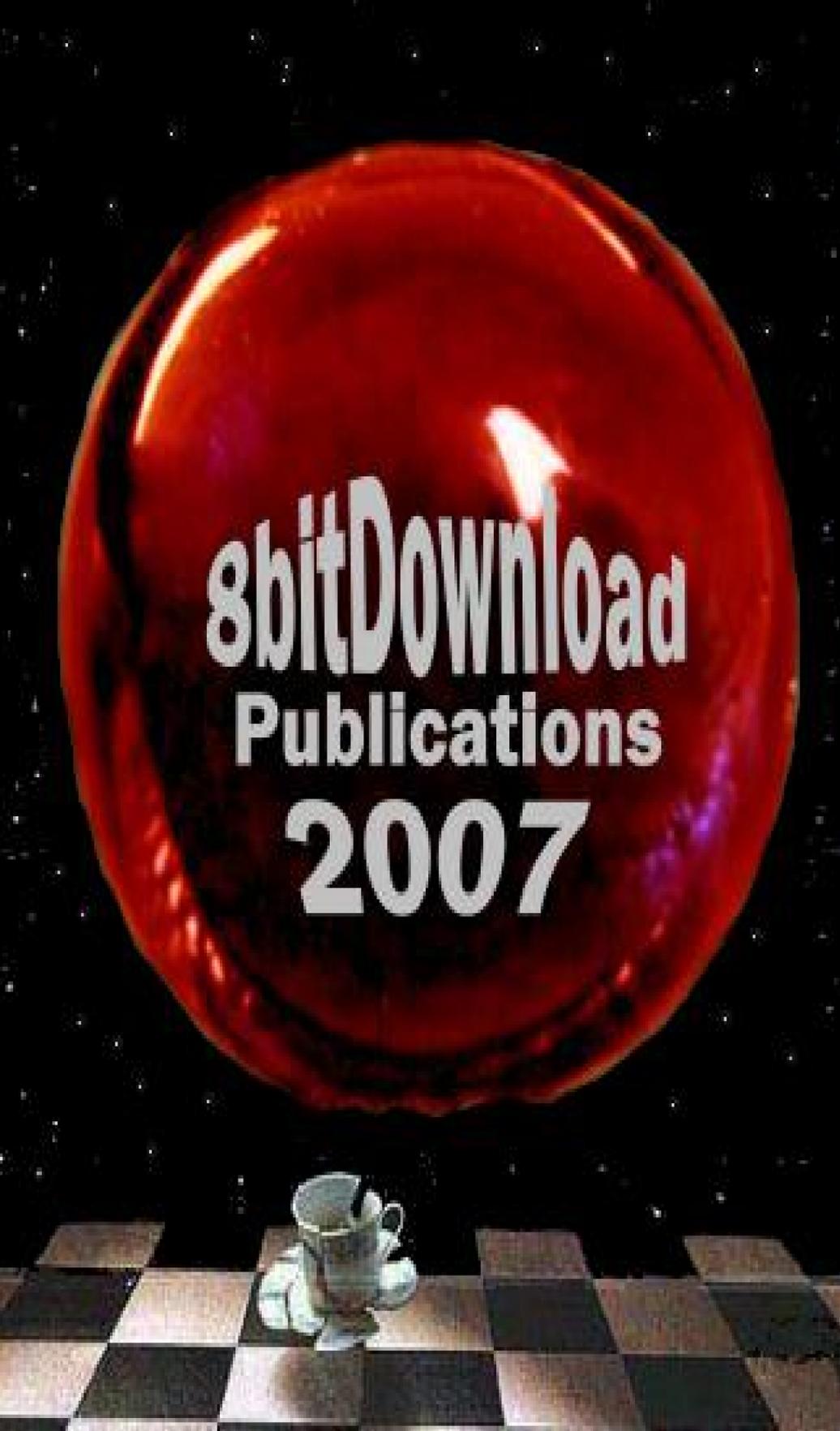


The Devil

A red-tinted image of a hand holding a small, horned devil figure. The hand is positioned in the upper right quadrant, with the index finger pointing towards the center. The devil figure is small and appears to be perched on the tip of the finger. The background is a solid, deep red color.

