

NOV. - JAN.

30¢



Gene Autry's
Champion

BELL



NIGHT HORSE



AFTER A HARD WORKING DAY DRIVING CATTLE, THE WRANGLER TAKES ALL THE HORSES OUT TO GRAZE, EXCEPT, OF COURSE, THOSE BEINGS USED BY MEN WATCHING THE BEDDED DOWN HERD. ALL THE OTHER COMPUNCHERS TURN IN AND THIS MAKES IT HARD TO DEAL WITH ANY SUDDEN EMERGENCY SUCH AS A STAMPEDE LONG AGO. CATTLEMEN ESTABLISHED THE CUSTOM OF KEEPING A "NIGHT HORSE" ALL READY TO GO. HE IS NOT USED DURING THE DAY SO THAT HE WILL BE RESTED AND READY. HE IS USUALLY KEPT TIED TO THE CHUCKWAGON OR A PEG DRIVEN IN THE GROUND AND HIS SADDLE AND BLANKET ARE ALWAYS NEAR BY, READY TO BE THROWN ON HIM AT AN INSTANT'S NOTICE. AND HE'S USUALLY THE BEST HORSEFLESH THE RANCH OWNS, A FINE, STRONG HORSE, USED TO WORKING CATTLE AT NIGHT AND IN DIFFICULT, DANGEROUS SITUATIONS.

BLIZZARD BOUND

ONE WINTERY MORNING AT THE FLYING-A



WHEE-
UH-
UH!

HOLD EVERYTHING, CHAMP!
I'M COMING!

WEE!
WEE!



YOU RASCAL! CAN'T
WAIT FOR ME TO UNLOCK
THE GATE, HUH?

WICKER-EE!

IF YOU'RE GOING RABBIT
HUNTING, RICKY, BETTER
STAY CLEAR OF THE HILLS!
FEELS MIGHTY LIKE
SNOW!

DOESN'T
LOOK
LIKE IT,
THOUGH!



DON'T WORRY, UNCLE
SMOXY! WE'LL BE
BACK BY SUPPER-
TIME!

MAKE IT EARLIER'N THAT
IF YOU SET SOME COTTON-
TAILS! MY MOUTH'S
WATERING FOR FRIED
RABBIT!



LATER

WOOF!
WOOF!

MOVE, CHAMP! REBEL'S
FLUSHED SOMETHING!



A YOUNG
GRIZZLY!



NO SENSE SHOOTING FROM THIS ANGLE! I'D
ONLY WOUND HIM! EVEN A POUND GRIZZLY'S
DANGEROUS WHEN HE'S HURT!



REBEL! COME BACK HERE!
WE'RE AFTER RABBITS!
REMEMBER?



HALF AN HOUR LATER
JEEPER! IT'S SURE BLOWING
UP COLD! MAYBE WE'D
BETTER TURN BACK!



BUT AT THAT MOMENT...



A COTTONTAIL! LET'S
GO CHAMP!



GARN IT! REBEL'S LOST THE SCENT!
RECKON LADY LOCK'S HOT ON OUR
SIDE TODAY!



SNOW!
COMING DOWN
TRICK AND FAST, TOO!
WE'D BETTER GET
OUT OF THESE
WOODS PRONTO!



GOSH! I DIDN'T REALIZE WE'D COME
THIS FAR! LOOKS LIKE WE'LL HAVE
TO TAKE SHELTER SOMEPLACE AND--



I KNOW! RANGER
KELLY'S CABIN!
WE'LL MAKE FOR IT
AND WAIT TILL
THE STORM
BLOWS OVER!



THE STORM'S FURY MOUNTS

GOLLY! I CAN'T EVEN SEE WHERE I'M GOING! WE'VE GOT TO FIND SHELTER FAST!



SUDDENLY

DOOMPH!

WHEE!
OH OH!

RR-
OO-
OO!



NOW! THAT WAS A SPILL! (PUPP) KNOCKED THE BREATH OUT OF ME!



