

HOLTON OF THE NAVY
A STORY OF THE FREEING OF CUBA

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SYNOPSIS.

Lieutenant Holton is detached from his command in the navy at the outset of the Spanish-American war and assigned to important secret service duty. While dining at a Washington hotel he detects a waiter in the act of robbing a beautiful young lady. She thanks him for his service and gives her name as Miss La Tossa, a Cuban patriot. Later he meets her at a ball. A secret service man warns Holton that the girl is a spy. Senior La Tossa chides his daughter for her failure to secure important information from Holton. She leaves for her home in Cuba. Holton is ordered to follow her.

CHAPTER IV.

A Frank Admission.

Holton's requisitions were promptly attended to, and by the time he had completed his packing at the club his tickets for the Florida Special had arrived.

He lunched with Billy Holt of the ordnance department, and then took a hack to the station, where he found the train made up. He had several magazines in his hands, and settled down to read with his feet luxuriously resting on the other seat of his section.

It was not many minutes, however, before he yawned broadly, and five minutes thereafter his magazine had tumbled from his hand and he was fast asleep.

As he fell into slumber two men approached the porter, and, throwing open their coats, displayed Secret Service shields.

While their English was perfect, they were surely of the Latin race. "Ya-as, sub—all right, gen'lmen." The porter was very much impressed.

"Ya-as, sub, go right along."

"As they approached Holton's section one of them stopped.

"Well, here he is," he remarked.

"Yes, and asleep, too. He's bound for Tampa for a surety."

"Yes; but now that he kindly sleeps, we might as well go farther." He bent down and carefully drew Holton's bag out into the aisle.

"Quick," he said, looking up, "the keys."

His companion drew from his pocket a large bunch of keys, and the man tried several without success. Finally, becoming impatient, he drew the bag to the seat behind Holton, and, drawing his knife, cut a long hole near the top.

Then, inserting his hand and arm, he fished about for several minutes, but without feeling anything other than wearing apparel and toilet articles.

Finally he straightened up and pushed the bag into the place whence it had been withdrawn with the frowning remark:

"Well, we'll have to let him go; we've done our part."

The two men spent some time in the station, framing a telegram in cipher, which, when completed, was sent to Tampa. Then they disappeared.

Holton in the meantime slept, and was still asleep when the train moved out. Awakened by a sudden turn of the cars, he started bolt upright and

looked about him with only a vague idea as to where he was. When he came to a realizing sense of his situation he looked at his watch, and then tried to resume his nap. But this time he did not fall asleep, and so, after fidgeting about for half an hour, he decided to go into the smoker.

He had some very excellent cigars in his grip, and, pulling out the bag, he leaned down to unlock it, when he saw the long hole which had been cut in the shining pigskin.

He regarded the damage for a second with rising anger, and then unlocked the valise and searched it thoroughly to see what had been stolen. For his only idea was that some sneak thieves had taken advantage of his slumber.

But, finding everything intact, he was obliged to cast about for another explanation. It was then that the

thought of spies occurred to him. Thus thinking, he rose from his seat and looked searchingly over the occupants of his car.

Almost the first person his eyes lighted upon was a girl in the section diagonally opposite him. One glance at her profile was sufficient to send Holton stumbling and gasping back into his seat.

The girl was Miss La Tossa. He thought for a moment. Oh, to be sure, he had risen to find out who had maltreated his bag. Then—

Good Heavens! Holton's hands flew to his head after the most approved manner of tragedy, and for a moment he tried to dismiss the surging thoughts from his mind. But no, the facts were large and luminous and not to be denied, and these facts were as follows: He had gone asleep in the car, his bag had been cut open and rifled. Now, then, Miss La Tossa had been designated by men who should know whereof they spoke as a spy. Miss La Tossa was the only other person in the car—he paused. He just would not think it, that was all.

