



# CARMEN OF THE RANCHO

By FRANK H. SPEARMAN

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## SYNOPSIS

Don Alfredo, wealthy, Spanish owner of a Southern California rancho, refuses to heed several warnings of a raid by a band of outlaw, Sierra Indians. One day after he has finally decided to seek the protection of the nearby mission for his wife and family, the Indians strike. Don Alfredo is killed and his two young daughters are torn from the arms of the family's faithful maid, Monica, and are carried away to the hills. Padre Pasqual, missionary friend of the family, arrives at the ruins of the rancho.

## CHAPTER II—Continued

"Padre, first make sure bad Indians are gone. They might kill you," cautioned Diego.

"No, no," exclaimed the padre, as near impatience as he ever allowed himself to stray. "That is nothing, nothing!"

"They might kill me, Padre," suggested Diego darkly.

As the wind, blowing in a gust, dies suddenly into calm, the mission veteran changed. "True, Diego," he murmured, gently reproachful of himself. "You might be in danger. Remain here, hidden in the wheat. I will go forward and report if there is danger."

Both men were striving for their own ends: the padre to keep his devoted servant from harm, Diego to keep his infirm master from harm.

"Tell me, Padre," said the padre, agitated, "can you see anyone?"

"I see a woman and a boy. They are fighting. She holds him and beats him with a stick."

"It is Monica," said Diego in his staccato accents. "Now the boy gets loose. He is running. She chases. He is running into the wheat to hide. Slower, Padre. Have care! You will fall!"

Protests were lost on the aged man. With his hands outstretched in eager appeal as he stumbled on he sought to stay the angry Monica. She was already in the tall wheat, furiously pursuing her escaping victim. The two were running down the trail through the grain which must soon bring them into the padre's arms when his shout reached the ears of both pursued and pursuer.

The boy, seeing the advancing priest, halted, dumfounded. But only for an instant—then, tearing into the tall grain with the swiftness of a rabbit, he could only be followed with the eye as the swaying wheat heads told of his flight.

Monica dashed ahead. Even the sight of the padre did not check her hysteria. "Diego!" she cried loudly to the padre's neophyte. "After him! Do not let him go!"

Diego stared but made no move. He looked at the rapid parting of the grain heads that marked the boy's race to escape; but most of all he stared at the strange Monica in front of him. Her scant gown was in rags. Her features were distorted with grief and rage. Her eyes, strained and tear stained, bulged in their sockets, and still she shouted at Diego in the Indian tongue as she pointed after the fleeing boy.

"Woman!" exclaimed Padre Pasqual. "Woman!" he repeated in sterner command, for she scarcely heeded him. "What are you doing? Who are you?"

The half-crazed creature suddenly looked at him. The stick dropped from her grasp. She clasped both hands to her haggard face and with a dreadful cry threw herself prostrate on the ground at the padre's feet.

"Who—who," gasped the sorely bewildered priest, "are you?"

"Padre," said the stolid Diego collectedly, "do you not know? It is Monica."

"Impossible!" exclaimed the padre. "Monica whom I have known for so many years—whom I baptized! Aid her, Diego. Rise, my poor child. Rise! Speak!"

"Monica!" he exclaimed as Diego helped the sobbing woman to her uncertain feet. "Monica! What is the meaning of this? What is the meaning of this? Where are your master and mistress?"

Monica, lifting again to her trembling knees, lifted her face as she caught at his right hand. "Woe is me, Padre! My master cruelly slain! My mistress shamed unto death. Carmelita, Terecita, stolen by the wicked Indians. Only Alfredo left. Woe to Los Alamos!"

Stunned, the missionary and the neophyte listened to the horrible recital of the murders of the day before.

Padre Pasqual listened to the end. He stood infirmly, leaning again on his staff with heart and mind lifted to heaven, poured out his grief in prayer to his Maker.

The awesome spectacle of the venerable man, heart-broken but silent, in petition before his God steadied Monica.

"At last," she said, gasping with emotion, "the soldiers came. Alfredo brought them. The house is burned; the quarters and the granary are burned. They rode away to pursue the savages; Alfredo rode with them. Oh, Padre, he is so brave, the poor boy. He worshiped his mother and his little sisters. What—what will become of them? The soldiers followed the trail far into the hills, but in the mountains the Indians fought and wounded so many soldiers with their arrows, the soldiers had to come back. They buried the poor vaqueros on the hill and carried the body of Don Alfredo

to the presidio. And my dear mistress, she is lost, lost. And my lovely, lovely children! My Carmelita lost forever!"

