



DON'T MAKE
ME GO TO
TOWN



NUMBER TWENTY-THREE
THE M. K. BROWN RANGE LIFE SERIES

Don't Make Me Go to Town

Ranchwomen of the Texas Hill Country

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RHONDA LASHLEY LOPEZ



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*For my daughter, Emily,  
my mother, Linda,  
and my husband, José*

I have chased wild horses in the Medicine Bow mountain range, chased goats in the Fort Davis Mountains, sheared goats during staggering hot summer days in a Texas barn, docked lambs on the windy, dusty, high plains of Shirley Basin. I have seen the evening dances of purples, pinks, and oranges that take place on a stage of clouds on the high plains of Wyoming. I have seen the breathtaking, yet deadly, night storms that have hurled fiery lightning balls upon the land; and then the morning sun as it warms the skin after a cold, crisp morning rain; the sky as it turns the color of spring bluebonnets, and the land as it gingerly perks up to feel the warmth.

How do you explain these marvels to people? I hear people say that soul-searching, psychological phrase, "I am trying to find myself." People spend their working lives in New York or Houston, to someday buy a small, quaint place in the country, to own two cows and watch the birds.

Well, ladies and gentlemen, I have always known who I am and what I want. I want to ranch for a living instead of living to ranch.

AMANDA SPENRATH GEISTWEIDT,  
*in a speech to the Riverside and Landowners Protection Coalition*