

Payback ■ *Gerald L. Guy*



PAYBACK

Eye for an Eye

By GERALD L. GUY



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Payback: Eye for an Eye

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ACCLAIM FOR GUS MCINTYRE

Run Like the Wind

“I love Gus McIntyre! Gus, a 14-year old boy traveling with his father to gold rush territory after they lost everything at home, is ambushed. His father is murdered. All their belongings are stolen. Gus is left for dead. Alone in the Wild West, Gus must depend on his personal strength and skills to survive in this lawless land. “Run Like the Wind” pulls you into this western coming of age story while entertaining and scaring you at the same time. This needs to be a TV show.”

Carol Ann Kauffman, Niles OH

Run to Danger

“I like this kid, Gus McIntyre! I love the way Gerald L. Guy draws you into a story and you can't leave until it's done. Gus stumbles upon a gang of rustlers that threaten the livelihood of the ranch he owes his life to. He sets out to return the cattle to the Circle H Ranch but needs the help of an old Apache Chief who befriends him. Times were tough. Gus has a maturity about him that even the old chief noticed and admired. They begin the journey together. A lot of twists and turns will keep you glued to the pages. A great read for teens and adults alike. I'm reading the third installment in this series and enjoying it every bit as much as the first two books! Thank you, Mr. Guy, for sharing your excellent story with us!

Juliette Douglas, Benton KY

Chasing Gold

“I thoroughly enjoyed "Chasing Gold." It was even more of a page-turner than your previous works, your best offering yet. Some of the twists and turns you put in there reminded me of another one of my favorite authors, Robert Ludlum. I have also read all his works.

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I anxiously await the continuing adventures of young Gus as well as the third book in the "Wolf Pact" trilogy. I'll be checking your web site frequently so I can get signed up for pre-ordering as soon as possible.

Charlie Major, Palm Coast FL

Chasing the Past

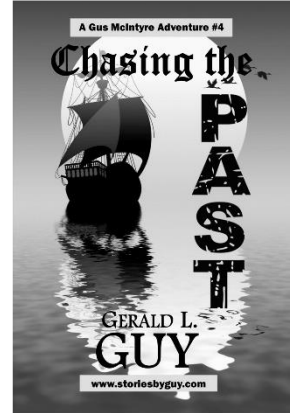
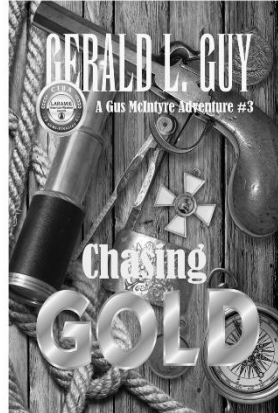
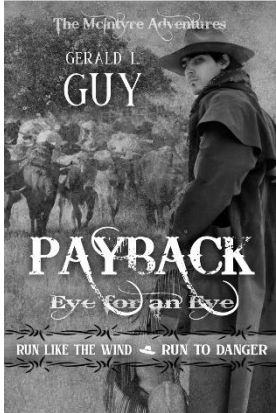
"I love the Gus McIntyre series. Each book is filled with adventure, interesting characters and it won't let you put it down until the last page.

Author Gerald L. Guy weaves a colorful tapestry of fiction mingled with facts of when Gus' relatives travel to the new America and settling these fresh new lands. The whole series of Gus McIntyre is one you don't want to miss, I highly recommend! Good for Teens through adults!

Thank you, Mr. Guy, for sharing your wonderful storytelling with us!"

Juliette Douglas, Benton KY

THE MCINTYRE ADVENTURE SERIES



kindle amazon kindleunlimited

The Gus McIntyre Adventures continue with “Chasing Gold” and “Chasing the Past.” You can purchase all three at Amazon. Signed copies are available at www.storiesbyguy.com

In “Chasing Gold”, Gus and his sidekick, Toots, discover a dying drifter along the road who slips a treasure map into their hands. The map is thought to be a guide to the lost treasure of deposed Mexican emperor Ferdinand Maximilian. As Gus tries to locate the drifter’s kin, outlaws and the KKK learn of his find and try to gain possession of the map. Gus is forced to flee for his life.

After months in hiding, McIntyre and his friends return to the Circle H ranch in “Chasing the Past.” During their slow journey, Gus relates the tale of how his ancestral grandfather, James Oliver McIntyre, escapes Scottish injustice and arrives to the New World. He joins legendary Daniel Boone in a quest to tame the wilderness west of the Appalachian Mountains and begins a new life.

