LEADING BULLS RECOILED, A DENSE MASS OF BODIES ROLLING UP IN GREAT ROLLING AND TUMBLING ON THE FLANK...

THE OLD MAN IS
OUT OF HIS HEAD!
COME BACK,
TRAPPER!



AS THE COLUMN RE-FORMED, THE IMMENSE BORN OF THE TRAPPER CUTTING IT INTO TWO QUIET STREAMS OF LIFE...

IT WORKS! COME
OUT, CAPTAIN...
DOCTOR... WITH YOUR
ARMS OUTSTRETCHED!



AS THE OTHER TWO STREAMS FORWARDED, THE COLUMN DIVIDED FURTHER, AND FOR THE FIRST TIME THE THICKET BECAME DIRECTED...

THE DANGER
 WAS NOT
 YET OVER,
 AS THE
 MAN BODY
 OF THE
 BEASTS
 PRESSED
 MORE
 AND MORE
 UPON
 THE OWN
 LINE
 OF THE
 DEFENDERS
 OF THE
 THICKET...



CLOSE, AND DIVE FOR THE
 GROUND, OR A THOUSAND
 OF THE DEVILS WILL BE
 AT HIS HEELS!



AS THE ANIMALS HEADED AGAIN
 FOR THE THICKET, THE HULL
 RESSENTING THE SUDDEN ENTRY OF
 HIS COMRADE, LIFTED HIS VOICE IN
 THE MIDDLE OF THE LIFECH...



THERE THEY GO!
 SCARED BY THE BRAY
 OF THE HULL!



THE PRAIRIE

MOMENT LATER, THE SHARP EYE OF THE TRAPPER CALIGHT RIGHT ON A GROUP OF INDIANS CIRCLING ONE OF THE STRAY BUFFALOES...

THEY'RE THE ACCURSED SIOUX!
TO COVER, LADS, TO COVER!
A SINGLE GLANCE THE WAY
BY THOSE SAVAGES AND
WE ARE LOST!



I RECOGNIZE
WELCHA! THEY'RE
ON THE TRACK OF
THE SQUATTERS!
AND WERE DIVERTED
BY THE BUFFALOES!



AS THEY LAY THERE, THE TRAPPER COULD NOT
HELP BUT REMARK ON THE STRANGE
CIRCUMSTANCES THAT HAD PUT THE SIOUX ON THE
TRAIL OF THE SQUATTERS, WHO WERE EVEN THEN
ON THE TRACK OF HIS OWN LITTLE GROUP.
WHILE THE SQUATTERS, LUNGING FORWARD IN
THE VICINITY, WERE ON THE BAIN-RATH AGAINST
THEIR DREADED ENEMIES THE SIOUX...



AND, FRIENDS... HERE ARE
FOUR PARTISANS WITHIN
SOUND OF A CANNON, NOT
ONE OF WHOM CAN TRUST
THE OTHER!



A MOMENT LATER...

LOOK, THEY'RE
APPROACHING
THE THICKET!

THEY MUST NOT FIND
US ALL HERE! I'M GOING
OUT ALONE ON THE
PLAIN... IT MAY YET GIVE
THE REST OF YOU
TIME TO ESCAPE!



THE TRAVELER DROPPED HIS RIFLE AND APPROACHED MANTOREE, HIS HAND RAISED IN TOKEN OF PEACE.

MY BROTHERS ARE WELCOME! THEY'RE FAR FROM THEIR TILLAGES... AND ARE HUNGRY... WILL THEY FOLLOW TO MY LODGE TO EAT AND SLEEP?



THE CHIEF POINTED TOWARD THE THICKETS.

THEY ARE GONE, BUT MANTOREE HAS THE EYES OF AN EAGLE AND CAN SEE A GREAT DISTANCE!



MANTOREE IS A WISE CHIEF... HE KNOWS YOU'RE NOT ALONE! WHERE'S YOUR YOUNG WIFE AND YOUR OTHER YOUNG MEN?

I HAVE NO WIFE; THE SAHOCOTANS HAVE TAKEN THE HORSES FROM THE WHITE TRAVELLERS... LET HIM FIND THE PALS - FACES WHERE HE LEFT THEM!



SLUDDENLY THE BUSHES OPENED, AND THE WHOLE PARTY EMERGED IN FULL VIEW.



AT THAT MOMENT, A CLUSTER OF ARMED MEN APPROACHED A SHORT DISTANCE AWAY.

IT'S THE FAMILY OF THE SQUATTER ON OUR TRAIL!



The TRAVELER WHO HAD FOUND TIME TO RECOVER FROM HIS SURPRISE, SAW AT ONCE THAT MANTOREE, HAVING SEEN MANTOREE'S GROUP, HAD REFERRED TO TRUST TO THE HOSPITALITY OF THE SAVAGES RATHER THAN FACE THE SQUATTER'S WRATH!

