The Free Press' Short Story

A FLASH FROM THE ORIENT

BY GEORGE H. HALL

"I hope you do," agreed his compan- company. In disgust he turned toward ion. Harold Parker, carnestly. "I am told that the amuggling of opium among the you and your fleet," he declared angrily. natives of the Philippines is one of the worst things that the Government out wretched trade myself."

"You never can tell," explained his be able to do something in that line ment is hunting for you right now." yourself sometime.

"Count on me if there is any chance to help. Must you go?" saked Harold Parker.

Wireless operator on a merchant ship is nothing. He was a prisoner a pretty good job. You see lots of the is the only life. Travel, good compan- licads. ionship, and above all plenty of excite-

"You always did like excitement." We sail at midnight."

two young men shook hands warmly. "Hope you get your smugglers."

Again seated at the table. Haroid thought over the adventures of the day me go at once or I will make trouble for "I believed, their story I thought which had been so filled with interest you" and pleasure. It had been his first glimpse of the Orient and the unex- calmly. "We're not going to let you company!" The young man repeated the pected meeting with his old schoolmate go. If you work with us, we will treat words in dispust. "I wish they would had added greatly to the day's enjoy- you right. We have just lost our wire- be caught to-night " ment. Together they had explored the less man He was drowned." From the "They certainly will be," declared old city of Manila so strange and pic- way in which the words were spoken, Harold turesque with its mingling of the old there could be no doubt that the former "If I were sure of it, I would free you and the modern.

Parker's reverie was interrupted by cident. the appearance of another young man assurance, he slipped into the chair that the lob?" had been vacated by the sergeant: "I should like to speak to you," he an- itely worded request lay a threat. He, proudly, "Manuel Fernandez may have nounced in a friendly tone. "You are too, might be drowned if he offered re- done many things that were not right; wireless operator on the steamer 'Col- sistance. A thought, almost an inspira- but he has always spoken the truth." orado.' Yes?"

Of course the fellow's knowledge of his none of his captors understood wireless patrolling the north channel was true, position and ship had been gained from or they would not be taking such des- absolutely true; but I didn't tell him the name and the insignia on the oper- perate means to secure an operator. Once that the 'Huron' was ordered to patrol ator's cap.

"My company needs a good radio could call for aid without their knowing of amugglers is as good as caught aloperator," the young man went on. "I what he was doing. wonder if you would be interested in the

"Not at all interested," replied Harold

probably getting a hundred and fifty ness." a month. How about three hundred?" one does not have to search the streets keys. for a wireless operator. He must try to: "None of that!" exploded the captain

he asked with simulated interest "The Manila Coastal Trading Com- "Our business," continued the cappany would."

"Never heard of it before" "You will hear of us," the man as reason the Government does not apsured him. "Say, how about walking prove of our transactions. In fact they down to the wharf and looking over our hunt for us whenever we go out." ficet?"

think of leaving Captain Anderson and that the patrol was trying so hard to the "Colorado," still it might be well to find! get acquainted with any company that; "We have learned." Alvarez went on. promised such a builliant future. All "that instructions to the patrol are right," Harold consented after a radioed each evening at just about this moment's consideration. 'I'll go along time. You are to pick up these direcand look thinks over

Together they sauntered down the With the receivers at his cars, Harold abreet through other smaller and ding- listened while he tried desperately to ter streets, until they reached the water think of some means of defeating the front A feeling of distrust came over smugglers plans For a time the air Harold as they followed the river for a was stient. Clearly then, in the familiar few blocks. They were going away from code, came orders from the customs that part of the harbor at which the house to the destroyer "Erie." larger steamers docked. He was about Having secured the desired informato give up the project entirely when his tion, Harold realized that he was facing companion stopped before a warehouse a momentous proolem. Should be tell that loomed dask and ominous in the his captors the truth and thus become a

sathering duck Harold inside. The supposed warehouse of information fisshed through the air proved to be only a huge shed down the like a solution to the entire difficulty. centre of which ran a alip from the "They have given out their directions." river, thus providing sheltered mooring he announced. "The 'Eric' is to patrol for the two motor boats which appar- the north side of Corregidor Liland until the Manila Coastal Trading Company.

