BY CUTCLIFFE HYNE



"and I'm thanking heaven for it this

through the smoke at the firefles which

She'd fill the position splendidly, and

The little man broke off and stared

of much-wanted contraband of war onto

cruiser in the process and had received

and he could not avoid seeing that by

his present association with Capt.

tragedy every moment that he lived.

Yet here he was pinned, not only to

He would gladly have forfeited half

his fortune to be snugly back in St. Ste-

phen's. Westminster, clear of the mess;

but escape was out of the question;

true position would be like an attempt

to reason with the winds or the surf on

an ocean beach. So he held his tongue,

and did as he was bidden. He was a

man of physical bravery, and the rush

of actual fighting that morning had

certain and treacherous dangers of the

future, and the cozy niche that await-

ed him at home in England, that his

throat tickled with apprehension, and

he caressed with affectionate fingers

the region of his carotids. And if he

had shown that at that precise mo-

ment the ex-priest, and the mulatto

they called el Cuchillo, and the others

of the insurgent leaders were stalking

him with a view to capture and execu-

come pleasantly to him.

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CROWN AND GARROTE.

"We will garrote el Senor Kettle with due form and ceremony," said the mulatto, with an ugly smile. "The saints must have sent us this machine

He threw away the cigarette stump from his yellow fingers, and began to knot a running bowline on the end of a rawhide rope. "I will do myself the honor of capturing him. He covme with that revolver of his this morning, and put me to shame before the men. I have not forgotten.' "And the other Englishman?" said

the ex-priest. "He fought well for us the morning. He is brave." "And so is far too dangerous to be inft alive, padre, after we garrote the antior."

"My dear Cuchillo," said the eccleslastic, "you are so abominably bloodthirsty. But I suppose you are right. I will come with you, and if the man Nispwe trouble. I will shoot him where the sha." He and the mulatte got up as he spoke, and the other men rose ales, and the six of them left the inseems silently on the side away from the camp. The jungle growths of the rained plantation swallowed them out of sight. They held along their way ellently and confidently, like men well skilled in woodcraft. With primitive sunning they had arranged to make their attack from the rear.

The noise of their chatter ceased and from the distance there went up flato the hot, tropical night faint matches of the "Swanee River," sung by a Louisiana negro, who had grown delirious from a wound.

In the meanwhile the two Englishmen were taking their tobacco barely a couple of hundred yards away. They had built a small fire of green wood and were sitting in the alley of smoke some refuge from the swarming mospuitos, and the conversation ran upon mselves and their own prospects. "I don't want to mess about with a

serown." Capt. Kettle was saying. "A cheese-cutter cap's good enough for me, or seeing that Cuba's hot, a pith beimet might be preferable, if we are going in for luxury." He peered through the smoke wreaths at the camp of the sevolutionists, a naked bivouac chopset from amongst the canes, and strewn with sleeping men who moanof in their dreams. The ruined ingenie at the further side had its white walls smeared with smoke. The place sched with poverty and squalor.

"Not that there seems much luxury Sero," he went on. "These beauties haven't a sound pair of breeches emongst them, and if it wasn't for the ettles and ammunition we brought seshore from the poor old Sultan, sir, I'd say they'd just starve to death before they kicked the Spaniards out of the island. But if ugliness mean pluck, men; and when we get to bossing them properly you'll see we shall just make trying to make Kettle appreciate his this revolutionary business hum. You are going to stay on and help, Mr. Carnforth?" The big man in the shooting coat

gave a rueful laugh. "You've got my promise, Kettle. I don't see any way of backing out of it." "I thank you for that, sir," said the

sailor with a bow. "When I come to be formally made king of these Cubuns, you shall find I am not ungrate-Tel. I am not a man to neglect either my friends or my enemies. "You shall sign on as prime minister,

Mr. Carnforth, when we get the show regularly in commission, and I'll see you make a good thing out of it. Don't you act the notion it'll be a bit like the dreary business you were used to in parliament in England. Empty talk To not to my taste, and I'll not set up

tion. it is probable that he would have felt even still more disturbed.