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RUN LIKE THE WIND

The McIntyre
Adventures
Book 1



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FOREWORD

“PAYBACK: Eye for An Eye” is a remake of the first two Gus McIntyre novels I wrote in 2017-18. Both books – “Run like the Wind” and “Run to Danger” – have been re-edited and offer readers new scenes and commentary.

I initially published the books because I wanted to write something my grandchildren might enjoy reading. I never imagined Gus McIntyre and his friends at the Circle H Ranch would captivate my imagination and grow into an ongoing series. “Chasing Gold” and “Chasing the Past” have followed, and I’m working on book five now, “New Paths.” I’m hoping it will publish in 2021.

Offering the books in this re-engineered format is part of a new marketing strategy to get the Gus McIntyre Adventures into more hands.

Some of you have been faithful readers from the beginning. If you are meeting Gus for the first time, thanks for coming aboard. I don’t think you will regret it.

Gus is an extraordinary teenager, whose intelligence, fearless determination and bubbly personality keep readers coming back for more. I hope you enjoy the journey.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Being a Baby Boomer allowed me to grow up in the heyday of television westerns. Daniel Boone and Davy Crockett became household names because of a guy named Walt Disney. They were followed by Hopalong Cassidy, Sky King, The Lone Ranger and then the more sophisticated Bonanza, Cheyenne, Wanted Dead or Alive, Rawhide, The Rifleman, Wagon Train, Gunsmoke and The Virginian, to name just a few. They filled my adolescent years with dreams of big victories over insurmountable odds.

They don't make television like that anymore. Our oversensitive society probably couldn't condone gun play in the streets, damsels in distress, Matt Dillon hanging out with Miss Kitty at the Long Branch Saloon or riding horses until they drop.

Shoot, I think today's generation could use a little bit more of John Wayne and a lot less of that Kardashian bunch. The Duke talked slow and made a point. I believed him when he said, "Courage is being scared to death but saddling up anyway!" It was a standard I carried into adult life.

Thank you, Duke, Fess Parker, Dick Powell, Peter Graves, Clayton Moore, Chuck Connors, James Drury, Ward Bond, Doug McClure and, yes, Clint Eastwood and Steve McQueen. You've all played important roles in building America's youth into a force to be reckoned with.

Shucks! If you don't believe me, "I'll let daylight through your hide," as Gorge "Gabby" Hayes once said.

Run Like the Wind
Run to Danger
Chasing Gold
Chasing the Past

DEDICATION

For my wonderful grandchildren – Hailey and Hayden. Grandpa finally wrote something suitable for your consumption. I hope you like Gus and understand that anything is possible if you work hard and put your heart and soul into it.

Payback ■ Gerald L. Guy

*“Life is tough, but it's
tougher when you're stupid.”*

John Wayne, Actor

CHAPTER ONE

The call of cattle lowing carried across the dark hills in the still morning air like a rooster claiming its turf on any farm in nineteenth century America. The morning was anything but routine for Eongus “Gus” McIntyre, who was suddenly awakened by friendly sound. He had been searching for civilization for more than a week. Had it found him? Could it be true or was he imagining things?

He listened carefully and was positive it was the low rumbling of cattle being roused from sleep as the sun began to make its bright presence known across the eastern horizon. Not so long ago, fourteen-year-old McIntyre took dawn’s awakening for granted on the farmlands of the Illinois River. That’s where his family plied the rich soil for more than a decade. Now, it was music to his ears, especially if it meant cattlemen were pushing livestock to nearby pastures.

He rolled up his blanket, gathered his meager belongings and started to run toward the familiar sound. His pace was swift and quiet. His grandfather always said his grandson could “run like the wind.” He prayed he could run even faster today so he could catch up with the herd and hopefully be rescued by whoever was prodding livestock toward winter feeding grounds.

He was eager, but apprehensive. The Black Hills had been anything but friendly to him so far. Ten days ago, almost exactly six weeks after he and his father had left their Illinois farm to seek their fortune in the lucrative gold mines of the Black Hills, they had been attacked by bandits. His father was killed, and Gus was abandoned along the trail. He was lucky to have survived the ambush and had been wandering for days, keeping a close eye out for Indians and outlaws.

