THE CENTRE REPORTER. CENTRE HALL PA

didn't I?"

rassed."

respect."

not ?"

hospitality."

man," Roberta faltered.

"Nonsense. It was a grand joke-

and far between in this part of the

world. That rascal Dingle had been



CHAPTER VI-Continued -8-

"How dare you presume to address me?" Roberta cut in icily. "I am not aware that I have the dubious honor of your acquaintance, sir, although I believe you are my uncle's slayer, Jim Higgins."

He stared at her without rancor, nor did the pleasant smile that had crinkled his undeniably good-looking countenance fade the slightest. Roberta made swift appraisal of him. He was about six feet tall, strongly built, lithe and graceful. His complexion was a reddish brown, a most agreeable color-scheme when taken in conjunction with crinkly jet-black hair and large, black, snappy eyes, "Black Irish," Roberta reflected, noting his thick, almost snubby nose, the broad upper lip and the square jowls. "The very worst kind of Irish !"

"Yes, I am Jim Higgins," Don Jaime admitted, without a particle of shame or embarrassment, and from the inflection of his voice, from a certain faint clipped manner of slurring his consonants, Roberta knew that Spanish was this man's tongue. "It was my misfortune to be the instrument of an inscrutable fate that wafted your delectable uncle to his mansion in the skies."

""Has anybody ever told you what a cool scoundrel you are, Mr. Higgins? Do you enjoy killing men?"

"Oh, no! Not even in self-defense." Roberta had a feeling that she was not going to make much progress in the face of the man's debonair indifference.

"What do you mean by trying to shoot my foreman?"

"Why, it's the open season on sheepherders. We're allowed one a day, and old Dingle Bell is the first I've flushed in a week."

"He'll be the last you'll flush in many years if there is such a thing as law and justice in Texas."

"Oh, we're very law-abiding, indeed! Very few of us on this side of the Rio Grande kill for pleasure or profit. You're going to have me arrested, I presume."

"I certainly am."

"Well, when the warrant is issued the sheriff will telephone me about it and tell me to come in and talk it over. By the way, what are you doing around here, anyway? Is it your intention to camp all night on this platform or were you expecting somebody to call for you? Is it possible that in a moment of exuberance I frightened Dingle Bell away and thus deprived you of your transportation?" "No, I'll excuse you of leaving us stranded. Mr. Dingle would have departed in a little while, but not so precipitately. I do not mind telling you that we are waiting for Don Jaime Miguel Higuenes to send a car over for us. Do you know Don Jaime?"

have an opportunity to withdraw from | barns and on to the ancestral home | call him, and instantly I was jealous. | glance fixed on Don Jaime with a your peppery presence, so with your permission, senorita, I shall ride swiftly to the humble abode of this fellow Higuenes and tell him to beat it over here like the devil with his car." Again his hat swept the platform, before he climbed down and limped

to his horse, spoke a few words to the boy who was waiting there for him, and set off down the road at a smart gallop.

"There goes the handsomest, most cultured, most interesting ruffian any woman will ever meet," Roberta declared. "I do hope his lameness will not be permanent."

"He's marvelous, gorgeous," breathed Mignon. "I wonder why he doesn't go in the movies."

"Mr. Higgins ought to get along beautifully in that profession," Roberta sighed. "He certainly has admirable control of his temper. I couldn't seem to insult him."

In about an hour a handsome sedan appeared, accompanied by a speed wagon. Both were driven by youths of undoubted Aztec ancestry. Without a word they fell upon Roberta's baggage and stowed it in the speed wagon, whereupon the driver of the sedan approached, hat in hand and said:

"The senor Higuenes sends thees car and the compliments of heem to the senorita. Don Jaime tell to me to say to the senorita he ees ver' sorry he have make the bonehead play not to come before. Jus' now Don Jaime is ver' busy weeth wash heemself and make the shave for deener."

Roberta smiled at the naive youth's report and entered the car with Mignon. "I wonder what Davy Crockett saw in Texas," she mused. "He died for It !"

As the party reached the summit of a low range square mile after square mile of smiling green valley lay outspread before them. Evidently their chauffeur was aware of the beauty and comfort of the scene, for he stopped the car to give them opportunity to enjoy it.

"All thees," he said with a wave of his hand and a proprietary air, "be- nicest room in the house. It was for-

of Don Jaime Miguel Higuenes. They halted under a red-tiled porte-cochere. and Mrs. Ganby came out to welcome them.

"Don Jaime begged me to present his excuses for his failure to meet you, Miss Antrim," she explained. "He has been working cattle with his men the past two days-they're shipping from Valle Verde station-and Don Jaime has only just gotten home and is busy making himself pretty. And this young lady with you is-"

"My maid, Mignon, Mrs. Ganby."

