Valley OF REVENGE

BY JACKSON·COLE

SYNOPSIS

Chapter X: Valdez tells Juanita he wants her to take a package and a message to a Catholic mission, a three-day ride away.

CHAPTER XI

Outside the cave he hurriedly saddled El Cielo and started down the slope for the badlands he must travel to reach Paisano Valley. The last glimpse he had of Juanita was of her standing in the cave entrance, her lovely young face smiling at him as she waved her hand.

Michael Valdez made a swift ride to the valley and as swift a return as he could, leading the horse that had been Juanita's father's mount. It was a skinny sorrel, but Valdez believed it had possibilities once it was properly fed. Juanita had a meal ready for him, and it was only shortly after noon when her horse was ready for her trip to the mission.

Valdez figured that it would be at least a three-day ride for the girl, and made preparation for that. Plenty of supplies were packed for the journey, and a saddle roll was made up which contained everything for the girl's comfort during those three days in the open.

* * *

Without comment, then, El Caballero Rojo fastened to the cantle of the saddle the heavily laden saddlebags containing the money he had taken from Raymond Garvin the night before. Juanita's eyes widened as she heard the clink of coins.

"But what is this?" she demanded.

"I want you to give these saddlebags to Padre Vincente when you meet him. He'll know what to do with them and what they contain. Tell him he'll hear from me again from somewhere around Deep Water Valley. I'm heading for Arizona and Coronado right away."

Valdez led the girl's horse out on the rock ledge before the cave and told her good-bye. Her confident, lovely young face was alive with eagerness at the prospect of fulfilling a mission for him.

"Hasta la vista, senor!" she cried, as she turned her mount's head toward the slope. "We shall meet again!"

"Vaya con Dios," echoed Valdez, and grinned as he turned back into the hideout. "Go with God—because we shall not meet again, my wild one."

But as he sat down on the stump chair beside the pine-bough cot, somehow the cave refuge seemed empty.

Juanita de Cuevas had plenty to think of during the seventy-two hours that followed her leave-taking of El Caballero Rojo. Like everybody else in that part of the West, through all the states leading up to Arizona from the border and on the other side of the border itself, she had long heard of the man as an almost legendary figure.

Some of what she had heard had been good, but far more of it had been not so good. But now she knew him herself, had known him for a day and a night. She had talked to him, she had seen his kindness, his gentleness back there in her ravaged home. She had searched his face with clear-seeing eyes that she believed had looked into his soul, and she had found it clean of any evil thing.

Perhaps after she had completed this strange journey she would know more of the strange saga of El Caballero Rojo. The priests at Corpus Christi might tell her many things.

But whatever the outcome, whatever she learned or did not learn, she knew one thing right now, and from that nothing on earth could sway her—she must follow him wherever he went, whatever he did. That firm though was like a signpost with just one arrow, an arrow showing her the only trail her own life could take.

* * *

Juanita rode through Paisano Valley as swiftly as she could, but once she had passed it she set a steady pace.

Star-eyed daisies and primroses gazed up at her invitingly in other places, and here and there she rode by a jungle of juniper and chaparral that looked like a sea of green, stretching away to the horizon. But nothing tempted her to dismount until each night, she found a camping spot where she ate a cold meal and wrapped up in her blankets to fall asleep under the stars.

On the afternoon of the third day of her journey Juanita de Cuevas saw the distant outlines of the mission. She urged Pedro on to a swifter pace.

Soft banks of white clouds hung motionless in the cardinal sky of just before dusk. In the rays of that setting sun they shone like polished silver. And under this cathedral canopy stood her goal—the Mission of Corpus Christi.

Approaching it from the mountainside along which she had been traveling for the last few hours, the first thing she saw was the life-sized representation, in granite, of the Crucifixion. It was in the center of the garden that was lush with blooms of scarlet and white and gold, and shaded by age-old trees that seemed to hover over the place in benediction.

A gray-haired padre walked slowly back and forth in the courtyard, repeating his paternoster. He stopped and kneeled before the great granite crucifix. Only the low mumble of his voice could be heard, and the muted hum of insects coming out to greet the coming dusk.

* * *

His devotions completed, the padre became aware then, for the first time, of the kneeling figure at the gate. He arose and greeted Juanita, in her ragged overalls of a peon boy.

"A benediction, my son," he said in a sonorously mellow but gentle voice. "What brings you here this night?"

"I have come a long way with a message and a present for you, Padre", Juanita replied meekly.

"Had you come with no burden except your sins for which you may wish to atone you would have been welcome," murmured the padre. "I am Padre Vincente," he announced. "It is I perhaps whom you seek? What do men call you, my son?"

