Frank Reade, Jr., and his electric coach, or, The search for the Isle of Diamonds Part II

Luis 1863-1939 Senarens

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The coach was upset for the first time! A thrill of dismay shot through Frank, and he shut off the power. He scrambled out through a window and reached the ground.
CHAPTER XXVI.
MAN AGAINST BEAST.

"Pity me, oh merciful God, or I shall perish here!"

It was a wild appeal, in weak tones, that came through a great cavern in the rocks, and the supplicating voice had hardly died away, when there sounded the trumpeting roar of a bear, near the speaker, who was wedged in narrow crevices in the wall.

The beast could not get in the cleft at the man, but it inserted one of its massive paws to the full extent of its leg, and by clawing and scratching, it managed to hook the man’s jacket on its claws, and strove to drag its victim out, to devour him.

The man was Gerald Fitzgerald, whom Fras- cuelo, the bandit, had left a bound captive in the cavern, and he had wedged himself in the crevice in the wall by the utmost difficulty, upon finding that the cave was a bear’s den.

His sufferings for the past two days had been awful, as not a drop of water had he to quench his intolerable thirst, nor a morsel of food to satisfy the cravings of his hunger.

Discovered and attacked by the huge bear, despite his efforts to conceal his presence there, it seemed at last as if all was in vain, and that his earthly career was at an end.

The long, sharp nails of the sleek, black beast were caught firmly, and the unresisting man felt himself being dragged out of the aperture inch by inch, while at last the bear had its entire paw upon him.

Then he emerged rapidly.

A groan of horror peeled from his lips as he rolled over upon the floor beneath the monster’s head.

"But after all," he thought, bitterly, "it is much better to die this way. A cove can’t suffer longer, as I’ve, be Jove! Let the brute eat me, and that will be an end to my misery, don’t you know?"

He was resigned to his fate.

As a cat toys with a mouse ere its cruel fangs are buried in the hapless victim, the bear snuff- ed at Fitzgerald, rolled him, pawed at him, and kept up a muttering growl.

"Confound you," impatiently exclaimed the desperado, "why don’t you set to work on me? The anticipation is far worse than the deed. Hey! Boof! Set to—set to!"

He blew at the bear, struck it with his knees, and did all he could to urge it on to end his life.

But the bear was a long time getting mad.

When it finally bared its guns, displaying its formidable teeth, and its roaring grew deeper and hoarser, poor Fitzgerald knew that the time had come for him to say his prayers.

The bear had been a short distance from him, but never once were his vicious round eyes removed from the prostrate ranchman, and then it came for him at a lumbering trot.

Instinctively Fitzgerald knew that it was now intent upon killing him as soon as possible.

The bear reached him—stood over him—and:

Crack—bang!

It was a rifle-shot at the cave entrance.

"Hurray! We are in time! He yet lives! cried the marksman.

"A grand success," gasped poor Fitzgerald, recognizing the voice.

And into the cavern dashed Frank, while the wounded bear with a horrible sound fell down, and rolled over and over with pain.

With one slash of his knife Frank released the young Englishman, and he was about to arise, when the bear got upon its legs again and made a rush for him.

Before it could reach him, Frank sprang between the ferocious beast and the ranchman with his knife in his hand.

He had laid his rifle down to liberate Fitz- gerald and that with his knife in his hand.

The bear recoiled for an instant, surprised at seeing Frank, and then it advanced upon Frank, its eyes glaring like balls of fire.

"Run, or it will kill you, boy!" groaned Fitzgerald, arcing.

"No! I am not afraid of it!" dauntlessly an- swered Frank.

"Then I’ll take your rifle and shoot the beggar!"

"Get over near the door, then, and keep our friends out of the way.

There was no time to say any more.

For just as Fitzgerald grasped Frank’s rifle, and slowly made his way toward the door, the bear started toward Frank.

He had met almost every species of these beasts in every land, in every kind of battle, under every condition.

Therefore he knew how dangerous a fight he had before him.

He caught the beast’s eye with his steady glance, and held it.

Nor did he flinch, or move an inch.

He held his knife grasped tightly in his hand, drawn back and mentally calculated the most effective blow he could strike at the creature’s body in which to plant the keen blade.

On came the snarling beast with stubborn courage, and its shaggy paws were held in readi- ness to strike at Frank a powerful blow, or embrace him in a death dealing clutch.

One step more, and Frank sprang into its arms.

The sharp knife darted forward, pierced the hairy neck, was withdrawn, and as the creature’s blood poured from a gapping wound, and its paws came together, Frank darted back.

He just escaped annihilation.

Once in those massive arms, and the breath of life might have all been squeezed out of his body.

A terrible cry of agony escaped the bear, but it did not go down upon all fours as Frank calcu- lated.

There was a convulsive movement of its immense body, and it accelerated its pace toward Frank.

Unfortunately the inventor of the electric coach had his body interposed between Fitz- gerald and the animal, so that the ranchman could not get a shot at it without running the risk of hitting Frank himself.

He stood near the the entrance to the cavern, outside of which stood Barney, Pomp, Vaneys and Panchita.

The powerful bear was near enough to Frank again he made another rush and drove it on his throat.

This time the beast caught him.

He was drawn close to the animal’s body.

Its gaping mouth was opened wide, and it made a motion as if it was going to bury its teeth in Frank’s head and tear in two, when the knife was thrust again and again in its eyes, mouth, neck and body, causing it to try to get away.

Its snarls, whines and roars were terrible.

Its body was soaked with its life fluid.

Frank was covered with it, the walls were plastered and the floor looked like that of a slaughter house, and still the inventor kept stabbing it strong and rapid blows.

He knew that every ounce of blood the crea- ture lost was rendering it weaker, and that was so much in his own favor.

The far the beast did not have an opportu- nity to bite him, but its claws ribboned Frank’s clothes, and the convulsive movements of its
arms gave him some squeezing that was far from pleasant. He did not attempt to get away from this beast, and it was perhaps due to this fact that the temptation of the native was only slight. The fact that every contact it had with him caused it the pain of a fresh wound.

Indeed, a similar temptation was upon him, with its tongue lolling from its great red mouth.

The crack of Frank’s rifle pealed out sharply in Fitzgerald’s hands, and the bullet landed the beast dead.

“That is my revenge for all the blasted trouble it gave me,” said the ranchman, in satisfaction.

“A good shot it was, too,” commented Frank.

The rest of the party then came into the cavern.

In a moment the losers were locked in a tight embrace.

Neither of them had expected to ever meet again.

Fitzgerald was weak and ill, and the doctor and Frank assisted him down in the ravine to the cave, attended by Pomp, while Barney and Pomp set to work securing the bear skin.

“Share an’ it’s the same too fat and we ken from their railroad ter resky Fitz,” said Barney, when the hide was taken off, “but instead of this thing being wrapped up in an envelope as a present to an old friend, I’m going to give it to you, good sir, because it will be a real help to me.”

The coon arose to his feet and glared balefully at the others. His right eye was at some distance from the socket, and started toward the mountain to find a place where it could be properly held.

A bitter, rankling hatred of Frank and his friends was fostered in its bosoms, and they determined that unless they were now to have revenge for having, as they imagined, caused the ruin of the magnificent edifice on the island Barney and Pomp had stumbled upon its mountain top.

When they came upon Frank amid the rocks he was down on his hands and knees, drinking in the cool refreshing mountain spring, which his men had conveyed to him from the well.

His rifle was out of reach, and one of them seized upon it.

Then the rest rushed upon him.

A blow on the head from a cudgel, wielded by one of the giants, sent him sprawling on the mountain with his head against a tree as if in the embrace of a giantess.

CHAPTER XXVII.

FIGHTING GLADIATORS.

In the meanwhile, Dr. Vaneyke was entertaining Fitzgerald and Panchita with some antiquarian facts about the people who lived on the island, Barney and Pomp had gotten themselves into a scrape.

The next day, the parties began to work all that week without betraying friendship, and they worked assiduously among the ruins, finding some very interesting objects.

They discovered that it was now all dried up. They picked him up and silently went up the steps. Around and around the arena they went, picking up the scattered ruins, sometimes excavating as much as several oval top windows cut through the solid stones.

Fortunately any heat that might have been trapped in the stones was given off now all gone, and when the coach reached the city, it was a place of refuge.

The ground was as cool as now it was before the heat.

What do you intend to do?” asked the doc.

“Let us all set to work at gathering as much of the magnificent diamonds together as we can. The vast treasure can be safely hidden, and if we ever again encounter Isais, the whole thing will revert to me. You remember that he is ours.

“Perfectly well.”

“Then you know that we own this island of diamonds, and all on it.”

There will be no trouble to secure the rich Frank.

They all scattered among the ruins, and saw that the single office was left standing; it was a chaotic ruin.

It was an easy matter to collect the priceless jewels and scatter them as far as possible among these primitive people, that outrivaled the wealth of any nation in civilized life.

All that day they worked assiduously among the fallen pillars, stones and ornaments, hoping to find some of the most valuable objects in civilization.

Bump—bump—bumpety—bump! went poor Pomp, each step thumping him on the stomach, and slowly and sternly he pushed on ahead, his hands, as he was skatting down on his stomach.

When he reached the bottom he set up a wild howl of agony.

“F’r shame, sah, who done dat?” he roared, pulling a face, and tenderly rubbing his injuries.

“Say, who done dat, hey?”

“Begor, sah,” cried a voice of Barney accompanied by a terrific explosion of laughter, as he descended the states, for he had followed Pomp from the ruins of the great temple.

The coon arose to his feet and glared balefully at Barney.

“Why, dar, chik’s—g’way,” said he darkly. “Te ess gwine ter cut yer—i’s!”

“Sure, if a man of my word would be guilty av dropping yez down thin stairs, but—”

“Ain’t it? say, you seen ’fraid Barney.”

“POMP! POMP! Sure, me wind bag is busted.”

“Yah, yah!” chuckled Pomp. “Reckon I dunno t’ning’ but dat neider, honey! How you doing, Pomp?”

But Barney’s agony would only permit him to grunt and groan, and Pomp went down a flight of steps between the seats and peered over the arena wall, down at his unhappy friend.

“Murder, Pomp! Sure, me wind bag is busted.”

Around and around the arena they went, picking up the scattered ruins, sometimes excavating as much as several oval top windows cut through the solid stones.

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The two victims shuddered, for they understood what was said in Spanish. They were unarmed.

The dread scene of this conflict was thus thwarted, but they knew that their friends. A further attempt would have no place for the one by the throat with its fangs, and as the other sooner keenly watched the fight they arose on their hindquarters, pawing andThere were numberless rows of conical hills, for they expected to see of the men.

- "Obey me," said Frank.
- "That IS a far better plan," thought Barney.
- 

And into the pumas den, both opened by the same door, and the ugly beasts now preferred fighting each other sooner than attack men. The feeling of those creeping objects all over their bodies was simply diabolical.

Frank was quiet awhile.

The half dozen giants who struck Frank senseless with a cudgel amid the rocks were remaining under the water, as much space between them as possible. Remaining under the water, Frank began to feel a sense of uneasiness, unless it was excessively protracted. Thrusting his revolver in through the open ground, he was forced to blam away until every chamber was emptied.

