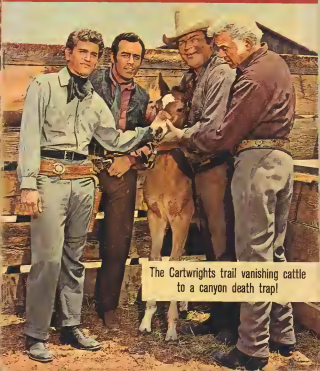


DELL
15¢

BONANZA



The Cartwrights trail vanishing cattle
to a canyon death trap!

BONANZA



THE FOUR-FLUSHER



Battled by gambler Lucky Lou Montana, Ben Cartwright dunks the cardsharp.

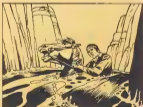


The gambler's scheme for revenge: Destroy the Cartwrights.

ONE DARK NIGHT



An outlaw's bullet tops Adam, as restlers plague the Fonderosa Range.



Later, following the stolen herd, he is swept into deadly Millrace Canyon.

BONANZA

The **FOUR FLUSHER**



ON A WINDY DAY BEHIND THE FOUR CARTWRIGHTS OWNERS OF HUGE PONDEROSA RANCH, STOP AT A SQUABBER'S INN.

BEN CARTWRIGHT! MAY I HAVE A WORD WITH YOU?

A GAMBLER!

"LUCKY" LOU MONTANA! HE'S BEEN MAKING A SPLASH LATELY, HOSS!



HOW MUCH MONEY WOULD YOU BUY YOUR PONDEROSA FOREST, CATTLE RANGE AND ALL, CARTWRIGHT?

PONDEROSA IS NOT FOR SALE AT ANY PRICE!



THE OFFER I COULD MAKE YOU WOULD BE MOST ATTRACTIVE, SIR! TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND—!

ARE YOU HARD OF HEARING, MAN? ABBODY BUYS PONDEROSA!



LOOK HERE, CARTWRIGHT! YOU'VE BEEN AROUND, BUT SO HAVE I—AND I'VE LEARNED FACTS THAT YOU WOULD GIVE MORE THAN THE PRICE OF PONDEROSA TO KEEP QUIET!

THERE ARE NO SUCH FACTS!



SO WASH YOUR MOUTH OUT, YOU CIBAB FOUR-FLUSHER!

BONANZA, No. 1043, Feb-Mar., 1962. Published by Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 750 Third Avenue, New York 17, N.Y. Helen Meyer, President; William F. O'Connell, Jr., Executive Vice-President; Robert E. Clark, Vice-President; Advertising Director: Evelyn L. Nelson, Vice-President. All rights reserved throughout the world. Registered matter. Printed in U.S.A. Designed and produced by Western Printing & Lithographing Co. Copyright © 1961, by National Amusement Company, Inc. This periodical shall be sold only through authorized dealers, lists of authorized copies or copies without covers, and distribution of this periodical for premiums, advertising, or otherwise, are strictly forbidden.





NEXT MORNING

THERE GOES "LUCKY" LOU MONTAINE AND HIS BIG DUMMAY BODYGUARD! WONDER WHERE THEY'RE HEADING?

FOR PONDEROSA, MOST LIKELY! TWO THINGS MONTAINE HAS GOT: NERVE AND LUCK!

THAT NOON... AT PONDEROSA SALOON...



WHAT'S THE MATTER, ADAM? AREN'T YOU EATING WITH US?

PA, COME HERE AND LOOK! THERE'S SMOKE!—ABOUT A MILE FROM HERE! ANOTHER FOREST FIRE STARTING!



IT'S A GOOD THING WE DON'T UNSADDLE THIS NOON, PA!

RIGHT LITTLE JOE! HOSS—GRAB SOME SHOVS!



THEY'RE COMING, CAUBAN? ALL RIGHT—COME DOWN NOW! WE'VE GOT TO RIDE!



FOUR CARTWHEELS CAME TO THE FIRE? FINE! IT'S WORKING OUT JUST AS I PLANNED!

NOBODY IN SIGHT!
THEY'VE ALL GONE TO THE
FIRE, I EXPECT! THEY'LL PUT
IT OUT QUICKLY-- BUT THE
THING IS TO GET THE CART-
WRIGHTS BACK HERE
ALONE!



MISTAH BEN
CARTWRIGHT NOT HERE!
NOBODY HERE! GONE
TO PUT OUT FIRE!
YOU WAIT ?

