

The Land of Broken Promises

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(Previously Continued)

cia Aragon. Bud pondered upon the outcome as the emissaries wrangled on the hillside, and then he went back to the corral to make sure that his horse was safe. Copper Bottom, too, might be held for ransom. But, knowing the rebels as he did, Hooker foresaw a different fate, and rather than see him become the mount of some rebel chief, he had determined, if the town surrendered, to make a dash.

Riding by night and hiding in the hills by day he could get to the border in two days. All he needed was a little jerked beef for the trip and he would be ready for anything.

So he hurried down to the hotel again and was just making a sack of food fast to his saddle when he heard a noise behind him and turned to face Aragon. For two days the once haughty and arrogant man had slunk about like a sick cat, but now he was headed for Gracia's big roan, and the look in his eyes betrayed his purpose.

"Where you going?" demanded Hooker in English, and at the gruff challenge the Spaniard stopped in his tracks. The old, hunted look came back into his eyes, he seemed to shrink before the stern gaze of the Texan, and, as the memory of his past misdeeds came over him, he turned as if to flee.

But there was a smile, an amused and tolerant smirk, about the American's mouth, and even for that look of understanding the harried hacendado seemed to thank him. He was broken now, thrown down from his pedestal of arrogance and conceit, and as Hooker did not offer to shoot him at sight he turned back to him like a lost dog that seeks but a kind word.

Bud knew that Aragon was entreaty at his mercy, that fear had clutched the once arrogant Spaniard by the throat, and it was almost worth the anxiety he felt for this man's daughter to see the father cowed. Aragon crawled closer to Bud as if for the protection he could not get from his own people.

"Ah, señor!" he whined, "your pardon! What?" as he sighted the sack of meat—"you are going, too? Ah, my



"I'm Going to Get Those Papers!"

friend"—his eyes lighted up suddenly at the thought—"let me ride with you! I will pay you—yes, anything—but if Bernardo Bravo takes me he will hang me! He has sworn it!"

"Well, you got it coming to you!" answered Hooker heartlessly.

"But I will pay you well!" pleaded Aragon. "I will pay you—" He paused as if to consider what would tempt him and then suddenly he raised his hand.

"What is it you wish above everything?" he questioned eagerly. "Your title, to the mine—no? Blast! Take me to the line—protect me from my enemies—and the papers are yours!"

"Have you got them with you?" inquired Hooker with businesslike directness.

"No, but I can get them!" cried Aragon, forgetful of everything but his desire to escape. "I can get them while you saddle my horse!"

"Where?" demanded Hooker craftily.

"From the agente mineral!" answered Aragon. "I have a great deal of influence with him, and—"

"Hastente!" exploded Bud in a voice which made Aragon jump. "Enough! If you can get them, I can! And we shall see, Señor Aragon, whether this pistol of mine will not give me some influence, too!"

"Then you will take them?" faltered Aragon as Hooker started to go. "You will take them and leave me for Bernardo Bravo to—"

"Listen, señor!" exclaimed Hooker, halting and advancing a threatening forefinger. "A man who can hire four men to do his dirty work needs no protection from me. You understand that—no? Then listen again. I am

going to get those papers. If I hear a word from you I will send you to join your four men."

He touched his gun as he spoke and strode out into the open, where he beckoned the mineral agent from the crowd. A word in his ear and they went down the hill together, while Don Cipriano watched from above. Then, as they turned into the office, Aragon spat out a curse and went to seek Manuel del Rey.

CHAPTER XXIV.

In a land of class privilege and official graft it is often only in times of anarchy that a poor man can get his rights. For eight months Hooker had battled against the petty intrigue of Aragon and the agente mineral, and then suddenly, when the times turned to war and fear gripped at their hearts, he rose up and claimed his own, holding out his brawny right hand and demanding the concession of his mine.

In a day the whirligig of fortune had turned, and it was the fighting man who dominated. He spoke quietly and made no threats, but the look in his eye was enough, and the agente gave him his papers. Then he wrote out a receipt for the mining tax and Bud stepped forth like a king.

With his papers inside his shirt and a belt of gold around his waist there was nothing left in Mexico for him. Once on his horse and headed for the line and he could laugh at them all. In Gadaden he could show title to Kruger, he could give answer for his trust and look the world in the eye.

