

RAINBOW'S END A Novel

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O'REILLY LEARNS OF ROSA'S PLIGHT AND RUSHES TO THE RESCUE WITH ALL POSSIBLE HASTE

Synopsis.—Don Esteban Varona, a Cuban planter, hides his wealth—money, jewels and title deeds—in a well on his estate. The hiding place is known only to Sebastian, a slave. Don Esteban's wife dies at the birth of twins, Esteban and Rosa. Don Esteban marries the avaricious Donna Isabel, who tries unsuccessfully to wring the secret of the hidden treasure from Sebastian. Angered at his refusal, she urges Don Esteban to sell Evangelina, Sebastian's daughter. Don Esteban refuses, but in the course of a gambling orgie, he risks Evangelina at cards and loses. Crazy by the loss of his daughter, Sebastian kills Don Esteban and is himself killed. Many years pass and Donna Isabel is unable to find the hidden treasure. Don Mario, rich sugar merchant, seeks to marry Rosa, who has returned from school in the United States. Johnnie O'Reilly, an American, who loves Rosa, wins her promise to wait for him until he can return from New York. Donna Isabel falls to death while walking in her sleep. Esteban's connection with the insurgents is discovered and he and Rosa are compelled to flee.

CHAPTER V—Continued.

"Are you crazy, or am I?" he queried.

"Yes, sir; delirious. It's this way, sir; I've changed my mind, too."

"Oh—! You have?"

"I've met the dearest, sweetest—O'Reilly choked, then began again—"the dearest, loveliest—"

"Never mind the bird-calls—don't scoo! I got enough of that at home. Humph! It turned out better than I thought. Why, I—I was positively terrified when you walked in. I ought to be offended, and I am, but— Get out while I telephone Elsa."

O'Reilly spent that evening in writing a long letter to Rosa Varona. Other letters went forward by succeeding posts, and there was no doubt now that O'Reilly's pen was tipped with magic! He wringed when he re-read what he had written. He bade Rosa prepare for his return and their immediate marriage.

O'Reilly's love was unlimited; his trust in the girl was absolute. He knew, moreover, that she loved and trusted him. This, to be sure, was a miracle—a unique phenomenon which never ceased to amaze him. He did not dream that every man had felt the same vague wonder.

And so the time passed rapidly. But, strange to say, there came no answer to those letters. O'Reilly cursed the revolution which had made communication so uncertain; at length he cabled, but still the days dragged on with no result. Gradually his impatience gave way to apprehension.

Great was his relief, therefore, when one day a worn, stained envelope addressed in Rosa's hand was laid upon his desk. The American stamp, the Key West postmark, looked strange, but— Her first letter! O'Reilly wondered if his first letter to her could possibly have moved her as this moved him. He kissed the envelope where her lips had caressed it in the sealing. Then, with eager fingers he broke it open.

It was a generous epistle, long and closely written, but as he read his keen delight turned to dismay, and when he had turned the last thin page his brain was in wildest turmoil. He



"Are You Crazy, or Am I?" He Queried.

thought he must be dreaming. Could it be that he had misunderstood anything? He turned to the beginning and attempted to read, but his hands shook so that he was obliged to lay the letter flat upon his desk.

My Dear Beloved: It is with diffidence and hesitation that I take my pen in hand, for I fear you may consider me unduly forward in writing to you without solicitation.

Alas! We are refugees, Esteban and I—fugitives, outcasts, living in the man-

gua with Asensio and Evangelina, former slaves of our father. Such poverty, such indescribable circumstances! But they were our only friends and they took us in when we were homeless, so we love them.

If this letter reaches you—and I send it with a prayer—what then? I dare not think too long of that, for the hearts of men are not like the hearts of women. What will you say when you learn that the Rosa Varona whom you favored with your admiration is not the Rosa of today? I hear you murmur, "The girl forgets herself!" But, oh, the standards of yesterday are gone, and my reserve is gone, too! I am a hunted creature.

Rosa had compelled herself to start with the death of Donna Isabel and to give him a succinct account of all that had followed. O'Reilly read the story, fascinated.