is
Wiser

Ernest A. de Lima



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**The Devil
Is
Wiser**



Ernest A. de Lima

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BY THE WILLIAM BYRD PRESS, INC.
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA**

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TO MY DAUGHTER
NORMA
AT WHOSE BEHEST THIS BOOK WAS WRITTEN

FOREWORD

Colombia is a land of natural and spiritual beauty; of pathos and sentiment, mingled with lighthearted gaiety. In Colombians you may find immediate response to every mood—they will weep with you over your troubles and rejoice with you in your triumphs. They will receive you always with unfailing courtesy, and expect the like in return.

It is also a land of proverbs, or ‘refrânes’ as they are called here. These permeate the lives and philosophy of all the people, and are constantly cropping up in their conversation. It seems to me, at times, that Colombians regulate their lives by proverbs—and gain great advantage thereby. In this book I have included a few of the ones most employed.

The names and characters that appear here are purely imaginary; any similarity with persons who may actually exist is purely coincidental. The incidents that are here narrated, have never occurred, to my knowledge. The names of towns, places, hotels, etc., are, for the most part, of places and establishments that actually exist. No harm can be done by mentioning them, in my opinion, and it may serve to give the reader a clearer idea of the surroundings in which this story is supposed to have taken place. The land transactions, boundaries of such land, and names of proprietors thereof, as well as their purported neighbours, are entirely fictitious, as is the unidentified ‘pensión’ on 14th. Street. The legal problems presented are purely hypothetical,

Cali, Colombia, January 1947—

recreation as an electronic book

Halloween night, October 31, 2007
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C H A P T E R O N E



“EXCÚSENOS, señor, please allow us to pass with these valises.”

At this request, delivered in the courteous and musical Spanish used by Colombians, Richard Entergarde quickly stepped from the aisle into his seat, and turned to watch the porters who were loading the hand baggage of the passengers entraining from Buenaventura to Cali. Perspiring profusely, they accommodated bags, boxes, and what-nots, on racks and under seats, as the respective owners, anxious to be aboard on time, claimed their various possessions and attempted to assist the porters, who were more hampered than aided by their efforts.

“Strange”, thought Entergarde, “how humanity loves to travel, and yet seems to suffer so in the course thereof.”

As the warning whistle blew, he settled himself comfortably in his seat and gazed out of the window at the streets of this busy Pacific port, glistening in the rain that almost never ceases in that coastal region. He contemplated with satisfaction his arrival, a few hours hence, at the thriving city of Cali, nestling three thousand feet high, in the lovely “Valle del Cauca”.

“The Swiss”, mused he, “say ‘See Switzerland and die’, and I say ‘See the Cauca Valley and live’ ”.

A native Colombian, born in Cali, he had lived there most of his life, having been educated first in Colombian schools and then in the States. He spoke fluent English, and his tall and athletic figure was a familiar one in social gatherings of Americans and Colombians alike. He was immensely popular, for he was uniformly pleasant and courteous, besides being a witty companion. Despite his 49 years, he was still a bachelor.

A flourishing cattle business, inherited from his father, was attended to by him only vicariously, much to the disgruntlement of his ‘mayordomo’, who frequently chided him with the

old proverb 'al ojo del amo engorda el buey'—('under the eye of the owner the ox fattens'). But Entergarde, whose given name was Ricardo, and who went by the name of Richard only to distinguish himself from a cousin of the same name, preferred his chosen field of crime investigation, for which he had received excellent training in the splendid police school which the national government maintains in Bogota, Colombia's capital city. He was at present serving as a special agent with the police authorities of Cali, acting in certain cases where his technical training and long experience proved valuable.

The extended trip to the States, from which he was now returning, had been made in connection with matters having to do with these activities. He had worked hard and was now glad to be back in this peaceful tropical land where, because of climate and simple common sense, people had the habit of living calmly. He was accustomed to that way, and did not feel at home in the hurly-burly life of the North American cities.

An hour and a half later, as the train puffed into the little mountain town of Cisneros, he was still meditating on various matters connected with his trip, and at the same time pencilling notations on a pad.

"Hello, Richard old boy—how are you?"