So, picking up a magazine, he settled back in his seat and tried to lose himself in a serial story. For a while he kept his mind fairly well upon the tale, but eventually he found his thoughts straying to the girl in front of him. Eventually he flung the magazine aside and shifted about uneasily.

After all, was he playing the game as he should? Silent contempt was all right if it were only noticed. But silent contempt when the person against whom it is directed does not feel it, is hardly a satisfactory course to pursue.

With this thought, Holton arose from his seat and, with a self-conscious smile, bustled up to Miss La Tossa as though he had just discovered her presence.

"Why, of all things!" he exclaimed. "How do you do, Miss La Tossa!"

Her book fell to the floor and she looked up. "Mr. Holton!" she cried.

"The very same," laughed Holton, "and may I ask what strange circumstances have brought us together again?"

"I was just going to ask you that," Holton looked at her curiously, hardly knowing what reply to make, after such a check.

"Where are you going?" he inquired at length.

"To Tampa and thence to my home," she responded.

"Oh!" Holton shifted doubtfully. "I'm going to Tampa, too."

"Really?"

"I trust if I can be of any service you will avail yourself of my presence, Miss La Tossa," he added somewhat formally.

"Thank you. Won't you sit down? That's one service you can perform—talk to me; I'm dreadfully bored."

Holton seated himself obediently. "Beastly raw and windy, wasn't it, today?"

"Yes."

Then she laughed at him unaffectedly.

"What are you laughing at?"

"At your brilliancy. Oh, you are masterly! And yet," she added, "they told me you were so clever."

"I cannot help what people say," he began, and then, impatient at his obvious disadvantage, he changed the subject. "I had the most curious thing happen to me on this train."

He went on.

"Now," she laughed, "you promise to be really entertaining. What was it? Do tell me!"

"I boarded the car," said Holton, "and fell asleep—"

"and fell asleep—"

"I fell asleep, and while I slept some rascal cut a hole in my bag and rummaged through the contents."

He glanced at her sharply. But her face revealed nothing except polite concern.

"Indeed!" she remarked.

"Nothing was stolen," continued the officer, "and I cannot imagine why the thing was done."

"I think, perhaps, I can tell you," she said calmly. "You were attached to the Scorpion. She had been testing out some new torpedo. You came to Washington on the eve of war, and now you hurry away again to Tampa. Certain persons were desirous to know whether your departure concerned the Scorpion, and your bag was searched for orders or other writings that might throw light upon the subject."

"You are frank," Holton looked at her admiringly. "But how do you happen to know all this?"

"Because I'm a spy."

You can deprive a man of speech about as handsily as any person I ever knew. Of course, you're not a spy!"

"Do you really believe that?" Her eyes were serious now. "Do you?"

"Yes," he returned desperately.

"Then, Mr. Holton, I beg to inform you that I am a spy."

Holton received the girl's announcement with bowed head, and as he didn't speak she looked at him with defiant eyes.

"I am a Cuban. I am not a professional spy, as you may imagine. I fear I am not a spy at all in the high sense of the term. But I have tried to serve my country; I shall continue to do so. My country is in peril. I could be, I was born to be, I fear, a pleasure-loving butterfly. But I have found that there are ways in which my country has need even of poor me."

"Yes, but we need not be enemies," Holton's voice was very earnest.

She did not reply, and Holton added: "I applaud your motives, but surely you do not imagine Cuba to be in danger at the hands of the United States. I should think Spain would be your object, and if the United States, I ask you why?"

Still, she did not answer, and Holton, shrugging his shoulders, impatiently repeated his question.

"Why?"

"Do you know, Mr. Holton," she said after a moment's pause, "that every mile southward this train flies increases my happiness. It is so pleasant to feel you are nearing home."

"You have not answered my question, Miss La Tossa."

"And I do not intend to answer it." Indignation was coloring the naval officer's mood.

"Look here, Miss La Tossa, I like you. If the honest admiration of a man is anything to you, you can make the most of that statement. And so I ask you with the friendliest motives—why should you think it necessary to pry into the affairs of the United States?"

