

Montana Rides Again

A RAPID-FIRE ROMANCE BY EVAN EVANS.

SYNOPSIS: Brother Pascual and the Montana Kid have entered the Valley of the Dead to find a way to release Mateo Rubris, condemned to die under the scorching sun. Pascual is made to work. He meets Mateo in the foul bunkhouse. El Reed is given a horrible test, and then rescued by Juan-Silva, master of the valley, as a guest. Juan-Silva has explained to Mateo that his opiate serving women are only waiting for the pleasure of seeing her master die.

Chapter 41

JUAN-SILVA'S DREAM

"BUT I shall not stay here in the Valley of the Dead until my life ends," Juan-Silva added. "All of this—all of these years—they are spent for a purpose."

"What purpose, señor?" the Kid asked.

"Shall I open my heart to you?" croaked Juan-Silva. "Shall I tell you that I am barely forty thousand pesos from my goal? And then I may leave the Valley of the Dead—I may sail over the sea—I may go again to Old Spain!"

"When I was a boy I was a shepherd in old Castile. The land of castles! You understand what I say? People make the shepherds sing songs. But all that I heard from my companions was cursing. But always there was something above us!"

He pointed upward. Heaven? wondered the Kid.

The old man continued: "There was always the castle on its rock. The trail wound up to it. But the castle was empty, and still we were all there. And as I walked with my sheep I used to look up and up, and I saw the castle and told myself that I would one day come to have a million pesos, and then I would buy that castle."

"You think, my friend, that these years in the Valley of the Dead have been a torment. But in the hot summer day I think of the castle blowing its head among the blowing clouds. And in the winter I think of how my hall will be in Spain, and the great fire of logs burning on the hearth."

He actually extended his hands before him and rubbed them together as though at this moment a winter chill struck through him with the memory.

And Montana said, bluntly, "Will you have long with your castle?"

"Ah," grinned Juan-Silva, "you look at the body and you see that it is like old leather, ready to crack apart with a little bending. But the place to look is in the eyes of a man. Men have lived twenty years past a hundred. Considering them, I still have a third of my years to spend, and they shall be spent in my Spain, in my valley, in my castle on the rock."

In the strange company of Juan-Silva, the days might have gone swiftly enough for the Kid, but he found his mind there was the constant anxiety about Rubris, about the friar.

When he felt that he had gained some foothold in the thought of the old man, he spoke to him one day when they were in Juan-Silva's carriage.

He took the Kid with him every day for a drive of inspection; and at last Montana said: "Señor, there are two friends of mine in the valley. Be kind, and let me see them."

"THE friar?" said Juan-Silva.

"He's one."

"My lad, think of the good he is doing!"

He gave his hoarse, croaking laugh.

And the Kid, looking down at his gripped hands, fiercely restrained the impulse to throttle the old fiend at once.

"But then you have a second friend, El Reed?"

"Rubris?"

"Ha! Rubris! But ask me for something I can give! The friar is a jewel to the other poor devils, and Rubris is a jewel to me!"

"Well," said the Kid, slowly, "I don't ask you to set him free, I ask to see him, only."

"To see him? To talk with him, you mean?"

"Yes."

"Ah, my son," said Juan-Silva, "why do you make me say no to you so often when I have nothing in my heart but a sense of kindness and even of gratitude to you? This much I know—that while I live will a man escape alive from the valley. But perhaps—three men together are a great strength!—perhaps you and your friends might work the miracle. They might pass the guard at the gate of the valley. They might

pass even beyond the reach of those."

Here he paused, and pointed to wards the wall of the valley. Along that wall three Indians were trotting their ponies. They looked clumsy, unwieldy, but the Kid knew that, once roused to action, man and horse would become as one savage beast to pursue an enemy.

And behind that trio the dust rose from the hooves of another set of three, and behind them still another appeared.

The Kid closed his eyes. And he began to think, not for the first time, of Rosita, far out there in the hills—but not far enough, because she would keep herself always close enough to one high point so that she could see what was happening in the Valley of the Dead. Or had she given up her watch before this? Had she retired towards the land of the living?

She might find enough of the sun-starved grasses to serve as fodder for the horses, but how did her own food last? Or what traps had she contrived for the lean jack rabbits, since she dared not shoot for fear the noise might reach some distant ear?

HE had lost his count of days. But time was like a hand pulling at him constantly, and the tenseness grew little by little until he knew that a breaking-point was near.

How he could help his friends—that was the chiefest of the miracles now. But he could see no step of his way towards it. He spent hours, in addition, wondering anxiously what that "great good" might be which Juan-Silva expected to draw from him. And then he learned.

Old Maria stood inside his door. "The master wants you," she said. She remained there, standing back to let him pass through the door, and as he went by she spoke: "Your hands are free. Why don't you use them? Why do you wait to die like a poor blind sheep?"

He could not answer this. He walked on before her into the patio of Juan-Silva, and as he stepped out into the blinding strength of the sun he saw the carriage and the four white horses already harnessed and waiting, though it was hardly time for the master to begin his daily drive. There were sweat stains on the four, moreover, and a servant was now rubbing down the spokes of the wheels.

When a spoke to the mazo who held the heads of the leaders, the man said, with a grin: "Great people have come—generals and great people!"

Old Maria still showed the way until she had opened the door into the main room of the house.

The Ki, as he entered, was gripped by guards who waited on either side of the doorway. Then he saw before him the cause. For in the middle of the room, at a table with Juan-Silva, were the lean, yellow-green face of Jack Lascar, peak-faced Major Alvarez, and above all the swinish jowls of General Ignacio Estrada.

