

HEART of the SUNSET

of the
SUNSET
of REX BEACH

Author of "The Spoilers," "The Iron Trail," "The Silver Horde," Etc.
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FOLLOWING DISCOVERY BY ED AUSTIN AND GENERAL LONGORIO THAT DAVE LAW AND BLAZE JONES ARE RETURNING FROM MEXICO WITH GUZMAN'S BODY, CLASHING FORCES GO TO THE RIVER—PALOMA AND ALAIRE LOOK ON

SYNOPSIS.—Mrs. Alaire Austin is the handsome young mistress of Las Palmas ranch in Texas and La Feria ranch in Mexico. She dislikes her husband, who is a brutal, profligate, lecherous drunkard, but she feels a strong sympathy for David Law, state ranger, when she discovers accidentally that he loves her helplessly. There is trouble between Mexicans and Americans along the border. Law discovers that Austin is league with American horse thieves and Mexican rebels, among them Tad Lewis, who is under suspicion. Law kills a horse thief. When Law's friend, Ricardo Guzman, goes to the Mexican side to collect money due him, he is murdered by the Lewis gang because he can give incriminating testimony against them. Law and Blaze Jones go to the Mexican side to get Guzman's body secretly. Mrs. Austin and Paloma Jones, Blaze's daughter, are preparing to give them aid on their return to the American side when Gen. Luis Longorio, an odious admirer of Mrs. Austin, comes to call. Ed Austin and Longorio learn of the Jones-Law expedition. Tad Lewis is warned and his gang and Longorio's meet at the river to kill the friends of Guzman.

CHAPTER XIII—Continued.

Alaire drove as swiftly as she dared, following the blurred streak of gray that was the road, and taking the bumps with utter recklessness. Ahead loomed the dark ridge of the river thickets, a dense rampart of mesquite. But even before they were sheltered from the moonlight Paloma saw the lights of another automobile approaching along the main-traveled highway behind them—the lights, evidently, of Tad Lewis' machine. A moment later Alaire's car drove into the black shadows. It had been a short, swift, exciting ride. "Young Ed's" rumble could not be many minutes ahead of them. The women got out, then breasted the high grass and brambles between their hiding place and the pumphouse road. A hundred yards away they could now see the ghostly Rio Grande, its saffron surface faintly silvery by the low moon; lights gleamed from the windows of Morales' house. In the distance the vague outlines of the Mexican shore were resolving themselves, and far beyond twinkled the evidence that some belated citizens of Romero were still awake.

Paloma had brought with her the long-barreled rifle, and this she clutched nervously as she and Alaire stood whispering. Conditions were favorable for an approach to the pumphouse itself. They had nearly reached their goal when out into the clearing behind them, with metallic rattle and clang, burst another automobile, and Alaire whispered excitedly.

"There's the Lewis outfit at last." In the Lewis car were several men. They descended hurriedly, and when one of them ran around the front of the car to turn off its lights, both women saw that he carried a rifle. Evidently Tad Lewis had come prepared for desperate measures.

A small door gave entrance to the pumphouse, and into the lock of this Mrs. Austin fitted a key; the next moment she and Paloma were safely inside. Dusty, cobwebbed windows let in a faint ghost-glow of moonlight, but prevented clear observation of anything outside; Alaire's fumbling fingers found the latch and began to lift a window, when someone spoke, just outside the building.

"What did you discover?" inquired a voice which neither woman recognized. Paloma clutched blindly for her companion; the two eavesdroppers stood rooted in their tracks. The pounding of their hearts sounded loudly. Since the building was little more than a wooden shell, they could plainly hear the answer:

"The house is full of groansers. I can't tell who they are."

A third man spoke, this time in Spanish. "That was Tad Lewis who just came, señor."

There followed some whispered words indistinguishable to the listeners, then a rustle of bodies moving through the tall grass and weeds.

Paloma placed her lips close to Alaire's ear. "Who are those people?" she breathed.

"I don't know. They must be the ones who came in that strange automobile."

Paloma chattered viciously: "Everybody in Texas is here. I wish we'd thought to scatter tacks behind us." Cautionally they swung the door back and looked out. The open space along the river bank was leveled by the moonlight; from Morales' house, to their right, came the sound of voices. The women waited.

