

SOMEWHERE
There's a whisper in the branches of the heaven blessing pines,
And a purple blossom smiling from behind the clinging vines;
There's the chatter of a chipmunk, as he leaps from tree to tree,
While the daisies yonder whisper: "Come out here and play with me."
There's a path, a winding ribbon, just the clover fields beyond,
That goes stealing through the meadows to the distant picket pond;
There's the cool, dank, grateful shadows; there's the lazy, droning bee,
And I fancy me—saying: "Come out here and play with me."
There's an orchard where the fragrance of the fields come lifting sweet,
Where the sod is velvet tenderness to pavement weary feet;
There are songs, without restraint, from songsters winging to the blue,
And each feathered throat is singing of its song at me and you!
There's a quiet, old-fashioned garden with its roses and half-hocks,
And its blushing, loving, timid panes, flaming phlox;
And a sweet, old-fashioned lady, with a blossom in her hair,
Winding in and out among them, watching every one with care.
And the dear old-fashioned lady, with her crown of wavy snow,
Beams a smile and hums a love song as she patters to and fro.
And it's oh, so sweet—the dreaming!
They're so much of a life a part,
For they've somehow found a welling here within a welling heart.
—Good Literature.

A THIEF'S DEBT OF HONOR.

Free once more, Juan Verdugo left the court room. The man was certainly guilty—his record was about as bad as a record can be made in thirty-six years, and the moral and circumstantial evidence of his guilt was appalling.
But in Mexico the criminal law does not recognize circumstantial evidence nor moral certainty. Not without some difficulty, and considerable courteous insistence on this point, the young licenciado, Valentin Rivas, convinced the court that the notorious and ill-favored bandit was at least technically innocent of the latest crimes charged to him—a highway robbery to which no witnesses could be produced, for the beautifully simple reason that he had killed them.
His client acquitted, the young licenciado Rivas gathered up his books and papers, and sauntered out of the door of the Palace of Justice (a dowerly adobe structure on the plaza of the little border town) and down the sprawling, untidy street to his house. Waiting at his gate stood Juan Verdugo, his hat held humbly in his hand, an ugly snarl curling his scarred lip.
The young lawyer paused, and glanced at him coldly. "Well—and what is it?"
"It is this, but I have no money. The judge—bail—we are of a feather, he and I—he stole the money that I took from those leeches, those milksoops out there on the road. I'm sorry now I killed them. But it is this I have no money to pay you, and this, honor, is what I wish to say."
"It is nothing; I did not expect money. Your thanks will be enough."
"Senior," Juan Verdugo spoke sharply, an ugly glare in his bloodshot eyes, "thanks are given by friends. Those are the words of the law, its upholder—the seat of the judge, the power to send men to death will be thine. Thy friend me I am not, thy friend I will never be. Yet will I pay thee well, for that ye saved me from the death!" He turned and slipped away into the gathering dusk.
Wearily with the day's work, Valentin Rivas turned from the packet of papers before him with a sigh. Three years had added to his practice, and other cases much more interesting than this had brushed Verdugo's from his mind. Occasionally it was recalled with cynical amusement when some new expert, attributed to Verdugo, expostulated the authorities and alarmed travelers of the Camino Real. But tonight his mind was busy with his own, almost stealthy preparations for a forty-mile ride over range and plain, with \$52,000 on his saddle. The proceeds of the season's sale of cattle on the ranch of old Judge Cantu, his patron and friend, he would not venture to send it to the customs office by messenger, perilous as he knew the errand would be to himself. He believed he had guarded the secret of his proposed departure well; a brave man, he was serene in his mind.
The night was still and close, with an intangible film of storm to come. Valentin Rivas, thoughtfully glancing over some memoranda, was suddenly startled by a gentle scratching at the door. He held his breath, and strained his ears, stealthily laying his hand on the butt of a heavy six-shooter that lay in the drawer at his side. A tense minute of silence passed, then a whisper, cold, sibilant, penetrating—"Senior!"
Without a moment's hesitation he snuffed out the candle on the table, leaving the room in darkness but for a sickly ray of moonlight slipping through the small window.
Moving like a cat toward the door, the pistol gripped in his hand, he felt for the heavy bar. The money was in the house, and his blood chilled a little.
"Quien es—who is it?" His whisper was as low as that of the other.
The answer made him jump. "It is I, Juan Verdugo—be silent, and open quickly."
In spite of himself, the lawyer's hands contracted for an instant. Astonished, he made no answer.
"Senior, open, open—at once or I go, and your life is lost—open, for I come to pay my debt!" The cutting whisper trembled through the crack in the panel.
Valentin Rivas softly slid the heavy bar back, and opened the door, knowing well the hazard, and feeling dimly a wonder at his own rashness. The muzzle of his pistol nearly brushed