When his father steered their horse-driven wagon into the Black Hills, it was the rampaging tribes he most feared. As they reached the Nebraska Territory, they had been told of a major upheaval in in the Montana Territory, west of the Dakotas. General George

Armstrong Custer and his entire cavalry unit had been wiped out in the summer of 1876 at a place called the Little Big Horn.

“Don’t worry, Gus. We’ll be hundreds of miles east of Montana when we arrive in Deadwood,” his father said, his eyes sparkling when he spoke of their destination. “Keep your eye out for Indians just the same. They’ve been known to kill any white man they find trespassing on their land, and they think all of this is their land.”

Waving his arms with excitement, James Sr. added, “They can have all of it except the small piece you and I stake as our claim. We’re gonna be rich, son. No savages are gonna stop us.”

Just two years earlier, it was Custer who confirmed the presence of gold in the Black Hills, aggravating the Sioux Nation with the rush of humanity to their sacred land. It was September now, three months since Custer met his demise. The Black Hills oozed with unrest.

Unfortunately, it was white men the McIntyres should have feared most.

When the attack began, his father ordered Gus to run, and he did. He couldn’t remember running any faster or being more scared at any time in his short life. He hid in the forest for a full day while the outlaws ransacked their wagon and tortured his father.

“Give us your gold or die,” the leader of the gang ordered.

“I ain’t got no gold but I’m fixin’ to get me some if you boys let me go,” the elder McIntyre pleaded. “I just left my Illinois farm two months ago. I’m on my way to find my fortune.”

“Then today is not your lucky day,” the outlaw with long red hair and a shaggy beard bellowed just before shooting Eongus James McIntyre Sr. in the forehead. They left him lying there in the dirt while they laughed and rummaged through the belongings they had packed for what his father called “the adventure of a lifetime.”

Gus went unnoticed in a thicket not far from where his father lay dead. He didn’t emerge from his hiding spot until he was positive the outlaws had departed for good. Then, he crawled out and tended to his remains. He pulled a blanket over his lifeless body because he couldn’t stomach looking at his only kin in such a bludgeoned

condition. The bullet had torn off half of his father's face.

Gus buried his father with a shovel he found among the family's scattered belongings. The outlaws had not only taken his father's life, but they took everything of value brought from Illinois. Guns, ammunition, food and supplies were all gone.

Young Gus spent another day at the burial site, mourning the loss of his only relative and trying to figure out what to do next. He constructed a small cross and planted it at the gravesite before striking off in search of his destiny. He had no desire to mine for gold, but he knew he had to locate civilization in order to survive.

* * *

THE BLACK HILLS, most of which rises from the plains of Nebraska and are located in what is now known as South Dakota, presented the young teen with a challenge. They stretched over more than one hundred square miles of wilderness in 1876. It certainly was no place for a fourteen-year-old farm boy. Long considered the sacred land of the Lakota Sioux Nation, the lawless territory was infested with gold thirsty settlers, angry Sioux renegades and outlaws of all kinds.

Young Gus McIntyre was raised comfortably on the rich farmlands of Illinois. He could read and write and was taught at an early age to sustain himself in the fields or the forests. While his father provided his knowledge of farming, young McIntyre inherited a love of the forest from his grandfather, a third-generation American whose ancestors emigrated to the New World from Scotland in the eighteenth century. They helped settle the frontier lands west of the Appalachian Mountains. Thanks to his grandfather, Gus could track and hunt, find and build shelter and live off the land if needed.

He was an expert marksman but had no gun or ammunition. His tool of defense was a slingshot his grandfather taught him to use long before he was strong enough to raise a firearm in his tiny hands. It gave him a bit of confidence as he wandered through the forest-covered hills and valleys. He knew he could find game, and he was deadly accurate with the rock-thrower. A hunting knife was his only

real weapon, and it always hung at his side.

Autumn had almost completed its transformation of the Black Hills. The leaves had turned color and the nights were growing cooler. In another month there could be snow on the ground, a fact that made Gus' search for civilization more urgent.

Each night when he fell asleep, the young teen dreamed of home, a tiny farm along the Illinois River where he and his parents had enjoyed a wholesome life. Influenza had taken the life of his mother and grandfather in 1874 and devastated his father. Eventually, it was "gold fever" that hastened the death of Jamie McIntyre. Gus never felt so alone.

Thankfully, he was no stranger to the wilderness. He knew where to find edible roots and that he could chew the bark of most pines and birch trees for nourishment. But he relied on his trusty slingshot, a constant companion in his hip pocket, to provide protein. Like most regions of the western frontier, small game – rabbit and squirrel -- were plentiful.

