

Lady Wildcat



Greasy black smoke swirled about him as he supported the girl, got her away from the advancing flames

They pushed through muck and rain and shin-kicks to a million dollars' worth of oil. And it looked like three times and out of the woods, until scrapper-in-skirts Magee took a hand

By T. T. FLYNN

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BY eight o'clock that night the rain really got down to business. The gumbo mud on the oil field road was a gruesome sight.

"She's molasses an' glue," the truck driver said while they were still on concrete. "I wouldn't risk a tractor an' a load of feathers out there tonight."

"It's tonight or wait a week," Danny Cole said. "Pour it to her."

"She's your pipe and truck time to pay for, mister."

Which was partly right and mostly wrong. Those thousands of feet of oil-well casings didn't belong to Danny Cole and his partner until they were paid for. And if there was no oil down there under the gumbo, the shale and the rock, there'd be no payday on the Cole-Crosby lease for ever and anon. Which was to say, never.

That was a road. The big truck and trailer threw mud and water like a runaway bulldozer. The motor raced frantically, gears whined in protest, and now and then all those tons of pipe and truck went lunging and slithering all over the road.

Danny Cole clung to the bucking seat.

Maybe they'd make it. Probably they wouldn't. And that would be the end of Cole and Crosby. Three times—and out.

They made twelve miles of it and six more to go when they hit a mushy swale that was all water and no bottom. The truck wallowed deep, bucked and shivered.

But that rawboned redhead behind the wheel was a driver. The engine racket leaped to a high howl of effort. Low gears that would have pulled the crown block out of a hundred-and-ten-foot derrick took hold. The truck shook and shivered as it gored ahead with agonizing slowness.

"*Yow!*" the driver yelled. "Made it!"

Gears shifted again. They picked up speed. Danny Cole found he'd cracked the stem of his pipe in those critical moments. The driver didn't know that Danny Cole and Sam Crosby, three thousand feet of drill hole, derrick, machinery, and four years of heartbreaking work and scheming had almost mired down in that hole too.

"Look!" the driver said. "Waving us down! Ain't one of them a woman?"

IN the sullen pour of rain two dripping figures stood in the road mud. A black coupe coming their way had slid over and mired in the ditch.

"Nobody else'll be along tonight," the driver jerked out. "If I stop, maybe I don't get going again. What'll I do?"

"Slow down all you can," Danny said, opening the door and stepping out on the running board.

"Lookit that dame!" the driver howled. "She's gonna make me stop!"

Their headlights blazed on her slim stubborn figure, ankle-deep in the black mud. Waving angrily at them. Daring them not to stop.

Danny spoke prayerfully into the streaming rain. "If she stops us and we stall, I'll break her neck!"

Hand on the horn button, that red-headed driver rolled his tons of truck and pipe and let the devil take what stood in the road. She staggered aside in the last instant; and Danny weak with suspense,

scooped her up as the truck rolled by.

Which wasn't so dangerous as it sounds, for the truck was rolling slowly and she had been a slim little slip of a thing in the headlight glare.

"Fer Go's sake!" the driver gasped as Danny and the girl landed hard on the seat.

She was so angry she stuttered. "You t-tried to run over me! Deliberately! Let me out!"

"Got stuck if we'd stopped," Danny said, swinging her to the seat between himself and the driver. "Take it easy. Here's your boy friend."

The man had made a running jump and hauled himself on the running board. His face was red with anger as he shouted: "What are you roughnecks trying to do?"

"So it's *you*?" Danny said. He pushed with his foot—and the doorway was clear once more. "I've waited two years for that," Danny chortled. "And it's twelve miles to the highway."

The girl clawed him from temple to chin. Her fingernails were sharp and her shoe heel drove into his instep as she tried to get out.

"You beast! You bully! Let m-me out!"

Danny thumped her back on the seat and closed the door.

"Sit still, lady. You asked for it and you got it. You can dry out at the well and ride back with the truck."

"You k-kicked him under the wheels! You—you tried to kill him!"

"No such luck," Danny said regretfully. "Pussyfoot Greer is a snake. He always lands belly-down and crawling. Wet night, isn't it?"

She was mad and helpless. She had a tipped-up nose and a splash of mud on a thin little-boy face. She was wet. Her hat drooped soggly.

She was a bedraggled lady wildcat out of a mud puddle, ready to spit and scratch. She was young and she wasn't pretty. Danny wondered why Greer, the lady's man, had picked her up. Hatchita, over there on the Big Pool, where Greer had made a million already, had prettier girls.