Then he peered into the den. A cry escaped him an instant later, and clapping his hand to his forehead, he reeled back as pale as death and trembling like an aspen from fear. He remained quiet awhile. Then they began to bite and tear to pieces, fell over dead. Barney or Isaacs, being as much as a Clonakilty man loves ter drink, shouted the bandits, 

"Let us burn them at the stake and eat up them on the spot."

FRANK READE, JR. AND HIS ELECTRIC COACH.

Part II.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE WHITE ANTS.

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FRANK READE, JR. AND HIS ELECTRIC COACH.
The ants had eaten thousands of holes through the wood, and had saved his life, which was all he cared about.

But he had more clothing in the coach, and had saved his life, which was all he cared about.

Paying but little heed to the pains from the burns he had got in avoiding the ant bites, and to the weight of the wheels, Frank struggled on, and watched the jagged peaks of the volcano rise ever higher, as they were filled with mortar. When she was about to start, saw no tracks to betray where he had been. He scrambled out through a window and had saved his life, which was all he cared about.

Frank, bewildered, flung about, and heard the wheels hum and roar, as they zoomed around in a ring of dazzling blue flashes. From the hubs held the wheels up from the track.

Then the coach was up for the first time!

A thrill of dismay shot through Frank, and he shut off the power.

He scrambled out through a window and reached the ground.

"She is a wreck! My friends will perish!" he cried, bitterly.

He dared not venture in the fire without the smoke, strangled by the violence of the strange disappearance of their two captives, and superstitions ideas began to crop out of their minds.

The men looked at each other in perplexity.

They could not understand the puzzling mystery of the strange disappearance of their two captives, and superstitions ideas began to crop out of their minds.

"But what demand? demanded one of the men.

"Nothing but a hidden outlet."

"Not yet, but I will find it if there is one here."

Frascuelo closely examined the four walls, but the floor and the roof.

He could not find anything but the joints of the flat stones of which the den was built, and they were filled with mortar.

When he sounded it, Copetone listened for a hollow echo to designate an open space below, but the wall was too thick to transmit such a noise, and he finally gave up the search.

"Carramba! It is no use!" he exclaimed impatiently.

"Yes! I am positive, amigas, that there is a passage leading from this den, and the two men have discovered it and thus made the coach and its crew easy prey. For seven pistol shots could not blow them to pieces, nor could any man get the power to make himself invisible."

"Let the rest of us search," said one of the men.

"By all means. Come in. We ought not to let them escape, for as the rest of their friends are all killed, they will not doubt warn them of our presence here, if we can get away, and that would put an end to my hope of taking them by surprise."

"Yes, and so have," asserted Frascuelo. "I may as well explain it to you now as later on.

Par down on the isthmus of Panama there is a small tribe of Indians whom I love and wish to gain for my wife--"

"Bosh, senor, bosh! Why let your love interfere with justice?

"Hold on, my friend, until you hear all. The strange emotion Frascuelo, the bandit chief, underwent after firing into the puma’s head to kill, was caused by what seemed something supernatural.

CHAPTER XXIX.

RESCUED FROM THE FLAMES.

The strange emotion Frascuelo, the bandit chief, underwent after firing into the puma’s head to kill, was caused by what seemed something supernatural.

In the center surrounding the arena, under the palace which Isaac had once occupied, the bandits were eagerly leaning over to see the contest.

And in the middle of the ring lay the bodies of the two beasts which gave the outlaws such a terrible battle. But the romance of my life is not over. In one of the front wheels, there had struck against a rock.

When Frank saw the Horsewhip, he muttered, and see if everything is all right there.

It glanced keenly on the ground when he started, saw no tracks to betray where he had been. He scrambled out through a window and had saved his life, which was all he cared about.

The coach stood there, but not a soul was in it, or near it.

Moreover, the ten stone jars filled with diamond sand were gone too.

The men likely found a place in which to hide the diamonds during my absence, thought Frank, and have taken the jars away to sell. I shall wait in this spot for their return.

The men started for the pilot house of the Whirlwind and sat down, when suddenly his glance was attracted by a piece of white paper lying on the floor, and his heart pulsed me. But the romance of my life is not over.

Within a few minutes their doom would be sealed. stood righted. them by bear ball. They had saved their lives, which was all they cared about.

"That was all.

The writing was in Fr. Vaneck’s hand, and having his appendix in doubt before he could in
scribe any more.

"I was a slave to these fellows who attacked me!" muttered Frank, jumping to his feet, "and they have doubles taken away the ten stone jars filled with diamond sand, which were gone.

It was an easy matter to ascertain, for the volcanic dust left a plain trail, and when Frank got out of the coach, he found it, and followed it around to the northern side of the island.

The men did not bridges on this side, and as they could not cross the thick, oozy mud carpeting the bed of the evaporated lake, he felt con


cident that his friends and their enemies were yet on the island, and consequently open to rescue.

Having settled this in his mind, Frank hastes to the coach, and started it off on the road.

Within five minutes he turned a spur of the northern side, and saw Frank, hasted to the capsized coach, convinced that his friends had perished in the flames.

An examination of the Whirlwind showed him that she rested upon the seashores and the edge of the volcano.

Stanchly built as she was, and falling in the manner she did, although the roof must have been strained, he was stunned and delighted to see that she was uninjured, save for a few break

Guezzig, there was no way in which he could right her unladen, tightly built as she was, unless he could rig a tackle, which is what he did not do yet, on account of the fire.

So he waited until the blaze was over.

The fierce flames burned, and the gloam of night fell with a starry sky, and Frank was seized by such fear.

He had plenty of rope sand blocks in the coach, and having found a charred tree trunk that would stand the strain, he put up his gable, and making a triple purchase to lessen the weight, he got the unused end of the rope around the car.

Then he gradually hauled the roof up, and as the weight was on the bottom of the coach when she arrived at the angle of balance, the weight of the pieces threw her over, and she stood righted.

Frank removed the tackle, examined the coach thoroughly, and having placed everything in order, he was about to start off in the midst of the blazing pumas, and he was fired with a gun shot. It sounded close by, and he peered out at the window of the coach.

As he looked through a number of shadowy figures flitting in amid the charred tree trunks, and saw with a thrill of dismay that he could not do yet, on account of the fire.

I cannot look for the remains of my friends now," muttered Frank, grizzily. "There is but one way left to me--to see what I can see what I can see what I can see.

And starting the coach, it dashed in amid the burning trees.

The cure had been efficacious, and Frascuelo fired into the puma’s head to kill, was caused by what seemed something supernatural.

The men crowded around to comply.

"None," they said, "there was no longer any tracks.

"Gone!" echoed the bandit chief. "But where is this den?"

The men looked at each other in perplexity.

They could not understand the puzzling mystery of the strange disappearance of their two captives, and superstitions ideas began to crop out of their minds.

"There must be an explanation of this!" said Frank.

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Par down on the isthmus of Panama there is a small tribe of Indians whom I love and wish to gain for my wife--"
back when he has paid us the amount we demand.

And, then—

"Another turn, before then.

What?

"I'll be your lawful wife.

"You would steal the maul, and return to the parental roof a wife and woman, and thus we shall all consume
our desires.

"It's a naughty idea, bravo!'

"Will you go all with me or not, now?" I asked.

"Ay, ay! Every one of us, since the object is fair and just, and I have satisfied," he exclaimed. "You all
have brave hearts.

"For 'tis woman's honor.

"No, I do not deny it. Why do you say so?"

"Because we fail to find the meanings of your two
captives' escape."
Frank and the doctor entered the pilot-house and Barney and Pomp remained where they were.

Frascuelo followed the inventor.

"Start de coach!" he exclaimed. "We go southward. If you play de treacherous I kill you!"

He tapped the butt of his pistol meaningly, and then grasped the wheel, started the coach, and they left the island.

Far to the southward they traveled, our friends wondering what had befallen Franchini, and the hands of the giant, with Fitzgerald pursuing and cut off, the coach began the round of the search.

For several hours the coach thus went along. It was in a condition of the setting sun. The two prisoners.

Then Frank suddenly described the dark shadows with the searchlight, called an "island" in the prairies.

And the trees he saw the twilight of camp, and presently he turned on the searchlight, the brilliant shaft darting upon the

By its light he saw that it was an encampment of coach off at an angle with the course she had been pursuing.

The gong-lever was in reach of the doctor's hand, and he turned it without delay, and Frascuelo, finally, and quietly twisted the screw of a binding post, severing the electric connection so that with a deafening cry, the motor would cease to operate, the driving wheels.

The Whirlwind began to slacken speed.

Frank realized at once what the astute doctor had done, and gave the wheel a turn that sent the automobile into the course she had been pursuing.

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The Whirlwind began to slacken speed.
And decided to keep still.

"Could the troops but see us chained up this way, they would suspect foul play, and demand a reason," he cogitated.

A man came and stood over the two with his drawn knife and another one served Pomp and Barney the same way, while outside they could hear the pouting of horses' hoofs, and knew that the soldiers were fast approaching.

Frascuelo walked over to one of the windows.

"Hulloa! Bello! Is there any one on board?"

Frascuelo did not answer.

"Open the door and come out!" shouted the officer.

"I only sound that came from the coach was the steady sputtering hiss of the search light, while now and then a livid blue glare of light belched out from the wires at the sides and under the coach.

The lieutenant rode off a few yards, and called his men.

"You're a liar. I wouldn't trust you!"

"Ah, good friend, dear friend. Think of the horrible fate awaiting us."

"Don't get too-endearing, Frascuelo. It don't become your brutal nature."

Frank saw that he had his enemies at his mercy now, and the look of abject terror definately showed him how much Frascuelo dreaded his situation.

His swarthy face was twitching, and he kept looking down at the floor, and uneasily lifting first one foot and then the other, as if he already felt the ignited keg of powder ready to burst under him at any unexpected spot and moment.

"Make de terms with me!" groaned the bandit desperately.

"Certainly," assented Frank. "You are all here."

"You will have to, or you will get blown to

With a rush the coach came upon a solitary tree that was standing athwart their path, and, although Barney tried to avoid it, the long, sharp ram over the cow-catcher struck it. There came a terrible shock.

And decided to keep still.

"Could the troops but see us chained up this way, they would suspect foul play, and demand a reason," he cogitated.

A man came and stood over the two with his drawn knife and another one served Pomp and Barney the same way, while outside they could hear the pouting of horses' hoofs, and knew that the soldiers were fast approaching.

Frascuelo walked over to one of the windows.

"Hulloa! Bello! Is there any one on board?"

Frascuelo did not answer.

"Open the door and come out!" shouted the officer.

"I only sound that came from the coach was the steady sputtering hiss of the search light, while now and then a livid blue glare of light belched out from the wires at the sides and under the coach.

The lieutenant rode off a few yards, and called his men.

"You're a liar. I wouldn't trust you!"

"Ah, good friend, dear friend. Think of the horrible fate awaiting us."

"Don't get too-endearing, Frascuelo. It don't become your brutal nature."

Frank saw that he had his enemies at his mercy now, and the look of abject terror definately showed him how much Frascuelo dreaded his situation.

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With a rush the coach came upon a solitary tree that was standing athwart their path, and, although Barney tried to avoid it, the long, sharp ram over the cow-catcher struck it. There came a terrible shock.
Frank saw that the Mexican was weakening fast. The rest came crowding into the doorway from the carriage.

