

# VALIANT DUST

by Percival Christopher Wren

**SYNOPSIS:** Lieutenant Napoleon Biccotti, forced to resign from the French army by the discovery of his secret service, has enlisted in the Foreign Legion and risen to the rank of Major. He has taken a detachment over treacherous mountains into the "hottest place on earth," the domain of the Sultan of Mekkas. There they build a fort, while Biccotti, dreaming of following in the footsteps of an earlier Napoleon, goes back for the remainder of his command.

## Chapter 5

### "THE LITTLE JEWELS"

Said Sallor Harris, "Ole friend o' mine, the Sultan is. 'Bloke I told you about, Bob," he added, turning to Otho, "that day at the fair."

"I'm not likely to forget it," agreed Otho, "nor your message about 'Save the Little Jewels,' as I thought you said."

"'Save the Little Jewels,'" murmured Otho again, with a short and bitter laugh.

"'Wot was that, 'Arris?'" asked William Bossum. "You bin 'ere before, d'you say? If you bin 'ere before, why couldn't you say so before?"

"Ho, yus, before and be'ind. I didn't say before that I'd bin 'ere before becuz we come some other way. But I been to Mekkasen before, all right," replied Sallor Harris.

"Well, go on, get it up," requested William Bossum, "and don't be so bloomin' 'aughty and mysterious. Anybody'd think you was a missin' heir or somethin'."

"You'll be a missin' Legion-heir all right, in a moment," replied Sallor Harris with unwonted brilliance. "If you could close your 'ead for half a second, I'd tell you. Before I 'ad the misfortune to meet you in Tonbury, I goes ashore from off my ship in Marseilles and gets drunk. So drunk I gets that I joins the Foreign Legion, or else the Foreign Legion joins me. . . . I dunno. . . . Any'ow, my Section was garrison of a fort, and my eroosade was doin' a patrol and got mopped up by some Beddoe blokes. Me an' my chum, ole Peer Legrand, is what they calls the sole survivors of the bloomin' shipwreck."

"An' these Beddoe blokes takes us along to Mekkasen an' gives us to this Kite for a Christmas-box or a birthday-present or something."

"Cor lumme! Rough! 'E was an ole buzzard. We soon wished we was back with the Beddoes. One day he took my poor chum Peer Legrand, an' 'ad him chucked off a tower on to some sharp 'ooks, 'arf-way down the wall. An' there 'e 'ung till he died. 'Ooked through the leg. . . Upside-down. . . like a sheep in a butcher's shop. Kite Harem Abdulker Kareem. The dirty dog. . . I'd like to. . ."

"Well, how did you come to get away from 'em?" asked Joe Mummyery, as Sallor Harris paused to think of exactly what he'd like to do to the Kaid Haroun Abd'allah Karim of Mekkasen.

"It was his sister does it. Come down in the middle of the night to the dungeon place, she did, where I was chained up like a dog. Ses she can get me out and guided to a place called Tangier if I'd give a bloke there a message from 'er. Then the bloke would give me two 'undred and fifty francs for meself and see me on my way. Likewise she does it too. A dumb bloke, an' an ole 'ag, an' a black piccaninny. An' me in one o' their big cloaks like a great 'orse-blanket with a hood to it."

"Well, the dumb bloke gets me out all right and guides us to Tangier. And all the way I keeps repeating the message 'o meself, not knowing but what me life depended on it, yer see. The message from this girl to the bloke in Tangier, Seneory Peteroh Mulloony."

"Yes," murmured Otho. "Señor Pedro Malligal."

"What was the message?" asked Joe Mummyery.

"'Save the Little Jewels,'" replied Sallor Harris, "Gibraltar, England. Don't trust my brother any more. His wife has won. Give this man two hundred and fifty francs and send him over the sea. Peteroh's gawdle Elizabeth Ellen speaks. Save the Little Jewels."

"Yes, that was the message an' I'll remember it as long as I live. . . . Elizabeth Ellen was the girl's name—the Kite's sister. Only she pronounced it like El Is Beth El Ain. Like that. . . . A lovely piece, she was, too. Cor lumme! . . . An' spoke some English with 'er French and Arabic."

