

# CARMEN OF THE RANCHO

By FRANK H. SPEARMAN © Frank H. Spearman WNU Service



## CHAPTER X—Continued

"I welcome the chance, señor, to lay your honorable words before Carmen and—I shall dare to say"—Dona Maria spoke the words with gracious charm—"I trust the matter may have a happy ending. Carmen is going to Monterey tomorrow to do some shopping. She means to ask you to take her. It will be best now to send Pedro with her. So, señor, for two or three days—patience!"

Bowie remained with some of his vaqueros along the river nearly all that day. Then, to kill time through the rancho supper hour, he rode over to Santa Clara and visited with Padre Martinez, who, poor man, had more trouble to face than his young visitor had—though it did not so seem to Bowie.

"This government," exclaimed the padre mildly, "they want to confiscate—secularize, they call it—every mission in California. What, Señor Bowie, becomes of my poor Indians?"

Bowie had little use for any Mexican government. "It is too bad, Padre. But no honest man ever came in contact with that bunch of grafters without getting robbed. I only wish it were in my power to help you. But I am a foreigner—an Americano, they call me. I insist I am a Tejano."

He supped with the padre and rode home later. He escaped seeing Carmen in this way and next morning took his saddle very early, after giving Pedro particular instructions for insuring the safety of his charge for the trip to Monterey. In the end Bowie told Pedro to take Sanchez along with him.

"But I can't find Sanchez," said Pedro. "He has been missing for a day."

"Missing? What do you mean?" Pedro could offer no explanation. "He rode into the hills yesterday morning. He has not returned."

"No matter," said Bowie. "Take one of the other boys. The Senorita must be carefully escorted."

Of what had taken place at Guadalupe the day before, Bowie knew nothing, though its events concerned him vitally.

Carmen was caught wholly by surprise. She listened carefully, but her cheeks mantled and her eyes revealed that she was startled. She caught her breath imperceptibly. For a moment she could not speak.

"Of course, dearest, it is a surprise," continued her mother. "Though not perhaps as great a one to us as it is to you."

As her first surprise died away Carmen's expression grew grave. "You no doubt will want time to think this over, my child," her mother went on. "Sleep over it tonight."

"Oh, my Mother," exclaimed Carmen, "that is not necessary."

"Not necessary? Is your mind so soon made up?"

The girl's face set in a fixed resolve. "What Senor Bowie asks is quite impossible, Mother dear. I will never under any circumstances marry an Americano. I do not wish to wound him unnecessarily. Say to him that Carmen has no thought of marriage; that she thanks him for his offer; that she feels honored by it, but as to marriage—no."

She spoke rapidly and as if determined to brook no discussion, yet her mother, who perhaps unconsciously inclined toward the bronzed frontiersman, persisted.

"Far be it from me, dearest, to seek to influence your decision—yet the ground of it does surprise me. Such unions not infrequently occur among us."

"Perhaps it is so, and perhaps they turn out well," admitted Carmen. "But with my feelings against them as brutal interlopers; their cold-blooded murder of the only man I would have married had he lived—Oh, these people are intolerable! Though I have nothing personally against Senor Bowie, yet he, too, is brutal. I saw it the other day where he would have dragged that drunken Fremont marauder to death."

Dona Maria perceived it was useless to argue. "As you will, Carmen dear. It is your future and you are well able to decide the question. Kiss me good night."

In the morning Bowie was in the saddle early. Carmen was on her way to Monterey when he got back to the rancho house. And Dona Maria sent for him.

"Oh, Senor Bowie," she began, "Carmen will not think of marriage. She insists she is too young. I remind her that her mother was married younger than she. Where do girls nowadays get their ideas? I can't understand it. But she seems determined not to marry. Believe me, dear Senor Bowie, I did my best, for both Don Ramon and I hold you in high esteem. Her decision was so hasty. I told her so. But she has grieved deeply over the murder of her sweetheart, Senor de Haro, at the hands of Americanos—she feels bitterly toward all Americanos. But give her a little time, señor. Young girls change their minds so easily. Do not lose courage."

Try as the kindly Dona Maria would to soften the verdict, she saw how bitter a blow it was to the Texan. He made no comment. But as he rose, hat in hand, and in a few words thanked Dona Maria for her kindness, she thought there was in

his demeanor, despite his rough garb, a silent dignity that would move any woman to the respect from which affection must stem.

