

# RAINBOW'S END

A NOVEL BY **Rex Beach**  
 AUTHOR OF "THE IRON TRAIL" "THE SPOILERS" "HEART OF THE SUNSET" ETC.  
 COPYRIGHTED BY HARPER AND BROTHERS.

## CHAPTER XVII.

Rosa.  
 "Look!" Jacket clutched at O'Reilly and pointed a shaking finger. "More beggars! Christo! And those little children!" The boy tried to laugh, but his voice cracked nervously. "Are they children, or gourds with legs under them?"

O'Reilly looked, then turned his eyes away. He and Jacket had reached the heart of Matanzas and were facing the public square, the Plaza de la Libertad it was called. Matanzas appeared poor and squalid, depressingly wretched; its streets were foul and the Plaza de la Libertad—grim mockery of a name—was crowded with a throng such as it had never held in O'Reilly's time, a throng of people who were, without exception, gaunt, listless, ragged. There was no afternoon parade of finery, no laughter, no noise; the benches were full, but their occupants were silent, too sick or too weak to move. Nor were there any romping children. There were, to be sure, vast numbers of undersized figures in the square, but one needed to look twice to realize that they were not pygmies or wizened little old folks. It was not strange that Jacket had compared them to gourds with legs, for all were naked, and most of them had bodies swollen into the likeness of pods or calabashes. They looked peculiarly grotesque with their spidery legs and thin faces.

O'Reilly passed a damp hand across his eyes. "Just Heaven!" he breathed. "She—she's one of these!"

The reconcentrados overran Matanzas in an unclean swarm; streets and plazas were congested with them, for no attempt was made to confine them to their quarters. Morning brought them streaming down from the suburban slopes where they lived, evening sent them winding back; their days were spent in an aimless search for food. They snatched at crumbs and combed the gutter for crusts. How they managed to exist, whence came the food that kept life in their miserable bodies, was a mystery, even to the citizens of the city; no organized effort had been made to care for them and there was insufficient surplus food for half their number. Yet somehow they lived and lingered on.

At the time of O'Reilly's arrival the sight presented by these innocent victims of war was appalling; it roused in him a dull red rage at the power which had wrought this crime and at the men who permitted it to continue. Spain was a Christian nation, he reflected; she had set up more crosses than any other, and yet beneath them she had butchered more people than all the nations of the earth combined. This monstrous, coldly calculating effort to destroy the entire Cuban people seemed to him the blackest infamy of all, and he wondered if it would be allowed to succeed.

Fortunately for the two friends, General Betancourt's generosity served to relieve them from any immediate danger of starvation. After making a few purchases and eating with the utmost

the presence of new corpses lying upon the station flagstones. From those still living, groans, sighs, sick mutterings rose until O'Reilly finally dragged his youthful companion out of the place.

"I can't stand that," he confessed. "I can't sleep when people are starving to death alongside of me. This money burns my pocket. I—I—I—"

Jacket read his purpose and laid a detaining hand upon his arm. "It will save our lives, too," he said simply.

"Bah! We are men. There are women and children yonder—"

But Jacket's sensibilities were caloused. "Of what use would your few pesetas be among so many?" he inquired. "God has willed this, and he knows what he is doing. Besides, your 'pretty one' is probably as hungry as these people. No doubt we shall find that she, too, is starving."

O'Reilly slowly withdrew his hand from his pocket. "Yes! It's Rosa's money. But—come; I can't endure this."

He led the way back to the Plaza de Liberty and there on an iron bench they waited for the full day. They were very tired, but further sleep was impossible, for the death wagons rumbled by on their way to collect the bodies of those who had died during the night.

Nether the man nor the boy ever wholly lost the nightmare memory of the next few days, for their search took them into every part of the reconcentrado districts. What they beheld aged them. Day after day, from dawn till dark, they wandered, peering into huts, starting into faces, asking questions until they were faint from fatigue and sick from disappointment.

As time passed and they failed to find Rosa Varona a terrible apprehension began to weigh O'Reilly down; his face grew old and drawn, his shoulders sagged, his limbs began to drag. It was all that Jacket could do to keep him going. The boy, now that there was actual need of him, proved a perfect jewel; his optimism never failed, his faith never faltered, and O'Reilly began to feel a dumb gratitude at having the youngster by his side.

