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guards to ward us more carefully.

In this way, then, we walked along a path between two fields of vine, and passed down the straggling street of the village, which the guerillas had occupied, and brought up in a little plaza which faced the white-walled chapel.

In the turret a bell was tolling dole-

THE GUERILLA BARED HIS TEETH LIKE AN ANIMAL.

fully in slow strokes, and as the sound came to me through the heated air, it

did not require much imagination to

frame it into an omen. In the center of the plaza was a vast magnolia tree,

filled with scented wax-like flowers, and

splashed with cones of coral-pink. We drew up before the piazza of the

with gilttering teeth, and fingers lemon-colored from cigarette juice.

trial, such as it was, began.

I must confess that the proceedings

astonished me. Animus there certain-

all the harshness of war. Had we been Chilians in the Chilian service this might have been pardonable. But we were aliens from across the sea; were freebooters, fighting not for a country.

Garcia looked towards us expectant-

PART II.

I shrugged my shoulders. It seemed

useless to say anything. Methuen said: "Look here, sir; you've got us, there's

no mistake about that. It seems to me you've two courses before you, and they are these: Elther you can kill us,

more or less barbarously, in which case

you will raise a most pestilential hunt at your heels, or you can put us up to

ransom. Now, neither Calvert, here, nor myself are rich men, but if you chose to let us go with sound skins, we're prepared to pay ten thousand Chilian dollars aplece for our passports. Now how does that strike you?"

Carrie finished rolling his eigenratic

Garcia finished rolling his cigarette, and lit it with care. He inhaled a deep breath of smoke. "Senor," he said (the words coming out from between his white teeth with little puffs of vapor)

"you do not appear to understand. You fight as a soldier of fortune, and I am merely in arms as a patriot. I am no

nuckster to traffic men's lives for money, nor am I a timorous fool to be seared into robbing a culprit of his just

"Very well, then," said Methuen,
"murder the pair of us."

"It's made for a gallows," said Me-

"Precisely," said the guerilla, "and it will be used as one inside of ten min-utes. I shall string one of you up there

by the neck to dangle there between heaven and earth. The other man shall have a rifle and cartridges, and if,

standing where he does now, he can cut with a bullet the rope with which his friend is hanged, then you shall both

"I hear you say it," said Methuen. "In other words you condemn one of us to

be strangled slowly without chance of

GARCIA SPRANG TO HIS FEET.

thuen.

PART I.

PART I.

Methuen wriggled himself into a corner of the hut, rested his shoulder against the abode wall and made himself as comfortable as the rawhide thongs with which he was tied up would permit. "Well, Calvert," said he. "I hope you quite realize what an extremely ugly hole we're in?"

"Garcia will hang the pair of us before sunset," I replied, "and that's a certainty. My only wonder is we haven't been strung up before this."

"You think a rope and a tree's a certainty, do you? I wish I could comfort myself with that idea. I wouldn't mind a simple gentlemanly dose of hanging. But there are more things in Heaven and earth, Calvert—" He broke off and whistled drearily. I moistened my dry, cracked lips, and asked him huskily what he meant.

"Torture, old man. That's what we're being saved for, I'm very much afraid. A Feruvian guerilla is never a gentle-minded animal at the best of times and farcia is noted as being they firm the street as the street of times and farcia is noted as being the firms.

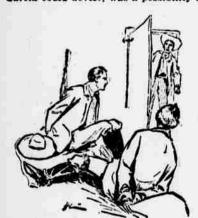
afraid. A Feruvian guerilla is never a gentle-minded animal at the best of times, and Garcia is noted as being the most vindictive fellow to be found between the Andes and the Pacific. Then, if you'll kindly remember how you and I have harried him, and shot his men and cut off his suplies, and made his life a torment and a thing of tremors for the past four weeks, you'll see he had got a big bill against us. If he'd hated us less, he'd have had us shot in sight when we were caught: as it is, I'm afraid he felt that a couple of bullets in hot blood wouldn't pay off the score."