WE'VE GOT TO KEEP MOVING, FELLAS! OR WE'RE DONE FOR!

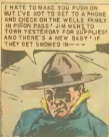




AT THE SAME TIME, FOREST RANGER TERRY KELLY, BATTLES THE STORM.

I'M SURE I HEARD A DOG BARKING! BUT TRYING TO SPOT ANYTHING IN THIS BLIZZARD — — —





HANG ONTO THIS, RICKY! THEN YOU WON'T LOSE CONTACT WITH ME!

GRAT!



A LITTLE LATER...

IT WON'T BE LONG NOW, RICKY! THERE'S MY PLACE!

IT SURE LOOKS GOOD TO ME!



THERE'S ROOM FOR CHAMP IN HERE, RICKY! FEED HIM AND THEN COME INSIDE!

RIGHT!



THE TELEPHONE IS DEAD! LINES MUST BE DOWN!

POOR MRS. WELLS! AND UNCLE SNOMY! HE'LL BE WORRIED SICK!



AFTER WE EAT, I'M GOING TO TRY TO MAKE IT INTO THE VALLEY ON FOOT! I'LL GET WORD TO SMOKY THAT YOU ARE GRAY!



I HOPE YOU GET THROUGH! THIS STORM'S A LULO!

I'VE BEEN OUT IN WORSE ONES! I'LL MAKE IT!



THERE'S PLENTY OF FOOD AND WOOD HERE! YOU SHOULD BE ALL RIGHT TILL I GET BACK!

SURE THING!



THAT NIGHT--- ABOVE THE ROAR OF THE STORM...

NEE-
AUGH!

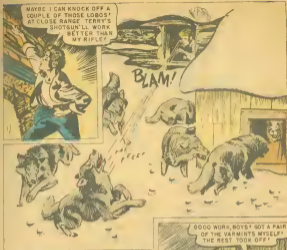
THAT'S CHAMP! SOMETHING'S WRONG!



FINGER WOLVES!

WHEE-AW!





ANOTHER DAY AND NIGHT PASS

THE STORM'S OVER!
AND THE WIND'S BLOWN
A REGULAR PATH
AWAY FROM
THE CABINET!

FUNNY, RANGER KELLY ISN'T
BACK! MAYBE WE OUGHT TO
TAKE A LOOK FOR
HIM, CH, REBEL?

A LITTLE
LATER...

DRIFTS AHEAD,
CHAMP! YOU'LL
HAVE TO TAKE IT
EASY!

CAUTIOUSLY,
CHAMP PICKS
HIS WAY
THROUGH THE
UNTRACKED
SNOW ..

AT LEAST WE CAN SEE WHERE
WE'RE GOING! HOLD STILL, REBEL!
THE SNOW'S TOO DEEP FOR YOU
TO WAG
THROUGH!

WOOF!

SUDDENLY..

WOW WHAT AILS YOU
TWO? I--- OH-OH! I SEE
IT! LOOKS LIKE SOME-
BODY CAME A
CROPPER!

WHOOPEE!

WHOOPEE!



GOOD GRIEF! A DOG TEAM AND SLED, BUT NO DRIVER! I WONDER IF HE WENT FOR HELP OR GOT SPILLED OFF UP ABOVE!



OKAY, REBEL! THIS IS WHERE YOU GET OFF... AND INTO HARNESS! THAT POOR LEAD DOG'S ALL IN!



WHEE-UMPH!

PUSH HARD, CHAMP! IT'S COMING!



YOU'LL BE OKAY AFTER A LITTLE REST, BOY! AND YOU CAN TAKE THAT WHILE I SCOUT AROUND FOR YOUR MASTER! HE MIGHT BE IN REAL TROUBLE!

MMH...



IT'S UP TO YOU NOW, REBEL! LET'S GO!

WOOF!



THANK GOODNESS
THE TRAIL'S EASY
TO BACKTRACK!



THERE'S THE DRIVER!
NOPE HE'S STILL
ALIVE!



