Our Weekly Serial Story Installment

Mistress of Monterey

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WNU Service

CHAPTER XX—Continued

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"Tomorrow night," he sibilated, "on the beach . . . at the laboratory tent. If it is clear we shall be making some last observations of the stars . . . I will be waiting for you. I will [illegible] even if it is not clear . . . I will wait." Can you disguise yourself?"

She caressed his shoulder with a feline gesture that made him shiver.

"Fear not! I will be there, prepared, starlight or fog!"

The Indian games and dancing were over, but the program Fray Lasuen had planned for the guests was to continue with some of the old Spanish dances, and another group began tripping to the music of some guitars and a flageolet. One figure stood out among them.

Indizuela scorned the Indian dances of her people, but had taken pains to learn those of the Spaniards, and while her face showed stolid and indifferent as she danced, her slim body was alive and graceful, supple as a sapling.

The others stopped dancing to admire her, and she stood alone. When she had finished there was a burst of applause led by the Governor.

"Ole!" he called. "Bravo, nina! Viva la nina de los ojos negros! Viva la morena!" With a gallant gesture he threw his hat at her feet. She picked it up gravely, and after a slight hesitation put it on her head, did another impromptu pirouette, and stood with her hands provocatively on her hips.

The Governor half rose to go to her and claim the sombrero with an embrace as was the custom. But La Gobernadora, who was staring at the performance with set jaw and disapproving eyes, clutched him before he could rise.

"Sit down!" she commanded. "Do not make a scene of yourself. Well done, moza," she called in a high voice, with a chill smile. "Well done, indeed." The Governor subsided automatically before he could protest, and the Indian girl, her face asmolder, carried the hat to him, presenting it with a contemptuous gesture.

La Perouse rose and stretched himself delightedly.

"Magnifique!" he shouted across the space to Fray Lasuen, who was moving toward them with a pleased smile. "One of the most interesting performances I have ever seen! These Indians, whom I had thought so crude, so stupid, can really do things, can they not?"

"Ah, Senor el Conde," replied the priest, "you must not underestimate my poor children. Perhaps you would like to come through the establishment again, and see what they have done?" he invited eagerly.

La Perouse protested hastily.

"Non, non, mon pere. I have already carefully examined the Mission San Carlos, you will remember, and have made notes about it all, and about you. Perhaps all Europe will some day read of this little place, and of your good works! Now, I am leaving you a souvenir of our visit. It is a mill, a hand mill upon which to grind barley. Thereby one woman can do the work of many, instead of grinding the meal by hand on stones as I have seen them do here. I will have it sent over tomorrow."

Lasuen began an exclamation of pleasure and gratitude. "And I am leaving something else, aussi, something for you, and for my host, his Excellency, the Gouverneur. Perhaps I am being presumptuous in thinking there is anything you need in this California, and I have been wondering what it could be that I might leave as a gift, and to insure the fact that you, perhaps, will not forget your French brothers."

He paused and looked about him, beaming.

"It is two sacks of potatoes," he announced. "I noticed that you have none, either that you have planted or that grow wild. And these we have brought from South America. So I will leave one sack with you, Pere Lasuen, for your mission garden, and one for you, Monsieur le Gouverneur, for that garden of yours of which you are so justly proud!"

After the Governor and his party had ridden away from the mission, when the Indians had retired for the night, Fray Lasuen sat in his cell and wrote carefully in his journal:

"This has been indeed a day of historical importance. This day the potato has been introduced into California."

CHAPTER XXI

As the cavalcade of the Governor were mounting their horses to return from the fiesta at Mission Carmelo, Dagelet stooped for Eulalia's foot to assist her into her saddle. Suddenly he was good-naturedly jostled aside by Don Pedro, who, in sign language, made known to the young Frenchman that he would take care of the lady. Then, to Eulalia's surprise, instead of seating her on her horse, he took her in his arms, and tossed her into his own saddle, swung himself up behind her and said, "I think I will have you ride with me, chiquita, like a little peasant girl, tired and sleepy, from the fair. Que no?"

Eulalia tried to sit bolt upright to express her outraged dignity, but Don Pedro only pulled her closer and there was nothing to do but lean against him, in the circle of his arm, and be quiet.

On they rode, silent under the stars, with pine-needles thick beneath the horses' hoofs, and startled night birds rustling among the trees at the disturbance. From some of the riders came bursts of song, the twanging of a guitar. The horse ambled quietly, for no one seemed in a hurry to break the spell of the night. Eulalia abandoned her dignity, nodded and dozed.