"And Dona Juana, where is she now?" asked the padre patiently.

"In the home of her sister, Dona Teresa, at the presidio. I walked all the way back here today to find, if possible, some garments for my unhappy mistress."

"And had Don Alfredo no warning of this attack?" pursued the padre.

Monica almost shrieked as she clasped her hands. "Warning upon warning, Don Alfredo had! For a week I warned him. The cook told me the attack would come. I begged my master to flee with the family to the presidio. He only laughed. 'Have I not had for a time the boy of the chief Sobriano here in my household?' he would say to me. 'Sobriano will control the young men. He will not allow them to attack us. We are as safe as Los Alamos, Monica, as they are at the presidio.'"

"Only Sunday night the cook said to me: 'Tomorrow they come!' I told Don Alfredo. The Senora begged him to heed the warnings. He was impatient but he yielded. 'Tomorrow morning, then, we will go, querida mia,' he told her. And then—next morning when he went to get the horses they swept down on us. Woe to Los Alamos!"

Diego asked a question—his first—in the Indian tongue. Monica answered in Spanish. "It was that boy," she cried, "that Indian fiend, Yosco! Still my master would have escaped with his life but for him. When Don Alfredo and the two vaqueros saw the Indians come they fled to the house for firearms. Yosco, accursed boy, barred the front door against them! They could not get into the house; they were slaughtered, all three, on the portico before the barred door—barred by this young fiend. And this morning, back he came to steal the silver in the house. I caught him. It is he that I was beating, and now he has escaped."

The three moved slowly on through the wheat toward the rancho house.

## CHAPTER III

Too cold and too hungry to sleep, Bowie sat looking into his dying campfire, speculating on what still might be ahead of him and his companions. His thoughts reverted less willingly to what he had left behind: the acute agony of thirst, the steady gnawing of hunger, the fendish heat of the desert, the killing of the last pony for food.

But at least the horror of this was behind him. The mountains could not be worse; they might be better.

The sky was overcast and the night air, drifting silently down from the higher Sierras, chilled him to the bone. On the other side of the campfire embers, stretched asleep on the rocky ground, lay a lanky Missourian, the scout, Ben Pardaloe, with his feet so close to the fire that it seemed as if they might blaze up any minute. His sleep was fitful, like that of a famished man, unlike his normal sleep with which Bowie, after three weeks of hard camp life, had grown too familiar.

Pardaloe, tall and gaunt, twisted and turned, drew up his legs and thrust them desperately out again. From his open mouth there issued sighs and burlles. Even the familiar snore was lacking; Ben was too weak to snore.

The third man, Bob Simms, a half-breed Creek Indian, lay sleeping more quietly a little apart from the restless scout—no, perhaps, more inured to hunger and hardship than his fellow adventurers but certainly more stoical in endurance.

Hunger and the piercing night air presently roused Bowie from a troubled sleep. He started off to find kindling chips.

Later, while he was stumbling along in the faint light of dawn, feeling here and there as his feet kicked into fragments of bark and rotten branches fallen from trees, he became aware of an object distinctly silhouetted against the eastern horizon. Noiselessly he sank flat to the ground to look and listen. He thought the thing might be alive. Some moments passed before he could determine. Luckily he had it between him and the light. Patience and the rapidly growing dawn rewarded his vision. He was able to see the object more clearly. Nor was he long in identifying with it a pair of antlers. Caution was necessary. The adventurers were starved men. They had not tasted meat for ten days nor food for more than three days; that buck meant relief from hunger pangs.

He crept stealthily back to camp, if such their halting place for the night might be called. Since sleep is the only substitute for food and drink his companions were still asleep. He shook the scout carefully and with a cautioning "Hist!" The suppressed sound woke the Indian also. Ben Pardaloe stirred. "Wake up, Ben," whispered Bowie. "A buck. Wake up, Simmie," he added to the Creek, "a buck."

Not a word answered him; no further word was needed. The two men were on their feet together. They picked up their cold rifles. "Which way?" snorted Pardaloe, peering about.

