

By REX BEACH

Author of "The Iron Trail," "The Spillers," "Heart of the Sunset," etc.

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O'REILLY, BACK IN CUBA AT LAST, HEARS BAD NEWS ABOUT ROSA AND ESTEBAN

Synopsis—Don Esteban Varona, rich Cuban planter, hides his money and jewels and the secret of the hiding place is lost when he and the only other person who knows it are killed. Donna Isabel, step-mother of the Varona twins—Esteban and Rosa—suffers valiantly for years for the hidden treasure. Johnny O'Reilly, American, loves and is loved by Rosa. Donna Isabel falls to her death in an old well while walking in her sleep. Esteban's connection with the Cuban Insurrection is discovered and he and Rosa are forced to flee. O'Reilly, with Spanish soldiers en route, Esteban escapes, but, before returning to New York on business, gets a letter from Rosa telling of her peril and he starts for Cuba. Pancho Coto, leading manager of the Varona estates, betrays Esteban and Rosa, feeding Colonel Cobos, notorious Spanish guerrilla, their hiding place. O'Reilly returns to Cuba with a band of filibusters, which includes Norine Evans, an American girl who has dedicated her fortune and services as nurse to the Cuban cause.

CHAPTER XII—Continued.

Evening came, then night, and still the train was jerked along at the tail of the party with a hint as to its destination. About midnight, those who were not dozing noted that they had stopped at an obscure pine-woods junction, and that when the train got under way once more their own car did not move. The ruse was now apparent; owing to the intensity of the moon, it had crept out from its hiding place, and forward coaches was aware that the train was lighter by one car.

CHAPTER XIII.

The City Among the Leaves and the City of Beggars.

The slight was moonlight and warm. An impetuous breeze dimmed the star-glow, only the diffused illumination of the open sea enabled the passengers to see that what was ahead was a blacker darkness on the horizon ahead of them as land. Major Ramos was on the bridge with the captain. Two men were seen in the distance, and a blind search for that steep wall which forms the side of the old Bahama channel. When the lead finally gave them warning, the Fair Play got her underway and came to a stop, rolling lazily.

Major Ramos spoke in a low tone, his face was a mask of sternness, and to look for an opening through the reef. Before the words were out of his mouth O'Reilly had offered him self.

Ten minutes later he found himself at the steering oar of one of the ship's boats, with Miss Evans at the helm. There was a long night's work ahead; time passed, and so O'Reilly altered his course and cruised along outside the reef, turning, urging his crew to hasten.

A mile—two miles—it seemed like a flash of light, and then a phosphorescent white water showed in black-bottomed foam. O'Reilly explored it briefly; then he turned back toward the ship, and his crew were aboard and the ship was groping her way toward the break in the reef. Meanwhile, her deck became a scene of confusion, as the men, who had been swung out, with the result that when the Fair Play had maneuvered as close as she dared everything was in readiness.

O'Reilly took the first load through, and discharged it upon a sandy beach. Every man tumbled overboard and waded ashore with a pack train and dropped this in the sand above lighted mark, and then ran back for another. It was swift, hot work. From the darkness on each side came the sounds of other boat crews similarly engaged.

Daylight was coming when the last boat cast off and the Fair Play, with a hoarse, triumphant blast of her whistle, faded into the north, her part in the expedition at an end.

Dawn showed the voyagers that they were indeed fortunate, for they were upon the mainland of Cuba, and as far as they could see, both east and west, the reef was unbroken. Men were lolling about, exhausted, but Major Ramos, alert as a cat, was not for rest; he roused them, and kept them on the go until the precious supplies had been collected within the shelter of the brush. Then he divided the supplies into packages and distributed arms among his followers.

The three Americans, who were minus their tasteless breakfast, and pilot boat, were joined by Major Ramos. "I am dispatching a message to General Gomez's headquarters, asking him to send a pack train and an escort for these supplies. There is danger here; perhaps you would like to go on with the couriers."

O'Reilly accepted eagerly; then thinking of the girl, he said doubtfully: "So? I should Miss Evans isn't equal to the trip?"

"Nonsense! I'm equal to anything," Norine declared. And indeed she looked as though she was equal to anything, in her short walking suit and stockings. Branch also declined the invitation, vowing that he was too weak to bud. If there was to be a pack train, he preferred to the interior he infinitely preferred to await the opportunity, he said, even at the risk of an attack by Spanish soldiers on the coast.

It took O'Reilly but a short time to collect the few articles necessary for the trip; indeed, his bundle was no more than a pack train and an escort for these supplies. There is danger here; perhaps you would like to go on with the couriers."

"I can't take any clothes," she inquired in a panic. "I can't live without a change."

"Is something you'll have to learn," he told her. "An insurrection with two shirts is wealthy. Some of these men's."

"So?" You wish to go west, eh? "Yes, sir. I want to find Colonel Lopez."