"Her mother was an Englishwoman—Elizabeth Elaine Torson," said Otho, "captured with her husband Captain Torson, a gunner from Gibraltar. The tribesmen who captured them killed him, and sold her in the market-place of Mekkasen as a slave. This Kaid's father bought her—and the woman of whom Harris is talking was their daughter. So she is the half-sister of the present Kaid. Also half-English. . . . Poor soul. . . ."

"How d'you know, Bob?" asked Joe Mummyery as Otho fell silent.

"Because the 'black piccaninny' who went with Harris and the dumb man and the old hag was her son, disguised. He was 'the little Jewels' (as Harris thought she said)—his name is Jules—and it was to escort, and to save, the little Jules that she sent Harris to Tangier. . . . And the little Jules Malligal, being safely handed over to his father, Pedro Malligal, by the dumb guide, was sent to England in charge of a Dr. Maykings and his wife, friends of

"'Chucked off a tower—'"

Señor Pedro Malligal whom they were visiting in Tangier. Dr. Maykings, as you know, Joe, was my father's friend and doctor. . . . And 'the little Jules' married his daughter Margaret Maykings who, as you also know, was my—or—friend."

Otho Bellôme fell silent.

"Rum world," soliloquized Sallor Harris. "Rum go, Fair ole panter-mime. . . . Fancy the piccaninny bein' that girl's kid!"

"Yes," continued Otho. "It was Jules Malligal. And I have known him for nearly as long as I can remember. . . . I met his cousin too—chap named Ralsu—son of the Kaid Haroun Abd'allah Karim. He was educated in Paris and Madrid, and he used to come to see Jules Malligal at Oxford, when he visited England. The Señor Pedro Malligal was the Kaid's agent—financial and political in general, and gun-running in particular, I believe. I expect Jules looked after the English end of it for Pedro—and Ralsu looked after Jules. . . ."

"I used to hear a good deal about Mekkasen, but I never thought I'd see the beastly country."

"A curious stranger arrives at the post, tomorrow."

**Dallas Business Zone Has Blaze**  
DALLAS, Feb. 14.—(AP)—A crew of 50 men fought a business district fire here late Saturday night and kept it from spreading out of the half block of wooden buildings where it started.

A laundry, jewelry store, trading post, barber shop and blacksmith shop were leveled to a mass of charred remains. The loss was estimated above \$10,000.

**Corbett Fighting A Losing Battle**  
NEW YORK, Feb. 14.—(AP)—James J. Corbett, seriously ill with a heart ailment, passed a restless night but today appeared to rally slightly from the fatigue which was apparent early in the day.

## LAST REHEARSAL FOR 'JIM'S GIRL'

This evening the last rehearsal of "Jim's Girl," comedy-drama to be presented by an all-star local cast, under auspices of the Medford American Legion, will be held, Robert Loraine, director, announced this afternoon, and tickets for the show are now on sale at Strang's drug store.

Tickets may also be obtained through three well-known participants in the show, Adra Edwards, Nellie Green and Ethel Chord. Announcement of the play was made today by C. Y. Tengwald at the Kiwanis luncheon, with a promise to all that it will be well worth seeing and that the funds derived will be devoted to charity to provide hot lunches to school children from needy families.

Children's frocks made. Gladys Natwick Shelby, 15 Gargill Court.

## NEW CARDINALS TO BE CREATED

VATICAN CITY, Feb. 14.—(AP)—The Osservatore Romano announced this evening that six new cardinals would be created at a consistory March 18, among them Pietro Fumasoni-Biondi, apostolic delegate to the United States and Mexico.

Jean Marie Rodriguez Villeneuve, archbishop of Quebec, will also be elevated to the cardinalate, the newspaper says.

The others are Archbishop Innitzer of Vienna, Archbishop Fossati of Turin, Archbishop Della Costa of Florence, and Archbishop Dolci, papal nuncio to Rumania.

The number of cardinals thus would be raised from 52 to 58 out of a possible 70.

## S'MATTER POP—

By C. M. PAYNE



TAILSPIN TOMMY—Small Details Don't Worry Skeeter!



## SNAPSHOTS OF A BOY DELIVERING A VALENTINE

BY GLUYAS WILLIAMS



## BOUND TO WIN—Rebellion

By EDWIN ALGER



## BOUND TO WIN—The Next Step

By SOL HESS



## BRINGING UP FATHER

By George McManus



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