"We did well in that fight this morning," said Kettle presently, as he drew his eyes away from the light-snaps of fireflies, and shut them to keep out the sting of the wood smoke "You've been shot at before, sir?"

"Never," said Carnforth. "You couldn't have been cooler, sir, if you'd been at sea all your life, and seen pins flying every watch. Do you know, I've been thinking it over, and I'm beginning to fancy that perhaps our black and yellow mongrels weren't quite such cowards as I said. I know they did scuttle to the bushes like rabbits so soon as ever a gun was fired, but then their business is to shoot these Spanish soldiers and not get shot back, and so, perhaps, they were right to keep to their own way.

"Anyway, we licked them, and that means getting on towards Mrs. Kettle's being a queen. But that murdering the wounded afterward was more than I can stand, and it has got to be put a stop to."

"You didn't make yourself popular over it.' "I am not usually liked when I am captain," said Kettle grimly.

"Well, skipper, I don't, as a rule, agree with your methods, as you know, but here I'm with you all the way. Your excellent subjects are a great deal too barbarous for my taste." "They are wholly brutes, and that's

a fact," said Capt. Kettle, "and I expect a good many of them will be hurt "It's a fact, sir," said the other whilst I'm teaching them manners. But they've got to learn this lesson first of with a sigh. "I do like to have the ordering of men. But don't you think all: They're to treat their prisoners that's the only reason I'm taking on decently, or else let them go, or else shoot them clean and dead in the first with this racket. I'm a man with an income to make, and I'm out of a berth instance whilst they're still on the run. elsewhere. I'm a man with a family, I'm a man myself, Mr. Carnforth, that can do a deal in hot blood; but after-"I am a bachelor," said Carnforth, ward, when the poor brutes are on the ground, I want to go round with stickminute. Doesn't it strike you, captain, ing plaster, and not a knife to slit their that this is no sort of a job for a throats."

"It will take a tolerable amount of married man? Can't you see it's far toe trouble to drum that into this crew. "Big pay, big risk; that's always the Spaniard on the warpath is not merciway, sir, and as I've faced ugly places ful; an African is a barbarian; but before and come out on top side, there's make a cross of the two (as you get no reason why I shouldn't do it again here) and you turn out the most unuthere. Indeed, it's the thought of my terable savage on the face of the wife that's principally pushing me on. earth."

"They will not be taught by kindness During all the time we've been toalone," said Capt. Kettle suggestively. gether, Mr. Carnforth, I've never been able to give Mrs. Kettle the place I'd "I've got heavy hands, and I sha'n't be afraid to use them. It's a job," he added with a sigh, "which will not "She was brought up, sir, as the come new to me. I've put to sea with daughter of a minister of religion, and some of the worst toughs that ever splendidly educated; she can play the harmonium and do crewel work; and, wrote their crosses before a shipping though I'll not deny I married her from master, and none of them can ever say behind a bar, I may tell you she only they got the top side of me yet." He was about to say more, but at took to business from a liking to see

society." He looked out dreamily that moment speech was taken from him. A long rawhide rope suddenly were winking across the black rim of flicked out into the air like a slim, black snake: the noose at its end for "I'd like to see her, Mr. Carnforth, an instant poised open-mouthed above with gold brooches and chains and a him and then it descended around his elbows and was as simultaneously black satin dress and a bonnet that plucked taut by unseen hands behind cost 20 shillings, sitting in government the shelter of the jungle. Capt. Kettle house, with the British consul on the mat before her, waiting till she chose struggled like a wildcat to release himto ask him to take a chair and talk. self, but four lithe, bony men threw themselves upon him, twisted his arms I've just got to wade in and get it for behind his back and made them fast there with other thongs of rawhide.