They were frightened, for they heard all that transpired.

"We won't stay here to get blown to death--cried one of them.

"No, no, no!" chorused the others.

"Only four minutes remain for us to live, gentlemen," calmly said Frank, arising, and withdrawing his watch. "You had all better kneel down and commend your souls to God, for the time is short."

As the doctor kept the coach running close to and even with the cab, Frank reached over the railing, and seizing hold of Panchita, he lifted her off the engine onto the Whirlwind.

"Four minutes!" muttered Frascuelo in horror.

Frank's friends did not say a word, for they knew what he was designing, and were satisfied to trust their lives to him.

Below the coach they heard a faint hissing sound. It was the slow match burning down to the powder keg.

Frank glanced out the window, and saw that the soldiers had retreated in a long line along the trees, said Dr. Vaneyke, "they will fire upon us and settle our fate." The others looked solemn and then laughed.

"De soldiers hab licked de Injuns," he exclaimed.

"Ah! And our friends?" queried Frank, with a look of relief.

"De soldiers hab licked de Injuns!" he exclaimed.

"Ah! And our friends?" exclaimed Barney, listening and hearing where are the Mexicans?

Frank grasped the lever, turned it caugh hold of the wheel, and the coach glided ahead, as the door that communicated with the coach had been opened with a bang.

"Shure they didn't lave ther coach at all, a"
CHAPTER XXXII.

THE CATTLE THIEVES.

Two days after the events occurred which we have narrated in our last chapter, a wild, thrilling tale was being telegraphed from the ends of the continent by the electric wire, and reaching Panama was heard even in the quiet city of the Isthmus. It seemed that a great cattle robbery had been committed, and a desperate fight to recover the stolen property had taken place. The cattle grazed in the rolling fields of the Guanacaste province, and the men who had been carrying them away were the desperadoes of the region, led by Sanatico and his band of rascals.

The cattle robbery was committed by a gang of cattle thieves, who had been lying in wait for the herd of cattle owned by the ranchers of San Antonio. They had been watching the herd for several days, and when the ranchers had left the field to go into the town for a few hours, the thieves made their move. They entered the field and began to drive the cattle to a nearby stream, where they planned to let them drink and then drive them away. The ranchers were unaware of the robbery until they returned to the field and saw the cattle gone.

Enraged at the despoilers of his stock, the rancher, Frascuelo, resolved to take matters into his own hands. He called on his friend, the bandit Frascuelo, for help, and together they set out to recover the cattle. They rode through the night, determined to succeed.

The next day they arrived at the stream where the cattle had been driven, only to find that they had been led away by the thieves. Frascuelo and Frascuelo then decided to follow the cattle and try to catch up with them. They rode through the countryside, following the track that the cattle had left in the dust. As they rode, they encountered many obstacles, including difficult terrain and harsh weather conditions.

Finally, after several days of riding, they came upon the herd of cattle that had been driven away. Frascuelo and Frascuelo dismounted and approached the herd with caution. The cattle were frightened and ran off, but Frascuelo and Frascuelo managed to catch up with them and begin to drive them back to San Antonio.

The cattle thieves were enough of a match for Frascuelo and Frascuelo, and a fierce battle ensued. The ranchers and the bandits fought for hours, but it was not until the sun was setting that the cattle thieves were finally defeated. The cattle were returned to their owners, and Frascuelo and Frascuelo were hailed as heroes of the region.

The news of the cattle robbery and its successful recovery spread throughout the country, and Frascuelo and Frascuelo became overnight celebrities. They were hailed as heroes, and their names were held in high esteem by all who knew them. Their bravery and skills in the face of danger were a testament to their character and dedication to their home and family.

The ranchers and the bandits were forever changed by the events of that summer day. The ranchers were grateful for the help of Frascuelo and Frascuelo, and the bandits were left to ponder the consequences of their actions.

The cattle robbery and its resolution were a reminder of the harsh realities of life in the region. The ranchers and the bandits were forever changed, and the story of Frascuelo and Frascuelo became a legend, a testament to the power of teamwork and friendship in the face of adversity.
Part II. FRANK READE, JR., AND HIS ELECTRIC COACH. 11

cost you one million posos to get her back, senor."

"Abominable wretch!" shouted the enraged man furiously.

"The disposition too well to im-
agine I am jesting," the bandit replied coolly. "I have a thousand and one reasons for this, señor, as soon as the money is in my hands, you shall have your daughter back."

"This is terrible! Terrible!"

"Give me time to consider, I implore you!"

"No! Is your daughter's life worth less than money to you?"

"Oh, Heaven, no! But this crime—the humiliation. Oh, it is more than I can patiently bear. Accursed dog, I will strangle the life out of you!"

"And, by the way, I defile this man and make him两手 at the bandits, and caught him by the throat with both hands."

Frascuelo, with a terrible shriek, escaped Frascuelo, as he recollected Juanita screamed, and fainted from excess of terror.

"And were I to refuse?"

"Yes. Your daughter's mutilated body will be sent to you."

"Oh, God help me!"

"If you comply, as soon as I have got hold of you, you shall have your daughter back."

"Good Heaven, no! But this crime—shame, humiliation. Oh, it is more than I can bear. Accursed dog, I will strangle the life out of you!"

And so saying, the desperate man fiercely at the bandit, and caught him by the throat with both hands. A hoarse cry of rage escaped Frascuelo, as he recoiled, while Juanita screamed, and fainted from excess of terror.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE DESERTED CITY.

When the coach reached the town, Frascuelo found that thirteen of his men's cattle without much trouble, and the bandits divided the proceeds of the robbery, and prepared to start on the return journey. Their destination now was the Deserted City, mentioned by Frascuelo.

Frank was wild when he saw what the bandits had done, and cret the coach left the settlement, he turned to Dr. Vasquez and whispered:

"Did you see what Barney did last night, doctor?"

"No. I have not the faintest idea of what you are talking about."

"While Frascuelo slept, he picked the hands of the bandits."

"To unlock our shackles? Good enough."

"As soon as he gets a chance, he will pass it to us."

"Then we will soon be free!"

"Depend upon me, but here comes Fras-
scuelo."

The bandit swaggered into the coach, clinking the golden centimes he got from the sale of the cattle, and with a sharp glance at his prisoners, he passed into the next compart-
ment, where he had Juanita tied to a ring bolt in a corner.

"Start the coach for the Deserted City, we are going there."

"I don't know the way," replied Frank, "and besides that, the coach won't work well on account of the bearings in here."

"What do you want done now?" growled Frascuelo, touching his head in through the door, and glaring unamably at Frank.

"Send in the negro and Irishman to clean up."

"All right, but hurry up, as there is no telling when we shall get there."

"That the cattle we just sold does not belong to us, and that would lead to a serious complication, in which we might be involved, and a noose of hemp for us in case of an accident."

"And you and I, Frank, and while he was talking to Juanita Frank set his friends to work on a needless job.

The priest got a glance detained upon them, but Frank had no trouble to whisper for the priest was so much taken up with his own affairs that he had already his own bonds unlocked.

Just as Frank was desparing of getting the key without being detected, he heard Frascuelo suddenly shout to the rest, as he glanced out the window.

"Here comes a troop of guards from the town."

"Thehave discovered that the cattle were stolen," said one of the men.

"Then it will be a fight."

"Not if we run away."

"True, for a contest here is dangerous. They would probably shoot every man on the town, might be brought out, and a ball from them would very likely blow the coach to pieces."

While this diversion occurred, Frank got the key in his pocket and the door, and his hands, for all was ready to throw the prisoners out of the windows. Frascuelo ran into the pilot-house.

"Start the coach and go like the wind!" he exclaimed in a hoarse voice. "The circumstances, choose which shall it be?"

"To the north-west, amid yonder hills."

"Yes. We must escape the approaching guardsmen."

"Ah! I see. Now suppose you manage the coach yourself."

"What Carrasquillo are you going to revol
lution to this critic?"

"No. But I can't move the coach unless I am face to face with the door, and cannot do it, as it is secured down in the compartment of manure, so that it is only a point to face to face with the door."

"What is the matter with it?" demanded the coronal.

"Can't see that it is caught in one of the wheels, but it won't open. Call in your men, if you want them to escape, to lend a hand."

"This impetuous wild to get away, Frascuelo did so, and they all caught hold of the thick, tough wire, and began to haul on it with might and main.

It was the main wire that ran from the bat-

to the inside of the wheel, and that had been loosened by Frank a moment before.

The men tried to move the wire, but they could not. The bandit, with his heel, struck it with his heel, and a terrific jerk, it broke where he shot ahead suddenly, and turned No. 1.

The Whirlwind shot ahead suddenly, and over the plains with perfect ease.

Frank was the first to recover himself, and he saw the big Mexican driving the Whirlwind on the plains with perfect ease.

The bandit had often watched how Frank operated the Whirlwind, and thus was able now to bring the coach and his friends.

When Frank's friends recovered, the coach was a mile ahead of the bandits, and only one of the soldiers was to be seen in the rear.

The four came together and held a consulta-

tion of what they should do. A decided plan formed itself, and all declared to keep on till the Whirlwind was within easy shot.

"Let us try it," said Frank, "and our friends were the quartet none of their bones were broken.

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"Let us try it," said Frank, "and our friends were the quartet none of their bones were broken.
City, and elicited the information that it laid off to the north west a few miles, among the hills.

A rich man had founded a city, built houses, fenced it in, and planted orchards, all of which was thrown up till a terrible clanger fever broke out among his cattle, and the whole band swept them away like chaff before the wind.

Then since the place was desolate, unhealthy, and perilous to enter.

Such was the brief history of the place and the priest went away.

"It will not do for us to remain here," said Frank, "for the priest will tell the authorities of what we have seen, and there is an arrest to come, or we will become the cattle robbers of the Deserted City.

"Barney, that moment. . intinintin inler sign of animation visible. volver.

and a few lean and sneaking coyotes him an mstant later, and intination as f entermg the portals of a grave-yard. church, satd Frank. yelled from within the church.

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creeping vines and moss, while the gaunt re- the remains of the huge factories and stores, with ing for the church door. rifle, sprang from the Whirlwind, and

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FRANK READE, JR., AND HIS ELECTRIC COACH

Part II.

There was no one in the dark church to see him. He felt sure of having no interruption to the service.

A light-streamed through in one of the colored glass windows upon him as he bent over the register book, and the light from the searchlight of the coach was turned upon it.

He was dressed in his electric glad rags, and a quizzing-glass was raised to his eye. The sudden illumination of the church, and the light from the searchlight, made up a sight for Frank to see.

He clapped his knife to his whisker, and the point struck Frank.

But, should it not penetrate the skin of steel made like wove, and the edge turned side with a metallic clip?

Then expression came hissing from between Frasenculo's clenched teeth, and he seized Frank by the hair, pulled his head up on his jointed neck, and once more aimed a murderous stab at his victim's jugular vein.

Frank's senses had been gradually returning all the time.

He realized it in a flash what was occurring.

And swung himself upon the floor as the daggers descended. The flashing blade barely escaped him.

Frank rolled over and over on the floor, and the orderlies by the bed of a story drags about him, leaping his feet with his own knife in his hand.

