

Montana Rides Again

A RAPID-FIRE ROMANCE BY EVAN EVANS

SYNOPSIS: The Montana Kid and Mateo Rubric have stolen the crown of Our Lady from General Estrada, who had stolen it from the church. But before Montana and Rubric can return the crown to the bishop, Rubric is captured. Montana and his half brother, Mateo, have to force Mateo to betray the general, and to force the general to betray the crown to the general a few hours back.

Chapter 37 TORTURE

ROSITA slunk out of the room, her hands pressed over her ears. "Is Rubric chained?" asked Estrada. "See, Excellence." Estrada, with a sense of luxurious content, surveyed the heavy chains that weighed down the hands of Rubric. There was an iron ball of twenty pounds weight hitched to his ankles, and the chain from the ball passed up by a special chain and was fastened to a collar that fitted close around that great neck. "Leave him, then," said Estrada. "I may need you again in a moment. Wait outside the room."

When they had withdrawn, Estrada said: "Rubric, the fact is that you worked with El Keed. You made a gringo your partner to steal from me today."

Rubric said nothing. There was merely a sort of idle curiosity in the eyes with which he scanned the face of the general. But in Estrada there was a mighty confidence. It was as large as his soul and rooted as deep. "When you stole the emeralds," said Estrada, "you took half and El Keed took half. You went by different ways. And, by God! you almost escaped, as he did. Bad luck stopped you. And yet, Rubric, it may not be such very bad luck, after all. You have fallen into the hands of a man of understanding."

"The poor have never had any reason to fear you. Now, then, I was once a poor man, myself. I remember those days very well. And I want to tell you that I can feel such a sympathy that I could give up all the noise and the reputation that will come from all over Mexico because I am the man whose grip at last closed on you. I could arrange matters so that you would be able to slip quietly away, Rubric, one of these nights. And all that I want you to leave behind for me is a little information—just a little information, Rubric."

"Something for nothing is not what a man can expect in this world, Rubric. But the payment I ask from you is very small. I begin by pointing out to you that there are certain jewels in the hands of El Keed—that El Keed was your partner in the work of this night. I merely ask you where I can find the gringo."

There was no answer. The general said: "You note, Rubric, that the man is not one of us. You note that he is a gringo?" Rubric smiled. And at that, with a touch of anger in his voice for the first time, the general continued: "If you will talk willingly you receive your freedom. But if you put me to it—if I have to tear the answers out of you, I shall have them, with blood dripping from every word of them. You hear me, Rubric?"

GENERAL IGNACIO ESTRADA could not believe his eyes. Yet he saw that the prisoner continued to regard him in silence, without greater emotion than a mild curiosity. The general leaped to his feet. "You fool!" he shouted. "Do you know what I am?" "A dog and the son of a dog," said Rubric.

Not for the first time that night, the rage of the general was so great that he remained calm. In a sense it would be better this way. More than once General Estrada had enjoyed putting his questions by force, but he had never had such a complete man to deal with. There was pleasure as well as answers to be extracted by the method he had in view. Therefore he almost wondered that he had, in the first place, offered any sort of a bargain to Rubric. The little cell in that old dungeon which was supposed to be disused was the lowest of the entire cellar of the building. It was so low that the river water, seeping aslant through the soil, kept oozing through the walls and covering them with mold. And on the floor there was slime from which sprang up a disgusting odor of decay. But though the irons were thick with

scales of rust, they retained a strong core. By pulleys, and by ropes which were fastened to the iron rings at the base of the opposite walls and also to the feet and the hands of Mateo Rubric, his body had been stretched taut. After that, in order to increase the strain, a low hurdle had been passed beneath his huge, naked body. He was now left alone with the general, who had for his equipment only some buckets of perfectly innocent water and a large leather funnel.