AS THEY APPROACHED THE TEACHER SAID THAT THE CHIEF MAJOR WAS INVITED ON THE PRAIRIE WOMEN.

MY BROTHER SEES THAT WE'RE NOT ON THE WAR-PATH, THE WHITE MAN DOES NOT SEND HIS WOMEN TO WAR. I KNOW THAT THE DAHOTOONS WILL BRING WITH THE STRANGERS.



MAHTORSE IS A GREAT CHIEF! THE ABBONS OF MY YOUNG MEN ARE IN THEIR GUNS... THEY WILL BRING WITH THE STRANGERS!



SUDDENLY WITH A GREAT SHOUT THE MASS RODE OUT IN A STRAIGHT LINE, HEADED IN THE DIRECTION OF ISHAMEL PORTRESS.

THE WHITE MEN AND THEIR WOMEN WERE ALLOWED TO MINGLE WITH THE MAJORS AND PROVIDED WITH MOUNTS... MAHTORSE, WHO HAD SEEN THE BRACING SQUATTERS IN THE DISTANCE, ORDERED HIS MEN TO WHEEL AROUND THEM, KEEPING JUST OUT OF RANGE OF THEIR GUNS.



HE HEADED OVER HIS HORSE, ALONGSIDE BATTLE WHO WAS FALLING BEHIND ON HIS HOLE...

IN A FEW MINUTES YOU'LL BE OUTFRANCED BY THE REST OF US! RIDE FAST... FOLLOW THE NORTH STAR... AND IF WE'RE FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO RETAIN OUR MOUNTS WE'LL JOIN YOU LATER!



THE BOLD BRUIN OUTSTANCED THE PURSUING SQUATTERS, WHO WERE ON FOOT, AND REACHING THE ROCK, THEY IMMEDIATELY BEGAN SCALING IT...



BEING THE RIGHT MOMENT, THE TRAPPER MOVED TO HIS WHITE FRIENDS...

IT'S NOW OR NEVER, MY LADS... FOLLOW ME!



THE REDS WON'T FOLLOW US TILL THEY ARE THROUGH WITH THEIR BUSINESS AT THE ROCK!



THE FLEEING PARTY PICKED UP DR. BATTLES AND HIS ALLIE. THEY LEFT THE ANIMAL TO REST AND WITH BATTLE SNARING THE TRAPPER'S SADDLE, AN HOUR'S RIDE BROUGHT THE PARTY TO A LARGE MEADOW COVERED WITH A HEAVY GROWTH OF GRASS, WHERE THEY CAMPED FOR THE NIGHT.

NEXT MORNING...

SEE, MIDDLTON, HOW LOVELY IS THE SKY... SURELY IT CONTAINS A PROMISE OF HAPPIER THINGS!

IT IS GLORIOUS! RARELY HAVE I SEEN A RICHER RING OF THE SUN!



RINGS OF THE SUN! GOOD HEAVENS, THE PRAIRIE'S ON FIRE!



THE PRAIRIE

COME, LADS, COME! 'TIS TIME TO BE GOING NOW! PUT HANDS UPON THIS WITHERED GRASS, AND LAY BARE THE EARTH WHERE WE STAND!



WITHIN A FEW MINUTES, AN AREA OF TWENTY FEET SURROUNDING THE LITTLE GROUP HAD BEEN ENTIRELY CLEARED OF GRASS AND WEEDS...



THEN SELECTING A HANDFUL OF DRY HERBAGE, THE TRAPPER KINDLED IT AND PLACED IT ON THE WEEDS SURROUNDING THE RING WHERE THEY STOOD...



BUT IT WAS NOT FATAL!—FOLKRE BRINGING THE FIRE NEARER TO US RATHER THAN AVOIDING IT!

WE SHALL ALL LIVE TO SEE, CAPTAIN!



THE FIRE THAT THE TRAPPER HAD KINDLED SPREAD RAPIDLY, DRAWING UP A WIDE PATH AROUND THE CIRCLE ON WHICH THEY STOOD...

MOST WONDERFUL! THE THOUGHT WAS A GIFT FROM HEAVEN, AND THE HAND THAT EXECUTED IT SHOULD BE IMMORTAL!

LET THE FLAMES DO THEIR WORK FOR A SHORT HALF HOUR AND THEN WE'LL MOUNT. WHEN THE MEADOW IS GOOD ENOUGH FOR THESE LIMBOD SIOUX HORSES!



IN A HALF HOUR THE PARTY SET OUT OVER THE SCORCHED PRAIRIE...

THERE'S A BROAD AND SWEETENER FLOWING SOME DISTANCE OVER YONDER! WE SHALL NOT BE SAFE UNTIL IT IS FLOWING BETWEEN OUR TRAIL AND THOSE SHARP-SIGHTED SOULS!