"I am an enemy to any enemy of my country, and by enemy I mean any person or group of persons whose good-will toward us may be questioned."

"Then you infer that the United States is not acting in a way to show good-will to Cuba!" Holton was thoroughly outraged. "Well, I'll be hanged if that isn't gratitude!"

"If you don't mind, Mr. Holton," she said sweetly, "I should like to read now."

Holton hustled out of the seat in a great huff.

"Oh, certainly, by all means; most assuredly," he burst out, and returned to his seat.

As he sat there thinking, the train stopped at a small station to change engines. When it started again the conductor came into the smoker calling Holton's name. He responded, and the conductor gave him a long, official appearing dispatch. The message ran as follows:

"Congress declared war today. Sampson will be ordered to blockade the Cuban coast. Troops will mobilize at Port Tampa. They will proceed thence in transports to Cuba. You will remain in Tampa, availing yourself of the Gnat [a small torpedo boat, built for a battleship to carry] to prevent any attempt to destroy transports. You will watch Cuban camp at Tampa for developments regarding matters already brought to your attention and will hold yourself in readiness to land secretly on Cuban soil to perform intelligence work with regard to location and movements of Spanish warships. You will work un-

winked slyly once more at the interested spectators.

"How do you keep from fallin' off the thing?"

"All you've to do is to climb on, start it going and keep going. Just try it. Here, get on."

The gawky young man took hold of the bicycle awkwardly and trundled it out to the middle of the road.

"It isn't quite so good a one as I've got at home," he said, as he mounted it and started down the road at a rattling pace, "but I can follow directions. It's only four miles to the next town. I'll be waiting you at the pump. Good-by."

And the smart young tourist in his knickerbockers trudged after him on foot.

"I know you could."

"An' make 'er go!"

"Of course."

"You're trying to fool me."

"Don't you want to try it?"

And the tourist in knickerbockers

der direct orders of the Secretary (Lons). ROOSEVELT."

"When!"

Holton sat back in his seat. So war had come. What would happen now? So far as he was concerned, Holton was likely to be well in the forefront. He was exalted, thrilled in every fiber of his being. He put the dispatch in his pocket and walked back through the train to his car. As he reached Miss La Tossa's section he found her folding up a bit of paper and putting it in her waist.

"Had she, too, received a dispatch? Holton did not doubt it. So he wasted no words.

"Well, it has come to pass," he said; "war has been declared, and within a few months Cuba will be as free as even you could wish."

"God grant it," she murmured.

Holton held out his hand.

"Good night, Miss La Tossa," he said.

She shook his hand cordially, lingeringly even.

"Good night," she replied.

Her eyes sought his, and for a moment it seemed as though she were going to speak. Then she turned away.

Holton waited an instant, and then he, too, averted his face.

"Good night," he said again, and went to his own berth, where the porter had completed his preparations.

CHAPTER V.

Mysterious Messages.

At Tampa Holton met and had breakfast with several army engineers who had been engaged in laying out camp sites in the pine woods back of Tampa. Then in the afternoon he proceeded on to Port Tampa, nine miles away. Ahead, rising into the blue sky like some dream palace in Sahara, the Tampa Bay Hotel, with its brick walls and gleaming silver domes and minarets.

It brought hope to his heart, and his steps were more springy as he hurried toward the immense structure. A negro boy took his bag as he entered the lobby, and the clerk smiled as he had not done since the winter through left the hostelry early in March.

After a bath and shave he set out to the bay to view his new command.

He found her in charge of an able seaman, Conroy, who welcomed him with enthusiasm.

Holton stepped aboard and chuckled when he recalled the comparatively large deck space of the Scorpion. The Gnat was almost a toy craft, and yet her regulation torpedo gun on the after deck, the machine gun forward, and the little conning tower, heavily plated with steel, gave adequate hint that she was by no means built for pleasure.