She refused to talk. Danny forgot her as the truck swung off on the Cole-Crosby lease road, which was two ruts across the empty range. Maybe they'd make it. Maybe luck had tired of kicking Cole and Crosby around.

They sighted the derrick lights, nineteen miles from Hatchita as a crow would fly—if a crow was fool enough to fly out here, let alone sink a well with pennies.

THE driver swung around by the well and the muddy earth gave a yawn and sucked them down. They stopped, canted drunkenly. Danny jumped out to meet Sam Crosby and the drilling crew.

"You son-of-a-gun!" Sam yelled as they met in front of the headlights. "Didja really bring casing?"

"Don't let the driver hear you," Danny warned. "Get that casing off and in the ground fast."

"She's off already," Sam said joyously.

Danny went back to the driver. "Hot coffee in the office there," he said solicitously. "And a bottle."

"Lead me to it, mister."

"You too," Danny said to the lady wildcat.

"I'll wait here," she said coldly.

"Lady," said Danny, "you worry me. Do I have to carry you in to keep you from catching pneumonia?"

In frigid silence she got out and struggled through the mud with him. In the office shack she looked pale and bedraggled. Danny saw her shiver as he filled a tin cup with hot coffee. She tasted rebelliously—and kept on tasting. A little color came back into her cheeks.

"What a night," the driver said.

The rain drummed monotonously on the tin roof. The raw damp cold was getting worse. Danny cocked an ear to the welcoming clang of steel pipe coming off the truck. The driver heard it too and fished a paper out of his pocket.

"I'll be back in a minute," Danny said hastily, and went out in the rain.

The way that pipe was coming off the truck was a sight to behold. Danny stood

contentedly in the rain and watched. Sam joined him. "Greer was out here this evening."

"What did he want?"

"I dunno," Sam said. "I ran him off too quick. Had a girl along."

"I brought her back."

"You *what*?"

"Greer's car was in the ditch ten or twelve miles this side of the highway. I left him to walk out."

"Let's hope he bogs down," said Sam. "Son, you must be a wizard to have gotten this pipe."

"I am," Danny said modestly, and went back to the little office.

The driver was talking to the girl. He turned with a fishy look in his eye.

"I've got the bill for the trucking and that load of pipe," he said. "Your partner had to sign the check, they told me, and no check, no pipe. We better settle that right now."

"Sure," Danny said, taking the statements. "As soon as we find my partner, we'll settle everything. Have another drink."

THE driver muttered something under his breath and jumped for the door. Danny whistled softly between his teeth and poured himself some coffee.

The girl spoke coldly. "You're flat broke. You won't finish this well. He won't get a dollar from you tonight."

"I'll get you some clean overalls and a shirt," Danny decided. "You can sleep on the cot there while your clothes are drying."

"I'm going back with that truck driver!"

Danny said nothing for the truck driver stormed in accusingly.

"Nobody out there knows where your partner is! Nobody works a slicker on *me* like this! I'm taking that pipe back!"

"Don't blame you," Danny said soothingly. "Pick up your pipe and roll. No hard feelings."

"You know I can't load that pipe and get out of the mud myself!"

"Too bad," said Danny. "Because we'll be dropping pipe down the hole in an hour."

The driver was temperish. His fist plastered Danny's nose flat.

"Good for you!" cried the lady wildcat.

That was all that Danny needed.

The trucker was good while he lasted. They all but demolished the interior of the little office. The lady wildcat sought safety in a back corner. Sam Crosby opened the door a bare instant before a roundhouse swing sent the trucker reeling into his arms.

"The funniest things happen on this lease," Sam marveled. Sam had a roly-poly look and a droll, ugly smile that twisted almost up to his ears now as he stood dripping water and holding the inert trucker.

"Who won the lady?" Sam asked.

Danny Cole wasn't so big or so broad. His hair was like touseled wheat straw and his face looked as if it had been jumped on as he held a handkerchief to his battered nose and faced lady wildcat.

"Undress!" Danny ordered. And as she looked startled, he snapped: "I'll bring you overalls and a shirt and dry your clothes for you. Nobody leaves this lease until the rain stops and a car can get through the mud."

She glared at him.

"Hear me?" Danny yelled.

She glared at him.

"Put him in the bunk shack," Danny seethed at Sam. "And let's get that pipe run while we've got it."

"Amen," Sam said.

THEY had thirty-two hundred feet of drill hole under the old cable-tool derrick. The engine was a museum piece. The steel cables were frayed and rotten.