For water, he stayed close to the creeks and streams that flowed generously through the Black Hills. The nights were growing cold and the water was clear and refreshing.

It was the Y-shaped weapon that saved his life when he was about a week into his journey. Because the nights were growing cold, Gus had secured a blanket of moss he wrapped in his blanket to keep him warm each night. It also helped him blend into the environment.

The largest animal Gus had seen during his wanderings was the whitetail and mule deer of the region. The streams he followed teemed with fish and were natural gathering places for animals, large and small.

Gus was sound asleep one night beneath his mossy comforter when he heard something rummaging through his stash of nuts and berries. He opened his eyes to discover a large bear gorging itself on his breakfast.

As quietly as possible, he discarded his blanket, sat up and loaded the slingshot. When he yelled "SHOO BEAR!" the beast turned on him and growled menacingly. That's exactly when Gus released the

sinew that propelled a round piece of granite at his nemesis. It struck the bear square in the snout. The young grizzly howled in pain, dropped the basket of berries and ran off across the stream and into a thicket.

Gus gathered what was left of his breakfast and climbed a nearby tree. He stood watch the rest of the night, but the bear never returned. That's when he decided to follow the path of the stream but make his nightly camp far from its shoreline.

Every other day or so, he made his night camp on one of the hills so he could look over the terrain that lie ahead. He was high on one of those dark mounts when the sound of the cattle gave the enterprising boy hope. As he skirted along an animal trail that led north, he thought the sounds were getting closer. The low rumbling sounded like the call of a mother to her young calf. His heart raced. He increased his pace and fixed his eyes on the horizon.

When he found the herd, it was in a valley a mile away. He waved his arms and called to the cattlemen who were driving the cows north. Of course, they could not hear him above the din of the lowing and pounding of hooves. He had to get closer.

It took him about no time to make his way down the rocky slope to the valley floor. He found some of the drovers gathered at a covered wagon for lunch. His excitement was overwhelming. Finally, he had found other humans.

He had spent ten days wandering and the entire morning chasing the sound of livestock. Now, it was time to make his presence known and seek the help of others.

CHAPTER TWO

Gus could hardly contain his joy as he approached the covered wagon where a couple of riders laughed with a gargantuan black man. He had a full beard and odd-shaped hat, made from the fur of some sort of animal. Gus had never seen the likes of it. It seemed poised and ready to attack from atop the giant Negro's head. One of the riders, a burly man with dark hair, sipped coffee from atop his horse, while a thinner and younger man dipped a ladle into a pot simmering over a campfire. Whatever was cooking smelled delicious. Gus' mouth watered.

As quietly as he could, he snuck closer to the wagon. When he was within twenty-five yards of the three strangers, he stepped out of the brush to announce his presence. Before he could utter a word, a lariat circled his body and yanked him off his feet.

"Hey look what I caught sneaking up on you boys," declared a tall blond-haired cowboy, seated atop a tan horse. Gus hadn't seen him approaching. The cowpuncher who had been sipping coffee immediately yanked a pistol from his holster and aimed it at the teenager.

"Hold on! Hold on!" the black man called out. "He's just a kid!"

"I don't care who or what he is," the coffee-drinker said. "Anyone who sneaks up on me is likely to get shot. These hills are teeming with outlaws and redskins. How do we know he's friendly?"

The black man stepped between Gus and the gun-toting wrangler. "The boss ain't gonna like it if'n you shoot an unarmed kid, Buck. Why don't you give me a chance to find out what he wants?"

"Toots, you know better than to step in front of my pistol," Buck replied. "You're lucky I didn't shoot you."

"Hell fire, Buck! You ain't gonna shoot nobody, especially me. You love my cookin' too much. Now put that gun away."

The black man stood well above six feet. Gus guessed his stride was twice the length of his own as he lumbered toward him, his

shadow blocking out the sun. "Let off that rope a bit, Clint. I'm gonna help the boy up and see what he's doing out here in the middle of nowhere," he ordered.

Gus' joy quickly turned to fear. He was shaking when the black man reached down, pulled the rope over his head and tossed it back to its owner. He grabbed him by the shirt collar, helped him to his feet and said, "Okay, mister! Who might you be? And why are you sneakin' up on my chuckwagon?"

"Ah... Ah... I'm Eongus James McIntyre... Please, don't shoot... Need help... Men killed my daddy... I've been lost for days and..."

