

# RAINBOW'S END *A Novel*

By REX BEACH Author of "The Iron Trail," "The Spoilers," "Heart of the Sunset," Etc.

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CHAPTER XVIII—Continued.

"I have been close to death so long that it means little to me," she confessed. "I have you, and—well, with you at my side I can face the worst."

"Oh, we won't give up until we have you," he assured her. "If I had money it would be a simple proposition to bribe some guard to pass us through the lines, but I have spent all that General Betancourt gave me." He smoothed back Rosa's dark hair and smiled reassuringly at her. "Well, I'll manage somehow; so don't worry your pretty head. I'll find the price, if I have to waylay old Don Mario and rob him. Don't you think I look like a bandit? The very sight of me would terrify that fat rascal."

"To me you are beautiful," breathed the girl. Then she lowered her eyes. "La, la! How I spoil you! I have quite forgotten how to be ladylike. Isabel was right when she called me a bold and forward hussy. Now, then, please turn your face aside, for I wish to think, and so long as you look at me I cannot—I make love to you brazenly. See! Now, then, that is much better. I shall hold your hand, so. When I kiss it you may look at me again, for a moment." Drawing herself closer to O'Reilly, Rosa began thoughtfully: "Before you came I more than once was on the point of appealing to some of my former friends, but they are all Spaniards and we are no longer—sympatico, you understand?"

Rosa paused for his answer.

"Perfectly; I'm in the same fix. Of all the people I used to know there isn't one but would denounce me if I made myself known. Now that I've been fighting with the insurgents, I haven't even gone to the American consul for help—if there is an American consul."

Rosa nodded, then continued, hesitatingly: "I had a vivid dream last night. Perhaps it was a portent. Who knows? It was about that stepmother of mine. You remember how she met her death? I wrote you—"

"Yes, and Esteban also told me."

"It was he who recovered her body from the well. One day, while we were in hiding, away up yonder in the Yumuri, he showed me an old coin—"

"I know," O'Reilly said quickly. "He told me the whole story. He thinks that doubloon is a clue to your father's fortune, but—I can't put much faith in it. In fact, I didn't believe until this moment that there was a doubloon at all."

"Oh, indeed there was! I saw it." There was a moment of silence during which the lovers were oblivious to all but each other, then Rosa murmured: "How strange! Sometimes your eyes are blue and sometimes gray. Does that mean that your love, too, can change?"

"Certainly not. But come, what about Esteban and that doubloon?"

With an effort the girl brought herself back to earth. "Well, it occurred to me, in the light of that dream last night, that Esteban may have been right. Of course nobody outside of our family credits the old story, and yet my father was considered a very rich man at one time. Pancho Cueto believed in the existence of the treasure, and he was in a position to know."

"True! Perhaps, after all—"

O'Reilly frowned meditatively.

Rosa lifted herself upon her elbow, her eyes sparkling. "Wouldn't it be wonderful if it were true? Just think, O'Reilly, cases of Spanish gold, silver coins in casks, packages of gems. Oh, I've heard Isabel talk about it often enough."

"Don't forget those pearls from the Caribbean, as large as plums," Johnny smiled. "I could never quite swallow that. A pearl the size of a currant would buy our freedom right now." After a moment he went on, more seriously: "I've a notion to look into that old well this very afternoon. I—I dare say I'm foolish, but—somehow the story doesn't sound so improbable as it did. Perhaps it is worth investigating—"

He made up his mind swiftly. "I—I'm off this very instant."

When O'Reilly emerged from the hut he found Jacket industriously at work over a fragment of grindstone which he had somewhere unearthed. The boy looked up at his friend's approach and held out for inspection a long, thin file, which he was slowly shaping into a knife-blade.

"What do you think of that?" he queried proudly. "It may come in handy when we are ready to clear out of this pesthole."

"Where did you get it?"

"Oh, I stole it. I steal everything I can lay my hands on nowadays. One can never tell when he may have a throat to cut, and a file has good steel in it."

"Since you are such an accomplished thief, do you think you could steal something for me?" O'Reilly inquired. "A piece of rope?"

