



A FOUL VILLA'S MEN

By Capt. George B. Rodney

SYNOPSIS.

Automobile of Miss Dorothy Upton and friend, Mrs. Fane, breaks down at New Mexico border...

Is the terrible suspense of waiting for death worse than death itself? Does the man condemned to be shot at sunrise suffer most before led out to execution?

CHAPTER V—Continued.

So Upton, laying aside his rifle, went down the hill to meet the pseudo-officer, who, with an orderly behind him, was signaling for an interview.

"Well, what is it you pirates want?" he asked truculently. "Are you tryin' to make a livin' by your own unaided efforts?"

"We have come to collect from the holders of Mexican property a part of their ill-gotten gains in order, senator, that the brave and patriotic defenders of the republic shall not be hungry."

"Well, you've undertaken a grown man's job, then," snarled Upton. "We demand the payment by the Santa Cruz mine of five thousand dollars in cash and the surrender of all the arms, ammunition and powder, including dynamite, that you have, as well as the permanent loan of all your able-bodied horses."

"H-m! And what do I get out of it?"

"You will have our protection and our assurances that you will not be bothered or annoyed by any further compulsory loans made to the provisional republic."

Upton fumbled for a moment in his pocket, from which he finally produced two papers. These he handed to his interviewer.

"There are two other 'protections' given me last month," he said tersely. "You will see that one is for two thousand and the other for fifteen hundred."

"We will guarantee you against any further contributions," said the other ingratiatingly.

"If your own force isn't strong enough to take my place it certainly isn't strong enough to protect me against anything. No, senator, I won't pay you a single cent—not a sou warkee. I've stood all I'm going to stand from you fellows. Now I'll appeal to the American consul."

The other spat derisively. "Better trust to me!" he said vaingloriously. "But if you do not surrender immediately, but compel me to take the place, I tell you frankly, senator, I shall show no quarter."

"Well, I can't help that, can I? I will give you, sir, exactly what you can take—and it won't strain your back to carry it, either," snapped Upton.

"Very well, senator," said the Mexican. "I give you half an hour to consult with your companions. If at the end of that time you decide to accept my terms you have only to wave a white flag from your front door. I shall know what it means."

"If there is no flag—then all that follows is your own fault. Adios, senator. May the saints teach you wisdom!" The Mexican strode off to his men while Upton picked the best way up the slope to the house.

The long half-hour came to an end at last. Suddenly down by the corral a rifle cracked. A bullet whooped through the window where Kynaston stood. Lodged in the heavy window-post. At the smack of the impact the youngster sprang back.

Raising his rifle, he fired at a head that showed above a stone. The flat, smacking report and the heavy recoil of the piece steadied him.

"Did you hit him?" asked a soft cue steady voice behind him. He turned to see Dorothy standing near him.

"Don't think so. Please get back, Miss Upton. You might be hit, you know, and then—"

knew, but it was hard to accustom herself to the idea of death and suffering inflicted under her very eyes.

An oath from Upton made Kynaston turn. He saw John Wilkes, the old engineer, step to the table and, picking up the dipper, help himself to a drink of water.

The dipper was still immersed in the water when there came another flat, smacking report, followed by a crash as of a stone on a board. The bucket broke into fragments and fell from the table, the water dripping down upon the floor.

Mr. Wilkes stood gazing upon the ruin. "What the—" he ejaculated helplessly.

"Bullet through the east loophole," said Kynaston shortly. "The bucket was in the line of fire. Now, you've done it, Mr. Graesser! That's all the water we had."

Hour after hour the defenders sat beside their loopholes watching the slow advance of their besiegers. The Mexicans did not dare advance across the open under the fire of the rifles from the house. They were obviously waiting for night to cover their real approach. Kynaston dreaded what the night would bring, for there was no way to prevent the Mexicans from getting to close range under cover of the darkness.

Then, when the besiegers were within striking distance, it would be difficult indeed for the defenders to reply to the overwhelming intensity of the fire that would be opened upon the house so soon as daylight should come.

While Kynaston was cudgeling his brains to find some solution to the problem he saw old Wilkes pottering about the house, carefully gathering up all the empty tin cans. These the old man strung on a piece of rawhide



The Heavy Recoil Steadied Him.

that had been brought to the house to be made into a lariat. His curiosity thoroughly aroused, Kynaston asked: "What are you doing with that, Mr. Wilkes?"

"Can't get no mule-bells," said the old man sentimentally; "they're all in the stables. So I'm a-singin' to string all these cans on a piece of rope an' hang 'em across the front an' back roads 'em dark. Anybody stumblin' against 'em 'll rattle 'em, an' that 'll give us warnin'."

"That's what I've been trying to think of! Now, if we only had some water!"