Entergarde looked up to see his old friend Tom Langley towering over him.

"Why hello Tom, what are you doing here?—I thought you were in the States. Didn't see you get on the train."

Langley, a tall ruddy man in his middle fifties, slipped down into the seat at Entergarde's side, and threw an affectionate arm around his shoulder.

"No, you didn't see us, because we got on the coach ahead, but we knew you were here because they told us at the Hotel Estación that you had just arrived on the 'Santa Clara'. We came in this morning at 3. a. m., on the 'Iroquois' and just had time to go to the Hotel for breakfast and make this train."

Entergarde looked at his friend with a warm and friendly interest, engendered by years of close association and mutual esteem. Langley, an American, had been established in the cat-

tle business in Cali for about 30 years, and had married a Colombian girl of distinguished family—doña Maria de Hidalgo. Besides Langley and his wife, the family consisted of three children, two boys and a girl, all of whom were now grown up and all single. **Elena**, the daughter, had spent more time in the States than in Colombia, but the two boys, **Pablo** and **Juan**, had preferred to remain in Cali. All three were Colombian citizens. Pablo and Juan had taken their degrees as chemical engineer and lawyer, respectively; however they had recently devoted part of their time to the management of the family cattle business, due to their father's absence in the States.

"And what about Maria, Elena, and the boys?" Entergarde inquired, "**are** they here with you?"

"Yes, they're all in the next car forward; you know how Maria is—**she** never can be away from Cali for more than a few months at a time, so I brought her **down**—and Elena wanted to come back and see how the old ranch was getting along. As for the boys, they have been here almost continually since graduation, as you know. About a month ago, Juan popped up in **Florida** to take a rest and to discuss some business matters with me. Pablo stayed here, but came up as far as Panama to meet us."

"And how is everything getting along, **Tom**—**are** you feeling all **right**?"

"Well, Maria and the children are O. K., but I'm not so well; doctor says I have to be careful of my heart and that I might soon be a goner if I don't take things easy. Had a bad attack of angina up in Florida last year."

"Yes, I heard about it" said Entergarde. "Take care of yourself and don't worry—let the boys handle the business."

"I certainly would like to do that, Richard, but I'm having plenty to worry about right now."

He grew silent and Entergarde noted that his face clouded.

"I'm sorry to hear it, **Tom**—is there anything I can help you with?"

"No Richard, it's just a family matter. Pablo has been trying to get me for some time to put a lot of capital into a chemical

manufacturing business that he wants to start here, but I don't feel able to do it. Besides, we have always been cattle people, and you know the old saying here—'zapatero a tu zapato'".

"Yes—'shoemaker stick to your last', as you say in English. That's a pretty good motto; I wonder why Pablo doesn't see your point of view about it?"

"Pablo is very determined about it, Richard,—he keeps insisting and insisting, and he's even carried it into the Courts down here. Calls it a friendly test suit, but I don't regard it as such."

Entergerde looked at his friend with amazement.

"Carried it into the Courts?" he queried, "how in the world could he do that?"

"Well, you see, more than half of the family capital consists of money that was inherited by my wife from her father, with the stipulation that she should invest it in our cattle business until the time of my death, and under my management and direction. Should I die, the management of this fund of Maria's passes to my eldest son, Pablo, who is authorized, for a period of five years, to use it in any way that he sees fit—not necessarily in cattle. This because my father in law felt that by that time the boys would have secured their degrees, Elena probably would be married, and it might suit the family to liquidate the cattle and invest Maria's money in other things. He knew that as long as I were alive, the cattle business would be continued, and as he was an old cattleman himself he was anxious to see that it was kept up as long as possible. But he was willing to trust the money to Pablo's sole judgment, in the event of my death, for a period of five years, after which time it was to be turned back to Maria, or if she had died, to be equally divided among the three children."

"Seems all right so far", said Entergerde. "What is Pablo claiming in the Courts?"

"He claims that the proviso in the will that stipulates that the money should be invested in cattle under my management and direction, is illegal, because he says that according to

Colombian law each person's inheritance must be given to him free and clear, without any encumbrance, provided that person is of age and of sound mind, both of which conditions are of course fulfilled in the case of my wife."