The general did not begin at once. He first admired the immense strength of the body of his victim, the great thighs and sinews pulled so tight that they stood out in a high relief. It reminded the general of the strings of a musical instrument, properly tuned. So was Rubric tuned, and Estrada felt that he knew how to extract the most exquisite pain. The general did not begin at once. He first admired the immense strength of the body of his victim, the great thighs and sinews pulled so tight that they stood out in a high relief. It reminded the general of the strings of a musical instrument, properly tuned. So was Rubric tuned, and Estrada felt that he knew how to extract the most exquisite pain.

"After so many days in the desert, after so many hot days with sand in the face and the throat, what could be better for you than a little water, Rubric?" asked the general. "And you shall have some. You shall have such a drink as you never tasted before. We begin with a drink, and afterwards we ask a few questions. But when you are willing to talk, you can signify by the lifting of one finger. For I shall be watching, my friend!"

WITH that, he pried open the jaws of Rubric; using a cold chisel as a lever for that purpose. Then into the gullet of the prisoner he forced the small end of the big leather funnel. Out of the nearest bucket he filled the funnel, and stepped back to wait. Gradually the liquid ran down into the body of Rubric. Stretched to rigidity as it was, the least pressure from within was a frightful agony.

It was that old torture called "the question," of all abominations the most terrible gift from brute to brute in the history of man. With that device, more frightful than all instruments for tearing flesh or bruising bones, murderers in the old days were given the pains of ten deaths before the law permitted them to expire under the merciful hand of the executioner.

And the governor, looking down at the immense bulk of his victim, filled the funnel again, and watched the liquid work like twisting flats inside the body of Rubric. He stood directly above the face of the man, so that Rubric could not help but look back into his eyes. He saw the sweat brighten the face of the outlaw, and the perfect agony brighten his eyes.

A thin tremor of joy, like sound, ran through the body and the heart of Estrada. He leaned still closer and forced his gaze into the eyes of Rubric. He could gain no real satisfaction in this manner, however. For the agony of Rubric did not seem increased by this personal supervision of his pains.

Estrada sent down another funnel of water. He could see the whole body of his victim begin to work now. And presently, almost beyond his hope, he could hear the voice of groaning agony. He thought for a moment that it was the appeal for mercy. When he saw that it was merely the involuntary reaction that accompanied breathing, the face of the general grew black with an almost virtuous anger.

Rubric had begun to wish for death. He wished for it more passionately than he ever had wished for another thing in his life. There was no part of his body that was not in pain. The frightful drawing of the ropes cut into his wrists, into his feet and ankles. Bones might be broken under the strain, but the numbness and the agony combined so that he could not even particularize the regions of the torment.

Sometimes it was ice that filled his veins, and then it was swelling fire. And then it was the pure essence of pain, and nothing else except that frightful and increasing nausea.

General Estrada was no longer calmly contented. He had begun to curse. More than once he beat the body of his victim with his fists. And every stroke left a great swelling purple mark on the tensed flesh. And then, lifting the eyelids of Rubric, he saw that the life was ebbing rapidly from his body. (Copyright, 1934, Harper & Brothers)

Montana, tomorrow, attends a feast.

AUTO OFFICIALS AWAITING RULING ON SIGNBOARDS

WASHINGTON — (UP)—Motorists and highway officials throughout the nation are watching the United States Supreme Court to see if it will sustain a recent decision by the Massachusetts Supreme Court upholding the right of that state to regulate outdoor advertising within "public view."

President Thomas P. Henry of the American Automobile association said the decision "is a landmark in a controversy which has been conducted on many fronts and in many states for more than a decade."

He said that if the high tribunal sustains the decision, it will have far-reaching effects on the future of American highways. "It will certainly lead to new efforts to solve what has been an urgent problem for a long time," Henry declared. "What is the recognition of the interests of commerce on one hand, and of safety, health and pleasurable travel on the other."

The court's decision answered 15 equity suits attacking the validity of regulations drawn by the Massachusetts Department of Public Works under legislation drafted in conformity with a constitutional amendment. The amendment provided that "advertising on public highways and on private property within public view may be regulated and restricted by law."