There was no water; and the whole garrison knew it. For hours the defenders, sticking close to the loopholes, knew thirst—grimy, dry-eyed thirst that froze the smile on the lips and cracked the corners of the mouth.

A shot from the corral smacked against the rear wall of the house. Instinctively the man behind the door-post took cover. A moment after the shot was fired a man came forward from the corral, displaying a dirty handkerchief on the end of a stick.

Mr. Wilkes spoke excitedly: "Don't you do it! Anybody that goes out here now ain't got no sense. They'll get you into the open and shoot you down. Don't pay no attention to 'em!"

"You must recognize it," said Kynaston. "Come on, Upton, we'll see what they want."

But little time was given. There came a crack from the right, and a bullet whizzed uncomfortably close to Kynaston's shoulder, landing with a vicious whiff in the mass of clay chinking that formed the chimney. Down came the half-baked stuff with a rattle.

Mr. Wilkes, thrusting his rifle through a crack between two of the logs, fired two shots in rapid succession.

"You'll walk home, consarn you, if you go at all!" he growled.

Kynaston saw two of their horses down in the dust of the corral. A storm of curses came from the edge of the clearing.

15 DAYS CAMP FOR MILITIA

Moore Secures Ample Funds.—New Enlistment Oath Required for Members of National Guard.

Columbia.—The annual encampment of the National Guard of South Carolina will continue for 15 days, according to W. W. Moore, adjutant general, who went to Washington for a conference with Secretary Baker relative to the property shortage.

"The encampment will last for 15 days," said the adjutant general, "as required by the new army bill. Every soldier in the National Guard must reenlist and take the new oath at once. The necessary funds for the encampment will be furnished upon requisition. Credit will be given to the men under the new oath for previous service. No new commands will be considered at the present time."

The adjutant general said that the new rules and regulations for the control of the militia were being prepared by the war department and would be issued in a few days.

The following is the new oath required for the members of the National Guard: "I hereby acknowledge to have voluntarily enlisted this day of \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_\_\_, as a soldier in the National Guard of the United States and of the state of \_\_\_\_\_, for the period of three years in service and three years in the reserve, under the conditions prescribed by law, unless sooner discharged by proper authority. And I do solemnly swear that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the United States of America and to the state of \_\_\_\_\_, and that I will serve them honestly and faithfully against all their enemies whomsoever, and that I will obey the orders of the president of the United States and of the governor of the state of \_\_\_\_\_, and of the officers appointed over me according to law and the rules and articles of war."

Short Course in Demonstration. Columbia.—The following agents are now holding short courses in the home demonstration work of their respective counties: Miss Nellie Ray, Barnwell county, assisted by Mrs. Dora Dee Walker, Mrs. B. W. Faust, Bamberg agent, and Miss Stella Mims, Chesterfield agent; Miss Cora L. D. Conner, Colleton county, assisted by Miss Amanda Edwards, Williamsburg county, and Miss Jo Yarborough, Chester county; Miss Marguerite Richardson, Beaufort county, assisted by Miss Caroline Bostick, Miss Pearl Napier, Charleston county, and Miss Katherine Richardson, Clarendon county; Miss Grace Lumpkin, Alcorn county, assisted by Miss Bostick, Miss Dorothy Napier, Richland county, and Miss Ida Moore, Marlboro county.

To Entertain Firemen. Orangeburg.—The time for the state Firemen's Association meeting to be held in this city is drawing close. This convention will be held in Orangeburg on June 20-21-22. The local committees have everything in readiness for the convention and the big tournament. Best of entertainment will be given the visiting fire ladders. The race course is being put in best of condition. Large grand stands will be erected and the races promise to be more largely attended than any in the history of the association. Orangeburgers expect 15,000 visitors on the big day of the races.

Vice Consul to Riga. Washington.—Congressman J. W. Ragsdale was notified by the state department that T. B. Brooks Alford of Dillon had been appointed vice consul to Riga, Russia. Mr. Alford is an alumnus of the University of South Carolina and has been secretary to Mr. Ragsdale since January 1. Riga is one of the most important seaports of Russia. Mr. Alford will spend about two weeks with his relatives in South Carolina and then sail from New York for Riga.

Travelers Select Columbia. Florence.—The United Commercial Travelers of the Carolinas closed their annual convention here with the selection of Columbia as the meeting place for next year.

Memorial services were held for seven members of the order who have died since the last convention.

SOUTH CAROLINA NEWS ITEMS. U. R. Brooks, clerk of the South Carolina supreme court, has gone to Newport News, where he will remain for about 10 days on his vacation.

Cecil Jean Rogers, the three-year old child of H. K. Rogers of Ebenezzer, was struck by a train and killed within a few feet of his home.

City delivery of mail will be inaugurated at Hartsville July 1.