They'd lost tools and fished for them. They'd lost the fishing tools and had to fish for *them*. They'd cursed and sprouted gray hairs and mumbled abracadabra as they slowly punched the hole down through the Pennsylvania limes and sands toward the Mississippian structure.

They'd poor-boyed that well down on hope and air while their lease on three thousand acres of empty rangeland went sizzling by at four dollars an acre, paid in advance by the year.

It rained all night. They were sodden, tired and hungry; an they sang, pitched rough jokes under the dim well lights as the casing went down, down, down.

"Wonder what Greer wanted?" Danny said to Sam as they paused under the driller's canopy for a cigarette. "The girl told me we were flat broke and wouldn't finish the well."

"Which'd suit Greer," Sam said. "But we've got one more day. And with the showing we've got, there ain't any doubt old man Magee will let things ride like he promised last month."

"Providing and if."

"We've provided," Sam said, staring lovingly at the new pipe. "And we'll never get a better 'if' than we can show him tomorrow."

"Today," Danny corrected, looking at the cold gray shadow of dawn in the eastern sky.

"If she's down there, she's down there," said Sam, looking at the pipe collar which supported two thousand feet of pipe hanging down in the hole. "And if she's down there, we've as good as got our hands in it, son. How'll it feel to be lousy rich?"

"Since Greer threw us a curve and stole the Big Pool right out of our pockets, I keep my fingers crossed."

"That dirty so-and-so," said Sam. "If I live long enough I'll see his eyes crossed for good. No sleep for the sinful. Let's go."

They put 'er down—thirty-two hundred feet of new casing, and knocked off for breakfast before rigging the cable tools.

THE rain had tired into a cold drizzle. The gumbo mud was something to write home about. The truck looked as if it had been planted there until harvest time.

The lady wildcat opened the office door to Danny's knock.

"Breakfast," Danny said, holding a paper over the tin plate and coffee cup. "Sleep well? Got any snuffles this morning?"

She said: "No!" to all questions, and then looked resentful as Danny started to smile.

Overalls and shirt sleeves were rolled up—an she still looked like a little girl swathed in a tent.

"I can't help it," Danny gurgled. "You look—you look—"

"You're a horrible scarecrow yourself!" she flared.

Danny put her food down inside and fingered the stubble on his battered face. He was bleary-eyed and weary, and he felt so good he chuckled. "My boy friend isn't coming for me."

"I was with Greer on business," she said coldly.

"God help you then," said Danny. "We did business with him and he stole a million dollars worth of leases from us."

"You probably deserved it," she said coldly, reaching for the coffee cup.

"Nobody ever deserved Greer. Look, I'll bet he promised to get you a fat job, didn't he?"

She looked startled. "Why do you say that?"

"It's an old gag of his." Danny eyed her commiseratingly. "Pussyfoot Greer never went this far back through the rain for any girl. They come too easy. If you've got to have a job, maybe I can find one for you."

She combed her hair up on top of her head. She had the look of a little lady despite the overalls and shirt. Kind of helpless and appealing.

"If Greer shows up," Danny promised, "I'll punch him for having the nerve to kid you along. And then I'll see about your job. Ask anyone at Hachita or Hamptonville whether Danny Cole's word is good."

"I'd rather ask the driver who brought that pipe."

She said coolly:

Danny winced. "We had to have the

pipe. They'll get their money. We've practically got a well here."

"Have you?" she said. "Get my clothes, please. Mr. Greer will be back and I want to be ready to leave."

"My mistake," Danny said coldly. "I thought you needed help."

And that was the end of the lady wildcat as far as he was concerned. Greer must have known that he was about with her. And yet the more Danny thought about it, the madder he got. Something about her stuck in his craw. Something that had been growing on him all night.

"Scrappy little wildcat!" he thought—and stopped.

That was it. She was a scrapper. She wouldn't back down. She said what she thought. She wasn't smooth like Greer, with words cut for the occasion.

"That heel!" Danny said into the drizzle. "He won't be back for her and I'll punch him when I see him!"

The tired mean drizzle gloomed down. The drill bits were on that monotonous, endless punching of the rock far beneath the derrick. Up and down . . . up and down—and only a greasy frayed steel cable linking hope with reality.

ONLY today was different. The lease ran out today. Old Magee had been sharper and harder than a cutting file. When his lease ran out, it ran out.