That is how we came to live with Asensio and his wife, I imagine. It is a hell, a hell, a hell away far up the Yumuri, and so insignificant as to escape attention. We are no longer people of consequence or authority; our safety depends upon our inconspicuousness.

The whole country is in chaos. There is no work—nothing but suspicion, hatred, and violence. Oh, what desolation this war has wrought! Esteban has already become a guerrillero. He has stolen a cow, and so we have milk for our coffee; but there is only a handful of coffee left, and little hope of more. Marauding bands of Spaniards are everywhere, and the country people tell atrocious tales about them. How will it end? How long before they will discover us and the worst will happen?

If only you were here— Oh, my dearest Juan! If only you were here—to take me in your arms and banish this ever constant terror at my heart. If only you were here to tell me that you love me still in spite of my misfortune. See! The tears are falling as I write. You will return, will you not? I could not write like this if I were sure that you would read these lines. My nightly prayer— But, I will not tell you of my prayers, for fate may guide this letter to you, after all, and the hearts of men do change. In those dark hours when my doubts arise I try to tell myself that you will surely come and search me out.

When you return to Cuba—see, my faith is strong again—avoid Matanzas, for your own sake and mine. Don Mario wanted to marry me to save me this exile. But I refused; I told him I was pledged to you, and he was furious. He is powerful; he would balk you, and there is always room for one more in San Severino.

If I could come to you, I would, but I am marked. So if you still desire me you must search me out. You will? I pin my faith to that as to the Cross. To doubt would be to perish. If we should have to find another hiding-place, and that is always likely, you can learn of our whereabouts from Colonel Lopez.

Alas! If you had asked me to go with you that day! I would have followed you, for my heart beat then as it beats today, for you alone.

The candle is burning low and it will soon be daylight, and then this letter must begin its long, uncertain journey. I trust the many blots upon the paper will not give you a wrong impression of my writing, for I am neat, and I write nicely; only now the ink is poor and there is very little of it. There is little of anything, here at Asensio's house, except tears. Of those I fear there are too many to please you, my Juan, for men do not like tears. Therefore, I try to smile as I sign myself.

Your loving and your faithful ROSA.

O God! Come quickly, if you love me.

CHAPTER VI.

The Quest Begins.

When O'Reilly had finished his second reading of the letter there were fresh blots upon the pitifully untidy pages. "I write nicely, only the ink is poor—" "There is little of anything here at Asensio's house—" "It is cold before the dawn—" . . . Poor little Rosa! He had always thought of her as so proud, so high-spirited, so playful, but another Rosa had written this letter. Her appeal stirred every chord of tenderness, every impulse of chivalry in his impressionable Irish nature. "O God! Come quickly, if you love me." He leaped to his feet; he dashed the tears from his eyes.

Johnnie's preparations were conducted with vigor and promptitude; within two hours his belongings were packed. He seized his hat and hastened downtown to the office of the Cuban junta.

A businesslike young man inquired his errand. Johnnie made known a part of it, and then asked to see someone in authority. In consequence, perhaps, of his Irish smile or of that persuasiveness which he could render almost irresistible when he willed, it was not long before he gained admittance to the presence of Mr. Enriquez, a distinguished, scholarly Cuban of middle age.

O'Reilly plunged boldly into the heart of the matter which had brought

him thither. When he had finished his tale Mr. Enriquez inquired: "But how do you expect me to help you?"

"I want your advice more than your help, although you might tell me where I can find Colonel Lopez."

Enriquez eyed his caller keenly. "That information would be very well worth having," said he. "But, you understand, we know little about what is going on in Cuba—far less than the Spaniards themselves. I'm afraid I can't help you."

"You don't take me for a spy, do you?" Johnnie asked, with his friendly grin.

"Ah! You don't look like one, but we never know whom to trust. This young lady in whom you are interested, who is she?"

"Her name is Varona; Miss Rosa Varona."

"So?" Enriquez raised his brows. "Not by any chance the heiress to that famous Varona treasure?"

"Exactly!—If there is such a thing. Here! Read this. I want you to believe me." Reverently he laid Rosa's letter before her countryman. "I'm not in the habit of showing my letters to strangers, but—I guess that'll convince you I'm not a spy."