"Lopez? Miguel Lopez?" the general inquired quickly. "Well, you've been in Cuba for some time, haven't you?" "Branch also declined the invitation, vowing that he was too weak to bud. If there was to be a pack train, he preferred to the interior he infinitely preferred to await the opportunity, he said, even at the risk of an attack by Spanish soldiers on the coast."

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"Lopez? Miguel Lopez?" the general inquired quickly. "Well, you've been in Cuba for some time, haven't you?"

"Isn't it likely to rain on us?"

"It's always raining here," said Miss Evans pondered this prospect; then she laughed. "It must feel funny," she said.

"There were three other members of the traveling party, men who knew something of the country round about; they were good fighters, doubtless, but in spite of their ship's new weapons they resembled soldiers even less than did their major. All were dressed as they had been when they left New York; one even wore a derby hat and pointed patent-leather shoes. Nevertheless Norine Evans thought the little cavalcade presented quite a martial appearance as it fled away into the jungle.

The first few miles were trying, for the coast was swampy and thickly grove, up to the undergrowth and the jungle gave place to higher timber and to open savannas deep in gullies grass. Soon after noon the travelers came to a clearing, the center of which was known to one of the guides, and here a stop was made in order to secure horses and pack animals.

Johnnie, who was badly fagged from the previous night's work, found a shady spot and stretched himself out for a nap.

The site was grateful. O'Reilly enjoyed his sleep.

The party had penetrated to the foothills of the Sierra de Cubitas, and as the ascending the scenery changed. Rarely is the Cuban landscape any thing but pleasing. It is a smiling land. It has been said, too, that everything in it is beautiful and warm. Here in the Cubitas range all was beauty and peace. The hills were low and the people are amiable, warm-hearted; the very animals and insects are harmless. But here in the Cubitas range all was beauty and peace. The hills were low and the people are amiable, warm-hearted; the very animals and insects are harmless.

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gave way to a frown and his brow darkened. "So? You are that O'Reilly from Matanzas," said he. "I know you now, but I never expected you would meet me here. Esteban Varona told you about me, did he not?"

"The colonel inclined his head. "I'm here at last, after the devil's own time. I've been trying every way to get through. The Spaniards stopped me at Puerto Principe—they sent me back to my quarters. I've been perfectly crazy. I—You—O'Reilly swallowed hard. "You know where Esteban is? Tell me—"

"Have you heard nothing?" "Nothing whatever. That is, nothing since Rosa, his sister—You understand, she and I are engaged—"

"Yes, yes; Esteban told me all about you," said he. "You are engaged—"

"What is it? Not bad news?" "There was no need for the officer to answer. In his averted gaze he saw the shadow of a smile.

"Why look for ethics in war?"

O'Reilly read confirmation of his sick apprehensions.

"Tell me! Which one?" he whispered.

O'Reilly recoiled; a spasm distorted his chalky face. He began to shake weakly, and his fingers plucked aimlessly at each other.

Lopez took him by the arm. "Try to control yourself," said he. "Sit here while I try to tell you what little I know. I can tell you one thing, and wait awhile, until you are calmer. As the young man had no answer, except to stare at him in a white agony of suspense, he sighed and went on:

"I will tell you all I know—which isn't much. Esteban Varona came to me soon after he and his sister had fled from their home. He wanted to join my forces, but I didn't dare take the girl—a woman could have easily betrayed the hiding place. So I convinced him that his first duty was to her, rather than to his country, and he agreed. He was a fine boy; he had spirit. He bought some state rifles and armed a band of his own—which wasn't a bad idea. I used to hear about him. Nobody cared to touch him. I can tell you, until he killed some of the regular troops. Then of course they went after him. Meanwhile he managed to destroy his own plantations, which Cuba had robbed him of. You know Cuto?"

"Yes," Esteban put an end to his story after a while; rode right to La Joya one night, broke in the door, and nabbed the scoundrel in his bed. But there was a mistake of some sort. It seems that a body of Cobos's volunteers were somewhere close by, and the two parties met. I have never learned all the details of the fight, but the stories of that fight which came to me are too preposterous for belief. Still, Esteban and his men must have fought like demons, for they killed some incredible number. But they were human—they could not defeat a regiment. It seems that only one or two of them escaped."

"Esteban? Did he—"

"Colonel Lopez nodded; then he said gravely: "You take no prisoners. I was in the fight hills at the time, fighting hard, and it was six weeks before I got back into Matanzas. Naturally, when I heard of what happened, I tried to find the girl, but when I was concentrating the pacifics by the time, and there was nobody left in the Yuma, there was a disaster."

"Then you don't know positively that she—?" "That she—"

"Wait. There is no doubt that the boy was killed, but of Rosa's fate I can only form my own opinion. However, one of Esteban's men joined my forces later, and I not only learned something about the girl, but also why Esteban had been so reluctant to leave. It was all Cobos's doings. You have heard of the fellow? No? Well, he was a spy. The spy's tone was eloquent of hatred. He is worse than the worst of them—a monster! He had seen Miss Varona. She was a beautiful girl."

