

The background of the entire image is a close-up of a wooden surface, likely a table, with a prominent vertical wood grain. In the top-left corner, there is a vibrant red flower with soft, feathery petals. In the bottom-right corner, a portion of a light-colored cowboy hat is visible, showing its wide brim and a slight shadow. On the left side, a thick, coiled rope is partially visible. In the center, four playing cards are fanned out. From left to right, they are: the Ace of Spades, the Ace of Diamonds, the Ace of Clubs, and the Ace of Hearts. The text is overlaid on the upper half of the image.

Roy LeRoy & The Ace in the Hole

a free story by Kit Zheng

This mighty tall tale would not exist
without the many witty ideas
brought forth by the following fine folks:

Syd McGinley
Stephanie Vaughan
Dianne Fox
HB Kurtzwilde
Just Ruth
Tammy Lee
Angus Devotee

And the votin' of all the good people
who made up a fine gathering
at the Torquere_social Livejournal community
on June 22, 2008.

A tip of the hat to them,
and to you, reader.

Lash L'Amour concept by Just Ruth

Find more work by Kit Zheng at
<http://kitzheng.thatdamncat.com/>

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Summer's a fine time for a traveling tale, so here's one for you. There was one summer at the very beginning of Roy's traveling days when he was searching high and low for something he couldn't quite remember. He'd walked far enough to have almost forgotten his name, though not so far he'd hit the end of the earth. Indeed, if the signs were to be believed, he was just approaching The Point of Still-Possible Return, a low, grimy looking place with a bull's skull hung over the entrance and a welcoming ruckus coming from inside.

Roy had just crossed the desert of Maybe You'll Get Back if You're Really Lucky, so seeing the Point of Still-Possible Return was mighty welcome. Especially because it seemed the sort of place that a man might get a cool drink or two to wet his throat, and Roy was mighty thirsty. He'd had to live ten days on nothing but the rare, dewy drops he sometimes found afflicted sleeping locals in the morning, which he lapped up with a gratefulness only men stranded in the desert for days can know.

That being so, Roy threw his caution to the wind, and he strolled into the Point of Still-Possible Return like it was the Four Winds Saloon back home. He walked straight up to the bar and leaned against it, sure and comfortable as any of the regulars.

"Well, howdy," said the barkeep, and Roy took his hat off and nodded back.

"Howdy. Might this be a place that a man come out of the desert could have a drink or two to restore himself?"

"It might be," the barkeep said. He was polishing a glass nearly as big as Roy's own head, with sides as thick as a finger. Roy couldn't help but lick his lips, looking at that glass and imagining it filled all up with maybe sarsaparilla, or maybe beer, or maybe sweet, sweet water.

"Only 'might'?" Roy said, eyes still on the glass. The barkeep nodded. "What'll change that to a 'sure thing'?"

The barkeep might've smiled a little, but he had a huge walrus-mustache that mostly hid his mouth. "Well, it ain't up to me."

"Who is it up to?" Roy asked, but before the barkeep had a chance to answer, a lovely, husky voice rang out in the crowded saloon.

"That'd be up to me, sugar."

Roy turned round and laid eyes on the handsomest dame he'd ever seen. Her pale, powdered face was a lovely combination of features that might've been too strong on any other lady's visage: a striking nose and deep set eyes, strong arching brows, a mouth that was painted red as poppies and slick as blood. Her black hair was

piled atop her head in the most elaborate style Roy had ever seen (though he'd never laid eyes on the Dames of Dumont Valley), and it added a good half a foot to her already magnificent height. She must have been the tallest person in The Point of Still-Possible Return, and as if in acknowledgment of that, every head turned her way. There was a murmur like when the mayor of Red Fern came into Whistler's Gulch; that is, a little reverent, and a little irreverent, at the same time.

Always a man quick on his feet, Roy was quick on his feet. His hat was already off, but he took it in hand and pressed it to his chest and made a bow that would've done a Prince of the Sandy Hills proud. "Ma'am" was what started to come out of his mouth, but he changed it quicker than thought to "Majesty" when the word "Queen" reached his ears.

"Oh my, you flatter me," said the very tall lady, and she waved her fan in front of her face as if to hide a blush. But Roy could see that she wasn't blushing. Her eyes were as sharp and glittering as chips of glass. "Flattery ain't gonna ease that parched throat of yours, stranger."

Roy straightened up and introduced himself. "Name's Roy LeRoy, yer Ladyship. I'm the Sheriff of Whistler's Gulch."

