

Montana Rides Again

A RAPID-FIRE ROMANCE BY EVAN EVANS

SYNOPSIS: The governor has stolen the emerald crown of the Lady from the church in Duraya, and the Montana Kid, with Mateo Rubira, plans to steal it back for the good Bishop Emiliano. Montana wants Rosita, daughter of the keeper of an inn, near the general store; suddenly she realizes that the man she is talking to is not José, a Mexican, but Montana, known and hated through Mexico as "El Keed."

Chapter 15 LOVE SCENE

There is plenty of trouble in you, Rosita," said Montana, "and in the emerald crown. I swore that no one would recognize me with such a dark skin. Besides, it has been a long time since I was in Duraya."

"I looked at your mare in the stable. She was too beautiful for an ordinary man to ride. I ran out to call back poor Benito. But he was already in the room."

"I wanted to hear noise. There was no noise. My heart stopped. I began to ask myself who you were. I began to half-remember. And you are El Keed!"

She was backing toward the door. "Why do you sneak away?" asked Montana. "Call out! Sing out my name, and there are twenty men downstairs who'll come fast enough with your father among 'em. If I knew, he's good enough Mexican to help out my throat!"

"That is true. And he must not know."

"Why did you send Benito Garza?"

"Why did you try to buy me like a dog?"

"Because you need plenty of money. With this much you could be a lady with a diuena in Mexico City."

She tossed back her head and caught her breath. "But this is a game, El Keed, and everyone who plays a game with you is sure to lose."

"Until I lose my head," said Montana. "In the fort of Duraya?"

"Or here in this inn. I'm losing it now, Rosita."

"Look at me, El Keed."

"I'm a pretty girl, am I not?"

"I've been remembering you all this time, but remembering was no good."

"But look, El Keed. I'm not too tall and not too short. I shall never be heavy. I shall never let fat swallow up my face. I'll fight fat like fire."

"You'll always be lovely, Rosita. I can dance and sing. Also, I can talk almost like a lady. Some day you may see."

"You can talk like an angel, Rosita."

"To be pretty is to work very hard and to keep smiling," said the girl. "Of course it is. But you've stopped smiling, Rosita."

"I'll never smile for you," said she. "Oh, I could look at you and let my heart jump out at my eyes. But how long would you keep it?"

"Forever," said Montana. "Bah! Your forever is a day or a week or a month. And then you would grow tired because you have to ride. There is always the other side of the mountain to see. And what girl could ride fast enough to keep up with you?"

She closed her eyes. "El Keed!"

"Ay!" said Montana. "Kiss me and tell me to forget everything I've said."

He leaned over until she could feel the shadow of his face. "No, friend," said he.

MONTANA, the next morning, sat at the table in his room and saw a peon carry in a tray loaded with savory roast kid such as Mexican alone can offer. There were tortillas, frijoles cooked with seven kinds of peppers, green and yellow and red. And a good red wine, also, to wash everything down. When he had eaten, Rosita appeared in the door.

"Was everything to the pleasure of the señor?" she asked.

He took up his guitar and rose from the table. He strummed the tight strings softly with the flat of his fingers, a breathing accompaniment hardly larger than a whisper, and the voice in which he sang could not have escaped even through an open window of the room.

The girl leaned her hand against the edge of the door and listened with a bowed head.

"You know the old songs," said the girl. "And a few new ones."

"Are you sad, Rosita?"

"Is there one more man in the world like El Keed?"

"I hope not, poor fellow," said he. "If I met one more like you, I should go mad."

"Think of this, Rosita. You are heart-whole and free. You are going to open for me, this evening, a door into the fort of Duraya. That's a good deed, considering what I shall try to do when I'm inside. And afterwards you'll have the five hundred dollars with which you can take five hundred steps among the grandes in Mexico City."

"Five hundred steps? You would hardly have to take five before you walked yourself into a carriage belonging to a governor, at least. That is long trail to see you again, if I live to come out of Duraya. I may have to ride as far as Paris. Would you know me, there?"

"That is what I keep saying and never believing. I've taken the money. I have been bought."

"Only for a good deed, Rosita."

"Do you mean that you would ride after me—if everything goes happily?"

"To the end of the world."

"But just now you would not have to ride. You would only need to walk three steps."

"And leave the general crown in the hands of that General Estrada?"

