

Temporary titles:

WILD ROSE -- TIGER CAT -- HELL HOUSE

By:

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The Time: The present.

Place: New York City; Northwestern Canada or Alaska.

Rose Moran (later known in story as Wild Rose) is the sweetheart of Diamond Bill Carey, a well known habitue of the tenderloin. Diamond has acquired his name from the fact that he always wears diamonds and when he is interested in a girl, he gives her all kinds of diamonds to wear but only as a loan.

Rose is frightfully lonely in spite of her luxurious apartment, her black maid, her chinese dog, the gold fish, canaries and her diamonds. Diamond is a dog in the manger and while unable to be with her much himself, because of his political affiliations and huge financial undertakings, has strictly ordered her to have nothing to do with the other women who live in the gawdy apartment house. So Rose sits alone in the apartment playing with her diamonds.

A party of gay young people in the building pop in for a moment to try to coax her to go out on a party. Diamond, they tell her, is in Albany. She wants to go but is afraid to.

Billy Lomax, a good looking, weak, but likable young fellow comes back. He is in love with Rose. Billy is also in trouble over gambling drinking, etc. He has seen the box of diamonds on the table.

He makes love to Rose who is almost inclined to respond when suddenly, unexpectedly, a key is turned in the lock and Diamond walks in. He gives one look at Billy, the latter quails and slinks out with-

out a word.

Diamond, a man of few words but quick action, makes it plain to Rose that he's through with her.

We bring out Rose's defiance. She calls him a dog in the manger and says he's jealous of all her friends and that she's glad to be through with him. He says that's okay and to hand over the diamonds. Rose replies that he gave them to her. He says he never gives diamonds to any girl -- that he merely decks out his women in them. They have a furious scene which is overheard to some extent by the elevator boy listening at the door, a neighbor through the fire escape and the colored maid.

Rose finally picks up the box, shoves it into his hand and tells him to clear out. He opens the box -- it is empty!

He leaps for Rose. She screams - "Let me go or I'll kill you!" Suddenly the lights go out -- there is an explosion of a gun -- a woman screams and Rose comes running out of the place and darts down the stairs.

NOTE: I'm not sure that it is well to have this New York sequence in the first part. I'm merely telling what transpires before we pick up Rose in North-western Canada. I'm not going, here, into the detail of Diamond's murder nor the fact that someone other than Rose had shot him and gotten away with his diamonds.

SECOND NOTE: I realize that such a situation as above suggested may be censorable but it all depends how it is treated. Though I would like to get across the fact that Rose is a kept woman, of course we have to handle such a situation with subtlety. They made no bones about it in "The Trial of Mary Dugan".

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HELL HOUSE. This is a gambling and dancing hall of the sort one finds in the timber and ranching country of the Northwest. The owner of the place is a large mannish Englishwoman who smokes a pipe or a black cigar, whose thumbs are always in her waist-line, has a great bellowing voice and who can handle men like a prize-fighter. An aristocrat by birth. No one knows much of her past, save that she had come out to Northwestern Canada, homesteaded, roughed it and finally set up her place on the Ghost River. Her girls are the usual sort, peculiar to dance halls and such places. A bold-eyed hard drinking crew.

Toughest of them all is the girl known as Wild Rose. She is a great favorite with the men, can drink any of them under the table and can cuss with the worst of them. But she is a marvelous dancer.

Wild Rose has one weakness that no one at this time suspects. She has a wholesome fear of the Northwest Mounted Police. Whenever one of them shows up at the camp, Rose manages to slip out of the way.

She has a little cabin in the hills to which she returns when her work is done and it is her boast that no man has stepped across its threshold.

Not far from the camp are the great lands of the stoney Indian Reserve. Here are the fine buildings of the Indian Agency, a Trading Post, Northwest Mounted Barracks, the Mission School and the houses for the agent and his clerks, etc. The Indian houses are scattered over the Reserve. They are rough log shacks and tents. A feud exists between the Missionery and the Lady Ann. He considers her a detriment to the locality. He has denounced her place as the Hell House.

There is also a railway station on the Reserve, this being the terminal point.

One day there comes to the Reserve a young man from the east.

He finds lodging in the Missionery's house. The Missionery warns him to keep away from the Hell House. He tells him that Lady Ann has demoralized all the men in the country. The young man pretends that he is not interested in the place but he sneaks up there the first opportunity.

Rose, coming in one day, sees him at one of the gambling tables. One of the girls tells her the newcomer is spending money like water -- must be a millionaire, etc. He looks up and she recognizes him as Billy Lomax. From that day he scarcely lets her out of his sight and soon everybody considers him to be her lover. He is drinking heavily and playing wildly. Rose is sorry for him but she is not in love with him. She tries to induce him to return east. He tells her that he cannot return any more than she can. He took the diamonds, while she is wanted for murder -- . Rose is terrified, and begs Billy to believe that she never killed Diamond. Billy is sceptical. However, he declares that they are two of a kind. With this hideous secret between them, Rose realizes that it is no longer safe for her even in the timber country.