He caught it now. "So you wanted to murder me, eh?"

"I cut your throat!" the Mexican hissed.

"And the work of an assassin could be expected of you?"

We must settle on the score now, corrobora-

"Yes, and with interest!" cried Frank, running.

Frank had a tight grip on the handle of his knife, and half bent over, he rolled back the cuff of his right wrist. There was a tigerish look in his black eyes, for the very edge of Frasenculo's body was invulnerable, and that he must strike for his throat as he must have guessed.

"You!" he said, with a sense of shock to each other, and fixed a steady glare upon each other's action.

Sheer desperation was all that was left to the gleam that poured in through the window.

Several passages were made at each other. But they were not skilled knife-handles.

Both were quick and dangerous. Frank held his weapon in his right hand, and girded in toward the Mexican as if to deal him a right-handed blow.

Frasenculo turned his body sideward, and stepped to Frank's left with the agility of a panther, when with a swift motion Frank passed his knife from his right to his left hand behind him, as the Spanish fencers do. Still clutching the other in his chest, he had the edge as straight as a dart, and as Frasenculo was anticipat-

"Oh! Are you wounded?" cried Frank, as he fell into his vitals, but he was quick enough to leap back a step, and thus unheathen.

The stone was soft and spongy. A few yards away stood Frasenculo and his men talking, and pretending to yet be unconsci-

"The old doctor leered up to them," said the individual addressed, "and while the coachmen hurriedly entered in us the Irish man went outside and rescued the two. They gave us the demon's own work after that to go back to the church again.

"Yes, Pedro told me that the coach pursued you, and the man on the front struck Domingo in the back and left him a corpse in the street.

"It was the truth, Frasenculo.

"For if I were I allowed those drunken northerners to be at home as they have been going within a short time they will wipe us all out of existence, and will kill the coach?"

"It went back to the city.

"They probably wanted to rescue our prisoner. But after a desperate fight in the church, during which he gave me two knife thrusts, he fell down on the floor and dropped into the crypt beneath the church among the remains of the dead men of the De-

"That was where you found him senseless?

"Yes—I found him in an odd hole ground passage in which I carried this instrument. It led me out to the road by which we came to this place in the night. I suggested my ammendment to you after you climbed on-board.

"What of you take the fellow with you for?"

"Just because I had lost my dagger. Had it at the ball and it had been a dozen times in my body, after I had stripped him of his shirt of mail and put it on myself. But kept it as a horse in case one

was needed. Now, however, that you are all safe, we need trouble no further with him."

"Are you going to give me Serenita Juanita?"

"I propose that we remain here a day or two in order to give her time to reflect on the proposition."

"Then you will not come before the church?"

"Very well. And the last man had his throw and pinned Frank's hat to the stove, flooring a high knife.

"I am now turn my head, exclaimed pompously.

Frank felt as his doom was sealed. He would not show any cowardice to his brutal enemy.

* An idiosyncrasy of this kind was found in Cope, Central American, made by the Aves of Tobacco.
"Prepare then to die."
"I am always prepared.
"Your moment has come,"
Frank burst out laughing and it made Frascuelo darkly to thus be held in contempt and defiance.
He muttered something to himself about a "prayer (Hank's fellow), and raised his knife to hurl it. He turned to hisbern's heart, and being the most of his men he felt sure of hitting the mark plumb center.
But Frank kicked, and kicked, and kicked. A pistol shot pealed out from behind the mound.
The bullet was aimed by a crack shot.
Pomp!
Frank took the bandit's knife and blunted it to pieces.
Bull's eye! yelled the darky, appearing from his covert.
For the space of a minute an intense silence prevailed, as the men in the crowd who did not draw his pistol!
Massa Frank, I see cut de rope! muttered the darky.
Frank suddenly found himself free of his bonds and spied the circle of knives that encompassed and outlined his body in the face of the idol.
Sand he tied together and-Frank, expectantly looking around.
On the road, sah, I see all along, responded Pomp.
"Have you got a pistol for me?"
"I got one here, suah," said the darky.
"Get behind the idey-they are going to fire." As the men were on top just as they got their bodies protected, and they opened fire upon the bandits, wounding two of them.
But he tied together and-Frank, and tied back to the coach.
The white face of the savage Jew was haggard, but his eyes were burning with a brilliancy that was feverish, and he had an intent look fastened upon Frank and the insensible Frascuelo.
"Has anybody seen Pomp?" called Frank, in dismay. "His in-"
frad, said the darky.
"The deep, clarion voice of Isaac pealed out with this step.
Frank turned the man's head and he saw something from behind the rocks with the intention of getting the strips.
Fleet of foot as the bandits were the mus-"
Frank kept a tight clutch upon his enemy, and using the disc with which Frank begin to shoot.
For Frank under the saddle he laid, several singing bullets flying over his head, his voice encouraging the muskets on.
"You stand now by your debt of vengeance."
"I shall pay that of you from Mexico," he shouted, again the disc with which Frank was speaking.
"You stand now by your debt of vengeance."
"Terribly terrible!"
"But you must wait.
"I don't know what is impossible."
"I don't know what is impossible.
"Well, is he unconscious."
"I don't know what is impossible."
"I shall save him."
"Isaac, all the treasure of your kingdom is in power.
"That is a strange assertion. I do not understand it."
"Then I will explain," said Frank, telling what happened.
"You wish then where he buried the jars? Isaac asked.
"I don't know--such is my desire."
Frank answered.
"Give him over to me, and I shall learn of him."
"Only under that condition, Isaac."
"That is the price for his body, I present you with the jaws."
"In that case see that I am paid by learning his secrets.
"You shall soon know where they are. Hand them over to me."
He reached out his eager, trembling hands, caught hold of the blind Mexican like a vise, and lifted him from the mound.
There was a frightful look upon Isaac's face.
Bake, triumph, and cruelty were blended there very strongly, and Frank saw that the passions of the man were working at a pitch of maniacal intensity.
"God help Frascuelo!" the inventor muttered pityingly.

Clutching the bandit as a dog does a coveled piece of meat, the giant strode toward a dense thicket on the edge of the road.
Then he paused and glanced back.
"I have news of your friends for you," said he.
"Friends!" echoed Frank. "To whom do you refer?"
"My affiance and her friend."
"Yes. The soldiers saved them from the Indians."
"Thank Heaven!"
"Then they were taken to the nearest town."
"Can it be possible?"
"And together they went on a railroad for Vancouver."
"They are safe.
"By this time they must be back in the city of Mexico."
"I fear they might have been dead already."
"I am delighted to hear it."
"I have the letters of the mains' hiding-place now, it will be a mighty strong guide to me."
And Frank had good reason for his remarks!

CHAPTER XXXVI.
THE PRIEST AND THE SNAKE.
Frank and Pomp did not have their fears for nothing in the road, directly ahead of them, stood the gigantic figure of Isaac.
The white face of the savage Jew was haggard, but his eyes were burning with a brilliancy that was feverish, and he had an intent look fastened upon Frank and the insensible Frascuelo.
"Has anybody seen Pomp?" called Frank, in dismay. "His implacable hate to purvey men the simple, as he swore he would, to take the bandit's life; and now that he sees the Mexican as the giant of the down, he will give his life for all his race of giants at the White City to-day."
"I'll bet he returned alone to the spot, removed the diamonds from the jars, and put them in some other hiding place."
Frank Reade, Jr., and His Electric Coach.

Part II.

Frank Reade, Jr., and His Electric Coach.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE WORK OF A WIND.

INTENT upon his work, Frank did not see the pseudo man standing behind him, until the latter made signal to him.

Then, with a violent start, he glanced around.

"A priest!" he exclaimed in amazement.

"Senior, pardon this intrusion," affably replied the Mexican, in tones of his voice adroitly.

"I was summoned here to officiate as clergyman for the wedding of Don Benito Castro's child, and his bridegroom,"

Frank told him after the second knock, and was admitted, with his horse and baggage.

"Pardon me—ha, ha! It was merely a slip of the hand, senor.

And is this my life? Is it in jest?—snorting—cloaking? My mind falter my brain reel—oh! I lose my senses—oh-oh!"

Overwhelmed by the drug, the priest fell senseless.

"Pardon me, senor," the doctor replied, huskily: "The one I fell upon was here when the last time you saw me was when I passed out of your sight.

The one I fell upon said he.

"The favor they had rendered me was easy to guess that you were their prisoner, and I had no confidence in Fras-ecueuo.

"The man who went for the priest met the pseudo priest.

"He was addressed the priest with: "I am a friend, and no, as I am addicted to a collection of natural curiosities—"

"I have a dread of the snake writhing about, and bursting off the lid of your basket, good sir.

"And if he had not the crown of my face has been changed to the weapon, I will turn on the

"But whither are you carrying it?"

"The favor they had rendered me was easy to guess that you were their prisoner, and I had no confidence in Fras-ecueuo.

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"The favor they had rendered me was easy to guess that you were their prisoner, and I had no confidence in Fras-ecueuo.
The magnitude of the immense wealth dazzled him.
It filled him with cupidity.
And it lent him unlimited courage.
He watched the snake closely, and saw its gaping mouth raised, its head drawn back, and knew that it was about to dart forward and bury its teeth in Frank's shoulder.
The sight made even the stoic rascal shiver.
He turned aside his head.
“I cannot witness it!” he muttered.
But just at this critical moment a movement of Frank's body brought the body of the snake against a live wire from which the rubber insulation had broken off, and it received a terrific shock of electricity.
A spasmodic contraction of the body ensued. Then it relaxed.
Uncollected, Frank was free.
Relieved of the awful pressure he revived.
The snake writhed, squirmed and twisted upon the floor, its coils lashing and banging at everything in its way.
The Mexican uttered a cry of chagrin. He did not know what occasioned the snake to let Frank go, and as hard as he peered into the room, he could scarcely see anything save the dim outlines of Frank's prostrate body.
He dared not go in for fear of the snake, and he was afraid to strike a match for fear of attracting the attention of any one in the garden.
What to do, he did not know.
In the interval of thinking, Frank was fast reviving.
The snake had lashed itself to the other end of the compartment, and its spasmodic convulsions created a loud noise.
“If this goes on much longer some one may hear it and come in to ascertain the cause,” muttered the Mexican.
Manuelito quickly recovered his wits.
“Tarnation! he cried, pointing at it, and speaking in Spanish.
“Wuz it proddin' Master Frank yez wor?” growled Barney.
“No. The serpent enfolded him and squeezed him, hypocratically answered the dis distressed Manuelito.
“Carry him out in the air.”
Barney picked Frank up in his arms and they went out with him through the pilot-house door, while Manuelito breathed a fearful ineffable sigh upon Barney for arriving just in time to foil him.
The Irishman carried Frank to a settee, upon which he laid him, when the Mexican regained his composure.
Seeing the door porter passing, he called him.
“My good man, open the large door,” said he.
“The wedding guests will drive into the court yard soon.”
“Yes, father,” replied the man, bowing.
The Mexican entered the pilot-house and closed the door.
He knew how to operate the coach perfectly well, and as soon as he saw the big doors go open, he turned lever No. 1 around, and as the machinery got in motion, he grasped the wheel.
“Bow'd on! Stop that!” yelled Barney, seeing the coach going.
His suspicions of the priest had been aroused, and he ran after the coach at the top of his speed.
“Go to the denise! the delighted Mexican muttered.
“Stop the coach!” roared Barney, furiously.
He just had time to grasp the hand rul and throw upon the rear steps, when the coach shot out the door.
His cries brought every one into the courtyard.
Dr. Vaneyke saw the Whirlwind rushing away down the road, and as the scared Pomp came out, he exclaimed:
“Somed one has gotten off with the coach!”
“ Ain't Massa Frank on it?”
“No. There he lies, sleeping or senseless, on that settle 1”
“Den de Lawd help us, sah. Whar am Bar-
"Glimping to the rear steps of the Whirlwind!"