Carnforth did nothing to help. At the out at the fireflies, and Carnforth first alarm that burly gentleman had coughed the wood smoke from his looked up and discovered a rifle muzlungs and rammed fresh tobacco into | zle not 10 feet off, pointed squarely at his pipe. He was a man with a fine his breast. The voice of the ex-priest sense of humor and he appreciated to came from behind the rifle and assured the full the ludicrousness of Kettle's him in mild, unctuous tones that the pretensions. The sailor had run a cargo | least movement would secure him a quick and instant passage to one or the Cuban beach, had sunk a Spanish other of the next worlds. And Martin Carnforth surrendered without terms. When the four men had finished their But he had taken the florid metaphor other business they came and roped

of the country to mean a literal offer, him up also. and when in their complimentary The mulatto strode out from the phrase they shouted that he should be cover and flicked the ashes of a cigarking, a king from that moment he inette into Kettle's face. "El rey," he tended to be. The comedy of the situa- said. "de los Cubanos must have his power limited. He has come where he But at the same time Mr. Martin | was not wanted, he has done what was Carnforth was a man of wealth, and a forbidden and shortly he will taste the man (in England) of assured position;

"You gingerbread-colored beast," retorted Capt. Kettle, "you shame of your Owen Kettle he was flirting with ugly mother. I made a big mistake when I did not shoot you in the morning." The mulatto pressed the lighted end

of his cigarette against Kettle's forekeep in the man's society, but to help head. "I will trouble you," he said, "to keep silence for the present. At dawn you will be put upon trial, and then you may speak. But till then (and the sun will not rise for another three hours yet), if you talk, you will earn a painful burn for each sentence.

and, moreover, he knew quite well that "You are a man accustomed to having your own way, senor; I am another; and as at present I possess the upper hand, your will has got to bend to mine. The process, I can well imagine, will be distasteful to you. It was distasteful to me when I looked down your revolver muzzle over the affair of those prisoners. But I do not think It was only when he thought of the you will be foolish enough to earn tor-

Kettle glared, but with an effort held his tongue. He understood he was in a very tight place. And for the present the only thing remaining for him was to bide his time. He quite recognized that he was in dangerous hands. The mulatto was a man of education. who had been brought up in an American college, and who had learned in the States to hate his white father and loathe his black mother with a ferocity which nothing but that atmosphere

could foster. He was a fellow living on the borderland of the two primitive colors, and his whole life was soured by the pigment in his skin. As a white man he would have been a genius; as a black he would have become a star; but as a mulatto he was merely a suave and brilliant savage, thirsting for vengeance against the whole of the human race. He had entered this Cuban revolution through no taint of patriotism, but merely from the lust for cruelty. By sheer daring and ability he had raised himself from the ranks to supreme command of the revolutionists, and he was not likely to let so appetizing a situation slip from his fingers for even a few short hours without exacting a bitter retribution when

the chance was put in his way. Carnforth lifted up his voice in expostulation, but was quickly silenced by the promise of branding from the cigarette end if he did not choose to hold his tongue. Quiet fell over the group. The only sounds were scraps of the "Swanee river" sung by the wounded negro in his delirium from some-

where in the distance: "Still longing for the old plantation, And for the old folks at home." came the words in a thin quavering tenor, and Carnforth, with a sigh, thought how well he could indorse

camp aroused, and half an hour later the court was ranged. The self-styled judges sat under the whitewashed plazza of the ruined house; the motley troops faced them in an irregular ring 20 yards away; and the two prisoners, with an armed man to guard each, stood on the open ground between.

El Cuchillo was himself principal

spokesman and proceedings were carried on in Spanish and English alternately. The crime of Capt. Kettle was set forth in a dozen words. He had stopped the rightful execution of prisoners, and had let them go free. "You had no place to jail them," said

Carnforth in defence. The mulatto pointed a thin yellow finger at the sun-baked ground in from of the plazza. "We have the earth," he said. "Give them to the earth, and she will keep them gaoled so fast that they will never fight against us more. It is a war here to the knife on both sides. The Spanish troops kill us when they catch, and we do the like by them. It is right that it should be so. We do not want quarter at their hands; neither do we wish them to remain alive upon Cuba. Three Spanish soldiers were ours a few hours ago. Our cause demanded that their lives should have been taken away. And yet they were Yes," broke in Kettle, "and, by

James, that's a thing you ought to sing small about. Here's you, 6 officers and 150 men, all armed. Here's me, a common low-down, foul-of-his-luck Britisher, with a vinegar tongue and a 30-shilling pistol. You said the beggars should be hanged; I said they shouldn't; and, by James, I scared the whole caboodle of you with just one half an ugly look, and got my own blessed way. O, I do say you are a holy crowd."