"It is likely we'll be busy before long, Conroy," he said. "I'll have my luggage brought down from the hotel and come aboard at once. How many men have we?"

"Only Howard, the engineer, and me," was the reply.

"All right. The fewer the better. I'll return shortly, and perhaps take her out."

Whereupon Holton stepped out with a blithe stride. In the lobby of the hotel he buried his face in a Washington newspaper and spent a half-hour absorbing the war talk of the day.

His reverie was interrupted by a hotel page, who handed him a card bearing the name Jose Rodriguez, Havana.

"Mr. Rodriguez wishes to know if you will do him the honor of calling upon him in his rooms," announced the boy.

"Rodriguez! And who is he?"

"He's a very wealthy Spaniard who has been here some time."

"Well, then, you will tell Mr. Rodriguez that if he wishes to see me, he'll find me here."

"Yes, sir, I'll tell him that," and the boy hurried away.

"I like the nerve of that," growled Holton, returning to his paper.

In a few moments the page stood before him again.

"Well!" Holton looked up impatiently.

"Mr. Rodriguez said, sir, that he does not wish to speak to you in the lobby, and that it will be best for you if you visit him as soon as you can in his rooms."

Holton flushed angrily.

"Say, boy, get this straight. You give Mr. Rodriguez Mr. Holton's compliments, and say to Mr. Rodriguez that Mr. Holton says for him to go to the devil."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

COMMERCIAL

Weekly Review of Trade and Market Reports.

Dun's Review says:

"Complaints are still heard of the retarding influences of mild weather, which restricts retail demand for seasonable merchandise. Holiday trade, however, has opened up well."

"Apprehension of labor troubles at textile centers, notably at Fall River, has been removed, at least for the present, but scarcity of operatives keeps production below distribution. An easier tendency is manifest in cotton goods for contract delivery, but spot values hold steady and recent inventories by Western jobbing houses indicated more prosperous conditions than a year ago."

Bradstreet's says:

"Unseasonably warm weather bulks large in the trade crop; and industrial reports this week. Warm, growing weather, projected into December, is also dulling the seasonable demand for coal and causing too rank a growth of winter wheat. Some farmers are being forced to mow their lands to prevent too heavy a growth, jointing, etc. Insect damage is also complained of, and real winter weather would be in a high degree acceptable throughout a wide area."

Wholesale Markets

NEW YORK.—Wheat—Spot firm; No. 2 red, 100c elevator domestic and 101 nominal f o b afloat; No. 1 Northern Duluth, 97 1/2 f o b afloat.

Corn—Spot firm; old No. 2 yellow, 85c nominal elevator domestic.

Potatoes—Wheat; Maine, \$2@2.15; European, \$1.25@1.60; Southern sweets, \$1@1.50.

Butter—Creamery extras, 34@35 1/2; seconds, 23@25 1/2; thirds, 22@23 1/2; creamery, held, seconds, 23@24; thirds, 22@22 1/2; imitation creamery, firsts, 21 1/2@22; factory, held, 21 1/2@22 1/2; packing stock, current make, No. 2, 19 1/4@20.

Eggs—Fresh gathered, extras, 44@45; extra, firsts, 42@43; firsts, 40@41; seconds, 37@39; thirds and poorer, 35@36; fresh gathered dirties, 25@27; refrigerator, lower grades, 21@26 1/2; dirties, 21@25; State, Pennsylvania and nearby henney whites, fine to fancy, 52@55; do, gathered white, 50@53; State, Pennsylvania and nearby henney browns, 46@47; do, gathered browns and mixed colors, 40@46.

PHILADELPHIA.—Wheat—Car lots, in export elevator, No. 2 red, spot and December, 93@93 1/2; steamer, 91@91 1/2; No. 3 red, 90@90 1/2; rejected "in," 87@87 1/2; No. 1 Northern Duluth, 97@98c.