Her fears are augmented by a rumor that a posse of the Mounted Police are expected at the camp. No one, unless perhaps the Lady Ann knows what they are coming for. She advises her girls to make themselves scarce for a while and keep to their cabins, for she suspects the Mounties are about to make some raid upon the place.

That night, in her cabin, Rose hears someone trying her door, and overcome with fear that the police are after her, she climbs out of a window at back and beats it for the hills.

She climbs up to a place known as the "Castle". It is a giant rock cave. Rose has no hesitation in going inside, where she curls up on a natural bed of leaves and moss and goes sound asleep. She has not seen on the other side of the great rock, the young Forest Ranger

who is camping there.

His pack unslung, rolled up in his blanket Jim Rowan is asleep. He is a lean, strong, cleancut outdoor type.

Very early in the morning, while streamers of red and gold are splashing the sky, Jim rebuilds his fire and prepares his breakfast -- coffee, fried potatoes and bacon. He goes down to a stream for more water.

In the cave Rose awakes, with the odor of sizzling bacon and coffee in her nostrils. She peers out, sees the fire, and hungrily steals out and seizes the frying pan and a loaf of bread. She is about to help herself to some of the bacon when she hears Jim, whistling, coming back up the trail. She darts back into the cave, the grease from the frying pan dripping on the ground as she runs.

Jim is astounded to find his rations gone. His first thought is that an Indian has been prowling around. Then he sees that telltale trail of grease, and loading his rifle, ominously goes to the entrance of the cave.

"Come out of there -- you low lified sneaking coyote. I have you covered!"

Whereupon Rose comes out with her two hands up and one cheek still bulging with Jim Kenyon's breakfast.

He is stunned and asks where in the world she came from. Jim hasn't much use for women. At least he is afraid of them. He effects a rough air always to them, but it is hard to be rough to this pretty girl who tells him a glib story of having run away after being beaten on some ranch, and shows him the evidence on a very white shoulder, which makes the frowning but impressed Jim avert his eyes quickly. He had flattered himself he was girl proof, but he now longs to get his hands on the skunk who had hurt this poor little helpless girl.

He tells her, however, that these are a man's diggings, and she'll have to clear out. Rose asks plaintively, if she might have some breakfast first. All right -- she can stay for breakfast.

In the glow of the early morning they breakfast by the camp fire. Rose is an excellent listener, and it is not long before Jim is explaining to her the fascinating detail of his work as a forest ranger. He said it was a man's work. A Forest Ranger rode the ranges and the Forest Reserves. When he camped on a high place, he was able to spot fire from almost any point. Said the Government had tried to substitute aviators,--didn't work in the Rockies. He showed Rose the paraphernalia for extinguishing insipient fires. He showed her the whistle whose shrill blast would bring the fire-fighters to danger points. Rose listened absorbedly. She was not faking now. She was too much interested in the earnest, clean-cut young fellow. As for Jim, he got something of a shock when, as he tried to show Rose how to look through special field glasses, he got a considerable electrical shock at the contact of her little hand on his. Immediately he reminded her that she ought to be moving along, soon -- .

Rose said, "Am I so much trouble, then? Couldn't I stay here for a few days?"

Jim blushed, scowled -- He'd see about it. Well, yes, he guessed she could -- he'd find a place on one of the lower levels.

Rose said: "It'll be all kinds of fun keeping house for you. I'll do the cooking."

And that was how they arranged it. For three blissful days. Jim even took her with him when he made brief sorties around the country.

Rose asked him whether he didn't get lonely sometime.

He said she was crazy -- a man couldn't get lonely in a place

as swell as this.

She asked him naively, what he would do if he had a wife?

Jim scowled, -- said he wasn't stuck on girls, however, if he ever came across one whom he was good enough for -- and he gave her a canny wink -- his prospects were fine. He was to be in charge of the National Reserve at Banff. All the Buffalo and wild animals would be under his supervision. All he had to do was to patrol the National Wild Game Parks. A swell salary went with it and a swell shack right on the Reserves. It was a cinch and a man's job. On a clear day, she could see Banff through the glasses. He adjusted the lense as he spoke and held them for Rose to look through. She managed to get under and almost into his arms. Jim screwed his face up, got very red. Rose put her head back. Jim jerked the glasses to his own eyes and automatically his gaze became focussed on a party of horsemen coming along the trail in the valley below.

"Well I'll be durned", he said. "Looks like red-coats down there."

"Redcoats!" faltered Rose.

"Yes -- Mounties -- you know 'em don't you? They wear the red coats so the Indians can spot 'em. They signed a treaty once with the Indians to wear the red coat."

But Rose was now overcome with terror. She said:

"They're coming for me!" And she started running for the cave.

Jim caught her arm, pulled her back. "Whatta ya' afraid of?" He asks. "They can't take you unless they got something on you."

