

The Stowaway

By LOUIS TRACY



During that quick twist on the horse's withers she had plucked a revolver from a holster. She meant to slatter that false face of his utterly, to blast him as with lightning, but the lock snapped harmlessly, for San Benavides had indeed borne himself gallantly in the fray. He struck at her now in a whirl of fury. She winced, but with catamount activity drew back her arm and hit him on the temple with the heavy weapon. He collapsed limply, reeled from off the saddle, and they fell together. The frightened horse, finding himself at liberty, galloped to the camp, where already there was an unusual commotion.

Carmela flung herself on the man's body. She was capable of extremes either of grief or passion.

"Salvador, my love, my love!" she screamed. "What have I done? Speak to me, Salvador! It is I, Carmela! Oh, Mary Mother, come to my aid! I have killed him—killed my Salvador!"

He looked very white and peaceful as he lay there in the gloom. She could not see whether his lips moved. She was too distraught to note if his heart was beating. It seemed incredible that she, a weak woman, should have crushed the life out of that lithe and active frame with one blow. She rose and ran blindly.

Long before Carmela reached the finca San Benavides stirred, groaned, squirmed convulsively and raised himself on hands and knees. He turned and sat down, feeling his head.

"The spittle!" he muttered. "The she devil! And that other! Would that I could wring her neck!"

A spattering of rifles cracked in the valley. There was a blurred clamor of voices. He looked at the sky, at the black summits of the hills. He stood up, and his inseparable sword clanked on the stony ground.

"Ah, well," he growled, "I have done with women. They have had the best of my life. What is left I give to Brazil!"

CHAPTER XVII.
A COUP OF THE NAPOLEONIC ORDER.

CARMELA went back to a household that paid scant heed to her screaming. Dom Corria was there, bareheaded, his gorgeous uniform sword sashed and blood bespattered. General Russo, too, was beating his capacious chest and shouting:

"God's honest! Not a make a fight of it!"

A sprinkling of soldiers, all dismounted cavalry or gendarmes, a few disheveled officers, had accompanied De Sylva in his flight. With reckless bravery he and Russo had tried to rally the troops camped at headquarters. It was a hopeless effort. Half breeds can never produce a military caste. They may fight valiantly in the line of battle—they will not face the unknown, the terrible, the harpies that come at night, borne on the hurricane wings of panic. Unhappily De Sylva and his bodyguard were the messengers of their own disaster. The cowardly genius at Pesqueira had planned a surprise. He would not lead it, of course, but in Dom Miguel Barraca he found an eager substitute. It was a coup of the Napoleonic order. An infantry attack along the entire front of the Liberatorist position cloaked the launching against the center of a formidable body of cavalry. The project was to thrust this lance into the rebel position, probe it thoroughly, as a surgeon explores a gunshot wound, and extract the offender in the guise of Dom Corria.

The scheme had proved eminently successful. The Liberatorists were crumpled up, and here was Dom Corria making his last stand.

He deserved better luck, for he was magnificent in failure. Calm as ever, he tried to be shot or captured when the reserves in camp failed him. Russo and the rest dragged him onward by main force.

"They want me only," he urged.

my death will end a useless struggle. I shall die a little later, when many more of my friends are killed. Why not die now?"

"They would not listen.

"It is night!" they cried. "The enemy's horses are spent. A determined stand may give us another chance."

But it was a forlorn hope. As San Benavides lurched into the patio the horses of the first pursuing detachment strained up the slope between the house and encampment.

Carmela, all her fire gone, the pallid ghost of the vengeful woman who would have shattered her lover's skull were the revolver loaded, was the first to see him. She actually crouched in terror. Her tongue was parched. If she uttered some low cry none heard her.

Dom Corria, striving to dispose his meager garrison as best he could, met his trusted lieutenant. His face lit with joy.

"Ah, my poor Salvador!" he cried. "I thought we had lost you at the ford!"

"No," said San Benavides. "I ran away!"

Even in his dire extremity De Sylva smiled.

"Would that others had run like you, my Salvador!" he said. "Then we should have been in Pernambuco tomorrow."