'If he thinks the matter over calmly he'll not very well avoid seeing that if he wipes us out there'll be reprisals to be looked for.

"And a great lot," replied Methuen, grimly, "he'll care for the chance of those. If we are put out of the way, he knows quite well that there are no two other men in the Chilian service who can keep him on the trot as we have done. No, sir. We can't scare Garcia with that yarn. You think that be-cause we're still alive, there's hope. Well, I've sufficient faith in my own theory for this: if anyone offered me a shot through the head now, I'd accept it and risk the chance." "You take the gloomy view. Now the man's face is not altogether cruel.

There's humor in it." "Then probably he'll show his fun-niness when he takes it out of us," Methuen retorted. "Remember that punishment in the Mikado? That had something humorous' in it. Bolling

oll, if I don't forget." Involuntarily I shuddered, and the raw-hide ropes cut deeper into my wrists and limbs. I had no great dread of being killed in the ordinary way, or I should not have entered the Chilian army in the middle of a hot war, and I was prepared to risk the ordinary woundings of action in return for the excitement of the fight. But to be caught, and held a helpless prisoner. and be deliberately tortured to death by every cruelty this malignant devil Garcia could devise, was a possibility I



THE EARLESS MAN SWUNG INTO

had not counted on before. In fact, as the Peruvians had repeatedly given out that they would offer no quarter to us English in the Chillan service, we had all of us naturally resolved to die fight-ing rather than be taken. And in-deed this desperate feeling paid very deed this desperate feeling paid very well, since on two separate occasions when Methuen and myself had been cornered with small bodies of men, and would have surrendered if we could have been guaranteed our lives, as it was we went at them each time so furiously that on each occasion we broke through and escaped. But one thinks nothing of the chances of death and maining at those times. There is a glow within one's ribs which scares away all trace of fear.
"I suppose there's no chance of res-

"None whatever," said Methuen, with a little sigh. "Think it over, Calvert. We start out from the hacienda with an escort of five men, sing out our adios, and ride away to enjoy a ten days' leave in the mountains. The troops are left to recruit; for ten days they can drop us out of mind. Within twelve erly ambushes us in a canyon where not three people pass in a year. The poor beggars who form our escort are all

"Yes, but are you sure of that?" I interrupted. "I saw them all drop off their horses when we were fired upon, but that doesn't prove they were dead. but that doesn't prove they were dead. Some might have been merely wound-ed, and when the coast cleared, it is just possible they crawled back to our post with the news. Still I own it's a small chance."

"And you may divest yourself of even that thin rag of hope. Whilst you were being slung senseless across a horse, I saw that man without the ears go round with a machete and—well, when the brute had done, there was no doubt about the poor fellows being as dead as lumps of mud. Ah, and talk of the devil."

The earless man swung into the hut. "Buenos, senores," said he mockingly. "You will have the honor now of being tried, and I'm sure I hope you will be pleased with the result."

"I suppose we shall find that out later," said Methuen with a yawn, "but anyway I don't think much of your anyway I don't think much of your hospitality. A cup of wine now after that ugly ride we've had today would come in very handy, or even a nip of aguardiente would be better than nothing."

"I fancy it might be a waste of good liquor," was the answer, "but you must ask Garcia. He will see to your needs."

A guard of twelve ragged fellows armed with carbine and machete had followed the earless man into the hut, and two of them, whilst he talked here.

reprieve. But what guarantee have we that you will not slit the second man's throat after you have had your sport out of him?"

Garcia sprang to his feet with a stamp of passion, and the chair rolled over backwards. "You foul adventurer!" he cried, "you paid mankilles!" and then he broke off with a bitter "Pah!" and folded his arms and for a minute held silence till he got his tongue in hand again. "Senor," he said, coldly, "my country's wrongs may break my heart, but they can never make me break my word. I may be a hunted guerilla, but I still remain a gentleman."