Twelve thousand cash brought you a year's drilling on his land. If you had no oil by noon of the last day, you got ready to pay another twelve thousand into the Hamptonville bank by closing time.

A hole in the ground and a lot of hope got you nothing. Old Magee hadn't gotten over not settling on a ranch that covered Hachita and the Big Pool.

Only a couple of fools would lease on such terms. But when you were almost broke and had a strong hunch about the faulted strata, you had to take what you could get.

And a month back Magee had looked at the rock cuttings out of the hole and said that he'd be fair about it. If the showings

looked as good when the lease ran out, he'd wait for his money. Magee was hard but his word was good.

So they drilled and didn't worry too much about Magee and the twelve thousand due today. They had pipe and they were down in the Mississippian. It wouldn't be long now, one way or another.

The drizzle stopped. A feeble sun pried among the clouds. They ate lunch. Greer's girl sat on the bench before the office and ate. Her skirt, blouse and jacket were wrinkled, but she had again that slim, competent look.

Her face was clean, soft brown hair was up on top of her head. She looked like a little lady who was enjoying herself nastily and expectantly.

Danny looked at her resentfully, feeling himself blear-eyed, unshaven and dirty.

"No use," he said. "Looking down the road won't bring Greer back."

She smiled scornfully. "Are you always right?"

"I'm right about the well," Danny said shortly. "I'm right about Greer—and I'm right about you. Greer dirties everything he touches. You aren't his kind."

Her lips curled. "So you want to look out for me?"

"I wouldn't touch you with a thirty-foot pipe casing!" Danny blew up. "You—you wildcat! I was just sorry for you!"

Off by himself, he wondered why he was angry. She was stubborn, vindictive, ready to spit and scratch at sight of him. She made him feel helpless.

That must be it, Danny decided. She made him feel helpless—and furious at her preference for Greer.

After lunch the drill bits were chunking away when Danny called: "Sam, do you see what I see?"

Sam turned in the mud and stared at four riders and a horse with an empty saddle coming across the range. "Ain't that Greer and a couple of deputies?"

"Afraid to come back alone," Danny growled.

"Can't say as I blame him," Sam said.

GREER had been in bed, had shaved, changed clothes. His well-fed face was smug as he dismounted between the sheriff and the deputies. "I got here as soon as I could," he said to the lady wildcat.

"I've been expecting you," she said brightly, and looked at Danny.

Danny ignored her and greeted the sheriff evenly. "Howdy, Shockley. Looking for something?"

Shockley was a big man with a wide, weathered face. He seemed embarrassed. "I thought I'd ride over this way, Cole."

"The lady," Danny said politely, "has been dried, slept, and fed. She's been waiting for Greer to collect her. There's no charge. The pleasure's all ours."

She reddened angrily at the way he put it. But Greer had a creamy satisfied look.

The sheriff coughed, not too happy.

"I don't know about Miss Magee. I guess that's all right. Mister Greer has got a little business, and insists he needs protection. . ."

Danny exploded: "Miss Magee?"

The sheriff nodded. "Thought you must know by now. Her grandfather owned your lease."

"Owned?" Sam said loudly.

Now you could see that Greer had been looking forward to this moment, savoring, anticipating, yearning for it.

"I bought Magee out for cash day before yesterday," Greer smirked. "Lock stock and barrel—everything but his eighth royalty. Your lease runs out today I understand—unless you've got twelve thousand for renewal by bank closing time."

Danny was husky in spite of himself. "Magee said that wouldn't be necessary."

Greer toyed with the situation like a cat chivvyng a couple of mice. "Magee's packed and gone on a world cruise. I own the land now. I'm afraid we'll have to stand on the lease terms."

"Skunked again," Sam said thickly. "We couldn't make Hamptonville by bank closing time if the money was there to borrow."

Shockley said heavily: "If I had it, boys . . ."

"Sure," Danny said. "Sure, Shockley. Thanks."

"Mr. Cole!" the driller called from the derrick.

Danny looked at the old derrick, where the frayed cable was slipping up and down in the well pipe. The last of their money, another year's work gone. And by all the signs they had a well. Maybe another Hatchita. Maybe a million or two, with three thousand acres under lease.

Now Greer would get this too. Pussy-foot Greer had slipped up on them again. For Cole and Crosby it was three times and out. Danny turned to old man Magee's granddaughter.

"It was business, wasn't it? Greer's kind of business. No wonder you were so sure he'd come. Kind of funny, isn't it? I'll be needing the job."

She stood looking at him.

"Mr. Cole!" the driller screamed.