"Go on!" whispered the first. "I discovered that she didn't live."

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GENERAL CORNER A BACKLASHED BY THE ITALIANS

AUSTRIAN OFFENSIVE ALONG ENTIRE FRONT HELD BACK BY STRONG ALLIED FORCE.

ACUTE WATCHFULNESS OF ENEMY ALONG BRENTA RIVER

Each Day Will Bring New Efforts and With an Effort the Fighting Will Be More Active Along Piave River.

Italian Army Headquarters.—The Italians, with their French and British Allies, are successfully resisting the Austrian onslaught and are counter-attacking fiercely everywhere. In addition, there is acute watchfulness for all enemy movements in the Brenna river area, the mountains or toward the sea far attained.

Whether the enemy effort upon Montello plateau is an attempt to move toward the rear of the famous Monte Grappa salient, mountain positions, or to menace the Venetian plains and Venice, it is certain the Austrians are fighting desperately to hold their ground far attained.

The Italian command feels that while the first great attempt to advance has been blocked, each day will bring the next effort more arduous.

Built 14 Bridges Across Piave. Unofficial advisers are to the effect the Austrians have thrown 14 bridges across the Piave along a front of about 100 miles. In view of the Zenson loop and the Conegliano railway bridge, but the Italians are heavily engaging the enemy at all points and are preparing to counter-attack.

Infantry operations on the battle front in France continue virtually at a standstill, but the Allied and German forces are still active in the Vosges and it is not improbable fighting on a large scale will be resumed somewhere shortly. Along the front south of Alver and west of Serre, the British and Germans are engaged in night artillery duels while spirited activity is noticeable along French sectors of Montdidier and between Montdidier and the Aisne.

The French continue daily to regain ground taken from them in the recent German offensive south of the Aisne and also to take prisoners in their enterprises.

Austrians Defeated in Alps. Rome.—Beaten to a standstill in the mountains, the Austrians on the third day of their great drive in Italy fled through the mountains of the Alps against the Piave front. They were able, at a tremendous cost in blood, only to creep forward. The menace against the Venetian plain from the Venetian I. held. The enemy is still on the west side of the Piave; he has captured Cap Sile and shoved his lines forward west of Sandono Di Piave.

Such are the meager results of three days' incessant assaults, costing the Austrians in the greatest military gamble of the war that was to rich and fertile plains of northern Italy. The enemy is still on the west side of the Piave; he has captured Cap Sile and shoved his lines forward west of Sandono Di Piave.

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"Sworn to before me by FRANK V. CLOVER, Notary Public."

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MANY INDIAN PEACE EMBLEMS Wisconsin Braves Still Retain Numerous Medals Given to Them by Various Governments.

Wisconsin Indians still retain many peace medals that were given to them by their ancestors by various governments, and some of the medals date back to 1720, according to an article on Wisconsin Indian medals in The Wisconsin Archeologist.

The earliest medals owned by Indian families today include one of brass issued at the time of George I, four of silver bearing the name of George II, and one of silver and one of brass issued by the bust of President Polk, dated 1845, was owned by the Menominee chief, Shunien.

Arthur Gerth, Milwaukee collector, once owned a silver medal issued by President Jefferson. An Andrew Johnson medal is in the collection of A. T. Newman, of Wisconsin. Dr. Alphonse Gerend is the owner of a silver George III medal, formerly the property of the Wisconsin chief, Waunegama.

Bear Took Possession of a Car. Breaking from his crate in an express car, a big black bear, being shipped from Shreveport, La., to Meridian, Miss., took possession of the car and during the run consumed three crates of chicken and three five-gallon buckets of ice cream.

A Current Joke. The Grandstrander—Say, the language that fellow down there uses in routing is perfectly shocking. I wish you would arrest him. Dr. Alphonse Gerend is the owner of a silver George III medal, formerly the property of the Wisconsin chief, Waunegama.

Away With the Cats! The damage to crops has been indirectly attributed to cats has recently brought the question of cat suppression into more than one state legislature. Cats out birds that eat insects that destroy crops.

Kamerads. "I always get that I don't get left in anything worth while," said the aggressive egoist.

"Well," replied Farmer Cortness, "you're wrong in that. A potato bog is worth the same thing."

Metal fasteners have been invented for holding poultry together for cooking without sewing.

Better Off if you drink INSTANT POSTUM instead of coffee. Postum is nutritious, healthful, economical, delicious and American.

TRY IT FOR EVERY GOOD REASON

At Atlantic Port—Passengers and crew of the Canard liner Ascania, were at the Buenos Aires agreement, a reef off the coast last Thursday, were brought here Sunday on a patrol vessel. The report stated that the ship will be a total loss.

Conard Liner Total Loss.

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