"And is he right about this?" inquired Entergarde.

"No one seems to think so except himself and his attorneys" replied Langley, "the provisions of the Civil Code clearly seem to justify the conditions of my father in law's will. Of course, none of us ever imagined that any technical legal questions would crop up in our affairs, for we were always a very united family. My father in law knew this and did not even bother to have his will made out by a lawyer—it was just a simple document signed before a Notary."

Entergarde took out a cigarette and lighted it reflectively.

"All right" he said, even supposing that Pablo wins his case in Court, wouldn't the money belong to his mother anyway, and couldn't she do anything she wanted with it—leave it with you, for instance, invested just as it is?"

"Yes, of course she could", said Langley, "but that's another thing that's worrying me—I'm not sure whether Maria would leave that money in cattle—she says that if the management of it comes back to her and if I have no objection, she is willing to use it to back Pablo's project, but I do have a very definite objection. In the first place, I don't have any faith in the future of that chemical business, and in the second place, the family interests would be seriously affected by taking so much money out of the cattle business right now. Cattle is pretty low, and we'd have to sell at least two thousand head in order to liquidate his mother's fund in cash."

Entergarde drew thoughtfully on his cigarette.

"Well, but you say that Maria would only give him the money if you don't have any objection, and as you do have an objection, that would leave everything as it is, wouldn't it?"

Langley smiled wryly.

"You know how mothers are, Richard" he said, "once the control of that fund passes into Maria's hands, Pablo wouldn't

have to argue with me any more, but only with her, and I'm sure it wouldn't take him very long to convince her that he was right, and in the end he would get his way."

Entergarde reflected for a moment.

"How is the matter going in the Courts?" he asked.

"**The lower Court decided against Pablo**", answered Langley; "he has appealed to the Circuit Court, and if he loses there he will have to appeal to the Supreme Court. That will entail considerable delay."

"So as I see it", said Entergarde, "there is no immediate danger of the money being touched for a long time."

"Yes, that's right", said Langley, "except", he added, "if I were to die—in which case Pablo would get control of it immediately, according to the provisions of the will."

"But you're not going to die for a long time, my friend", said Entergarde poking him playfully in the ribs, "you'll still be alive and kicking when I'm carried out to the cemetery".

"I wish I could think so, Richard" replied Langley soberly, sometimes I feel that I'm not going to last very long".

"Now, now" said Entergarde, "enough of that—and oh, by the way, tell me something, **Tom**,—is it generally known in **Cali** that Pablo has started this litigation over the will? I've been away for almost a year."

"Yes, unfortunately it is, Richard", answered Langley; "there was considerable publicity about it in the newspapers because the matter revolves around the wording of a law just recently passed and which hasn't been interpreted yet by the Supreme Court. So it has been pretty well discussed in business circles and even in the Clubs, Juan tells me. Very embarrassing, as you can imagine, for our family."

"Yes, of course" replied Entergarde, "I'm very sorry about all this, Tom, and I wish there were something I could do to help you. How about my having a talk with Pablo one of these days to see whether I can bring him to his **senses**?"

"Thanks very much, Richard", said Langley gratefully, "I know you always had great influence with the boy and maybe he will listen to you."

They talked about other things for awhile and soon the train puffed to a noisy stop at the town of Dagua. It was immediately surrounded by peasant women and children, offering for sale fried chicken, fruits of all kinds, the delicious **cornmeal** bread peculiar to Colombia and known as "**arepa**", and the tasty "**manjarblanco**", or "**arequipe**", a sweet paste made of sugar, milk, and rice flour.

"Here Richard" offered Langley, "let me treat you to some 'arepa' and 'manjarblanco'—it will last us till we can get lunch in Cali."

"No thanks, Tom", said Entergarde, getting up from his seat, "I think I'll stroll forward and say hello to your **family**—are you coming?"

"No" said Langley, fishing into his pocket for a coin which he dropped into the waiting palm of the little girl who had passed him the "arepa" and "manjarblanco" through the open window, "I think I'll stay here and do some **figuring**—and say, Richard, lend me a pencil, will you? Can't think what became of **mine**—no ink in my pen, either."