The suits questioned whether a state could, with constitutional warrant, prescribe the uses to which a man may put his land.

CELEBRATE BIRTHDAY MESSIAH COMPOSER

HALLE, Germany, Feb. 22.—(AP)—Halle, birthplace of Handel, immortal composer of "The Messiah" began Friday a three-day celebration of the 250th anniversary of his birth.

The composer's birthday, February 23, was ushered in with a midnight concert from the balcony of the picturesque city hall.

A program of Handel revivals will be presented throughout tomorrow and "The Messiah" will be rendered in the cathedral in the evening. The festival will close Sunday night.

Lighted Signs To Guide Fair Guests At San Diego 1935

SAN DIEGO, Calif., Feb. 23.—Motorists to the California Pacific International exposition, opening May 29 at San Diego, will find that every facility has been provided to guide them.

Brightly illuminated signs, reflector buttons and painted bulletins are being posted on major transcontinental highways.

The first unit, a sixteen by twelve foot sign at the junction of Highways Nos. 60 and 89 at Phoenix, Arizona, bears the inscription: "To San Diego and Los Angeles—Broadway of America All Year Fair Route Route to California Pacific International Exposition."

BRONZE BUST OF IRVINE UNVEILED

PORTLAND, Feb. 23.—(AP)—His co-workers and friends paid honor last night to B. F. Irvine, editor of the Oregon Journal, as a bronze bust of the editor was unveiled and presented to students of Oregon State college, an institution dear to him for many years.

Major Emeritus George L. Baker of Portland received the bust in behalf of the college. "This bust will typify," he said, "to students and alumni his (Irvine's) resilient step about the campus, symbolize his eloquence, his spontaneous humor and remind us of his unbounded confidence in Oregon, which some of us once thought visionary, but which has been proved realistic and prophetic."

Irvine was for 30 years a regent of the State college and now is a member of the state board of higher education.