## CHAPTER XI

About a week later Carmen's Aunt Ysabel appeared at the rancho for a visit. One evening just before dinner she, Carmen and Bowie became involved in a rather sharp conversation. Ysabel's sharp tongue had pricked the Texan's sensibilities. She said exactly what she pleased and had positive opinions. Some of these Bowie disliked but made little effort to oppose—his mind was filled with other reflections. Once or twice, indeed, he did openly disagree with her.

His objections precipitated a lively discussion between the two. Once, when this seemed to threaten the peace of the trio, Carmen intervened on Bowie's side. This resulted in a pointed reprimand from Tia Ysabel, who objected to a callow girl's expressing views on any subject.

Both Carmen and Bowie laughed this off. He noticed how pleasant it was to be laughing with her—then he hardened his heart. Carmen, too, found something agreeable in siding with her rejected suitor. After all—it was just a thought—perhaps she had decided rather quickly.

Following dinner, the embers of the fire of the conversation flamed in the living room. After mild efforts on the part of the peaceable host and hostess to check the heat of Auntie, they gave up, and Tia Ysabel held forth.

"Senor Bowie and I were talking about Mexico and Texas this afternoon," said Ysabel to Don Ramon.

"I hope you agreed on everything," responded her brother peacefully.

"If you said 'disagreed,' Senor Bowie and I could agree on one point at least. He is a very courteous antagonist, and I admire his sincerity. But I tell him—he is so much younger than I—that he has some things to learn. This republic of Texas, do you know what is behind it all, Don Ramon?"

"No, and to tell the truth, dear sister, I am not vitally interested to know."

"But you should be!" bristled Tia Ysabel. "I have been told that that republic has even sent emissaries to California to suggest that we join the insurgents. Can you imagine?"

Bowie, who had lighted a cigarette, gazed innocently and thoughtfully into the fire. "What's behind that Texas rebellion is this," continued the fast-tongued spinster. "A junta of proslavery American politicians cooked up a scheme to set up a slavery empire in the South, taking in Texas and Cuba, mind you, and splitting away from the United States. Spanish laws are so old fashioned and degrading that they forbid human slavery; hence these high-minded Texas patriots struck off the base shackles of Mexico and Spanish law so they could have a nice little slavery empire of their own! Well, Senor Bowie knew nothing of all this, but it is the truth. His heroes have clay feet."

Bowie sat unmoved. "Most heroes have," he said calmly. "Dona Ysabel states the Mexican side well; but it is only one side. The Americans could say something too."

"But would anybody believe them? Look at their record. Haven't they robbed everyone they could lay their hands on?" she exclaimed, biting off her words. "The poor Indians—how haven't they been plundered! Look at poor Mexico! Robbed of Texas. Now they try to lay hands on Mexican California! Heaven forbid! They will corrupt our people and ruin our civilization!"

"Ysabel!" protested Don Roman with dignity. "Spare us. You seem to forget the presence of our own Americano."

Bowie raised his hand. "Pardon, Don Ramon," he interposed lazily, "if you refer by chance to me, I am not an Americano." A restrained but growing emphasis marked his words as he added, "I am a Tejano, a citizen of the republic of Texas—something quite different."

"Different," snapped Tia Ysabel, "but no better. A land of rebels—Texas!" she exclaimed contemptuously.

Bowie was hard to ruffle—outwardly. "Rebels, if you will," he retorted evenly. "But at the worst, rebels against a vile government. Our Tejanos should have marched on Mexico City and horsewhipped every member of the disreputable junta. I would except only Santa Ana. He shouldn't be horsewhipped. He should be torn to pieces by wild horses. I beg, Don Ramon, that I may be excused," he added coolly. "I have orders to give for the roundup tomorrow."

His withdrawal left Dona Ysabel somewhat nonplused. But her resourcefulness did not desert her. "Certainly," she observed magisterially, "the young Tejano has spirit."

"You have hurt him, Ysabel," admonished Don Ramon.

"Hurt him," echoed his sister. "No more than he has hurt me. He is positively abusive. He certainly does not need anyone to save his wounds. I should say he is quite able to take care of himself!"