GEE, HE SURE LOOKS
LIKE HE'S DONE
FOR!



BUT HE ISN'T! THERE'S A
PULSE! FAINT BUT
FAIRLY EVEN!

Drip-
drip-
drip!



ANOTHER HOUR OR SO AND HE'D
HAVE FROZEN TO DEATH!



I WISH RANGER KELLY WOULD SHOW UP!
I DON'T KNOW WHETHER TO TRY AND GET
THIS HOMBRE BACK TO
THE CABIN OR---





COME ON, CHAMP! THESE DOGS ARE TOO TIRED! YOU AND REBEL WILL HAVE TO GET THIS HOMBRE TO THE WELLS' CABIN!



RECKON I CAN SAVE THIS STUFF, TOO!

A STRANGE PARADE HEADS DOWN PIRON PASS...



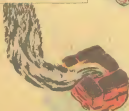
STEADY, CHAMP! IT'S TOUGH FOOTING, BUT WE HAVE TO GET DOWN THERE! THIS HOMBRE NEEDS A HOT DRINK! AND THOSE FOLKS MAY BE STARVING!



SOLLY, CHAMP! THAT WAS A CLOSE CALL! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, REBEL?

SHORT!

WOOPE!







IT 'IT'S JIM!
THANK HEAVEN!
I'D GIVEN YOU
UP FOR LOST!

DADDY!



GOLLY! I NEVER
DREAMED HE WAS
YOUR HUSBAND!

IT'S A MIRACLE!
WHERE DID YOU FIND
HIM? ARE THE DOGS
ALL RIGHT? AND THE
SUPPLIES?



EVERYTHING'S FINE! I'LL TELL YOU
THE WHOLE STORY AFTER I SEE TO
THE DOGS AND MY HORSE!

THERE'S A LEAN-TO ON THE SOUTH SIDE
OF THE CABIN! BUT I'M AFRAID IT'S
BURIED UNDER THE
SNOW, TOO!



DON'T WORRY! MY PALS AND I
WILL UNCOVER IT! AND IN A
JIFFY, TOO!



AN HOUR LATER...

FUNNY, RANGER KELLY
HASN'T SHOWED UP! SURE
HOPE HE DIDN'T RUN
INTO BAD TROUBLE!

IF HE DID, JIM, HE'LL WIN
THROUGH! THE FINEST
RANGERS ALWAYS DO!

YOU CAN SAY THAT AGAIN, MRS WELLS! HERE HE COMES NOW WITH HALF A DOZEN---GOSH! THERE'S UNCLE SMOKY!



RICKY! YOU OKAY?

SURE! AND SO ARE THE WELLSSES! THANKS TO REBEL AND CHAMP!



TO SAY NOTHING OF THIS BRAVE BOY! HE SAVED JIM'S LIFE---AND OURS! I DON'T KNOW HOW TO THANK HIM!



DON'T TRY, MA'AM! JUST PUT IN A WORD WITH RANGER KELLY FOR ME IN CASE I WANT TO JOIN THE SERVICE WHEN I'M OLD ENOUGH!

I HOPE YOU DO, RICKY! WE CAN ALWAYS USE MEN LIKE YOU'LL TURN OUT TO BE!



GOSH! MY EYES'RE WATERING SOMETHING FIERCE! MUST BE THE SUN ON THE SNOW!

I UNDERSTAND, MR ASHTON! MY EYES DID THE SAME THING WHEN I REALIZED JIM WAS SAFE!



TWO-WAY ROUNDUP

JAKE! LOOK AT THAT STALLION GO! WHAT I WOULDN'T GIVE TO BE STRADDLING HIM!

SAVE HERE! IF THIS CRUISE WASN'T READY TO DROP, I'D TRY TO GET CLOSE ENOUGH TO THROW A ROPE ON HIM!



AND IF THAT BLASTED BANK GUARD HADN'T PLUGGED MY BRONG, WE'D BE OVER THE BORDER BY NOW!