"You are fortunate to have brought her with you. Don Jaime has Mexican or Indian maids-I don't know which-to care for the house, but until I came he had nobody to train them and everything has been at sixes and sevens. I've been here about six weeks and am gradually getting order out of chaos. Do you speak Spanish, Miss Antrim?"

"Unfortunately, no."

"The servants understand nothing else. I am studying the language and am beginning to make myself understood. You have a modern bath with hot and cold water. Dinner is at six." "Does Don Jaime dress for dinner?" "He puts on his coat, even when we haven't got company," Mrs. Ganby laughed. "In this part of Texas men

readily acquire the comfortable shirtsleeve habit." "What a lovely room!" Roberta ex-

claimed, as she entered. It was a large room, and furnished in an oldworld elegance. In fact, Roberta, who knew something about such things, was satisfied that every article of furniture in the room had come from Spain and was at least three hundred years old. The windows opened onto the patio, and the scent of flowers

filled the room. A cluster of roses occupled a vase on the dressing table. "Don Jaime plucked these and

placed them here himself," Mrs. Ganby informed her. "He was in great distress at having you arrive a day earlier than we expected you. I fear you didn't figure your time-table cor-

him?" "Don't," Don Jaime suggested meek-·ly. "I'll do it. Give me Uncle Bill's rectly. Miss Antrim. Yes, this is the address and I'll send him a wire to-

pitality as a gag to free speech."

mover. How shall I explain it to

BEGINNING THE STORY, FOR NEW READERS

Roberta Antrim, beautiful Eastern society girl, who lives with her uncle, William B. Latham, known as "Crooked Bill" because of his amusing slyness, receives a telegram from Jaime Miguel Higuenes, owner of the Rancho Valie Verde, in Texas, informing her her Uncle Tom Antrim has died a violent death. At the advice of Glenn Hackett, who is in love with her, Roberta plans to go to Texas to protect her interests, since she is her uncle's sole heir to thou sands of sheep which Antrim had grazed on land controlled by Don Jaime. Don Jaime, unmarried, half Spanish and half Irish, is attracted to Roberta's picture in a magazine. Antrim is warned to take his sheep off Don Jaime's ranch Antrim ambushes Don Jaime. The young ranch owner is wounded and Tom Antrim killed. On his b found instructions to notify Miss Roberta Anirim in the event of his death. Another Higuenes' telegram tells Ro Lerta her uncle was killed by Jim Higgins (Don Jalme's anglicized name). Lathan tells her his fortune is in danger, and she decides to go to Texas to get Antrim's estate, to save it, "Crooked Bill" concets a scheme he hopes will forward Hackett's courtship. Don Jaime, actuated chiefly by his romantic interest in the pictured Roberta, allows the Antrim sheep to continue to graze on his ranch. At the station of Valle Verde Roberta meets Dingle, Tom Antrim's foreman, who points out Don Jaime as her uncle's slayer, then flees. Roberta, watching "Jim Higgins," sees him shoot she thinks, at Dingle.

So I tried to kill Dingle Bell-accordsort of maternal adoration, "That ing to you-although what I really boy requires manhandling," Don Jaime tried to do was to puncture his tire. assured her. "That atrophied leg I thought if I could succeed in frightmust be built up with exercise, but we ening him away before he had an opmust proceed slowly. Good little lad, portunity to tell you too much-the Robbie, but his doting ma has given things I wanted to tell you myselfhim an imperfect notion of the sacred-I would be proving myself a very ness of a contractual relation, I fined smart young man. Well, I succeeded, him a dollar, and that's mighty hard on Robble, but"-he looked down at Mrs. Roberta's face went scarlet. "I'm Ganby with his kindly grin-"I have a so terribly ashamed - so - embarwire-haired fox terrier pup coming for him tomorrow. If Robbie should ever lose confidence in me I'd be out and I assure you grand jokes are few of luck."

> He poured cocktails and served them. "Ladies! To your beautiful



Man," Roberta Faltered. eyes." he toasted, and added to Ro-

"My Uncle Bill will think it very, berts. "And confusion to your old very strange of me to accept the hos-Uncle Bill!" pitality of my Uncle Tom's-ah-re-

> gled with laughter. She had suddenly visualized Glenn Hackett standing beside Don Jaime Miguel Higuenes and the comparison was-well, Roberta laughed!

To be called an idiot by one's guest is not exactly a compliment, nevertheless it bucked Don Jaime Miguel Higuenes up considerably. "I've never

Long Years of Service

Warren county, New Jersey, points with great pride to a stretch of roadway which bears the proud title, "First concrete road laid in New Jersey." This stretch of road is just twenty-five years old this year and to the motorist traveling over it, that would not be apparent were it not for the sign which tells its ago. The road is in as good condition as that attached to it, although the attaching sections are much more recent of installation,

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Hazardous Income

"Has your father discovered that I make my living writing jokes?" "No, but, anyway, he told me he didn't intend to support you."-Des

Moines Register. COLDS TILL HER TIP

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away poisonous wastes which make you suscep-tible to colds, dizzy spells, headaches, bill-ousness. Works

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"TUMS"

that will comfort you.

druppist's.