La Perouse and Fages talked in low tones. They spoke of La Perouse's departure, and a little wistfully of his visit in California. The Frenchman had fallen under the spell of the country so beloved of Pedro Fages, and would leave regretfully, he told his host. And the Governor had found a warm friend in the genial little Frenchman, with his quaint Spanish, learned in the mountains of his native South of France, among the Basques. He would miss him when he was gone. Not since Junipero Serra's death had there been anyone in California with whom he felt such companionship.

All these things the two men made known to each other, with few words, as men speak, but of profound meaning, then were silent. Although formal farewells would be made later, this was the real leave-taking between them. Fages felt deeply the importance of the visit of the French ships, the first foreigners to visit California. And he wondered vaguely, what other people, and ships of how many other nations would visit the shores of the distant province. "Ships and people and cities," La Perouse had predicted. Fages pondered. So deep was he in thought that he had not noticed Angustias riding close beside him. When she spoke out of the darkness, he started.

"On my word, Angustias, you almost frightened me."

"Ai, Senor," sniffled the woman, "forgive me for speaking to you like this, but there is something I want you to do for me. It means much to me, Excellency. A matter that has lain sorrowfully close to my heart for days . . ."

"Speak, then. What is it?"

"It is about Chichi. He is dying, Don Pedro, in these fogs and cold weather of Monterey. I have managed to keep him alive so far, but I am afraid he will die." She sniveled dismally.

"But what can I do?" asked the Governor in dismay.

"I want to ask your permission to give him to the Senor el Conde de La Perouse," she said. "He is going to sail from here to the tropics I understand, where it is warm, and a safe place for little monkeys to dwell. Chichi would become alive and well there." She was tumbling her words one over another in her excitement. "And though it will break my heart, I must let him go. When el Conde reaches those tropic isles, he can release Chichi, and then . . . and then he will be happy and well. And he will perhaps forget his adoring Angustias and," she sniffed loudly, "find him a little

"Tomorrow Night," He Sibilated, "on the Beach."

monkey wife!" she ended, her voice breaking on a high squeak.

Fages saw the need for being firm.

"No, Angustias. You must not ask it. Chichi has managed to live here this long, and will not die until his time comes. He would die away from your loving care, I know. The jungle is no place for him. And besides, Conde de La Perouse has his hands so full of important matters that it would not be fair to ask him to do it. Think! He has two great ships for which he is responsible, and many men, and machinery, and instruments, and plants, and food supplies, and ammunition, and . . ." He stopped, for he realized he was talking to himself, and Angustias was crying in her shawl. Yes, he was talking to himself, he suddenly was aware that he was wishing that it was Don Pedro Fages who commanded the two ships, and the men, and was sailing away to find new worlds.

He spoke harshly, both to himself and the weeping woman.

"No. Out of the question. I forbid you to ask him, mujer."

Angustias drifted away, sniffing sadly.

Fages bent his head again over the sleeping Eulalia. There was a warm perfume from her relaxed body, and the weight of her sagging against him was delicious to his senses.

"Let him have his ships, and men and distant lands," he thought. "I have Eulalia." He lifted his head, and saw with eyes accustomed to the dark the wooded hills, the more distant mountains. He breathed the heady odors of sea and pines that mingled in the air, and heard the ocean pounding restlessly on the cypress-decked cliffs.

"And I have my California," he said thankfully, lifting his face to the stars.

At the great gate of the presidio grounds good nights were said.

"It has been a marvelous day," said La Perouse almost sadly. "And a beautiful night. I hope tomorrow night will be as clear, for we wish to make some astrological observations before we sail. We will not dismantle the observatory until the last moment."

Angustias, about to turn into the gate, heard him.

"So!" she murmured. "Tomorrow night he will be on the beach at his funny tent! Perhaps . . ." And she whispered her hopes to herself. "I have never been insubordinate," she muttered to herself. "But his Excellency doesn't know everything. Especially about a woman's heart," she added grimly.

At the door of the palacio Don Pedro lifted Eulalia from his horse and carried her into the house.

CHAPTER XXII

So the next morning Eulalia went about her preparations for departure.

Tears of self-pity blinded her as she packed. Lonely, insulated from the world in this most remote and desolate of the King's colonies, with nothing to look forward to but more loneliness, as the years passed; perhaps more children; and at last the final desolation of being laid in the Campo Santo of the Mission Carmelo. That was her life. For she was sure now nothing would ever happen to call Pedro Fages away from California. There were no more troubles with the Franciscans, and El Gobernador served his King too well in this colony where few men wished to come and bury themselves to be recalled by the Crown.

Her jewels were already stored away in their case, and she was sorting out her clothes. Weeping, and recounting her grievances to herself, she filled a great leather chest, and as she sat on the lid to close it, a thought came that made her gasp with dismay. She could never get this bulky thing to the beach. There was no safe way of sending it . . . she couldn't carry it. For a moment she sat there, then a beautiful idea came to her.

