

The Red Mirage

A Story of the French Legion in Algiers

By I. A. R. WYLIE

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SYNOPSIS.

When Sylvia Omney, a beautiful English girl, returns from a search in Algiers for her missing brother, her lover, Richard Farquhar, finds she has fallen in love with Captain Arnaud of the Foreign Legion. In Captain Bower's room Farquhar gets deliberately drunk, but when young Preston loses all his money to Lowe, a shady character, Farquhar forces Bower to have Preston's I. O. U's returned to him. Farquhar is helped to his rooms by Gabrielle Smith. Bower demands an apology. Refused, he forces Farquhar to resign his commission in return for possession of Farquhar's father's written confession that he had murdered Bower's father. Gabrielle saves Farquhar from suicide. Farquhar tells his mother that he is going to find his father if the latter is alive. To shield Arnaud, Sylvia's fiancé, he professes to have stolen war plans and tells the real culprit, who he did so. As Richard Nameless joins the Foreign Legion and sees Sylvia, now Mme. Arnaud, meet Colonel Destin, Farquhar meets Sylvia and Gabrielle, and learns from Corporal Goetz of the colonel's cruelty. Arnaud becomes a drunkard and opium smoker. Sylvia becomes friendly with Colonel Destin. Arnaud becomes jealous of Farquhar.

Why should Richard Nameless refrain from telling Sylvia the blunt truth about his great honor sacrifice for her sake? She is a shallow woman who ruthlessly threw him over for another. Do such women deserve the fine consideration the world owes its best women?

CHAPTER VI—Continued.

Richard Nameless turned back to the desert. The Arabs had risen and an elder was praying aloud, his aged, tremulous voice leading the richer unison of the worshippers behind him.

"With my face to Mecca and with a sincere heart I offer my prayers to Allah—"

Mirage! For those dark-faced desert children Mecca opened the gates of Paradise; for this dream of unknown happiness they waited and prayed, and when their time came passed through the great shadow with fearless, triumphant confidence.

He went back to his work. With fierce, dogged energy he pulled away the deep-rooted weeds and brought a pathetic look of care and order into his corner of the wilderness. For a moment he lingered over the grave which Goetz had tended. The bald yet eloquent inscription touched him. He wondered vaguely who Philip Grey had been; if he, too, had paid a price and in the last hours of horror had still been satisfied.

Two women had entered the cemetery. Their white-clad figures flashed gayly in between the dark graves, and a clear, silvery laugh mingled with the final Arab prayer—

"La ilaha illa 'llahu!"

The younger woman stopped an instant and pointed with the tip of her parasol at the broken remnant of a cross.

"Look at these beads! Aren't they ridiculous? And the inscription—just a number, like a convict's." She glanced back over her shoulder at her companion. "Miss Smith, I believe you are frightened. Do you think there are ghosts here? Well, perhaps there are, but I don't mind."

As yet the man standing immobile, hidden amid the forest of crosses, had escaped her notice. But he had heard her now, and shadowy and ghostlike enough in the dying light, awaited her approach. At the foot of the Englishman's grave she hesitated. The inscription attracted her. With puckered brows she spelled out the badly cut letters, her soft voice touched with just the faintest ironical interest.

"Philip Grey—No. 3112—Foreign Legion."

Then she looked up involuntarily and saw the man who watched her, his hand gripping the head of the cross.

It was very quiet now. The Arab prayer was silenced, and the white figures of the worshippers had vanished in the long olive grove leading back to Sidi-bel-Abbes. Sylvia Arnaud's voice, when she spoke at last, sounded strained and harsh in the absolute quiet.

"Richard!" and then again, "Richard Farquhar!"

He shook his head. "Not Richard Farquhar now," he answered. "Richard Nameless."

She seemed not to understand. Her lips were a little parted in the expression that he remembered. She looked piteously frightened and incredulous.

"I am sorry to have frightened you," he said gently. "I did not mean that you should ever see me—but you came so suddenly, and out in this desolate place you were the last person I expected. Forgive me."

"Yes—yes, it is a desolate place—it makes me frightened. But I was told it was something I ought to see—and a few minutes ago I wasn't frightened at all. Now—I see ghosts everywhere."

"I am one of them," he said.

She brushed her hand over her forehead as though indeed trying to dispel some terrifying specter. Her feeble effort to regain her previous laughing savorage failed. She was white and trembling.

"I am No. 4005 of the Foreign Legion," he said. "Is there anything else that you need understand?"

"Yes—I must. I feel as though one of us two were mad. The Foreign Legion is just the last resort for all the riffraff of the world—criminals, gamblers, cheats—"

"I am one of them."

She was silent a moment, looking at him with large, thoughtful eyes, out of which the fear had passed. When she spoke again her voice was full of a smothered tenderness.