"Rope?" Jacket was puzzled. "Rope is only good for hanging Spaniards. My friend in the fish market has a volandra, and—perhaps I can rob him of a balyard." Laying aside his task, Jacket arose and made off in the direction of the water front. He was back within an hour, and under his shirt he carried a coil of worn but service-

able rope. Without waiting to explain his need for this unusual article, O'Reilly linked arms with the boy and set out to climb La Cumbre. When at last they stood in the unused quarry and Johnnie made known his intention to explore the old well, Jacket regarded him with undisguised amazement.

"What do you expect to find down there?" the latter inquired.

"To tell you the truth, I don't really expect to find anything," the man confessed. "Now that I'm here, I'm beginning to feel silly; nevertheless, I'm going to have a look for the hidden treasure of the Varona."

"Hidden treasure!" From Jacket's expression it was plain that he feared his friend was mildly mad. Even after O'Reilly had told him something about old Don Esteban's missing riches, he scouted the story. He peeped inquisitively into the dark opening of the well, then he shook his head. "Caramba! What an idea! Was this old man crazy, to throw his money away?"

"He—he had more than he knew what to do with, and he wished to save it from the Spaniards," O'Reilly explained lamely.

"Humph! Nobody ever had more money than he wanted." The boy's disgust at such credulity was plain. "This well looks just like any other, only deeper; you'd better look out that you don't break your neck like that foolish old woman, that Donna What's-Her-Name."

O'Reilly did indeed feel that he was making himself ridiculous; nevertheless, he made the rope fast and swung himself down out of the sunlight, leaving Jacket to stand guard over him. Perhaps fifteen minutes later he reappeared, panting from his exertions. He was wet, slimy; his clothes were streaked and stained with mud. Jacket began to laugh shrilly at his appearance.

"Ha! What a big lizard is this! Your beautiful garments are spoiled. And the treasure? Where is it?" The lad was delighted. He bent double with mirth; he slapped his bare legs and stamped his feet in glee.

O'Reilly grinned good-naturedly, and replaced the planks which had covered the orifice, then hid the rope in some nearby bushes. On their way back he endured his young friend's banter absent-mindedly, but as they neared Asensio's house he startled Jacket by saying, "Can you manage to find a pickax or a crowbar?"

Jacket's eyes opened; he stopped in the middle of the dusty road. "What did you see down there, compadre? Tell me."

"Nothing much. Just enough to make me want to see more. Do you think you can steal some sort of a tool for me?"

"I can try."

"Please do. And remember, say nothing before Asensio or his wife."

Rosa met O'Reilly just inside the door, and at sight of her he uttered an exclamation of surprise, for during his absence she had removed the stain

from her face and discarded that disfigurement which Evangelina had fitted to her back prior to their departure from the Pan de Matanzas. She stood before him now, straight and slim and graceful—the Rosa of his dreams, only very thin, very fragile. Her poor tatters only enhanced her prettiness, so he thought.

"Rosa, dear! Do you think this is quite safe?" he ventured, doubtfully.

Evangelina, who was bending over her husband, straightened herself and came forward with a smile upon her black face.

"She is beautiful, eh? Too beautiful to look at? What did I tell you?"

Rosa was to delightful confusion at

O'Reilly's evident surprise and admiration. "Then I'm not so altogether changed?" she asked.

"Why, you haven't changed at all, except to grow more beautiful. Evangelina is right; you are too beautiful to look at. But wait!" He drew her aside and whispered, "I've been down in the well." Some tremor in his voice, some glint in his eyes, caused the girl to seize him eagerly, fiercely. "I may be wrong," he said hurriedly; "there may be nothing in it—and yet I saw something."

"What?"

"Wooden beams, timbers of some sort, behind the stone curbing." It was plain Rosa did not comprehend, so he hurried on. "At first I noticed nothing unusual, except that the bottom of the well is nearly dry—filled up, you know, with debris and stuff that has fallen in from the curbing above, then I saw that although the well is dug through rock, nevertheless it is entirely curbed up with stones laid in mortar. That struck me as queer."

"Yes?"

"I noticed, too, in one place that there was wood behind—as if timbers had been placed there to cover the entrance to a cave. You know this Cuban rock is full of caverns."

Rosa clasped her hands, she began to tremble. "You have found it, O'Reilly. You have!" she whispered.

"No, no, I've found nothing yet. But I've sent Jacket for a pick or a bar and tonight I'm going to pull down those stones and see what is behind them."