QUIT BEEFING! WE GOT AWAY, DIDN'T WE?



SO FAR! BUT I'VE GOTTA GET A MOUNT OR ---

YOU WILL! AT THAT RANCH YONDER! WE'LL HAND THE OWNER A \$50 STORY! HE WILL SELL US ONE!



HOWDY, MISTER! WHAT'S CHANCES OF BUYING A HOT MEAL--- AND A HORSE? HAD TO SHOOT MY PARTNER'S! BROKE HIS LEG IN A GOPHER HOLE!

THAT'S TOUGH LUCK!

YOU'RE WELCOME TO A MEAL! BUT I DON'T KNOW AS I CAN SPARE A HORSE WITH FALL ROUNDUP STARTING TOMORROW!



MAYBE WE HAPPENED BY AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME! CAN YOU USE A COUPLE OF EXTRA HANDS?

I SURE CAN! COME ON! I'LL HAVE MY NEPHEW TAKE YOU TO THE WAGON BOSS!



RICKY! TAKE THESE BOYS TO TOM MACK! TELL HIM I'M PUTTING THEM ON FOR ROUNDUP! THEN SEE THAT HOP KEE FEEDS THEM!

ON THE DOUBLE, UNCLE SMOKEY!



A LITTLE LATER...

IT'S A PERFECT SETUP, MATT! WE'LL LIE LOW HERE TILL THE HEAT'S OFF!

YEAH! BUT IT BURNS ME UP TO FORK WHEN WE ARE LOADED WITH CASH! I---



TOM'S ASSIGNED YOU BOYS TO WILLIE BLAKE'S UNIT! SAYS I SHOULD TAKE YOU TO MEET WILLIE WHEN YOU ARE THROUGH EATING!

WE ARE! BE RIGHT WITH YOU!



SURE SEEMS FUNNY--- BEING ON THE OTHER END OF A ROUNDUP!

I'M SATISFIED! JUST SO LONG AS IT ISN'T THE WRONG END OF A HOPE!



WILLIE---MEET JAKE WINTERS AND MATT COO! THEY'LL BE RIDING WITH YOUR UNIT!

GOOD! WE'LL BE HEADIN' OUT BEFORE DAWN SO YOU'D BETTER TURN IN EARLY!



I KNOW, RICKY, THAT HORSE OF YOURS IS SOME CRITTER I WANT TO SELL HIM!

NOT ON YOUR LIFE, JAKE! CHAMP'S THE SMARTEST, FASTEST, KNOWINGEST HORSE EVER FOALLED! WON'T LET ANYBODY RIDE HIM BUT ME!



THE NEXT MORNING

HEAR THAT, MATT? reckon you're out of luck where the chestnut's concerned!

AN RATS! ONCE IN THE SADDLE, I CAN HANDLE ANY BRONC!

THE ROUNDUP GETS UNDER WAY

KEEP A SHARP EYE OUT FOR SLICK EARS AN' MAVERICKS! WE---

WILLIE! SOMETHING'S MOVING IN THE BUSH YONDER, I'LL GO SEE!



PIPPED-UP! HAZE 'EM, REBEL!



GEE, BUT THAT KID, HORSE AND DOG SURE WORK WELL TOGETHER!

YEAH! BUT I DON'T COTTON TO THE DOG! HE'S TAKEN TO GROWLING AT ME!



THAT AFTERNOON

YOU BLASTED MUTT!
GET AWAY FROM ME
OR I'LL...

REBEL! QUIET! DON'T
KICK HIM, MATE! HE NEVER
FORGIVES ANYONE WHO
HURTS HIM!



THAT'LL SETTLE YOU, YOU
WANDY CUR!

AREEYOW!



REBEL!



I'M REPORTING
THIS TO MY
UNCLE, YOU--
YOU--

THE BRUTE ATTACKED ME!
I'VE GOT A RIGHT TO
PROTECT
MYSELF!