SHE lifted her head, finally, and gave him a long, long look behind which he could read, with a perfect understanding, that many devious thoughts were working through her mind.

"Well," she said, suddenly picking up the tray, "I've sent the messenger to your friend. If he comes up the back stairs, no one worth while will see him. This evening, if you knock as I told you on the small door, it will be opened. And then—God defend you!"

She went out like that, suddenly; and the kid stared for a long moment at the door which had closed behind her.

After that, he picked up the guitar and began to sing again, almost soundlessly, the love songs of old Spain, and Mexico, all of them sad.

But, afterwards, he stood for a long time in front of a window, looking out and up at the great, squat walls of the fort of Duraya. Some where a bugle was blowing thin and small, and he could always see the sentries walking their posts on the walls.

It was true that General Estrada was a warrior who knew his business in the world very well. If he had been given a province already picked bare as a stone, he had made up for that by robbing a church. And inside his fort one could be sure that all was working in perfect order, as a military machine ought to be.

It was a little later in the day when bare feet shuffled on the back stairs. Then Rubira came through the door, barefooted, with a huge sombrero of tattered straw on his head and the mustaches shaved from his face.

Even the scar had been covered by an unfading dye, and his lips bulged out in a way that distorted the entire expression of his face.

The towering bulk of Brother Pascual entered behind the outlaw. And Rubira, throwing himself down in a chair, drat plucked out of his mouth the rubber wadding which helped disguise his face. Then he sighed.

"You're sent for us, Montana. Here we are. There is the fort. And neither Pascual nor I as yet one step closer to an idea or a key that will open the place and give us a way to the emeralds. And here you lie at your soft ease, like a puma after a kill, till the dogs get wind of you and run you to bay. Is that wine in that bottle?"

He made inquiry with his nose and then poured the contents of the bottle, uninvited, down his throat. After that he made and lighted a cigar.

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Montana explains his plan, tomorrow.

cents a Mexican man was hired to guard it through the night. With my interpreter I walked a mile to a grazing camp, procured a mule, two adequate beds and put up for the night.

Net result, 38 miles in two days, about seven hours driving time and the rest from daylight to dark waiting for blasts and landslides to be cleared. But from my final night in the mountains, close to six hundred miles below the border, on into Mexico City was a delight and a wonder. A wonder in that it showed what completed sections of the mountain part of the Pan American highway will be like. A delight in the fact that it revealed a new and pleasing culture on the North American continent, superimposed on the oldest of American civilizations, the Aztec.

The story of the final mileage into Mexico City will be told in a fifth and concluding story of the series and then there will be a recapitulation story giving an exact finding as to the road with information the American tourist should have if he goes deep into Mexico.

Actor Dies

NEW YORK, Feb. 9.—(AP) Frederick Wards, 84, actor and author who played with Edwin Booth and John McCullough, and who was for three years the leading man of the old Booth's theater in New York, died last night. He had been ill for some time.

By Mail Tribune Staff

BYRD EXPEDITION QUILTS ANTARCTIC IN FOG BLANKET

S. S. JACOB RUPERT (enroute to Dunedin, N. Z., Feb. 9.—(Via Mackay Radio).—(AP)—Rear-Admiral Richard E. Byrd and his second Antarctic expedition steamed through the mouth of Discovery inlet at 2:35 a. m. today, taking leave of the Antarctic continent.

Both the Rupert and the Bear of Oakland passed through the inlet during a dense fog.

The mist swiftly enveloped the barrier cliffs as the continent was left behind.

The two ships traveled along together. The Bear was under steam with her square sails set to profit from a light westerly wind. Twenty penguins were captured yesterday on the inlet and were housed with 17 others from Little America, in a refrigerated room with a salt water pool.

The voyage from the Bay of Whales to the inlet was without incident, the Bear setting the pace. From time to time the ships were obliged to change course to avoid the streams of ice at the foot of the high barrier front.

SEATTLE, Feb. 9.—(AP)—A gain in production of about fifteen million board feet for the week ending February 2 over the previous week was reported by SIB and operating lumber mills in Oregon and Washington to the West Coast Lumbermen's Association today.

Regular Traffic In Stratosphere Near Says Post

LOS ANGELES, Feb. 9.—(AP)—A possibility that transcontinental airplane flights through the lower stratosphere may be started by airlines within three or four months was foreseen today by Wiley Post, holder of two round-the-world flying records.

