WILD PASTURES REX BEACH

THE STORY TO DATE

Tom Kennedy, young Texas cowboy, has come to the cattle country of Florida in the wild '90's to work for his uncle, Capt. Ben Noble, wealthy and respected rancher Tom falls in love with Rita Mendez, beautiful Cuban girl, who is visit-ing her relatives, the Rubio family, at Fort Myers. Tom incurs the en-mity of Tad and Sonny Dolman, powerful but disliked sons of Asa Dolman, a rancher, who by a secret arrangement with Mr. Rubio is shipping arms to Cuban revolution-ists. While Tom Kennedy is fencing in his uncle's privately owned pasture land, his friend, Bide Will ing, tells him that other cattlemen have threatened to cut the wire Tom wins the admiration of Belle Sprague, unconventional woman rancher. He saves her father's life after an operation the old man performs upon himself.

INSTALMENT V.

OM recited a brief biography which was in no wise extraordinary. Before he had finished, Belle Sprague broke in to inquire:

"Why don't you team up with me, Tom?"

"Captain Ben offered me a deal and I took it. I've got the world by the tail and a downhill pull."

'Too bad! We'd make a lot of I reckon you had a money. high time in town last night." 'No. ma'am."

"Some pretty girls in Fort Meade."

'Yes'm. I reckon so." "Hm-m!" Belle stared at the

speaker curiously. "You're a good deal like your uncle."

That's a compliment, ma'am." 'I see. A virtuous cowboy! I'd

like to have you framed and hang you in the parlor. Funny how he and my father are such friends, isn't it? You've probably heard dy. Mr. Kennedy, Mr. Tuttle. Hostories about dad - and me, too. Most of 'em are lies, of course, but they're close enough to the truth. Cap'n Ben usually gets what he goes after, and so does Gordon; the difference is they don't go after the same thing. It was good of you to play doctor; you saved father's life.

Belle rose and extended her hand, allowing it to rest in Tom's. Her eyes were nearly at the level of his and she stood so close to him that he could see her plainly; in fact, her body almost touched his. Her lips were parted in a smile; she wore an expression he had never seen before, and although he could not read its meaning, a sudden discomfort seized him

He managed to mumble some commonplace remark.

Belle paused at the door and stood for a moment looking at him, still smiling. She was about to say something further when she turned her head at a sound from the road.

"It ain't the cost of the wire, although that's considerable; it's the principle of the thing. Looks like a man can't own property in this state. It sets me afire!

"Couldn't you track 'em, Nick?" This query came from Belle. "I been trackin' 'em. That's why

I'm so late. They came from over this direction.'

Belle, be a good girl and scramble up some eggs for the boys," her father directed. "They've got a long ride ahead of them. And you might fix about four for me. I think I'd like a bite."

It was a cool night; the horses traveled at a good gait. The road which Nick and Tom followed, a poor road at best, led past an occasional house now dark and silent except for the querulous bark of some dog roused by the heat of hoofs. In time it dwindled to a pair of ruts, and finally to a mere trail.

66 A IN'T that smoke?" Nick inquired. He pointed, and Tom beheld a lazy blue streamer that rose and wavered like a wispy egret plume.

Together they rode toward it until they saw a tiny blaze and a figure stooped over it. Four horses were grazing near by, and not until they lifted their heads did the man at the campfire straighten his back. A moment, then a second man rose, stretched himself, and finally waved at the approaching horsemen.

"It's Homer Tuttle," Nack said in a low voice.

"Hi, Nick! Where you heading?" Tuttle called out.

Hi, Homer! You're up early. Mr. Tuttle, meet Tom Kennemer's the sherif of Lee county."

At these words a man flung his blankets aside and sat up. It was Tad Dolman; with him was none other than his brother Sonny. Their faces were swollen from sleep. Out of widening eyes they gazed at the newcomers. They greeted Nick, but ignored his companion. The fourth member of the party

was not introduced. "We saw your smoke," the foreman explained, "and thought you might be vealers." As he spoke he ran his eyes over the camp equipment, but it was limited. He saw nothing more than the usual paraphernalia carried by men who travel light.

