

# The Voice of the Pack

By EDISON MARSHALL

## SNOWBIRD SAVES DAN.

Synopsis.—Warned by his physician that he has not more than six months to live, Dan Falling sits dependently on a park bench, wondering where he should spend those six months. Memories of his grandfather and a deep love for all things of the wild help him in reaching a decision. In a large southern Oregon city he meets people who had known and loved his grandfather, a famous frontiersman. He makes his home with Elias Lennox, a typical westerner. The only other members of the household are Lennox's son, "Bill," and daughter, "Snowbird." Their abode is in the Umpqua divide, and there Falling plans to live out the short span of life which he has been told is his. From the first Falling's health shows a marked improvement, and in the companionship of Lennox and his son and daughter he fits into the woods life as if he had been born to it. By quick thinking and a remarkable display of "nerve" he saves Lennox's life and his own when they are attacked by a mad coyote. Lennox declares he is a reincarnation of his grandfather, Dan Falling I, whose fame as a woodsman is a household word. Dan learns that an organized band of outlaws, of which Bert Cranston is the leader, is settling forest fires. Larry Hildreth, a former member of the gang, has been induced to turn state's evidence. Cranston shoots Hildreth and leaves him for dead. Whisperfoot, the mountain lion, springs on Hildreth and finishes Hildreth and devours him, thus acquiring the taste for human flesh. Dan discovers Cranston in the act of setting a forest fire.

## CHAPTER II—Continued.

Dan felt himself straighten; and the color mounted somewhat higher in his brown cheeks. But he did not try to avenge the insult—yet. Cranston was still fifteen feet distant, and that was too far. A man may swing a rifle within fifteen feet. The fact that they were in no way physical equals did not even occur to him. When the insult is great enough, such considerations cannot possibly matter. Cranston was hard as steel, one hundred and seventy pounds in weight. Dan did not touch one hundred and fifty, and a deadly disease had not yet entirely relinquished its hold upon him.

"I do very well, Cranston," Dan answered in the same tone. "Wouldn't you like another match? I believe your pipe has gone out."

Very little can be said for the wisdom of this remark. It was simply human—that age-old creed to answer blow for blow and insult for insult. Of course the inference was obvious—that Dan was accusing him, by innuendo, of his late attempt at arson. Cranston glanced up quickly, and it might be true that his fingers itched and itched about the barrel of his rifle. He knew what Dan meant. He understood perfectly that Dan had guessed his purpose on the mountain side. And the curl at his lips became more pronounced.

"What a smart little boy," he scorned. "Going to be a Sherlock Holmes when he grows up." Then he half turned and the light in his eyes blazed up. He was not fearing now. The mountain men are too intense to play at insult very long. Their inherent savagery comes to the surface, and they want the warmth of blood upon their fingers. His voice became guttural. "Maybe you're a spy?" he asked. "Maybe you're one of those city rats—to come and watch us, and then run and tell the forest service. There's two things, Falling, that I want you to know."

Dan puffed at his pipe, and his eyes looked curiously bright through the film of smoke. "I'm not interested in hearing them," he said.

"It might pay you," Cranston went on. "One of 'em is that one man's word is good as another's in a court—and it wouldn't do you any good to run down and tell tales. A man can light his pipe on the mountain side without the courts being interested. The second thing is—just that I don't think you'd find it a healthy thing to do."

"I suppose, then, that is a threat?" "It ain't just a threat." Cranston laughed harshly—a single, grim syllable that was the most terrible sound he had yet uttered. "It's a fact. Just try it, Falling. Just make one little step in that direction. You couldn't hide behind a girl's skirts, then. Why, you city sissy, I'd break you to pieces in my hands!"

Few men can make a threat without a muscular accompaniment. Its very utterance releases pent-up emotions, part of which can only pour forth in

muscular expression. And anger is a primitive thing, going down to the most mysterious depths of a man's nature. As Cranston spoke, his lip curled, his dark fingers clenched on his thick palm, and he half leaned forward.

Dan knocked out his pipe on the log. It was the only sound in that whole mountain realm; all the lesser sounds were stilled. The two men stood face to face, Dan tranquil, Cranston shaken by passion.

"I give you," said Dan with entire coldness, "an opportunity to take that back. Just about four seconds."