"Long way from home, ain'tcha?" The tall lady raised her striking brows, and fluttered her fan, and that was when Roy noticed the huge bullwhip at her waist. He supposed even a fine lady—or a Queen—needed to look out for herself in these wild parts.

"Not yet far enough," Roy said, and the lady furrowed her brow at him. "Might you tell a man what he ought to do to acquire a drink from you?"

At this the lady tittered, and she did blush, and her fan worked a little harder. "I'll tell you, darling," she said, "But I ain't gonna tell you in this crowd of cowboys."

"You better like Poker!" someone heckled.

"Stud poker!" another man added, before the tall lady silenced them all with a look.

"Shush, all you scoundrels. As for you, sir, why don't we discuss this in my rooms?" The lady held out her hand to him. Roy took it, trying his best to be proper, but he had to hold his hand up nearly at his ear to give her a comfortable rest.

Our man Roy followed her up a rickety staircase stuffed behind the bar, so narrow he thought his shoulders might get stuck and that the lady's flouncy petticoats were sure to jam. But somehow they squeezed through.

Once he escaped the treacherous staircase, Roy's breath caught in his throat. The entire upstairs of The Point of Still-Possible Return was the lady's bedroom. In the center was a massive bed, all made up in red and black, heavy with lace and silk. The wooden walls were dressed up to match, sheer lengths of red fabric spilling down to the floor.

Now, a more worldly man than Roy might've immediately wondered as to the Queen's honorable profession, but to Roy she only seemed nobler and fancier than ever, surrounded by all this froofy to-do. If anything, he felt, for perhaps the first time in his life, a bit intimidated, and so he balked at the foot of the stair like a nervous sheep before she hauled him in with a surprisingly strong grip. She sat him on the edge of the bed, and then gathering up her skirts, settled down beside him. From somewhere in her petticoats she produced a fine silver case, and when she opened it, revealed a number of neatly rolled cigarettes. She offered it to Roy, but he had no use for tobacco; with a delicate shrug, the fine lady took one for herself, lit up, and blew an excellent smoke ring into the air.

"You may call me Lash L'Amour," she said, her fan fluttering double-time now, much as Roy's heart was doing. The little smoke ring was chased towards the ceiling by another. "And before we go any further, I need to know: are you a man?"

Roy blinked. "Well, don't know what else I'd be, ma'am."

"Are you willing to prove it, darling?"

It was Roy's turn to get a little red. "If it means I can wet my throat when we're done."

Lash L'Amour smiled, and it was a clever little smile. "Oh, I guarantee it. And how'll you prove it, darling?"

If Roy's thoughts didn't immediately leap to what Lash L'Amour was thinking, we can hardly blame him. After all, he'd only just defeated the Black Bull not so long ago, and had his first taste of the pleasures of the flesh. So he looked at the bullwhip at the fine lady's side and he remembered a time when Jake Duke had showed him a little trick "sure to impress any lady." It had impressed Roy enough that he almost wasn't so pure when the Black Bull came for him. He said, "I can take that cigarette from your lips with nothing but that whip, and not harm a hair on your head to do it."

"Hair," Lash L'Amour said, and she was a little taken aback by our hero. "What about my face?"

“Course I couldn’t hurt that, ma’am,” Roy said, and he looked away as she looked him up and down appraisingly. His face was starting to feel as red as his hair; he simply wasn’t used to being looked at so fierce, not by man or woman.

“Well, all right,” she said slowly. “But why don’t we make things a bit more interesting? You ever play poker, Mr. Roy LeRoy?”

Roy thought of the jeers in the saloon below, and he shook his head. “Can’t say as I ever have.”

“But you at least know what a poker face is?”

Roy nodded. Sometimes Eli Lords was known to gamble, and if you got a bit of moonshine—specially Molly’s, which was made from dew gathered in the moon—in him he liked to talk about the game. “Means you don’t show nothin’ on your face.”

“You pull your little trick and I flinch or blink or get all surprised, you can go downstairs, drink all the sarsaparilla you like. But then it’s my turn. I got a little trick and I bet you can’t not show something on that pretty little face of yours. You show anything but poker face, and I get what I been cravin’.”

Roy’s mouth felt like sandpaper just about then, and even though he didn’t like to think of making the lady flinch, he was sure a delicate creature such as Miss L’Amour would be bound to, even if she weren’t all that delicate. And even if she didn’t flinch, well, Roy was a stolid man, and proud of his control over his emotions, so he didn’t think any trick that Miss L’Amour might have would make him flinch, neither.

So he nodded and he stuck out his hand. “Sounds like a deal.”