I GUESS
WE'LL HAVE
TO !



TELL ME--
WHAT IS THAT
BELL FOR ?

BELL IS FOR CALLEE
EVERYBODY BACK
HOME, QUICK-QUICK!
RING SLOW, ONLY
CARTWRIGHT'S COME!
---RING FAST, ALL
HANDS COME !



A PERFECT
SETUP! I'LL CALL THE
CARTWRIGHTS ONLY!

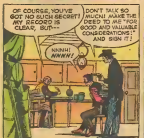


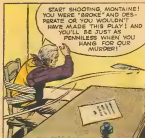
THAT CARRIES! IF
THE WIND WERE RIGHT!
IT COULD BE HEARD
FOR MILES!













NOBODY IN SIGHT OUT THESE, CALIBAN? ALL RIGHT, WE'LL TAKE THESE FOUR OUT AND TIE THEM ON THEIR HORSES! IF THEY STRUGGLE, A SWAP ON THE HEAD WILL QUIET THEM!



MARCH, CARTWRIGHT! YOU'RE GOING TO DISAPPEAR WITH YOUR BOYS--AND LONG AFTER YOU'RE GONE, PEOPLE WILL WONDER WHAT WAS THE AwFUL SECRET YOU PAID SO HIGH TO BURY!



I'M GLAD I REMEMBERED THIS LAKE--ONLY THREE MILES FROM PONCEROSA RANCH HOUSE! AND THAT BEAUTIFUL LITTLE ISLAND!



HEAD FOR THE ISLAND, CALIBAN! THE DOWN-WIND END!



"CALIBAN" GOUSSE IS PRICELESS, BEN! HE CAN HEAR, BUT CANNOT TALK, AND HE OBEYS ME WITH THE DEVOTION OF A DOG!





MEANWHILE, BACK ON THE ISLAND...





THEY NEVER SEARCHED US AFTER TAKING OUR GUNS-- OR THEY'D HAVE FOUND OUR JACKKNIVES, PA!

(COUGH!) THEY NEVER GUESSED YOUR STRENGTH, SON! GET THE OTHERS-- QUICK! MY HANDS ARE NUMB!



I DROPPED MY KNIFE, LITTLE JOE! FORTUNE AHEAD! HURRY HOSS! (A-HUCK! COUGH!)

ADAM'S FREE!



NO TIME FOR YOUR HANDS, LITTLE JOE! JUST THE ROPE!

OKAY! I CAN RUN!



YOU CAN'T RUN FAST ENOUGH WITH YOUR HANDS TIED! NOW CUT WIGGLING, LITTLE JOE, (A-HUCK!)

WATER-- WE'RE ALMOST THERE (COUGH!)



SAFE-- THANKS TO YOU, HOSS!

CAN'T YOU STOP TO FREE MY HANDS NOW, HOSS? A MAN SWIMS BETTER THAT WAY!

HAW HAW! I JUST WORDED ABOUT THAT, LITTLE JOE!



I SEE OUR HORSES—BUT NO SIGN OF MONTAINE!

HE WOULDN'T STAY AROUND... FOR FEAR THE FIRE WOULD DRAIN SOME OF OUR CREW HERE, PA!



WHAT'S NEXT, PA—TRY TO TAIL MONTAINE?

NO NEED TO DO THAT, SON! WE'LL BE MAKING TRACKS FOR VIRGINIA CITY! WE'LL FIND HIM THERE!



MONTAINE IS "BROKE" AND BEING A GAMBLER, HE WON'T WAIT FOR TOMORROW TO CASH IN ON HIS FORGED DEED TO PONDEROSA! HE'LL BORROW ON IT, PROBABLY AT THE PALACE!

WE'LL GO THERE, PA— WITH THE SHERIFF!



LATER...

YOU HAVE WON AGAIN, MR. MONTAINE! TWENTY THOUSAND DOLLARS!

NEW OWNER OF PONDEROSA IS MAKING HIS LEGAL LUCK!



THERE HE IS—AT THE SQUATTY WHEEL, SHERIFF!

YOUR REGS, GENTLEMEN?

I FEEL TOO LUCKY TO LOSE TONIGHT! I'LL GET PONDEROSA AGAINST THE BANK— WINNER TAKE ALL!



THE GAMBLER'S COLD NERVE
SHOWS NOTHING OF HIS ALARM!