"Idiot !" Roberta gasped, and stran-

"I've known him all my life."

"What sort of man is he?"

"We-ell, average, I'd call him. Just a fair sample of a greaser. Folks in this country don't seem to mind having him around. Are you certain Don Jaime knew you were due here today?"

"Why, I wrote him a week ago." "Well, the hair must have slipped somewhere or he'd have had a car here to meet you-yes, and a light motor truck for your baggage. One thing Higuenes prides himself on is his punctuality and hospitality. I'm very much afraid, Mees--1 mean Miss-Antrim, that unless I get word to Don Jalme that you're here, the station



"How Dare You Presume to Address Mo?" Roberta Cut in Icily.

master will have to take you in. And I know he isn't equipped for company.'

Roberta's troubled gaze met the young man's with just a hint of tolerance now. "I suppose you have your humane moments, Mr. Higgins, Remember, however, I am certainly going to prosecute you for the attempted murder of Mr. Dingle, so don't tangle yourself up in rash promises to render first aid. You may send word to Senor Higuenes if you wish, but all it will avail you is my thanks."

"You may even omit the thanks." he

long to Don Jaime Miguel Higuenes.] Maybeso I theenk two hundred t'ousand acres in all. Mira, senorita. On the mesa you see the beeg white ha-Don't, hurry." cienda weeth the red roof. That is the home of Don Jaime. He is my good boss."

"You are very fond of Don Jaime?" Roberta queried.

"11-1, senorita, 1 die for heem. My father she's die for heem!"

Roberta was impatient to see Don Jaime Miguel Higuenes for whom men died so gladly. She gazed across the lovely valley and thought.

"All those poor, simple people are sheltered under the mantle of his philanthropy. He is the master, the gentle despot whose slightest wish is their law. He is a feudal baron. Roberta, you're trembling on the brink of a great adventure. How I would enjoy having Glenn Hackett meet and know a man like Don Jaime Miguel Higuenes !"

The car rolled across wooden bridges over irrigation canals; and on the borders of a distant field Roberta saw a long queue of teams drawing mowers. Dozens of hay wagons were loading and stacking the new-cut alfalfa hay; perhaps a hundred men were raking and piling it. The fragrance of the harvest came pleasantly to the girl's senses and it occurred to her that this valley had once been dry and barren until metamorphosed into a vast garden by men of vision, courage and faith. To her it seemed a big, worth-while thing to have donesomething Homeric. There was drama in it-poetry, too. She knew no little man had done this, and that none but a big man could carry on with it. And her impatience to meet Don Jaime Miguel Higuenes increased.

They swept up through the Indian pueblo and were barked at and pursued by incalculable numbers of dogs of assorted breeds. "If Glenn Hackett were the overlord here he would banish those curs," Roberta thought, "and justify his act on the ground of efficlency and sanitation. But these peones must have their dogs and doubtless Don Jaime realizes that. Let them have dogs-millions of them. What affair is it of his? I dare say he has dogs of his own."

Assorted brown children, in varying degrees of nudity, stared and shouted at them; fat brown women, seated on door-steps or hanging over fences in homely gossip, bowed or curtsied: then they were through the pueblo and rushing up a gentle slope, through an replied brightly. "I am delighted to avenue of oleanders, past great white you-and then I saw Dingle Bell, as 1 for every eight of land. Connecticut

merly Don Jaime's mother's room. | night. That will give him an oppor-Dinner will be served shortly after you have tidled yourself up a bit. Roberta chose to wear that night

the dress, shoes and stockings which had precipitated that unfortunate proposal on the part of Glenn Hackett, and was unusually critical of the manner in which Mignon prepared her bobbed hair. She wanted to look her best when she should meet Don Jaime Miguel Higuenes,

At last she was ready and made her way down the corridor hall. Mrs. Ganby led her into Don Jaime's spacious living room.

At a small sideboard, his back toward her, stood her host. He was arrayed in flannel trousers and white buckskin shoes, a soft white silk shirt, a black silk bow tie, and a blue serge coat. Roberta was impressed by the extreme youthfulness of his figure. for she had anticipated a very much older man and, for a reason she had no ground for entertaining, she had expected him to be short and portly. Mrs. Ganby spoke: "Don Jaime !" He turned. "This young lady is Miss Antrim, Don Jaime." Don Jaime bowed. "You are welcome to my poor house, Mees Antrim,"

he said evenly, and advanced to take her hand. "Jim Higgins !" she cried furiously.

