

Two Creatures Found Themselves in Same Boat

A man applied for a job as a keeper at the zoo.

The vacancy had been filled, but there was an acute shortage of apes and, equipped with a skin, the man was engaged to impersonate one.

This he did with great success, entering thoroughly into his part and becoming an adept on the trapeze. Unfortunately he overdid his gymnastics one day and hurtled through the air, to land in the lions' enclosure.

"Help!" he yelled, as a ferocious-looking lion approached him, growling ominously.

"Shut up!" said the lion. "Do you want to get us both fired."

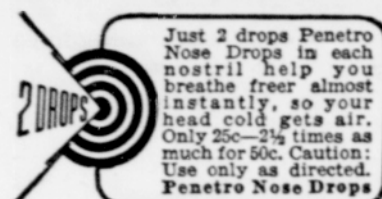
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Doughnuts As Invitations

Doughnuts serve as wedding invitations in some parts of Macedonia. Families of the bride and bridegroom have young boys distribute doughnuts to the townspeople.



Just 2 drops Penetro Nose Drops in each nostril help you breathe freer almost instantly, so your head cold gets air. Only 25c—21 times as much for 50c. Caution: Use only as directed. Penetro Nose Drops

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The army's portable X-ray can be assembled in six minutes and will locate foreign matter in 40 seconds.

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Relieves pain and soreness

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War Dogs Tagged

Every army dog carries an identification card—A tattoo mark on its left ear.

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Great Year-Round Tonic

BLACK SOMBRERO

by CLIFFORD KNIGHT ~ WNU SERVICE

Elsa Chatfield, Hollywood artist, is cut off from the will of her Aunt Kitty, who died from an overdose of morphine. Hunt Rogers, professional sleuth, and Barry Madison, an amateur detective, go to Mazatlan, Mexico, to solve what they believe to be Kitty Chatfield's murder. On arrival they find that Elsa's party had preceded them by plane. During a fiesta at Sam Chatfield's ranch (Sam is Elsa's father) Rogers questions the guests about the death of Sam's sister. All have a motive. They go to the courtyard and while watching the dancing Maria announces the death of James Chesebro. The Mexican police arrive and examine the body. Death was the result of a knife thrust.

CHAPTER X

"Why, then, did the others push you forward as if you knew something?"

"I go over the house seeking my pay; they do not have the money in the kitchen, sir. It is for this reason they push me forward."

"So you were wandering about the house, then?" said Lombardo.

"What did you see?" "I am walking in a place, sir, which Maria tells me is the passageway that leads to the room where the gentleman was murdered. There I see a man enter a door, sir, which must be the door to the room. For I have described it well to Maria, sir."

"Who was the man, Pedro?"

"That I do not know, sir."

"Was he wearing a sombrero?"

"Yes, sir."

"What kind?"

"It was large and black. I think it was of felt. The head and shoulders were in shadows, sir, but in the hand he carried a whip."

"Was he Mexican or American, Pedro?"

"Sir, I do not know."

"What kind of a whip did he have? You said he carried a whip."

"It was about so long, sir," and Pedro's thin brown hands measured a space in air about eighteen inches in length. "It was, I think, what you call a quirt, sir."

"A quirt, so?" Lombardo turned to look meaningfully at Alvarez, his eyebrows arched, his lips parted slightly. He turned back to the pulque man. "Do you see among us, Pedro, such a man as you have described? I warn you to be very careful; these are gentlemen."

Pedro's sharp little eyes, to my alarm, were suddenly upon me; he inspected me carefully, then shifted to Sam Chatfield who sat beside me. Finally he quitted our host's short figure and moved to Huntoon Rogers. He dismissed him with a glance, then came back to me, as if some doubt lingered in his mind.

"I did not see the face, sir," Pedro reminded Lombardo.

Huntoon Rogers spoke for the first time. "It is impossible, Senor Lombardo. Senor Madison was with me when Maria came with the news of the murder."

"And all of the evening, senor?" I answered the question. "No," I said. "But the remainder of the time I was with either Senor Rumble, or Senorita Chatfield."

"Yes, of course," said Lombardo. "Pedro is wrong." He waved the pulque man away abruptly, saying sternly, "It is enough, Pedro; you are mistaken about this man." He pointed to me. "Do not make any more mistakes."

"Yes, sir," replied Pedro, springing up from the chair and vanishing in the shadows near the door.

"The quirt," Lombardo said, "I do not understand. Was it the purpose to whip the victim and then kill him? The lashes on the face, Miguel, were they made so recently?" he turned to Doctor Cruz.

"They were made much earlier, Otilio."

"How did he get them? Did the one who gave them to him return, and this time kill him with a knife?"

No one answered the questions. "Is there anyone else among the servants whom you wish to interrogate?" inquired our host.

"No, sir, I am interested now in other things."

"Come this way, then," said Sam Chatfield, leading us from the kitchen.

"I think," began Sam Chatfield hesitantly, "that Senor Lombardo has a few questions to ask."

"Only a very few, ladies and gentlemen," Lombardo said, bowing courteously.

"The Senorita," and his eyes sought out Elsa in the background, "if I may, please; I wish to ask of her a question."

"A thousand pardons, senorita," began Lombardo, yielding to an obvious embarrassment that swept over him. "I ask the question: Have you worn the costume of the China Poblana all evening?"

"Yes, of course," Elsa replied,

somewhat puzzled. "I put it on at dusk."

"Then you cannot be the one," said Lombardo.

Lombardo turned to Alvarez and said in Spanish, "Fetch the sombrero from the room, please." He turned back to Rumble. "In a moment, Senor Rumble, I will show you the sombrero I speak of." Alvarez returned promptly with the black felt sombrero.

"Do you recognize the sombrero, senor?" Lombardo inquired, holding it out to Rumble.