"I beg your pardon," said Methuen.
"We will now," continued Garcia leily, "find out which of you two will play which part. Afterwards I will add another condition which may lend more skill to what follows. I will not coerce you. Kindly choose between yourselves which of you will hang, and which shoot." followed the earless man into the hut, and two of them, whilst he talked, had removed the seizings from our knees and ankles. They helped us to our feet and we walked with them into the dazzling sunshine outside.

"I'll trouble some of you for my hat," said Methuen when the giare first blazed down on him; and then as no one took any notice of the request, he lurched against the earless man with a sudden swerve, and knocked his sombrero on to the brown baked turf. "Well, I'll have yours," said he; "it's better

My comrade shrugged his shoulders, "I like you, Calvert, old man," said he, "but I'm no prepared to dance on

"Precisely; but, my dear fellow, I have both hands trussed up, and no "Pray let me assist you," said Garcia.
"Senor Calvert, may I trouble you for an expression of opinion?"
He leaned over the edge of the plazza

and spun a dollar into the air. I watched it with a thumping heart, and when for an instant it paused, a dazzling splash of brightness against the red-tiled roof, I cried: "Heads!"

The coin fell with a faint thud in the dust a ward from my feet. dust a yard from my feet.
"Well?" said Methuen.
"I congratulate you, old fellow. I

wing."
He frowned and made no reply. Garcia's voice broke the silence. "Bueno, Senor Methuen," he said, "I advise you to shoot straight or you will not get than nothing at all. Pick up the thing, and put it on my head."

The guerilla bared his teeth like an animal, and drew a pistol. I thought he would have shot my comrade out of hand, and by his look I could see that Methuen expected it. Indeed, he had deliberately irritated the man to that end. But either because the nearness of Garcia and fear of his discipline stayed him, or through thought of a finer vengeance which was to come, the earless man contented himself by dealing a battery of kicks, and bidding our guards to ward us more carefully.

In this way, then, we walked along home even now. You remember I said there was still another condition. Well, here you are: You must cut your friend down with a bullet before he is quite dead, or I'll string you up be-side him."

Methuen gave a short laugh. "Remember what I said about that fellow in 'The Mikado,' Calvert? You see where the humor comes in? We've had that coin spun for nothing. You and I

must change positions."
"Not at all. I take what I've earned." "But I say yes. It works this way took it that the man who was hang-I took it that the man who was hanging stood a delicate chance anyway, and I didn't feel generous enough to risk it. But now that the senor here has put in the extra clause, the situation is changed altogether. You aren't a brilliant shot, old man, but you may be able to cut me down with a bullet, if you remember what you're firing for, and shoot extra straight. But it's a certain thing that I couldn't do it if I blazed away till doomsday. The utmost I could manage would be to fluke a pellet into your worthy self. So you see I must wear the hemp, and you must apply your shoulder to the rifle butt—laugh," he added, in English. "Grin and say something funny, or "Grin and say something funny, or these brutes will think we cared for

But I was incapable of further speech. I could have gibed at the prospect of being hanged myself, but the horror of this other ordeal turned me sick and dumb. And at what fol-

lowed I looked on mutely.

There was a well on one side of the plaza and the earless man went and plaza and the earless man went and robbed the windlass of its rope. With clumsy landsman's fingers he formed a noose, took it to the great magnolia tree and threw the noose over the projecting branch. The bell of the little white chapel opposite went on tolling gravely, and they marched my friend up to his fate over the sun-baked dust. They passed a thong around his ankles, the carless man lifted the noose to his throat; a dozen of the guerillas, itself from a branch.