"Vealers, eh? Well, now, that's Tuttle laughed loudly. good! " Step off and have a bite of breakfast.

We've done et. Where you been, Homer?' "O, just out on a case! "

"Over our way?"

Sure you could. Why don't Nope! Been up around Bartow. you? . . isn't a yard of guts in a mile of

menace that drew attention back to him. He had turned his horse until the group at the campfire was on his left; he sat his saddle loosely: his right hand lay upon his saddle horn; his eyes were leveled at the two brothers, who still sat on their blankets. "I hear it said you boys have sworn to nail my hide on the door. Is it true?'

"Now, see here, son! You aiming to start a ruckus?" Tuttle demanded. "It's too early in the morning to pick a fight." 'Speak when you're spoken to,"

At last he was able to claim

the guest of honor for a waltz.

you're bragging what you'll do

Nick stirred, he voiced an ad-

Stand off, Nick, and keep your

eye on the law. I'm going to have

this out. . . . I'll take you boys

on right here, right now, single or

"I don't know what you're talk-

"What ails you, anyhow?" Tuttle

Come on, Nick. There

ing about," Tad Dolman said sul-

demanded angrily. "You can't go

these ----- fence cutters."

Tom wheeled his horse and jogged

away. The very slowness of his

"Whew!" Nick exclaimed a mo-

ment later. "That's tellin' 'em!

And on an empty stomach! What

"That's high praise, but — you'll

probably live this down in ten or

ever took hold of you, Tom?"

"They're-no good!

around threatenin' people. I could

monitory word, but Tom cut in

Let's get it over with."

double. How about it?"

arrest you for that."

going was an insult.

crisply:

lenly.

nedy standing near by, a grin on less, too, every girl teased her his face. The man had scaled the lover, tortured him, pretended in- chin?" the foreman demanded in- lovemaking. I'll never have a side fence, that same fence he had vaulted the night of the medicine show

"O! Hellol . . . I was just playing.

"Sure! But you've got the hang of that lariat. I bet you could rope a real horse if you had one.'

"Wait! I must show you." Miguel scrambled down; he coiled his rope and began to twirl it.

Luisa and her cousin did talk a good deal about fancy work and Tom warned him. "I'm talking to dresses and men and love, for they your betters. , . , They tell me were normal girls of eighteen and

difference, as a punishment for the privilege of loving her. All the

same, it was pretty hard to bear. It soon transpired that Tom was fortunate in one respect, at least: he had arrived in time to attend a party in Rita's honor. He learned that on the next evening Mr. and Mrs. Rubio were giving a dance for their niece, and he was promptly invited to come. It was going to be pretty formal, pretty important, pretty grand, and the girls were tremendously excited. They had been looking forward to it for weeks. Mrs. Rubio was even then downtown purchasing materials to decorate the place, and the final preparations were to begin immediately upon her return. There were a million things to be done; the entire family would be busy all that afternoon and evening and the next day as well.

"You going to take this on the credulously. 'I am. Take it and smile."

That ain't like you, Cap'n Ben." "I know it isn't, but we can't crowd nature."

A few days later in the columns of the Citizen, only newspaper published in Fort Myers, this item appeared:

BRILLIANT SOCIAL AFFAIR

On Thursday evening a formal party was given at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Vicente Rubio in nonor of their cultured and beautiful niece, Miss Rita Mendez of Havana, Cuba, who is sojourning in our midst. Those who attended were enchanted by the per sonal charm of the honoree, and they were privileged to partake of an entertainment that for joviality and social enjoyment has never been eclipsed by any gathering held in our fair city. Music and dancing were provided for members of our gay younger set, while the elder guests engaged themselves in conversation and otherwise. The refreshments served would challenge competition with any that ye editor ever saw, and the affair was signalized by that warmth of hospitality which distinguishes

our neighbors to the south. Miss Mendez, daughter of a distinguished Cuban family, is quite the loveliest senorita who has visited our shores. Happily for the young gallants of Fort Mvers, she expects to remain here until after the Christmas holidays and tournament. Look to your laurels, girls, or a new Oueen of Love and Beauty will be crowned.