AS THEY PROCEEDED THEY SIGHTED MANY CARCASSES OF BEASTS OF THE PRAIRIE THAT HAD MET THEIR DEATH IN THE FLAMES...



LOOK, TRAPPER... YONDER LIES THE CARCASS OF AN ANIMAL.



THE TRAPPER OVERTOUGHT AND EXAMINED THE OBJECT...

IT IS NOTHING MORE NOR LESS THAN THE HIDE OF A BUFFALO!



LIFT THE CORNER OF THE SKIN OLD TRAPPER... IT'S HERE'S A MORSEL OF HIS HUMP LEFT, IT MUST BE WELL COOKED!



AS THE TRAPPER THROST HIS FOOT BENEATH THE SKIN... AN INDIAN WARRIOR SARRANG FROM ITS COVER TO HIS FEET...

IT'S OUR SAVANNE FRIEND!



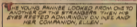


THAT LAD HAD HIS OWN WAY OF CREATING THE FIRE. HE WAS CAUGHT ASLEEP IN THE GRASS AND USED THE FRESH BUFFALO HIDE AS A PROTECTION. I'LL SPEAK TO HIM KINDLY.



MY BROTHER IS WELCOME! THE SIOUX HAVE BEEN SMOKING HIM AS THEY WOULD A RACCOON!

A SIOUX IS A DOG! WHEN THE PRAIRIE WAG WHOOOP IS IN THEIR EARS, THE WHOLE NATION HOWLS!



THE YOUNG PRAIRIE LOOKED FROM ONE TO ANOTHER OF THE STRANGERS THEN HIS EYES REPOSED ADMIRINGLY ON THE MAN AND HIS COMPANION, ELLEN.



IT IS TRUE, THE WIFE ARE ON OUR TRAIL, AND I WOULD TO MEET A WARRIOR WHO DOES NOT LIKE THEM!

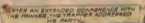


MY FATHER SHALL BE WELCOME! MY YOUNG MEN SHALL FIGHT WITH HIS SONS, THE PRAIRIE GIRLS WILL SING IN THE EARS OF HIS DAUGHTERS!



AND IF WE MEET THE SIOUX?

THE SMOKE OF THE SMOKE-KNIVES SHALL FEEL THE BLOW OF THE PRAIRIE!



AFTER AN EXTENDED CONFERENCE WITH THE PRAIRIE, THE TRADER ADDRESSED HIS PARTY.



IT SEEMS THE LAD HAS BEEN HANGING ON THE SKIRT OF THE SIOUX ALONE UNTIL HE WAS DRIVEN TO THE GRASS FLOORCOVER! THE SIOUX ARE IN GREAT NUMBERS! OUR RED FRIEND HAS GONE TO THE PRAIRIE VILLAGE FOR REINFORCEMENTS!

BUT HE TELLS ME MORE MY FRIEND! THE CLIPPING MAN HORSE, INSTEAD OF GOING TO BLOOD WITH THE SCATTER, HAS FOLLOWED HIS FRIEND - THEY HAVE BOTH JOINED FORCE, AROUND THIS PLAIN AND ARE ON OUR HEELS!



THIS NEWS WAS RECEIVED WITH CONSTERNATION BY THE OTHERS. ACCOMPANIED BY THE WOMEN, THEY QUICKLY MOVED ON AND REACHED THE RIVER WITHIN AN HOUR...

COME! IT'S A SHORT QUARTER MILE TO THE OTHER BANK... WE CAN FORD THE STREAM ON HORSES!

THAT MAY BE WELL ENOUGH FOR US, BUT ELLEN AND HER COMPANION COULD NEVER GET A HORSE WITH THE RIVER WHIRLING BEFORE THEIR EYES!



THE RED-MAN IS WISE IN THE WAY OF CROSSING THE WATER. CAN MY BROTHER SUGGEST A WAY OF BRINGING OUR WOMEN TO THE OTHER SIDE?



THE YOUNG MAN OR LISTENED GRABLY... THEN THROWING DOWN HIS BUCKLE SKIN, HE DROVE THE HIDE INTO THE SHAPE OF A PARABOLITE BY THINGS OF DEERHORN... LONG A FEW LIGHT STICKS FOR SUPPORT...



AN INSTANT LATER, THE STRANGE CONVINCE CARRIED ITS FIRST LOAD ACROSS THE RIVER...



THE PRAIRIE

THE PARTY SUCCESSFULLY FORDED THE CANYON CONTINUED ON FOR SEVERAL HOURS UNTIL THEY REACHED A SHELTER...



THEY REACHED THE 400 SQUAT LODGE, REALIZING THEY HAD TAKEN THEIR OWNERS FOR THE TRAIL. WHEN A PARTY OF SLAVES BROUGHT THE MEN TO THEIR RESCUE...