A class of 118 graduates were awarded diplomas at Clemson College last week.

Eugene M. Hart, aged 72, a Confederate veteran of Columbia died a few days ago.

Forty-one pupils received diplomas from the Women's College at Due West.

Albert D. Oliphant, assistant secretary of the state board of charities and corrections, spent one day in Lexington pursuing the duties of his office. He said Lexington is building some of the best highways to be found in any county in the state.

At a meeting in Spartanburg Monday plans were laid for the organization of a mutual insurance company.

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

LESSON FOR JUNE 18. THE PHILIPPIN JAILER.

LESSON TEXT—Acts 16:16-40. GOLDEN TEXT—Believe on the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house.—Acts 16:31.

Dean Vaughn has said of this lesson that in it "we have an epitome of the whole history of the gospel." The time was A. D. 50 or 52 and the place was Philippi, an important city, as before suggested.

I. The Damsel Delivered of Demons (vv. 16-18). On their way to the praying place where they had met Lydia, the disciples met this maid who "had a spirit, a Python." Greek soothsayers were supposed to be inspired by Apollo, who killed a great snake at Mt. Parnassus and left it to rot. The girl was probably possessed of hysteria and thus spoke strange words, and her condition brought much profit to her masters, who professed to interpret her words. This evidence of evil possession awoke a sympathetic response in Paul's heart. "Her misery and degradation were a symbol of the degradation, as Lydia's sweet and benevolent Christian character was of the transfiguration of womanhood."

Stalker. Her cry after Paul was perhaps that they were the slaves of some god, even as she was the slave of Apollo. The Gadarene (Luke 8:28) used similar language. Paul did not at once stop her (v. 8), perhaps to avoid a controversy, but his deliberation made more profound the final deliverance wrought. Worn out at last with her cries, but taking no credit himself, Paul spoke the name of Power which had foretold just such acts (Mk. 16:17; Lk. 9:1; Lk. 10:17).

II. The Disciples in Prison (vv. 19-24). Of no further commercial value, the slave drivers sought revenge by inciting a mob to attack Paul and his companions. So today the liquor interests would seek remuneration for the loss of their "business," and anathematize their opponents, while the underworld tries to overthrow all who seek to restrain them. Paul and Silas were accused of "troubling" the city, for the trade has been interfered with. It, indeed, went hard with them thus to be unjustly set upon and finally, through the connivance of the spineless authorities, to be incarcerated in a filthy dungeon. Still, though the majority was against them, yet the mob was not right (compare 17:5; 18:12; 19:28-29), and they had One on their side who was sufficient (Rom. 8:28).

III. Deliverance and Salvation (vv. 25-35). Christ before Pilate was accused of sedition, and these flogged disciples were likewise innocent sufferers. (1) Prayer and praise (25-26). Note the circumstances—darkness, torn and bleeding, aching backs and a narrow filled with blackness. There was no sleep for the disciples at that midnight hour, but often strength is better gained in prayer than sleep. "Praying, they sang hymns,"—in the midst of that heterogeneous lot of prisoners they did not, could not, keep silent. The result was attentive listening by the other prisoners and by a loving Heavenly Father, who shook the place to evidence his interest (v. 26). (2) The jailed delivered. The place was so shaken that every barred door was opened and the staples of the stocks were so loosened as to liberate every prisoner. (3) The jailer saved. The brutal one is now the anxious inquirer, and becomes a good type for all to follow who are out of Christ. (a) He saw he was lost. He was subject to the same death as his escaped prisoners. "Supposing" (v. 27) has darkened many lives, and our greatest sorrows are often imagined. Face to face with death, the jailer would plunge into an eternity for which he was not prepared. Paul's clarton call brought the jailer to express his anxiety (v. 29), and it was not a trifling nor skeptically indifferent man who appealed to Paul. He was brought face to face with two holy men, with God and with eternity.

Those to whom he came knew the facts, had faith, and could meet the emergencies of life with confidence. IV. The Humbled Magistrates (vv. 35-40). The jailer evidences joy, hospitality and a changed home, which news must have reached the magistrates. Their daily command was to "let these fellows go." Paul here rises to his full dignity. Beaten openly, condemned without trial and verdict, does not allow them to cover their crime and blunder by stealth. The magistrates were liable to loss of position, goods, and even life, and hence willingly did all that Paul required.

Thus the imprisonment turned out to the honor of the apostle and the glory of God.

Nor did Paul hasten at all in leaving the city.

After recovering strength to travel and encouraging the members of the infant church they departed, taking Timothy (17:14) with them.

Thus God gloriously delivered those who labored amidst sore trials, and there was established in Philippi a church which was dear to Paul and which was especially kind to Paul, and to which is directed one of his most tender epistles.

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