He stood very straight as he spoke, and his eyes did not waver in the least. It would not be the truth to say that his heart was not leaping like a wild thing in his breast. A dark mist was spreading like madness over his brain; but yet he was striving to keep his thoughts clear. Stealthily, without seeming to do so, he was setting his muscles for a spring.

The only answer to his words was a laugh—a roaring laugh of scorn from Cranston's dark lips. In his laughter, his intent, catlike vigilance relaxed. Dan saw a chance; feeble though it was, it was the only chance he had. And his long body leaped like a serpent through the air.

Physical superior though he was, Cranston would have repelled the attack with his rifle if he had had a chance. His blood was already at the murder heat—a point always quickly reached in Cranston—and the dark, hot fumes in his brain were simply nothing more nor less than the most poisonous, bitter hatred. No other word exists. If his class of de-

from the clinch and lashed at him with hard fists.

It is a very common thing to hear of a silent fight. But it is really a more rare occurrence than most people believe. It is true that serpents will often fight in the strangest, most eerie silence; but human beings are not serpents. They partake more of the qualities of the meat-eaters—the wolves and felines. After the first instant, the noise of the fight aroused the whole hillside. The sound of blows was in itself notable, and besides, both of the men were howling the primordial battle cries of hatred and vengeance.

For two long minutes Dan fought with the strength of desperation, summoning at last all that mysterious reserve force with which all men are born. But he was playing a losing game. The madly with which he had suffered had taken too much of his vigor. Even as he struggled, it seemed to him that the vista about him, the dark pines, the colored leaves of the perennial shrubbery, the yellow path were all obscured in a strange, white mist. A great wind roared in his ears—and his heart was evidently about to shiver to pieces.

But still he fought on, not daring to yield. He could no longer parry Cranston's blows. The latter's arms went around him in one of those deadly holds that wrestlers know; and Dan struggled in vain to free himself. Cranston's face itself seemed hideous and unreal in the mist that was creeping over him. He did not recognize the curious thumping sound as Cranston's fists on his flesh. And now Cranston had hurled him off his feet.

Nothing mattered further. He had fought the best he could. This cruel beast could pounce on him at will and hammer away his life. But still he struggled. Except for the constant play of his muscles, his almost unconscious effort to free himself that kept one of Cranston's arms busy holding him down, that fight on the mountain path might have come to a sudden end. Human bodies can stand a terrific punishment; but Dan's was weakened from the ravages of his disease. Besides, Cranston would soon have both hands and both feet free for the work, and when these four terrible weapons are used at once, the issue—soon or late—can never be in doubt.

But even now, consciousness still lingered. Dan could hear his enemy's curses—and far up the trail, he heard another, stranger sound. It sounded like some one running.

And then he dimly knew that Cranston was climbing from his body. Voices were speaking—quick, commanding voices just over him. Above Cranston's savage curses another voice rang clear, and to Dan's ears, glorious beyond all human utterance.

He opened his tortured eyes. The mists lifted from in front of them, and the whole drama was revealed. It had not been sudden mercy that had driven Cranston from his body, just when his victim's falling unconsciousness would have put him completely in his power. Rather it was something black and ominous that even now was pointed squarely at Cranston's breast.

None too soon, a ranger of the bill had heard the sounds of the struggle, and had left the trysting place at the spring to come to Dan's aid. It was



The Battles of the Mountains were Battles to the Death.

generate mountain men had no other accomplishment, they could hate. All their lives they practiced the emotion: hatred of their neighbors, hatred of law, hatred of civilization in all its forms. Besides, this kind of hillman habitually fought his duels with rifles. Hands were not deadly enough.

But Dan was past his guard before he had time to raise his gun. The whole attack was one of the most astounding surprises of Cranston's life. Dan's body struck his, his fists flailed, and to protect himself, Cranston was obliged to drop the rifle. They staggered, as if in some weird dance, on the trail; and their arms clasped in a clinch.

For a long instant they stood straining, seemingly motionless. Cranston's powerful body had stood up well under the shock of Dan's leap. It was a hand-to-hand battle now. The rifle had slid on down the hillside, to be caught in a clump of brush twenty feet below. Dan called on every ounce of his strength, because he knew what mercy he might expect if Cranston mastered him. The battles of the mountains were battles to the death.