"To night? You must let me go, too. I want to help."

"Very well. But meanwhile you mustn't let your hopes rise too high, for there is every chance that you will be disappointed. And don't mention it to Evangelina. Now, then, I've a few pennies left and I'm going to buy some candles."

Rosa embraced her lover impulsively. "Something tells me it is true! Something tells me you are going to save us all."

Evangelina in the far corner of the hut muttered to her husband: "Such love-birds! They are like parakeets, forever kissing and cooing!"

Jacket returned at dusk, and with him he brought a rusty three-foot iron bar, evidently part of a window grating. The boy was tired, disgusted, and in a vile temper. "A pickax! A crowbar!" he cursed eloquently. "One might as well try to steal a cannon out of San Severino. I'm ready to do anything within reason, but—"

"Why, this will do nicely; it is just what I want," O'Reilly told him.

"Humph! I'm glad to hear it, for that rod was nearly the death of me. I broke my back wrenching at it and the villain who owned the house—may a bad lightning split him!—he ran after me until I nearly expired. If my new knife had been sharp I would have turned and sent him home with it between his ribs. Tomorrow I shall put an edge on it. Believe me, I ran until my lungs burst."

Little food remained in the hut, barely enough for Asensio and the women, and inasmuch as O'Reilly had spent his last centavo for candles he and Jacket were forced to go hungry again. Late that evening, after the wretched prison quarters had grown quiet, the three treasure hunters stole out of their hovel and wound up the hill. In spite of their excitement they went slowly, for none of them had the strength to hurry. Fortunately there were few provisors within the lines, hunger having robbed the reconcentrados of the spirit to venture forth, and in consequence Spanish vigilance had relaxed; it was now confined to the far-dung girdle of intrenchments which encircled the city. The trio encountered no one.

Leaving Jacket on guard at the crest of the hill, O'Reilly stationed Rosa at the mouth of the well, then lowered himself once more into it. Lighting his candle, he made a careful examination of the place, with the result that Esteban's theory of the missing riches seemed even less improbable than it had earlier in the day. The masonry work, he discovered, had been done with a painstaking thoroughness which spoke of the abundance of slave labor, and time had barely begun to affect it. Here and there a piece of the mortar had loosened and come away, but for the most part it stood as solid as the stones between which it was laid. Shoulder-high to O'Reilly there appeared to be a section of the curbing less smoothly fitted than the rest, and through an interstice in this he detected what seemed to be a damp wooden beam. At this point he brought his iron bar into play.

It was not long before he discovered that his work was cut out for him. The cement was like flint and his blunt makeshift implement was almost useless against it. Ankle-deep in the muddy water, he patiently pecked and pounded and chipped, endeavoring to enlarge the crevice so as to use his bar as a lever. The sweat streamed from him and he became dismayed at his own weakness. He was forced to rest frequently.

Rosa hung over the orifice above, encouraging him, inquiring eagerly as to

his progress. During his frequent breathing spells he could discern her white face dimly illumined by the candle light from below.

After he had worked for an hour or two, he made a report: "It begins to look as if there really was a bulkhead or a door in there."

The girl clasped her hands and laughed with delight. "Do hurry, dear; I'm dying of suspense."

O'Reilly groaned: "That fellow, Sebastian, knew his business. This ce-

luded! That means something to hide. Oh, if I could only help you!"

"Heavens! If I only had something—anything, to work with!" muttered the American as he fell to with redoubled energy. He no longer tried to conserve his strength, for the treasure seeker's lust beset him. Rosa looked on, wringing her hands and urging him to greater haste.

But the low, thick door was built of some hard, native wood: it was wet and tough and slippery. O'Reilly's blows made no impression upon it, not upon the heavy hasps and staples with which it was secured in place. The latter were deeply rusted, to be sure, but they withstood his efforts, and he was finally forced to rest, baffled, enraged, half hysterical from weakness and fatigue.

Daylight was at hand once more, but he refused to give up, and worked on stubbornly, furiously, until Rosa, in an agony, besought him to desist.

Johnnie again collapsed on the grass and lay panting while the other two replaced the planks.

"Another hour and I'd have been into it," he declared, huskily.

"You will skill yourself," Jacket told him.

Rosa bent over him with shining eyes and parted lips. "Yes," said she. "Be patient. We will come back O'Reilly, and tonight we shall be rich."