LOOK! THE PLAIN IS COVERED WITH SNOW!

THE LORD HAS MERCY ON YE ALL! A SQUAD! WOULD LEAVE HIS TRAIL ON THE LIGHT COATS OF THE EARTH!

THE NEXT MOMENT THE SOUL BRAND WAS SEEN RIDING IN A CIRCLE AT THE DISTANCE OF A HALF MILE. LANDING NO PRINTS IN THE SNOW, THEY WERE CONVINCED THAT THE PARTY THEY WERE SEEKING WERE NEARBY AND THEY SLOWLY CIRCLED THE PLACE OF CONCEALMENT.



WOULD CERTAIN DEATH WOULD FOLLOW YOUR RAISHNESS! LET US MEET OUR FATE LIKE MEN, THERE IS ALWAYS HOPE WHILE WE STILL HAVE OUR SCALP!



THE LEAST WE CAN DO IS LET THE DEVIL HAVE A FEW OF OUR SLUGS!

AS THE SOUL STOPPED THE PASSAGE, THE TRAPPER RECOGNIZED THEIR SOUND OF TRAPERS...



WARR, YE, MY FRIEND, THE SOUNDS OF THE PASSAGE IS SOUDDY! HE IS NONE OTHER THAN THE INVINCIBLE HARD-HEART HUNTER!

WITH THAT THE TRAPPER STOPPED AND REVEALED THEIR POSITION...

THE PRISONERS WERE TAKEN TO THE INDIAN CAMP. THE WRITERS, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE TRAPPER AND THE WOMEN WERE SECURELY BOUND AND LEFT TO LAY ON THE GROUND WHILE MANTOORE WAS TIED TO A STAKE. SOON, MANTOORE APPROACHED THE GROUP AND BROKE TO THE TRAPPER...



MANTOREE LED THE TRAPPER TO A LODGE WHICH HAD BEEN MADE FOR INEZ AND ELLEN. THE CHIEF THEN PROMISED THE TRAPPER THE FREEDOM OF THE MEN IF THE TWO WHITE WOMEN WOULD REMAIN AS HIS WIVES. THE TRAPPER WAS GREATLY TIME TO THINK IT OVER.



AS THEY LEFT THE LODGE, THEY MET SHAMAL, ESTHER AND ABRAHAM, WHO WERE LIVING IN THE INDIAN CAMP.



MY FRIEND... THE BIG-KNIFE CLAIMS THE TWO WOMEN IN THE WHITE PARTY!

WAGH! THEY SHALL BOTH BE WIVES OF MANTOREE... THEN THE LONG-KNIFE WILL BE THE FATHER OF A CHIEF!



STANDING AT THE SQUATTER, THE TRAPPER CONTINUED:



HE WILL NOT GIVE UP THAT WHICH YOU ASK FOR!



SHORT TIME LATER, THE SAVAGES HELD THEM RITERS, PREPARATORY TO THE EXECUTION OF THEIR BITTER ENEMY, HARD-HEART.



AT A SIGNAL FROM MAHTORRE, WELCHA SPRANG FORWARD AND GRABBED HIS TOMAHAWK AT THE PRAIRIE HEAD.



QUICK AS A FLASH, THE PRAIRIE STAYED HIS EXECUTIONER'S ARM, AND THEN SEIZING THE TOMAHAWK, BROUGHT IT DOWN ON THE SCOUR'S HEAD..



HEAVEN HELP HIM NOW. HE'LL BE TORN TO PIECES BY THE SAVAGES!

CUTTING A PATH THROUGH THE BLOODY HEARD THROUGH THE ASTOUNDED SAVAGES, HARD-HEART LEAPED FORWARD LIKE A SCARED DEER, AND WAS OUT OF THE CAMP IN A MATTER OF MOMENTS.



WELL OF REVENGE BURST FROM A HUNDRED THROATS, BUT THE PURSUIT WAS STAYED BY MAHTORRE, WHO EXTENDED HIS ARM TOWARD THE RIVER..



THE WARRIORS OF THE PRAIRIE HAD ARRIVED JUST IN TIME! NOW WE SHALL SEE A BLOODY STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL!

MARTORRE LED HIS WARRIORS IN FULL FLIGHT TOWARD THE RIVER, LEAVING HIS WIFE CAPTURED IN PROTECTION OF AN AGED WARRIOR AND THE BLOODHUNTER SQUATTER.

LOOKIN' OL' BOLD TRAPPER... AND WE COULD HOLD OL' DAVE AGAINST THE ANCIENT SAVAGE AND THESE OL' CROWES!

PAYENCE BEE-HUNTER! BAWHAWES WILL ONLY COST US ALL OUR SCALPES!



