

HEART OF THE WORLD.

BY H. RIDER HAGGARD

A Strange Story, Taken From a Manuscript Bequeathed by an Old Mexican Indian to His Friend and Comrade, an Englishman Named Jones.

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shadow.
Now we crept forward and down the stair. At the foot of it was a little door, which, as we had hoped, stood ajar. For a moment we consulted together, then we crawled forward through the gloom toward the ring of light about the altar. Now Jose had the heated sword in his hand.

"Look up, my dear, look up," he said to the girl, patting her on the cheek. "I am about to baptize your excellent father according to the rites of the Christian religion by marking him with a cross upon the forehead," and he advanced the point of the sword toward the Indian's face.

At that instance Molas pinned him from behind causing him to drop the weapon, while I did the same office by Don Pedro, holding him so that, struggling as he might, he could not stir.

"Make a sound either of you and you are dead," said the senior, picking up the machete and placing the hot point of it against Jose's breast, where it slowly burned its way through his clothes.

"What are we to do with these men?" he asked.

"Kill them as they would have killed us," answered Molas; "or, if you fear the task, cut loose the old man yonder and let him avenge his and his daughter's wrongs."

"What say you, Ignatio?"

"I seek no man's blood, but for our own safety it is well that these wretches should die. Away with them!"

Now Don Pedro began to beat inarticulately in his terror, and that hero, Jose, burst into tears and pleaded for his life, writhing with pain the while, for the point of the sword scorched him.

"You are an English gentleman," he groaned; "you cannot butcher a helpless man as though he were an ox."

"As you tried to butcher us in the chamber yonder, us who saved your life," answered the senior. "You are right. I cannot do it, because, as you say, I am a gentleman, Molas, loose this dog, and if he tries to run put a knife through him. Jose Moreno, you have a sword by your side, and I have one in my hand; I will not murder you, but we have a quarrel and we will settle it here now."

"You are mad, senior," I said, "to risk your life thus. I myself will kill him rather than it should be so."

"Will you fight if I loose you, Jose Moreno?" he said, making me no answer, "or will you be killed where you stand?"

"I will fight," he replied.

"Good. Let him free, Molas, and be ready with your knife."

"I command you," I began, but already the man was loose and the senior stood waiting for him, his back to the door and the Indian machete handled with the golden woman in his hand.

From the moment that I saw them fronting each other, my fears for the issue vanished. Victory was written on the calm features of the senior, while the face of Jose told only of baffled fury struggling with bottomless despair.

Still it was he who struck first, for, stepping forward, he aimed a desperate blow at the senior's head, who, springing aside, avoided it, and in return ran him through the left arm. With a cry of pain, the Mexican sprang back, followed by the senior, at whom he cut from time to time, but without result, for every blow was parried.

Now they were within the altar rails, and now his back was against one of the carved pillars of sapote wood, that to which the girl was tied.

Then the end came, for the senior, who was watching his chance, drew suddenly within reach, only to step back so that the furious blow aimed at his head struck with a ringing sound upon the marble floor. Before Don Jose could lift the sword again, the senior thrust with all his strength and his machete pierced the Mexican through the heart.

And now I must tell of my own folly that went near to bringing us all to death. You will remember that I was holding Don Pedro, and in my joy and agitation I slackened my grip, so that with a sudden twist he was able to tear himself from my hands, and in the twinkling of an eye was gone.

I bounded after him, but too late, for as I reached the door it slammed in my face, nor could I open it, for on the chapel side was neither key nor handle.

"Fly," I cried, rushing back to the altar; "he has escaped, and will presently be here with the rest."

The senior had seen, and already was engaged in severing with his sword the rope that bound the girl, while Molas cut loose her father. Now I leaped upon the altar, and springing at the stonework of the broken window, made shift to pull myself up with the help of Molas pushing from below. Seated upon the window ledge I leaned down, and, catching the Indian Zibalbay by the wrists, with great efforts I dragged him to me and bade him drop without fear to the ground, which was not more than ten feet below us. Next came his laughter, then the senior, and last of all Molas, so that within three minutes from the escape of Don Pedro we stood unhurt on the outside the chapel among the bushes of a garden.

"Where to now?" I said, for the place was strange to me.

The girl Maya looked round her, then she glanced up at the heavens.

"Follow me," she said, "I know a way," and started down the garden at a run.

Presently we came to a wall the height of a man, beyond which was a thick hedge of aloes which we forced

our way through and found ourselves in a milpa, or cornfield. Here the girl stopped, and again searched the stars, and at that moment we heard sounds of shouting, and, looking back, saw lights moving to and fro in the hacienda.

"We must go forward or perish," I said; "Don Pedro has aroused his men."

Then she dashed into the milpa, and we followed her, till at length we were clear of the cultivated land and standing on the borders of the forest.

"Halt!" I said; "where do we run to? The road runs to the right, and by following it we may reach a town."