"If you insist upon applying the literal translation of my monicker, James Michael Higgins is as correct as Jaime Miguel Higuenes. Dear me, can't you see the map of Erin on my face, Miss Antrim?"

Her eyes blazed at him. "You're a positive devil," she whispered as she reluctantly surrendered her hand to his. "Why did you deceive me at the station to day?"

"Dear Mees Antrim, I did not deceive you. You asked me if I were Jim Higgins and I admitted it. Then you started to work on me and I had a great curiosity to see how far you would go."

"If I had known you were Jaime Miguel Higuenes I would have had Dingle take me over to my late uncle's ranch."

"I feared the son of a gun was planning to take you there. You and your maid are the first women to get off at that station in a year, and when from a distance I observed you, I suspected your identity, suspected that for some reason you had arrived a day earlier than that named in your letter. So I started across to interview

tunity to register his kick tomorrow. If it seems to you then that you ought to leave Valle Verde my car will be at your disposal."

He called Mrs. Ganby and when she entered Bobbie was holding to her hand. "I rode all the way home with Ken, Jimmy," he shouted, "and I'm not tired." Then he saw Roberta and removed his hat. Don Jaime formally presented the boy, then snapped his fingers at Robbie and the little chap limped over to him.

"Well, old hoss," Don Jaime greeted him, and scooped the boy up in his great left arm. "We had a fine ride today, didn't we? But you disobeyed orders, Robbie. I told you to ride home with the cook in the chuck wagon and lead your pony behind. You've overdone it, son. What are we going to do about that, ch?"

Robbie looked distressed. "But I felt so good, Jimmy-" he began.

Don Jaime shook him and set him down. "I put you on the payroll at ten dollars a month. At the end of the month you'll collect nine. You are fined a dollar for disobedience of orders."

The boy threw his arms around Don Jaime's waist and looked up at him almost tearfully. "Are you angry with me, Jimmy?" "Of course not. Do you think I'm

a short sport? But an order's an order and given to be obeyed. You promised to obey me, son, and you must learn that a promise must be kept. Understand? No matter what happens, a man must keep his promises. It's costing you a dollar to learn that, and the lesson would be cheap at double the money. Run along now and wash your face and hands and get

ready for dinner." Roberta caught the boy's mother's

Many Square Miles of "Liquid" United States

The firm land area of the United j has nearly 100,000 acres of water to States is about 3,000,000 square miles; beautify its 3.000,000 of land. its water area, not counting the Great Minnesota, with 2,500,000 acres of Lakes, amounts to more than 50,000 water, leads all the states in water square miles-better than one mile area, while if you count the 40,000 of surface you'd have to swim across

square miles of Great Lakes surface, for every 60 you could walk over. over which Michigan claims sovereignty, she has almost as much water Some of our states have far more as land area .-- W. B. Courtney in Colwater area than Delaware or Rhode Island has land area. The District of lier's. Columbia has one square mile of water

Conscience and slumber are akin.

been called an idiot before." he retorted gravely. "Yet, for some strange reason, I feel pleased."

"I didn't mean you, of course, Don Jaime," Roberta hastened to assure him. "I was thinking of somebody else just then." "An idiot?"

"On the contrary a very intellectual, splendid gentleman of my acquaint ance."

"Well, I'm glad you've pigeonholed him at last, whoever he is. I don't like him. And I agree with you that he'd never do for Texas. Not flexthe enough. What sort of fellow is your Uncle Bill?"

"Oh, Uncle Bli's human-very. He was born and raised in Texas. Spent most of his early life in this state, in fact."

"In what line of endeavor?" "Cows."

"On a large scale?" "Oh yes!"

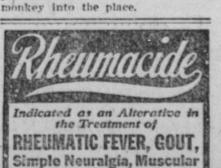
"I should know him or of him, then, What's his last name?"

"Latham. William B. Latham." Don Jaime Miguel Higuenes set down his glass and stared at her. "Is Uncle Rill slightly lame in his of hind leg-just a suspicion of a limp?"

"Yes. Do you really know my Uncle Bill?"

"No. I do not. But my late father knew him very well. They got into an argument once as to which was the best for the country-the gold standard or Bryan's sixteen-to-one silver idea. Your Uncle Bill was an outcast in Texas, at the time being a Republican. My father, of course, was a Democrat. In their argument they waxed personal, and finally your Uncle Bill called my father a d-d anarchistic greaser. So my father yelled : 'Hurroo! Eaugh-a-ballagh !' and hit your Uncle Bill on the nose and canted it five degrees to the southeast. My parent then ran to his horse to get his gun, which he wore in a pommel holster, and on his way there your Uncle Bill shot his hat off. This was getting personal, so my father retallated by shooting your Uncle Bill in the heel."

"Why, Uncle Bill never told me about that, Don Jaime!" (TO BE CONTINUED.)



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