The engine had stopped—as if it mattered now. Something seemed to be wrong. The drill cable looked slack. A low, moaning grunt oozed through the silence.

The driller was at the edge of the platform, waving his arms like a crazy man. "She's bringin' the drill string up!"

Sam's voice cracked on a wild woop. "We've got it! We've got it!"

Greer spoke loudly and rapidly.

"It's past noon! If you didn't have oil by noon today, your lease ran out, unless you pay next year's rental by four o'clock. Sheriff, you and your men witness the time!"

"I don't know why I didn't brain you last night!" Sam bellowed.

The sheriff and one of the deputies stopped Sam before he reached Greer. And for the time being they were rooted in fascination by what was happening. Even Sam.

THE driller and his crew were off the platform now. Limp cable was defying the law of gravity and snaking up out of the pipe. The pipe seemed to be

snarling and growling under its breath. The pipe collar was shaking as the cable piled and coiled around it.

Then the water came in a muddy swooshing column that shot toward the top of the derrick like a solid bar before it broke and mushroomed out.

The water turned dark, turned black—and the oil came in a mighty column that whistled and frothed with gas. And then the drill bits were vomited out as if the heavy steel had been distasteful to the bowels of the earth.

Danny held his breath as the great bits crashed over against the derrick and slammed down in the torrent of oil plunging on the platform. One spark from steel striking steel and the well might catch fire.

Sam had his moment of madness in which he bellowed at the driller. "Get your men an' let's get a valve on 'er!" And then Sam remembered and wheeled on Danny. "Whose well is this now?"

Oil was spraying out from the derrick top. The rank smell of gas loaded the damp air. Streams of the thick black crude were snaking out over the ground in all directions. And Danny had a desperate thought.

"Lend me that extra horse, Shockley!" he burst out feverishly. "There's a ranch house and a telephone over on the new road to Hatchita. Maybe I can reach it in time to call the Hamptonville bank and get them to put the money to Greer's account. They'll do it when they hear we've got a gusher."

"Go ahead," Shockley nodded.

The horses had backed off with reins dragging and were shaking their heads and moving uneasily. Danny started toward them when he heard Magee's granddaughter cry: "Stop him!"

Behind him space coughed in a vast dull explosion. The blast hurled Danny into the mud. Breath was snatched from him. Burnt gas was acrid in his nostrils as he stumbled up groggily.

The horses were galloping off in terror. They'd not stop within sight of the well.

A spark had fired the gas. Devils were hissing and crackling up the derrick when Danny turned. The gusher had turned into a fountain of flame. A column of black greasy smoke spewed high.

Heat already was searing out at him.

The others had been knocked over. The drilling crew was scrambling to safety. Shockley and the deputies were staggering back from the inferno of fire. Sam was rolling out of a puddle of crude.

A shift of wind blew a pall of greasy, choking smoke over them. Over Greer who was farther in toward the derrick, where oil was splashing to the ground in cascades of flame. And spreading fast in a ghastly blanket of fire.

Greer was staggering up when the smoke swept down and hid him. And Greer wasn't alone. Magee's granddaughter was there by him, moving weakly on the ground.

She looked very small, terribly helpless. The blanket of fiery oil was moving toward her as the smoke closed in a swirling, opaque cloud over the spot.

"Sam!" Danny heard himself shouting hoarsely.

He was running as the smoke swirled to meet him. Sam was looking around to see what he wanted when the smoke came between them.

A stumbling, coughing wraith plunged out of the smoke and collided with him. It was Greer, alone, empty-handed.

"You rat, did you leave her?" Danny yelled, shaking him.

Greer tore away, crying: "I'm burning up!" He vanished in the smoke.

It wasn't quite that bad—but almost. Danny was choking and swearing with a terrible fear as he went on. Suppose she got up dazed and ran right into the fire? Suppose she couldn't get up and the wave of blazing oil engulfed her? Suppose crude had soaked her clothes and they caught fire?

He almost missed her in the smoke. She was staggering and uncertain. But she was heading the right way. Danny's foot slipped in a stream of crude as he lunged to the right and caught her.

Both were coughing too much for speech as Danny rushed her back through the smoke . . . and it thinned and the heat grew less as they got away from the well.

Magee's granddaughter was soot-streaked. Her eyes were running tears. She got some of the smoke out of her throat and gasped: "Thank you."

"Thank *you*," said Danny scornfully, "for trying to stop me when I started for the horse. You learned fast from Greer, didn't you?"