Post expects to take off within a few days for a non-stop stratosphere flight to New York, which he believes he can make in less than eight hours, attaining a speed of some 350 miles an hour at altitudes of 30,000 to 40,000 feet.

Results and data obtained on this flight, Post said, will be used to guide Transcontinental and Western Air, Inc., in plans to establish regular stratosphere mail service.

ROME, Feb. 9.—(AP)—Tosca Piermonte, first wife of Enzo, declared herself hopeful today that her former husband would leave his American millionaire spouse and return to her.

"I am still his wife under Italian law," she said, after returning her from Genoa, where she saw the former pugilist. "When I met him in Genoa, he was very happy to see me and our child."

"There were tears in his eyes. We went to a cafe and spent some hours together. Yes, I still love him dearly. I think he loves me. He may come back to me, but not immediately."

An alarming decrease in the catch of fish along the North Carolina coast has caused fishermen in the Manteo section to organize in quest of government aid to tide them over the lean winter.

SALEM, Ore.—(UP)—Oregon has produced more record breaking Jersey cattle than any other state. Ivan H. Loughery, field representative of American Jersey Cattle club, told members of the Oregon Jersey Cattle club in convention here recently.

Loughery pointed to such champions as Golden's Chief Lady Mae, world champion in milk and butterfat production for 305 days, and owned by L. S. Hulbert, Independence.

MRS. FIERMONTE NO. 2 HYSTERICAL AS HUBBY MEETS FORMER WIFE

NAPLES, Feb. 9.—(AP) Mrs. Madeleine Force Astor Dick Fiermonte became semi-hysterical today when she learned that her husband, the former boxer, had met Mrs. Piermonte No. 1 in Genoa.

She repeated over and over that she could say nothing, that she knew nothing about the matter, and that she did not know what her plans would be.

Yesterday she had said confidently that she would meet Enzo on the French Riviera after they both left Italy.

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THE FAMILY ALBUM—PEACE AND QUIET

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



PEACE AND QUIET REIGNS OVER HOUSEHOLD, WITH WIFE SEWING UPSTAIRS, MILDRED WRITING LETTERS

HEARS SOMEONE CALL AND SHOUTS WHAT IS IT?

AFTER A MOMENT WIFE OPENS HER DOOR AND CALLS WHAT DOES HE WANT

EXPLAINS HE DOESN'T WANT ANYTHING HE JUST SHOUTED WHAT IS IT WHEN SHE CALLED

WIFE STARTS TO MAKE IT CLEAR SHE DIDN'T CALL BUT IS DROWNED OUT BY MILDRED SHOUTING DO THEY WANT HER

EXPLANATIONS BEGIN ALL OVER AGAIN WHEN WILF OPENS DOOR TO CALL HOW CAN HE STUDY WITH ALL THIS SHOUTING GOING ON

WHOLE FAMILY BEGINS EXPLAINING AT ONCE, GETTING NOWHERE AND RATHER IRRITATED WITH EACH OTHER

DURING BRIEF LULL IT IS DISCOVERED THAT THE ORIGINAL CALL CAME FROM YARD NEXT DOOR, AND PEACE AND QUIET SETTLE ON HOUSEHOLD AGAIN

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OREGON JERSIES LEAD IN BREAKING RECORDS

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S MATTER POP—



TAILSPIN TOMMY—Betty Decides to Stay



BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—On to Snevily's Ford!



THE NEBBS—Know Thyself



BRINGING UP FATHER



By Hal Forrest



By Edwin Alger



By Sol Hess



By George McManus



TRAVELOGUE CAR CONTINUES TOUR TO MEXICO CITY

(Continued from Page Seven)

one of our men who does little else back it up." Agreed, and I then saw the greatest exhibition of driving I have yet seen. The professional got into the car, put it in reverse and backed a mile, with clearances between the rock on one side and a fall on the other sometimes less than four inches. He didn't even change pace. When he had parked the car he was asked if he would permit me to give him a fee. He said "No, thank you."

Mexicans are like that. It was part of the day's work. Sleeping at Chapulhuacan, a start was made early the next morning, and by late afternoon thirteen miles had been accomplished. Driving was not so hard, but the waiting for cleared places in the road was long. Near dusk a landslide was encountered. The car was parked by the side of the road. For a fee of 14