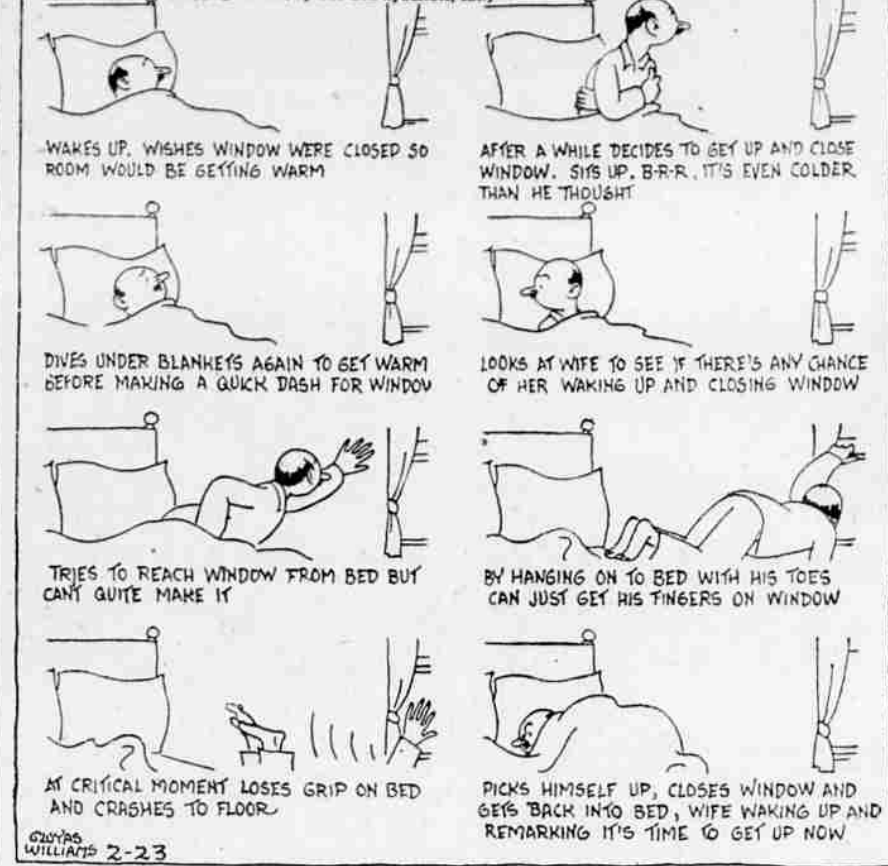
59,000 MALARIA DEAD IN CEYLON EPIDEMIC

COLOMBO, Ceylon, Friday, Feb. 22.—(UP)—Fifty-nine thousand deaths from Malaria had occurred in Ceylon during the current epidemic, it was estimated today.

Famine is increasing on the island. Some families are eating only once every two days.

Attention
Woodmen of World—All members of Camp No. 90 now make payments to Leland J. Knox, clerk, Room 303, Medford National Bank Bldg. Managers Camp No. 90, Woodmen of World.

SNAPSHOTS OF A MAN CLOSING THE WINDOW



SMATTER POP



By C. M. P...

TAILSPIN TOMMY—Skeeter Makes a "Hit!"



By Hal Forrest

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Complications?



By EDWIN ALGER

THE NEBBS—The Fashion Sheet



By Sol Hess

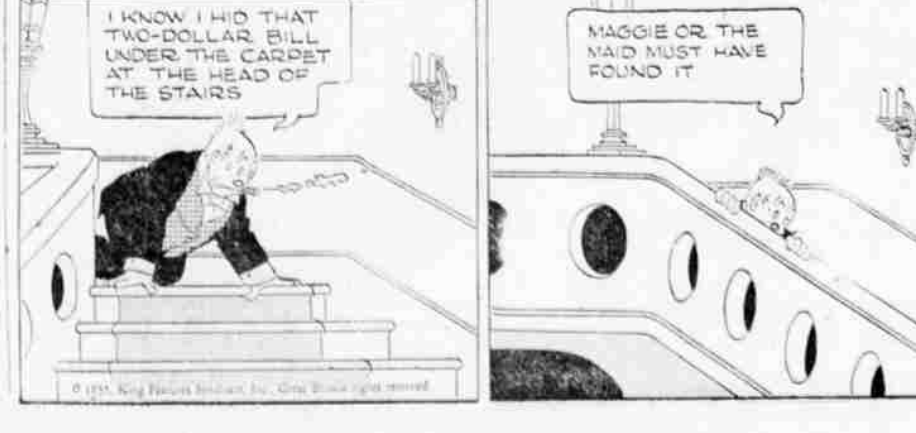
PARENTS TO READ SUICIDE'S LETTERS

LONDON, Feb. 23.—(AP)—Over 200,000 United States consul general in Naples, and his wife may learn from beyond the grave Monday why their daughters, Elizabeth, 23, and Jane, 20, plunged to death from an English airplane. Two letters were found in the empty cabin of the plane when the horrified pilot landed at Romford airport yesterday without his two passengers. They are being held for the coroner's inquest Monday. It was rumored that the notes would indicate the girls had decided to meet death as their lovers, two Royal flying corps officers, died a week ago—in a crash from the air to earth. The officers, Flight Lieutenant Henry Longfield Beatty and Fly-

CONSUELO SMITH GETS RAPID RENO DIVORCE

RENO, Nev., Feb. 22.—(UP)—Secretly divorced in eight minutes Mrs. Consuelo Vanderbilt Smith became one of the wealthiest unmarried young women in America today. Mrs. Smith, who is reported to receive an income of \$1,000,000 annually, divorced Earl R. T. Smith, New York socialite, on her charge of cruelty following the brief hearing behind the locked doors of Judge Benjamin F. Carter's courtroom. For those that wear but NOLUE A HORREI Ethelwyn B. Hoffmann

BRINGING UP FATHER



By George McManus