She had found a handkerchief and was wiping her eyes. But she wasn't crying. She was amazed and angry. "I don't know what you mean!"

Sam came toward them dragging Greer by the nape of the neck. Greer's nose was bleeding. There was blood on Sam's fist. Shockley and the drilling crew were closing in, but Shockley didn't seem to be in a hurry to stop Sam.

"**H**E FIRED it!" Sam roared. "Edged in close and threw a match! Blew our well up in our faces! I'll murder him for it!"

"My well!" Greer cried frantically. "Sheriff, stop this man! Those horses are gone now! Cole and Crosby can't get in touch with the bank by closing time now! It's my lease and *my* well!"

Sam shook him. Sam bellowed: "The girl tried to stop you! I saw you jump and throw the match after she yelled!"

Shockley was hard and menacing too.

"I heard her and saw it too. The man's insane, firing a well this way."

"You think so?" Greer bawled at him. "Where are the horses now? **How** will they get to the bank? I knew what I was doing! Sheriff, this property is as good as mine and I'll hold you responsible if anything happens to me here!"

"Shockley," said Danny, "step back. He skunked us again. He stole another million from us when he threw that match. If it's the last thing I do, I'll make him earn it the hard way before I walk off the lease. Stand back, Shockley, even if you are the sheriff!"

"My eyes," said Shockley, "are still full of smoke. I can't see a thing. But remember, boys—murder is murder."

It might have happened. The oil game is a hard game. Four years of sweat and disappointment, Hatchita and the Big Pool, and now this, being tricked away also by Greer, did things to a man. Anything might have happened to Pussyfoot Greer, and the paying for it a matter for the future, if Magee's granddaughter hadn't run in between Danny and Greer.

To be just, Danny hadn't quite intended murder, or he wouldn't have paused to hear her out. Or maybe it had gotten to be a habit now with Danny. Listening to her.

"Let him alone!" old man Magee's granddaughter said fiercely. "Do you want useless trouble? I've got a check in my pocket for twelve thousand dollars.

"Grandfather got four times what the ranch was worth and kept his oil royalty. But he'd promised you to extend the lease and he left the money to keep his promise. Here it is, certified and better than cash. Greer will have to take it. You have witnesses."

"Yow!" Sam yelled, grabbing the slip of paper from her and inspecting it. "Who gets skunked now? Greer's stuck with the land; Magee and us get the oil! Lookit it, you snake! *Certified!*"

Sam shoved the check into Danny's hand and whirled on his drilling crew.

"Let's catch them horses and get a

crew with asbestos suits here! We'll have this out by morning! Yow! I could beat a horse into Hatchita!"

DANNY looked at the check and looked at old man Magee's granddaughter. Her face was sooty and she wasn't pretty if you liked the magazine covers. Danny never had, much.

"Why didn't you tell me last night?" he asked.

"You were so sure everything you did was right. And Greer had promised grandfather he'd extend the lease. I wanted to see what he'd do."

Danny smiled just a little. "Are you sure you didn't want to see what I'd do?"

"Since you always seem to be right," said Magee's granddaughter, smiling just a little herself, "yes."

"Since I'm always right," said Danny, "and there's going to be plenty of money from now on, see what I'm going to do."

She was a lady wildcat out of the soot and the mud. Spunky enough to say what she thought. Wise enough, perhaps, to realize that Danny Cole was right for once, at least. At least she didn't spit and scratch when Danny's arms went around her.

"Kitten," Danny said, kissing her sooty cheek, "I've got a real job for you."

"I was hoping you wouldn't forget," said Magee's granddaughter honestly. "Kiss me again, Danny—and let them look."

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HACKMEN HEROES

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Max Baron....

..HAS WON BOTH BAR AND STAR, AND HAS BEEN MENTIONED FOR A THIRD CITATION. HIS FIRST CAME WHEN TWO NEGROES, ACTING SUSPICIOUSLY, TUMBLED INTO HIS CAB. BARON DROVE UNTIL HE SAW A PAIR OF MOUNTED COPS, THEN APPLYING THE BRAKES YELLED: "BAD BOYS INSIDE! COME WITH YOUR GUNS!" AND DOVE INTO THE GUTTER. THE NEGROES, HOLDUP MEN, WERE CAPTURED.

THE NEXT YEAR, WITH A POLICEMAN ON HIS RUNNING BOARD, HE WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN THE APPREHENSION OF ANOTHER BANDIT AFTER A WILD CHASE.

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