A fortnight later, with a good part of the tallow and hides marketed and normal days resumed at Guadalupe, Bowie spoke to Don Ramon in the office. "I've wanted for some time to take a trip up to Sutter's Fort. I have some old friends up there. I met a couple of them once at Yerba Buena, and I promised before I came to Guadalupe to pay them a visit."

"Of course, señor—whenever you like and stay as long as you like. Though we shall be very glad, indeed, to welcome you back."

"My stay will be indefinite, Don Ramon. I do not plan to come back."

"Not come back!" Bowie shuffled a bit; there was a tone of amazement and reproach in Don Ramon's words that made it hard for him to proceed.

"Not, at least, for the present, Don Ramon."

Don Ramon pleaded, but without effect. He sought his wife in consternation. Dona Maria listened but explained all before Don Ramon had done. "It is Carmen," she said, nodding regretfully. "No man—most of all, a man like Senor Bowie—could sit at the table day after day with a senorita he loved, after she had refused him, Ramon. You



"Carmen will not think of marriage."

couldn't expect it. It is too bad for us. But you argue with him in vain."

The final words somehow or other held themselves back until Bowie halted at the door, ready to ride away. Don Ramon with cordial protestations had said good-by; Dona Maria came out on the porch and down the steps toward Bowie. He slipped instantly from his saddle and stood before her, hat in hand.

"I know why you go, señor," Dona Maria said simply. "I regret it more than I am saying. Wherever you go you will have warm hearts at Guadalupe, interested in your welfare. And prayers will go up here a long time for your safety."

"You are much too kind, dear Dona Maria," replied Bowie steadily. "The happiest days of my life have been spent under your gracious roof. And if you ever feel a dire need—which God forbid—for my presence here, I shall come if I am alive."

Bowie left Guadalupe stonyhearted. His impulse was to put as many miles as possible between himself and the scene of his one great failure.

With his three ponies, that being as many as Don Ramon could persuade him to take, he rode to Monterey to talk to Larkin. The latter was in Yerba Buena. Bowie rode on up the peninsula to find him. The town was not so large as to make it difficult to happen on the American. He encountered him at Viaget's, and with him was a nervous and active young man who spoke with a foreign accent—Captain John A. Sutter.

Sutter looked at Bowie with the interest with which old Frederick William of Prussia would regard a likely recruit for his regiment of phenomenally tall grenadiers. In Bowie he saw precisely the type of frontiersman he wanted for his grandiose enterprise up the Sacramento River—youth, strength and a poise that promised resource under pressure.

The three men adjourned to a rear room where Sutter ordered Heidsieck, and the three sipped and chatted nearly the whole afternoon. Bowie tried two or three times to break away but could not. Larkin, despite Bowie's efforts to shut him off, told Sutter about Bowie's Indian affairs—the stories of which had long ago reached Monterey.

After this disclosure Sutter clung to Bowie like Mustard to a stot; nothing would do but that Bowie must come up to the fort. The Texan refused all offers of an immediate contract but, unable to escape otherwise, gave the magnetic adventurer a promise that he would visit him upriver within a few weeks.

Sutter had in his mind the apprehension that Bowie, in passing Fremont's camp which lay enroute, might be coaxed into joining his

scouts; but Larkin later assured him that his alarm was groundless since Bowie had no love either for Fremont or his expedition.

It did, in fact, come about that Bowie visited the Fremont camp on his way to the fort. Sutter had ingeniously made as sure as he could of Bowie's visit by taking the extra ponies up the river on his supply boat.

When Bowie appeared at Fremont's quarters he was promptly arrested as a spy, which did not increase his affection for the sensational adventurer. The guard that detained him attempted to disarm him. This proving embarrassing to his captors, they led him to Fremont's quarter. Fremont, busy, as usual, about nothing of importance, had no time to interview the spy. But while Bowie stood outside the tent, an armed guard on each side, two of the general's scouts came up.

One of these was stopped by the sergeant of the guard, who poured a story into his ear about the captive.

"Who is he?" asked the scout, looking at the prisoner.

"That's what I don't know, but I suspect he's one of General Castro's spies; the country's full of 'em. He says he's from Texas. He gave up his rifle, but when I tried to take his pistol and his knife he got ugly. I didn't want no shooting round headquarters so I let him keep 'em."

