

THE MAVERICK

by Joanne Robhart

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"Seems lak Ah got real great news for you. Been talking to the Boss Lady. She decided to give yuh a break, yuh willin' to wuk part time ?"

"Who's the Boss Lady ?"

"Missus Johnson."

"Who ?"

Violently a thrown down copy pencil hit the floor. "Don't they teach yuh nuthin, no 'Merican history in them fancy Eastern colleges ? She's just the most important wife of the most important representative to the Yew-nited States House of Representatives, in Washington, D.C. "

"News was scarce where I spent last year."

"Yuh mean there's nuthin in them college history books you studied about LBJ; FDR's right hand man ?"

"Who's LBJ ?"

"Jimmymmmmmmmmm Bmmmm. You just a massa ignorance, aintcha !" Sarcastic laughter shook the bureau chief as he mimicked Amos & Andy. With condescending patience he explained. "LBJ's our white haired boy, a real gennlymun. Patriotic. Hard workin. Come a long way. Going places."

"Who sez ?"

"Just about everybody. Leastways in Texas."

"How'd he do it ? Who's behind him ? Oil men ?"

"Oil men, big ranchers, radio stations; them he owns. Like this outfit, INS. And, it helps to have a rich wife, so they say."

"Mrs Johnson's rich ?"

"Naow, Ah didn't exactly say that, did I ?" He yawned hugely, smothered a belch. "Ah don't think you'll ever understand Texas politics. Let's just say Lady Bird's well off. I mean she's just th: smartest, hardest workin woman Ah ever knowed...knew. Her Pappy had him a store; grazin land. Water rights." The bureau chief wandered over to the teleprinter, read some short takes which had followed the jingling of a bell, then wandered about the room, rattling

ENCLOSURE

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the change in his pockets, whistling absent mindedly. "Yessir, all the way with LBJ. With him n' her runnin' this rig, all the other interests, everyone workin' for him, he's gonna be president some day."

"President ! What of ? The Texas Navy !" Breaking up laughing, the girl halted at the look of fury in the man's face, the wild anger of the blood shot eyes.

The bureau chief paused, hands on hips, lips set. "You're speakin' of something you don't know nuthin about, young lady. Just like them over-educated, underworked young whipper-snappers up at the college. Just wait awhile, you may learn a thing or two, someday."

"But, president of the United States, that's a job for eastern ers, surely ?"

"We gonna change all that." Expansively the big man waved his hairy arm, smiled his crocodile smile. "That easterner business, that don't make no never mind as we say down here. We run things our own way. Ever hear of Judge Roy Bean ?"

"I am the law, west of the Pecos."

"Yeah, that's the one. We write our own history."

"Like at the end of a gun ?"

"Howdja guess ? You're gettin' smarter every day. That ole business of Wall Street, all them Jews, them dirty rotten stinkin Catholics, runnin' the commodity biness, riggin' the freight rates, all that's gotta change. Texas has 'em a real man down there in Washington. Knows all the ins and outs, gotta real Bible readin' 'Merican boy, knows the value of a dollar, he's worked his way up, not like some of your lily livered, fancy pants eastern folk, ruined rotten with easiness, yer parlor pinks." The straw boss bureau chief gave ~~me~~ ^{the girl} a pitying look. "I don't know about you," he shook his head. "You oughta give some thoughts to your future. I kin tell yuh one thing, it's loyalty that counts in this outfit." He shook a sausage size finger coyly in the girl's face, the air slightly scented with bourbon. "We gotta mighty fine bandwagon, you'd do well to climb aboard, ~~xxxxx~~ while yuh still kin."

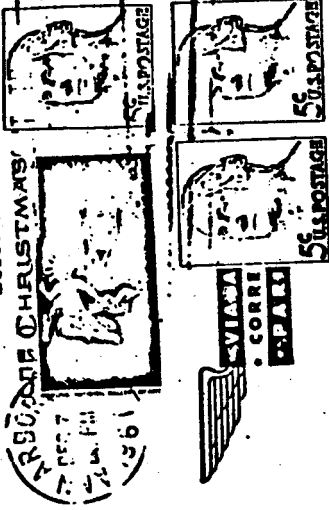
Silently the girl went back to the broken down typewriter to the re-write of the agricultural department hand-out on tick contro:

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Behind her sprawled the chief, engrossed in yet another paperback thriller, his big ham fist clutched over a lurid yellow cover, partly covering the figure of a range rider sighting down the smoking barrel of a rifle, the gun resting on a three barred gate.

In the Dallas distance was Samarra and November 22, 1963.

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SENATOR ROBERT KENNEDY
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