Jacket, too, became thin and gray about the lips. But he complained not at all and he laughed a great deal. To him the morrow was always another day of brilliant promise toward which he looked with never-failing eagerness; and not for a single moment did he question the ultimate success of their endeavor. Such an example did much for the older man. Together they practiced the strictest, hardest economy, living on a few cents a day, while they methodically searched the city from limit to limit.

At first O'Reilly concerned himself more than a little with the problem of escape, but as time wore on he thought less and less about that. Nor did he have occasion to waste further concern regarding his disguise. That it was perfect he proved when several of his former acquaintances passed him by and when, upon one occasion, he came face to face with old Don Mario de Castano. Don Mario had changed; he was older, his flesh had softened, and it hung loosely upon his form. He appeared worried, harassed, and O'Reilly recalled rumors that the war had ruined him. The man's air of dejection seemed to bear out the story.

They had been enemies, nevertheless O'Reilly felt a sudden impulse to make himself known to the Spaniard and to appeal directly for news of Rosa's fate. But Don Mario, he remembered in time, had a reputation for vindictiveness, so he smothered the desire. One other encounter O'Reilly had reason to remember. It so chanced that one day he and Jacket found themselves in the miserable rabble which assembled at the railroad station to implore alms from the incoming passengers of the Habana train. Few people were traveling these days, and they were, for the most part, Spanish officers to whom the sight of starving country people was no novelty. Now and then, however, there did arrive visitors from whom the spectacle of so much wretchedness wrung a contribution, hence there was always an expectant throng at the depot. On this occasion O'Reilly was surprised to hear the piteous whines for charity in the name of God turn suddenly into a subdued but vicious mutter of rage. Hisses were intermingled with vituperations, then the crowd fell strangely silent, parting to allow the passage of a great, thick-set man in the uniform of a colonel of volunteers. The fellow was unusually swarthy and he wore a black scowl upon his face, while a long puckering scar the full length of one cheek lifted his mouth into a crooked sneer and left exposed a glimpse of wolfish-teeth.



"I Can't Stand That," He Confessed. Frugality, they began their search. Later they stretched themselves out to sleep on the stones beneath the portales of the railroad station.

They spent a horrid, harrowing night, for now the general distress was brought home to them more poignantly than ever. At dawn they learned that these people were actually dying of neglect. The faint light betrayed

mutter the name, "Cobo." Then indeed he started and stiffened in his tracks. He fixed a fascinated stare upon the fellow.

Colonel Cobo seemed no little pleased by the reception he created. With his chest arched and his black eyes glancing malevolently he swaggered through the press, clicking his heels noisily upon the stone flags. When he had gone Jacket voiced a vicious oath.

"So that is the butcher of babies!" exclaimed the boy. "Well, now, I should enjoy cutting his heart out."

O'Reilly's emotions were not entirely unlike those of his small companion. His lips became dry and white as he tried to speak.

"What a brute! That face—Ugh!" He found himself shaking weakly, and discovered that a new and wholly unaccountable feeling of discouragement had settled upon him. He tried manfully to shake it off, but somehow failed, for the sight of Rosa's arch-enemy and the man's overbearing personality had affected him queerly. Cobo's air of confidence and authority seemed to emphasize O'Reilly's impotence and bring it forcibly home to him. To think of his lustful persecution of Rosa Varona, moreover, terrified him. The next day he resumed his hut-to-hut search, but with a listlessness that came from a firm conviction that once again he was too late.

That afternoon found the two friends among the miserable hovels which encircled the foot of La Cumbre, about the only quarter they had not explored. Below lay San Severino, the execution place; above was the site of the old Varona home. More than once on his way about the city O'Reilly had lifted his eyes in the direction of the latter, feeling a great hunger to revisit the scene of his last farewell to Rosa, but through fear of the melancholy effect it would have upon him he had thus far resisted the impulse. Today, however, he could no longer fight the morbid desire and so, in spite of Jacket's protest at the useless expenditure of effort, he set out to climb the hill. Of course the boy would not let him go alone.