A few moments, then a number of men appeared. Paloma judged there were at least a dozen, but she was too excited to count them. As they came straggling toward the pumphouse one of them called back:

"Morales! Put out your lights." Both women recognized Tad Lewis as the speaker.

Alaire had stubbornly refused to charge her husband with any active share in this evil business, but her faith in Ed suddenly vanished when she heard him say:

"Hush! You're making too much noise. You'd better scatter out, too, for there's no telling where they'll find us." Alaire leaned weakly against the door. "I'm going to leave, and let you all attend to the rest," he was saying. But Tad Lewis halted him as he turned from the group.

"Where are you going, Ed? You left your car back yonder by the road. I almost ran into it."

"Eh? What are you talking about? My car is over by Morales' house."

"Señor Austin is in a great hurry," sneered someone in Spanish. "Once more he leaves all of the fighting to his friends."

"That's Adolfo Urbina," panted Paloma. "I know him." Stung by this open charge of cowardice, Austin began a voluble defense, but in the midst of it General Longorio addressed him sharply.

"You will stay here, señor. Nobody leaves this place."

"I told you I wouldn't be a party to the business," Ed declared hotly. "You forced me to come in the first place—"

"Yes! And now I force you to stay." Longorio's stand appeared to please Lewis, who chimed in with the words: "That's right, Ed. You've got to stick, for once in your life."

"What do you mean, you nearly ran into my car back yonder?" Austin asked after a moment.

"Ain't that your machine yonder by the thicket?" inquired Lewis. "If it ain't, whose is it?" As no one answered, he started in the direction he had indicated; but at that moment a man came running from the river bank, crying softly:

"Look out! They come." A man passed swiftly by the crack of the half-open door and scarcely ten feet beyond. He was followed by three others.

The first of the newcomers, acting as spokesman for his party, stepped out into the moonlight and cried loudly: "Hello, men! What's goin' on here?" It was an American voice; it had a broad, slow Texas drawl.

The group of plotters turned; there was a startled murmur, then Tad Lewis answered:

"Hello! Who are you! What do you want?"

"I reckon we must have got off the road," announced the stranger. Then he peered out across the river. "Say! Ain't that a skiff yonder?" he inquired. "Well, it don't look like a steamboat." Lewis laughed disagreeably. "We're havin' a little party of our own. I reckon you fellows had better beat it. Understand?"

The outposts that had been sent to cover the bank in both directions were now coming in. Through the stillness of the night there sounded the thump of orlocks. Seeing that the stranger did not seem to take his hint, Lewis raised his voice menacingly:

"That's your road back yonder. It's a right good road, and I'd advise you to travel fast."

But this suggestion was also ignored; in fact, it appeared to amuse the man addressed, for he, too, laughed. He turned, and the women noticed that he carried a short saddle gun. They saw, also, that at least one of the men at his back was similarly armed.

"Now, what's the hurry?" The stranger was chuckling. Suddenly he raised his voice and called loudly: "Hello, Dave! Is that you-all?"

The answer floated promptly back: "Hello, Cap! Sure it's us."

"Have you got him?"

It was Blaze Jones' voice which answered this time: "You bet!"

Paloma Jones was trembling now. She clung to Alaire, crying, thankfully: "It's the Rangers! The Rangers!" Then she broke away and ran out into the moonlight, trailing her absurd firearm after her.

"Now, boys," the Ranger captain was saying, "I know 'most every one of you, and we ain't going to have the least bit of trouble over this thing, are we? I reckon you-all are friends of Ricardo Guzman, and you fust couldn't wait to find out about him, eh?"

Alaire, who had followed Paloma, was close enough now to recognize the two Guzman boys as members of the Ranger party. Lewis and his men had drawn together at the first alarm; Longorio's Mey as had gathered about their leader. The entire situation had changed in a moment, and the Ranger captain was in control of it.

Soon Dave Law and Blaze Jones came up over the river bank; they paused, stricken with surprise at finding a score of people where they had expected no more than four.

Blaze was the first to speak. "What's all this?" he cried. He peered near-sightedly from one to the other; then his huge bulk shook with laughter: "Say, do my glasses magnify, or is this an open lodge meetin'?"

"Dad! Oh, dad!" Paloma scurried to him and lunged herself into his arms.

"What you doin' here, kid?" the father exclaimed. "Why, you'd ought to be home and abed, long ago. You'll catch your death of cold. Is that gun loaded?"