Among those present wereet cetera

Tom Kennedy's name was on the

T WAS by all odds the gayest and the most pretentious affair he had ever attended - nevertheless, he had a rotten time. For one thing, he was uncomfortably aware that his clothes were cheap and ill fitting, at least in contrast to those worn by some of the other young men; and for another, Rita treated him exactly as she did them. To make him still more thoroughly ill at ease, Tad Dolman was there. He was the first man Tom's eyes fell upon, and it took some maneuvering on the part of each to avoid an actual meeting.

Mr. Dolman cut quite a splendid figure. Plainly he was an outdoor man, and yet he wore his clothes with an air, and they were expensive. He talked well; he was quite a favorite with the girls.

Thanks to Luisa Rubio, Tom met all of the latter, and he danced Because "Ben-Gay" goes with several, but his heart was not time, for instance, in an earnest showed him this pair of tinner's in it. When at last he was able to

"I'll never have time for any chance to see you.

Things are strange here. American girls are so free; American men are so headlong. Perhaps they love all in a moment, like you -that is, if you're not playing a game -- but I'm Spanish; we conduct such things more differently. We proceed with de-with decoro. Correctaments. It is a serious something to ask a girl to marry; these men pay me compliments, they say how beautiful I am, but they don't speak of----

"You are beautiful," he ex-"The most beautiful claimed. girl----

" Dios! My ribs are cracking with that pretty speech, and my aunt is looking. If she suspects what you're talking about-" Rita rolled her eyes, she laughed again. Your face proclaims it to everybody.'

AFTER a pause Kennedy said: "I reckon I am running away with myself. But I'm speedy. Lord! I'm burning up."

'Every girl dreams about some handsome caballero, more impetuous than all, who steals her away. It's very exciting."

'I'll steal you in a minute."

'Ouch! Can I dance without breathing? There is no harm in such dreams. The poor girl wakes up and — it's all over. Then she marries with some rich sugar planter and the caballero, he forgets her entirely."

'I'll never lorget."

'So! The music is over. You dance well."

Will you dance with me again?" Perhaps. But there are so many----

> (Copyright: 1934: By Rex Beach.) (To be continued.)



deep and stays in.

did not mean that they were incesfairs. They spent considerable

Even while they were mother came home with mindedly, then shooed him away. She, too

was in a flutter.

each was insatiably interested in and Tom had visited the general herself, in her world and in the im- store at Fort Ogden also, with simipression she made upon it, but that lar results. In Fort Myers, however, he had more success, and that aftsantly concerned with trivial af- ernoon he reported to his employer: "I dropped in at McCallum's and

her arms full of bundles, greeted Tom absent-

On his way from the ranch Nickerson had stopped at Arcadia long enough to satisfy himself that nobody had

discussing it Luisa's

made a recent purchase of wire-cutting tools. He

Tom heard it, too; evidently somebody had turned in at the gate. Soon the dark blur of a horse and rider could be seen.

'Evenin', Miss Belle! That you, Mr. Hobby?" The voice was that of Nick Nickerson. Tom hailed him eagerly and descended the steps. "Why, Nick! What are you doing here?'

"Hi, Tom! I figured you'd be here or in Fort Meade. There's hell to pay at the ranch. Somebody cut our fence.'

'Honest?"

What I mean, they cut it! There ain't a piece of wire a hundred foot long in five miles. I'm riding to Fort Myers if I can get a tresh horse. Want to go along?"

"Do I!" Tom's heart leaped. Who did it, Nick?" Mrs. Sprague inquired.

Wouldn't I like to know? Is your father in bed yet?"