SO HAS HE FARE
YOU KICKED HIM?
I WARNED YOU--

SO WHAT? IT'S ONLY
A DOG!



TAKE IT EASY, CHAMP! REBEL
MIGHT BE BADLY HURT!



AFTER SMOKE HEARS RICKY'S STORY

WILLIE! SEND THOSE
TAD BIRDS TO
ME FIRST!

RIGHT? IF I'D SEEN THAT
HOMBRE BASH REBEL, I'D
HAVE FIXED HIM! BUT I
WAS ROUTIN' OUT A
COUPLE STRAYS IN
THE CANYON!



A LITTLE LATER

GGG! YOU NEARLY
KILLED THAT DOG!
I DON'T HOLD WITH
MISTREATING ANIMALS!

I ONLY TAPPED HIM
IF THAT KID TOLD
YOU DIFFERENT, HE
LIES!



THAT'S SOMETHING HE
DOESN'T DO! BESIDES,
I SAW THE DOG WHEN
RICKY BROUGHT HIM IN!
HE WAS OUT COLD!

OKAY, ASHTON? IF
YOU TAKE THE KID'S
WORD AGAINST
MINE, I QUIT!



ME, TOO? YOU CAN
PAY US OFF! AND WE'D
AS SOON HAVE A
HORSE AS CASH!

I'LL SEE YOU IN
BLAZES BEFORE
I'LL LET YOU HAVE
ONE O' MY HORSES!
OR ANY CASH EITHER!



YOU CAN'T
AP THIS TO
US! WE...

SHUT UP AN' GET MOVING!
OR, SO HELP ME, I'LL
WIPE UP THE GROUND
WITH YOU!



GEE, UNCLE SMOKEY!
THEY'RE ANWFUL BORE!

SO AM I! BUT I'M
MIGHTY GLAD TO SEE
THE LAST O' THAT
FMR! IT JUST DOESN'T
PAY TO HIRE DRIFTERS!



THAT EVENING, IN THE HILLS

JAKE, I'LL GET EVEN WITH ASHTON IF IT'S THE LAST THING I DO! BUT HOW TO DO IT IS---

I'VE GOT AN IDEA!

AFTER THE CAMP'S ASLEEP, WE'LL HELP OURSELVES TO SOME CATTLE AND THE KID'S STALLION! THAT'LL MAKE UP FOR THE PAY WE DIDN'T GET AND THEN SOME!

IT'S A DEAL!

JUST BEFORE DAWN...

SWELL! BUT WE'LL HAVE TO HURRY! AT THE FIRST STREAK OF DAYLIGHT, THIS CAMP'LL COME ALIVE!

WHADAYA SAY WE ROPE YOU A FRESH HORSE, JAKE?

SHAKE A LEG, MATT! I GOT ME A FRESH MOUNT!

THERE'S THE BABY I WANT!---THAT STALLION!

WHEE-EAW!

BLASTED SHORTY! I'LL SHOW YOU!



BY GLORY, RICKY, I THINK YOU'RE RIGHT! TAKE A COUPLE BOYS, WILLIE, AND SEE IF YOU CAN PICK UP THEIR TRAIL!

MUY PRONTO, BOSS!



LATER... WE FOUND THE TRAIL OKAY, SMOKE--- BUT LOST IT UP IN THE HILLS!

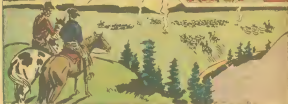
THAT PAINT'S EASILY IDENTIFIED! I'LL SEND WORD TO THE SHERIFF! HE CAN BROADCAST AN ALARM!



IT WON'T BE LONG NOW, MATT! THEY'RE DRIVING THE CATTLE IN TO BEG THEM DOWN! I FIGURE ABOUT TWENTY HEAD'LL BE ALL WE CAN HANDLE!

TOWARD SUNDOWN

AND ALL WE CAN EXPLAIN AWAY IF WE RUN INTO ANYBODY WHO STARTS ASKING QUESTIONS!