Carnforth stamped in anger. It seemed to him that this truculent little sailor was deliberately inviting their captors to murder the pair of them out of hand. He understood that Kettle was bitterly disappointed at having his bubble about the kingship so ruthlessly pricked, but with this recklessness which was snatching away their only chance of escape, he could have no sympathy. He was unprepared, however, for his comrade's next remark. "Don't think I'd any help from Mr.

Carnforth here. He's a member of parliament in London, and is far too much of a gentleman to concern himself with your fourpenny-ha'penny matters here. He warned me before I began that being king of the whole of your rotten sland wasn't worth a dish of beans but I wouldn't believe him till I'd seen how it was for myself.

"I'm here now through my own fault; ought to have remembered that niggers and yellow bellies, and white men who have forgotten their color, could have no spark of gratitude. I'll not deny, too, that I got to thinking about those fireflies, and so wasn't keeping a proper watch; but here I am, lashed up snug, and I guess you're going to make the most of your chance. By James though, if you weren't a pack of cowards you'd cast me adrift, and "Speaking as a man of peace," said

the ex-priest, "I fancy you are safest as your are, amigo.' "I'd be king of this crowd again in-

side three minutes if I was loose," re-

El Cuchillo snapped his yellow fingers impatiently. "We are wasting time," he said. "Capt. Kettle seems still to dispute my supreme authority. He shall taste of it within the next dozen minutes; and if he can see his way to resisting it, and asserting his own kingship, he has my full permission to do so. Here, you; go into the ingenio, and bring out that machine." A dozen ragged fellows detached hemselves from the onlookers, and went through a low stone doorway into the ruined sugar house. In a couple of minutes they reappeared dragging with noisy laughter a dusty, cumbersome erection, which they sat down in the open space before the plazza. It was made up of a wooden plat-

form on which was fastened a chair and an upright. On the upright was a hinged iron ring immediately above the chair. A screw passed through the upright into the ring, with a long lever at its outside end, on either extremity of which was a heavy sphere of iron. If once that lever was set on the twirl, it would drive the screw's point into whatever the iron ring contained with a force that was irresistible.

The mulatto introduced the machine with a wave of his yellow fingers. "El garrote," he said. "A mediaeval survival which I did not dream of finding here. Of its previous history I can form no idea. Of its future use I can give a simple account. It will serve to ease us of the society of this objectionable Capt. Kettle."

"Great heavens, man," Carnforth broke out, "this is murder." "Ah," said el Cuchillo, "I will attend to your case at the same time. You shall have the honor of turning the screw which gives your friend his exit. In that way we shall secure your si-

ence afterward as to what has oc-"You foul brute," said Carnforth, with a shout, "do you think I am an

assassin like yourself?" The mulatto took a long draft at his cigarette. "What a horrible country England must be to live in, if all the people there have tongues as long as

you two. Senor, if you do not choose to accept my suggestion for pinning you to silence, I can offer you another. Refuse to take your place at the screw, and I promise that you shall be stood up against the wall of this ingenio and be shot inside the minute. The choice

stands open before you.' "Mr. Carnforth," said Capt. Kettle, "you mustn't be foolish. You must officiate over me exactly as you are asked, or otherwise you'll get shot uselessly. Gingerbread and his friends mean business. And if you still think you're taking liberty in handling the screw (in spite of what I say) you may fine yourself a matter of 10 shillings weekly, and hand it across to Mrs. Kettle. I make no doubt she would find that sum very useful."