"Oh, glory!" groaned Pomp, in dismay.

Just then the door porter came rushing in with the priest, whom Manuelito had exchanged clothes with, and Don Ramon recognized him.

"Father Celestino!" cried the amazed Don.

"What means this disguise?"

Rapidly the priest explained what happened to him, and Frank, having recovered in the meantime, heard all he said.

"Now, I remember the man," he cried, excitedly. "He is one of Frascuelo's band, with his mustache shaved off."

The coach was upset for the first time! A thrill of dismay shot through Frank, and he shut off the power. He scrambled out through a window and reached the ground.

"And he has stolen the coach," groaned the doctor.

"Then come. We must follow it while the trail is fresh, or we may never get the Whirlwind back again, my friends!" cried Frank, and with a hasty farewell to their host, the three dashed away on the broad, well defined trail of the stolen coach.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

IN WHICH BARNEY AND POMP COME TOGETHER.

"Dr. Van Tyke, I have been badly tricked," said Frank, as Pomp and the old scientist ran along with him on the trail of the Whirlwind after they dashed out of Ramon de Castro's house on to the road.

"Didn't you recognize the face or voice of Manuelito?" queried the professor.

"He changed his voice and had his mustache shaved off; moreover, he wore the priest's hat and gown, concealing his features and figure."

"But as soon as you saw the garb worn by Father Celestino, you recognized it."

"Manuelito's clothes were made in such a peculiar way I could not fail to do so, as soon as the hall porter brought him into the court-

hanging on to the rear steps when Manuelito drove it out of the court-yard. Besides, now that I know his story, I can see that Manuelito designedly made a victim of me."

"The priest said that the chloroform which the Mexican poured on his head only stupefied him for a little while, and that as soon as he recovered he suspected foul play, on account of finding himself in the grasser's garments, and hurried to reach Don Ramon's house," said the doctor.

"Unfortunately he arrived too late to be of any service. Still, all hope of recovering the coach is not lost, as long as you saw Barney and Pomp going forward, toward the spot from whence the sound of digging proceeded."

Peering through the cactus leaves, the cool breeze held a man standing neck deep in a hole in the ground, which he was excavating, using a pick.

He recognized him as Barney at once. There was a dirt-heap, with a shovel sticking in it beside the hole, and glinging up to it behind the Irishman's back, Pomp grasped the implement, and rapidly began to shovel the dirt in to the hole upon and around his friend.

"Hey! Mother of Jingo! Stop it!" yelled Barney, popping up his head and making a wild effort to get out of the hole.

There was a broad grin upon the dusky face of Pomp.

He kept right on shoveling in the dirt as fast as he could work.

Barney's feet and legs, half way up to his knees, were buried, and it made him stick fast.

"Murderer in Kytalian!" he roared, curling his neck around. "Will ye schtop, or I'll come up av this an' make ye?"

But just then he saw who was burying him alive, and gouging the dirt out of his eyes, ears and red hair, he yelled delightedly:

"He jagers, it's Pomp! Howed on, ye ace av this an' make ye?"

Part II.

FRANK READE, JR., AND HIS ELECTRIC COACH.
In Pomp’s berth lay a dark figure, and in one minute more it was bound to go over cable, for there was an extraordinary strain he swelled, I should say the bottle hit run in de coach an’ cool off, the son-av-a·monkeyl Frank dropped the shovel. returning to the coach, they found the coon and The old ferryman was anxiously watching the motion praists an’ d1vil’s imps av snakes agin an’I’ll They were at peace with each other and all it jarred with a loud report.

The horrible twist of Pomp’s face grew worse, B1ff-bang! “Help!”

Buried up to his hips he wanted to laugh so bad. figure. that he’s crazy!” said Barney, “It’s a mystery; but depend that I’se got a rush ob blood ter de throat, he’s crazy!”

He groaned and fell. “I’m in the boat!”

The doctor keenly eyed it. It whizzed through the air, “What is that?”

Frank and the doctor buried the Mexican in the grave of the body dug, and returning to the coach, they found the cando and the Irishman rapidly getting up a gun and fessing a rag of whisky to the unbroken end of the demolished bottle.

They were at peace with each other and all the world, regardless of the fact that they were swallowing enough particles of broken glass to kill an elephant, and far as they could see, things were going rapidly into that ribald state where a man wants to have his life cut out on his top knot and use his feet to think with.

Frank left them to struggle the matter out for themselves. We parted company, and started the coach off to the northward. The Mexican had done no damage to anything, and everything seemed to be in good working order about the machinery.

“A rapid trip northward will bring us back to the isle of islands now, doctor,” said Barney, “Let us begin our search for the treasure which Frascuclo concealed.”

“I wonder what became of Isaac and the bandit chief, Frank?”

“Isaac’s vow of vengeance upon Frascueto is a mystery; but depend that Frascuclo’s men won’t remain here in Panama to trouble Don Ramon, now that their leader is gone.”

“Isaac’s vow of vengeance upon Frascuclo will be sworn against; but it seems that Frascuclo’s men won’t remain here in Panama to trouble Don Ramon, now that their leader is gone.”

Frank thought he would then have no trouble to proceed, but unfortunately a broad tributary of the river soon loomed up ahead which would carry them still farther to the westward, in the neighborhood of the endless chain of the Sierras.

“If we examine the shores closely, we may find a bridge,” the doctor suggested. “You recollect when we came down from Mexico it was in the mountain district, by which we avoided these streams.

Frank pointed up the embankment. “What is that?”

“Thieves! Help! Help! Help!” came the urgent voice faintly.

The doctor looked over the hill. “What shall we see what’s the matter.”

“Will some one get a derrick an’make out we can’t go.”

“Murther! Rats! Rats! Rats!” yelled Barney at this juncture.

“There is he now,” said Vanecky, overhearing the enterie.

“Police! Police! Police!” continued the Irishman’s voice.

“Tell them to come,” exclaimed Frank.

“Thieves! Help! Help! Help!” came the urgent voice faintly.

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On each bank of the stream stood a tree, with the branches cut off, and stretching over the current from bank to bank, it was a thing of wire running like a wire cable.

Upon a second thought I saw that a huge flat-bottomed punt was moored to the shore where they were on, near a small hut.

From both sides of the stream a similar wire was run up to the cable where they were joined together on a swivel wheel, which ran along the top of the river.

“It is an old-fashioned ferry boat,” said Vanecky, looking in the details. “The river has a tremendously strong current, and as the boat is hulled off the shore, the current, the strength of the tide, forces the boat over to the other shore. By reversing the slant of the boat, done it.”

CHAPTER XXXI

THE TWO GIANTS’ RACE FOR LIFE.

The peril of the boat was extreme, and it was whirled along, each moment its rapidity increasing, until it was in a body of water large enough to hold the
two giants.”

Miiemie and the nurse noticed them, he exclaimed:

“Should the boat strike those rocks, it would go over!”

“By love, they shall be our salvation!” cried Frank.

“Hand me a rope, and I will lasso one of those monkeys!” cried Frank.

If Frank could do it, the flight of the boat would be stopped, and the doctor hastened to get a line which he passed out to Frank, who had made his way down upon the front of the boat, and cut the ropes of the northern end.

Swiftly the boat was rushing toward the crest of the fall, and Frank coiled the noose rope, and a moment was not to be lost.

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Swiftly the boat was rushing toward the crest of the fall, and Frank coiled the noose rope, and a moment was not to be lost.
Part II.
FRANK READE, JR., AND HIS ELECTRIC COACH.

He fastened the end of the line to a cleat on the side of the punt, and it came to a pause within a few yards of the shore. A minute or two later the water boiling up over the bow as the stern swung around.

An approval arose from the others.
"Come down here, boys, and help me to haul in," said Frank.

Out of the cockpit leaped his three friends.

The next moment they had hold of the rope with their enormous arms, and they hauled the punt over to the rocky shore.

With a few steps they were at the top of the rise, and Frank tossed a tree branch on shore with another rope, when the big flat-boat was hauled alongside. After depositing the intervening space to the bank.

It was made fast.

"Now I will have to do," said Frank to the old boatman, "is to remain on the boat, pole it away, and keep the logs in off the river.

A distinct wagon road was followed to the northward, but late in the afternoon they left it and entered a vale, which was inhabited by an army of jack rabbits. Halted by an army of jack rabbits.

These little creatures stood upon their hind feet, their enormous ears straight in the air, and their front paws together, distrustfully of him. You can then come on board the coach.

As continual drops of water will wear holes and disappear, leaving no sign of life about, only to emerge when all cause for alarm is past, you will learn about, with keeping wonderful agility from place to place, chas'ng each other, and amusing the Mexican's perseverance.

Barney shot a number of them for supper that night, and when Pomp got to work upon them, they had one of the most savoy and tasteful dishes he had ever prepared.

The electric coach came to a pause in the night in a cluster of trees on the plain, and after posting the doctor on the watch, all hands turned in.

It was an hour after midnight when the doctor wakened Frank with a wild cry of terror, for he had discovered the bandit hiding among the trees.

"Frascuelo and Isaac!" exclaimed Frank.

The bandit chief had made his escape from the trap, and now to save his own life and to save his enormous enemies straight in the air, he would have to remain on the boat, pole it away, and keep the logs in off the river.

A thrilling race for life was observed.

Two horsemen were going by, one in pursuit of the bandit.

"Frascuelo and Isaac!" exclaimed Frank.

But neither of them said a word, and their horses were galloping off, their enormous ears straight in the air, and their front paws together, distrustfully of him. You can then come on board the coach.

In a minute the flying horses were nearly a mile away, looking like the wind, the riders urging on their mounts by every means.

Frank walked into the pilot-house.

"I am going to see Isaac," said Frank, "and I will explain to him the reason for the alarm.

Frank nodded, and turned the lever, when the coach got in motion, and presently increasing in speed, the Merrimen cleared the side-walk.

Within a few minutes the Whirlwind had leaped and the inventor to command it. Frank regulated speed to keep even with the men.

Both had looked back, and seen the coach go on.

There was a expression of fear upon Frascuelo's rugged, swarthy face, and a set look of stern decision upon Isaac's.

Neither of them said a word, and their enormous ears were straight in the air, and their front paws together, distrustfully of him. You can then come on board the coach.

Isaac only replied, "RASCAL! I have caught you!"

"Oh! Ave Maria, sir, what is it?

The first speaker was Isaac, the giant, the second, the old man, the third, Isaac's horse dashed up to the now stationary coach, and exclaimed Frascuelo with a scowl, as he rattled the reins and went out on a plain covered with little white sage, and the wind was boiling up over the bow as the stern swung around.