'He's in bed, all right," the woman asserted. In a few words she made known what had happened. Nickerson was shocked. Why, the old scoundrell " he

exclaimed.

FROM inside the house issued a feeble call from the scoundrel himself, who had recognized the newcomer's voice. Belle led the way to his room and Hobby extended a bloodless hand. The foreman took it; admiringly he said:

Well, Gordon, it's a mercy you didn't have a bad attack of dandruff. I reckon you'd have cut off your head."

'I've got a bet with Belle. I'll give you odds I get well."

'Psaw! You're that onnery you'd do it to spite me if I took you up. I'd like to borrow the loan of a horse, though." Again Nickerson explained the reason for his presence.

"I warned Ben Noble against barbed wire," the sick man said.

Chicago Sunday Tribune

Sort of politickin for the next election.

'Kind of off your course, ain't you? Mebbe you need a compass." Again Tuttle brayed. "That's it. Lost! Dogged if I don't believe you think we are vealers." 'How are things at the ranch?"

Tad inquired. Good! Just fine.

his eyes blazed; involuntarily all

six men stiffened. Nick in particu-

lar was astonished, for during his

had never seen the young man

lose his temper nor heard him

make use of profanity; now, in de-

scribing the outrage which had oc-

curred, he released a string of epi-

thets the least venomous of which

was a fighting word. There was

provocation, defiance, in the gaze

he kept fixed upon the two Dol-

mans. Tad flushed, Sonny averted

his eyes, Tuttle grinned vacuously.

He it was who spoke first when

"I reckon you belong to be sore,"

him. "There ain't many tools in

ter light; the coffee is boiling."

Tom Kennedy spoke again, and

Tom had finished.

who bought it."

I'd have to house you."

Got your fence finished?" For the first time Kennedy spoke.

Some dirty rats finished it for us." twelve years." It was the tone of his voice rath-"Did you notice their ax?" 'No.' er than his words which revealed his feelings; his lips had whitened,

"It was dull. The blade was nicked. . . . It set me off to know they had the sherif with them. I got to thinking about those coffins, limited acquaintance with Tom he too. If that's their game I'll play it."

> "MIRAD! Mirad! De aqui!" Miguel Rubio shouted. He stood in the center of a whirling loop made by his lariat; delicately his right wrist propelled it; his eyes were fixed hypnotically upon the hissing circle of sisal. "Six. Seven. Eight—caramba! Well, I had it

going, didn't I?" There was no answer. Migue! placed his hands on his hips and scowled in the direction of the porch. "Rital Luisal" he bawled

he agreed amiably. "But don't you let me hear no such language at the top of his lungs. "Yes. What is it?" came his out of you if there's ladies present. sister's voice from behind a screen We may call on you to house of morning glory vines. these night riders," Nickerson told

"Why didn't you look?' We did look. You're a smart this country to stretch bob wire or boy. Senor Kennedy will be to take it down with. Some of ours pleased----"

was chopped, but most of it was "You didn't look.' 'But yes," Rita assured him. cut with tools. Not many stores han'le the stuff; mebbe we'll find "We are fascinated. It is the most wonderful."

"Now you're shoutin'! " Tuttle ex-Once more the voices of the two girls dropped to a confidential murclaimed heartily. "You get me the evidence and I'll do the rest. Betmur, whereupon Miguel exclaimed: 'Aw, shoot! "He was disgusted.

Miguel looked over his shoulder.

discussion of Cuban politics - a topic of grave concern to them and they had another pair, and they those they held dear. Rita was did. I never let on, of course, what more than uneasy. The fact that I was up to, and Mac told me her father had felt it necessary to Sonny Dolman bought these very send her away for an unlimited visit filled her with apprehensions exactly like 'em. And some heavy regarding his safety. She worried pliers, too. Looks like a pretty good much. They had been talking about it this morning; their faces were grave.

