VALIANT DUST

by Percival Christopher Wren author of "BEAU GESTE"

SYNOPSIS: The Citadel of Mekazzen and the desert nearby seethe with intrigue. Inside the citadel the Kaid and his advisers plot with a stranger they believe is from Germany for help against France; not far away Major Napoleon Riccoli of the Foreign Legion schemes to betray France to the Kaid, and the Kaid to Riccoli's own Napoleonic ambition. Margaret Maligni English wife of an adviser to the Kaid is oppressed by the Citadel; she does not know that Otho Relleme her childhood sweetheart, is in Riccoli's command. Raisul, the Kaid's son, promises his father many foreign troops.

Chapter 18

MORE PLOTS

"A PRINCELY gift, oh Raisul my beloved son," smiled the Kaid. "But how shall that come to pass?"

"Have patience and give me a little time, and it shall come to pass, oh my father," assured Raisul in a tone of firm conviction. "Soon you will receive a strange letter from one who is commander of a column among them."

"Allah grant it, my son," replied the Kaid. "His men would be as leaven is to bread, as the forbidden liquor is to the water in which it is mixed . . . Among the mountains, behind rocks, my men are wolves, yea, our tribesmen are the best soldiers in the world. When charging they are swooping eagles, yea, the foot-men are as cavalry.

"Could we but get them to stand in line, to obey words of command, who could then withstand them? What foreign foot could tread the Country of the Gun? We could clear this land of them, and I would soon be Sultan of Morocco."

"You shall, oh Kaid," murmured Maligni.

"*Insh'allah*," whispered the Kaid, and rising to his feet, signified that the council was ended.

"Stay a moment, Raisul, my son," he added, resuming his seat, and, waiting till the hall was empty, continued,

"What is this talk of bringing me foreign soldiers, willing volunteers from the great regiment of strangers that fights for the French? Do you mock me, my son?"

"By Allah, I do not, oh my father," replied Raisul. "Hearken to plain facts—a tale I had not intended to tell you until it had proved its own truth.

"In Algiers, as was my business, I met an officer of the 19th army corps—from the island of Corsica—where once our ancestors ruled and had their watch towers and forts. I became his friend, lent him money and having helped him to spend it, lent him more.

"Women were his weakness, women and overwhelming ambition. There is a madness in his blood, thought. I made myself necessary to him, and just when things were getting interesting he was sent to the Sahara. Soon I went to the Sahara—and soon he owed me more money. As we grew ever more friendly and intimate, I learnt more and more of his ambitions, his hopes—yea, his intentions.

"The madness in his blood was increasing—and his weakness for women (of whom he had known too many) and his insane ambition. Sometimes he talked as one smitten of Allah. But only to me. He knew that at any moment I could ruin him, by prosecution for debt; knew that he was already absolutely in my power; so he cared not what he said, cared not what I knew—and he opened his mind to me.

"Then he got himself sent to Ain Broudja—and thence with a little desert column to where the borders of the French Sahara meet those of Mekazzen . . ."

"And had you a hand in this, oh Raisul my son?" smiled the Kaid.

Raisul's smile matched that of his father.

"A hand, my father? Nay, nay. But, perchance, a voice. A voice that was but a whisper—in his ear. Just a suggestion . . . or the hint of a suggestion—of a suggestion. Just a tiny seed in wondrous fertile, fruitful soil.

"An independent command—far, far away from superior authority, from observation—indeed, from any thought or care or interest in his doings or his fate.

"Who so keen and zealous an officer—who so devoted to his profession, his career and his country—as he who would volunteer, nay, beg, to be sent on such duty, establishing a chain of outposts at the very back of beyond, in the depths of the forsaken desert, in that roasting hell of loneliness, thirst, hardship and deprivation?

"This to his superiors. . . . A zeal that would ask for a station in hell.

"This to himself . . . A small, compact, self-contained and self-sacrificing army, at his absolute disposal. A nucleus for a greater army, an ever-growing army, a mighty army, such as that with which the Mahdi of the East swept down upon Africa, or Abd-el-Kader fought the French."

The Kaid stroked his beard as he closely watched Raisul's animated face.

"A moment, my son . . . You go too fast . . . This man is a foreigner, an officer of France in command of French troops . . ."

"And he would throw off his allegiance to France. He would use those troops for his own ends. He would lead them into this country, lead them here to Mekazzen city—and place them at your disposal, my father."

"By Allah!" cried the Kaid. "He would? He would? And you have brought this about, my son? I cannot believe it . . .

"No," he continued, "and if he did—what would be his true and hidden intention? What would he hope to gain? No. It is a trick, I say.

"On his part! On his part, I mean, my son," he added hastily.

"What would he hope to gain, oh my father? Power. Wealth. Freedom. Relief from the bonds of irksome discipline and the restraints of the slow promotion that will not make him a great and powerful man until he is an old and feeble one.

"As I showed him—by careless remark and casual hint—he could rise in a day from the rank of major to that of general, field-marshal, commander-in-chief, if he joined you, bringing a well-armed, well-equipped force with him—and found favor in your sight.

"And in truth he could be to you what Kaid Sir Harry Maclean was to the Sultan—and much more. In one brief campaign he could make you Sultan of Morocco. In another he could sweep the French and Spaniards into the sea. In another reconquer Algeria—with the help of the countless hordes of the Bedouin of the Sahara.

"Then Tunisia. And how long would the Italians resist in Tripoli—with the Senussi helping in their overthrow? The English in Egypt—that once great English people that now lets its Empire fall to pieces—how long? Then Africa for the Africans . . . Islam united . . . The Pan-Islamic Holy War against the usurping Infidel at last . . ."