Colonel Cobo lit a black cigarette, leaned back in his chair, and exhaled two fierce jets of smoke through his nostrils. For a full moment he scowled forbiddingly at the sergeant who had asked to see him.

"What's this you are telling me?" he inquired finally.

The sergeant, a mean-faced, low-browed man, stirred uneasily.

"It is God's truth. There are spirits on La Cumbre, and I wish to see the priest about it."

"Spirits? What kind of spirits?"

The fellow shrugged. "Evil spirits—spirits from hell. The men are buying charms."

"Bah! I took you to be a sensible person."

"You don't believe me? Well, I didn't believe then, when they told me about it. But I saw with my own eyes."

Cobo leaned forward, mildly astonished. Of all his villainous troop, this man was the last one he had credited with imagination of this sort. "What did you see?"

"A ghost, my colonel, nothing else. La Cumbre is no place for an honest Christian."

The colonel burst into a mocking laugh. "An honest Christian! You! Of all my vile ruffians, you are the vilest. Why, you're a thief, a liar, and an assassin! You are lying to me now. Come—the truth for once, before I give you the componte."

"As God is my judge, I'm telling you the truth," protested the soldier. "Flog me if you will—rather the componte than another night in those trenches. You know that old quinta?"

"Where Pancho Cueto made a goat of himself? Perfectly. Do you mean to say that you saw old Esteban Varona walking with his head in his hands?"

"No, but I saw that she-devil who fell in the well and broke her neck."

"Eh? When did you behold this—this marvel?"

"Two nights ago. She was there beside the well and her face shone through the night like a lantern. There was fire upon it. She came and went, like a moth in the lamplight. I tell you I repented of my sins. Some of the men laughed at me when I told them, as they had laughed at the others. But last night two of the doubters went up there."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

**Cement From Beet Sugar.**

A result of experiments in French factories is the production of an excellent cement as a by-product of beet-sugar refining. The first step in the production of sugar from beets is boiling them. It has heretofore been customary to throw away as valueless the scum formed on the caldrons. But it has now been discovered that this scum contains large quantities of carbonate of lime. It is estimated that 4,000 tons of the carbonates can be recovered from 70,000 tons of beets. To this quantity of the carbonate 1,100 tons of clay is added, the resultant product being a good cement. The best scum is pumped into large reservoirs and allowed to evaporate for a certain length of time before being mixed with the clay. It is then stirred or beaten for an hour before being fed into rotary ovens such as are used in making Portland cement.—The Argonaut.

**Encore.**

Hotel Proprietor—Did you enjoy the cornet playing in the next room to yours last night?

Guest (savagely)—Enjoy it! I should say not. I spent half the night pounding on the wall to make the idiot stop.

Proprietor—Why, Jones told me this morning you applauded every one of his pieces and he was going to send for some more music right away so that he could play for you again.

There's a little door, as sure as you live," he told her.

The girl was beside herself with ex- a fantastic idea, nevertheless citement. "Yes? What else? What more do you see?"

"Nothing. It appears to be made of solid timbers, and has two huge hand-wrought locks."

"Locks! Then we have found it." Rosa closed her eyes; she swayed momentarily. "Esteban was right. Looks,

ment is like steel, and I'm afraid of breaking my crowbar."

Rosa found a leaf, folded a kiss into it, and dropped it to him. "That will give you strength," she declared.

O'Reilly lost all count of time after a while and he was incredulous when Jacket came to warn him that daylight was less than an hour away. "Why, I haven't started!" he protested. He discovered, much to his surprise, that he was ready to drop from fatigue and that his hands were torn and blistered; when he had climbed the rope to the upper air he fell exhausted in the deep grass. "I—I'm not myself at all," he apologized; "nothing to eat, you know. But the work will go faster now, for I've made a beginning."

"Do you still think—"

Rosa hesitated to voice the question which trembled on her lips.

"I'll know for sure tonight." He directed Jacket to replace the planks over the well; then the three of them stole away.

O'Reilly spent most of that day in a profound stupor of exhaustion, while Rosa watched anxiously over him. Jacket, it seemed, had peacefully slumbered on picket duty, so he occupied himself by grinding away at his knife. The last scraps of food disappeared that evening.

