

# ART FOR THE JUNIOR CALL

## MONTEZUMA'S COAT OF GOLDEN MAIL

### How Nam and Ital Saved the Life of the Mexican Emperor from Traitors

AMONG the chief favorites in the court of Montezuma, the dreaded ruler of the Mexican empire four centuries ago, were two boys whose names were Nam and Ital. It was not strange that they should be treated with kindness by the emperor, for Ital's arrow had saved his life when he was hunting in the mountains and an angry lioness was about to spring upon him in defense of her cub. All the attendants, great lords though they were, stood terror stricken in the moment of peril, and it was fortunate for Montezuma that the two young travelers from the north were at hand and that Ital's arm was so strong and his eye so sure.

On his return to his palace in the midst of his capital city in the lake the emperor took the boys with him and showed them many marks of kindness. In exchange for their rough garments of skins and coarse cloth made by the Cliff Dwellers he gave them robes of cotton as fine as woven silk, with heavy chains of gold, bright gems and wonderful cloaks made of the brilliant feathers of birds, such as have never been produced anywhere in the world except in the ancient domain over which Montezuma held sway before Columbus crossed the ocean or any white man had set foot on the shores of America.

Nam was slender and thoughtful and lame in one leg, while Ital was tall and strong and fearless. In spite of the close friendship that existed between the boys they were not at all alike. "I will make you the keeper of the royal library and one of my counsellors," Montezuma said to Nam, "and you," he said to Ital, "I shall make a warrior to lead my soldiers to battle and win captives for the honor of the gods."

He kept his word, but at the request of the boys he gave them apartments together in his palace. Nam wore the long robe of a student and scholar and set himself to study the books with which the library was filled.



Nam Threw Himself on His Knees

The Aztecs, as Montezuma's people were called, had no printing or writing such as we have, but their books were written in pictures, very small and arranged in lines. They could read books written in this manner as easily as we can read our own books of printed words. The pictures were often colored to make their meaning more clear.

But Ital cared nothing for the books that were so interesting to Nam. In his glittering helmet and his armor of light quilted cotton, or of gold and silver mail, he was impatient for war. But when he came in after drilling all

day with the guards of the palace, so that he might understand the manner of fighting in that country, so different from anything that he had ever known before, he was glad to listen to Nam while his friend related to him the strange and wonderful things that he had found in the books.

Montezuma, too, liked to listen to the stories that Nam had to tell of his adventures among the Mound Builders and the Cliff Dwellers of the north before they reached Mexico, and he asked many questions about them and about the fierce men of the farthest wilderness before whom the Mound Builders had been compelled to flee.

Nam and Ital were filled with amazement when they first saw the sparkling lake, high up among the mountains, with the city rising out of the water. They had not supposed that there were so many people in all the world as crowded the narrow streets between the great houses of stone or thronged the canals which often took the place of streets. They marveled at the activity and wealth of the people, the many strange inventions which they saw for the first time and at the towering pyramids of earth and stone which were devoted to the worship of the gods and upon the tops of which a sacred fire was always kept burning.

"This is better than the little huts that we used to live in beside the Mountain of Storms," Ital said one night, stretching himself at full length upon a couch covered with soft skins, after the slaves who had served them their evening meal had left them alone.

Nam knew that he referred to the poor little far off village in which they were born and from which hunger had driven them to seek their fortune in the great world, and he smiled rather sadly.

"I do not know whether it is better or not," he replied slowly. "That is what we have still to discover."

"What do you mean?" Ital asked, opening his eyes in surprise and starting up on his elbow. "You mean that you think that these courtiers who surround Montezuma are our friends, however friendly they may seem to be when they are with us. They are men of high rank and they are very proud. They look upon us as wanderers who have no right to be here, and they would do us harm if they could."

"I don't see why," Ital replied, "we have never done any harm to them."

"That is true," Nam said, "but Montezuma treats us as his friends and that is reason enough for them to hate us. They are jealous of our good fortune."

"I'd like to see them try anything," Ital said, lazily letting his head fall back among the soft pillows. "I'm not afraid of them."