Dave Law was even more amazed than his companion. Recovering from his first surprise, he took a position beside his superior officer, Captain Evans did not seem at all troubled by the disparity in numbers. One Ranger, or two at the most, had always been sufficient to quell a Texan disturbance; now that there were three of them, he felt equal to an invasion of Mexican soil, if necessary. In consequence, he relaxed his watchful vigilance, and to Dave he drawled:

"We've got most of the leading citizens of the county, and I reckon somebody in the outfit will be able to identify Guzman."

"There's no trouble about that, sir. We found him. Pedro and Raoul can make sure." The sons of Ricardo Guzman stepped forward promptly, and Law waved them toward the boat landing, where the two helpers were waiting with Ricardo's remains.

Despite the Ranger captain's easy assumption of command, the strain of the situation had not subsided, and Longorio drew swift attention to himself when he said:

"It is fortunate that I chanced to learn of this matter. You have done me a great service, Señor Law, for I came to Romero purposely to examine into the death of this unfortunate man. But I could learn nothing; nobody knew anything whatever about the matter, and so I became convinced that it amounted to little. Now—behold! I discover that I was deceived. Or—perhaps there still may be a mistake."

Blaze Jones thrust his daughter aside and advanced toward the speaker. "There's no mistake," he declared



"Hello, Men! What's going on here?"

belligerently. "I don't make mistakes when I go grave-robbin'. Don Ricardo was shot by your men. He had five thousand dollars on him, or he should have had, and he was an American citizen. Your Colonel Blanco covered the body, but he'll have a h—l of a job coverin' the facts. It's time we came to a showdown with your murderer's outfit, and I aim to see if you've got a government in your country."

"Heaven guided my hand," devoutly breathed the general. "It is regrettable that you used this means when a word to me would have served the purpose, for—it is no trivial matter to desecrate a Mexican graveyard. My country, it has a government. An officer of the state of Texas, under arms, has crossed the Rio Grande. What does that mean?"

Captain Evans had a sense of humor; Longorio's ominous words amused him. "Say, general, it ain't the first time," he chortled. "And you're an officer, too, ain't you? You're in Texas at this minute, and I'll bet if I frisked you I'd find that you was under arms." The Mexican understood English sufficiently well to grasp the significance of these words. After a moment's consideration, therefore, he modified his threatening tone.

"But my mission was friendly. I had no criminal purpose," he said mildly. "However—perhaps one offense condones the other. At any rate, we must

have no international complications. There is a more practical side to the matter; if Don Ricardo Guzman met his death in Mexico, there will be a rigid investigation. I assure you."

Evans agreed. "That's fair! And I'll make a bargain with you: you keep still and so'll we. We never aimed for this affair to get out, anyhow. I reckon these men"—he indicated Lewis and his followers—"ain't liable to talk much."

The two Guzman boys, greatly moved, returned to announce that they had identified their father's body, and Longorio could not well refuse to accept their evidence.

"Very well," said he. "I am indebted to you. Since there is nothing more to be said, apparently, I will return to Romero." With a bow to Mrs. Austin, who had silently watched the play of these opposing motives, he turned away, and Tad Lewis followed him.

But Dave Law had recognized Adolfo Urbina in the crowd, and, stepping forward, disarmed him, saying:

"Adolfo, there's a warrant for you, so I'll just take you in."

For a moment Adolfo was inclined to resist, but, thinking better of it, he yielded with bad grace, bitterly regretting the curiosity which had prompted him to remain to the end of this interesting affair.

Tad Lewis gave him some comfort. "Never mind, Adolfo," he said. "They can't prove anything on you, and I'll go your bail. Ed Austin knows where you was the day that stock was stole." He and his two remaining men moved toward their automobile, and a moment later the vehicle went clattering away up the thicket road.

So ended the attempt to foil the return of Ricardo Guzman's body to Texas soil.

When Alaire came to look for her husband, he was gone.

CHAPTER XIV.

Superstitions and Certainties.

The sensation caused by Ricardo Guzman's disappearance was as nothing to that which followed the recovery of his body. Whatever the facts of the rescue, it was generally recognized that the result had been to bring on a crisis in the affairs of the two nations. Strong influences, however, were at work to prevent that very outcome for which the people of Texas prayed. During the delay there arose a report that Ricardo Guzman had borne an evil reputation, and that he had been so actively associated with the rebel cause as to warrant punishment by the federal government. Moreover, a legal question as to his American citizenship was raised—a question which seemed to have important bearing upon the case.