They lunged back and forth, wrenching shoulders, laughing fists, teeth and feet and fingers. There were no Marquis of Queensberry rules in this battle. Again and again Dan sent home his blows; but they all seemed ineffective. By now, Cranston had completely overcome the moment's advantage the other had obtained by the power of his leap. He hurled Dan

knocked, very pale but whistly self-sufficient and determined and intent. Her pistol was cocked and ready.

## CHAPTER III.

Dan Falling was really not badly hurt. The quick, lashing blows had not done more than severely bruise the flesh of his face; and the mists of unconsciousness that had been falling over him were more nearly the result of his own tremendous physical exertion. Now these mists were rising.

"Go—go away," the girl was commanding. "I think you've killed him."

Dan opened his eyes to find her kneeling close beside him, but still covering Cranston with her pistol. Her hand was resting on his bruised cheek. He couldn't have believed that a woman face could be as white, while life still remained, as hers was then. All the lovely tints that had been such a delight to him; the play of soft reds and browns, had faded as an after-glow fades on the snow.

Dan's glance moved with hers to Cranston. He was standing easily at a distance of a dozen feet; and except for the faintest tremble all over his body, a muscular reaction from the violence of his passion, he had entirely regained his self-composure. This was quite characteristic of the mountain men. They share with the beasts a passion of living—that is wholly unknown on the plains; but yet they have a certain quality of imperturbability known nowhere else. Nor is it limited to the native-born mountaineers. No man who intimately knows a member of that curious, keen-eyed little army of naturalists and big-game hunters who go to the north woods every fall, as regularly and seemingly as inexorably as the waterfowl go in spring, can doubt this fact. They seem to have acquired from the silence and the snows an impregnation of that eternal calm and imperturbability that is the wilderness itself. Cranston wasn't in the least afraid. Fear is usually a matter of uncertainty, and he knew exactly where he stood.

"Oh, I wish I could shoot you, Bert."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## ORANG FEARED THE CAMERA

Photographer's Presence of Mind Probably Saved Him From Death or Fearful Injury.

As a rule orangutangs, the fiercest of the apes, are caught young and tamed before they are shipped to Europe and the United States. One of these animals that arrived in London came with the best of characters. He was considered a very tame, steady-going creature, and an expert was engaged to photograph him.

The man entered the orang's cage as he had entered many others. He had not exposed many plates before he saw that the animal was intent on mischief. He was a very powerful beast, and the man would have stood no chance at all if the orang had attacked him.

The man's only chance was to use the camera as a weapon. Making a sign to the keeper to keep silent, the photographer pointed his hand camera at the orang and with slow and steady step approached him. The keeper was outside the door ready to open it; but neither of them uttered a sound. The photographer was relieved to see the orang gradually retreat and at the same time to be able to rise from the crouched and menacing position he had taken. Once the creature was on the move the man knew he had a chance. He succeeded in working the orang around to the corner furthest from the door, which the keeper had silently and slowly opened. Still pointing his camera at the beast the man very slowly backed out of the cage, the door was slammed to and he was safe.

## COST HIM LITTLE TO LIVE

Roger Crab, Eccentric Englishman, Subsisted for Many Years on Roots, Weeds and Grass.

People today might with profit take a leaf from that rare pamphlet written by Roger Crab, "The English Hermit; or, Wonders of This Age."

There have been three men of this name who were more or less celebrated in literature, all, however, spelling their patronymics differently. Roger Crab, who died Sept. 11, 1680, was a hermit, and 1641 he began restricting himself to a vegetarian diet, avoiding even butter and cheese. From roots he got to a regimen of broth thickened with bran, and pudding made of bran and turnip leaves; and finally resorted to dock-leaves and grass. He drank nothing but water, and said his views came to him by illumination while digging in his garden. His publications were coarse at times, but shrewd.

Speaking of himself, he said: "Instead of strong drinks and wines, I give the old man a cup of water. . . . The law of the old man in my fleshy members rebelled against the

law of the mind, and had a shrewd skirmish; but, the mind being well enlightened, held it so that the old man became sick and weak with the f.-s. like to fall to the dust, but the wonderful love of God, being well pleased with the battle, raised him full of love, peace and contentment of mind, and he is now becoming more humble, for now he will eat dock-leaves, mallows or grass."—Chicago Journal.