"Nor am I if they give us warning so that we can defend ourselves," Nam replied. "What I fear is that they will lay some plot against us and make Montezuma, our enemy instead of our friend. You must remember that we are strangers and that without him we would have no refuge from attack."

"Well," Ital replied, "I shall leave it to you. In one way or another you have always managed to find out what was going on."

Nam smiled at his friend's confidence in him, but he was really uneasy over the situation. Although he did not think it wise to tell Ital about it, he knew that they were in danger. As a matter of fact Montezuma was not popular. He had been a priest when he became emperor, there were a great many priests in the city, and an enormous amount of gold was required to support them and to pay the cost of their sacrifices. There were constantly taking place, this meant that the people were compelled to pay very heavy taxes, and severe penalties were exacted of those who could not pay. Many of the poorer people had to sell their children or even themselves into slavery to avoid starting to pay heavy taxes, and as Montezuma sided with the priests and insisted that they must have all that they demanded matters were growing worse.

As the courtiers looked upon Nam as a mere boy they were less careful of what they said and did before him than they would have been had they known him better. He also received information from Tezcan, a young slave who had been given to him by Montezuma. By putting this and that together he was thus able to learn many secrets. Montezuma suspected nothing so carefully was going on about him under the roof of the palace concealed from him, and Nam knew that it would be useless to tell him of his own fears, as the emperor would not believe him; so he had sense enough to hold his tongue until the right time came.

It was a habit of Montezuma to go out into the city in disguise and mingle with the people, so that he might know what they were saying and how they faced. There was a certain one of the lords named Manto, a cousin of the emperor, who always accompanied him on these excursions. Nam did not like this man. He never smiled except when he was in the presence of Montezuma, and he was cold and cruel

and very harsh. Nam gave Tezcan instructions to watch him constantly and to report everything that he did.

Tezcan came to him in great excitement on the day after his talk with the emperor, who were to attack the emperor when next he was to go to the market place.

"How do you know this?" Nam asked.

"What is it?" Nam asked.

"Manto is a wicked man," the slave replied. "He is planning to kill Montezuma and make himself master of the empire in his place."

"How do you know this?" Nam asked.

"I overheard him telling some of his friends what to do," the slave replied. "They hope to escape by going out in disguise and slay him. It is arranged that Manto shall pretend to protect him, but he really will not do so, and afterward he has promised to pardon the men on the ground that they made a mistake and did not really know whom they were attacking. Later he will reward them."

"Where will the attack be made?" Nam asked.

"In the market place, where they will lead the emperor," said the slave. "The emperor will be in the crowd after the affair is over. You know that there are many thousands of people there on market days."

Nam made the slave keep the secret he trusted his life, and he lost no time in seeking Montezuma. Manto was with him as usual, and Nam learned that they were planning that same day to go out in disguise. He waited patiently until he could speak to Manto, without being heard by Manto. "My lord," he said, hastily, "the chief priest sends me with a message to you. He instructed me to tell you that the gods are unwilling that you should leave the palace today without putting on your coat of golden mail under your cloak so that it can not be seen."

Montezuma was astonished, for it was never his custom to wear armor or to take arms with him on his secret excursions, but that would have shown the people who he really was.

"Why did not the chief priest himself come to tell me this?" he asked. "The gods would not permit him."

Montezuma hesitated a moment. "I will speak to Manto about it," he said at last.

Nam threw himself upon his knees. "I beg of you, my lord, to do nothing," he said. "The chief priest said especially that you should say no word to any man, so that the gods might have their will." He was so earnest that Montezuma, with a smile, consented to do what he requested.

It was now that he did it more to please Nam than for any other reason, and they knew that it would be useless to ask to accompany him. He thanked the emperor, and bowing low, hastened to find Ital.

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## WINNERS OF THE JUNIOR PAINT BOX PRIZES

HERE is the reading girl and another fine chance for the artistic and industrious younger junior to do some more beautiful coloring. The winning girl brought a very large number of lovely pictures to the office of The Junior Call, and the editor hopes to have even more next week.