Public interest is short-lived; few living men can hold it more than a day or two, and it reckons no dead man worthy of more than an obituary notice. Thus in the course of time the Guzman incident was in a fair way of being officially forgotten and forgiven.

But there were several persons who felt intense relief at the course events had taken, and among these was Alaire Austin. In the days following that midnight expedition she had had ample time in which to meditate upon her husband's actions. It seemed probable that he had fled to San Antonio, there to remain until interest in the Guzman matter had abated.

Alaire telephoned Dave Law, arguing to herself that she must learn more about her husband's connection with the Lewis gang. Dave arrived even sooner than she had expected. She made him dine with her, and they spent the evening on the dim-lit gallery. In the course of their conversation Alaire discovered that Dave, too, had a hidden side of his nature; that he possessed an imagination, and with it a quaint, whimsical, exploratory turn of mind which enabled him to talk interestingly of many things and many places. On this particular evening he was anything but the man of iron she had known—until she ventured to speak of Ed. Then he closed up like a trap. He was almost gruff in his refusal to say a word about her husband.

Because of Ed's appropriation of the ranch cash, Alaire found it necessary a few days later to go to the bank, and, feeling the need of exercise, she rode her horse Montrose. When her errands had been attended to, she suddenly decided to call on Paloma Jones. It was years since she had voluntarily done such a thing; the very impulse surprised her.

Paloma, it happened, was undergoing that peculiar form of feminine torture known as "fitting;" but insecurely basted pinned and tucked as she was, she came flying down to the gate to meet her visitor.

Alaire was introduced to Mrs. Strange, the dressmaker, a large, acidulous brunette, with a mouthful of pins; and then, when Paloma had given herself once more into the seamstress' hands, the two friends gossiped.

"I don't know what dad will say when he gets the bill for these dresses," Paloma confessed.

"Your father is a mighty queer man," Mrs. Strange observed. "I haven't so much as laid eyes on him."

Paloma nodded. "Yes, and he's getting more peculiar all the time; I can't make out what ails him."

"Where is he now?" asked Alaire.

Tad Lewis and his gang determine that Dave Law is too dangerous to be alive—so the plotting takes a more sinister turn. Startling developments are described in the next installment.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

PUBLIC ROADS

FEASIBLE WIDTH OF ROADS

First Deputy Highway Commissioner of New York Tells of Troubles Encountered by Him.

Most of the roads built in New York by the state are 16 feet wide. When money was voted for the highway system it was on the basis of approximately \$13,000 per mile. This was in 1912, and \$13,000 was a low figure even for that date. Under present conditions it is obviously impossible to complete the system as planned then, and extra width is a serious expense. H. Eltinge Breed, first deputy highway commissioner of New York, recently stated that only by the strictest economy, by substituting different classes of pavement within certain limits of cost, and by using federal aid, will it be practicable to have all the important roads brought together into a good highway system. It would be far better, he says, if there were sufficient funds to build them 18 feet wide for two lines of traffic and 24 feet for three lines. The use of motor vehicles is steadily increasing and they are being constructed wider. Hence they require pavements where vehicles at least 90 inches wide can pass one another comfortably and frequently. Eighteen feet is probably the narrowest width that permits this, according to Mr. Breed. Especially is this true, he says, in the case of concrete roads, because the transition from the hard concrete surface to the earth shoulder and back again becomes really dangerous in some soils on account of the rut that traffic usually wears along the joining line.

MILEAGE OF CONCRETE ROADS

There Were 19,000,000 Square Yards of It in 1914 and Only 364,000 Yards in 1909.

The mileage of concrete pavements in the United States has increased rapidly, and it is likely to continue to increase. There were 19,000,000 square yards of it in 1914 and only 364,000 square yards in 1909. The principal advantages of concrete pavements are said to be durability under ordinary traffic conditions; a smooth, even surface; absence of dust; comparatively small cost of maintenance until re-



Concrete Road in New York.

newals are necessary; availability as a base for another type of surface if desirable; attractive appearance.

The durability of concrete roads has not yet been fully proved because there are no old pavements in existence. The condition of those which have undergone several years' service indicates they wear well.