The Brazilian looked around. His eye dwelt heedlessly on the cowering Carmela. He was searching for Iris, who had been compelled by Coke and Bulmer and her uncle to take shelter behind the score of sailors who still remained at Las Flores.

"It is true nevertheless," he said laconically. "I knew the game was lost, so I came here to try to save a lady."

"Ah—our Carmela? You thought of her?"

"No!"

Then the spell passed from Carmela. She literally threw herself on her lover.

"Yes, it is true!" she shrieked. "He came to save me, but I preferred to die here—with you, father, and with him."

Dom Corria did not understand these fireworks, but he had no time for thought. Bullets were crashing through the closed venetians. Light they must have or the defense would become an orgy of self destruction, yet light was their most dangerous foe when men were shooting from the somber depths of the trees.

The assailants were steadily closing around the house. Their rifles covered every door and window. Each minute brought up fresh bands in tens and twenties. At last Barraca himself arrived. Some members of his staff made a hasty survey of the situation. There were some 300 men available, and in all probability Dom Corria could not muster one-sixth of that number. It was a crisis that called for vigor. The cavalry lance was twenty miles from its base, and there was no knowing what accident might reunite the scattered Liberatorists. One column at least of the Nationalists had failed to keep its rendezvous or this last desperate stand at Las Flores would have proved a sheer impossibility.

So the house must be rushed, no matter what the cost. This was a war of leaders. Let Dom Corria fall and his most enthusiastic supporters would pay Dom Miguel's taxes without further parley. A scheme of concerted action was hastily arranged. Simultaneously two detachments swarmed against the chosen points of assault.

One crossed the patio to the porch, another made for the stable entrance, a third attacked the garden door, a fourth assailed the servants' quarters, and the fifth, strongest of all and inspired by Dom Miguel's presence, battered in the shutters and tore away the piled up furniture of the ballroom.

The Nationalist leader's final order was terse:

"Shoot the women; shoot every rebel; do not touch the foreigners unless they resist!"

With yells of "Abajo De Sylva!" "Morto por revoltados!" the assailants closed in. Neither side owned magazine rifles, so the fight was with machetes, swords and bayonets when the first furious hail of lead had spent itself. No man thought of quarter nor ceased to stab and thrust until he fell.

When 200 desperados meet fifty of the garrison in a hand to hand contest, when the 200 meanly end the business and the fifty know that they must die, fighting for chance, but die in any event, the resultant confusion will surely be both fierce and brief.

By one of those queer chances which sometimes decide the hazard between life and death the window nearest that end of the room where the sailors strove to protect a few shrieking women had not been broken in. Here, then, was a tiny bay of refuge. From it the men of the Andromeda and the Usher Fritz, Bulmer, Verity, Iris and such of the Brazilian ladies as had not fled to the upper rooms at the initial volley looked out on an amazing butchery. De Sylva, no longer young and never a robust man, had been dragged from mortal peril many times by his devoted adherents. Carmela had snatched a machete from the fingers of a dying soldier and was fighting like one possessed of a fiend.

Once when a combined rush drove the defenders nearly on top of the non-combatants Iris would have striven to draw the half demented girl into the little haven with the other women.

But Coke thrust her back, shouting: "Leave 'er alone! She'll set about you if you touch her!"

Dickey Bulmer, too, who was displaying a fortitude hardly to be expected in a man of his years and habits, thought that interference was useless.

"Let 'er do what she can," he said. "She doesn't know wot is 'appenin' now. If she was any 'ratchin' she'd be a ravin' maniac. God 'elp us all! We've got ourselves into a nice mess!"

one of Verity's simple words exalted him into the kingdom of the heroic David Verity occupied a lower plane. Prayers and curses alternated on his lips. He was stupefied with fear.

A tall, distinguished looking man, wearing a brilliant uniform, his breast decorated with many orders, now appeared on the scene. He shouted something, and the attacking force redoubled its efforts. He raised a revolver and took deliberate aim at Dom Corria. Coke saw him, and his bulldog pluck combined with avarice to overcome his common sense. Without thought of the consequences he sprang into the swaying mob and pulled De Sylva aside. A bullet smashed into the wall behind them.