"Slow down, kid," Toots said. "Come over here and have something to eat and tell me and the boys what misfortune has befallen you. We're not gonna do anything to harm you," the black man said with a smile that helped chase away McIntyre's fear.

The cook's big, right hand wrapped around Gus' upper arm to ensure he didn't run away, and he used his left to clean off the seat of the boy's pants. Toots dragged him to the campfire, threw a biscuit and a pile of beans on a plate and said, "Sit right there on that log and put some grub in your belly. I'll grab you a cup of coffee and you can tell us what's goin' on and why you showed up here in the middle of the Black Hills. Mind you, though. I want you to do your eatin' and explainin' slow like. You're among friends, son."

Gus swore the ground shook each time the big man took a step, but the plate of food garnered his full attention. The beans were too good to ignore. They were cooked in molasses and mixed with venison. It was absolutely the finest-tasting food Gus had consumed in a very long time. As he took the last bite of the biscuit he said, "This is good! Thank you."

Seated in the middle of the three cowboys and the cook, Gus told his story. They found it hard to believe one so young could survive in the wilderness for ten days without a weapon or knowledge of the terrain.

"What did you do for food?" one of the cowhands asked.

"I scrounged some wild root vegetables my grandfather taught

me to search out,” he replied, “and I got me a squirrel almost every day. I cooked it over a small fire, hoping nobody would spot me. My father warned me there were lots of Indians roaming these hills.”

“How is it you were able to shoot a squirrel? You ain’t got no gun,” a cowboy named Billy asked.

Gus proudly pulled the slingshot from his back pocket and held it up for everyone to see.

“It’s perfect for small game and it makes no sound,” the greenhorn informed. “Lucky for me, there’s lots of squirrels in these hills and valleys. I only shot what I could eat.”

“I’ll be tarred and feathered,” Billy said. “Let me see that thing.”

Gus passed it to the friendly wrangler who must have been in his early twenties. He watched him spin it in his hands and draw back the sinew as if he was taking a shot.

“I used to have one of these when I was a boy. We used to shoot cans with ’em. Never was good enough to shoot a squirrel. You must be one heck of a shot, kid.”

“My grandpa made it for me, and he was a good teacher,” the boys said and blushed a little. “I don’t miss too often.”

Billy handed him back the peashooter and said, “Let’s see how good you are. You got a pebble in your pocket?”

“Always!” Gus replied.

Billy threw what was left of his coffee on the ground and stood up. Gus knew what was coming and he loaded a small stone into the pouch and watched the man rise to his feet. He quickly glanced at Toots, who smiled and nodded.

“I’m going to toss this here cup in the air. You shoot it. I want to see if you’re as good a shot as you say,” the cowboy said.

“Why would I lie about something like that?” Gus asked.

“I didn’t say you was lyin’, boy. Just want to see how good ya is. Are you ready?”

“I’m always ready,” Gus said with confidence. He squeezed the perfectly carved handle with his left hand and held the stone and pouch in his right. When the cowboy hurled his coffee cup, he shot just before it reached its peak.

When the stone hit the tin cup, it made a sharp ringing sound and found a new flight path. It landed behind the chuckwagon in a fresh pile of horse dung.

While the other cowboys marveled at the shot and laughed at the consequences, Billy fumed.

“Dad-gummit, look what you did, kid!” he said.

“Sorry! You should have thrown it out into the open.”

“Boy’s right, Billy. I’d suggest you go retrieve your cup and clean it good before it melts right into those droppings. If that pile was left by old Bessie, it’s dangerous stuff,” Toots said with a big smile.

Everybody laughed at Billy’s expense as he sauntered over to rescue his cup, mumbling expletives under his breath.

“And that’s exactly why I drew iron on the boy,” Buck said goodheartedly. “I’m lucky he didn’t come into this camp firing that thing. He’d a put my eye out.”

“That was my fault,” Gus admitted and hung his head a bit. “I should have known better than to barge in on you all. I was just so glad to find people. I wasn’t thinking straight. And I wouldn’t have shot at any of you.”

“He’s just joshing you, Gus,” Toots said. “We’re glad we were here at the right time for you to find us. Buck wasn’t going to shoot you. He ain’t never shot nobody.”

“I know, but you gotta understand,” Buck said, “When it comes to Injuns and outlaws, he who hesitates generally ends up dead, just like your daddy. The Black Hills is no place for greenhorns. You’re lucky to be alive.”