"Sure thing", said Entergarde, and drawing an ink pencil out of his pocket, of the kind he always used, he passed it to Langley.

"Thanks, **Richard**—tell the family I'll be along later."

On **leaving** the car, Entergarde had to stand aside at the door to let the incoming passengers by; among them were two business men from Cali with whom he exchanged greetings. Immediately behind them was a man whom he recognized as the owner of a furniture business in Cali, and in the rear, laughing and chatting gaily, were six young society ladies in uniforms of the Red Cross, carrying baskets filled with little ribbons.

"**Hola, señor Entergarde**," cried one of them, spying him, "**Cruz Roja, Cruz Roja**—this is Red Cross Week; aren't you going to let us pin a ribbon on you?—**only** one peso!"

"Most certainly, **señorita**", smiled Entergarde, "give me one by **all means**—and don't forget to tackle Mr. Tom Langley who's sitting back there".

"Oh no se **preocupe**—**don't** you worry, **señor Entergarde**,

we'll get him all **right—thanks** very much indeed" answered the girl laughingly, pinning a ribbon on his lapel and accepting his peso graciously.

"**We** certainly have some lovely looking girls in Colombia" mused Entergarde, as he strolled forward to greet **Langley's** family in the car ahead.

C H A P T E R T W O



MARÍA LANGLEY looked up with a pleased smile as she saw Entergarde coming towards her, and she and Elena both jumped to their feet and threw their arms around him in the affectionate embrace used by Latin Americans in greeting family members and old friends.

"Richard!", they both cried "qué gusto en verlo—what a pleasure to see you—we heard you were on the train and were wondering if you would come along to see us or if we would have to go back and see you. "We were almost about to think" added Maria with a sly wink at her daughter, "that you had forgotten that you are back in Colombia where, as you must know, the gentlemen are *very* polite to the ladies!"

"I haven't for a moment forgotten it, my lady" replied Entergarde, smiling at her sally, "as you see, I have come of my own accord, being detained only a little while by a conversation with your husband, for it was only when I met him that I knew that you all were on the train." "And now", he added, "tell me how you have all been and all about yourselves."

"Oh, we're all just fine, Richard", answered Elena, a blond vivacious girl of 22, "here, aren't you going to say hello to my brothers?"

Before Entergarde had time to reply, he was slapped heartily on the back from behind, and turned around to find himself confronted by Pablo and Juan, the faces of both wreathed in smiles—they were as happy to see this old family friend as were their mother and sister.

"How are you, Pablo—how are you, Juanito?" he said, using the diminutive of Juan's name, which is usual when referring to the youngest son of the family.

Both young men shook hands with him warmly and the usual greetings and questions were exchanged. Pablo was the

tallest of the **two**—a handsome, determined looking chap of 28, and Juan, somewhat shorter in **stature**, of less robust physique, and about a year younger.

"You look more like your Dad every day, **Pablo**" said Entergarde, "and you, Juanito, more like your mother."

"Yes, that's what everyone tells us" smiled Juan, "and now tell us about **yourself**, and how long were you up in the **States**—and why didn't you drop in to see the family in Florida?"

"Oh, I'm just about the same as ever", said Entergarde, "I was away almost a year; but as far as visiting you in Florida, remember that I haven't got a rich Dad like you have, and can't afford to be going around on long pleasure trips."

At this mention of their father, Entergarde saw a fleeting shadow cross Pablo's face, and the latter turned to him with an abrupt question:

"What do you think of the political situation **here**—**do** you think the new Government will be friendly to business?"

Entergarde looked his surprise.

"Don't forget that I've been away for some time, Pablo, and you should be better able to judge than I, but from all reports that I've had I would say that the Government is perfectly **stable**—as always. And very friendly, as usual, to all legitimate business. Things are always prosperous here under any kind of **Government**—**either** Liberal or Conservative."

"Yes, that's right", answered Pablo, "but I was a little worried about it because Dad has the idea that you can't establish anything new just now, and he seems to think that everything is going to break."

"No, I don't believe he thinks that, Pablo", said Entergarde, "he has just as much confidence in Colombia as he ever had, but maybe he isn't in favour of establishing certain new lines, that the family capital can't handle."