It had been a long and strenuous fight; a fight made against seemingly insurmountable odds; a fight that had cost him much, but he had won. He had proved the trust Kruger had placed in him, and it had been a fight worth winning.

Yes, he was a man now—but his work was not quite done. Up at the big house, with the screeching women around her, was Gracia Aragon, and he owed her something for his rough words. To pay her for that he would stay. Whatever she asked now he would grant it; and if worst came to worst he would take her with him and make good his promise to Phil. He had given his word and that was enough. Now he had only to wait.

It would not be long, for the parley would soon be over, and if the cowardly rurales surrendered the town to the bandits he would make a break for the line and civilization with the girl. It would be a hard ride, and alone he would have no fear of the results; but he would chance it even with the girl rather than leave her.

The boy lieutenant, the brothers Mendoza, the superintendent, and Manuel del Rey, all were out on the hillside talking terms with Bernardo Bravo and his chiefs. With the rebels it was largely a bluff, since field-glasses had shown them to be short of cartridges; but they had over a thousand men massed along the ridges and, with courage, could easily take the town.

Bud knew that courage was the one thing lacking. It was the one thing that was always lacking in these Mexican fights. The Mexican bandit takes but little chance when he goes to war.

As for the Mendozas and their Sonoran miners, they were properly chagrined at their waste of ammunition and swore by Santa Guadalupe to fight it out with hand grenades. Even as their leaders wrangled the Mexican powder men were busily manufacturing bombs, and all the while the superintendent was glancing to the south, for swift couriers had been sent to Alvarez, the doughty Spanish hacendado of the hot country, to beg him to come to their relief.

Twice before Alvarez had met the rebels. The first time he spoke them well and they ran off all his horses. The second time he armed his Yaquis and Yaqui Mayo rancheros against them and drove them from his domain, inflicting a sanguinary punishment.

Since then he had been itching to engage them in a pitched battle, and when the word reached him he would come. Two hundred and forty Yaquis, all armed with repeating rifles, would follow at his back, and even with his boasted thousands Bernardo Bravo could hardly withstand their valor. So, while the rebels parleyed, demanding a ransom of millions and threatening to destroy the town, the defenders argued and reasoned with them, hoping to kill the time until Alvarez should arrive.

In the open space in front of the house the refugees gathered in an anxious group, waiting for messengers from the front, and as Hooker walked among them he was aware of the malignant glances of Aragon. There were other glances as well, for he had won great favor with the ladies by ditching the powder train, but none from Gracia or her mother.

Bud would not have admitted that he resented this lack of appreciation on the part of Gracia. In fact he hardly knew that he did resent it, but he watched anxiously for any sign of approval from this girl who was to be his partner's bride should he conduct

her safely to the border.

From the beginning the Senora Aragon had treated him as a stranger, according to the code of her class, and Hooker had never attempted to intrude. But if Gracia still remembered that she was an American girl at heart, she forgot to show it to him. To all she was now the proud Spanish lady, thrown with the common people by the stress of circumstances, but far away from them in her thoughts.

The conference between the leaders dragged on and messengers came and went with the news—then, after hours of debate, it broke up suddenly in a row and the emissaries came back on the run. Even at that they narrowly escaped, for the rebels opened fire upon them from the ridges, and before they could get back to cover the dandy, Manuel del Rey, received a bullet hole through the crown of his hat.

A grim smile flickered across Bud's face as he saw the damage it had wrought, for he knew that Amigo was in the hills—and a bullet shot down hill goes high! Some trace of what was in his mind must have come to Del Rey as he halted in the shelter of the house, for he regarded the American sternly as Aragon spoke rapidly in his ear. But if they planned vengeance between them the times were not right, for a rattle of arms came from the lower town and the captain was up and away to marshal his men to the defense.

So far in the siege Del Rey had kept under cover, patrolling the streets and plaza and letting the volunteers fight, but now the war had shifted to his territory and his rurales were running like mad. A matching treachery against deceit, the rebel leaders had sent men around to slip up near the town and at the first fusillade from the hillside they came charging up the creek.