Corn—Car lots for local trade, as to location, old, No. 2 yellow, natural, 53 1/2@54c; old, steamer, yellow, natural, 53@53 1/2c; kiln-dried, new, No. 2 yellow, 80 1/2@81 1/2c; do steamer, yellow, 79 1/2@80 1/2c; do, No. 3 yellow, 78@78 1/2c.

Oats—No. 2 white, 45c; standard white, 45@45 1/2c; No. 3 white, 44 1/2@45c; No. 4, 43@44c.

BALTIMORE.—Wheat—No. 2 red spot and December, 94 1/2; January, 95 1/2; February, 97.

Corn—Southern white corn on grade, sold at 74c per bu for prime tall white corn, and small lots of white on the wharf at 71 and 72 1/2c per bu.

Oats—No. 2 white, 45 1/2c; standard white, 44 1/2@44 1/2; No. 3 white, 44@44 1/2.

Rye—No. 1 rye, Western, domestic, 72@73c; No. 2 rye, Western, domestic, 68; bag lots nearby, as to quality, 60@70.

Hay—No. 1 timothy, \$18.50@19; standard timothy, \$18@18.50; No. 2 timothy, \$17@17.50; No. 3, do, \$15@16.50; light clover mixed, \$17@17.50; No. 1, do, \$16.50@17; No. 2, do, \$16@16; heavy, do, \$16.50@17; No. 1 clover, \$17@17.50; No. 2, do, \$15@16; no established grade, \$10@15; sample grade, as to kind, quality and condition, \$10@12.

Butter—Creamery, fancy, 34@34 1/2; creamery, choice, 31@33; creamery, good, 29@30; creamery, prints, 33@35; creamery, blocks, 32@34; ladies, 23; Maryland and Pennsylvania rolls, 21@23.

Cheese—Jobbing lots, per pound, 18@18 1/2c.

Eggs—Maryland, Pennsylvania and nearby firsts, 36c; Western firsts, 26; West Virginia, firsts, 35@36; Southern, firsts, 34. Re-cracked and re-handled eggs, 1/2c to 1c per dozen higher.

Live Poultry—Chickens—Old hens, heavy, 16c; do, small to medium, 15c; old roosters, 10; young, 18. Ducks, 14@15c. Geese—Nearby, 14@15c; Western and Southern, 13@14; Kent Island, 16@17. Pigeons—Young, per pair, 25c; old, 25. Guinea Fowl—Old, each, 40c; young, 62 1/2. Turkeys—Young, 10 lbs and over, per lb, 18@19c; old, 18; rough and poor, 12.

Live Stock

CHICAGO.—Hogs—Bulk of sales, \$7.35@7.65; light, \$6.95@7.50; mixed, \$7.30@7.70; heavy, \$7.35@7.70; rough, \$7.35@7.45; pigs, \$4.75@6.90.

Cattle—Beeves, \$6.70@9.65; Texas steers, \$6.70@7.80; stockers and feeders, \$4.90@7.70; cows and heifers, \$3.40@3.85; calves, \$7@11.

Sheep—Native sheep, \$4.15@5.50; yearlings, \$5.50@7; lambs, native, \$6.20@7.90.

Daily Thought.

I am a part of all that I have met.—Tennyson.

ABLE TO FOLLOW DIRECTIONS

Seemingly Unsophisticated Youth Traveled in Comfort While the Smart Tourist Walked.

"I suppose if I should try to ride that machine I'd break my neck," said a gawky-looking fellow as he looked at the bicycle against the lamppost.

"No you wouldn't," replied the bicyclist, winking at the bystanders.

"It's the easiest thing in the world to do. Anybody can ride one of these machines if he only thinks so."

"I want to know!" exclaimed the gawky youth. "Dye think I could stay on it if I got on?"

"I know you could."

"An' make 'er go?"

"Of course."

"You're trying to fool me."

"Don't you want to try it?"

And the tourist in knickerbockers

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