This picture work is for the younger juniors only, those who are 10 years of age and younger. For the juniors who are over 10 years of age the writers' contest, particulars of which are given on the second page, is open. Twenty paint boxes will be awarded to 20 pictures most artistically and neatly colored.

Color your picture as quickly as possible and mail it to the contest editor of The Junior Call, so that it will arrive not later than Wednesday afternoon, as pictures received after that time can not be used.

The younger juniors who have been awarded prizes for the picture of the reading girl are:

Edward Kirchen, 2770 Bryant street, San Francisco, age 9 years.

John Reicher, 697 Cherry street, San Francisco, age 9 years.

Tony Canella, box 262 Infirmary road, San Jose, age 10 years.

Leona McIntosh, 732 First avenue, San Francisco, age 9 years.

Portia Hopper, Santa Rosa, Ludwig boulevard, age 7 years.

Bruce Gandy, Spreckels, age 8 years.

Perry Hardwick, 229 Steiner street, San Francisco, age 10 years.

Mildred Eaton, box 502, Tulare, age 20 years.

Chris Wright, 1214 Peravia street, Berkeley, age 5 years.

Ernie Weismann, 229 Eighth street, San Francisco, age 7 years.

Archie Leonard, 26 Elby street, Santa Cruz, age 7 years.

Walter Vincent, 622 Railroad avenue, San Francisco, age 8 years.

Dorothy Mansie, Fort Baker, age 10 years.

Baker de Wolfe, 135 Sixth avenue, San Francisco, age 8 years.

Evona Waring, 762 Sixth street, Oakland, age 10 years.

Stephanie Demianakes, 582 Twentieth avenue, Oakland, age 8 years.

Regina Kirby, 1415 California street, San Francisco, age 8 years.

Madeline Grace, 2140 O'Farrell street, San Francisco, age 9 years.

Perry M. Shaw, 1404 Bonita avenue, Berkeley, age 7 years.

Doris Sawyer, 3021 Fulton street, Berkeley, age 10 years.

Mary Marra, 838 Lombard street, San Francisco, age 9 years.

Olin Hansen, 261 Peravia street, Oakland, age 8 years.

William H. Brown, 3121 Elm street, Oakland, age 8 years.

Betty Baker, 721 Lincoln avenue, Alameda, age 7 years.

Bert Armstrong, 2622 Eastgate avenue, Alameda, age 7 years.

Willard Ramsay, 44 Kentucky street, Vallejo, age 10 years.

Donald Murray, 331 Bay View street, San Rafael, age 8 years.

Ellnor Burt, Mill Valley, age 10 years.

Joseph Cronin, Callista, age 10 years.

Helen Grant, St. Helena, age 9 years.

Louise Gillies, 823 Franklin street, Napa, age 9 years.

Florence Church, box 407, Sausalito, age 6 years.

Lawrence Casement, 682 San Jose avenue, San Francisco, age 7 years.

Fannie Kingston, 109 Lyon street, San Francisco, age 9 years.

Marguerite Center, 2324 Twenty-fourth street, San Francisco, age 7 years.

Anna Stacia Burns, 3 Bennington street, San Francisco, age 10 years.

Norothy Bullock, 1615 Seventh street, San Francisco, age 9 years.

Russell G. Bacon, 1520 Schiller street, Alameda, age 8 years.

Milton Hosie, 1366 Sanchez street, San Francisco, age 7 years.

Olga Marfall, 41 Winfield avenue, San Francisco, age 10 years.

Viola Kennedy, 4099 Seventeenth street, San Francisco, age 7 years.

Marjorie Keefe, 2289 Twenty-second street, San Francisco, age 10 years.

Walter Barker, Continental hotel, San Francisco, age 10 years.

Edith Heywood, 1306 Grove street, Berkeley, age 9 years.

Ella Mulcare, 333 Church street, San Francisco, age 9 years.

Kathryn M. Tuttle, 1427 St. Charles street, Alameda, age 9 years.