He sat silently while the letter was being read; nor was he disappointed in the result. Mr. Enriquez raised dark, compassionate eyes to his, saying:

"This is a touching letter, sir. I thank you for allowing me to see it. No, I don't doubt you now. Poor Cuba! Her sons must be brave, her daughters patient."

"Well! You understand why I must go quickly, and why I can't chance de-



He Sat Silently While the Letter Was Being Read.

lay by going either to Matanzas or to Havana. I want to land somewhere farther east, and I want you to help me to find Colonel Lopez."

Mr. Enriquez frowned thoughtfully. "What I just told you is literally true," he said at last. "We work in the dark up here, and we don't know the whereabouts of our troops. But—I have a thought." He excused himself and left the room. When he returned he explained: "I don't have to tell you that we are watched all the time, and that for us to assist you openly would be liable to defeat your purpose. But I have just telephoned to a man I can trust, and I have told him your story. He has relatives in Cuba and he agrees to help you if he can. His name is Alvarado." Writing an address upon a card, he handed it to O'Reilly. "Go to him, tell him what you have told me, and do as he directs. Another thing, don't return here unless it is necessary; otherwise when you land in Cuba you may have cause to regret it."

Doctor Alvarado, a high type of the Cuban professional man, was expecting O'Reilly. He listened patiently to his caller's somewhat breathless recital.

"You do well to avoid the cities where you are known," he agreed. "But just how to reach the insurgents—"

"If you'd merely give me a letter saying I'm a friend—"

The doctor promptly negated this suggestion. "Surely you don't think it can be done as easily as that?" he inquired. "In the first place, wherever you land, you will be watched and probably searched. Such a letter, if discovered, would not only end your chances, but it would bring certain disaster upon those to whom it was written. My two brothers, Tomas and Ignacio, reside in Cuba, and we all work for the cause of independence in our own ways. I am fortunately situated, but they are surrounded by dangers, and I must ask you to be extremely careful in communicating with them,

for I am placing their lives in your hands and—I love them dearly."

"I shall do exactly as you say."

"Very well, then! Go to Neuvitas, where Tomas lives—there is a steamer leaving in three or four days, and you can arrange passage on her. He is a dentist. Meet him, somehow, and make yourself known by repeating this sentence: 'I come from Felipe. He told me how you whipped him to keep him from going to the Ten Years' war! That will be enough; he will ask you who you are and what you want. You won't need to say anything more. No living soul, except Tomas and I, knows that he thrashed me, but it is true. He will understand from the message that I trust you, and he will help you to reach the rebels, if such a thing is possible. Come and see me when you get back, and bring me news of Tomas. Now, adios, compadre."

"Adios, señor! I am deeply grateful!"

O'Reilly had no difficulty in securing passage direct to Neuvitas on the English steamer Dunham Castle, and a few days later he saw the Atlantic highlands dissolve into the mists of a winter afternoon as the ship headed outward into a nasty running sea.

Cuba, when it came fairly into sight, lay bathed in golden sunshine, all warmth and welcome, like a bride upon an azure couch. The moist breath from her fragrant shores swept over the steamer's decks and Johnnie O'Reilly sniffed it joyfully.

Although there were but a few passengers on the Dunham Castle, during which suspicious customs men searched their baggage and questioned them. Finally, however, O'Reilly found himself free to go ashore.

El Gran Hotel Europea, Neuvitas' leading hostelry, belied its name. It was far from large, and certainly it was anything but European, except, perhaps, in its proprietor's extravagant and un-American desire to please, at any cost. But it was the best hotel the place afforded, and Señor Carbajal was the most attentive of hosts.

He evinced an unusual interest in the affairs of his American guest, and soon developed a habit of popping into the latter's room at unexpected moments, ostensibly to see that all was as it should be. When, for the third time, he appeared without knocking, O'Reilly suspected something.

"You have everything, eh?" Mr. Carbajal teetered upon the balls of his feet while his small black eyes roved inquisitively.

"Everything in abundance."

"You are a pleasure traveler? You see the sights, is that it? Well, Cuba is beautiful."

"I'm not a tourist. I travel for my health," said O'Reilly.