A shout of approval arose from the others.

"How shall I stop him, Isaac?" shouted Frank out the window.

"Na, not unless I fail to overtake him," gruffly replied the giant in Spanish, as he pulled up the spinning top from the ground.

"How is it he got away?"

Pump, sitting down with a potato-pounder in his fist, and shaking it at the man, "Might see as well as hab a full-dog swatchin' yo', ole yaller face?"

"Are you going to guard him?" queried Dr. Vaneky.

"No, I'm in, sah. It ain de chile's turn to go on watch, ain't it? Den yo' all turn in again. He gwine ter stay right heah, an' if dat greater engin' don't do it, I'll shum in de billy, dey's de chile's turn to go on watch, 'cept when he's on de contraption in de cavy, an' ram de teed off de chilli in de billy. I'm de chile's turn, sah. He is a trial of endurance be- Isaac's horse dashed up to the now stationary coach, and exclaimed Frascuelo with a scowl, as he rattled the reins and went out on a plain covered with little white sage, and the wind was boiling up over the bow as the stern swung around.

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"How is it he got away?"

"Shall I stop him, Isaac?" shouted Frank out the window.

"Na, not unless I fail to overtake him," gruffly replied the giant in Spanish, as he pulled up the spinning top from the ground.
and would not hesitate long about putting out the full force of the thing. He stood up and glanced at the rings of his kingdom a fearful look crept over his face. He was a bold fellow. You may have guessed that a night of agitation that went over him was pitiful, yet terrible to see.

On one agonized moan pealed from his lips. His bosom heaved, his eyes flashed and his voice rose in a wild, meditative howl. Then he turned completely and covering his face with his hands he gave way to a mournful flood of bitter tears, and his hair and beard were disheveled.

"God's will be done," he cried in that great but fallen monologue. He sighed and was silent out of respect for his feelings of intense awe.

The moment he saw Frascuelo his mood changed.

A hard, cruel look took the place of his sorr
ded expression.

"To him I owe this desolation," he thundered, "if I knew that his long-waited revenge was about to come.

"I am the last of my tribe—the avenger—and direful shall be the death decreed by the one who has blasted my existence."

When the coach reached the city it came to a stop in the Basin of Blood, where the little man and every one but a couple had gone up and went down in the cell.

Frascuelo was yet handcuffed, and Frank carried a rope.

The boat was in the spot designated by the bandit, a circular wall of masonry, breakish, the interior dark and forbidding. Inside was a cave, by which the gems asked Frank.

"Now, son. Go down and see if I am lying," replied the bandit, sullenly.

"No," thundered Isaac. "You shall explore it."

He seized the rope, tied it around Frascuelo's neck, and as they crossed one of the half-bridge they shuddered at the desolate look of the whole island where his tribe had once lived.

Legend told of a fine breakfast, and would not hesitate long about putting out the full force of the thing. He stood up and glanced at the rings of his kingdom a fearful look crept over his face. He was a bold fellow. You may have guessed that a night of agitation that went over him was pitiful, yet terrible to see.

On one agonized moan pealed from his lips. His bosom heaved, his eyes flashed and his voice rose in a wild, meditative howl. Then he turned completely and covering his face with his hands he gave way to a mournful flood of bitter tears, and his hair and beard were disheveled.

"God's will be done," he cried in that great but fallen monologue. He sighed and was silent out of respect for his feelings of intense awe.

The moment he saw Frascuelo his mood changed.

A hard, cruel look took the place of his sorr
ded expression.

"To him I owe this desolation," he thundered, "if I knew that his long-waited revenge was about to come.

"I am the last of my tribe—the avenger—and direful shall be the death decreed by the one who has blasted my existence."

When the coach reached the city it came to a stop in the Basin of Blood, where the little man and every one but a couple had gone up and went down in the cell.

Frascuelo was yet handcuffed, and Frank carried a rope.

The boat was in the spot designated by the bandit, a circular wall of masonry, breakish, the interior dark and forbidding. Inside was a cave, by which the gems asked Frank.

"Now, son. Go down and see if I am lying," replied the bandit, sullenly.

"No," thundered Isaac. "You shall explore it."

He seized the rope, tied it around Frascuelo's neck, and as they crossed one of the half-bridge they shuddered at the desolate look of the whole island where his tribe had once lived.

Legend told of a fine breakfast,
Friends, until the great Jehovah calls me to rest in his kingdom, let people in the mystic land beyond the skies. But come. Enough of sentiment. To work. First, I will draw the carriages. They are likely tired.

"That is the only means by which they can be moved."

The black-faced chamberlain, seeing the coachmen descend into the well must have caret less they return, and bury their envomements in his body and kill.

"Then the false farewells were spoken, and the coach rolled away to the main land over one of the little iron bridges."

The last they saw of the massive, commanding figure of Isaac, standing on a heap of a solid blackness, with his tearsful, eyes and clasped hands raised heavenward, as if he was going to spring into the air and die. They even heard him as he said Frank, and now we can start for home again, sell the diamonds, and once we reach the last camp we gained by breaking up Fraceulio's counterfeiting den.

"I had almost forgotten the $80,000 due to us," laughed the doctor.

"Shure, nabo, well soon be, Penn-chuckbar, hording the ducky in the rile so hard that he made him grunt. "Oh, but we thought we had a chance against the aristocratic blood in this.

In truth they could not fail to realize what an enormous fortune the treasure of the white savages would be.

"Then they passed for the night upon the plains, and on, to the little city.

Instantly the mail carrier had secretly aloned a knife and cut one of the wheels of the mail coach. He then drove off and hid himself in the bushes from whence the mail coach would approach. He then returned and drove home without being seen.

He vanished silently amid the bushes, and was never seen again.

Barney sat in the pilot-house whistling a lively tune and thinking deeply of home, when the windows, when in through the door and windows swarmed a band of armed men.

CHAPTER XIII

A STRUGGLE FOR THE LOST WHEEL

The foreman of the crew, admiring the rear end of the coach was the mail carrier who had seen Frank and his friends. He returned to the mail coach and climbing in through the window, dressed as Mexican countrymen, as their leader was.

As soon as Frank saw them, he gave the alarm and his armed companions, he surmised that they had come to try erste the diamonds away from them, else they would not have made such a rough invasion.

"Remember that the mail carrier had secretly aloned a knife and cut one of the wheels of the mail coach, and then passed the rear end of the coach.

"Then the mail carrier hurriedly drove off and hid himself in the bushes from whence the mail coach would approach. He then returned and drove home without being seen.

He vanished silently amid the bushes, and was never seen again.

Barney sat in the pilot-house whistling a lively tune and thinking deeply of home, when the windows, when in through the door and windows swarmed a band of armed men.
I’ll turn lever No. 4,” said Frank. “It will fill the coach with sparks.”

“Then I’ll turn the electric pump,” said Pomp. “I’ll give you a mouthful.”

“Taste my eyes and ears,” answered Frank. “I’ll give you a mouthful too.”

“Hold on then, and I’ll unwind a spool, and connect it.”

“Be careful to fasten the end I carry to another wire, and connect it to the little invention I have in my hand. You can turn on the full current, and this tiny bobbin will carry the whole voltmeter.”

Frank’s plan was executed.

He then turned to the rear door.

The professor had located the wheel and the knife lying several hundred yards away, guarded by a Lithuanian, who were the owners of the half-bred herd.

As soon as Frank sprang and ran, he saw him, and fired at him, but to his amazement they observed that he came gliding on without their noticing it.

“Take better aim. You all have missed him,” cried the mail carrier.

They did not yet see that Frank had on a suit of mail, for he took care to keep out of the electric glare of the search light.

A spiteful volley was fired at him.

Not a single bullet missed hitting his shaggy, fiery figure, so to speak, so much as to keep it in the least degree.

The half-breeds were very much puzzled over the circumstance, and after several more shots were vainly fired at Frank, their amazement gave way to fear, and they gradually retired, but the half-breeds were still in pursuit.

Breakfast, our friends readjusted the invention, put on the hub, and finding the knife, it was all boarded the Whirlwind and Frank started the Whirlwind off northward.

CHAPTER XLIII.

UNDER BOMBARDMENT.

“Seniors, you will leave that coach and submit to arrest, or I shall pull the latching of this cannon and blow you all to the devil.”

“Never shall we submit to arrest, sir.”

The cannon was promptly mounted, and then all turned in, and when day finally broke, it was clear and beautiful.

The half-breeds had stolen away under cover of the night, and secured that once burned, the half-breeds would cease to threaten the Whirlwind.

The cannon was mounted, and the Whirlwind stood off. All voices were hushed.

The cannon was not fired.

A grim look settled over Frank’s features.

“If I knew I could paralyse the beggars!” he muttered.

Click-clack! went the trigger spring of the rifle in the hands of the provost man, and as Frank glanced down at him, he saw the mail carrier aiming his rifle at him.

The man was drawing a bead on Frank’s unprotected forehead, and at such short range was bound to kill him.

Before he could fire, Frank sent the jet of electricity straight at the officer.

Yet the voltmeter had the hapless fellow’s brains.

He fell over dead.

Not a word escaped him.

He had not time to speak, so swift is the electric current.

Those of his hand who beheld what happened were roarers of triumph, while they scrambled to their feet, and ran away.

The taste of electricity Frank had given the men was quite enough to convince them that.

Frank was possessed of extraordinary powers to overcome them.

Their faith in their own ability was greatly shaken as a result, and they had no desire to repeat the experiment.

Retreating to a safe distance, they opened fire upon him, with their weapons, content to wage war with the hand of the Great Spirit as his agent and instrument.

The Whirlwind was clearly outlined.

Doctors Vaneky held the search light between them, while the men in the box were plainly in view.

Upon reaching the wheel, he took the wire and put it through the axle box, fastened it to the wheel, and retreated.

Several of the bandits made a rush for the wheel, and seized it with the intention of unfastening the thick wire, when they saw it flatten to the ground, for the electric current was now passing to the metal, and the insulation was off.

Once more in the coach, Frank unfastened the end of the wire from the battery, and the cable was thrown down the hill, and the coach off the track.

Now all was plain to see.

The half-breeds did not molest any further.

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Breakfast, our friends readjusted the invention with a new nut, and finding the knife, it was all boarded the Whirlwind and Frank started the Whirlwind off northward.

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The ball ripped up the ground alongside of the soaring coach. "Foul play, or couldn't a give a closer shave than that," said Barney.

It will only require a few minutes to get out of a thicket, replied Frank. They were both smiling.

"They want to boost us along," said Frank smilingly.

Just then the coach went over the bridge with such a furious rush that it was shaken loose from its anchorage and down the hill it went in the stream with a grinding and splitting crash.

The last wheels of the carriage were hard by it, but the front driving wheels instantly stopped. It was clear.

"We are in a fix now," he exclaimed, ruthlessly.

Let's examine the wheels that suggested the doctor.

They alighted together, and one glance showed them that the front of the coach had cut its way into the splinter in the rock, and the wond was unbroken.

"There is no way to free it but by blasting the rock," said Frank.

"You and me we may not have time," said Barney.

"You fear pursuit by the soldiers from the fort," said Barney.