"This is horrible," said Carnforth. "It will be horrible for Mrs. Kettle and my youngsters, sir, if you don't act sensibly and man the lever as Gingerbread asks. If you get planted here alongside of me. I don't know anyone at all likely to give them a pension. It would afford me a great deal of pleasure just now, Mr. Carnforth, if I knew my family could still keep to windward

of parish relief." "Of course," said Carnforth, with a white face, "I will see your wife and children are all right if I get clear; but it is too ghastly to think of purchasing even my life on these terms."

"You seem slow to make up your mind, senor," broke in the mulatto. "Allow me to hasten your decision." He gave some directions, and the men who had brought out the garrote took Capt. Kettle and sat him on the chair. They opened the iron ring, which screeched noisily with its rusted hinge, and they clasped it, collar-fashion, about his neck. Then they led Carnforth up to the back of the upright and

cast off the lashing from his wrists. "Now, Senor Carnforth," said the yellow man, "I want that person garroted. If you do it for me, I will give you a safe conduct down to any sea-I have to set on one of my own men to do the work you will not have sight to here, Skipper," he said, "I'm fond witness it I will not have sight to port in Cuba which you may choose. If witness it. I will stick you up against enough of life, but I don't think I want that white wall yonder and have you to earn it by playing executioner. I'd

TO A TOUR THE THE BOOK EXTENSION OF SALES AND SECURE OF SALES

shot out of hand. Now, senor, I have the honor to ask for your decision." "Come, sir, don't hesitate," said Capt. Kettle. "If you don't handle the screw, remember someone else will." "That will be a filmsy excuse to re-

member afterwards." "You will be paying a weekly fine, and can recollect that carries a fufi "Pah," said Carnforth, "what is 16 shillings a week?" "Exactly," said Kettle. "Make it 12 sir, and that will hold you clear o

"What feeble, dilatory people you English are," said el Cuchillo. "I must trouble you to make up your mind at once, Senor Carnforth. "He has made it up," said Kettle,

"and I shall go smiling, because I shall get my clearance at the hands of a decent man. I'd have taken it as a disgrace to be shoved out of this world by a yellow beast like you, you shame of your mother."

The mulatto blazed out with fury. "By heaven," he cried, "I've a mind to take you out of that garrote even now and have you burnt." "And we should lose a pleasant lit-

tle comedy," said the ex-priest. "No, amigo: let us see the pair of them perform together." "Go on," said the mulatto to Carn-

"Yes," said Kettle in a lower voice. "For God's sake go on and get it over. It isn't very pleasant work for me, this waiting. And you will make it 12 shillings a week, sir?" "I will give your wife \$1,000 a year,

my poor fellow. I will give her \$5,000. No, I am murdering her husband, and I will give her all I have, and go away to start life afresh elsewhere. I shall never dare to show my face again in England or carry my own name." He gripped one of the iron spheres and threw his weight upon the lever. The bar buckled and sprang under his effort, but the screw did not budge.

"Quick, man, quick!" said Kettle in a low, flerce voice. "This is cruel. If you don't get me finished directly, shall go white or something, and those brutes will think I'm afraid." Carnforth wrenched at the lever with a tremendous effort. One arm of the

bar bent slowly into a semicircle, but the lethal screw remained fast in its socket. It was glued there with the rust of years.

Carnforth flung away from the machine. "I have done my best," he said sullenly to the men on the plazza, "and I can do no more. You have the sattsfaction of knowing that you have made me a murderer in intent, if not in actual fact; and now, if you choose, you can stick me up against that wall and have me shot. I'm sure I don't care. I'm sick of it all here."

"You shall have fair treatment. said el Cuchillo, "and neither more no less. You have tried to obey my orders, and Capt. Kettle is at present alive because of the garrote's deficiency and not by your intention." He gave a command and the men released the iron collar from Kettle's neck, "I will have the machine repaired by my armorer," he said, "and in the meanwhile you may await my pleasure out of the sun-

He gave another order and the men laid hands upon their shoulders and led them away, and thrust them into a small arched room of whitened stone, under the boiler house of the ingenio. The window was a mere arrow slit: the door was a ponderous thing of Spanish oak, barred with iron bolts which ran into the stonework; the place was absolutely unbreakable.