"Sure. It's my hat. A while ago when I was out that way I missed it."

Rogers answered. "We found it in the room where Chesebro was murdered."

A curious expression came over Rumble's face; the dark eyes seemed to grow darker.

As he stood there before us the chief of police conceived an idea; it was first observable in a narrowing of his large dark eyes, a cocking

of his round head. He summoned Alvarez with a lift of his chin and said in Spanish, "The pulque man who is called Pedro; bring him here at once, Luis."

Alvarez soon returned, clutching the frightened Pedro by a thin arm.

"It is lucky for you, Pedro, that you are still here," began Lombardo. "I have more questions to ask you."

"I am here, sir," replied the man, "because I have not yet received the money for my pulque."

Lombardo ignored the frank statement, and requested the man to look about him. "Here are other persons, Pedro," he directed. "Look closely, and tell me if any of these others is the man you saw wearing the sombrero and carrying the whip. Make no mistakes."

Pedro did as he was bidden, but shyly and with evident embarrassment. Dwight Nichols stood up the better to be viewed, and he pulled George Rumble by the sleeve to line him up alongside himself and Reed Barton.

"I see only the back, sir; I do not see the face," he repeated.

Lombardo was patient. He picked up Rumble's black sombrero from a chair where it rested and held it out to Pedro. "Is this the sombrero the man wore?" he asked.

Pedro put his hands behind him and shook his head. "I saw only the back, sir," he repeated monotonously.

Lombardo had an idea. "We will go to the place where you saw the man, Pedro," he announced. "The gentlemen in turn will put on the sombrero, and carry the whip, and you will say which, if any, looks like the man you saw. Where is the whip?"

"There's a whip there on the table under my hat," Elsa remarked casually. "One I've carried with me riding." She indicated a table against the wall near the door. Alvarez went to the table and brought back a quirt I recognized as the one Elsa had used that morning in her savage attack upon Chesebro. Lombardo took it.

"Yours?" he asked, gesturing toward Elsa.

"No; not mine. It belongs here

on the rancho. I found it, when I wanted a whip, on the rack outside where the hats hang."

"Ah, so?" Lombardo turned the quirt about in his hands, examining it. It interested Lombardo who studied it for a moment. Finally and without releasing his hold he held it out toward Pedro. "Is this the whip you saw, Pedro?"

The pulque man took one quick, fascinated glance, then looked away. "I do not know, sir; there was a whip in the hand."

"Come; the gentlemen, please; the ladies, no. Follow me." Lombardo spoke quickly. He led the way toward the sombrero room where the body of Chesebro still lay in its huge mound within the dim pool of candlelight.

"Where were you when you saw the man enter the room?" Lombardo demanded.

"I am here, sir," he answered, pointing with a trembling finger to a tall piece of furniture against the wall. "I hear the man coming, and I feel I have trespassed where I should not go. So I conceal myself there and wait for him to pass."

"Very well, Pedro; you stand there now, and one of the gentlemen will put on the sombrero and carry the whip and walk past you."

"I did not see the face, sir; I see only the back," the pulque man reminded him as he took his station.

"Now, which of you will be the first?" Lombardo asked, ignoring the man's remark.

Reed Barton stepped forward, still dressed in the costume of the Charro, except for his own sombrero which he had left among the others on the rack near the front door.

"Ah, so? Thank you, sir," Lombardo gave him Rumble's hat, which Reed set atop his head, greatly increasing the height of his tall figure.

"Now the whip," said Lombardo, and that was given him. "And now, Pedro, the gentleman comes from this direction and walks to the door, opens it and enters, is it not so?"

"Yes, sir."

Reed withdrew and began a slow but steady walk down the dim passageway to the door behind which lay the body of the murdered man. I drew back against the wall beside Rogers, whose body was crowded close against mine. I felt a tenseness in his muscles and realized with what extraordinary alertness his eyes followed the tall figure of Reed Barton as he re-enacted the dread prologue to the death of Chesebro. Slowly, inevitably, he approached the door to the room. Rogers had become so intent upon this re-enactment that he was drawn a few steps after him, studying the figure, his every action and movement. As Reed touched the door-knob, when we all were intent upon this last act before we should turn to demand of the pulque man his verdict, there was a sudden rustling sound behind us. It was followed by a rapid shuffle of feet in loose guaraches, and before our astonished gaze as we turned, Pedro, the pulque man, was running away as fast as his thin legs could carry him.

Nor did we find him later that night after the police had taken their departure, their questions exhausted, their plan of re-enactment of the murder scene abruptly ended by the departure of Pedro, although, directed by Sam Chatfield, we searched diligently. There was an old moon. The others at last had scattered. Only Huntoon Rogers and I lingered in the patio.

"What do you make of it, Hunt?" I inquired, meaning the night's tragic happening and the comic opera exit of the star witness. He was slow to reply. At last he said:

"Did you see the whip at any time during Reed's walk down the dim passageway? He carried it in his hand, you know."

"I saw him take the whip."

"Does that not strike you as interesting?"

"It means much, I think; it explains what has happened. In the kitchen when Pedro described the appearance of Chesebro's murderer, he put the whip in his hand. Pedro took his stand at the spot where he says he observed the death march, so to speak. But the whip is not visible carried quietly at the side."

"Therefore, Barry, it is simple to reason that Pedro either lied when he said the man carried a whip, or he saw him elsewhere in the house at a time and place where the whip was plainly visible."

We sat together in the patio turning over the possibilities that lay close to the fact, the corollaries that might flow from it. Did Pedro, therefore, also hold the secret of that other murder far to the north of us in California and distant now in time by more than a year?

(TO BE CONTINUED)

"But what do you know about the death of the gentleman in the big room?"

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