"To the east in the chaparral,

likely hiding from panthers. Don't waste ammunition. We've none to spare."

"All right, Simmie," murmured Pardaloe, addressing the Creek by his nickname, "you stalk him."

Minute after minute passed, with Bowie and the scout anxiously waiting. The mere prospect of food had so excited the dormant salivary glands of the hungry men that each minute after the first was almost torture. Yet both knew no more could be done than the Indian would do. If the scout Pardaloe tried to help the stalk he might only spoil things. They must wait and lick their hopeful chops.

"What's keeping him half an hour like this?" grumbled Pardaloe.

"Half an hour nothing, Ben. Patience," counseled Bowie.

The words had barely left his lips when they heard the distant crack of a rifle.

In a moment both men were running in the direction from which the report had come.

It was some job to keep up with Pardaloe's long legs. He was as graceful as a camel, but the ground he could cover in an emergency was a caution. When, by dint of calling and answering, two hungry men found the Indian, he was actively cutting up the handsome buck.

The scout needed no instructions. He put down his rifle and Bowie got his flint and tinder ready.

"No, I don't feel like traveling today. Been traveling for three weeks now. Today I put away for eatin'. What say, Injun?"

Pardaloe spoke after the first hour of a repast that promised to last

all day. "I'll ask you one question, Henry," continued Pardaloe after getting no response from Simmie, and speaking now to Bowie. "Be we or be'n we in Californy?"

Bowie was disposing of a venison shank. "Ben," he said reassuringly, "we 'be.' Where did you think you 'be'?"

Pardaloe, gnawing at what was left on the bone of his venison saddle, spoke at ease. "Well, up to about a hour ago I thought I was in hell. But I guess this must be Californy. Things seem to be comin' our way since Simmie brought down this deer. Now, boys," he added precatorily, "hang on to every scrap of this meat—every scrap; might not sight another for a week. Mountains is big around here, they sure are. The highest is behind us. And I say, now while our stomachs is full, push on till we get down where there's plenty of game. We're started downhill but we're too high yet by near a mile, and going downhill a mile is a long way unless you fall down."

Pardaloe stretched out on the ground. "If I had a pipe of tobacco I'd call this a fair enough country. But there's too much snow on them high fellers—nights are too blamed cold. Well, Henry"—so the scout addressed Bowie—"if you say so, it's go; but give me one more hour at this deer—then I'll make a start."

Lazily, but with a more hopeful view of life, the little party of Texans made their way down the western slope of the Sierras. The difference between empty stomachs and full stomachs cheered them on their way, and the substantial remains of their feast they carried in sacks, crudely skewered from the buck's hide.

It was a rough and forbidding terrain they were following. "Ain't itter hide nor hair of a livin' critter all day," Ben rambled on as the sun sank in the west. "Well, we chewed dry leather three days after we finished your pony, Henry," he said to Bowie. "Guess fresh deer hide will keep us going. Why ain't this a good place to camp for the night, right here? What say, Henry? Here's water handy."

Bowie was willing to camp, and the peaceful Simmie never interposed objection on a minor point.

The spot they had reached was close to the brink of a long ledge that broke away below them into an open flat. A mountain brook gurgled hard by. They built a fire, laved, drank, and opened their re-

quires of raw venison. As they sat peacefully around their frugal fire they mourned for the tobacco they had squandered in more prosperous days.

Deprived of this, their only consolation, the three indulged in a Barmecide feast of the longed-for weed. The scout desecrated on the beauties of well-cured Kentucky leaf crushed in the pipe; Simmie spoke up modestly for willow Killickinnie; Bowie thought just one cigar—only one—would make him perfectly happy. It was while this futile discussion was going on that Simmie, lying, like his companions, on his back, pricked up his ears. Next he sat up and began to look around.

"What's a matter, Injun?" asked Pardaloe indolently.

"What's that noise?" asked the half-breed in turn.

"You tell," retorted the scout. Bowie, lost in thought, only heard the questions and listened for sounds. Neither of the whites heard anything, but as the Indian walked quietly toward the edge of the long ledge both men sat up. Simmie, behind a pine tree, looked down the great canyon and into the west. His instinct was not at fault. He beckoned cautiously to his companions. When they joined him, he whispered to Pardaloe to scatter the embers of the fire, come back and lie down.