Then it was that the ever-watchful rurales proved their worth. As the rebels appeared in the open they ran to the outlying houses and, fighting from the flat roofs, checked the advance until the miners could come to their aid.

But in the confusion another party of rebels had rushed down the gulch from the west, and while the fight was going on in the lower town they found lodgment in a big adobe house. And now for the first time there was fighting in earnest—the house-to-house fighting that is seen at its worst in Mexico. While women screamed in the casa grande and the Americans paced to and fro on the hill, the boom of a dynamite bomb marked the beginning of hand-to-hand.

If there was to be a casualty list in this long-looked-for battle of Fortuna, the time was at hand when they could begin counting the dead.

With a fearlessness born of long familiarity with explosives the Sonoran miners advanced valiantly with their hand grenades—baking powder cans filled with dynamite and studded with fulminating caps. Digging fiercely through wall after wall they approached unperceived by the enemy and the first bomb, flung from a roof, filled the adobe with wounded and dead.

A dense pall of yellowish smoke rose high above the town and, as bomb after bomb was exploded and the yells of the miners grew louder with each success, the stunned invaders broke from cover and rushed helter-skelter up the gulch. Then there was a prodigious shouting from the Sonorans and more than one triumphant grenadier swung his can of giant powder by the sling and let it smash against the hill in a terrific detonation.

In the big house all was confusion. Soon the cheers of the defenders heralded victory and, in spite of all efforts to restrain them, the wives of the miners rushed into the open to gaze upon the triumph of their menfolk.

On the hilltops the ineffective rebel riflemen rose up from behind their stone wall to stare, until suddenly they, too, were seized with a panic and ran to and fro like ants. Then, around the curve below the concentrator, a tall man came dashing up on a pure white horse, and behind him, charging as he charged, came the swarthy Yaquis of Alvarez, their new rifles gleaming in the sun.

Up along the hillside and after the fugitives they ran with vengeful eagerness, racing each other for the higher ground and the first shot at the rebels. First Alvarez on his white horse would be ahead, and then, as they encountered rocks, the Yaquis would surge to the front. It was a race and at the same time it was a rout, for, at the first glimpse of that oncoming body of warriors, the cowardly followers of Bernardo Bravo took to their heels and fled.

But over the rocks no Chikahuahua, no matter how scared, can hope to outdistance a Yaqui, and the pop, pop of rifles told the fate of the first luckless stragglers. For the Yaquis, after a hundred and sixty years of guerrilla warfare, never waste a shot; and as savage yells and the crash of a sudden volley drifted down from the rocky heights the men who had been besieged in Fortuna knew that death was abroad in the hills.

Fainter and fainter came the shots as the pursuit led on to the north and, as Hooker strained his eyes to follow a huge form that intuition told him was Amigo, he was awakened suddenly from his preoccupation by the touch of some unseen hand. He was in the open with prospects all about him—Spanish refugees, Americans, triumphant miners and their wives—but that touch made him forget the battle above him and instantly think of Gracia.

He turned and hurried back to the corral where Copper Bottom was kept.

(To be Continued.)

MARKET REPORT

FINANCIAL REPORT

New York, Aug. 21.—Probable extension of the British moratorium and unconfirmed reports that Germany proposes extending its suspension of specie payments for another three months, constituted the more depressing features of the world financial situation today. Otherwise conditions were calculated to make for increasing confidence in the ultimate working out of the more serious problems which now confront the domestic markets.

A very moderate loss of cash—probably less than \$3,000,000 is expected to be shown by the local banks this week. A further decrease of 1.7 per cent from last week is shown by the local weekly bank clearings, which are almost 23 per cent under the corresponding week of 1913.

Dun's Review

New York, Aug. 21.—Prompt and effective action by the government, in cooperation with the leading representatives of American business, is steadily making for the restoration of more normal conditions in foreign trade. There is nothing either unsound or unpromising in the domestic trade and crop situation, all the disturbances now experienced in the market being due to the interruption of foreign commerce and the suspension of the usual foreign exchanges caused by the European war. With the reopening of our foreign trade on a liberal scale, there should be a return to full normal prosperity in American business.

"Failures this week in the United States were 346 against 287 last year; in Canada 39 against 38 last year."