## Bull Baiting.

This was a sport once popular in England, but declared illegal in 1835. A bull was attacked by dogs, and sometimes the nostrils of the bull were blown full of pepper to increase his fury. Another form of the sport was to fasten the bull to a stake by a long rope and then set bulldogs at him, one at a time, which were trained to seize the bull by the nose. The bulldog seems to have been developed for this sport from a short-eared mastiff called "alaunt."

Every time a wise man falls it teaches him something.

Men have lost more by crowding than they have by waiting their turn.

## ASPIRIN

Name "Bayer" on Genuine



Beware! Unless you see the name "Bayer" on package or on tablets you are not getting genuine Aspirin prescribed by physicians for twenty-one years and proved safe by millions. Take Aspirin only as told in the Bayer package for Colds, Headache, Neuralgia, Rheumatism, Earache, Toothache, Lumbago, and for Pain. Handy tin boxes of twelve Bayer Tablets of Aspirin cost few cents. Druggists also sell larger packages. Aspirin is the trade mark of Bayer Manufacture of Monaceticacidester of Salicylicacid. —Adv.

## Couldn't Reach It.

Three-year-old Robert of Franklin has a fondness for playing with his mother's jewelry case, much to her annoyance, and after dropping a ring in the register he was warned not to touch the jewelry case again. One day his mother, while out of the room, thought in order not to tempt him, she would place the jewelry out of his reach on a mantel. When she returned, the youngster met her and shouted, triumphantly: "I didn't touch the jewelry, mother. I—I couldn't reach it."—Indianapolis News.

## A Feeling of Security

You naturally feel secure when you know that the medicine you are about to take is absolutely pure and contains no harmful or habit producing drugs.

Such a medicine is Dr. Kilmer's Swamp-Root, kidney, liver and bladder remedy. The same standard of purity, strength and excellence is maintained in every bottle of Swamp-Root.

It is scientifically compounded from vegetable herbs. It is not a stimulant and is taken in teaspoonful doses.

It is not recommended for everything. It is nature's great helper in relieving and overcoming kidney, liver and bladder troubles. A sworn statement of purity, strength and excellence is maintained in every bottle of Dr. Kilmer's Swamp-Root.

If you need a medicine, you should have the best. On sale at all drug stores in bottles of two sizes, medium and large. However, if you wish first to try this great preparation send ten cents to Dr. Kilmer & Co., Binghamton, N. Y., for a sample bottle. When writing be sure and mention this paper.—Adv.

## Ashes to Ashes.

"Look here, Eben," demanded the farmer's wife, angrily, "here you went and sold the cow yesterday, and now you say you haven't any money. What did you spend it on?" "I declare Amella," replied her husband meekly, "I'm darn sorry, but I just went into a restaurant and blew it all in for a beefsteak."—American Legion Weekly.

## Important to Mothers

Examine carefully every bottle of CASTORIA, that famous old remedy for infants and children, and see that it

Bears the Signature of *W. D. Fitch* In Use for Over 30 Years. Children Cry for Fletcher's Castoria

## Joyous Non-Fulfillment.

"You once said you were going to retire from public life."

"Not once," replied Senator Sorghum, "but several times. When things didn't look favorably to my political prospects I thought I might at least get credit with my friends for being something of a prophet."

## Cuticura Soothes Itching Scalp

On retiring gently rub spots of dandruff and itching with Cuticura Ointment. Next morning shampoo with Cuticura Soap and hot water. Make them your everyday toilet preparations and have a clear skin and soft, white hands.—Adv.

## Naturally.

"Don't you think Miss Blank's face rather worn?" "Naturally. She's been wearing it since about 1870, you know."

## Human Experience.

Human experience, like the stern lights of a ship at sea, illumines only the path which we have passed over.—Coleridge.

The war has made table linen very valuable. The use of Red Cross Ball Blue will add to its wearing qualities. Use it and see. All grocers, 6c.

There are a hundred successful men for one that is contented.

An ounce of help is better than a ton of hot air on the subject.