The value of the introduction of the guerillas were so stirred that for the first time their gibing ceased, and two of them of their own accord handed me carticles. I slipped one home and closed the breech-block. The perspiration was gravely, and they marched my friend a stream from my chin. Again I fired. Again the well-rope was snipped, and I could see the loosened strands ripple out as a snake unwraps to his throat; a dozen of the guerillas. principal house. Seated under its shade in a split-cane rocker Garcia awaited us, a small meager dark man, to his throat; a dozen of the guerillas. itself from a branch.
with shouts of laughter, laid hold of the hauling part of the line; and then a missed! why was I made to be a mur-He stared at us and spat, and the astonished me. Animus there certainly was; the guerillas as a whole were disposed to give us short shift; but their chief insisted on at least some parade of justice. The indictment was set forward against us. We had shot, hanged and harried, and in fact used all the harshness of war. Had we have

"So your pluck has oozed away?" he was saying, as the cigarette smoke welled up from between the white walls of his teeth. "Well, of course, if you do not care for the remainder. The plaza was hung in breathwalls of his teeth. "Well, of course, if other. The plaza was hung in breathyou do not care for the game, you can 
throw up your hand at once. You've 
only to say the word, and yu can be 
dangling on that bough inside of a coubut they were human enough in their 
but they were human enough in their ple of minutes. It's quite strong enough to carry more fruit than it bears already. But it's rather hard on your friend not to try—"

My wits came to me again. "You Like some mournful pendulum it passed to the product of the strong many to the product of the pr

but each for his own hand; and as such we were beyond the pale of military courtesy. We had earned a punishcourtesy. We had earned a punish-ment. Had we any word to speak why this should not be given? ly and then set himself to roll a fresh

the beckened to one of his men, and the fellow came up and cut off the lashings from my wrists and elbows:



THE FEARLESS MAN FITTED THE NOOSE TO HIS THROAT.

tioned some of the others, who drew "murder the pair of us."
Garcia smiled unpleasantly. "You may be a very brave man," said he, "but you are not a judicious one. To a judge less just than myself this insolence might have added something to your punishment; but as it is I shall overlook what you have said and only near and held their weapons at the ready. "I dare wager, Senor Calvert," he said, "that if you'd use me for a mark, you would not score a miss wish to insure that you do not shoot in this direction—" He raised his voice and shouted across the baking sunoverlook what you have said, and only impose the penalty I had determined light: "Quite ready here, amigos. So up with the target." upon before you spoke."

He lifted his thin yellow fingers, and drew a fresh breath of smoke. Then he waved the cigarette towards the magnolla tree in the center of the plaza.

"You see that bough which juts towards the chapel?"

PART III. PART III.

Now up to this point I am free to own that since our capture I had cut a pretty poor figure. I had not whined, but at the same time I had not seen my way to put on Methuen's outward show of careless brazen courage. But when I watched the guerillas tighten on the rope and sway him up till his stretched-out feet swung a couple of hand-spans above the ground, then my coolness returned to me, and my nerves set like icicles in their sockets. He coolness returned to me, and my nerves set like icicles in their sockets. He was sixty yards away, and at that distance the well-rope dwindled to the bigness of a shoemaker's thread. Moreover the upper two-thirds of it was invisible because it hung before a background of shadows. But the eighteen inches above my poor friend's head stood out clear and distinct against the white walls of the chapel beyond, and as it swayed to the pulsing of the body beneath, it burned itself upon my cysight till all the rest of the world was blotted out in a red haze. I never knew before how thoroughly a man could concentrate himself.

could concentrate himself.