"To be arrested as murderers," broke in the senior. "You forget that Jose Moreno is dead at my hands, and his father will swear our lives away, or that at the best we shall be thrown into prison. No, no, we must hide in the bush."

"Sirs," said the old Indian, speaking for the first time, "I know a secret place in the forest, an ancient and ruined building, where we may take refuge for a while if we can reach it. But first I ask, who are you?"

"You should know me, Zibalbay," said Molas, "seeing that I am the messenger whom you sent to search for him that you desired to find, the lord and keeper of the heart," and he pointed to me.

"Are you that man?" asked the Indian.

"I am," I answered, "and I have suffered much to find you, but now is no time to talk; guide us to this hiding place of yours, for our danger is great."

Then once more the girl took the lead, and we plunged forward into the forest, often stumbling and falling in the darkness, till the dawn broke in the east and the shoutings of our pursuers died away.

CHAPTER X. HOW MOLAS DIED.

For some few minutes we rested to recover our breath, then we started forward again. In front went the girl, Maya, our guide, whom the senior led by the hand, while behind followed Zibalbay, supported by Molas and myself. At first these two had run as quickly as the rest of us, but now all the fatigues and terrors that they had undergone took hold of them, so that from time to time they were forced to stop and rest, which is little to be wondered at, seeing that for five days they had eaten no solid food, for it was Don Pedro's purpose, to starve their secret out of them.

Slowly and with much toil we forced a path through the tropical forests.

This forest that seemed so destitute of life was peopled by millions of insects, all of them venomous. Garrapatas, tiny gray flies, wood wasps, and ants black and red, tormented us with their bites and stings, till we groaned aloud in our misery, then remembering our danger pushed on again.

Now the old Indian, Zibalbay, who was crouched upon the ground beside us, spoke for the first time, saying:

"Friends, why do you not fly? Doubtless you can find a path down the further side of the pyramid, and in the forest you may hide from these men."

"It is too late to talk of flight," said Molas, "for look; they are coming up the stair, the eight of them, with Don Pedro and the American at their head."

I looked; it was true. Already they had climbed half the steps of the first flight.

"Oh, for some rifles!" groaned the senior.

"It is useless to cry for what we have not," I answered.

"God can help us if He wishes, and if He does not we must bow to His will." Then there was a silence, broken only by the voice of Zibalbay, who, standing behind us, lifted his hands to heaven and prayed aloud to his gods to bring a vengeance upon our foes.

Now we could see through the trees and bushes that the men were beginning to climb the second flight.

"Come, let us do something," said the senior, and, running to the pile of stones which we had prepared, he called to us to roll the heaviest upon the enemy. This we did, but without effect, for the tree trunks turned the stones; moreover, those against whom they were directed, taking cover at the sides of the stairway, opened so sharp a fire on us with their rifles that in a few minutes we were driven from the piles of stones and forced to retreat behind the shelter of the arch.

Now they came on again, till presently they reached the foot of the third flight and paused to take breath. Then it was that Molas, seizing one of the Indian blowpipes, ran out onto the terrace followed by the senior—though why the senior went I do not know, for he could not use the weapon. Before the men below were aware of their presence Molas had set the blowpipe to his lips and discharged the poisoned dart among them. It struck Don Smith, the American, full in the throat. Watching around the corner of the arch I saw him lift his hand to pull it out, then of a sudden he fell to the ground, and at that instant a storm of bullets swept through the archway aimed at Molas and the senior as they fled back to shelter. I saw Molas fall and the senior stop to lift him to his feet, and as he was in the very act a patch of red appeared upon his face. Another moment they were back under cover.

"Are you hurt?" I asked the senior.

"No, no," he answered, "my face was grazed by a bullet, that was all. Look to Molas; he is shot in the side."

"Leave me," said Molas; "it is nothing."

Then we were silent, only Maya sobbed a little as she strove to staunch

PRESS CLIPPINGS.

About the Bohemia Nugget and its Proprietors.

C. J. Howard, of Eugene, has purchased the Cottage Grove Messenger, of Horace Mann, and will conduct the same. Mr. Howard is a thorough newspaper man, and will doubtless give the people of Cottage Grove a good paper.—Santiam News.

This week a new paper will be issued at Cottage Grove. It will be known as the Bohemia Nugget. The editor in his prospectus, claims to be good natured, peaceful and impervious to insult. These accomplishments show the ear marks of experience as a country editor.—Drain Watchman.

The Cottage Grove Messenger has changed hands, Horace Mann retiring and C. J. Howard becoming proprietor and editor. Announcements indicate that the name is to be changed to the Bohemia Nugget. We wish the Nugget prosperity.—Monitor-Miner.

Horace Mann has sold the Cottage Grove Messenger to C. J. Howard, of Eugene. Jack is a first class newspaper man—a practical printer, and an able writer. The Guard again welcomes him to the active newspaper field, and we assure the people of South Lane that he will be an able representative of their rights. When he takes active control of the paper, next week, he intends obliterating the present name of the paper and will call it the Bohemia Nugget. He is entitled to a good patronage, and will render good service for every dollar received. This is one of his first items; "The editor of the new paper has taken up his abode with his mother and sister in the Huston house, and now all the neighbors are talking about locking up their chicken houses and woodsheds."