The scout eyed the spy closely. "Well, if he's the man I think he is, I wouldn't want any shooting with him either."

He stepped forward and put out his hand for the spy to take. "Henry Bowie, what you doin' here?"

"You'd better tell me, Kit Carson, what you're doing here with this fool outfit."

"Shake hands, you old desert rat. This man," explained Carson to the crestfallen sergeant, "is a Texan. Why, man, he's from the Staked Plain. He's no spy. Get him his rifle, you bum . . . Henry," he ran on, "I heard you was out this way—kind of lookin' to run into you sometime, somewhere. Well, what you doin' for yourself? Huntin', I reckon. No matter what you're doin', Henry, I got a better job for you. And say, I heard you're totin' one of them new-fangled six-shootin' pistols."

"Where'd you hear that, Kit?"

"On the trail som'mers—don't know where. Let's see the contraption, Henry."

It was the first revolver Carson had ever seen. He looked, listened and examined the new firearm while men crowded around the two scouts, wild to see the new gun and get it actually in their own hands.

The upshot of the meeting was that Carson insisted on Bowie's waiting to meet Fremont; he had already gone into the tent with a word for the general's ear to acquaint him with the newcomer.

"I knowed that scout when he was a little shaver—everybody in Texas knows the Bowies. My brother Mose and this boy grew up together, you might say. Hates Injuns and greasers like pizen. If you can get him to trail South with us, he's worth a troop o' cavalry—knows the country, the folks, well liked and fights like a wildcat."

"Hold him," growled Fremont. "I'll get him."

Outside, when Carson rejoined Bowie, the talk went on. Carson talked eloquently of the importance of Fremont's campaign to California and its people and of the determination of every man in his ranks to fight to the death against any attempt of England to take possession of this prize of the Pacific coast. He promised fat pay.

Bowie smiled. "Kit, do you mean the kind of promises to pay he gives Californians every time he steals their horses and cattle?"

"Steals?" echoed Carson indignantly. "What do you mean?"

"That's what honest men call it. He took three hundred head of horses a few weeks ago from the Guadalupe Rancho. Nat Spear says the paper he gave Don Ramon ain't worth the ink on it. I heard all about it at Yerba Buena last week."

"To the devil with Nat Spear. I know he pays us boys and pays us work. And no soldiering, no camp work, Henry. We're scouts, and soldier boys wait on us."

Bowie listened with simulated patience; yet his tempter seemed to feel he was holding something back. Finally Bowie spoke. "That all sounds fine, Kit. But I'd like to ask you just one thing before I say more. Why did you shoot the unarmed De Haro boys when they were crossing the river to visit your camp?"

The blunt question took Carson aback. He seemed to color even under the bronze of his fine features. The two men were sitting frontier-fashion astride a fallen log. Bowie was looking straight into Carson's eyes.

"Henry, did you hear about that too? Darned sorry it happened, but we was in a box. The old man's orders was to take no prisoners. When I seen the boys and Berreyasa a-comin' I asked him flat out, Henry, what I should do. He come straight back with, 'Take no prisoners. We got no room for prisoners.' He'd been crowded pretty hard for two months. Everything had gone wrong. I had to obey orders, Henry, didn't I?"

(TO BE CONTINUED)



## ACCEPTANCE

Morning: 1—Inspection of the house in which Wendell Willkie was born, with special attention to exhibits including:

(a) Milk bottle broken by the infant Willkie when he heard for the first time the mention of a name that sounded like "Roosevelt"; (b) blackboard upon which he once drew a donkey and scribbled the words, "This is a turkey"; (c) faded Mother Goose book with page turned to a verse brought up to date as follows: Old Mother Hubbard went to the cupboard To get her poor doggie a bone; When she got there the cupboard was bare— The New Deal had skinned it by phone. . . .

2—Short talk by nursemaid who remembers distinctly that as a child in arms Willkie had the kind of personality that made her give him a lollipop when the doctor ordered paregoric. . . .

3—Reception by Mr. and Mrs. Frank McCarthy, present tenants of the old Willkie home, marked by frequent exclamations by both, "If we'd ever had an idea of this we'd never have taken the place!"

4—Address by the mayor of Elwood: "Home Town Boy Makes Good." . . .