Little was said during the ascent. The La Cumbre road seemed very long and very steep. How different the last time O'Reilly had swung up it! The climb had never before tired him as it did now, and he reasoned that hunger must have weakened him even more than he realized. Jacket felt the exertion, too; he was short of breath and he rested frequently. O'Reilly saw that the boy's bare, brown legs had grown bony since he had last noticed them, and he felt a sudden pang at having brought the little fellow into such a plight as this.

"Well, hombre," he said when they paused to rest. "I'm afraid we came too late. I'm afraid we're licked." Jacket nodded listlessly; his optimism, too, was gone. "They must all be dead or we would have found them before this," said he. When O'Reilly made no answer he continued, "It is true we thought of getting away from here, eh?"

Johnnie was sitting with his face in his hands. Without lifting his head he inquired: "How are we going to get away? It is easy enough to get into Matanzas, but—" He shrugged hopelessly.

Jacket brightened at the thought of escape. "Ho! I'll bet we can find a hole somewhere," said he. "We're not like these others. They haven't the spirit to try." There was a moment of silence, and then: "Caramba! You remember those juitas we ate? They were strong, but I would enjoy the smell of one now. Eh? Another week of this and we shall be living on garbage like the rest of these poor people."

Leaving Jacket to take his time, Johnnie completed the climb alone, meditating upon the boy's words. "The spirit to try!" Where had his spirit gone, he wondered. Perhaps it had been crushed beneath the weight of misery he had beheld; surely he had seen enough. Hourly contact with sickness and misfortune on such a gigantic scale was enough to chill anyone's hopes, and although his sensibilities had been dulled, his apprehensions had been quickened hour by hour. Now that he looked the matter squarely in the face, it seemed absurd to believe that a tender girl like Rosa Varona could long have withstood the hardships of this hideous place; stronger people than she had succumbed, by the hundreds. Even now the hospitals were full, the sick lay unattended in their hovels. No one, so far as O'Reilly knew, had undertaken to estimate how fast they were dying or the number of dead which had already ridden out of Matanzas in those rumbling wagons, but there were many. What chance was there that Rosa had not been among the latter?

As he breasted the summit of La Cumbre, O'Reilly beheld at some distance a bent figure of want. It was a negro woman, grubbing in the earth with a sharpened stick. After a suspicious scrutiny of him she resumed her digging.

Nothing but a heap of stones and plaster remained of the Varona home. The grounds, once beautiful even when neglected as in Donna Isabel's time, were now a scene of total desolation. A few orange trees, to be sure, remained standing, and although they were cool and green to look at, they carried no fruit and the odor of their blooms was a trial and a mockery to the hungry visitor. The evidences of Cobo's vandalism affected O'Reilly deeply; they brought him memories more painful than he had anticipated. Although the place was well-nigh unrecognizable, nevertheless it cried aloud of Rosa, and the unhappy lover could barely control the emotions it awakened. It

was indeed a morbid impulse which had brought him thither, but now that he was here he could not leave. Unconsciously his feet turned toward the ancient quarry which had formed the sunken garden—his and Rosa's trysting place.

O'Reilly desired above all things to be alone at this moment, and so he was annoyed to discover that another person was before him—a woman, evidently some miserable pacifico like himself. She, too, appeared to be looking for roots, and he almost stumbled over her as he brushed through the guava bushes fringing the depression.

His sudden appearance alarmed the creature and she struggled, panic-stricken, out of his path. Her rage could not conceal the fact that she was terrified, that her back was crooked, so he muttered a reassuring word to her.

This place was more as he had left it—there was the stone bench where he had said good-by to Rosa; yonder was the well—

"Senor!" Johnnie heard himself addressed by the hunchbacked woman. Her voice was thin, tremulous, eager,



A Woman, Evidently Some Miserable Pacifico Like Himself.

but his thoughts were busy and he paid no heed. "Senor! Do you look for something—some one—"

"N-no. Yes—" he answered, abstractedly. "Yes. I am looking for something—some one."

"Something you have lost?"

"Something I have lost!" The question came to him faintly, but it was so in tune with his unhappy mood that it affected him strangely. He found that his eyes were blurring and that an aching lump had risen into his throat. This was the breaking point.

O'Reilly's hearing, too, was going wrong, for he imagined that some one whispered his name. God! This place was not dead—it was alive—terribly alive with memories, voices, a presence unseen yet real. He laid hold of the nearest bush to steady himself, he closed his eyes, only to hear his name spoken louder.