the dark figure that slipped in like a snake through the cautiously opened door, closed again swiftly and barred with care.
The lawyer faced Verdugo—he felt his presence rather than saw him—and waited for him to speak. The strangeness of the situation dominated for the moment his sinister possibilities.
"Senior," whispered Verdugo, abruptly, "it is known that you are to start for Santa Ana this night. You are to take with you \$52,000 to send Judge Cantu. You are sure, is it not? But if you go, you will be killed, for they are many that would kill you. They are coyotes—chickens—thieves—but they are many, and bad. Myself—bah! I work alone!"
In the dim gloom the lawyer saw his figure stiffen with the tigerish pride of the predatory beast.
"But the money must go," Valentin Rivas spoke thoughtfully. Denial was obviously futile, and hardly occurred to him. "No, Verdugo, I must take it—it is promised, and must go. He knew how imperative was the need for the money."
"Senior," the sharp hiss of Verdugo's whisper was in the lawyer's ear, "they watch for you outside—they wait on the trail, and I, even I, Juan Verdugo, of my spears, through weeds and shadows, I come to you. They watch you, but know not that I am here. Venture from this house tonight, and you die." He paused, then—"Senior, shall I speak what is in my mind?"
"Speak then they mind."
"Senior Licenciado Rivas, once it was your wealth and I held him from me. This night I come to pay that debt. Thou hast been marked down for death, but I, Juan Verdugo, the ladron, the thief, will take that packet of money to the office of Cantu, and return to thee the paper they give to show that the money has been sent. This will I do, in good faith, for in truth the debt lies heavy on my heart."
The lawyer, astounded at the sublime absurdity of the offer, saw for an instant nothing but its fantastic humor. You will take the money to Santa Ana—you will bring the receipt?" The lawyer's voice carried a distinct shade of incredulity.
"Senior," Verdugo spoke earnestly, "on my word of honor—pah! I suppose that you think I have none, yet I have honor of my kind. Bien! I go then, senior, only that I may be purged of my debt. The money will be far safer in my hands than by thy trustful messenger, until it is in the office of Cantu—though, to be frank, I would most gladly rob the train that carries it south! Say, senior, am I thy messenger or no? Speak quickly, for the life of a hunted ladron hangs on too slender a thread in this place to be to the liking of even Juan Verdugo."
Valentin Rivas thought swiftly. Risky it was, without doubt, to place this fortune in the hands of a notorious bandit, to make a trusted messenger of a hunted scoundrel. Yet, somehow the money must reach Judge Cantu, and imperatively. Also, he knew well that old and almost superstitious respect for the sanctity of a private vow, so common among even the worst in Mexico. Knowing his people, he understood well how the man chafed under the constant failing sense of obligation to go, to be less than hated. His mind was made up. Silently he moved over to the little room, quietly he placed the unsealed packet of bills in the hand of Juan Verdugo. "The address is on the packet, take the receipt, and see the agent count the money and seal the packet. Bring me the receipt, and thy debt is paid."
"Esta bien, senior. It is well. Move not outside the door until I come—shut thyself in, let thy servant say that thou hast gone. But on no account be seen. I return in two days. Senior, I go!" Silently as a panther, Juan Verdugo slipped out into the gloom.
Valentin Rivas stood long at the little window. Unconsciously he stared hard into the blackness. The moon had set, and the darkness was beginning to whisper in the wide chimney, a faintness that angered him, a hint of nausea, would not be denied. He did not regret what he had done, he did not consciously fear for the result, yet, if anything did go wrong—
With sudden force he broke away from his mind the hideous train of consequences that seemed to assault his courage in a thousand ugly forms. Shaken for an instant, he turned hastily to a decanter of brandy and with trembling hand poured out and drank half a tumbler of the burning stuff.
Wearily he threw himself on the bed, and, hours afterward, slept.
The next day and even the night passed not so badly. Knowing his mind, all day and half the night, with the heavy lash of his own grim determination, he drove himself through an accumulated mass of the exhausting details of his professional work. Spent and weary, he slept late on the morning of the second day. But now he could no longer force aside his attendant doubts, the outcome, nevertheless, the hideous phantom of imminent ruin whispered distrust in his ear. As darkness crept through the wind-lashed rain, his nervous tension became horribly acute—his sense of bearing, strained for every sound, responded to the overtones of nerves, and the night was filled with penetrating sound. No longer a blended chord, the separate, defined notes of the storm ripped and whined and sighed through his tortured ears—the whirring of the barred door, the hurrying drip of water from the roof, the rush and wall of the wind over the plain, the little, distant noises of rivulets, and the deeper note of the flooded arroyo, all came in maddening distinctness and infinite segregation. Not that he was good, or weary, but a trapped coyote the length of the room, he wore out the dragging hours until the dawn. And Verdugo did not come.
Chilled, haggard, and desperate, Valentin Rivas would not yet allow himself to analyze his disgrace and ruin. Apathy crept over him, and but one thing in the world seemed worth while—sleep—rest—unconsciousness! On his bed, inert and indifferent, he lay while a numbness like death stole

