

VALIANT DUST
by Percival Christopher Wren

SYNOPSIS: Major Napoleon Riccioli leads his Forest Legion command into the Citadel of Mekazzen, ostensibly to verify with the Kaid of Mekazzen actually to combine with him against France. The Kaid does not know that Riccioli plans even more treachery—to murder the Kaid and make himself Sultan of the Sahara. The Citadel is a maze of intrigues in the midst of which are Riccioli, son of the Kaid, Jules and Pedro Mallign, financial managers of the Kaid, and their wives.

Chapter 18
INTO THE PAST

RARELY has a more varied, incongruous and cosmopolitan circle—and a family circle at that—sat in stranger surroundings and circumstances.

Margaret looked long and thoughtfully at her husband, Jules Mallign; at Raisul, his cousin; at Raisul's father, her uncle by marriage, the Kaid Haroun Abd'Allah Karim; at the Lady Zainub, his wife, the mother of Raisul; at the Lady El Isa Beth el Ain, sister of the Kaid, and her own mother-in-law; at Senor Pedro Mallign, her father-in-law; and, finally, at Sara, her cousin by marriage, the daughter of the Lady Zainub's famous brother, Kaid Mahomed Hassan, slain by the French.

Again Margaret looked round the family circle, and felt very, very far

there on his cushioned rug, well in the picture—Jules, with his black hair, pale face and great dark eyes. But then, of course, he belonged. This was his home, his birth place. His mother was half-Moorish (oh, her terrible tale of her English mother, sold in the market-place of Mekazzen), his father a Spaniard, bred and born in Morocco.

No wonder he had seemed to change so rapidly and so soon, after their arrival in this disturbing place. It was literally the return of the native.

Native? Her husband a "native"? What an unpleasant word in this particular connection.

But how absurd to take that view. Anybody is a native of the place in which he is born and bred. She was herself a native—of England.

And Margaret once again firmly put out of her mind an expression that she had somewhere heard or read—a phrase that had been doing its best to intrude upon her consciousness for some time.

"Gone native."

It was perfectly absurd. If, as she kept telling herself, everybody is a native, and the natives of one country are as good, or as bad, as the natives of another—in their own particular way and sphere—how could anyone "go" native?



Jules a "native"? What an unpleasant word.

from her home at Yelverbury, Kent, England. Jules was a thousand miles from the vast impregnable and ancient castle of the Kaid Haroun Abd'Allah Karim, and was also a thousand years from it.

The Kaid Haroun Abd'Allah Karim lived and dressed and acted and thought much as did his ancestor of a thousand years ago; and surely this castle, or castellated rock, had not changed in a thousand years?

Marvelous to think that the Union Jack floated over Gibraltar only a couple of hundred miles away, and that so near were a British garrison, battalions, churches, clubs, messes, shops, and British law and order.

Whether the thousand-year ideas were extravagant or not, one certainly traveled back more than 200 years in traveling that 244 miles.

This castle, this life, these people, that towered down there, below the castle, were all far more medieval than Tudor England, in outlook, in mode of life, in act and word and thought and deed.

The things her husband's mother, Lady El Isa Beth el Ain had told her! Unbelievable things. Perfectly incredible and perfectly true.

Of how that fat woman Zainub, once so beautiful—with whom, apparently, she now dwelt in perfect amity—had done her best to murder Jules, the Kaid's nephew, now Margaret's husband.

Strange to reflect how, but for that savage villainy, Jules would never have been sent to England, and Margaret herself would not now be Mrs. Jules Mallign, seated there in that lovely artificial Moorish garden, beneath the African moon, contemplating this strange assembly of her relatives.

No, she would not have been Mrs. Jules Mallign.

Would she have been Lady Bel-eme, had Zainub always been as fat and placid as she was today?

Once more Margaret's eye traveled round that amazing circle.

Jules, her husband, graduate of Oxford University, yet bred and born in this terrible castle, the son of Senor Pedro Mallign and the Lady El Isa Beth el Ain, the Kaid's half-sister.

And, undoubtedly, Jules, lolling

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HOOVERISM MUST BE SPONGED OUT

WASHINGTON, Feb. 23.—(AP)—The assertion that the Republican party must "purge itself" of the influence and philosophy of President Hoover, Secretary Stimson and Secretary Mills if it hopes to regain control of the government was made in the house today by Representative Tinkham.

The Massachusetts Republican said that in Europe, under the Hoover-Stimson-Mellon regime, the United States not only has lost prestige but "is regarded with contempt and ridicule for its emotional and maladroit interference in the political affairs of Europe."

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WASHINGTON U IN FEAR OF FUND CUT

SEATTLE, Feb. 23.—(AP)—President M. Lyle Spencer of the University of Washington said today the reported senate appropriations committee cut of the tentative University of Washington budget by one

third would "reduce the university to the rank of a small college."

"It will mean the elimination of many departments and we will be unable to lower our entrance requirements because we won't be able to take care of the additional students," he declared.

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HOPES ROOSEVELT HAS NO DICTATORIAL AIMS

WASHINGTON, Feb. 23.—(AP)—Senator Borah today wrote M. C. Migel, silk manufacturer of Providence, R. I., that if congress confers "dictatorial" power upon President-elect Roosevelt he would hope and expect Roosevelt "to fling it back in the hattering teeth of a pusillanimous congress with the reminder that he was the president of the United States and not its dictator."

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BRINGING UP FATHER



Formal Farewell For Mayor Baker

PORTLAND, Feb. 23.—(AP)—Geo. L. Baker, for more than a score of years mayor of Portland, was given a formal farewell dinner last night. He was not a candidate at the recent election, having announced he is retiring from politics.

Physician Dies

PORTLAND, Ore., Feb. 23.—(AP)—Dr. James O. C. Wiley, 63, one of Portland's most prominent physicians and surgeons, died here Tuesday. He had been ill four days. Dr. Wiley graduated from the University of Oregon medical school in 1899.

Last week for Midget Photo Special at Peaseley's Studio.

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