Rose said in a low voice: "They've got something on me alright."

"What?"

She shook her head. "You wanted to be rid of me," she said.

"Who said I did?" shouted Jim.

"Look here! If you're afraid of the Mounties, you let me handle them! If you go ~~in~~ the cave, they'll trap you. Get in there!"

He pulled his saddle blankets and hides from a sort of cellar in the ground and helped her into it. The men came riding up. Jim was squatting by the cave peeling potatoes. The chief Mountie was a Frenchman.

"Bonjour, M'sieu!" He greets Jim.

"Bong Jaw", yourself, returned Jim pleasantly.

"'ave you see girl come along thees way?"

Jim considered. -- "What kind of a girl?"

The Frenchman shrugged -- "One fine hell of a girl M'sieu."

"Well, there's <sup>damned</sup> no/hell of a girl around my diggings."

Mounties rode off -- Rose came out. She realized that the police were looking for her. She now knows that she loves Jim and she does not want to involve him in her own sortage drama. For a moment she looks at him, all her heart in her eyes.

"Jim", she says, "that Mountie was right. It's true. I am a hell of a girl."

Jim, not understanding, and intensely drawn to her, takes her hand, looks at her in his nice, firm way and says huskily:

"Well, anyway -- from now on you're going to be my damned hell of a girl."

Rose tries to get the nerve to tell him about herself but she can't do it so when Jim goes below to put out what looks like an insipient fire, some motorists have started on the trail, Rose leaves.

Jim coming back, can scarcely believe she has left the camp. He is dire forbodings of what has happened to her. He fears the police may have taken her after all and jumping on horse, he rides on down to the Reserve, the nearest point where there are any people.



He goes to the Northwest Mounted Barracks but finds that with the exception of a sargeant, all of the men are out in the hills running down a certain fugitive from the United States for whom extradition papers have come in.

Rose decides to go back and give herself up. She knows she is innocent. She returns to the dance hall. Lady Anne tells her they've been scowering the Country for her and that she had even asked the police to try and find her -- where in the world has she been? Hell House has been dead without her.

Rose is relieved and at the same time she is very sad as she thinks that Jim would hate her if he knew who she really was. Lady Anne tells her that the mounted police are looking for a certain criminal who is somewhere in that part of the country. She says she hates to tell Rose this, but he is none other than Billy Lomax. He has disappeared, however, and Lady Anne hopes he has made a good get-away, for she rather likes the poor devil -- and then he is Rose's friend.

The Mounted Police have a warm tip from the Missionery <sup>that</sup> ~~with~~ the man they want is the lover of the girl known as Wild Rose. If they find her, they will find Billy. They wait 'till she is in her cabin that night. Rose, feeling very blue, is about to retire when Billy steps from the little lean-to that adjoins her bedroom and where her stores are kept. He begs Rose to hide him, tries to induce her to leave with him but Rose tells him frankly that she loves another. The police are heard outside and Rose hides Billy in her room. I don't know where -- in a loft or somewhere.

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She comes out and faces the police. She says,

"I know what you're here for -- you've come to take me."

Just then she sees with the men is Jim Kenyon. One of the Pol

says,

She opens the door and the Police step in -- three of them. With them is Jim Kenyon. One of the police says:

"Hello Wild Rose, - where's your man?"

Jim is a prey to tremendous emotions. Rose, realizing the jâg is up, and that she can no longer retain Jim's respect, brazens the thing out. It's the best thing she can do for him, anyway. Show herself to him as she is.

"I don't know who you mean," she says to the Police.

"I mean Bill Lomax " -- "He's your fellow, ain't he?" says the Police.

"I don't know about that -- and what about it if he is."

The Police explain they have a warrant for his arrest. Rose taunts them, says she has no idea of where he is, etc. They search her place and Bill, himself, betrays his whereabouts. He is dragged out. He appeals to Rose frantically. She advises him to go with the police and she says she will go with him.

"We don't want you", the Police say.

"Yes you do", replies Rose -- "I'm wanted for Diamond Bill's Murder. I didn't do it, but they want me just the same!"

The police laugh at her and one of them says:

"Well, we've no warrant for you, in fact Diamond Bill himself, swore out the warrant for this bird!"

Billy hysterically reveals that Rose was Diamond's girl. Jim strikes him across the mouth and says he will make him eat those words but Rose cries out:

"You may as well know the truth! "

Billy darts for the door and makes a get-away but not before the Police shot after him.

The following morning Jim, sore-hearted and disillusioned, is on the trail.

He is making for other parts. His horse shys away from something lying on the road-side. He jumps down and finds the boy, Billy. He is badly wounded. Jim uses his Forest Ranger's whistle to call for help. The alarm spreads through the Forest Reserve Telephones and soon help is on the way but it comes too late.

Before dying, Billy has confessed everything to Jim and even exonerated Rose from blame so far as Diamond is concerned. He says:

"She was a swell kid".

*Complete <sup>story</sup> on application*

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