They handed me the rifle, loaded and cocked. It was a single-shot Winchester, and I found out afterward, thought I did not know it then, that either through fiendish wish to further hamner my all out the property of the could be supplyed to th either through fiendish wish to further hamper my alm, or through pure forgetfulness, they had left the sights cocked up at three hundred yards. But that did not matter; the elevation was a detail of minor import; and besides I was handling the weapon as a gameshot fires, with head up, and eye glued on the mark, and rifle barrel following the eyes by instinct alone. You remember that I had no stationary target to aim at. My poor comrade was writhaim at. My poor comrade was writh-ing and swaying at the end of his tether, and the well-rope swang hither

and thither like some contorted pendulum.
Once I fired, twice I fired, six times Once I fired, twice I fired, six times, ten times, and still the rope remained uncut, and the bullets rattled harmlessly against the white walls of the chapel a tinkle of broken glass, and the bell, after a couple of hurried nervous clangs, ceased tolling altogether. With the thirteenth shot a shout went up from the watching crowd. I had stranded the rope, and the body which dangled beneath the magnolia tree began slowly to gyrate.

ette with his thin yellow fingers and leisurely rocked himself in the split-cane chair. The man could not have been more unmoved if he had been overlooking a performance of Shakes-

At last I tore the Winchester from the hands of the fellow who was fum-bling with it, and clawed at the jammed cartride myself, breaking my jammed cartride myself, breaking my nails and smearing the breechlock with blood. If it had been welded into one solid piece, it could scarcely have been firmer. But the thrill of the moment gave my hands the strength of pincers. The brass case moved fr m side to side; it began to crumble, and I drew it forth and hurled from me a mere ball of shapeless twisted metal. The one of the laughing brutes gave me another cartridge, and once more I shouldered the loaded weapon.

The mark was easier now. The struggles of my poor friend had almost ceased, and though the well-repe still swayed, its movements were comparatively rhythmical and to be counted

tively rhythmical and to be counted



FIRED, AND THE BODY FELL TO THE GROUND.

I snapped down the sights, put the butt-plate to my shoulder and cud-dled the stock with my cheek. Here for the first time was a chance of some-thing steadler than a snap shot. I pressed home the trigger as the well-rope reached one extremity of its swing. Again a few loose ends sprang

voice from behind fell upon my ear. derer like this? Garcia's voice came to Garcia was speaking to me. With a strain I dragged my eyes away from the I can be kept waiting here no longer. glare of the plaza, and listened. He and I think you are wasting time. Your was smiling wickedly.

And I think you are wasting time. Your friend seems to have quitted us al-

My wits came to me again. "You like some mournful pendulum it passed fool," I cried, "how can I shoot with my arms trussed up like this? If the whole thing is not a mock cut me adrift, and give me a rifle."

back, and the rifle muzzle followed. Like some mournful pendulum it passed through the air, and then a glow of certainty filled me like a drink. I knew I could not miss that time; and I fired; and give me a rifle." and the body in a limp and shapeless heap fell to the ground. With a cry I threw the rifle from me.

and reced across the sunlit dust. Not and then, with a sour smile, he mo- an arm was stretched out to stop me. Only when I had reached my friend and loosened that horrible ligature from his neck did I hear voices clamoring

over my fate.

"And now this other Inglese, your excellency," the earles man said, "shall we shoot him from here, or shall we string him up in the other's place?" But the answer was not what the fel-low expected. Garcia replied to him on a shriek of passion. "You slaughter-ing brute," he cried, "another offer like that and I'll pistol you where you stand. You heard me pass my word: do you dream that I could break it? They have had their punishment, and if we see one another again, the meeting will be none of my looking for. We leave this nuebla in five minutes. See to your duties. Go."

The words came to me dully through

the heated air. I was almost mad with the thought that my friend was dead. and that the fault was mine, mine, mine

I listened for his breaths: they did not come. I feit for a heart-throb:
there was not so much as a flutter. His
neck was seared by a ghastly ring. His
face was livid. And yet I would not
admit even then that he was dead.
With a cry I seized his arms and moved
them first above his head till he looked like a man about to dive, and then clapped them against his sides; re-peating this an infinite number of times; praying that the air I drew through his lungs might blow against some smouldering spark of humanity and kindle it once more into life. The perspiration rolled from me; my mouth was as a sand-pit; the heavy scent of the magnolia blossoms above sickened me with its strength; the sight departed from my eyes. I could see nothing beyond a small circle of the hot dust around, whilch waved and danced in the sunlight, and the little green lizards which came and looked at me curiouly and forgot that I wa human.