"I have thought of you so much lately, Richard. I couldn't understand why it was. You haunted me. It was as though something in the place made me think of you. I remembered all your little movements, the way you looked. I seemed to see you in others. I grew almost—how shall I say?—homesick for you."

"You should have forgotten," he interrupted roughly. "I have gone out of your life. Look upon me now as what I am now—a mere shadow."

"Richard, what have you done?"

The tenderness had deepened. He clenched his hands in a movement of uncontrollable pain.

"Hasn't your husband told you?"

"No. We never mention your name. To me it is sacred."

"For God's sake, Sylvia—" He straightened up, his black brows marking a straight line across his face. "I was turned out of the army for betraying my country's secrets."

"You—a traitor! Why?"

The monosyllable was like the stab of a knife in the silence.

"For a woman."

She drew back. Her eyes were dark pools in which he saw no expression.

"What woman?"

He bowed gravely.

"Madame Arnaud, I have still honor enough left to remember the discretion imposed upon honorable men."

She turned away from him. He could see nothing but her profile, the



"You a Traitor! Why?"

exquisite, almost flawless profile, cut against a background of mingling gold and emerald. Her hands rested crossed on the handle of her parasol. She had grown suddenly very calm and deliberate.

"I told you that I had thought of you, Richard," she said quietly. "I did not tell you how I thought of you. Do you remember our last meeting, or has that been eclipsed by other more lovely memories?"

"Silvia, be silent! I dare not listen to you. You don't know what you are saying—"

"I know what I am saying, and you must listen. When a man destroys something, it is no more than just that he should see what he has done. You have destroyed something—an ideal, a dream, my faith in honesty and goodness. You were the one man I believed and trusted. And now you are like the rest—nothing—nothing." She turned away. "I wish to God I had not met you, Richard."

He did not attempt to detain her. He stood there like a man struck to death by a treacherous blow, and she went on down the path to the gate where her companion waited for her. There she paused for a moment.

"I want you to go back to that man," she said carelessly. "He is an old acquaintance who went wrong, and it might be rather unpleasant for my husband if he grew impertunate. Tell him that on no account must he speak to me again. It is very regrettable, but mistakes of that sort bring their own punishment. You understand, Miss Smith?"

"Yes, Madame Arnaud."

"Thank you. I will wait for you outside the public cemetery. It is getting dark—"

Miss Smith went slowly back along the narrow gravel path. The man had not moved. He was gazing out on to

the fiery waste now dying beneath the extinguishing mantle of the night, and neither heard nor saw. She touched him on the arm.

"Mr. Farquhar!"

He turned slowly and stared at her. Though he recognized her, his face was blank and hard and terrible.

"Miss Smith?"

"Yes, Gabrielle Smith. You see, after all, we have met again. Won't you shake hands?"

His eyes wandered past her down the path.

"No. You ought not to be speaking to me. A respectable woman does not speak to a common soldier of the Legion."

"Doesn't she? How interesting! One is always learning in this wonderful civilization of ours. Only as it happens I am not respectable. I told you that once before."

Her cool irony brought a flash of insane laughter to his eyes.

"Who the devil are you, then?" he asked savagely.

"Dear me, you have quite lost your nice English indifference, Mr. Farquhar. I'm not sure it isn't an improvement. Who I am? Well, you know my name, and at the present moment I am companion to Madame Arnaud—helping her to forget that she isn't English any more. English people think it's wrong to admire foreigners. It's their idea of patriotism. Madame Arnaud assures me she must have a bit of dear old England about her, and I am the bit. That's all."

"Why did you come?"

He was looking at her again. Through the dusk she saw the white, tortured suspense on the hard face. She wore a rose in the severe corsage of her dress. She took it and handed it to him.

"She sent you this—in token of remembrance."

He took her hand and kissed it.

"You have come like an angel into my life," he said.

He watched her until her small, energetic figure had disappeared among the shadows.

In the distance a bugle called a melancholy retreat.

He lifted the rose reverently to his lips.

CHAPTER VII.

A Meeting.

In Sidi-bel-Abbes there is a pleasant avenue, shaded by silver birch and redolent of all the sweet perfumes of the East, where the local potentates gather in a select exclusive circle. In the courtyard of one such of these houses Colonel Destin sat and smoked an after-tea cigarette. His kept lay on the broad balustrade beside him, and his head was thrown back in an attitude of easy contentment.

"You pour out tea charmingly, madame," he said. "A second cup would stifle the last regret that I should have gone so far against my principles as to drink a first."

She looked up at him. The soft reflection from the low, white walls around them enhanced her ethereal beauty and added the subtle glamour with which the eastern light-surrounds the least and most lovely object. Very delicately she obeyed his request, the soft, rich lace sleeve of her teagown slipping back to reveal the rounded arm and slender over-fragile wrist.