"Oh, the family capital is sufficient, all right" grumbled Pablo, "I guess Dad has confidence enough in Colombia, it's just that he hasn't any confidence in **me!**"

Juan turned to his brother with a look of anger on his face.

"Now see here, Pablo", he said, "lay off Dad for awhile,

will you?—**you** ought to have a little more consideration for him, especially now that he's so sick. If you had acted a little differently, maybe he would have more confidence in **you**—you're the only one to **blame**—**don't blame him!**”

Pablo turned on Juan sardonically.

"Juanito el **consentido**—little pampered Johnny", he mocked, "always has to be running to Mother and Dad for every little thing, because he can't stand on his own feet! Why don't you establish your own business like I'm trying to do?"

"Maybe I **will** some day, but I won't take my family into Court in order to do **it**—**that** you may be sure, Pablo" replied Juan seriously.

"**Qué pena!**—**how embarrassing!**", said Maria Langley, turning to her two sons. "Please, please, don't let us have any more of this shameful quarreling **now**—**family** matters can wait until later on."

"Right you are, Mother" said Juan cheerfully, "please excuse us, Richard, we really don't mean anything by **it**—**we're** having a **few** little differences as you may have heard, but it's not really as bad as it seems."

"I'm confident it's not", replied **Entergarde**,—"you are too fine a **family** altogether to have any serious trouble between you. Let's **all** sit down here and gossip awhile about things in Colombia and in the States."

Pablo said not a word, but turned on his heel and walked off sullenly towards the rear of the train.

Entergarde turned over the back of the seat so that he and Juan could settle themselves facing Maria Langley and **Elena**, and the four of them proceeded to chat comfortably about old times. About an hour had passed in friendly talk, when Pablo returned, looking very agitated.

Entergarde glanced at him keenly.

"What's the matter, Pablo?" he asked.

"Oh nothing" replied Pablo, "I've just been having a little row with Dad again."

"Better lay off that, my boy" said Entergarde, as kindly as possible, but a little sternly nevertheless, "that won't get you

anywhere and it's very bad for your father's health, you know."

Pablo said nothing, and slumped down into a seat some distance away, his head between his hands, and gazing moodily at the floor. Entergarde continued his chat with the others. There was a prolonged silence as the train passed slowly through a tunnel, and then, some ten minutes later the train came to a sudden stop. At the sound of shouts and screams coming from the car to the rear, Entergarde and the Langleys, with startled faces, jumped to their feet, and at that moment a frightened trainman came running through the car, stopped in front of Mrs. Langley, and stammered:

"Sefiora, mi senora, Usted es la sefiora de Langley, verdad?"

"Yes, of course I am sefiora de **Langley**—what is it?—tell me, my man, what has happened?" Maria Langley paled and her lips trembled as she spoke.

"Oh, mi sefiora, very bad news—the conductor asked senor Langley for his ticket just now, and senor Langley didn't answer, **señora**—and the conductor shook him and he saw . . . he saw, mi sefiora, that senor Langley is **dead!**"

Before the man had finished talking, Maria Langley, with a low moan, had slumped on her seat in a dead faint.

"Oh Dios mío, Dios mío—mi pobre papa, mi pobre papa" sobbed **Elena**, "oh Richard, what shall we do, what shall we **do?**"

"You stay right here and take care of your mother, Elena", ordered Entergarde, "and **here**—use this for her", and he handed her a small bottle of smelling salts that he always carried in his pocket for emergencies.

Pablo and Juan were already running back to the car from which Entergarde had come.

C H A P T E R T H R E E



PASSENGERS from all parts of the train, alarmed by the commotion, were pushing their way into the car where Entergarde had been seated, the women distraught and the men tense and excited. Entergarde made his way to the seat he had previously occupied, and found Pablo and Juan already there, bending over their father, both of them pale and trembling. Tom Langley was in a half sitting, half lying position, his face contorted and the fingers of his right hand still grasping the pencil that Entergarde had lent him. On the seat beside him was lying a small pocket pad, on which he had apparently been making notes. On the lapel of his coat, pinned far down and in a peculiar position, was the Red Cross ribbon that had been given him by one of the young ladies. In the aisle, beside the seat, the conductor was standing, a look of extreme consternation on his face.