She shook on it, handed him the bullwhip and moved the cigarette to the little pout in her bottom lip, just in the center. Her lipstick was flawless as enamel, and Roy knew he couldn’t mess that up neither. He took the bullwhip in hand and tested it out, snared a nail file from Miss L’Amour’s dressing table and knocked the head clean off a fly that was pestering a bottle of her perfume. Once he was satisfied, he turned to Lash L’Amour and said, “You ready?”

She nodded, giving a little wriggle before becoming very, very still. Roy shooed away a sudden tremor in his hand, and then he did his little trick—he was so good that the fall wrapped precisely three times around the hand-rolled tube of tobacco. Then he flipped his wrist and the whole thing pulled free and unrolled, scattering tobacco like confetti all around Miss L’Amour.

He was both relieved and disappointed as the handsome young lady neither flinched nor otherwise. She was still as a statue, in fact, and he was mighty

impressed. As the scattered tobacco rained down around her, she merely fanned the loosened leaves all away with her black fan. Not a single piece touched her.

“Well,” she said, “I believe it’s your turn, sir.”

He nodded. “Rightly so.”

“Are you ready, my fine sheriff?” she said, huskily.

He nodded again; but when she bent over and seized her skirts, he had to call on everything in him not to stammer, stutter, and blush. He shoved his hands in his pockets and he bit his lip, and he tried not to look like anything at all.

And then Miss L’Amour’s skirts went up over her head, and poor Roy, he was so taken by surprise, he showed it all over.

“Well I’ll be damned,” he burst out, when he could speak again. “Miss, you been holding an Ace in the Hole.”

“Ain’t no hole,” Miss L’Amour said. And she was right: framed up all pretty by a black lace garter was a cock that showed up Roy’s own, and slowly growing. In fact, as Roy watched, Lash L’Amour’s most impressive poker came straight up to attention. It was blushing as hard as Roy was, and he felt his own trousers getting a bit tight.

“I do believe,” Roy stammered, “you’re right, ma’am.”

“Now,” Lash L’Amour purred, rumbling like a contented puss expecting a saucerful of milk, “You flinched, so I get what I’m craving.”

“And what might that be, ma’am?” Roy said, and if this time he wasn’t entirely innocent, he ought to be forgiven. When a man’s about to bust his jeans from the size of his boner, thought ain’t much in order.

“Why don’t you bend over that bed, get out of those trousers and find out?”

Roy nearly tripped himself up trying to get out of his dusty old pants, and then he was face down in Lash L’Amour’s luxurious bed, his bared rear high in the air. He heard a rustling and then felt silk and lace fall down all around him; and buried in the midst of all the frippery, something so hot and hard it felt like a metal rod left too long in the sun. He moaned a little as it left a slick trail over his ass, and then slipped down into his crack, rubbing up and down between.

Then Lash L’Amour was leaning against him, silk-stuffed bosom crushing against his back, sticky-slick lips moving against the curve of his ear.

“You think you can keep a poker face now, Mr. Sheriff?”

“No ma’am,” he gasped.

“Good,” she said. “I like a screamer.”

And then Lash L’Amour pushed her cock full into Roy, deep as love cuts, and fucked Roy good and hard into that red-draped mattress. He buried his cheek against the lace and silk and took up handfuls of it and he rubbed himself up against it, too, because his own cock was still swelled up and twitching and throbbing. Since he’d promised that Lash L’Amour would get what she was cravin’, he did up a good holler, but that wasn’t much show, not for long: that big ole cock stretched him up good, and it hit that marvelous place that’s tucked up inside a man, and he was bucking and writhing for true and honest before long, making a mess on Lash L’Amour’s lovely sheets.

Lucky for him that Lash was not of a mind to notice: the masses of lace and starched petticoats moved over him with a faster and faster rhythm, tickling his skin and slithering over his thighs, and Roy swore he could feel Lash’s poker swell up good inside him and then spill, hot and slick and wet, into Roy.

Lipsticked kisses slipped over the back of his neck, his ears, and even one cheek; and a not-so-delicate hand slapped Roy’s ass before Lash pulled out, leaving the poor sheriff groaning in protest. If he was just thinking what a waste it was, that he might have liked a drink of Lash for himself, seeing as how thirsty he was, Lash fed him a single pearly drop of the tip of one finger, and Roy suckled it like it were the sweetest honey.

“You are a thirsty little thing, darling,” Lash L’Amour laughed. “Why don’t you go down and tell old Wayne to give you whatever you like? I’ll expect he heard that you earned it.”

Roy thanked her kindly, pulled up his trousers and went down to have himself a drink. And if he got a lot more drink than he expected, well, that’s another story.