5—Sight-seeing tour through business area, with special attention to the cobbler's shop where Willkie's shoes were repaired, and the barbershop where he was first shaved and in which the barber is still trying



to argue him into getting his hair cut some day. Review of places featuring Wendell Willkie Hamburgers, Wendell Willkie Barbecue Lunch, Wendell Willkie Haberdashery, and the "Wendell Willkie Punch—Positively One to a Customer."

6 p. m.: Band concert on the Elwood Green.

Selections: "Banks of the Wabash," "Inquisitions of the Potomac," "I'm on My Way," "Throw 'Em Down McClusky," "Just a Little White House Built for Two."

7 p. m.: Athletic Events at Galloway park. Greased Pole Climb: Bob Taft. Escaping From Locked Trunk Demonstration: Mr. Willkie. Throwing the 100-Pound Racket: Thomas Dewey.

Boxing Rodeo: Mr. Frank Gannett vs. the whole New Deal. Sack Race: Original Willkie for President men vs. alternates. Wrestling Events: Charlie McNary vs. Past Performances; Mr. Willkie vs. the field.

8 p. m.: Parade. Section 1—Republicans Who Had Just About Given Up Hope. Section 2—Republicans Who Had Definitely Given Up Hope. Section 3—Battle-scarred Tories. Section 4—Businessmen's Clubs of America (on stretchers). Section 5—Budget Balancers (in ambulances). Section 6—Thrift Clubs (on crutches). Section 7—Efficiency Experts (by proxy). Section 8—Brass bands playing the theme song, "Heaven Help the Poor Businessman; the New Deal Never Will."

9 p. m.: Mr. Willkie accepts the nomination at Elwood high school while his school teachers shake their heads and whisper, "You could knock us over with a feather."

5 to 8: Dancing, cold snalls and arguments over the Gulluck poll.

SUMMER PORTRAIT Hills and dales And cars with banners Full of folks With rotten manners. . . . Add smiles: As ironic as the idea of Pierre Laval putting other French leaders on trial for making mistakes. . . .

Adolf Hitler has sent to Mussolini as a gift a train of three armored cars equipped with 16 anti-aircraft guns in the hope "that it may accompany you in the future to protect your life." This would indicate that the reaction to those balcony speeches isn't what it used to be.

Out of 900,000 tulip bulbs planted by the city of New York in a special Riverside drive garden 800,000 failed to come up. After that we don't feel so futile about the daffodil bed.

## Things to make



BESIDES being a most attractive addition to lawn or garden in herself, this cute little sunbonnet girl has practical features too. The parasol trellis she holds is ideal for climbing flowers and vines. Cut the girl from plywood or other thin lumber with jig, coping or keyhole saw, add the trellis, then paint according to the directions given on pattern Z9112, 15 cents. General cutout instructions accompany this pattern. Send order to:

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## HOUSEHOLD QUESTIONS

Want some juice-appetizers? Try the following juice combination: Tomato and clam, tomato and pineapple, grapefruit and orange, grapefruit and grapejuice, lemon and cherry, apple and pineapple, prune and orange, raspberry and lemon, and grapefruit and cherry—with a bit of chopped mint. . . .

Add a few salted peanuts to the chocolate sauce you serve over ice cream or sherbets. . . .

When frying don't put in the article to be fried until the fat is still and a faint smoke is seen rising from the pan. . . .

Browned pears make delicious garnishes for veal or pork chops. Allow half a pear to a portion. Dip each pear into flour and brown it in a little fat in a frying pan. Sprinkle with salt, pepper and cinnamon. . . .

Iron rust may be removed from white material with sour milk. . . .

Cold air drops and hot rises. The compartment of the refrigerator under the ice chamber is, therefore, always the coldest part of the refrigerator. . . .

Jellied chicken broth often appeals to invalids during warm weather. Mix 1 tablespoon granulated gelatin in 3 tablespoons of cold water. After 5 minutes dissolve in two cups of boiling, well-seasoned chicken stock. Pour into individual molds and chill until firm. When stiffened cut into 1-inch cubes and pile in glass sherbet cups. Sprinkle with minced parsley mixed with a little lemon juice. . . .

## WEARY DESPONDENT GIRLS:

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