"Led by this French officer, my son?" interrupted the Kaid.

"Led by you, oh my father—at the head of an army trained and taught and disciplined by this French officer, and drilled by the soldiers he will bring with him."

"And who will control him—even when he is but commander-in-chief of my present army, and has defeated the Sultan and conquered Morocco in my name?"

"I will, oh my father," was the prompt reply. "I will control him. And when he has outlived his usefulness, or his gratitude, his humble allegiance . . ."

Raisul drew his hand suggestively across his throat.

The Kaid nodded, smiled again, and stroked his beard.

"A great and battle-scarred boar of the mountain forests once invited a lion of the desert to enter into his secret grove and into a hunting partnership with him," observed the Kaid. "The lion of the desert agreed, and was led to the secret grove of the boar of the mountains . . . They entered into a partnership that day—and that night when the lion felt hungry, the boar entered into the lion."

"You have spoken, oh my father," smiled Raisul. "For you are the lion. This officer shall enter into your den and into a hunting-partnership with you, and when the time is ripe, you shall eat him up."

The Kaid sat silent for a few minutes, while Raisul watched him.

Suddenly he laughed his famous hearty laugh.

"Let him come, my son," he said. "And let him bring all that he can bring . . . but let him bring his command piece-meal, detachment by detachment, and not as a conquering army . . . Yea, let him come, and let him go again—when Allah wills."

"I do not think Allah will decree that he go again, oh my father," smiled Raisul, and, rising, respectfully took his leave.

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Margaret awakes to a horrible situation Monday.

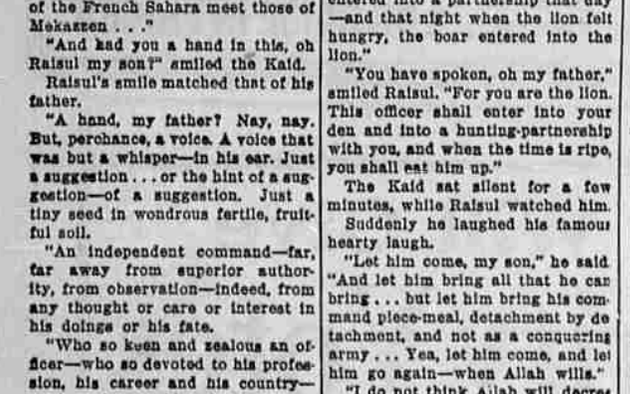
JUNIOR HIGH ELECTS COMPLETE STAFF TO PUBLISH NEWSPAPER

(By Mignon Phipps)

The junior high newspaper staff has elected new officers for this semester as follows. Editor, Dean Pieper; assistant editor, Anne Dean; city editor, Mignon Phipps; school news, Ted Taylor; boys' athletics, J. L. Campbell; girls' athletics, Catherine Ford; Boys' League, Dale Roberts; Girls' League, Lois Remington; club news, Patricia Short; jokes, Jamie MacCallister; contest editor, Dorothy Buchter; and miscellaneous, Mary Cummings. The reporters are: Jean Adams, Margaret Young, Mildred Buckles and Carolyn Cook.

Dean Pieper, the news editor, has many plans for enlargement and improvement of the publication.

Forty-three junior high pupils received their final writing certificates this semester. They were: Beatrice Jones, Elsie Kingsley, Eugene Coats, Virginia Fitzmaurice, Nellie Moon, Lillian Hansen, Jewell O'Neal, Doris Ford, Bertrand Hamilton, Edith Malkemus, Doodley Fry, Rae La Fevre, Maxine Guyer, Katherine Curry, Dorothy Smith, Bernice Lester, Jamie McCollister, Fidelas Wagner, Elizabeth Scovell, Dorothy Gibson, Raymond Hubbard, Marjorie Haddock, Kay Nakagiri, Anne Dean, Catherine Carter, William Johnson, Harry Stanley, Ethel Moore, Dorothaea Haskins, Shirley Roach, Pearl Crowell, Lefa Bedford, Ada McCoy, Cleo Cox, Helene Salade, Frances Daley, e Ann Scherer, Henrietta Spivey, Anna Dickey, Aline Fowler, Audrey Barber, Alice Horner.



WELLS TO RENO WITH LAKEVIEW PRISONERS

Deputy United States Marshal Cal C. Wells left today for Klamath Falls and will continue from there to Lakeview. At the latter point he will get Walter Huff and Lyle Highfell, who are charged with robbing box cars, and take them to Reno, Nev., where the case is to be heard. The charge on which the two are held deals with the interstate commerce commission laws.

WALL PAPER
Up to the minute
1933 Patterns at
K. D. ROSS CO., 22 S. Grape.

Texaco and Sons Tangle Thursday

Sam Colton, manager of the Texaco All-Stars, announced late today that his team will meet the SONS, Ashland Normal school squad, in a game here Thursday night at the armory. The game is scheduled for 8 o'clock.

Brand new! One lot of wool dresses. Famous "Bunny Fuzz Fabric." Ochre, biege, admiralty blue and paprika red are the featured colors of the season; $4.00 values grouped at $1.49. "The store that saves you money." The Band Box & Shoe Box.

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S'MATTER POP— By C. M. PAYNE

SELF-SERVICE By GLUYAS WILLIAMS

TAILSPIN TOMMY—Right Down Skeeter's "Alley"

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BOUND TO WIN—A Shock For Barney Postman!

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