And then of a udden my comrade gave a sob, and his chest began to heave of itself without my laborious aid. And after that for awhile I knew very little more. The sun-baked dust more wildly in the sunshine; the liz-



WHAT HAS HAPPENED?" HE GASPED.

ards changed to darker colors; the light went out: and when I came next to my senses Methuen was sitting up with one hand clutching at his throat, looking at me wildly.

"What has happened?" he gasped. "I thought I was dead, and Garcia had hanged me—Garcia. No one is here. The puebla seems deserted. Calvert,

chapel a tinkle of broken glass, and the bell, after a couple of hurried nervous clangs, ceased tolling altogether. With the thirteenth shot a shout went up from the watching crowd. I had stranded the rope, and the body which dangled beneath the magnolia tree began slowly to gyrate.

Then came a halt in the firing, I had handed the Winchester back to the fellow who was reloading, but somehow or other the exploded catridge had jammed in the breech. I danced and raged before him in my passion of hurry, and the cruel brutes yelled in ecstales of merriment. Only Garcia did not laugh. He re-rolled a fresh cigar-

narrow escape, old man. I—I—feel thankful."

There was in faint smell of incense inside the chapel. The odor of it lingers by me still.

AN ECLIPSE OF THE HONEYMOON

When I went to see the little bride the other day and found her weeping into her best Turkish sofa cushion. I knew that something was seriously wrong, and drew my face down into the proper expression of sympathy.

"What is it?" I asked.

"It's Tom," she said.

"And breakfast." I amended.

"Did he tell you?" she demanded, sternly, sitting up and wiping her eyes.

"Surely not." I answered; "only you see, my dear Annette, you are not the first bride I have had the pleasure of knowing in the course of life."

"I never claimed to be a good house-keeper or know anything about cooking," she began in an explanatory fashlon.

And he said that he wanted that litthe hand never to do anything harder than play with flowers or soothe his fevered brow," I added. "Why, how did you know he said that?" she asked.

I smiled.

"If he was looking for a good domestic girl, why didn't he marry Mary Smith?" she said, recurring again to

her woes.
"Why not, indeed?" I echoed.
"She's hideous," announced Annette,
with satisfaction. She would never put too much soda

in the biscuit or have the steak over-done," I said reflectively. "She has red hair," remarked Annette The butcher would never be able to sell tough meat and undesirable cuts to her." I went on in an admiring tone

"She has light eyes and no eyebrows to speak of," said Annette, as if it were a matter of importance.
"She would have made pies like his

"She would have made pies like his mother used to make," I continued.
"She has pale green freckles," remarked Annette triumphantly.
"Of what avail," I asked mournfully, "is beauty when one has dyspepsia from bad cooking?"
"Why didn't he ask me if I could

well-rope reached one extremity of its swing. Again a few loose ends sprans from the rope, and again the body began slowly to gyrate. But was it Methuen I was firing to save or was I merely wasting shot to cut down a mass of cold dead clay?

I think that more agony was compressed for me into a few minutes then than most men meet with in a lifetime. Even the overlooking guerillas "Now he thinks you are stupid if you don't know about the silver question."

not have found an angel very congenial, but, you have got to come down to a realization that the man who told you that he would make your life a dream of bliss, filled with delight and perfume, has forgotten he ever said it, and expects you to forget. Furthermore, he wants his dinner on time, and his house to be as well and economically managed a if he had married Mary Smith or any other of the domestic and homely girls he never looked at."
"Doesn't he love me still?" asked the little bride, desperately.
"Surely." I made anwer: "nevertheless, I advise you to read the papers and buy a good cook book."—Dorothy Dix, New Orleans Picayune.

Dix, New Orleans Picayune.

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