

"Aint no such animal on your ranch, ma'am".

Birdie bursts into tears, but Dickie shakes her and savagely demands that she shut up. This is no time for tears. With the stern manner of a man, he approaches the front of the wagon and addresses Buck:

"We will take train back to Calgary".

"Just's you say bo' but there aint no train goin' to Calgary till tomorrow night, 'bout 11.55 P.M."

Dick and Birdie exchange glances of horror, and look about them at the steadily descending darkness.

"Will you kindly direct us" says Dick firmly, "to the nearest restaurant."

"I'm starving" puts in Birdie hysterically.

Buck bursts out laughing, holding his sides as if he has just heard a great joke.

"Excuse me for laughin' ma-am, but that sure was a good one. The fact o the matter is that the nearest eating joint I know anything about is your own shack 'bout 22 mile from here".

After a moment, as the two stand hesitating Buck again sings out:

"Aller--aboard!"

"Theres no room in that --that wagon" says Dick. "Where are we to sit".

"Pshaw theres all kinds o' room aboard. Sit on the trunks, bo. They ain't too bad for a seat. I've set on worse. 'Course if you prefer it, you can foot it to the ranch. Aint but