SUDDENLY A WILD CRY FROM THE SQUARE PIERCED THE AIR.

HE THE SQUATTER AND HIS BLOOD... NOW WE ARE DONE FOR!



WELL, WE MEET AGAIN, OL' TRAPPER... BUT THIS TIME YOU'RE COMING BACK TO MY ENCAMPMENT, WHERE I HAVE A LITTLE MATTER TO SETTLE WITH YOU!



FETCH THE TWO WOMEN IN THE TENT, AND UNTIE THE OTHERS... ALL BUT THEIR HANDS!



THIS TIME THE TRAPPER WAS ALSO SOUND, AND WAS LED WITH THE OTHERS TO THE ENCAMPMENT OF THE SQUATTER.



BANKS, ON THE OPPOSITE BANK OF THE RIVER, HARD-HEART AND HIS SMALLER BAND OF WARRIORS TAUNTED THE SQUATTER AND CARED THEM TO CROSS OVER.



THE PRAIRIE

FINDING HIS EFFORTS USELESS, THE BRAVE PRAIRIE RESOLVED TO BRING ON THE RESULT BY ONE OF THOSE ACTS OF PERSONAL DARING FOR WHICH THE INDIAN BRAVES WERE FAMOUS. IN THE CENTER OF THE CURRENT WAS A LARGE ISLAND OF SAND. HE ADDRESSED HIS WARRIORS OF HIS INTENTIONS... THEN PLUNGING INTO THE STREAM ASTRIDE HIS HORSE, HE REACHED THE ISLAND IN SAFETY...

A YELL OF SAVAGE ANGER AROSE FROM THE THROATS OF THE SQUAT. THEY WERE ABOUT TO PLUNGE INTO THE WATER, WHEN A CALL FROM WANTON CHECKED THE RISING TEMPER OF HIS BAND.



THROWING HIS BURNING ARROW, WANTON ENTERED THE WATER AND SWAM TOWARD THE ISLAND, HOLDING OUT HIS PALM IN A GESTURE OF PEACE...



A CCEPTING THE PEACEFUL GESTURE OF HIS ENEMY, HARD-HEART WITHDREW TO THE FURTHER SIDE OF THE ISLAND, ALSO CASTING HIS BURNING ARROW...



SOON THE TWO CHEYENES FACED EACH OTHER, ARMED ALIKE...



THESE IS ROOM ON THE PRAIRIE FOR ALL INDIANS! WHY SHOULD A RED-MAN STRIKE HIS BROTHER?



ARE THE SIOUX WEARY OF THE HUNTS AND OF THE WAR-PATH? SO A PAWNEE WARRIOR WILL NEVER COME TO THE SIOUX FOR A WIFE!



STUNG BY THE SILENT MANTOSES NEVER-THENCE CONTROLLED HIS REINS, AND POINTED TO THE TENT OF SHAMAL, WHOSE IN THE DISTANCE.

THE PLAINS ARE FILLED WITH LONG-KNIVES WHO ROB AND PUNISH THE RED-MEN OF ALL THEY POSSESS. SEE THEY'RE HERE ALREADY!

WHAT DOES THE SIOUX SAY MUST BE DONE?



THAT THE LONG-KNIFE WHO COMES UPON THE PRAIRIE, SHOULD NEVER GO BACK YONDER ARE MANY... THEY HAVE HORSES AND OTHER RICHES! LET THE PAWNEE AND THE SIOUX MEET IN COUNCIL AND DEVISE A WAY TO DESTROY THEM!



NO! HARD-HEART HAS NEVER STRUCK THE STRANGER! A MIGHTY CHIEF IS HIS FRIEND! NO! HIS ARM WILL NEVER BE LIFTED!



ENRAGED, MANTOSES SET AN ARROW TO HIS BOW AND SENT IT WITH DEADLY AIM FULL AT THE NAKED BACK OF THE PAWNEE...



QUICK AS A FLASH HARD-HEART REARED HIS HORSE!



THE PRAIRIE

THE TWO CHIEFS WERE
SOON LOCKED IN
MORTAL COMBAT...



MAHTORRE
WAS THROWN
FROM HIS
HORSE, AND THE NEXT
INSTANT,
HARD-
HEART
PASSED
HIS LANCE
THROUGH
THE
BEAST...
UTTERING
A SHOUT OF
TRUMPH...



THE NEXT MOMENT, HE SAW STEEP MOUNTAINS
AND ROLLS FROM HIS HORIZON... MAHTORRE
RUSHED LOCK THE ENTANGLED YOUTH WITH
TOMAHAWK AND KNIFE...



FEELING FOR HIS KNIFE, THE FRENCH TOOK
UP THE BLADE BETWEEN HIS FINGERS AND
THUMB AND CAST IT AT HIS ADVANCING BOY...