DOGGING GROSSER BULLET, LITTLE JOE FIRES A SPLIT SECOND LATER... AND SECURES!



BONANZA

ARROW
and the **AXE**

MOSS
CARTWRIGHT
AND A SMALL
COMPANION FIND
A HOLLOW TREE
FULL OF WILD
HONEY—ALREADY
SPOKEN
FOR!

WELL, LITTLE WOLF, I
DEMON W'D BETTER
FIND ANOTHER BEE-TREE!
THAT MOTHER BEAR
GOT HERE FIRST!





OWWWW!

**OWW!
OWW!
OWW!**

*BUT THE BEAR IS ONLY DRESSED—AND A SWING
OF HER MIGHTY PAW TEARS THE AXE FROM
HOSS'S GRIP.*



**SHE'S DIZZY—BUT SHE'LL
GET OVER IT! MAYBE—I
CAN OUT-RUN HER...**

OWW—OWW!



**HERE TAKE—
UM AXE!**

**LITTLE WOLF!
I THOUGHT I
TOLD YOU--**



BOOM!

HUMPH!



**WHY YOU NOT KILL BEAR
THIS TIME, HOSS? YOU
HIT UM WITH **BACK**
OF BLADE! PRETTY
SOON BEAR
WAKE UP!**

**SHE'S A GOOD MOTHER AND I AIM TO
LET HER RAISE THOSE TWO GLISS! AND YOU,
LITTLE WOLF--BETTER THINK TWICE BEFORE
YOU AIM AN ARROW AT SOMETHING
BIGGER THAN YOU! NOW,
LET'S GO!**

BONANZA

ONE DARK NIGHT

AT FORDPOPA DANCE-HOUSE, BEN CASTLEWRIGHT AND HIS FELLOW BUSINESSMEN FACE A GROWING THREAT...

GENTLEMEN AND NEIGHBORS! I HAVE CALLED THE MEETING OF LOCAL STOCK BROWERS BECAUSE WE'VE ALL LOST DEEP TO RUSTLERS LATELY—MORE THAN WE CAN AFFORD! I HOPE THAT—WORKING TOGETHER—WE CAN STOP IT!

HOW CAN WE CATCH RUSTLERS—OR FOLLOW STOLEN COWS—THAT LEAVE NO TRAIL? ALL OUR SPREADS LIE CLOSE TO BLACK ROCK RIVER— AND THAT'S WHERE THE TRACKS ALL END!

WE'VE ALL COMBED BOTH RIVERSBANKS FOR SOME SORT OF SIGN, BEN, FROM THE HEADWATERS DOWN TO MILLRIDGE CANYON, WHICH NO COW, HORN OR MAN COULD COME OUT OF ALIVE! THE STOLEN STOCK NEVER LEFT THE WATER!

NO DEAD CRITTERS HAVE BEEN FOUND BELOW THE FALLS, EITHER! YOU KNOW THAT, BEN! HAVE YOU GOT ANY IDEAS? COWS DON'T FLY!

THEY DON'T FLY, BUT THEY'RE WASHING! GAWD! WE LEARN NOW, THERE'S ONE THING WE CAN DO—NO—THREE THINGS!

WE CAN RIDE DAY AND NIGHT HERD ON OUR STOCK—HIRE EXTRA HANDS WHEN WE CAN FIND RELIABLE ONES—AND KEEP HUNTING TOO RUSTLER SIGN! IF WE ALL DO IT WE'LL SAVE OUR HERDS!

I'M WITH YOU, BEN!

ME, TOO!

ONE DARK NIGHT, A WEEK AFTER THE BUSINESS' CONFERENCE, A NEW HAND, "LIMPY" JONES, IS RIDING NIGHT HERD WITH PAUTE JOE AND ADAM CARTWRIGHT.





LIKE A SACK OF MEAL, ADAM'S BODY HITS
THE DUST!

MINUTES LATER, AS CONSCIOUSNESS RETURNS...







AS THE MOON COMES BRIEFLY FROM BEHIND
THE CLOUDS...





I SHALL OUTLE--
AHEAD! THERE'S A COOL
BREEZE CARRYING THE
SCENT! A CAVERN BIG
ENOUGH TO HOLD ANY
NUMBER OF STOLEN
COWS!



OOOOOH!

NNNN-
OOOOOH!

THE STEERS--
JUST AHEAD AROUND
THAT TURN--AND
FIDDLIGHT! YOU'
WAIT HERE, TONY
HORSE!