She would make a bundle of her clothes, then she would dress in a peasant dress, like Indizuela, carry the bundle on her head, and barefooted, slip down to the beach in the dusk, her face covered by a concealing rebozo. She might escape unnoticed, for Pedro Fages was sending loads of provisions as a farewell present to his friends the French explorers, and many Indians were being pressed into service.

She giggled excitedly, hopped from the chest, opened it and gathering as many things as she could, piled them into a heap, then tied them in a blanket. She tried to lift the bundle, but could not budge it from the floor. Sighing impatiently, she began discarding heavier things, and at last had a weight that she could lift.

She wept again as she discarded the lovely gowns of brocade, velvet, satin and lace. Eloping was not so easy, after all. She had dreamed she could flee, unencumbered by baggage or impedimenta, to the waiting arms of an impatient and potential lover, but here she was struggling with bulky bulgy bundles of clothes, like a washerwoman.

All her lovely clothes! But then, she thought with satisfaction, the expedition would no doubt stop at the Filipino Islands, and there, in Manila, a real capital, she could buy new raiment. It would be better that way, for it was only too probable that her clothes, which she had had for more than three years, were demode, and in Manila she would find lovely things from Paris.

She lifted the load to her head, and experimented with a few steps.

Yes, she could do it. She looked at herself in her mirror, and swayed there, her hands on her hips. In the mirror she saw the face of her baby, staring at her in amazement.

Hastily she dropped the bundle and whirled on the child. The baby's Indian nurse came hurrying in after her, and stooped to pick up the child, but Eulalia stopped her.

"Wait!" she cried. She sank to her knees and held her arms out to the baby enticingly.

"Come, come to Mother, darling!" she cooed.

The baby only stared at Eulalia, nonplussed by such behavior on the part of the lady who generally ignored her good-naturedly.

"Darling, please, my little darling, come to Mother . . . won't you?"

The nurse stood stolidly by, a jealous warmth in her dull eyes. At last the baby, finger in mouth, sidled to the nurse and buried her face in the woman's skirts.

Eulalia rose to her feet.

"Take her out of here!" she demanded imperiously.

The nurse hugged the child close to her and hurried out of the room.

"There, you see?" said La Gobernadora to the Madonna who was smiling sadly at her. "You see? She does not love me at all! She never comes near me! She prefers that black Indian woman, and her father! You see? It will never make the slightest difference to her whether I stay here or not."

She paced back and forth the length of the dirt floor.

"As for young Pedro, he never sees me! He is with his father all the time. He cares only for him, and for his pony. Will he miss me? Does he need me? No, of course not. Absurd! No one wants me, no one needs me . . . I am going away . . ." She cast herself on the bundle of clothes and wept.

"I am going away . . . and no one will care . . . I am going so far . . . on the ocean! I will be seasick, Oh, Dios mio!" She turned toward the Madonna and held out her arms.

"Please, Our Lady of the Seas, make the ocean smooth, please, oh, please!"

After a while she sat herself at a table to write a note to her husband.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Chinese Use Brutal Trapping Methods to Capture the Fur-Bearing Animals

Game laws mean very little in China. In the more remote sections, where trapping is carried on extensively, the operators use bombs and poison to make their catches although this form of hunting is forbidden by law, but there are no wardens to enforce the provision, notes a writer in the Detroit News.

The Chinese hunter has many brutal methods of capturing wild animals which are just as injurious as the steel-jawed spring traps used by his American and European colleagues.

Thousands of animals suffer the torments of a lingering death in Szechuan and neighboring Tibet in a foot noose trap set in a runway and fastened to a bent-down sapling in such a way that, when the animal puts its foot into the fatal ring and springs the trigger, the noose tightens up, yanking the wretched victim into the air where it hangs suspended by one leg till death frees it from suffering. This type is used primarily in capturing the male little musk deer to secure the musk pod used only in the manufacture of perfumes, but more often than not it catches the female musk deer, the tufted deer and other small wild animals which are of little or no value. This trap is perhaps the most brutal and wasteful in use.

The more humane means employed in China is the deadfall, which is a heavy log raised from the ground in such a way as to fall on the quarry when it releases a cleverly set trigger. This is used extensively in the Manchurian forests where there are many kinds of fur-bearing animals. The set-gun is also employed and usually kills instantly but is extremely dangerous to a person walking along the runway on which it is set.

An Acre of Dirty Dishes

In 12 months the average woman washes an acre of dirty dishes, 3 miles of clothes, 1 mile of glass and 5 miles of floors, declared a home service director of a gas association in London