Peering together from this partial cover, the Texan could make out at a considerable distance below a straggling procession of men on ponies, winding their way up the long canyon grade. Reaching a wide-open space after some further travel, the procession broke and its horsemen made ready for a halt. For a long time the hidden men watched the scene with rapt attention, speaking in whispers.

"Injuns," said Pardaloe at length. After a further pause Bowie turned to crawl back from the brink of the ledge, signaling to his men to follow. Reaching a point where they could speak more freely, the talk began. Bowie spoke first.

"Indians, sure enough."

"And a bunch of 'em," added the scout.

"What do you make of 'em, Simmie?" The question was addressed to the Creek.

"I'd have to get closer to make things out. Looks to me like a raiding party, maybe heading for their mountain hide-out."

"What makes you think it's a raiding party?" asked Bowie.

"Most of 'em don't know how to handle their ponies. Looks as if they've been run off, eh, Ben? And no squaws as far as I can see. Some of them are carrying loot," he added. "You can see them unloading stuff. And there was some mix-up at the front when they halted."

"All right, what we going to do?" asked Pardaloe, appealing to Bowie.

"Looks as if they're heading for us, doesn't it?" returned Bowie. "If they keep on up the canyon they're bound to run foul of us. If we turn back we've got a good ten miles of a climb to get away from them. We never could do it—they've got horses."

"I'll tell you, Simmie; get in close and make sure what they're doing."

Simmie was gone a long time, so long that the white men began to wonder. Then they heard his careful footsteps.

"Thought they'd caught you, Simmie," said Bowie. "What did you find out?"

"Not much more than I knew before. It's a war party on their way home—not a squaw anywhere around. Some of those ponies have Spanish saddles. They've raided a rancho."

"Any sign of wounded?"

Simmie shook his head. "If they had any wounded they must have died on the way up—no sign of any now. They've been chased—that's sure. Some of those ponies are in bad shape—they've been run to death."

"Horses!" boomed Pardaloe, but cautiously. He licked his chops. "We've got to get a chance at them." He peered at Bowie. "What we going to do, Henry?"

Bowie turned to Simmie. "How many of them are there?"

"Near as I could count, fifty or fifty-five."

"The question is, how to keep out of their way," said Bowie, reflecting. "If they come up this way in the morning we'll have to mix with them whether we want to or not. Shall we turn back or try to dodge past 'em tonight?"

"Injuns got good ears," observed Pardaloe grimly.

"But no guns," retorted Bowie, still thinking. "I believe," he went on, "we can get around them tonight without losing any hair."

"They've got what looks to me like a couple of prisoners," remarked Simmie casually.

"Prisoners?" echoed Bowie. "Why didn't you say so before?"

"I might be all wrong," continued the impassive Creek. "I wanted to get closer to make sure, but I thought I was down there too long."

Bowie acted as if an electric shock had galvanized him. "Hell!" he snapped testily. "That's a horse of another color. I've heard these Californy Indians are close to cannibals. They may have camped to make a meal of their prisoners. We've got to look into this—come along."

(TO BE CONTINUED)



**MOVIES-IN-THE-SLOT**  
Are the movies going "back where they came from": the nickelodian, the nicoleet and the peepshow?

News from Hollywood so indicates. Dozens of promoters are getting in on a gold rush they think will come with the introduction of movies by slot machines in taverns, barrooms, luncheonettes, ice-cream parlors and poolrooms all over the country.

You drop a nickel in the slot and get a movie show with music. The idea is to flood the country with "movie cabinets" through which a customer may get a movie with his beer, cake, strawberry sundae, three-decker sandwich or hotdog.

Tyrone Power and Deanna Durbin will be presented with a short ale and an onion. Mae West, Eddie Cantor and E. G. Robinson may be obtainable with a cup of java and a plate of beans. Errol Flynn and Kay Francis through the mere deposit of a nickel will become inseparable from a cocktail and a hand of rummy.

You may even get Raymond Massey in a new Lincoln drama at the Seaside Grill.

The new device brings Radio City to Hogan's Elite Cafe, transfers Roxy's to Finnegan's Bar and makes



Greta Garbo, bock beer, Mickey Rooney, Gary Cooper, and a game of Kelly pool allied products.