"You—Health!" Carbajal's frame began to heave; his bulging abdomen oscillated as if shaken by some hidden hand. "Good! Ha! There's another joke for you."

"I'm a sick man," O'Reilly insisted, hollowly.

"You don't look sick," mumbled Carbajal. "Not like the other American."

"What other American?"

"A peculiar fellow. He went on to Puerto Principe. What a cough! And he was as thin as a wire. He bled at the mouth, too, all the time, when he was not reviling my hotel. You'll see him if you go there, provided he hasn't come apart with his coughing. I believe he writes for newspapers. Well, it is my pleasure to serve you. Command me at any hour." Mr. Carbajal rose reluctantly and went wheezing downstairs to his grimy tables and the files.

CHAPTER VII.

The Man Who Would Know Life.

Later that day O'Reilly set out to reconnoiter the city of Neuvitas. He was followed, of course—he had expected as much, and the circumstances amused rather than alarmed him. But when he returned to his hotel and found that his room had been visited during his absence he felt a hint of uneasiness. Evidently, as Doctor Alvarado had forecast, the authorities were interested in him; and he had further evidence of the fact when he learned that the room next him was occupied by the very man who had shadowed him on the street. Inasmuch as the intervening wall was no more than a thin partition, through which his very breathing could be heard, while his every movement could doubtless be spied upon, O'Reilly saw the need of caution.

During breakfast, and afterward throughout an aimless morning stroll, O'Reilly felt watchful eyes upon him. When he returned to his hotel he found Mr. Carbajal in the cafe conducting refreshments for some military officers, who scanned the American with bold, hostile glances. O'Reilly complained to the proprietor of a toothache. He declared that something had to be done at once, and inquired the name and address of the best local dentist.

Mr. Carbajal named several, among them Dr. Tomas Alvarado, whereupon his guest hurried away, followed at a respectful distance by the secret agent.

Finding Doctor Alvarado's office was closed, as he had anticipated, O'Reilly proceeded to the doctor's residence. There was some delay when he rang the bell, but eventually the dentist himself appeared. O'Reilly recognized him from his resemblance to his brother. He addressed him in English.

"I come from Felipe," he began. "He well remembers the day you whipped him to keep him from going to the Ten Years' war."

The languor of Doctor Alvarado's siesta vanished. He started, his eyes widened.

"Who are you?" he muttered. "My name is O'Reilly, I am an American, a friend, so don't be alarmed. The man you see approaching is following me, but he thinks I have come to you with a toothache."

"What do you want?"

"I want your help in joining the insurgents."

By this time the detective had come within earshot. Making an effort at self-possession, the dentist said: "Very well. I will meet you at my office in a half-hour and see what can be done." Then he bowed.

O'Reilly raised his hat and turned away.

Doctor Alvarado's dentist's chair faced a full-length window, one of several which, after the Cuban fashion, opened directly upon the sidewalk, rendering both the waiting room and the office almost as public as the street itself. Every one of these windows was wide open when Johnnie arrived; but it seemed that the dentist knew what he was about, for when his patient had taken his seat and he had begun an examination of the troublesome tooth, he said, under his breath:

"I, too, am watched. Talk to me in English. When I press, thus, upon your gun, you will know that someone is passing. Now, then, what is the meaning of your amazing message from Felipe?"

While Doctor Alvarado pretended to treat a perfectly sound molar, Johnnie managed, despite frequent interruptions, to make known the reason and circumstances of his presence.

"But there are no rebels around here," Alvarado told him. "You could escape to the country, perhaps, but what then? Where would you go? How would they know who you are?"

"That's what I want to find out."

The Cuban pondered. "You'll have to go to Puerto Principe," he said at length. "Our men are operating in that neighborhood, and my brother Ignacio will know how to reach them. I'll give you a message to him, similar to the one you brought me from Felipe." Then he smiled. "I've just thought of the very thing. Years ago I lent him a book which I particularly prized, and one of his children damaged it. I was furious. I declared I would never lend him another, and I never have. Now, then, I'll give you that very volume; hand it to him and say that I asked you to return it to him."