THE WARRIORS FROM BOTH TRIBES HAD ALREADY ENTERED THE STREAM AT THE
FIRST SIGHT OF COMBAT! INSTANTLY, THE SAND-BED WAS FILLED WITH
FURIOUSLY FIGHTING INDIANS...



DANCKY AT THE LOSS OF HIS CHIEF
 THE SIOUX WERE FORCED TO RETREAT
 TO THEIR OWN BANK.



SUDDENLY A YOLLEY FROM THE PATRIOT
 WESTERN BOULE HAS HEARD FROM THE
 REAR OF THE HARD-HEADED SIOUX.



AS 'EM BOYS, LET THE
 THEVING DEVILS
 KNOW THEY CANNOT
 PLAY HARD AND
 EAST WITH
 ISHMAEL BUSH!

THE SWIFE
 AND THE
 LANCE CUT
 SHORT THE
 RETREAT OF
 THE LARGEST
 PORTION OF
 THE DANGEROUS
 SIOUX ...
 THE SUN
 HAD LONG
 SINCE BEHIND
 THE ROLLING
 OUTLINE OF
 THE WESTERN
 HORIZON
 BEFORE THE
 BUSINESS OF
 THAT
 DEBATE
 WAS ENTIRELY
 ENDED.



EARLY NEXT MORNING, AT THE SQUATTERS'
 ENCAMPMENT, ISHMAEL HAD THE PRISONERS
 BROUGHT OUT FROM THEIR TENTS TO
 PRONOUNCE THE JUDGMENT OF THE
 PRAIRIE ON THEM.



WARD HEART ALONE, OF ALL HIS
 BAND WAS PRESENT TO WITNESS
 THE NOVEL SPECTACLE.



ISHMAEL SPOKE UP.

I HAVE BUT LITTLE KNOWLEDGE
 OF THE WAYS OF THE COURTS,
 THOUGH THERE'S A RULE
 THAT TEACHES AN EYE FOR
 AN EYE... AND A TOOTH FOR
 A TOOTH... RECOGNIZING NO
 OTHER LAW HERE IN THE
 DESERT, I WANT TO
 ABIDE BY IT!



THE PRAISE



IF THE EVIL-DOER IS TO BE PUNISHED, YOU MUST CHANGE SITUATIONS WITH ME... AND BECOME A PRISONER INSTEAD OF A JUDGE!



SINCE THINGS HAVE COME TO THIS PASS, I'VE THOUGHT THE MATTER OVER, AND I'VE CONCLUDED THAT THE LADY (NEE), SHALL BE RETURNED FROM WHENCE SHE HAS BEEN BROUGHT!

WE ARE AN AWFUL AND DANGEROUS PEOPLE... IT IS TO BE SOON AS THE DAUGHTERS OF OTHERS INTO A PEACEFUL FAMILY!

4 SUZAN SCOWLED AND SHOWED HIS DISAPPOINTMENT.



AND WHO WILL THANK YOU FOR THE SHAME, AFTER WHAT HAS BEEN ALREADY DONE? WHEN THE DEVIL HAS DONE MADE OUT HIS ACCOUNT, YOU MAY LOOK FOR THE RECEIPT IN FULL ONLY AT HIS HANDS!

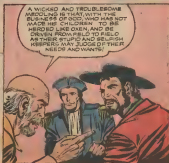


PRIDE! YOUR VOICE IS LIKE A RAVEN'S IN MY EARS! IF YOU HAD NEVER SPOKEN, I SHOULD BE SPARED THIS SHAME!



SINCE YOU ADMIT THE ERROR OF YOUR WAYS, WHY NOT REPENT THE REST OF US... WHO CAN HELP YOU IN WARDING OFF DANGER FROM THE LAW?

I WILL DEAL OUT THE LAW AS I SEE FIT!



A WICKED AND TROUBLESOME MARRIAGE IS THAT, WITH THE BLESSING OF GOD, WHO HAS NOT MADE HIS CHILDREN TO BE HEROES LIKE OREN, AND BE DRIVEN FROM FIELD TO FIELD AS THEIR STUPID AND SELFISH KEEPERS MAY JUDGE OF THEIR NEEDS AND WANTS!

ISHMAEL OVERHEARD THE WORDS OF THE TRAPPER AND ADDRESSING HIMSELF TO HIDDLETON...

"IF I HAVE BEEN REVEALED UPON BY THE DEVILISH BROTHER OF MY MINE TO TAKE AWAY YOUR WIFE... DO HAVE YOU BROKEN INTO MY ENCAMPMENT AND AIDED IN DESTROYING MY PROPERTY?"

"BUT WHAT I DID WAS TO LIBERATE..."

"THE MATTER IS SETTLED BETWEEN US! AGREE! SET THE CAPTAIN FREE!"