Luisa let her sewing drop and said finally: "At least you're safe, You're in love! "

"Am I to thank God for that also?" Rita inquired. "Love is amisery

in love so swiftly! At a glance!" Rita lifted a fluttering hand to her throat, her eyes widened, for any sort to Sonny Dolman; in fact, she heard Miguel's voice and-another. Footsteps sounded upon the side porch, an instant of blind, suffocating panic, then she saw Tom the last several months. Nick must Kennedy standing before her, his have misunderstod him. hat in his hand.

IS agitation, it seemed, was even more painful than hers, for he was awkward, stiff; he stammered and he had difficulty in disposing of his hands. Thank heaven Luisa and Miguel were present to hide her confusion!

Rita felt acute surprise when she heard herself greet the young man with admirable restraint; in fact, with a composure that bordered upon coolness. Then, almost before they had finished shaking hands, Ofelia emerged from the house, her eyes hostile, her face grimly set in lines of disapproval. She acknowledged Tom's bow and stare; she seated herself and folded her hands in her lap.

Of course, it was natural for her ride that fence every night. Let's to treat him with the strictest for- see 'em try it again." mality. That was to be expected this time more quietly, but with a He flushed as he beheld Tom Ken- under the circumstances. Doubt- you'll let it lie."

shears I picked up. I ast him if claim the guest of honor for a waltz shears only the other day, or a pair case, Cap'n Ben."

TOBLE agreed. "I'll see him myself and make sure. I can't understand why Tad and God be praised! And think! Homer would take a hand in such a thing. It's right in Sonny's line, of course, but----'

On the following morning, how ever, Mr. McCallum assured Cap-'O, but it must be thrilling to fall tain Noble that he had made a mistake while talking to Nickerson. He had not sold any hardware of he had not disposed of any pliers, metal shears, or wire-cutting tools of any description whatever within

When the foreman heard this his sallow face flushed. He was for going at once to the store and having it out with the merchant. You'll do nothing of the sort,"

Noble told him. "You understand what happened, don't you? Tad and Sonny and Homer got in a few hours after Tom and me.'

"Sure! I understand, also, how Mac is feeling right now. I could see it came hard for him to lie to me. The poor devil got as white as a ghost. He wouldn't have done it unless he had to."

Nick was outraged; he was boiling; he tramped the room cursing under his breath. "I reckon that his few words of Spanish with a blows up our evidence. But you let us string new wire," he urged. We can do it in a week, and we'll

Noble shook his head.

No,

he began his wooing where he had laugh:

What would people say to hear you speak such nonsense? "

"I don't care what they'd say. And it isn't nonsense. I haven't been able to think of anything except you and that night and-what happened. This is the first word ing) action. I've had alone with you since-

'That is a wicked story. You don't think at all about me.' 'But I do! Every-

Then you should not think any more. Because I made a little fool ishness you probably consider me a forward person. It was nothing, really. I was frightened of the storm. That's all."

Oh, Miss Rita! " he murmured in passionate protest. "I won't believe that. I-I love you too much. Honest I do. I'm 'most crazy-'If you love me so fierce why do

you always go away?' "I have to." Breathlessly, incoherently, he told her how his uncle had practically presented him with a fortune, how his entire future depended upon his attention to business, how she had been in his thoughts every waking hour, how he had dreamed of her every night. This was a figure of speech, a shameless exaggeration, of course,

for he slept as dreamlessly as any healthy, tired young man can sleep at the end of a long and busy day; nevertheless, his emotion was sincere, and Miss Mendez was some-

what mollified. 'Will you marry me?" he asked. I can ask you now because-

'Of course not! How could say yes when you must first speak it over with my father? We have

it kills pain quicker

left it that night of the rainstorm, No matter how deep those rheumatic only to hear her inquire with a pains ... "Ben-Gay" will seek them out. For "Ben-Gay" works sure and fast. It gets at the pain in a flash, and stays in the area until the pain is routed. For this original Baume Analgesique penetrates through skin, flesh, muscle . . . Insist on the box with the red "Ben-Gay." None of the imitators possesses the same hyposensitizing (pain-reliev-