Mr. C. J. Howard, of this city, has purchased the Cottage Grove Messenger from Horace W. Mann, and will take charge of the paper in time to get out the next issue. Mr. Howard has been in the employ of the Register for the past year, serving first as compositor and for several months past as reporter and solicitor. He is a good all-around newspaper man and a good rustler, and will give the people of Cottage Grove a live republican newspaper, which is what they have wanted and needed for some time. Cottage Grove is one of the most prosperous towns in the valley and has great possibilities for future development and growth. We wish Mr. Howard all success in his undertaking, and congratulate the people of Cottage Grove on securing a good republican newspaper, the Messenger heretofore been of democratic principle. Miss Ethel Cottle, of this city, who has been employed almost constantly in this office for the past three or four years, as compositor, will accompany her brother to Cottage Grove and assist in the mechanical work of the paper.—Eugene Register.

We are in receipt of volume 1, No. 1, of the Bohemia Nugget, published at Cottage Grove. It is an ably edited and newsy sheet and will be appreciated by the people of Cottage Grove and vicinity. Here's success to you, Nugget.—Drain Watchman.

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SUMMONS.

J. P. Currie, Plaintiff,
James E. Thorp, Minnie
M. Thorp and J. W.
Gowdy, administrators
of the estate of E. P.
Thorp, deceased, vs.
To James E. Thorp, Minnie M. Thorp and
J. W. Gowdy, administrators of the estate of E. P.
Thorp, deceased, defendants above named:

In the Name of the State of Oregon, you are hereby required to appear and answer the complaint filed against you in the above entitled suit by the first day of the next term of the above entitled Court following the expiration of the time prescribed in the order of publication of this summons, which first day will be on the 6th day of March, 1901, and if you fail to so appear and answer, for want hereof, plaintiff will apply to said Court for the relief demanded in his complaint, to wit: For the foreclosure of a certain mortgage created and delivered by E. P. Thorp to J. E. Gowdy on the 10th day of April, 1891, to secure the payment of a certain promissory note given by said E. P. Thorp to said J. W. Gowdy for \$400.00 due April 14, 1895, with interest thereon at the rate of 10 per cent per annum from maturity until paid, which said mortgage conveyed to said J. W. Gowdy for that purpose the following described real property, to-wit: Lot 1 and the east half of lot 2 in Block 2 in Long and Ainslie's Addition to Cottage Grove in Lane County, Oregon, which said mortgage and note were on the 13th day of January, 1891, assigned to this plaintiff. And for a decree barring and foreclosing you and each of you from any and all right, title or interest, as heirs at law of said E. P. Thorp, in and to said real property and every part thereof. This summons is published by order of the Hon. J. W. Hamilton, Judge of the above entitled Court, made January 19th, 1900.

J. E. YETTS,
Atty. for Plaintiff.

NOTICE OF FORFEITURE.

Cottage Grove, Lane County, Oregon.
January 11, 1899.

To ALEX COSTER:—

You are hereby notified that we have expended at least \$200, in work and labor on each of the two mining claims known and recorded in the Mining Records of the Bohemia Mining District in Lane county, Oregon, as the "Dum Lamond" and "Opportunity" mining claims, as will appear by certificate filed January 13, 1899 in the office of the County Clerk in said Lane county, in order to hold said premises under the provisions of section 2324 Revised Statutes of the United States, being the amount required to hold the said two claims for the years 1897 and 1898, respectively, and if within ninety days after the completion of the publication of this notice, you fail, neglect or refuse to contribute your portion of said expenditure as a co-owner, your interest in the said claims will become the property of the subscribers, under said section 2324.

J. H. WHITE.

A. M. White.

Active Solicitors Wanted Everywhere

For "The Story of the Philippines" by Murat Halstead, commissioned by the Government as Official Historian of the War Department. The book was written in army camps at San Francisco, on the Pacific with General Merritt, in the hospital at Honolulu, in Hong Kong, in the American trenches at Manila, in the insurgent camp with Aguinaldo, on the deck of the Olympia with Dewey, and in the roar of the battle at the fall of Manila. Bonanza for agents. Brimful of original pictures taken by government photographers on the spot. Large book; low prices. Big profits. Freight paid. Credit given. Drop all trashy unofficial war books. Outfit free. Address, F. T. Barber, Sec'y., Star Insurance Bldg., Chicago.

For Sale.

One half interest in the Horse Shoe mine in the Bohemia gold mining district. For terms and particulars call on, or address, O. H. WILLARD, Cottage Grove, Or.

For Sale or Trade.

120 acres of land; farm house, barn and other out buildings, situated 15 miles west of Eugene. Good out range. Will trade for property in Cottage Grove. For further particulars, address S. R. JENKINS, Eugene, Ore.