THE LIBERATED CAPTAIN LISTENED TO THE SIDE OF HIS HEARING EAR...

AFTER LONG DELIBERATION, THE OTHERS WERE SET FREE... ALL EXCEPT THE OLD TRAPPER...

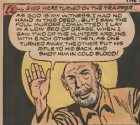
"YOU ARE FREE TO GO AND LEAVE US IN PEACE!"

"THAT IS IMPOSSIBLE WHILE THE OLD MAN, WHO IS OUR FRIEND AND BENEFACTOR, IS LEFT A PRISONER! WHAT HAS HE DONE THAT HE TOO IS NOT RELEASED?"

ISHMAEL PRODUCED A BULLET AND SHOWED IT TO HIDDLETON...

"LOOK AT THIS! WITH THIS MORSEL OF LEAD DID HE LAY LOW MY SON, ASA... AS FINE A BOY AS EVER GAVE JOY TO A PARENT'S EYE!"

"I CANNOT BELIEVE THAT HE HAS DONE THIS! DEED! NOTHING BUT HIS OWN ACKNOWLEDGMENT WILL CONVINCE ME THAT HE HAS COMMITTED SUCH A FOLL CROWN!"



JAMES FENIMORE COOPER

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER was born in Burlington, New Jersey on September 15, 1789. The circumstances of his life explain the characteristics of his books with even more completeness than could be imagined.

He had little systematic education. His character was developed and affirmed before his mind was either trained or stored. His taste naturally suffered. The fact that he was thirty before he took up his pen is proof that he was not a literary genius. Of the "art" of literature, he had perhaps never heard. He left school early and was a sailor, businessman, a gentleman of more or less leisure—enough, at all events, to encourage a temperament that was aristocratic and critical and not in the least speculative or adventurous.

Cooper was mainly interested in America. He was its historian, its critic, its painter. His "art" was for him the art of story-telling, in which the characters and incidents are imagined instead of being real. That his fiction was imaginative as well as imagined, probably never occurred to him. As he wrote "Precaution" to determine whether or not he could write a novel, he wrote "The Pilot" to prove that he could write a more seamanlike tale than the "Pirate" of Walter Scott. He continued to write story after story because he had made a success of story-telling and demonstrated it to be his vocation.

Cooper is usually called the American Scott in a sense that implies his indebtedness to Scott as a model and a master. His romances are esteemed imitations of the Waverley novels, differing from their originals as all imitations do in having less energy, less spontaneity; of necessity, therefore, less origi-



nality. How much or how little Cooper owed to Scott is a question for the literary historians rather than the critics. Doubtless, he copies Scott in various ways. However, it is idle to describe so voluminous a writer as imitative. Cooper's inspiration is as genuine, his art as great, his genius as individual as Scott's own.

There is a quality in Cooper's romance that gives it an almost unique distinction. It is thoroughly romantic, yet it produces an illusion of life itself. He looked at his material as so much life; it interested him because of the human elements it contained. Cooper's genius was a thinking and reflective one. He certainly was not a meditative philosopher, but it was life that interested him, and not story-telling as such. His central theme, his main substance, is, like Scott's, his native land. As a romancer, his whole attitude toward the pioneer civilization he depicted was one of sympathetic and intelligent interest.

There are those who have maintained that it is with low life that he is successful and that he fails when he attempts to depict the higher social types. The view is a superficial one. There is as much and as little character at one end of the social scale as at the other.

In all his work, the patriotic is as prominent as any other element of his work. He first painted for Europe the portrait of America. And the fact that it is in this likeness that the country is still so generally conceived there, eloquently attests the power with which it was executed. In a large sense, the subject of Cooper's entire work is America, nothing more, nothing less. The first great American novelist died on September 18, 1851.



PIONEER OF SCIENCE

HIPPOCRATES

Father of Medicine

IN MANY medical schools throughout our country, graduating young doctors take the oath of Hippocrates. They swear to be faithful to their profession, and to remain mindful of their duty to mankind. It is not remarkable that our doctors are asked to follow such high ideals, but it is remarkable that they are repeating the oath of a man who lived twenty-four hundred years ago.

Hippocrates was born on the Greek island of Cos, off the coast of Asia Minor. Although the ancient people thought him to be immortal, he was only a man far in advance of his time. Actually, Hippocrates was born of a noble and distinguished family. One of his ancestors was Aesclepos, the historical physician who is mentioned in the *Iliad*.

As a young man, Hippocrates practiced medicine at his native temple at Cos. But knowing that the other doctors were so steeped in superstition and ignorance, he felt it was his duty to travel to other cities to spread his belief in pure air, water and sunshine. He traveled to Thrace, Thessaly, Delos and Athens, practicing and teaching medicine in these places.