Weekly Cotton

New York, Aug. 21.—Beyond such progress as has been made in the work of evening up old contracts and in devising plans to complete that operations there appears to have been little change in the situation during the past week so far as is reflected in local circles. A large number of contracts have been running out through the transfer of interests to December and changes have been proposed in the by-laws to meet conditions created by the new cotton futures bill, which may accelerate such operations. No material progress is expected in the elimination of the international interest, however, until after the delegation of the Liverpool Association, who are to sail for New York tomorrow, have been in conference with the two American exchanges.

Meanwhile nothing more than a few scattering transactions are being reported in spot cotton at irregular prices, and the general attitude of the trade is that of awaiting developments with reference to a new crop marketing, the export situation, and a reopening of the futures market.

New York Cotton

New York, Aug. 21.—No material change in the cotton situation was reported here today. There were sales of 1,104 bales out of the local stock, but no official quotation was issued, while only a few scattering sales are reported by the local brokers for Southern shipment at irregular prices.

Liverpool Cotton

Liverpool, Aug. 21.—Cotton spot; sales 700 baltols, all American on the basis of 6.30d for middling. No receipts.

Weekly cotton statistics: Imports 17,000 bales; American 4,000; stocks 910,000; American 618,000; forward 14,000; American 11,000 exports 2,000.

Cotton Seed Oil

New York, Aug. 21.—Cotton seed oil was steady but very quiet, owing to a lack of outside demand. Offerings were small and sentiment appeared to be bullish. Final prices unchanged to three points net higher. Sales 3,000 barrels. Prime summer yellow was 66 1/2; 67 1/2; August 68 1/2; September 69 1/2; October 64; November 63; December 63; January 63; February 64; March 64; Prime yellow 65.

Chicago Grain

Chicago, Aug. 21.—The cereal markets today advanced, and all closed higher, wheat 2 3-8 to 2 7-8 cents; and corn 5-8 to 1 c., and oats 5-8 to 1 1-8. Provisions averaged slightly higher.

New York, Aug. 21.—Domestic wools were firm and active today. Carpet wools were quiet with prices lower abroad than here. Cotton goods were generally quiet with print cloths easing.

New York, Aug. 21.—Mercantile paper 6 a 7. Sterling exchange nominal for cables 5.06; for demand 5.03.

The Twenty Year Test
"Some twenty years ago I used Chamberlain's Colic, Cholera and Diarrhoea Remedy," writes Geo. W. Brock, publisher of the Enterprise, Aberdeen, Me. "I discovered that it was a quick and safe cure for diarrhoea. Since then, no one can tell me anything said to 'just as good.' During all these years I have used it and recommended it many times, and it has never disappointed anyone. For sale by all dealers."



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THE DAY IN CONGRESS

Washington, August 21.—Senate met at 11 a. m. Consideration of bill for government purchase of 15,000,000 ounces of silver objected to by Senator Brewster. Began debate on administration marine war risk bill. Passed war risk insurance bill after two hours debate. Adjourned at 5:30 p. m. to 11 a. m. Saturday. House met at noon. Private claims bill on the calendar was considered. Naval committee continued discussion of the Week's bill to establish a government steamship line to South and Central America. Warships for arrest of forty-three members denied by Speaker Clark to provide a forum for consideration of the cotton war damage bill. Adjournment at 6:12 p. m. to noon Saturday.

THE PEACEMAKER

Nogales, Sonora, Mexico, August 21.—An order from General Villa halting further warlike action by Governor Maytorena brought brought hope today of peace in Sonora. Villa's order to Maytorena was the result of negotiation by Colonel P. Elias Galles that he was willing to remain quiet if Maytorena would call his troops and encamped along the coast of Nogales. Maytorena's troops are about 30 miles south.

ROBBED THE DEAD

Paris, August 21.—Eighty-three German prisoners, accused of robbing the dead on the field of battle, arrived today at Clermont Ferrand, capital of the Department of Puy de Dome, where the police had great difficulty in restraining the population from attacking them. When arrested near Melun, many Jews, a number of wedding rings and large bags of money were found on the Germans. It is alleged these valuables were stolen from the dead bodies of officers and soldiers.