"O'Raill-ye!"

Johnnie brushed the tears from his lashes. He turned, he listened, but there was no one to be seen, no one, that is, except the dusky cripple, who had straightened herself and was facing him, poised uncertainly. He looked at her a second time, then the world began to spin dizzily and he groped his way toward her. He peered again, closer, for everything before his eyes was swimming.

The woman was thin—little more than a skeleton—and so frail that the wind appeared to sway her, but her face, uplifted to the sun, was glorified. O'Reilly stood rooted, staring at her until she opened her eyes, then he voiced a great cry:

"Rosa!" What more he said he never knew.

He took the misshapen figure into his arms, he rained kisses upon the pinched, discolored face. But Rosa did not respond; her puny strength had flown and she lay inert in his embrace, scarcely breathing. Dazed, doubting, astounded, it was some time before Johnnie could convince himself of the reality of this moment, and even then words did not come to him, for his mind was in turmoil. Joy, thanksgiving, compassion—a thousand emotions—mingled in a sort of delirium, too wild for coherent thought or speech.

Fear finally brought him to his senses, for he became aware that Rosa had collapsed and that his endearments left her unthrilled. Quickly he bore her to the bench and laid her upon it. After a time she smiled up into his eyes and her words were scarcely more than a murmur:


"God heard my prayers and sent you to me."

(To Be Continued.)

Electric Reading Stand Lamps. Ten left out of thirty-six. Let us send one to your home. Try it a week. If it suits you keep it. Also Thor vacuum electric carpet sweepers. Frasers-Pence Co. Phone 80.

FARM FOR RENT

Forty acres, good house, barn, chicken house, small orchard; in desirable locality. Inquire at Times office.

*You bet'cha!* 

"The more a man knows about genuine tobacco, the surer he is to see the value of Real Gravelly in comparison with ordinary plug."

Good taste, smaller chew, longer life is what makes Genuine Gravelly cost less to chew than ordinary plug.

Write to:—  
 GENUINE GRAVELLY  
 DANVILLE, VA.  
 for booklet on chewing plug.

## Peyton Brand REAL CHEWING PLUG

Plug packed in pouch

CAREFUL SAVING HAS BEEN THE SECRET OF MY SUCCESS  WHO BANKS HIS MONEY— THE SUCCESSFUL MAN OR THE FAILURE?

ANY MAN CAN BE SUCCESSFUL IN HIS PARTICULAR FIELD

The difference between the successful man and the failure is usually the fact that the one is systematically thrifty of his energy, his time and his money; the other is not.

SURE RULES FOR SUCCESS ARE work hard and honestly, save part of your income regularly and deposit your savings in this bank where they will work for you.

STRENGTH · ACCOMMODATION · SERVICE  
**FIRST NATIONAL BANK**  
 OF JEROME  
 CAPITAL \$50,000.00  
 D. C. MACWATERS, PRES  
 JOHN THOMAS, VICE PRES  
 H. D. HILL, CASHIER  
 R. W. WILLIAMSON, ASST. CAS.

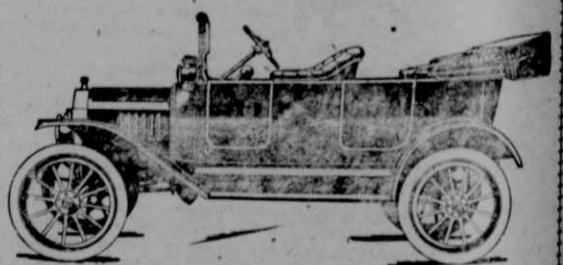
# DON'T FREEZE

Good Utah Slack, in ton lots or more, \$3 per ton.

## Jerome Milling & Elevator Co

Telephone 77

Don't Forget to Buy WAR SAVINGS STAMPS



## Ford Car Prices

F. O. B., DETROIT, MICH.

|             |          |
|-------------|----------|
| TOURING CAR | \$525.00 |
| RUNABOUT    | \$500.00 |
| CHASSIS     | \$475.00 |
| COUPELET    | \$650.00 |
| TOWN CAR    | \$750.00 |
| SEDAN       | \$775.00 |
| TRUCK       | \$550.00 |

NORTH SIDE AUTO CO.

FORD AGENCY

Jerome Idaho