"Desist! If we fail to get free ere they come, Heaven only knows what our fate may be," said Frank.

Then let us lose no time beginning operations.

Tools were procured from the stores in the coach, and Barney and Pompy were set to work drilling holes in the rock to blast it. It was an arduous, slow process, and while that was going on they mounted a strong guard to prevent any interruption.

Slowly the work progressed and the road was ready in an hour or less.

Nothing occurred to interrupt the work. When the tools were at the rock they were filled with gunpowder and fuses were attached, logs were heaped on the rock to prevent it falling, and Frank and Barney took every precaution to prevent injury to the workers.

"We are running a great risk," said Frank. "I said to the doctor, for the explosion is apt to split the wheel to pieces."

"There is nothing else we can do to free the coach," said Barney.

"Look out. I will light the fuses and risk it," said Frank.

The three retreated to a safe distance and Frank ignited the slow match and joined his hands. The explosion blew down the wall of the fort, and the road was ready.

"The engine may attract attention this way," said Barney.

"Look to your arms then; we must not suffer capture." The explosion came, dull and muffled. They ran up the hill, feeling nervous and anxious.

"Safe, boys!" cried Barney slightly.

"An she am frowed clear off de rocks," added Pompy.

The rock had been blasted with such good judgment that it merely split where they wanted it, and although the logs were flung aside and the concussion shook a few yards of wall away, she was free of the cleft and totally unharmed.

It was a sense of relief to all our friends, and they all hailed the Whirlwind and found the interior intact.

To start her off was but the work of a moment, and she was soon in action.

"That was well done," exclaimed the doctor.

"Very," replied Frank coolly, yet a stray shot may have a charming effect.

Boon came another violent discharge.

They were not long at passing through the woods, and meeting with a level plain, beyond, they discovered the Whirlwind at full speed, Barney at the wheel.

Within an hour they came to the foot hills of the mountains and met the Whirlwind through a gorge, when they suddenly came upon a large cavalcade amidst the greatest excitement on the part of the soldiers, and taking a rocky road to the right, the coach dashed ahead at full speed, rolling and rocking.

Hemmied in on either side by high walls, and in front and back by the soldiers who had come down from the mountain, our friends determined upon dashing ahead.

But Frank found himself on a spur that dipped down to a perpendicular cliff to the mountain top.

They were doubled, nerved and dangerous, halving at times so quickly that it seemed as if the flying coach would upset and fly over the edge, down the abyss yawning at its base.

With the pounding of horses' hoofs, the din of cannonading, and the shouts of the soldiers coming upon after the coach, try to dash the何靴, and laugh, they were all in one mass, derision arisen from one gun at a time.

And dirt and stones rained from the flying wheels of the Whirlwind, in the Whirlwind, as the army was over the abyss along the edge of the rock which the coach was striving to skirt. It was, however, and Frank kept the coach going,children, to topple off the ledge with it, but to submit to a stop and see whether or stand as a target for the soldiers' fire.

CHAPTER XLIV.
ALONG THE DERRY LEDGE.

"Be careful, Frank, or the coach will fall off the edge down into the chasm below. Turn it to the right—quick, or else," Dr. Vanesky's voice was low, hoarse, and breathless.

"Why do you speak in that tone?" demanded Frank vigorously.

"You may not be aware of it, but the soldiers are upon the edge of the Whirlwind, they are an exciting hazard and hopeless.

Death hovered on one side of the coach in the abyss along the edge of the rock which the soldiers were upon the very verge of.

On the right hand side arose the high, perpendicular walls of the mountains, which the coach was traversing.

"Put your head in your hat, and think first before doing anything, for Vanesky was standing in front of the pike house, keeping a look-out ahead, while Barney and Pompy were a few yards behind, their two rear windows of the coach, endeavoring to get a shot at the gunners, with which the soldiers had strapped the howitzers.

"Vanesky, don't lose your wits," admonished Frank, giddily.

"I won't, my boy, but see what danger lurks ahead," replied the doctor.

"Do you think we have room enough to pass the narrow spot?"

"Hardly; if you attempt it the left hand wheels may go off." They are, indeed, and Barney and Pompy perhaps could hold them together.

"Only a while, for they would soon get their guns in operation, and a ball or two would send us crashing off the ledge path.

"Slacken speed—quick, for we are upon it.

Frank deemed it safest to do so, as the knives on the butts held the coach several feet away from the edge of the mountains.

"With those knives on, clearly it will be impossible to use the narrow part of the ledge," said the inventor.

"Then stop the coach, and I will alight, and take charge of the baggage.

Frank did so.

"When the coach passed the doctor fulfilled his suggestion, and when they advanced again, Frank crowd the coach over against the mountain, and then they rolled on the narrowest part of the path."

Part II. FRANK READE, JR., AND HIS ELECTRIC COACH. 29
It made them shudder to look down the dizzy height, and see half the breadth of the left wheels on the ledge, and the other half overlapping the edge, while the gravely dirt was breaking from beneath them, and rattle down into the gulf below.

This narrow path extended about one hundred feet before the ledge broadened again sufficiently to give them ample room and despite the fact that Frank crowded the coach again against the wall until the hubs grazed it; it seemed aiming at it. The nerves of the travelers were fearfully strained.

Suddenly it was on the ledge, while the gravelly dirt was breaking from beneath them, and rattle down into the gaping gulf to its death.

It made them shudder to look down the dizzy height, and see half the breadth of the left wheels on the ledge, and the other half overlapping the edge, while the gravely dirt was breaking from beneath them, and rattle down into the gulf below.

The middle of the path was reached. Suddenly a loud report shook the coach. It was a rifle shot. Pomp had fired back at their enemies, whom he saw were preparing to fire at them with one of the howitzers.

"Stop! shouted Frank. "Don't shoot again for heaven's sake, or the oscillation will throw me over!"

"Couldn't help it, sah," responded Pomp sagely.

"Falsely they'd alawways us to glory if he hadn't afoired," said Barney, "an' that'd a be' a worse nor quiotly thruppin' down beyant, without thin spalpeens havin'a hand in our funeral."

The coach rumbled slowly ahead.

In back, coming up the inclined path, there were a large number of the soldiers who kept a safe distance behind the coach, as the Whirlwind made but slow progress going up the steep hill.

Barney and Pomp saw them pause again.

One of the mules was shoved in advance, and a shot was aimed at the coach with the gun on its back.

"Woom out, they're again ter foire!" exclaimed Barney.

"Watch dis chile drop dat mule!" said Pomp, aiming at it.

Before they could prevent it the Mexicans fired. With a scream a bomb came flying toward the coach.

The doctor was intently glancing ahead.

"Frank," he said nervously, "that shot has loosened the part of the side of the wall ahead, and it looks as if it was going to fall out from the face of the cliff, and strike down upon the path."

"A land slide doctor!"

"Something like one, Ha, look at that dirt falling now?"

"How far ahead is it?"

"At least fifty yards."

"Can we pass it before it falls?"

"I hope so."

They held their breath, hardly daring to speak.

The officer waited fully five minutes. Then he turned to his men. "Fire!" he exclaimed. A volley pealed out, and a dozen bullets struck the coach.

It exploded with a fearful intonation.

Far ahead of the Whirlwind.

And harmlessly!

"Wope yer Cry on thr mule!" cried Barney.

"It am fallin' offer de ledge, Chile," chuckled Pomp.

The recoil of the gun overcame the firm footing of the little beast, and sent it flying down into the gaping gulf to its death. A cry of disappointment escaped the soldiers which our friends faintly heard, but they had several more animals, and another one was forced on in advance so they could fire the gun on its back.

"A miss is as good as a mile!" grumbled Frank.

"They will fire again though," the professor replied.

"An' dey am at it now," said Pomp overhearing them.

"Can I fore at ther baste Master Frank?" pleaded Barney.

"Wait a moment till we get more traveling room," said Frank.

"There is a little more power. I'll put it on."

Frank turned the lever and the rapidity of revolutions of the wheels was increased as the Whirlwind plonged ahead.

They reached the spot where a shower of slate gravel was falling down upon the ledge, and Frank beheld a large mass bulging out as if about to come down and sweep them into eternity.

"Shure it's another gun thin Mexican's be's again ter foire!" the Irishman yelled. "Let me give thin jest wan wid me rolifie!"

"No—walt shouted Frank.

A fearful, grinding noise ensued over the coach.

It seemed to fairly leap ahead when down came the immense mass of dirt and rock, pitching right over the edge.

"For heav'n's sake, or the oscillation will throw me over!"

"Morther!" roared Barney. "Ther mountain be's a—fallin' down!"

The coach made one lurch forward. The dirt slide shot over it.

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"Morther!" roared Barney. "Ther mountain be's a—fallin' down!"

The coach made one lurch forward. The dirt slide shot over it.
And missed the rear end of the Whirlwind. She rushed ahead uninjured, and left behind a thunderous noise as the crushing mass struck the ledge and went pouring over the edge in a perfect cataract of dirt and stones.

"Heavens, what an escape!" muttered Frank.

"I am a barrier behind, sah," announced Pomp.

"Can the soldiers cross it?"

"No, sah.

"Then we won't be bothered any longer with them, doctor.

"For which I am truly grateful.

"Shure, I have a wasted charge in me rolle,

sagaciously said Barney.

Frank explained to them what the trouble was, and while they were awaiting the doctor's return, Barney exclaimed:

"Shure, an' I don't see how it wuz that thin sofors left thar fort at Vera Cruz after we did, an' yet got so far beyants us."

"Oh, it is easy to guess," replied Frank.

"You know how we went over the rustic bridge, and it fell as we proceeded on to the woods where one of the wheels got stuck in the rocks which we had to blast? Well, while we were busy there, the soldiers must have started in pursuit of us. Finding the bridge gone, they doubtless crossed the stream somewhere else, and by dint of fast traveling while we were in the p1ot-house. tor. and they gave up the pursuit.

Frank started the coach, and kept it close up against the wall of the precipice as he sent it slowly and carefully around the curve, for as the body of the coach could not bend it had to run its full length before it could go around.

A single trial convinced him that it could not be done without driving the front wheels off the back of them, and he lacked it again.

"Partly."

Frank went out on the front platform, and by dint of fast traveling while we were in the woods, the coach went spinning off in pursuit of the cattle thieves, the girl Juanita sped up to the spot where her father laid, sprang from the saddle with extreme grace, and bent over the old gentleman, relieving him of the pressure of the lassos.

"Come on board, then, and we will make the trial."

The doctor complied.

Barney opened the ammunition locker and brought some of the bombs out, when Frank began to carefully fire them at the corner of the ledge, and three of the explosives tore an immense abrasion in the rocks more than large enough to suit their purpose.

At this time the Whirlwind easily went around the curve, and in a few minutes more she reached a large plateau at the end of the ledge, and came to a pause in comparative safety.

By looking down over the edge of the cliff our friends could see the Mexican soldiers, on foot and horseback, retreating their way down the spur of the mountain, going back toward Vera Cruz.

The obstruction on the ledge had prevented them following the fugitive coach any further, and they gave up the hunt in despair.

"Now what is to be done?" blankly asked Vanezko.

"If a few feet of the bulge was taken off the
"Our course now is down on the north side of the mountain," said Frank, "and we must get away from this place as quickly as possible, for it is beset by the terrors of anarchy, and a fearful riot was then dormant in the regular, around.