"Juan de Cuevas, Padre," was Juanita's simple response, and she spoke truthfully, for men had called her that, since her father had seen fit for her to go about in the guise of a boy..

"Juan," muttered the padre, "may the grace of God be with you. Come with me indoors where you may be fed and cared for. I will have your beast seen to."

Juanita lifted the weighted saddlebags from Pedro's saddle, tossed them over her slight shoulders and half stumbled after the priest. He led her through a corridor and into a cell-like office in the adobe building. There she dropped her burden to the floor, opened the saddlebags and let the gold pieces tinkle out onto the stone floor.

(To be Continued)

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ANNE HIRST
Your Family Counselor

The True Secret Of Popularity

ONE MELANCHOLY girl today * voices the complaint of many * another. She lacks self-con- * fidence to a painful degree. She tells me she is always depressed. She doesn't go to dances because she's afraid she won't be asked to dance. She won't go on a blind date because she is afraid the young man * might be disappointed. She has a * good position, claims she has lots * of friends; her figure is good, she * says, and she dresses well. But * she is "not attractive."

* The trouble with this girl, as * with so many other shy ones, is * that she is afraid of life. She * dreads one more rebuff, she lacks * the courage to try again. So she * hides herself away from any new * experience. She is practically * standing in a corner, while life is * passing her by.

* This is not normal, though it is * far from uncommon. What she * needs is some good advice, and I * hope I can give it to her.

● NOTHING VENTURE

She must have some engaging qualities, or she wouldn't have so many friends. But instead of making the most of them, she constantly dwells on what she thinks are her faults. Who says she is not attractive, for instance? Only herself, I suspect. Next time she looks in the mirror I urge her to examine herself more fairly, acknowledge what pleases her and see what can be done to improve the rest. One's expression often has more to do with her popularity than mere prettiness, and it is inspired by her state of mind. If she sets out on a date convinced that she's going to have a wonderful time, she'll have it. The thought will bring a sparkle to her eye, color to her cheek; it will add music to her voice, and change her whole personality.

Next time this girl is asked to go out, I hope she'll accept. She'll wear a new frock (which will give her a lift) and she'll stride out of the house feeling she is Sombody Important.

Every one of us is more or less self-conscious. The cure for it lies in a sure knowledge of our attractive qualities and in employing them to our best advantage. Once we know we are doing that, we can relax and forget ourselves, and concentrate on other people. This is the true secret of popularity.

* * *

"Thinking can make it so" sounds trite, but it often works. Anne Hirst will help you to believe in yourself. Write her at Box A, room 421, 73 Adelaide St. West, Toronto.

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Sunday School Lesson

Religion in Practice
James 1:5-6, 22-27; 2:14-20

GOLDEN TEXT—Faith, if it have not works, is dead.—James 2:17.

"Living Our Religion" is the topic of this lesson for Young People and Adults, and that is religion in practice.

The Epistle of James is reputedly the epistle of "works" and some, including the great Martin Luther, have set it over against the Epistles of Paul as epistles of "faith.' But to make such a contrast is untrue to the letter and spirit of the New Testament.

Four Jameses are mentioned in the New Testament: James. the Apostle, son of Zebedee, and brother of John; James, the son of Alphaeus, also an Apostle (see Luke 6:16, American Revised Version,; James, the father of Judas, the Apostle who was not Judas Iscariot; and James, the brother of Jesus.

This last James, Christian history asserts, was the author of the Epistle of James. He was not among the Twelve Apostles; in fact, we are told in John 7:3-5, that the brothers of Jesus did not believe in Him. But after His crucifixion, they joined the Christian company (Acts 1:4), and two books of the New Testament, James and Jude, are associated with brothers of the Master.

James is mentioned by Paul (I Corinthians 15:7) as among those who had a vision of the Risen Christ. He became a great power in the church at Jerusalem.

When we think of James as the leader of the Christian community we can see him much as we would see the wise pastor of a church, dealing with his people according to their needs and conditions, rebuking laxity.

By the time the Epistle was written, the Christian community had grown enough to present new problems. The "man with the gold ring" was typical of some of the well-to-do who had been drawn to the Christian fellowship, and James found it necessary to remind the Christians that God was no respecter of persons. Likewise, when he saw Christian duties and opportunities for kindness being neglected, he gave the great, practical definition of pure religion in James 1:27.

Both the world and the church need a lot of this Epistle today.

The male flycatcher is one of the few birds that assists its mate in making the nest.

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