As his glance ran over these boats,

Harold made a most disconcerting dis-

es may not get them to-night, covery. On the deak of the larger boat nor to-morrow night, but was a pile of stoutly wired wooden boxes sconer or later we will get the peculiar size and make-up of which them!" declared Sergeant Norcross with could not be mistaken. Opium cases So this was the secret of the promising

here has to contend with. I wish I firmly. "You've seen far too much fo might have a hand in breaking up the us to let you go now. You'd put the

the door. "I think I've seen enough of

That's just what I will do," retor ed Harold hotly. 'Why, you are only chant ships that help a lot. You may gang of opium amugglers. The Govern-

that Government the slip. Come on.' A feeling of rage swept over Harold Indignantly he started for the door. "Yes. I'm due back on the 'Huron' at The man stood before him blocking the The sergeant rose from the way. Harold raised his arm to brush restaurant table and held out his hand, the fellow aside. As he did so both "Well it's been good to run onto you arms were grasped suddenly from behind again, Parker. Hope you will continue and he was held in a powerful embrace to like your berth on the 'Colorado.' Struggling and twisting accomplished

"Bring him up here!" commanded s world. But for me, the Marine Corps voice from the darkness above their

> "Bi. Si, senor," responded one of the men who had reized him.

Still resisting, Harold was led up commented Harold. "Sorry you have to short flight of stairs to a little balcony leave so early. I want to see a bit more which over looked the basin where the of the city before I go back to the ship. two boats were floating. Here, at a I table, sat a man whose bearing plainly "Goodby then until we run on to each buspoke the leader. A single glance into other again," said the sergeant, as the his cruel, piercing eyes told Harold that he was facing one who would stop at Filipino, "so mixed up in their schemes "Good luck to you," responded Harold nothing to gain his desires. Yet his that I would not dare to do anything voice was low, almost soft, as the man unless I could be sure of getting away. "We will," were the confident words directed Harold to be seated "So you I know what happened to the man who of the sergeant, as he strode rapidly, are the new wireless man," the leader was here before you. They are a bad

"I am not!" exploded Harold "Let "Then why are you with them "

"So you see," went on the captain, "we pressed. of about his own age, who had stopped need a new one. The pay will be liberal. "If you are telling me the truth, I beside his table. With complete self- Don't you think you had better take may be tempted to give you a chance."

tion, flashed through his mind. Why not "Then I'm - going to trust you. The Harold nodded but hesitated to reply pretend to accept the job? Certainly report I gave Alvarez about the 'Erie' in possession of the instruments, he the south channel. Why, your gang

"All right," he replied, finally

can handle the work for you." "Good!" exclaimed the captain. "That afor was bound "There," he exclaimed curtly. "I have a good berth where I is settled My name is Alvarez. Never mind yours You'll be 'Sparks' "Of course, of course But you are sume as on your ship

Without further words Alvarez threw Three hundred! That was far more off a large offcloth cover from the end than Harold ever could hope to attain of the table, disclosing a complete wirein his present position. Could the offer less outnit. No sooner were his bonds be genuine? Even in the Philippines released than Harold reached for the

find out what was back of such an offer menacingly "Your job is to receive, not "Who would give me three hundred?" to send Put on the phones I will explain what we want of you'

tain is to distribute goods to various points throughout the islands. For some

This must be the company of optum Surely there could be no harm in smugglers to which Norcross had relooking over the property of the com- ferred. How strange that Harold had pany While he certainly would not unintentionally run into the very gang

party to their unlawful work? Or should "Here are our headquarters" an- he mislead them by giving them incornounced the young man. Drawing a key rect information? Surely, if ever a lie from his pocket, he opened a small door were justified this was the occasion. in the front of the building and led Still he Besitated. Then a further bit

tone that rang true.

At once all was excitement and activity in the building. Alvares shouted his The engaine of the larger boat was start-Before leaving, the captain bound the unhappy operator in his chair, while a young member of the crew was placed on guard. . "If he tried to break away, shoot him." were the captain's parting

With a great chugging of her engine he opium-amuggling boat alld out alip and was on her way. tiled over the huge barnlike structure. roken occasionally by the rattle dishes from the cabin of the smaller boat which had remained tied up

Tricked! He certainly was, but at the same time Harold felt sure that his captors were tricked also. When they were caught, as they most certainly would their hide-out would be found and would be released. How soon could he expect this release to come? As the clock in a nearby steeple struck the hour of eight, he realized that in four hours his ship would sail. It would not do to wait for release from outside. He must depend on himself. He furtively strained "And you are going to help us give at the cords by which he was bound, at the same time studying the face of his guard. The young man was evidently p native Filipino and his clean-cut, intelligent features made him appear entirely out of place in the disreputable gang with which he was associated. Was it possible that he could be won over?

