



The Trail to Crazy Man: Novel of a Range War, Original Pulp Magazine Version

Louis L'Amour

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Rafe Caradec had been raised to a hard life in a hard land where death lurked behind every bush and in most men's eyes. Only his courage and his gun had sustained him. That and the unflinching honor that had earned him the respect of every man.

Now that honor was about to lead him into deadly danger against the greatest odds he had ever faced. For Rafe had given his word to a dying man and could not go back on it. The man had been murdered by a cabal of greedy ranchers who wanted his land, and Rafe had sworn to protect that land for the man's wife and infant daughter.

But when he told her his story, the wife didn't believe him. She knew someone was after the ranche, and she thought it was Rafe. So she betrayed him into the hands of the very men who had killed her husband.

If Rafe Caradec lived, he would have to wage a one man range war against impossible odds, with a woman who wanted him dead waiting if he survived.

This edition is based on the original magazine version of this novel as Louis L'Amour first visualized it. Trail to Crazy Man was published in the July 1948 issue of the pulp magazine, West. Later, he lengthened the story for his book publishers and change the title to Crossfire Trail. Some of his fans consider the novels as he wrote them for the magazines to be stronger than their subsequent expansions. L'Amour and other fans disagreed. Both camps agree that the original versions have all the strengths of his best writing and a taut, fast-moving pace that never stints on characterization.

The Trail to Crazy Man: Novel of a Range War, Original Pulp Magazine Version Details

Date : Published by Buckskin Western (first published 1986)

ISBN :

Author : Louis L'Amour

Format : Kindle Edition 141 pages

Genre : Westerns, Fiction



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From Reader Review The Trail to Crazy Man: Novel of a Range War, Original Pulp Magazine Version for online ebook

Jeffery W. Linton says

Simple western style reading. Grew up a Louis L'Amour fan, but this one was very elementary.

Beryl Fisher says

Great book

Moves fast, very exciting. This author is very good at story telling. Great read. Very authentic of a time long ago.

Kami says

Recently reread this--I actually enjoyed it quite a lot. If you read the summary about it, it's actually three longer stories that he wrote when he was first trying to be published, that later he made into their own novels. Anyway, point being I think these were a little more "unpolished" than some of his later works, at least they went quicker and had less philosophizing (that's a good thing in a shot 'em up western). I actually liked them better than I remember liking the novels made from them. The second story had the best proposal to a girl ever. Hee. Hee.

Kristi Cramer says

I listened to the audiobook version and enjoyed it very much. The voice talent was good. I suspect that if I stopped to analyze the plot I could poke a bunch of holes in it but as entertainment it worked just fine. I liked the main characters, and the way the heroes were fine examples of heroes. Good, upstanding men unafraid of doing the right thing for the right reasons, and tough as rawhide.

Michelle says

The Trail To Crazy Man
Louis Lamour
Western
Audio Book

It was a land where nothing was small, nothing was simple. Everything, the lives of men and the stories they told, ran to extremes.

The Trail To Crazy Man is one of Louis L'Amour's finest short novels. Shangaied into forced labor on a merchant vessel, Charles Rodney dies aboard ship from repeated beatings--but not before deeding part of his ranch to Rafe Caradec, whom he hopes will protect his family.

Kelly says

I received the audiobook free in exchange for an honest review.

I jumped at the chance to review a Louis L'Amour audiobook. This was not a book I remember specifically reading in my formative years, although we were warned at the start that this was the original short story that L'Amour wrote. Rafe's name seems familiar though.

L'Amour's books have always been about strong men, and strong women; about taming the west, and the high seas. This book combines both.

Rafe Caradec was shanghai'd out of San Francisco and escapes the ship with a couple other men. He promised Charles Rodney he would protect the man's daughter, before Rodney was beaten to death. Rafe travels to the Painted Rock with two of the four men who escaped the ship with him, only to discover that Anne Rodney believed her father had died long before Rafe told her he had. She was engaged to a man who held the mortgage on the ranch her father owned the mortgage that Charles Rodney had paid off before he was shanghai'd.

What follows is typical L'Amour fare Rafe trying to find out why the ranch was important, Anne certain he was there to take the ranch from her, and the bad men who were the ones who actually wanted the ranch. Of course, Anne eventually sees through her fiance's story, and his partner's duplicity, and comes to realize Rafe had the right of things. And Rafe, being Rafe, is true to his word about taking the man down.

The narrator's voice was matter of fact, there seemed to be the occasional hiccup with the recording of the audiobook, but only slightly. Very enjoyable.

Adrian says

I received a free copy of this audiobook in exchange for an honest review.