It isn't hard to imagine a fellow rolling into a tavern, pulling out a handful of change and demanding "The Garden of Allah," a sardine sandwich, a rye highball and a couple of short newsreels with ginger-ale.

Jimmy Roosevelt is getting some of the blame. He was among the first to leap into the new idea with both feet. Since that time scores of movie figures are aboard and it is reported that some of the major producers have money in it.

Tremendous returns are predicted, especially if Will Hays doesn't stop such screen revivals as "Fun in a Turkish Bath," "The Bathing Beauties' Ball," "The Boudoir-Burglar" and "Parisian Nights."

The whole idea will cheapen pictures, topple the movie industry from the penthouse level to the underground ratskeller and probably throw another rock at the legitimate picture houses. But it's coming.

The pictures are to be limited to three minutes, which is the only good thing that can be said in their



favor. Maybe "Gone With the Wind" is to blame. It may be just a normal reaction against four-hour films.

**An armored bullet-proof baby carriage is now being manufactured. And we call man higher than the animals!**

**RECIPE**  
Early to bed,  
Early to rise,  
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Than you would otherwise.

**SECRETARY LA GUARDIA**  
Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia of New York has been mentioned as an assistant secretary of war or for some other place in Mr. Roosevelt's emergency cabinet. The very idea is staggering. Fiorello might or might not keep us out of this war, but he would forget so many others that we would forget all about the present crisis. We can see him now, assistant secretary of the navy, attired in fire helmet, rubber boots and naval blouse, carrying a fire hose in one hand and a pair of binoculars in the other, ready for all comers.

Mayor LaGuardia is the only man in America who could plan a naval battle, dedicate a viaduct, open a new school, issue an ultimatum to Germany, deliver a talk on kitchen economics, put through an aviation program, throw out a first baseball, denounce the press and lead a tank attack, all in one afternoon.

**QUIZ LAUGH**  
"What general who headed the American forces in 1776, crossed the Delaware in an open boat and chopped down the cherry tree is the George Washington bridge named after?" the quiz man asked Jimmie Durante in a recent radio quiz.

"How much time do I get on that one?" demanded Jimmie.

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## The Better Way to Correct Constipation

One way to treat constipation is to endure it first and "cure" it afterward. The other way is to avoid having it by getting at its cause. So why not save yourself those dull headachy days, plus the inevitable trips to the medicine chest, if you can do it by a simple common-sense "ounce of prevention?"  
If your trouble, like that of millions, is due to lack of "bulk" in the diet, "the better way" is to eat Kellogg's All-Brain. This crunchy, toasted, ready-to-eat cereal has just the "bulk" you need. If you eat it regularly—and drink plenty of water—you can not only get regular but keep regular, day after day and month after month! All-Brain is made by Kellogg's in Battle Creek. If your condition is chronic, it is wise to consult a physician.

**Forgive Faults**  
Two persons will not be friends long if they cannot forgive each other's little failings.—La Bruyere.

## When your child BITES HIS NAILS

It may be a Danger Sign!

It isn't always "nerves" that makes a child bite his nails. Often it's because of an entirely different reason—a reason few mothers suspect—WORMS!

If, along with nail-biting, there are signs of an uneasy stomach, finicky appetite, fidgeting and restless sleep... take heed! For these may be the symptoms of round worms; a nasty infection that can cause your child real distress.

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WNU-13 25-40

**Doubt Materializes**  
Doubt indulged soon becomes doubt realized.

## Watch Your Kidneys!

Help Them Cleanse the Blood of Harmful Body Waste

Your kidneys are constantly filtering waste matter from the blood stream. But kidneys sometimes lag in their work—do not act as Nature intended—fail to remove impurities that, if retained, may poison the system and upset the whole body machinery.

Symptoms may be nagging backache, persistent headache, attacks of dizziness, getting up nights, swelling, puffiness under the eyes—a feeling of nervous anxiety and loss of appetite and strength. Other signs of kidney or bladder disorder are sometimes burning, scanty or too frequent urination.

There should be no doubt that prompt treatment is wiser than neglect. Use Doan's Pills. Doan's have been winning new friends for more than forty years. They have a nation-wide reputation. Are recommended by grateful people the country over. Ask your neighbor!

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