When night fell and it came time to return to the top of La Cumbre, O'Reilly asked himself if his strength would prove sufficient for the task in hand. He was spiritless, sore, weak; he ached in every bone and muscle, and it required all his determination to propel himself up the hill. He wondered if he were wise thus to sacrifice his waning energies on a hope so forlorn as this, but by now he had begun to more than half believe in the existence of the Varona treasure and he felt an almost irresistible curiosity to learn what secret, if any, was concealed behind those water-soaked timbers at the bottom of the well. He realized, of course, that every hour he remained here, now that food and money were gone, lessened the chances of escape; but, on the other hand, he reasoned, with equal force, that if he had indeed stumbled upon the missing hoard salvation for all of them was assured. The stake, it seemed to him, was worth the hazard.

Given tempered tools to work with, it would have been no great undertaking to tear down that cemented wall of stones, but armed with nothing except his bare hands and that soft iron bar, O'Reilly spent nearly the whole night at his task. Long before the last rock had yielded, however, he beheld that which caused him to turn a strained face upward to Rosa.

"There's a little door, as sure as you live," he told her.

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## MOTHERS TO BE

Should Read Mrs. Monyhan's Letter Published by Her Permission.

Mitchell, Ind.—"Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound helped me so much during the time I was looking forward to the coming of my little one that I am recommending it to other expectant mothers. Before taking it, sometimes I suffered with neuralgia so badly that I thought I could not live, but after taking three bottles of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound I was entirely relieved of neuralgia, I had gained in strength and was able to go around and do all my housework. My baby when seven months old weighed 19 pounds and I feel better than I have for a long time. I never had any medicine do me so much good."—Mrs. PEARL MONYHAN, Mitchell, Ind.



Good health during maternity is a most important factor to both mother and child, and many letters have been received by the Lydia E. Pinkham Medicine Co., Lynn, Mass., telling of health restored during this trying period by the use of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

### The Proper Spirit.

"Buy a flower, sir?"

The very prosperous looking gentleman stopped and permitted the very pretty girl to fasten a carnation in his buttonhole. Then he handed her a quarter.

"What is this for?" he asked.

"You have fed a Belgian baby," was the reply.

"Nonsense," said the other, adding a \$5 bill to his contribution, "you can't do it. Here, take this, and buy a regular meal for the baby."

### GIRLS! USE LEMONS FOR SUNBURN, TAN

Try it! Make this lemon lotion to whiten your tanned or freckled skin.

Squeeze the juice of two lemons into a bottle containing three ounces of Orchard White, shake well, and you have a quart of the best freckle, sunburn and tan lotion, and complexion whitener, at very, very small cost.

Your grocer has the lemons and any drug store or toilet counter will supply three ounces of Orchard White for a few cents. Massage this sweetly fragrant lotion into the face, neck, arms and hands and see how quickly the freckles, sunburn, windburn and tan disappear and how clear, soft and white the skin becomes. Yes! It is harmless.—Adv.

### GUARDED AS SACRED THING

Trust, Once Accepted, Must Be Held Inviolable in the Bottomless Depths of the Soul.

There is nothing adds so much to the strength and power of character as unflinching loyalty to a sacred trust. "Not to be trusted!" What a blow these words would be if they were true, of many of those we treasure as jewels among our friends.

Unlike the secret—of which, when only a hint of it appears, it is quickly scattered abroad to tingle the ears of the curious—the sacred trust is silently and safely guarded in the security of the lips that are sealed, and the pen that would unfold is inkless! It is lodged where the eyes of the curious can never penetrate, nor the mischievous tongue reveal its mysteries.

Nor is it to be found on the honored parchment, and with those who are highly paid for trust's protection, but is written in invisible words, and the bottomless depths of the soul. Safe it is from the "spite thrower's dagger"—safe in thought, where no whisper or sound can steal its sacredness; ever conveying, ever adding strength and courage to the trusted. It is the only armor needed to find the worth of "friend."—W. Stewart Royston.

### A Warning.

"My wife-to-be is an expert at keeping house." "Then take my advice and don't put it in her name."

Shouts of joy give the pessimist a headache.

**A Cool Breakfast for warm weather**

No fussing round a hot stove if you eat

**POST TOASTIES**

(MADE OF CORN)—Bobby