through mind and body, and he slept. It was dusk when he awoke. Still and sore, his brain was clear, and for the first time he gazed at his plight. The full extent of his folly was now plain to him—as plain as it would be to all others when it was known. He could not even make good the money loss, and the only explanation he could offer seemed now to grotesque, so incapable of extenuation, that he felt already the sting of the incredulity, the sneers, the ugly hints, and finally the open accusation of theft that would be leveled at him. A man of excellent family, able, honest, and rapidly rising in his profession, even acceptance of his story as true would subject him to the deeper disgrace of being branded as an unmitigated fool—in either case his career was at an end before it was fairly begun.
Moody he sat, hour after hour. Bitterly he marveled at his own incomprehensible recklessness, and tried to see somewhere in the future a chance to cleanse this blot from his name. But between him and his future came always that terrible dream—the time when first ridicule, then suspicion and malice, made him out both fool and rascal. He buried his face in his arms on the desk before him, and his face grew hot with the shame of it all. It was too much to live down. No suffering, no reproach, could ever make men forget—nothing, nothing—
"Senior!"
Valentin Rivas gripped his hands hard as they lay under his bowed head on the desk, and his heart stopped for one terrible instant, as he thought that whispered word a phantom of his brain. A moment of agonizing silence passed, then, through the dull swish of the rain on the roof came again that cutting whisper. Shivering, he softly slid back the bar from the door, and Juan Verdugo stood before him.
"It is here, the paper. Little trouble will it take the package to the agent, and he counted it all, and sealed it—so says the paper. But they found me out, the cons, the sneaking pack that would have killed thee, smelled me out as thy messenger. Two men's lives it cost, senior, before the road was cleared for this little paper. Take it now, for I go!"
Silently the lawyer took the paper, and by the light of a screened candle glanced it through. He turned to Verdugo. "Juan Verdugo, thou hast kept faith, and thou art a man of honor. Thy debt is more than paid, for life and honor both hast thou saved to me."
Verdugo stood at the door, faded and undimmed. "Senior Licenciado Rivas, I am Juan Verdugo, the ladron—the highway robber. Say you the debt is paid—paid in full! Then mark of even Juan Verdugo."
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POLITICS OF THE DAY

Freighted Finance.

Although the United States Treasury claims to have on May 28 a balance of \$567,008,648, besides the trust funds to be repaid outstanding certificates, yet in reality there is but a "working balance" of \$65,083,944 of free cash to pay the debts and running expenses of the government. For of the amount reported on hand must be deducted current liabilities which are reported on the same day to be \$113,399,030 and nearly four millions of the Philippine treasury and awaiting reimbursement. There was on the same date \$183,248,977 deposited in the national banks, which if called for suddenly could not be paid, or if paid would so reduce the money on hand in many of the banks as to produce a panic.
On or before July 1 the treasury will have to redeem \$213,700 of the four per cent bonds due on that day, \$74,441,850 having been redeemed or refunded by another issue. If the matter of paying off these bonds was treated as business men pay their liabilities the owners of the bonds would be given checks on the banks that hold \$183,248,977 of the government money, and which they are paying no interest, instead of issuing any new bonds.
But the national banks have been too free contributors to Republican campaign funds to be called upon to pay what they owe and will be left off with only a little over a year's interest required to pay interest upon years to come in the form of new bonds.
On the day of the Wall Street panic in March there was a "working balance" of \$100,797,000 in the United States Treasury, which has been reduced to a little over fifty million by increasing the deposit in the favored banks to help them out of the tight place they are in.
Thus is the United States Treasury mixed up with the doings of the freighted financiers of Wall Street by the present reform administration.
The Aldrich bill passed by the last Congress is responsible for this and as it was passed by the Republicans as a party measure they alone must explain why the banks were so favored at the expense of the people. The Wall Street Journal, commenting on that measure, said:
"The signals of the Aldrich bill is the first important step in the abolishing of the independent treasury system which was established in Van Buren's administration as a result of Jackson's war on the United States bank. From Jackson to Roosevelt covers a period of over thirty years.
So the result of Jackson's fight against the United States bank as a political power inimical to the interests of the American people, has virtually been reversed by the Republican party under President Roosevelt and probably not one Republican voter of a hundred knows the moral involved. The Congress is responsible for this and as it was passed by the Republicans as a party measure they alone must explain why the banks were so favored at the expense of the people. The Wall Street Journal, commenting on that measure, said:
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