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WANTED—Cheap horses for fox farm. Telephone Beaverton 9855.

## HIS CODE OF HONOR

Weekly Short Story

I was born in Cadiz, Spain. My father was a sea captain on a transatlantic liner and it was his ardent wish that I follow his footsteps. To his utter dismay he soon learned that everything connected with his calling inspired me with horror. I hated the sea. I was afraid of it. Despot though he was in his own home, he could do nothing about it.

Father was a practical man. He permitted me to dabble in art, but he insisted that I learn the English language. "A man is not educated without knowing the English language."

During his stay at home between trips, he would talk to me about America. For years I cherished the wish of coming to America. When I was nineteen my wish was to come true. Father was not opposed to the idea. So one day he announced that he would take me along with him to New York.

And so I came to this country, on father's liner, with a dream in my heart.

I was introduced to Mr. Wallis, the superintendent of Fashions. He turned to my father "Captain I can give your son a position. Of course I could not use him in the art department certainly not for the present. I want him to learn something of the rudiments of the business. And he would have to start at the bottom—as we do here in America."

"Excellent," beamed father. My salary was to be fourteen dollars a week as Mr. Wallis informed me.

"Well Ramon, you have what you wanted. Now don't make a mess of your life," were father's parting words.

I had determined not to. Next morning Mr. Wallis took me in to the book-binding department where they assembled the fashion books "This is Ramon Vilas," he introduced me to the forelady a middle-aged, efficient woman. "He'll work here."

I was uncomfortable—as she scrutinized my slim frame. In a few brisk words she gave me my instructions. I was to load the magazines on a small hand truck and wheel it in to the shipping department. The work was not very hard except that it was tedious.

### QUICK PROMOTION

Once during lunch hour I was sitting at my desk and amusing myself with drawing a figure of a dancing girl from my memory I tried especially to embody the

dashing almost mad quality of a girl flinging herself into the movement of the dance, vibrating and alert. For some reason I felt uneasy as if someone were standing behind me. I turned around.

I saw a tall, slim figure of a girl almost of my own height, watching my work with interest.

The girl pursed her lips, as if hesitating. The little turquoise chips in her eyes grew very blue. Finally she took the plunge.

"I am Hazel Rogers, of the art department. By accident I have noticed you here—sketching. This work is amazing."

I was so embarrassed that I hardly knew what to answer. "I'm just doing that for my amusement," I managed to say.

Again she hesitated. "Could I have this?" she asked.

"Certainly," I assured her hastily "I really don't mind it—I mean you could have it—if you care."

It seemed to me that I hardly had time to think over the matter, when I was summoned to the private office of Mrs. Burton. Mr. Wallis himself, came over to fetch me. Of course, I had already learned that Mrs. Burton was the majority stockholder of the corporation and the most influential person in the concern. I was ushered into a well equipped but simple office and there confronted the sovereign of the Fashions Company. She was a tall woman, with a high-bridged nose, and her almost Indian features were admirably set off by her graying hair. Miss Rogers, looking much smaller in her presence was smiling at me encouragingly.

"How I would like to draw these two," I thought. "One middle-aged healthy and robust, the other delicate—"

I was startled in my reverie "You're Ramon Vilas," came a brusque commanding voice. Mrs. Burton was speaking.

I bowed politely. It was the remnant of my European training that I could never quite forget. "Yes Madam."

"You're transferred to the Art Department. Miss Rogers here," she snapped, "is the head of the department. You'll take your instruction from her, and she'll give you the first lesson in designing."

I bowed again. "Your salary, continued Mrs. Burton "will start with twenty dollars a week. I hope—I do hope you'll do your utmost with your opportunity. We like to encourage people who work here." During the next few months I learned a great deal from the head

of the art Department. I knew nothing about designing at first. As her suggestions came to me I was able to put them on paper.

Then came an incident that left a profound impression on me. I was twenty-one years old at the time and still very much younger than the average American of that age.

I had no warning of what was about to happen when Mrs. Burton entered with a tall, blond, statuesque girl following her. She took off her cloak and stood in full view of the entire department. She was very scantily dressed. Miss Burton and Miss Rogers were pinning a paper pattern around her experimenting with various designs.

