

The Land of Broken Promises

A Stirring Story of the Mexican Revolution

DANE COOLIDGE

Author of "The Fighting Post," "The Mexican Wars," "The Treason," etc.

Illustrations by DON J. LAVIN

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CHAPTER XXVI.

Though men may make a jest of it in books, it is a solemn thing to kill a man, even to be near when one is killed. If Gracia had slain Del Rey herself in a passion her hot blood might have buoyed her up, but now her whole nature was convulsed with the horror of it and she wilted like a flower.

An hour before she had burned with hatred of him, she had wished him dead and sought the man who would kill him. Now that his life had been snuffed off between two heart-beats she remembered him with pity and muttered a prayer for his soul. For Hooker, for De Lacey she had no thought, but only for the dashing young captain who had followed her to his death.

Of this Bud had no knowledge. He realized only that she was growing weaker, and that he must call a halt, and at last, when the walls of their pass had widened and they rode out into the open plain, he turned aside from the trail and drew rein by a clump of mesquite.

"Here, let me take you," he said, as she swayed uncertainly in the saddle. She slid down into his arms and he laid her gently in the shade.

"Poor girl," he muttered, "it's been too much for you. I'll get some water, and pretty soon you can eat."

He unsaddled the canteen from his saddle-bag, gave her a drink, and left her to herself, glancing swiftly along the horizon as he tied out their mounts to graze. But for her faintness he would have pushed on farther, for he had seen men off to the east; but hunger and excitement had told upon her even more than the day-and-night ride.

For a woman, and sitting a side-saddle, she had done better than she had hoped; and yet—well, it was a long way to the border and he doubted if she could make it. She lay still in the shade of the mesquite, just as he had placed her, and when he brought the sack of food she did not raise her head.

"Better eat something," he suggested, spreading out some bread and dried beef. "Here's some oranges I got from Don Juan—I'll just put them over here for you."

Gracia shuddered, sighing wearily. Then, as if his words had hurt her, she covered her face and wept.

"What did you tell that man?" she asked at last.

"Why—what man?" inquired Hooker, astonished. "Ain't you going to eat?"

"No!" she cried, gazing out at him through her tears, "not until I know what you said. Did you tell that Indian to—to kill him?"

She broke down suddenly in a fit of sobbing, and Hooker wiped his brow.

"Why, no!" he protested. "Sure not! What made you think that?"

"Why—you rode over and spoke to him—and he looked at me—and then—he—killed him!"

She gave way to a paroxysm of grief at this, and Bud looked around him, wondering. That she was weak and hungry he knew, but what was this she was saying?

"I reckon I don't understand what you're driving at," he said at last. "Wish you'd eat something—you'll feel better."

been talking about brave men and all that; and now's once you've killed that I won't be brave because I wouldn't fight."

"It's just like to tell you to put your mind at rest, that my father was a sergeant in the Texas rangers and no hundred Mexicans was ever able to make him crawl. He served for ten years on the Texas border and never turned his back to no man—let alone a Mex. I was brought up by him to be peaceable and quiet, but don't you never think, because I run away from Manuel del Rey, that I was afraid to face him."

He paused and regarded her intently, and her eyes fell before his.

"You must excuse me," she said, looking wistfully away. "I did not—I did not understand. And so the poor Yaqui was only avenging an injury?"

She went on, reaching out one slender hand toward the food. "Ah, I can understand it now—she looked so savage and fierce. But"—she paused again, set back by a sudden thought—"didn't you know he would kill him?"

"Yes, ma'am," answered Hooker quietly. "I did."

"Then—then why didn't you—" "That was between them two," he replied doggedly. "Del Rey shot him once when he was wounded and left him for dead. He must have killed some of his people, too; his wife weeb, for all I know. He never would talk about it, but he come back to get his revenge. I don't shoot no man from cover myself, but that ain't it—it was between them two."

"And you?" she suggested. "If you had fought Del Rey?"

"I would have met him in the open," said Hooker.

"And yet—" "I didn't want to," he ended bluntly. "Didn't want to fight him and didn't want to kill him. Had no call to. And then—well, there was you."

"Ah!" she breathed, and a flush mounted her pale cheeks. She smiled as she reached out once more for the food and Hooker resolved to do his best at gallantry. It seemed to make her so happy.

"So you were thinking of me," she challenged sweetly, "all the while? I thought perhaps I was a nuisance and in the way. I thought perhaps you did not like me because—well, because I'm a Mex, as you say."

"No, ma'am," denied Hooker gazing upon her admiringly. "Nothing like that! When I say Mex I mean these low, pelado Mexicans—Don Juan tells me you're pure Spanish."

"With perhaps a little Yaqui," she suggested shyly.

"Well, maybe he did say that, too," confessed Bud. "But it's just as good as Spanish—they say all the big men in Sonora have got some Yaqui blood."