HUH-UH-UH!



THEY CAN'T GO
ANYWHERE TILL WE DRIVE
THEM OUT IN THE
MORNING! LET'S GET
SOME SHUT-EYE,
BOYS!

FOUR! AND ONE
OF THEM IS
LIMPY JONES!

SUDDENLY LONESOME TONY, BACK TOWARD THE CANYON ENTRANCE, GIVES A CALL.



BAD-SPLITTING IN THE BENDING CANYON, THE RIFLE REPORTS CRASH AND SLAM!



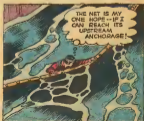


THE NEXT MOMENT, TONY, BULLET-BURNED
BUT NOT INJURED, WHIRLS AND BALLOPS TO
THE CAVERN'S ENTRANCE...

... AND THERE HE STOPS, DAWDLED BY THE
SWIRLING RIVER!



FIGHTING THE FIERCE TUG OF THE CURRENT,
ADAM STARTS PULLING HIMSELF UPSTREAM...





Fearful forces tug at Adam's body as the net whips in the fierce current.



AFTER RESTING, ADAM HITCHES HIS WAY UP THE CRACKS, BY BRACING HIMSELF AGAINST ITS OPPOSING WALLS.



AT THAT MOMENT, PAULIE JOE IS STAGGERING INTO THE YARD OF THE PONDROGA RANCH HOUSE.



AND BOB CHATWRIGHT'S SHOUT RINGS THROUGH THE HOUSE!





WITHIN MINUTES BEN AND HIS TWO BOYS ARE RIDING....



MEANWHILE ADAM SUCCESSFULLY CLIMBS OUT OF THE CRVICE AND RETURNS TO WHERE HE LEFT PAUTE JOE....



WHAT DID THEY DO TO YOU, BOY? PAULIE JOE JUST CAME IN WITH A CRACKED HEAD --- SAID YOU AND THE STEERS WERE GONE!

IT WAS THE NEW HAND---DARBY JONES! RUSTLER! HE SHOT ME --- CRACKED MY HEAD... BUT I HAD A CLOSED CALL THAN THAT, PA!



ADAM TELLS OF HIS DISCOVERY OF THE RUSTLER'S SECRET CAVERN...

A NET ACROSS THE MILLRACE --- A CAVERN AT THE BEND---IT'S IMPOSSIBLE! BUT IT FITS THE FACTS! THE POINT IS--- WHERE DO THEY COME OUT FROM UNDERGROUND?

SOMEWHERE IN THAT PAZEE OF NARROW CANYONS BEHIND THE RIVER, PA! WE'LL HAVE JUST ABOUT TIME TO REACH IT BY DAYLIGHT!



WE MIGHT HAVE TO STRIKE THE STEERS, PA! CHANCES ARE AGAINST OUD FINDING THE RIGHT CANYON QUICKLY!



BUT THE CANTHIGHTS ARE LUCKY AS SHORTLY AFTER DAWN....

LOOK, PA! THERE'S AN OLD CATTLE TRAIL! BUT WE'VE HIT THE RUSTLER ROUTE!



THE CAVERN IS UP THAT WAY, PA!

LISTEN! I HEAR COW-TALK NOW. THEY'RE COMING!







BONANZA SWIMMING CATTLE



ON THE LONG TRAIL DRIVES FROM TEXAS TO KANSAS OR MONTANA, CATTLE HAD TO CROSS RIVERS UNDER THEIR OWN POWER-- A RISKY JOB FOR THE DRIVERS!



IT WAS USUALLY A BATTLE TO KEEP THE CATTLE FROM TURNING DOWNSTREAM AND PERHAPS TURNING BACK TO WAGRE THEY STARTED FROM.



MORE THAN ONE DARING DRIVER AND HIS HORSE LOST THEIR LIVES IN SHIFT CURRENTS WHEN THE FRANKLY EMBROIDERS DO TURN DOWNSTREAM IN A MASS.



ONE OF THE DANGERS OF MISSING THE RIGHT CROSSING PLACE WAS GRYSAND, WHICH MADE A DEATHTRAP OF SOME RIVER MARGINS! FEW ESCAPED!



CLONKETS SENT FLASH FLOODS TEARING DOWN DRAYS TO TOSS ANYTHING THEY CAUGHT END-OVER-END! CURSING, NOT SWIMMING, MEANT LIFE!

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