All heads turned towards him as he stood there, made helpless by the hands that were fastened on his arms.

And Juan-Silva said: "Well, take your hands away from him. Even a great man like El Reed needs weapons. With his bare fists he can't do very much!"

So the Kid, made free, walked slowly on towards the table. Behind him, the guards were retreating from the room. Only old Maria remained to serve the guests, who already had before them little glasses of that fine, green-tasting fire, tequila.

It seemed to the Kid that he was advancing into an ethereal region, an atmosphere of pure hate. They were all smiling at him—Lascar, and the governor, and the major, and Juan-Silva.

Jack Lascar rose from his place and bowed to him stiffly.

"Your pleasure, Montana," he said, "ain't half as mine."

"You're sitting in at a big game, Jack," answered Montana. "If you've got the cards, d'you think that you've got the stakes?"

"We're three with one thought, partner," said Lascar. "That thought is about you!"

"Sit down, my son," said Juan-Silva.

The Kid took a place at the end of the table, and old Maria poured out a glass of tequila for him.

"You, my general," said the old man, "should be the first one to speak."

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Tomorrow, Juan-Silva makes an unholy bargain.

METHODS OF GOD MYSTERIOUS BUT PROVE ADEQUATE

Speaking Sunday night at the local Church of the Nazarene, from the topic "The Revealed Secrets of Christ," Fred M. Weatherford, pastor-evangelist, drew his text from I Tim. 3:16. "Without controversy great is the mystery of Godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

His message in part follows: "There is a mystery involved in the collaboration of all the successive phenomenal events in the life of Christ that will ever remain outside the pale of intelligible human understanding. In this world we will never understand just why God elected to save the world by the method He instituted. It is sufficient for us to know that the method He chose is adequate to the means of human satisfaction. The test of the method proved the effectiveness of the means."

"God was manifest in the flesh," Christ literally became God's voice to save the world. "The Word became flesh." Thought is unintelligible until it is intelligently expressed. Daily life in the abstract is unhelpful. Only through the revelation of His Son has He made Himself known to men. God has spoken unto us in His Son. "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us."

HOLD HEN PHEASANTS AT STATE FARM UNTIL HUNTING SEASON END

PORTLAND, March 12.—(AP)—The state game commission instructed today that female pheasants raised at state game farm must not be released until after the open season on pheasants has terminated.

By this simple expedient it is hoped to conserve and build up the stock and obviate the necessity of raising an excessive number of birds to the end that production and maintenance costs on the farms must be lessened.

The cost of raising the pheasants amounted last year to \$1.07 for each bird, the commission learned. Encouragement of establishment of holding pens by local clubs was extended by the commission.

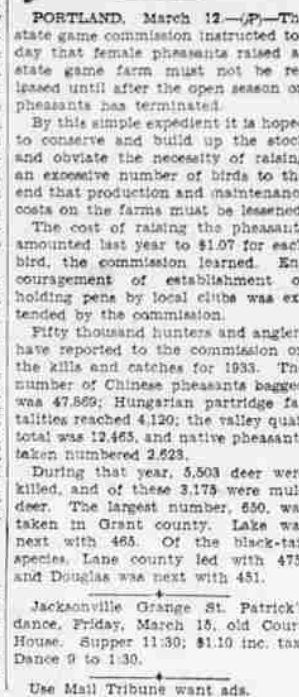
Fifty thousand hunters and anglers have reported to the commission on the kills and catches for 1933. The number of Chinese pheasants bagged was 47,809; Hungarian partridge 14,115; total was 12,465, and native pheasants taken numbered 2,623.

During that year, 5,503 deer were killed, and of these 3,175 were mule deer. The largest number, 550, was taken in Grant county. Lake was next with 465. Of the black-tail species, Lane county led with 475, and Douglas was next with 451.

Jacksonville Grange St. Patrick's dance, Friday, March 15, old Court House. Supper 11:30; \$1.10 inc. tax. Dance 9 to 1:30.

Use Mail Tribune want ads.

THE WORLD AT ITS WORST



WHEAT CHECKS DUE

PENDLETON, March 12.—(AP)—Wheat allotment checks amounting to nearly \$12,000 will arrive here next week for distribution to complying wheat growers. Another package of checks totaling \$60,000 will arrive soon after.

S-MATTER POP



TALKSPIN TO LARRY—Ade Parting



BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—A Brave Deed



THE NEBBS—Petition Wanted



BRINGING UP FATHER



S. P. MAY BATTLE TRAIN CAR LIMIT

SAN FRANCISCO, March 12.—(AP)—Angus D. McDonald, president of the Southern Pacific company, said today he is considering legal action to restrain the state of Nevada from enforcing its 70-car train limit law.

\$1 BARREL TAX URGED FOR BEER

SALEM, March 12.—(AP)—Further complicating the legislative snarl the senate committee on alcoholic affairs today reported back at least one sweeping amendment to the liquor revenue measure passed by the house.

A majority report of the committee signed by Senators Lee, McMonisack, Walker and Brasse recommended that the present tax on beer be increased from 62 cents to \$1 a barrel, and 10 cents of each dollar be rebated back to the cities and counties in proportion to their population. They would also divert 10 percent of all state wine taxes to the cities.

WASHINGTON, March 12.—(AP)—Repeal of the income tax publicity law was voted today by the house. The bill now goes to the senate where the publicity proposal was originated.