"Do your principles compel you to live only for your soldiers?" she asked lightly.

He laughed.

"Living for them' is perhaps too much of a euphemism," he said. "They would be more grateful if I did the other thing. But otherwise it is true. I have not put my foot under a hospitable roof for twenty years."

"Had you no one who—" She hesitated, a sudden color in her cheeks, and he leaned forward, his hands loosely interlocked between his knees, his handsome, ruthless face grave and intent.

"No, I hadn't anyone, Madame Arnaud."

Her gaze faltered under his steady, piercing eyes.

"What is your country, Colonel Destin?"

"I do not know, madame. I have forgotten." There was a little silence, in which the fountain played a silvery intermezzo, and then he went on in an altered tone: "You are the first person who has made wish to remember."

She was looking up at him again with a studied frankness, behind which there lurked something hypnotized, fascinated.

He turned carelessly from her.

"Ah, Arnaud, you there? You see, I have been breaking up the principles of years to entertain your wife. If you leave her too much alone you will find these English roses fade very quickly in this dreary place. Man, don't look as if you had seen the devil."

The young officer, hesitating on the edge of the low veranda, recovered himself with an effort.

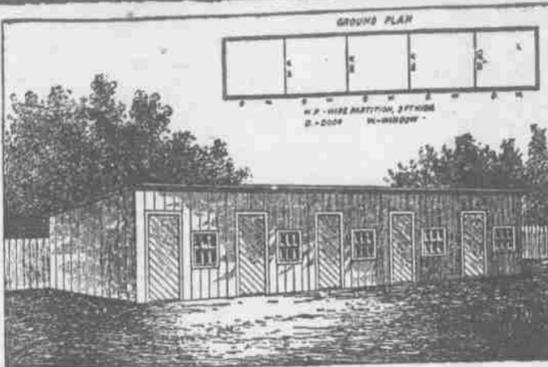
"My colonel—I was taken aback. I had not expected—but I am delighted and most honored. I beg of you to let me enjoy the pleasure—"

"No, no, Arnaud. We see enough of each other elsewhere, and moreover, I have a pressing engagement with three deserters from the Eleventh company. Au revoir, madame—and thank you!"

How soon do you think that Sylvia's flirting with Colonel Destin will cause Tragedy to stalk abroad in the Foreign Legion. It seems plain that Mrs. Arnaud knows she is playing with fire.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

DUCK RAISING IS FLOURISHING INDUSTRY



Five-Pen Breeding House for Ducks.

R. W. Curtis of Ransomville, N. Y., who raises about 30,000 ducks a year and makes big profits at the business, says it is harder manual work to raise ducks than chickens, and the business requires patience and good judgment. He selects eggs from the stronger birds and sets them in incubators and broods them until they are eight weeks old when they are fattened for market.

"Before these ducks are fattened we sort out our breeding stock at the age when the ducks are old enough so that we can tell the sexes. I go," says Mr. Curtis, "through a large number of ducks and perhaps I might get five or ten fit to breed from out of a large flock of one hundred. That seems like a lot of work. Every time you change the feed the ducks won't eat, and if you change gradually they will probably be off their feed for two days; and just at that time we sort out the breeding stock, and it is just at the time we change the feed so that we do not lose anything."

"We handle the ducks by the neck; we never take them by the legs. We hold the duck up and look at him, and if he has a good broad breast all the way through and fairly deep keel, and broad back, and not too long a neck, and his head not too long, and if he fights a great deal and tries to get away, showing he is strong, then we will pick out that duck. He has got to be a certain weight; we do not actually weigh them because that is too much trouble."

"We take the ducks out in May and they are taken out in flocks of two hundred. We start and drive these ducks over to the pasture and in driving them we will say that we have two hundred and ten or two hundred and fifteen."

"We keep them in a large wood lot. We take lots of time driving them along, not too slow and not so slow as you would drive market ducks. We keep them moving and when we get them half way over two or three of them will break down and flap their wings, and they cannot walk. These



House for Growing Ducks.

ducks are left right where they are. It is simply the survival of the fittest, and when we get to the breeding pens there will be ducks strung all the way along where we have been driving them. It is only the ducks that have strength to walk this distance, being urged all the time, that are put in the pen. Then we go back and clean up the ones that are left and they are put into the marketing pen. It does not matter how nice a duck they are, because it is strength we are after."

"We put one hundred to two hundred ducks in a pen, and there is no shed or anything for them to run under. It is just simply a wood lot. It would be just as well to have them run in a field, provided they had some artificial shade, but decidedly you have got to have some shade for ducks. If you put ducks in a hot field in the summertime there is danger. I have seen full-grown ducks get sunstruck and lie down and die."