"Mr. Vilas, will you please make a hasty sketch?" came Mrs. Burton's commanding voice. I looked up and my heart froze.

"Aren't you well Mr. Vilas?" she inquired.

"I have a slight headache and can't concentrate," I lied.

"You'd better take a walk," she suggested. "Miss Rogers will make the sketch."

I took my hat from the rack and walked out without looking at Hazel. Did she know the cause of it? Did she realize the shock I had received? The tumult in my heart? I wondered.

At five o'clock as she was ready to leave trim in her tailor-made coat, I approached her desk.

"May I have the honor to accompany you home?" I inquired very seriously.

There was a twinkle in her eyes. Now I know that the formality of my question made her smile.

"Certainly," she replied. "I live on Seventy-third Street. You may walk home with me."

Our office was on Thirty-third Street. "I'll be delighted." We spent a charming evening in her small home which consisted of a large living-room, a bedroom and a kitchen. Her mother a frail, lovely little woman, greeted me cordially.

She shook hands vigorously. "You'll stay for dinner, Ramon," was her first remark. "I've heard a great deal about you. Hazel thinks you're a great artist and I'm sure she's right."

It was an unforgettable evening. I told them of my early life in Spain. Accidentally Mrs. Rogers let out Hazel's age. She was only a week older than I was. We laughed a great deal over the incident.

### JOY AND DESPAIR

As the months passed by, our friendship ripened. We met almost every evening. We went to the museum together, studying the great masterpieces. At this stage, though Hazel would create the designs in her mind and I would recreate them on paper. The rest of the staff would also consult me.

Mr. Wallis informed us that our fashions were becoming better known and business in the last few months had been on the increase. That evening we held a celebration at Hazel's home. For some reason I was more solemn than usual. As we sat down to dinner I knew

that the hour had come. I stood up and without any preparation I addressed Mrs. Rogers.

"I have the honor to request you for the hand of your daughter."

The words were out. The dear old lady looked puzzled. "My boy have you spoken to Hazel about it?" she asked in bewilderment.

Hazel sat there quietly, as if she had not heard me. Slowly, to my consternation, I saw tears gather in her eyes. But they were just tears of summer rain—for like a rainbow a smile illuminated her face. She stood up and made a funny little bow.

"And I have the honor to accept you," she laughed.

The first cloud on our horizon appeared on account of Di Roma, an Italian, who was in charge of the embroidery department. He had a separate office and often I had to consult him in reference to our work. He was a man of thirty and I have always disliked him heartily. More than once I found him bending over some girl with a leering look in his eyes that chilled me to the bone.

In the spring, we were married. Both of us were twenty-two years of age. Mrs. Rogers left for a Western city to keep house for her son, who was a mining engineer. She would not stay with us, regardless of our entreaties.

One evening I came home rather late from the office. I had had considerable difficulty with a design and wanted to talk things over with Hazel. As I opened the door and entered the hallway I heard a man's voice in the adjoining room. Unconsciously I stiffened with displeasure. I imagined my surprise as I saw Di Roma in the room and my wife sitting close to him. In fact, he sat on the arm of her chair in an intimate attitude looking over her shoulder at some pictures.

Di Roma rose as if to greet me. As he put forward his hand, I pushed it violently away. I could not control my feelings. In fact I saw no reason for trying to control them.

"Get out of my house instantly!" I shouted.

"Very well," said Hazel. "I am going with you, Mr. Di Roma."

"Get out!" I yelled. "The two of you Quick, before I kill you!" And then to my wife: "Remember, I'll not take you back if you some crawling on your knees!"

I hate to dwell upon the next few months. I tried to forget my sorrow in my work, but I was unable to concentrate. I became listless.

I thought of giving up my position and going back to Spain. I was well aware that I could not hold the job much longer.

One evening, when the idea was permanently settled in my brain, I had a caller at home.

I ushered the lady in and awaited her pleasure. She was very young with dark hair small and vivacious. "I am Mrs. Di Roma," she said quickly. "You must listen to what I have to say. Hazel and I have been friends for a great many years and—"

At this I stood up. "Madam," I interrupted her. "I do not care to discuss these things with you."

(Continued on Last Page)

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