"Look out, mister!" he bellowed. "Ere's a blighter 'oo wants to finish you quick!"

De Sylva's glance sought his adversary. He produced a revolver which hitherto had remained hidden in a pocket. Perhaps his bullets were not meant for an enemy. He fired at the tall man. A violent swerve of the two irregular ranks of soldiers screened each from the other. An opening offered, and the man who had singled out Dom Corria for his special vengeance fired again. The bullet struck Coke in the breast. The valiant little shipper staggered and sank to the floor. His fiery eyes gazed up into Verity's.

"Damme if I ain't hulled!" he roared, his voice loud and harsh, as if he were giving some command from the bridge in a gale of wind.

David dropped to his knees.

"For Gawd's sake, Jimmie!" he moaned.

"Yes, I've got it. Sarve me dam well right too! No business to go ag'in me own pore old ship. Look 'ere, Verity, I'm done for! If you get away from this rotten muss see to my missus an' the girls. If you don't blast 'em!"

"Fire!" shouted a strong English voice from without. A withering volley crashed through the open windows. Full twenty of the assailants fell. Dom Miguel de Barraca among them. There was an instant of terrible silence, as between the shock of an earthquake.

"Now, come on!" shouted the same voice, and Philip Hozier rushed into the ballroom, followed by his scouts and a horde of Brazilian regulars. No one not actually an eyewitness of that thrilling spectacle would believe that a fight waged with such determined intolerance could stop so suddenly as did that fray in Las Flores. It was true now as ever that men of a mixed race cannot withstand the unforeseen. Dom Miguel fallen and his cohort decimated by the leader's storm that tore in at them from an unexpected quarter, the rest fled without another blow. They raced madly for their horses, to find that every tethered group was in the hands of this new contingent. Then the darkness swaled them. Dom Miguel's cavalry was disbanded.

At once the medley within died down. Men had no words as yet to meet this astounding development. Dom Corria went to where his rival lay.

"All Brazil is your debtor, and for ever met De Sylva's in a strange look of recognition. He tried to speak, but choked and died.

Then the living president stooped over the dead one. He murmured something. Those near thought afterward that he said:

"Is it worth it? Who knows?"

But he was surely president now. Seldom have power and place been more hardily won.

His quiet glance sought Philip.

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THE double tracking of the North Toronto Sub-division of the Canadian Pacific Railway between Leaside and North Toronto is now nearing completion, and involves the replacement of bridges (known as 0.3 and 1.3) which heretofore had been trestles constructed of steel. Owing to the high price of steel and the difficulty of procuring it since the war began it was found that reinforced concrete competed successfully against steel.

The bridges were therefore constructed of this material and are a specimen of railway construction work. No. 0.3 being 156 feet long and 90 feet high carrying two tracks, and No. 1.3 of similar dimensions, but a three track structure. The length of the 156-foot spans and the details of their construction are unprecedented in the engineering world. Previous to this no reinforced concrete beam with a length of more than about 25 feet had been attempted; the spans of these two C. P. R. structures are each from 35 to 37 feet long. These spans have been made possible by the employment of unit construction by which each span was designed as two T beams which, after being manufactured and securely wired together. When all was in readiness the concrete was poured by means of long spouts which led in several directions from the main mixing tower. The pouring of the concrete was maintained as continuously as possible until a whole tower was completed. This work was done during the winter at a time when the temperature was below freezing point; it was performed inside of what was virtually a building erected to maintain a suitable temperature around the newly deposited concrete until it was out of danger of being damaged by frost.

These two structures are provided with narrow sidewalks and handrails, which enable tralmen to move conveniently along side-standing trains. The hand rails add considerably to the aesthetic appearance of the structures, which are extremely

Fighting in Mesopotamia



An open machine gun emplacement.



Turkish prisoners recently captured.

Record In Concrete Bridge-Building



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MAGIC BAKING POWDER

CONTAINS NO ALUM