Entergarde bent down and grasped one of Langley's wrists, and after a moment placed his ear to Langley's chest. He then straightened up, and shaking his head, turned to Pablo and Juan, who were watching him with extreme agitation.

"I'm sorry, boys," he said, "but it looks as if your Dad's heart finally gave out on him—now be as calm as you **can**—let me handle this till the authorities show up. Meanwhile, go and see if you can find me a doctor on this train."

"I'm a doctor, **senor**," said one of the passengers who was standing by.

"Then please come here," said Entergarde, "and see if anything can be done for Mr. Langley."

The gentleman who had offered his services was a young man of perhaps thirty years of age, unknown to Entergarde but apparently known to Pablo and Juan, for they both addressed him at once.

"Doctor **Beola**, please, please, see if you can save my father—maybe there is still some chance", begged Juan.

"Please, don **Eduardo**, do what you can for him" begged **Pablo** at the same time.

The young doctor strode forward and made a careful examination, and then, shaking his head gravely, he turned to the two sons and said:

"I'm sorry, **senores**, but your father is dead. As nearly as I can see, he died about ten minutes ago—his body is still partially warm."

Juan broke down completely and Pablo buried his face in his **hands**,—his shoulders shaking.

Entergarde, striving to control his own emotions, gazed at his old friend in consternation. Then he turned to the conductor and said:

"Is there a policeman on this **train**?"

"Si señor" replied the conductor, "he is at present in the rear car; I was just about to send for him when you came up, and as I recognized you I waited."

"All right", said Entergarde, "better go and fetch him personally—someone has to take charge here."

As the conductor went off on his errand, Entergarde walked over to where Langley's sons were sitting and tried to comfort them. Pablo gazed up at him with a despairing look on his face.

"Good **God!**", he moaned, "I feel responsible for this, but you **can't**—you **musn't**—**think** that I meant to kill him!"

Entergarde contemplated him seriously.

"No, Pablo, I don't think you meant to kill him, but I do think that you acted very unwisely, and with very little consideration for your poor **father**—**however**, my boy, pull yourself together and go back and see what you can do for your mother and **sister**—**here**, Juan, you go along, **too**—**you** can't leave those two poor women all alone." "And don't let them come into this car under any circumstances", he added sternly.

As the young men moved off in a daze, the conductor reappeared, followed by a man in the uniform of the national police, this being a Governmental railroad and therefore under the protection of the national government.

The policeman stepped forward and addressed Entergarde. "A sus **órdenes**, sefior" he said respectfully.

"Thanks", replied Entergarde, "but you're not under my **orders—you'll** have to take charge here."

"That may be" replied the policeman, "but I know very **well** whom you are, sefior Entergarde, and I'm quite sure that the **Comandante** would approve of my being under your orders meanwhile."

"Very well, I'll help you", replied Entergarde. "The first thing I think ought to be done is to get all of these people out of **here—don't** let anyone stay in this car except you and me, the conductor and the **doctor—and** don't let anyone else come in here, either. Take a couple of trainmen and post them at each door of the car to prevent people from coming back after you get them out."

It took only a few minutes for the policeman, assisted by the conductor, to act on these instructions, and then they both returned.

"The car is all cleared, **señor—what else shall we do now?**"

"Well", said Entergarde, turning to the conductor, "how far are we at present from **Cali?**"

"About an hour's normal run, sefior", said the conductor.

"Any more stops between here and Cali?"

"No, senor, no more passenger **stops—about** five minutes from this point there is an emergency water stop."

"Any telephone there?"

"Si senor, there is a line telephone, but for railroad use only—**not for public service.**"

"Good. As there is no town stop between here and Cali, we can't follow the regulation procedure of calling the town authorities to certify to this death, so the only thing to do is to advise **Cali** direct. Hold the train at the water stop long enough for this officer here to call the Comandante's office and advise them what has happened, and then you call the railroad offices and make your report. After that, we should start off again immediately."

The policeman and conductor **both** nodded assent, and the

latter went off to give the requisite instructions to the engineer and trainmen.