As he traveled and practiced and taught, Hippocrates wrote down his observations, his theories, his discoveries and his ideals. A short time after his death, his works were collected and circulated throughout Greece. Today, these works are known as the Hippocratic Collection. Actually, a few of these articles probably were written by other doctors who knew that anything signed with Hippocrates' signature would be widely read.

Hippocrates was the first doctor to make medicine a factual study. In his time, people believed that the epidemics oc-



curred because the gods willed them. Hippocrates told them that these plagues were caused by polluted water, by flies, by rats, and by diseased people coming in contact with the rest of the community.

The most famous quotation of all of Hippocrates' writing is this sentence: "Art is long and Life is short." This expression well summed up the great doctor's philosophy. Man's stay on earth was of little time. Hippocrates would attempt to make man's stay more endurable. He would attempt to relieve man of pain, of sickness, of fear.

It is remarkable that Hippocrates, writing about twenty-four hundred years ago, originated many of the theories used by physicians today. One treatise, titled "Wounds of the Head," describes an operation of trephining; that is, removing part of the skull bone. His method of operation is still in use!

Another treatise titled "Concerning Things in the Surgery" might be the description of a modern, streamlined operating room! In the paper, Hippocrates writes of how to use natural and artificial light, how to prepare the patient, the sterilization of instruments, and other things connected with an operation.

Hippocrates has well earned the title of "Father of Medicine." His contributions to civilization cannot be measured in words or terms. His gifts go beyond that, for the spirit of Hippocrates will never die. He is with every young doctor who, reaching for his diploma, repeats the ancient Greek's oath. Hippocrates must smile anew every time a graduating medical student, with emotion, repeats: "Whatever hour I enter, there will I go for the benefit of the sick..."



DOG HEROES TUNNEY, THE CHAMP

DOWN ON Elsie Simpson's farm at Valdosta, Georgia, this April day in 1933 started out as almost every Spring day down South does. The sun rose bright and smart and cast a cheerful light over everything that moved on the farm. It was one of those days which would make a person say, "Gee, it's great to be alive!"

No wonder that Tunney, the farm Bulldog, was feeling fine as he set out to do some exploring and foraging. Of course, Tunney had been to every nook and cranny on the farm before, but there was always something new to see. Some days, he would discover a new kind of butterfly, or bug, or flower. On other days, a stray cat might wander on the property and, of course, he had to be chased away. Yes, there was always adventure for Tunney.

So on this lovely day, Tunney set out with a gay heart and a wagging tail. With his nose poking the ground, Tunney ambled along, sniffing the familiar odors that were part of the everyday life of the land. Yes, everything was fine.

But suddenly, Tunney stopped short. His nose began to sniff furiously, his ears quivered, and a heavy growl came out of his powerful throat. He began to walk warily, one slow step at a time. Then, he saw it. Snuggled itself on a small rock was an ugly Cottonmouth snake!

For a tense moment, the two natural enemies eyed each other. Then, the Bulldog decided itself to charge and the snake coiled itself to strike. Of all the breeds of dogs, none is more courageous than the bulldog. And Tunney was a credit to his breed.

With a deep throated growl, Tunney made for the poisonous reptile. Unmindful of danger, Tunney sank his teeth in the snake's flank. That was the wrong place to bite, for Tunney left the triangular head free, and two fangs, loaded

with venom, sank into Tunney's side.

Tunney sprang back. Instinct warned him that he had been mortally wounded. But what of his master, Mr. Simpson? The snake was still at large and would be a danger to his master. The master had to be warned.

As fast as his legs would carry him, Tunney ran back to his master's house. He saw his master and began

barking furiously. Then he tugged at Mr. Simpson's trouser leg. Mr. Simpson understood that Tunney wanted him to go somewhere with him. Judging from the excited tone of the dog's barking, it was very important and serious. Mr. Simpson picked up a weight and followed his dog.

The dog led the way to the snake, still coiled on the rock. When he was a short distance away from the reptile, Tunney stopped and barked. Mr. Simpson was as courageous as his dog and he went after the snake. But Mr. Simpson had the advantage of Tunney in that he knew he must guard himself against the venom-loaded fangs.

He let the heavy weight fall on the reptile's head. Steady and true, the weight crushed the head to the rock. The snake quivered and then lay still.

Mr. Simpson picked up Tunney and examined him. He soon discovered the marks of the fangs. Tunney had been bitten and was in grave danger. He must be given aid immediately!

Mr. Simpson ran with Tunney cradled in his arms like a baby. He ran faster than he ever believed he possibly could. Somehow, he reached a doctor and the doctor went to work. He worked quickly and knowledgeably. Tunney was saved.

And what was the effect of this adventure on Tunney? A few days later, after he was fully recovered, Tunney was back exploring and foraging again, looking for some new adventure.



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