Almost as though reading Harold's thoughts, the guard smiled, not unkindly, "I hope you told Alvarez the truth about the movements of the Eric." he said quietly in well-spoken English.

"I did," asserted Harold, "Still something may happen. They may be

"To tell you the truth," replied the guard, almost in a whisper, "I hope so." "You hope so? I thought you were with them, that you wanted them to suc-

"I am with them," admitted the lot I lonthe them!

they were offering me a good position "Don't get excited," said the other in a real trading company. Trading

operator had not been drowned by ac- We could get away together." The boy spoke so carnestly that Harold was im-

he at length admitted. Harold realized that beneath the pol- "Senor," the youth drew himself up

Already the knife Manuel held was busy at the cords with which the oper-

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the 'Huron' to tell them that the glers are on their way up the channel." For a few minutes, Harold worked stendily at the key. The "Huron" responded. He gave them the direction taken by the outlaw boat as definitely as he was able. The opium runners surely would be caught.

As the pair then started for the stairs. a volley of Spanish imprecations broke from the semi-darkness. Revolver hand, the brigand who had been left on the smaller boat confronted them. their excitement both young men had completely forgotten about him

Without regard for the menacing weapon, the young Pilipino threw self upon his huge antagonist. pair went heavily to the floor. Harold oined in the affray, which was soon over. The big amuggler lay writhing, member of their gang has made it a one disarmed and securely tied.

"Did you get hit?" asked Harold in anxiety, as he saw blood trickling down over Manuel's hand.

"Only a scratch," replied hi scom-"That's nothing. We must

"What shall we do with him?" asked "Why not take him along with us?" auggested Manuel. "I have a plan. The Huron' is going to get the others. Let's will. She sails at midnight." go out to meet her. We'll take Mendoza with us and give him up, too."

tainly believe in seeing a thing through." understand the management of the be in the Marines."

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order. With Harold at the wheel the craft was soon gliding out over the waters of Manila Harbor. Less than an hour later the . dim outline of a swift desroyer, with the smugglers' boat in tow. was seen coming rapidly toward them.

"'Huron' altoy!" hailed Harold as he brought his boat alongside. -"What do you want?" challenged the deck watch.

"We have a prisoner for you. Throw

The explanations were soon made in the cabin of the destroyer's commander "That's what I call good work, Parker. that officer declared with enthusiasm, a the recital ended. "After you radioed us the place where the amugglers were headed, we had no trouble in rounding them up. Then to have you bring in the other boat with the remaining

hundred per cent. 16b." "The credit for that is due to Manuel." explained Harold. "As soon as we gottogether, he surely proved a fine working

"And he will be given a chance to make good," promised the commander. "I know where I can place him in a can I do for you?"

"Put me aboard the 'Colorado,' if you

As Parker came out onto the "Huron's" deck, he found himself the centre of a "Bully!" laughed Harold. "You cer- most enthusiastic group of sailors and marines. Norcross was loud in his Carrying their prisoner to the boat, praise, "I told you we were going to the young men soon had him safely get them," he declared, "but you cerstowed in the cabin. Manuel seemed to tainly bent us to it. Say, you ought to

SCAPEGOAT OF TIBET

When the crops fail, or other trouble comes on the people of Tibet, the tribe assembles and a goat, led by a black rope is brought before them by its owner. The man pleads for its life, and very likely in the distant past he may have brought his gont as a substitute for the sacrifice of his own. But now the only punishment is the banishment of he goat from the flock.

A white rope is substituted for the black one. The goat is then gally adorned and having been well fed is driven off to the hills, an exile. No one may touch it or lay a load on P It is a wanderer doing penance for the sins of the people.

In other parts of Tibet there used to be, and may be still a scapeman. He was one who was either destitute or had done some wrong lake the goat, he was first well fed and then compelled to roam for three years in Central Thet a banished man, who would have foun. It hard to live in the bitter winter, but whom none would help.

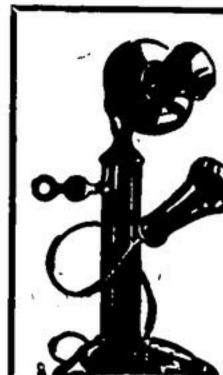
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Suspiciously like adding insult to injury is this stunt of Jock Scott, He is showing shaving himself outside a New York barber shop with an electric razor, powered by a battery in his knapsa k. Joek has hiked from his native Scotland through the entire continent of Africa, a 25,000mile stroll and is in New York to make a grand walking tour of North America, including Canada. No hitching, either, Jock does it all on foot except where he must cross water

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