“Shucks, Buck. I think the boy knows that already,” Toots said. “You don’t have to be so darned straight forward. He’s just a kid who has suffered greatly.”

“Sorry, boy. It’s the only way I know,” the tough said.

“It’s okay,” Gus replied. “I’m sorry I surprised you. I was really excited and just wanted to hear a friendly voice.”

“Did you recognize any of the men who assaulted you and your father?” Toots asked.

“No, sir! But I would know the one in charge, the man who shot my father, if I ever saw him again,” the fourteen-year-old replied. “He had red hair like mine, a big beard and a scar that stretched from his right temple to his chin. He was mean looking, and I’ll never forget his face.”

“Don’t you fret. He’ll pay for what he done,” the cook said. “The Good Book says, ‘vengeance shall be mine.’”

“It also says something about an ‘eye for an eye.’” Gus chimed in. “My grandpa told me that. I think that’s fair.”

“Whatever you are thinkin’, boy, wipe it from your thoughts. A vengeful man has a hard time findin’ peace,” Toots said.

The youngest of the three men, the man who was eating when Gus walked in on the group, introduced himself. He stuck out his hand and said, “They call me Junior because my father oversees this cattle drive. Let me assure you, there is nobody on this drive who will hurt you, and we’ll give you all the help you need.”

“I’m Gus. It’s easier than Eongus, and that is what my momma and daddy always called me. My dad only called me Junior when he was mad at me. Does your father do that with you?”

“No, the old man calls him worst names than that when he gets upset,” Buck said with a laugh.

“Speakin’ of the old man, here he comes now.” Toots said. “He’s probably wonderin’ what’s takin’ you guys so long to get back to work.”

“You best get along before he gets here. I’ll tell him we’ve got a visitor,” Junior said.

All three mounted their horses and rode out toward the herd. Junior stopped to chat with his father before following the other hands to the cattle that were moving slowly through the valley.

“You don’t have anythin’ to worry about, son,” Toots said. “This is a pretty good bunch of fellas. If it is help you need, you’ve run into the perfect outfit. The Circle H Ranch turns its back on nobody in need.

“Mind my word, though. The old man is a hard one. Grip his hand firmly when you introduce yourself and be respectful. That is Walter

B. Hamilton III. I call him Mr. H. You best call him Mr. Hamilton.”

Hamilton rode in atop a big, white stallion. It was the most beautiful horse Gus had ever seen. The boss wore silver spurs and a silver belt buckle that reflected the sharp rays of the autumn sun. He sheathed a Winchester rifle before dismounting.

The trail boss looked at Toots and then at the boy. “Is the coffee hot, Toots?”

“You know it always is, Mr. H,” the cook replied.

“Then give me some and tell me who this greenhorn is,” Hamilton said as he swatted dust from his Stetson and ran a kerchief across his brow.

“My name is Eongus James McIntyre, Mr. Hamilton, and I’m in need of a little bit of help,” Gus said, reaching his hand out to the imposing foreman.

“Well, that’s what I understand,” Hamilton said, impressed by the kid’s firm grip. “Do you know anything about cattle, son?”

“No, sir, but I’m willing to learn.”

“Well, we’ll see about that,” he said as he drained his coffee cup. “Mighty good coffee, Toots. Thanks! You’re in charge of this young’un. Teach him all you know and keep him out of trouble until we get to Deadwood.”

“That’s what we’ll do, sir,” Toots replied.

“See you in a few hours when we bed this bunch down for the night,” Hamilton said as he remounted and rode out of camp. “Glad to have you aboard, Irish!”

When only the cook and Gus were standing at the campfire, he asked, “Does that mean you and me is partners, Toots?”

“I think it does.”

“He was mistaken when he called me, Irish?” Gus asked. “My family hails from Scotland, and my grandad always told me to make sure people know the difference. He didn’t have much love for the Irish for some reason.”

“That’s good to know,” the cook replied. “People make all kinds of assumptions when they first look at ya. That red hair atop your head signals you ain’t from here.

“Names mean a lot. Make sure you set the boss straight the next time you see him. He won’t take offense, and it’ll make everyone else abide by your wishes.”

“What does your name mean, Toots?”

“It means mind your own business,” the cook said as he lifted the pot from the hot coals. “Douse that fire and I’ll start packing this rig so we can move up the trail and get ready to feed this bunch supper.”

Gus smiled. It felt good to have a full belly, new friends and chores to attend as trainee for the Circle H Ranch.

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