The silence had lasted a dozen hours, although it was plain that each of the prisoners was busily thinking. At last Kettle spoke. "If I could only got a rhyme to

'brow.'" he said, "I believe I could manage the rest. "What?" asked Carnforth. "I want a word to rhyme with brow,"

sir, if you can help me." "What in the world are you up to,

"I've been filling up time, sir, whilst snapped without being able to raise a we've been here by hammering out a finger to interfere. I'm not a coward, hit of poetry about those fireflies. I got Mr. Carnforth, but I tell you it took all the idea of it last night, when we saw the nerve I'd got to sit quiet in that them flashing in and out against the chair without squirming whilst you black of the forest."

"You don't owe them much gratitude | "It's no new thing for me to expect that I can see, skipper. According to being killed before the hour was what you said, if you hadn't been look through. I've had trouble of all kinds, ing at them, you'd have been more on with all sorts of crews, but I've always had my hands free and been able to

"Perfectly right, sir. And so this me. I might even go so far as to tell poem should be all the more valuable you, sir (and you may kick me for saywhen it's put together. I'm running it | ing it if you like). I've felt a kind of to the tune of 'Greenland's icy moun- joy regularly glow inside me during tains,' my favorite air, Mr. Carnforth. some of those kind of scuffies. Yes, sir, 'm trying to work a parallel between those fireflies switching their lights in and out, and a soul, sir. Do you catch the idea?"

"I can't say I do, quite. Capt. Kettle rubbed thoughtfully at said Carnforth, "I'd fight like a cornerhis beard. "Well, I'm a trifle misty ed thief till I got my quietus." about it myself," be admitted, "but it will make none the worse poetry for being a bit that way, if I can get the here they come for us."

rhymes all right." "'Plow might suit you," Carnforth | which he had sat, and whirled it above

That's just the word I want, sir. down against the whitened wall of the 'The fields of heaven to plow.' That | cell, and the bench split down its would be the very occupation the soul length into two staves. He gave one of the man I'm thinking about would to Carnforth and hefted the other himdelight in: something restful and in the | self like a connoisseur. agricultural line. I wanted to give him good time up there. He was due for it." he added thoughtfully, and then he reach us from the outside there. And closed his eyes and fell to making fur- if they want us out of here, we've got

Martin Carnforth knew the little ruffian's taste for this form of exercise. but it seemed to him jarringly out of place just then. "I am in no mood for verse now," he commented with a

"I am," said Kettle, and tapped out the meter of a new line with a finger tip upon his knee. "It always takes a set-to with the hands, or a gale of wind, or a tight corner of some kind, to work me up to poetry at all. And the worse the fix has been the better can rhyme. I find it very restful and pleasant, sir, to send my thoughts over a bit of a sonnet after times like

"Then you ought to turn out a masterpiece now," said Carnforth, "and enjoy the making of it." Kettle took him seriously. "I quite agree with you there, sir," he said, and puckered his forehead and went

on with his work. Carnforth did not say any more, but turned again to brooding. Every time be looked at the matter, the more he cursed himself for leaving his snug pinnacle in England. The utmost boon he could have gained in Capt. Kettle's

society was not to be caught. Dangers, hardships and exposures he was discovering are much pleasanter to hear of from a distance, or to read about in a well-stuffed chair by a warm fireside. The actual items themselves had turned out terribly squalld when viewed at first hand.



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me and bring out his platoon.

ways had a gun of some sort to help

that's the kind of animal I am; in hot

blood I think no more of being killed

knocked on the head in hot blood."

shillings a week if- By James, sir,

his head. With a crash he brought it

"Now, sir, you on one side of the

door, and me on the other. They can't

Carnforth took up his stand, and

shifted his fingers knowingly along his

weapon. He was a big man and a pow-

Continued on page three.

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"And Mrs. Kettle would lose her 12

He leaped up from the bench on

than a terrier dog does."

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Kettle woke up from his work. "I'm not sweet on wearing the iron collar again, and that's a fact. It's horrible work waiting to have your backbone Gunsand were getting ready the ceremonial. RIFLES

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