O'Reilly thanked him, promising to use every precaution in delivering the message. The next morning he paid Carbajal's score and took the train to the interior. In his bag was Tomas Alvarado's precious volume, and in the same coach with him rode the secret service man.

In its general features Puerto Principe differed little from the other Cuban cities O'Reilly knew. It was compactly built, it was very old and it looked its centuries. Its streets were particularly narrow and crooked, having been purposely laid out in labyrinthine mazes, so the story goes, in order to fool the pirates.

As he sat in a cafe, sipping an orangeade, he heard someone speaking an atrocious Spanish, and looked up to see that another American had entered. The stranger was a tall, funereal young man, with pallid cheeks and hollow, burning eyes. O'Reilly stepped over to the table and introduced himself. "The hotel keeper in Neuvitas told me I'd find you here," he said. "Your name is—"

"Branch; Leslie Branch. So Carbajal said you'd find me here, eh? Oh, the greasy little liar. He didn't believe it. He thought his cooking would have killed me, long ago, and it nearly did." This time Mr. Branch's bony frame underwent a genuine shudder and his face was convulsed with loathing. "Carbajal's in the secret service. Nice fat little spy."

"So I suspected."

Mr. Branch's beverage appeared at this moment. With a flourish the waiter placed a small glass and a bottle of dark liquid before him. Branch stared at it, then rolled a fiercely smoldering eye upward.

"What's that?" he inquired.

Esteban and Rosa feel secure in their hiding place unaware that Cueto's treachery is bringing upon them a new and more terrible danger. Don't miss this development, which is disclosed in the next installment.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

DIG TRENCHES, FIND TREASURE

Marines in Training Camp Uncovers Chest Buried by Jean Lafitte.

DIFFERS FROM FICTION

Precious Metal Worth Thousands of Dollars Sold and Proceeds Turned Over to Dependent Families of Marines.

Paris Island, S. C.—"Tell it to the marines."

"That's all the comfort superstitious negroes got when they whispered, to white scoffers, of buried pirate treasure on a little island near here.

But that was years and years ago, long before United States marines established their recruit depot at Paris Island for the training of navy soldiers for duties on land, at sea and in the air.

The negroes had it that Jean Lafitte, the swashbuckling pirate of the Mexican gulf, had buried a treasure chest near Paris Island. And so they told their children and their children told the United States marines when they established a recruit depot at Paris Island in 1914.

Why Not, Indeed! In these days of intensive training for troops, trenches must be dug in order to truly simulate west front conditions.

Well, then, why not dig the trenches somewhere near the spot negro tradition said the pirate treasure lay?

Not that the marines had any idea there was treasure there. Oh, no!

You can tell marines a whole lot of things but to get them to believe them is another matter. World travelers that they are, they are sophisticated, if not wise.

Still, digging away over the site of the buried treasure would add a new zest to the task—would get the trenches completed in jig time, and would prove to the darkies that the whole thing was a myth.

Now then, here's the spot our story begins to differentiate from the "Ed-



Raised the Chest to the Top of the Trench.

gar Allan Poe" and the "Robert Louis Stevenson" ideas.

The marines found the buried treasure in the exact spot the negroes said it would be!

Feverish hands raised the chest to the top of the trench and when the lid was pried off, the chest was found to contain—

Not the "go to hell or Hadleyburg" message of Mark Twain.

Not the soiled linen Jean Lafitte had forgotten to send to the laundry.

But sure enough gold and silver reposed in the resurrected chest.

Not a fortune in precious metal but several thousand dollars' worth. And papers and documents of all kinds, yellowed by age and illegible.

And so endeth our tale of the near Spanish Main.

Oh, yes! The metal was sold and the proceeds turned over to the dependent families of marines. We almost forgot that.

And we almost forgot the moral of the story. It is—Join the United States marines!

Their's is a great life.

SOLDIER PULLS POOR JOKE

Cautioned That It Would Be Wise to Change the Name of His Pup.

Camp Gordon, Ga.—The avowal that he loved "William II" better than he did any officer in his company resulted in the incarceration of William L. Schneider, a Pennsylvania soldier. His explanation that "William II" was his dog brought his immediate release, but he was cautioned not to joke about his pup again, and it was suggested that the name be changed.