The disadvantages of concrete as a road surface are its noise under horse traffic; the wearing of the necessary joints in the pavement, and the tendency to crack, with its consequent rapid deterioration; the difficulty of repairs when these become necessary.

USE MOTOR VACUUM CLEANER

Latest Municipal Development Makes Its Appearance in Los Angeles—Method Is Practical.

The latest municipal development to make its appearance in the western part of the country is the motor vacuum street cleaning apparatus, which has been adopted by the city of Los Angeles, Cal., says Power Wagon. For months this newest of street cleaning features had been under discussion, but it was not until a short time ago that it was really put into practice. That this new cleaning method is entirely practical has been proved by days of actual demonstration.

Stilt-Walking Crane Needed.

In many places the method of making "good roads" is to plow them down the center and decorate the roadbed with sod. This provides a surface which can be traveled only by the stilt-walking crane.

Growth of Good Roads. The improvement of public roads in the United States is now very rapid, and while an enormous amount of work remains to be done, the highway system is no longer a reproach to the country.

Girls! Use Lemons! Make a Bleaching, Beautifying Cream



The juice of two fresh lemons strained into a bottle containing three ounces of orchard white makes a whole quart of the most remarkable lemon skin beautifier at about the cost one must pay for a small jar of the ordinary cold creams. Care should be taken to strain the lemon juice through a fine cloth so no lemon pulp gets in, then this lotion will keep fresh for months. Every woman knows that lemon juice is used to bleach and remove such blemishes as freckles, sallowness and tan and is the ideal skin softener, smoothener and beautifier.

Just try it! Get three ounces of orchard white at any pharmacy and two lemons from the grocer and make up a quart of this sweetly fragrant lemon lotion and massage it daily into the face, neck, arms and hands. It naturally should help to soften, freshen, bleach and bring out the roses and beauty of any skin. It is simply marvelous to smoothen rough, red hands. Adv.

Bathe in Moonlight.

The pale moonlight that bathes each night the several hundred frame buildings at Fort Benjamin Harrison which house the student officers and the regular army men, shines also over the tents of two Indiana National Guard companies, the First Indiana field hospital and ambulance company No. 1. Late in the afternoon is bath time with the student officers, and with the regulars, and the bathhouses, one for each company, are about the busiest places at the fort, especially after a round of trench-digging. But the men of the field hospital don't care for bathing in the afternoon. Night time is the time for them. Their bathhouses are as open as the air, the bathing facilities provided consisting only of showers set up in the open back of their camp. So, late in the evening, guards are set out, and forms, pulled in the moonlight, emerge from the tents, run to the showers, shiver in the cold water, and beat a lusty retreat to the tents.—Indianapolis News.

ELIHR BABER WORTH ITS WEIGHT IN GOLD IN THE PHILIPPINES. A contracted malaria in 1886, and after a year's fruitless treatment by a prominent Washington physician, your Elihr Baber entirely cured his. On arriving here I came down with tropical malaria—the worst form—and sent home for Baber. Again it proved its value—it is worth its weight in gold here." Brasie O'Hagan, Troop, E, 8th U. S. Cavalry, Balayan, Philippines. Elihr Baber, 50 cents, all druggists or by Parcel Post, prepaid, from Kloczewski & Co., Washington, D. C.

Disproving a Theory.

The man who had a theory was expounding it.

"Everybody is more or less of a poet," he said. "There's not a person on earth, and there never has been a person who hadn't a spark of divine afflatus. It's only a matter of degree of inspiration of power to express, that makes the difference."

"I disagree with you," put in an auditor, positively. "There was one man who couldn't have been a poet."

"Who was that, may I ask?"

"Adam."

"How do you make out that Adam couldn't have been a poet?"

"Why, that's simple. Poets are born and not made."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Little Bodily Energy in Potatoes.

A pound of potatoes yields hardly one-fifth as much body energy as a pound of rice, cornmeal, or wheat. This is partly because they are much more watery and partly because a large portion is discarded with the skins. Part of this loss is inevitable because the skin itself is not usually considered good to eat; but the more carelessly potatoes are prepared, the more of the valuable edible substance goes with the skin.

Force of Habit.

"I want three eggs and boil them three minutes. I am hungry—how soon can I have them?"

"In a minute, sir."



Always fresh and crisp! Post Toasties are real corn flakes! SAYS BOBBY