"Moral, that was vice-president; the Tornes brothers, governors—" "And Aragon!" she added playfully, but at a look in his eyes she stopped. Bud could not look pleasant and think of Aragon.

"Ah, yes," she rattled on. "I know. You like the Yaqui better than the Spanish—I saw you shaking hands with that Indian. And what was it you called him—Amigo?"

"That's right," smiled Hooker; "him and me have been friends for months now out at the mine. I'd do anything for that feller."

"Oh, now you make me jealous," she pouted. "I was only a Yaqui—and big and black—" "Never mind," defended Bud. "He was a true friend, all right, and true friends, believe me, are scarce."

There was a shade of bitterness in his voice that did not escape her, and she was careful not to allude to Phil. His name, like the name of her father, always drove this shy man to silence, and she wanted to make him talk.

"Then you ought to be friends with me," she chided, after a silence. "I have always wanted to be your friend—why will you never allow it? No, but really! Haven't I always shown it? I remember now the first time that I saw you—I was looking through my hole among the passion-flowers and you saw me with your keen eyes. Phil did not—but he was there. And you just looked at me once—and looked away. Why did you never respond when I came there to look for you? You would just ride by and look at me once, and even Phil never knew."

"No," agreed Bud, smiling quietly. "He was crazy to see you, but he rode right by, looking at the windows and such."

"The first time I met him," mused Gracia. "I asked about you. Did he ever tell you?"

Bud hung his head and grinned sheepishly. It was not difficult to make out a case against him.

And so Gracia had not wanted Del Rey killed as he thought she did. She was not the vicious woman he had thought her for a time. She was just the gentle, noble girl he had sworn to protect and conduct across the border to her fiancé. Again came the desire to claim her, but there was not only Phil to be thought of but the fitness of himself to be the mate of this woman.

"Is it something I have done?" she asked at last. "Is that why you never liked me? Now, Mr. Hooker, please speak to me! And why do you always sit so far away—are you afraid of me? But look!—she moved closer to him "here we are alone, and I am not afraid of you!"

"Of course not," answered Bud, looking across at her boldly. "Why should you be—you ain't afraid of nothing!"

"Is that a compliment?" she demanded eagerly. "Oh, then I'm so happy—it's the first you ever paid me! But have I been brave," she boomed, "so far? Have I been brave, like a man?"

"Sure have!" remarked Hooker impersonally. "But we ain't there yet. Only thing I don't like about you is you don't eat enough. Say, don't pick up them crumbs—let me pare off some more of this jerked beef for you. Can't

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Senators Overman having been re-nominated, George Bailey, re-elected, the old North State is assured of at least four years immunity from the Boh Glenn peril."

CLUTE WAS SHOT WITH AN AUTOMATIC PISTOL. Authorities say Gifford owned such a weapon. Gifford could drive a machine. An attempt was made by the slayer by the footprints about the automobile.

In defense of the accused youth it is pointed out that he had borne a good reputation in his home town and had never been in any trouble excepting some schoolboy escapades. There is nothing to indicate that he ever knew Clute. Since his arrest he has been confined in the Albany county jail. Recently he was transferred from his cell to the hospital ward of the jail on the statements of physicians that he was suffering from long trouble.

GLASS ROUTE 1. The farmers around here are very near through with harvest, but they have some cotton to thin yet.

Mr. Abraham Overcash died June 9, aged 85 years. He was laid to rest in the China Grove Cemetery. He leaves to mourn his death two sons, Messrs. A. C. E. and J. S. Overcash and one daughter, Mrs. Dan Smith, a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Miss Lizzie Bennet has been spending some time with her aunt, Mrs. Jim Plaster.

The twelve-year-old son of C. D. Overcash had the misfortune to cut his foot with an axe last Saturday morning, but he is getting along nicely now.

There was quite a large crowd at the unveiling of the Monument to Troy V. Overcash on last Sunday afternoon at Enochville.

Mr. George Litaker and family, of Salisbury, came to Enochville Sunday in a new automobile.

Mr. Press Sims it at home from work for a few days.

The Cream route is progressing nicely in charge of Mr. W. C. Rose. He now has a large number on the route and still expects several more.

Mr. A. A. Overcash has purchased a phonograph.

RICH MAN'S SON FACES MURDER CHARGE

Many Elements of Mystery in Connection With the Crime.

Albany, N. Y., June 20.—According to the present plans of District Attorney Harold D. Alexander, young Malcolm Gifford, Jr., will be placed on trial here next week on an indictment charging him with the murder of Frank J. Clute, a chauffeur. The trial will consume several weeks, it is expected.

The accused youth is but 19 years old and is the son of a wealthy manufacturer of Hudson, N. Y. These facts, coupled with the many elements of mystery in connection with the alleged crime, have served to attract wide attention to the Gifford case and the trial promises to be one of the most notable that has taken place in this country in a long time. The elder Gifford has retained eminent counsel to conduct the defense of his son.