I DON'T SAVVY!

IT'S SIMPLE, JAKE! WE'LL SAY WE WERE HIRED FOR SOUND-UP AND ARE BRINGING IN STRAYS!

AN HOUR BEFORE DAWN

MONTANA IS TOO COLD FOR ME, THE WINTER'S FAR TOO LONG



WHAT LUCK! ONLY ONE NIGHT HERDER
HERE! WE'LL JUMP HIM, CUT OUT THE
CRITTERS AND BE WELL AWAY BEFORE
NO RELIEF SHOWS UP!



WHAT THE---
UH?

THAT TAKES
CARE OF HIM!
LET'S GO!



MMOOOO!

OOOO!



BUT THE BUSTLEES RECKON WITHOUT
CHAMP

MMOOOO!

OOOO
OOOO



IN A FLASH, THE GREAT HORSE LEAPS
INTO ACTION

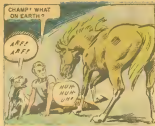


AND BACKS FOR BICKY.

WAAUGH!
WAAUGH!

OOOOOO!









WITH CHAMP'S HELP



AFTER NIGHT EXPLAINS

WE'LL HAVE TO CLEAR THE ROCKS AWAY, WILLIE! BUT WE'VE ONLY GOT ROPES TO WORK WITH!

I'LL SEND A COUPLA BOYS BACK FOR WHATEVER TOOLS THEY CAN FIND!



RANGED IF I CAN BEAR THIS WAITING! LET'S TRY TO PULL SOME O' THE ROCKS AWAY! BUT WATCH OUT! I DON'T WANT ANYBODY HURT!



PULL HARD, BOY!

COME ON, CHAMP! WE CAN DO THAT, TOO!



JEEPERS! THOSE BIRDS SURE ARE WALLED IN!



WHEN THE BOYS RETURN...

HEAVE!

PULL AWAY!



AT THE SAME TIME, ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BARRIER



BLAST THE LUCK! THIS INFERNAL ROCKSLIDE'S WORSE'N JAILHOUSE BARS!

MOON LATER



ASHTON AND HIS MEN? THEY'VE BEEN WORKING ON THIS SLICE FROM THE OTHER SIDE!



WHO CARES? I'M MAKING A BREAK FOR IT!

NOT WITH MY SHARE OF THAT BANK CASH! WAIT!



NOTHING GOING? IT'S EVERY MAN FOR HIMSELF NOW!



CHAMP! ONE OF THEM'S GETTING AWAY! MOVE!



GET HIM, CHAMP!



SEE, AUGH!

I CAN'T SHOOT BACK! BUT
MAYBE I CAN ROPE HIM!
FASTER, CHAMP!

FINISH!



GUN'S EMPTY,
BLAST IT!



BOOMPH!



ON YOUR FEET, JAKE! AND NO TRICKS OR I'LL
TURN CHAMP LOOSE ON YOU!

DON'T WORRY!
I KNOW WHEN I'M
LUCKED!



MEANWHILE

LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE OUT OF THE
RUNNING, MATT!

YEAH! BUT I WOULDN'T BE
IF THOSE COW CRITTERS
HADN'T GANSED UP ON ME!





HE SURE HAS! NICE WORK, RICKY!

THANKS! BUT, LIKE ALWAYS, CHAMP OBSERVES MOST OF THE CREDIT!



LATER, BACK AT THE ROUNDUP CAMP.

RUSTLING AND BANK ROBBERY! WHEN THAT PAIR GETS OUT O' JAIL, THEY'LL BE WEARING LONG WHITE BEARDS!



AND JUST THINK! IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR REBEL MISTRUSTING MATT AND CHAMP GIVING THE ALARM THIS MORNING, THEY MIGHT HAVE GOTTEN AWAY WITH IT!



NOBODY GETS AWAY WITH ANYTHING WITH YOU THREE AROUND! YOU'RE SURE A TOPNOTCH TRIO!