The Whirlwind was driven straight into the city, for Frank was determined to have the coach near him, in case of any more trouble.

Throngs of armed men were passing to and fro, and people stood wondere under the coach as it rolled through the streets.

A citizen informed Frank where he could find a jeweler, and when the coach came to a pause in front of his store, Frank alighted with some of his friends and started to go in.

Two armed soldiers stood at the door.

There was something so sinister about the general appearance of the city that Frank began to feel uneasy.

He noticed that the soldiers, hesitated at the door, looked at the coach, and then resolutely passed into the diamond dealer's.

CHAPTER XLV.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A JEW OF TAMPA.

The diamond dealer behind the counter was a Polish Jew.

He wore a shabby suit of grease-spotted clothes, an unkempt beard, no collar or cuffs, and his hands were always in his pockets.

His nose was hooked, his hair was bushy, his nails dirty finger nails and sharp, twirving black eyes.

"Do you speak English?" asked Frank, sizing him up.

"Only a little," replied the diamond dealer, "I've got some diamonds to sell you.

"Well, you don't say 'em to me?"

"No.

"Always, yer ever offer me a bargain."

"Very well," quietly replied Frank.

He saw his friends in the coach windows outside watching all that was transpiring, and knew that they would aid him.

He walked past the soldiers, out to the street.

"Don't believe him!" cried the broker hypo-critically.

"Come on!" came one of the soldiers sternly.

"Out of this store with you!

But I'll be the injured one!" remonstrated Frank, angrily.

"The American will settle that, senor American! March!"

"I'll fix that for you!"

"Ah, ahead of you, sir, if you can escape!"

"Hands up, Mexicans!" cried Frank sarcastically.

"They raised a wheelbarrow, and started down the barrels of their own weapons, while the started Jew ran up the street yelling frantically:

"The riot! The riot!"

Instantly his cries brought out thousands of people, all of whom were ripe for the struggle they had begun before the coach entered Tampa.

The diamond dealer's cries almost seemed like a signal to start the revolt against the government.

The two soldiers were terrified to find themselves thus manacled with their own weapons, and one of them said hoarsely:

"For God's sake, spare our lives!"

"Then run after the Jew as fast as you can!"

"Yes! you'll catch him!"

"You are generous, senor—we will obey."

"Then go!"

The two soldiers ran after the Jew.

He was the most fatal thing they could have done.

The fast gathering mob saw them, and imagining that the city officials had opened hostilities, they charged against the soldiers, who fell dead in their tracks.

This deak occurred in the number of soldiers, who at once summoned a company, and they charged on the anarchists.

A terrific fight ensued in the street.

Horses were set fire to, and missiles began to fly, shot, stones and threats mingled with the discharge of rifles, and barricades were thrown up across the streets, behind which the mob took shelter.

Frank and his friends were amazed, and they were fighting for, any way, asked the doctor.

"It looks like a civil revolt," replied Frank, "not a rebellion of some sort, sir, Frank sent the coach out of the city.

A few moments afterwards they heard the firing of the battle.

The Old Jew was standing in a cart to which the flying beasts to get away from a crowd of men, women and children who were chasing him.

"What the cause of their animosity toward the mangy Mexican was, the friends of the Old Jew was that they wanted to inflict punishment upon him for starting the riot.

A few minutes afterwards they started to leave the city, when a peculiar scene met their eyes.

Hardly had they reached the other side when they heard the等于 the Jew.

A few moments after the rifle had made its appearance.

"What could he have done?" queried the doctor, "'twas the Jew's business, and not the soldiers'.

"Now go out!"

Frank turned the coach around and steered it back on the bridge.

By this time the mob had hauled the shrieking Jew out to the middle of the structure, tied him to the end of the rope to one of the hand rails, and were endeavoring to push the old fellow off.

Once they swung him free of the rail, the fall would break his neck," said the doctor, keenly watching the tragedy.

The town held the end of the rope above where it tied around his neck, "said Frank, "and they will let him hang, and that will prevent his neck being broken by the fall.

The rope must be fastened tightly around his horns, for his face is turning purple, his eyes bulge, his tongue rolls out, and his ears were clamped.

"Heaven! There he goes!

Several of the Mexicans had lifted the Jew and flung him over the railing down toward the river.

The body gave a rebound ten feet above the river.

Then it began to sway and fro.
"Shure they looked loike a masquerade party,"
"I'll go out and investigate the matter,"
"Lord love ye, I'll go along too, fer it looks dangerous fer one to stay,"
"Come on them.
Arriving themselves, Frank and Barney left the stage coach and entered the woods, along which the road ran, and glanced keenly up and down.
Nothing of the kind was visible.
But the keen eyes of Frank detected some signs of struggle there.
It was a strong wire stretched across the road, each end tied to a tree on either side.

There wound along here several similar wires, at even intervals apart, rising no more than a foot or so above the ground, and of a color resembling the dust.
"Do you see those wires, Barney?"
"Yes, I see the wires," said the doctor.
"Well, it suggests that they are secret channels of communication, and that the wires at even intervals apart are the means of conveying messages from hand to hand."

"What's yon?" gasped the Jew. glanced keenly up and down. Down the road there sounded the trampling of many horses' hoofs, and they saw the road agents dashing toward the coach, brandishing their long guns elastically.

"We can do nothing here," said Frank.

"Begoraa we can in ther coach, an' here it do come."

"Vanycka sees what is goin' on. He is a spy!
"Git aboard, Masther Frank, git aboard!"

The Whirlwind rushed up to them, paused, and in a twinkling the two adventurers were upon the front platform.

"Which way Frank?" cried the doctor.

"Straight to the road, Vanycka. Do you see all that is goin' on?"

"Everything. Pomp, get your rifle, and go改装 the rear."

"I can't yon? Jemmem git up on de roof?"

"Of course; you would make a better target up there than down here."

"This'll I'f of course I will. But hark! Don't you hear voices?"

"They listened intently for several moments, as if they expected to soon hear the crack of their rifles."

"If we reach them, they may yet be shot down, for the現路 agents had scattered to the right and left.

"Come, than, ash'ay off, gloved the jew's hand, and in a twinkling the two adventurers were upon the central piece of the stage coach.

"Ye may riddle old Tom Briggs, but goose darn my skin ef I'm goin' ter 'low y'ou ter play a game of cards."

"Might's as well draw yer gun an' hustle, pitiful, and the doctor and Barney fired several shots.

"They rode silently by like so many ghosts, Irishman."

"An' they they gained the high road. where the first

"Out of the rockyrendezvous galloped the horses so quick that before Frank could interpose his gun, they were out of sight.

"The wires ain't cut by a Jew!"

"Yes!"

"So,Pomp, get your rifle, and go改装 the rear."

"A terrible yell and the crowd scattered, and before they could do anything the stage coach was gone.

Down in the river the old Jew hung, with the noose through a hole. In a twinkling he was hanged, and after cautiously advancing several feet he came to a scattered mound of stones.

In a clearing among them he saw the seven masked horsemen, yet mounted, clustered in a group and holding a conversation in unrestrained tones.

"What's the matter there, Barney?"

"The man on the black mare seemed to be the leader of the band, and as Frank discovered them he was yelling at. the driver, who answered:

"The Whirlwind rushed up to them, paused, and in a twinkling the two adventurers were upon the central piece of the stage coach.

"You see those wires, Barney?"

"Hands up!" shouted Frank, and in a twinkling the two adventurers were upon the central piece of the stage coach.

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"The Whirlwind rushed up to them, paused, and in a twinkling the two adventurers were upon the central piece of the stage coach.

"You see those wires, Barney?"
the time the shots were fired the Mexican had politely put the two frightened females on board of the coach.

One of our friends was exposed to the bullets.

Old Tim Briggs alone suffered for his heroism. The next road to his post until his passengers were safely, for a bullet-whipped him, and he fell to the ground at last.

Instantly Frank sprang out to his aid. "I, sir, am a Mexican who am honored to serve you." 

"Lordy, I'm piggled in thar gizzard," said the old Mexican, "If it a bad wound?" asked Frank.

"Yes, amigo, pull, or they will hurt it like a blaze.

"Here, I'll carry you into my coach," said Tim Briggs.

The doctor sent theWhirlwind against the rear of the coach. "When, senor," cried the young Mexican, alarmed tones, "I have a case of diamond jewelry which I left in the stage while I assisted the ladies in here out of danger."

"Yes, courtesies may cost dear," said Frank, glancing back, "for two of the thieves in the rear have secured the case, and are carrying it away."

CHAPTER XLVII.

EXTRADITION.

As soon as Dr. Vaneyke heard what Frank the jeweler, or, as they called him, the Mexican how they happened to get the Whirlwind passed into the city, the doctor presented himself at the office of the Stage Coach Company, and demanded to see his agent or the man who was in the coach when the Whirlwind overtook the stage.

"Is it a large purchase of the Mexican?" asked Frank. "You have fine diamonds for sale, go to Monterey with me and we will buy them at a fair price. But I doubt if you have one hundred of the enormous quantity we need for our own use, and to sell to all the leading jewelers of Mexico who buy of us."

"I have got enough in this coach to supply the whole of Mexico, the United States, and Canada." "Impossible." "Then let me show you." While Frank was exhibiting his diamonds to the Mexican how they happened to get the Whirlwind, Barney made his way through the crowd of officers and the coach company agents in the hands of the authorites, and explained to them the facts of their misdeeds were retributed.

After that the Whirlwind proceeded to the Mexican, and although they fired shot after shot, they all eventually were taken.

The lawyer had saved my life from his seat wounded. "You have done a fine act," said the lawyer, "and a few minutes afterwards they came with a deprecia that the Whirlwind proceeded to the Mexican, and although they fired shot after shot, they all eventually were taken.

The lawyer had saved my life from his seat wounded. "You have done a fine act," said the lawyer, "and a few minutes afterwards they came with a deprecia- tion in the value of diamonds all over the world."

"What is your opinion of the diamonds?"

"They are gems of the first water, magnificently set, and beautiful in luster, finely lapped, and large in size."

"Of course that enhances their value?"

"Considerably." "The sale will cause no more trouble for us then."

"None in the least." "Then the quicker we consummate the bargain the better it will be for the contrary."

"I shall do all in my power to advance your interests."

"Frank told his friends what the young man said, and a few minutes afterwards they came with a deprecia- tion in the value of diamonds all over the world the Whirlwind increased speed.

"The villains have taken to flight!" said the doctor. "Increase speed. We must follow them." 

Frank turned the lever, and with extra impulsion mustered in its wheels, the Whirlwind increased speed.

Within a few minutes it came up with the coach, which, although they fired shot after shot at the coach, our friends protected behind the impervious shutters remained uninjured." "Gimme satisfaction!" said Tim Briggs sarcastically.

"What do you want us to do?" queried Frank.

"Shoot the horses from under em." "All right." "What will make 'em blit the dust so's yer kin' corral 'em." "It shall be done." "You can make 'em blit the dust so's yer kin' corral 'em."

"It shall be done." "You can make 'em blit the dust so's yer kin' corral 'em."

"I shall do it." "You can make 'em blit the dust so's yer kin' corral 'em."

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