I had been wanting to read a Louis L'Amour western for some time now and thought this would be a good

opportunity. I did not enjoy it as much as I would have liked, unfortunately. There were a lot of characters and maybe a bit predictable at times. Throughout the story there were segments of fun and intrigue, but these were few and far in between.

One thing is for sure – it wasn’t easy living in the wild west! People got killed all the time with little remorse, apparently.

Audiobook narrator Randal Schaffer rating: 3 stars

I always appreciate a new recording of an old tale. There’s nothing worse than trying to listen to a classic book with a “classic” recording of the audio. Randal does a decent job of changing his voice for different characters, which is helpful during dialogue portions. Though, there are times when the consistency is just a little bit off. If this were improved some, it would be perfect! I know it’s hard to keep up with this kind of consistency when there are so many different characters.

Jack says

I like Louis L’Amour. His stories are well-done, well described and generally don’t involve a lot of fluff.

This is actually 3 of his books combined: THE TRAIL TO CRAZY MAN, RIDERS OF THE DAWN and SHOWDOWN ON THE HOGBACK. It’s deceptively easy reading without a lot of conscious thought. However, L’Amour always moralizes and shows not just the black-and-white good-vs-evil, but the decisions a person must make and the willingness to either compromise or to decide that the cause he has taken up is not just and stand against those he once supported.

L’Amour also seems to have a grasp of how humans can - and will - take advantage of each other due to greed or outright cussedness. He realized there is good and evil in the world and that it is the job of those that are seeking truth and justice to fight that evil. And that is the main theme of each of these stories.

Brianna says

These stories are great fun, but they lack any surprises in the plot and the women are rather two-dimensional.

I was a young teenager the last time I read Louis L’Amour, so I’m not sure if the defaults I found in these stories are a result of my having lived longer, or a result of these being early unpolished works of his.

These stories are actually the original versions of those published in magazines early in L’Amour’s career. (Later, he returned to the stories and developed them into published novels)

Joyce says

A pair of Western novellas by the prolific L’Amour. In “Trail to Peach Meadow Cañon” young Mike Bastian, raised by legendary outlaw Ben Curry to take over his band, must decide if an outlaw’s life is really for him. It features the characters and issues L’Amour often brought to his Westerns--thoughtful protagonists and unexpected issues and outcomes. In the title story, outlaws have killed a landowner for his property. But

before he died, he asked soldier of fortune Rafe Caradec to care for his wife, daughter, and land, which leaves the courageous Caradec fighting for his friend's legacy. In both stories love interests play a role, and L'Amour creates a pair of intrepid women not afraid to stand by their men. This pair of early short stories reflect L'Amour's style and themes, with fair play proving as effective as gunplay.

Brandon Burken says

The first story is about a man trying to take back land that his friend gave to him. The second story is about a stranger trying to fight for land now belonged to him from an old man. The final story is a retired Army man getting caught in a fight over land. I would definitely recommend this book for other people that like old western books and action.

Erin says

This novel actually contains three serial novels that L'Amour wrote. All were originally written as a serial for a magazine, which means that it was published in parts and each issue of the magazine would publish a part. Serial novels (published like this were popular in the 1940's and 50's). These novels were full of action and not character development because readers wanted action and because people had to wait until the next magazine came out, there needed to be plenty of action for people to want to read the next section.

The three serial novels contained in this volume were all added to and became three full length novels. The serial novel "The trail to crazy Man" became the full length novel "Crossfire Trail." The serial novel "Riders of the Dawn" became "Silver Canyon" and the serial novel "Showdown on the Hogback" became "Showdown at Yellow Butte"

In all three cases, I like the serial versions contained in this one book, better than the three full length novels.

Charles says

This is a collection of novellas that later became full length novels. The novels were Silver Canyon, Showdown at Yellow butte, and Crossfire Trail, all of which are among my favorite L'Amour books. If you've already read those other books then this collection might not be a compelling read for you, because of the similarities, but it's enjoyable to see how these stories developed.

Steven says

This is classic Louis L'Amour. It is a collection of 3 original novellas that were published separately as fully developed novels. The endings are predictable, good guy triumphs over evil and settles down with the pretty girl. If that simplistic approach bothers you then do not read Louis L'Amour. If however you want to know what is is like to have serious trouble and overcome it (we are not talking my iPhone is only getting 2 bars trouble), and what it was like to live in a country where you were expected to grit your teeth through the pain and do what is right then this is for you. Classic western writers like Zane Grey, William McLeod Raine,

Max Brand, and Louis L'Amour do not include pornographic sex scenes the way some of the modern western writers do. Something that I can certainly do without.

Elaine says

Very dramatic. Mystery, greed, intrigue, testosterone.

At the end of this audiobook, the narrator tells of L'Amour's prolific and formulaic writing which found so much success, which was interesting to learn after reading so many of his books.