"We feed them there for five months on light food. We do not want to fatten them. If there are any ducks that get off their feed they are taken right off; they are not kept. We keep lanterns burning in the trees on dark nights to keep them from getting scared."

"A peculiar thing about ducks is that they will run and trample on each other and jump in the corner of the pens if they get scared on a dark night. If it is a bright moonlight night we do not light the lanterns."

"The feed for these ducks is four parts bran to one part of flour and one part cornmeal and one-twentieth beef scrap. For green feed we use four parts clover. The clover should be about one-third or a little more than one-third of the entire feed. You can feed them all the green feed they will eat. A good indication is to watch their troughs, and after they have eaten their feed if they leave a little clover in the trough you know they are getting all they want, and may be a little more; and if they clean this trough up they haven't quite enough to eat. If they have too much to eat, they pick the green feed out and leave nothing but the mash, and then you know they haven't enough green feed."

"We feed them wet mash; mix it a little more moist than you do for chickens. These ducks must not be fed all they will eat, because if you

do they will get in good condition. They are not to be starved, but you must keep them just a little hungry, and they will go out in this one or two acres of land and eat more or less green feed, and they will run up and down the pen and it will give them muscle."

"We keep them in this manner until they are five months old, and then we change and put them in permanent quarters. Most any kind of a building will do for a duck house. It does not require very much light, but if you want eggs all the winter you must have it warm enough so that the eggs won't get chilled. If you go through pretty often and take up the eggs they will not get chilled."

"We do not have any nests in our duck houses; we simply bed them with shavings. We did try nests, but we could not see any great benefit from them. They will dig a hole in the corner and lay the egg and cover it up and when you go through in the morning you have to be careful that you do not walk on the eggs."

"We breed from a pullet, we never breed from a yearling duck. A duck will take on fat very easily, and if you keep them over the second year they get too fat, and they will not lay as early, and the eggs are not fertile, and we cannot get good results."

"We mate one drake and five ducks. We start these in October, and as the season advances, say about the first of March, we watch the ducks, and if we see two drakes got to fighting, we catch one of them; we catch the poorest and put him in a pen by himself. Whenever we see any fighting, we take out a drake, and when there is no fighting, we leave them alone, and they balance themselves up."

"Sometimes you will find they will run for a long time and there will be no fighting; then, there will come a rain storm, and there will be puddles of water in the yard, and if you go out you will find dozens of them fighting, and they will tear each other to pieces. They will get the blood started and your five drakes will get after one and fairly eat him. I have seen it when we would not have more than one drake to ten or twelve ducks, and we would get just as good eggs as we got in the winter."

RAISING FEED FOR THE FLOCK

Farm That Produces its Own Grain is Always Most Successful—Operating Expense Reduced.

"The poultry farm that produces its own feed or a goodly part of it is always the most successful," according to William H. Pfeifer of Allenton, Mo., "because the feed is always right at hand when needed, no drayage, no waste, the range birds seeing to the latter."

"The shattered grain does not go to feed sparrows, crows, etc., but produces chicken-meat and eggs. The droppings go back to the fields as fertilizer and the operating expense or upkeep is greatly reduced."

"Such a farm has a great advantage over the one that has to buy all its feed, hauling it over miles of rough country roads, paying dearly for the time wasted in drayage and extra handling. This in itself is important evidence of why the farmer can produce cheaper poultry and eggs than the poultryman. Those who after serious consideration decide to go into the business should bear this advice in mind."

EGGS SHIPPED FOR HATCHING

Should Be Nested Deeply and Carefully Wrapped in Excelsior—Cover Basket With Cloth.

Eggs to be shipped for hatching, packed in baskets, should be nested deeply in excelsior and each egg carefully wrapped in excelsior.

The basket may be covered with a piece of cloth which is sewed to the basket at the edges, or held in place by tacks carefully pushed in under the top strip of the basket, outside, with the edge of a case knife.

SETTING EGGS FROM PULLETS

As General Rule Young Fowls Are in Poor Physical Condition—Hens' Eggs Are Best.

Better hatches and stronger chicks will result by setting eggs from hens than from pullets. As a rule, pullets lay more during the winter and are poorer in physical condition at the beginning of the hatching season than are the hens, which gives rise to a larger number of small eggs and more infertile ones.

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Her Health Restored by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.



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Sympathetic young woman—You poor fellows! So you fought all day without rations.

Soldier—Not exactly, miss. Other shells from the enemy supplied us with perforations and lacerations in abundance.

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For sale by all drug stores or by mail from the A. B. Richards Medicine Co., Sherman, Mo.

"Pile-Powders" is guaranteed to stop and permanently cure that terrible itching. It is compounded for that purpose and your money will be promptly refunded without question if Pile-Powders fails to cure Hemorrhoids, Piles, Ring Worm or any other skin disease. See the box.

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