Clute was killed April 1, 1913, while driving an unidentified man from Albany to Troy. The passenger shot Clute in the back of the head, robbed him and threw the body into a ditch. The slayer wore a gray overcoat and a light fedora hat.

On the night of the murder Gifford, who had been expelled from a private school a month previously, but never had gone home nor notified his parents, left the house of a friend, Derrick Boardman, in Troy, ostensibly to attend a dance. He was garbed in a dress suit, a gray overcoat and a light fedora hat, it is said.

Several hours later Gifford appeared at the dance. Witnesses who appeared at the grand jury investigation declared that his clothing was soiled. The next morning, it was testified, he put his overcoat in one friend's suitcase, his hat in another, borrowed a cap and left for home.

Last April, a year after the murder was committed, property belonging to Clute was found under the eaves of the house where Gifford stayed on the night of the killing. A pair of gloves, of the same brand Gifford was wearing when detained by detectives, was found near Clute's body. These, according to the detectives, Gifford attempted to hide when they apprehended him at Chatham, Mass., on April 14, last, while he was on his way to Easthampton, Mass., where he was a student.

Clute was shot with an automatic pistol. Authorities say Gifford owned such a weapon. Gifford could drive a machine. An attempt was made by the slayer by the footprints about the automobile.

In defense of the accused youth it is pointed out that he had borne a good reputation in his home town and had never been in any trouble excepting some schoolboy escapades. There is nothing to indicate that he ever knew Clute. Since his arrest he has been confined in the Albany county jail. Recently he was transferred from his cell to the hospital ward of the jail on the statements of physicians that he was suffering from long trouble.

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CROP MONEY IS READY.

Treasury Department Will Lend Cash to Banks if Necessary.

Secretary McAdoo again stands ready to lend a hand to Western and Southern banks in case they need money for crop moving purposes. The plan of lending government money to the banks in agricultural districts for use during crop moving season last year was so successful that it will be adopted this year if the necessity arises.

Money lent by the Treasury Department last year was secured mostly by commercial paper, and all the borrowed money has been returned to the treasury by April 1, with interest amounting to \$260,000. The total amount lent to banks was \$37,386,000. It went to 193 banks in sixty-two cities of twenty-eight states.

Nation's Memorial at Valley Forge. Philadelphia, Pa., June 19.—Noted orators and many representatives of patriotic, military and other societies gathered at Valley Forge today for the dedication of the nation's memorial to the patriots who suffered there in the winter campaign under Washington for the independence of the American colonies. The memorial is in the form of an imposing arch and was erected at a cost of \$100,000, which amount Congress appropriated for the purpose several years ago. The arch stands at the junction of the old Gulf road, where it crosses the outer line driveway. Its design was largely influenced by that of the famous Arch of Titus in Rome, which has been somewhat adapted to meet the conditions at Valley Forge. The architect was Paul M. Cret, professor of design in the School of Architecture of the University of Pennsylvania.

The arch of granite, sixty feet high. On one side is the inscription: "To the officers and the private soldiers of the Continental Army, Dec. 19, 1777, June 19, 1778." On the other side of the arch is the quotation: "Naked and starving as they were, we cannot enough admire the incomparable patience and fidelity of the soldiers."

Why not give Jack Johnson the next Nobel peace prize? He put an end to pugilism.

STOMACH TROUBLES. Madison Heights, Va.—Mr. Chas. A. Ragland, of this place, writes: "I have been taking Theford's Black-Draught for indigestion, and other stomach troubles, also colds, and find it to be the very best medicine I have ever used."

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- 2nd. It is non-evaporating. No ink has to be thrown away on account of becoming thick and dirty—you save 75 per cent. of your ink bill. Never feeds any dust of gunny into the pen point. This is due to the scientific principle embodied in its simple construction.
- 3rd. It has no funnel parts above the top surface of the well. The ink never spurts out, endangering papers, desks, rugs, etc.
- 4th. It adjusts itself to a uniform dip. This prevents ink from soiling the pen holder or overloading the pen and causing blots.
- 5th. It requires filling but once in two to six months of actual use. If filled and not used, it will keep the ink like a corked bottle.
- 6th. It requires cleaning inside about once a year to remove ink sediment, which always stays at the bottom, never reaching the point.
- 6th. It can be maintained on the desk of your busiest clerk with only 8 ounces of ink during the year. (Better read that statement again. There are 32 ounces in a quart bottle.)
- 8th. It saves pen points, because absolutely fresh ink leaves no surplus on the pen to corrode it.
- 9th. It is the only automatic inkstand ever invented that prevents the evaporation of red ink, and work as perfectly with copying ink as with writing fluid.
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