Entergarde bestowed an interested glance on the ribbon in Langley's lapel, and then, drawing a handkerchief from his pocket, bent down and detached the pencil that was grasped in Langley's fingers. As he did so, something caught his attention, and he studied the pencil closely. Then picking up the small pad, he looked at it for a moment, wrapped both pad and pencil in the handkerchief, and placed the whole thing in his pocket.

"As a matter of precaution" he said to the doctor, "I don't like to leave these things lying around loose, until the authorities have had a chance to take charge of the body."

"Quite right", assented the doctor.

Within a moment the train started again, and Entergarde hurriedly resumed his seat by Langley's side, bracing the body in such a way that it would not fall over with the jolting.

"This is a sad way to enter Cali", he thought, "sad for me and sadder still for that poor family in the car ahead."

He extended his free hand to the doctor.

"My name is Richard Entergarde, doctor" he said.

"And mine is Eduardo Beola, *senor* Entergarde" replied the doctor, grasping the outstretched hand cordially.

"Why don't you sit down, doctor?—just turn over the back of that seat there, and sit down facing me."

The doctor did so, and placed his hand on one of Langley's knees, to help him steady the body.

A shrill whistle, and a grinding of wheels indicated that they had arrived at the water stop mentioned by the conductor. The policeman, who had been standing by in the aisle, made for the door to carry out Entergarde's instructions regarding the telephone call.

"By the way", Entergarde cautioned him, "don't forget to tell the Comandante that the man we are bringing in is an American, so that he may inform the American Consulate."

The policeman nodded assent and stepped off the train.

"Can you tell me, Dr. Beola", inquired Entergarde, "what was the cause of Mr. Langley's death?"

"Very difficult to say" replied the doctor, "without making

a careful and thorough examination and possibly an autopsy, but it looks very much like 'angina pectoris'—that's the Latin—in Spanish it is called 'angina de pecho', as you know. I understand that Mr. Langley had suffered previous attacks of 'angina'—the last one about a year ago in Florida."

Entergarde reflected for a moment.

"Tell me, doctor", he said, "if Mr. Langley had died from angina, would it have been possible for him to have made any intentional movement with his fingers when the spasms came on, such as attempting to write with that pencil, for instance?"

"Yes, it would have been quite possible", replied the doctor, though it is unlikely that such movement could have been very long sustained, because it is quite evident, from the fact that it proved fatal, that the attack was a severe one."

"Exactly so, doctor" said Entergarde, "thank you very much".

The conductor and the policeman soon re-appeared and the latter addressed Entergarde:

"I have just spoken with the Comandante's office, señor Entergarde, and the Deputy Comandante told me to inform you that he will meet this train in person. Also that there will be an ambulance to take the body to the morgue, as he does not wish it taken to the family's home until the cause of death has been determined. Also that I did right in placing myself under your orders, as you have an official rank in the Department."

"Very good. Thank you. Did he say that he would advise the American Consul?"

"Yes, he said that he would attend to that, too, and he will also advise Mrs. Langley's relatives and her household staff."

"That's fine. Did you speak with the railroad offices?" he asked, addressing the conductor.

"I did, señor—they will keep the platform as free as possible so that we won't have any delay in getting this poor gentleman off the train. Shall I give the order to start again?"

"Yes, by all means" said Entergarde, and the conductor hurried off.

As the train resumed its journey, Entergarde and the doctor were silent for a moment, and the latter then observed:

"A very fine man Mr. Langley was, señor Entergarde. I was

not their family physician, but I attended them once or twice when their regular doctor was absent from Cali. Mr. Langley was highly thought of by everybody."

"Yes, **that's** very true" replied Entergarde, "his death will be regretted by everyone in Cali."

"**Except**, perhaps, by his son, Pablo", remarked the doctor grimly.

"What do you mean by that, doctor?" inquired Entergarde.

"Well, you must have heard, **señor** Entergarde, "about the litigation that Pablo started against his father to try to upset the provisions of a will that had been made by his grandfather?"

"No, I hadn't heard about it" said Entergarde, "I've been away for some time in the States."

He thought it unnecessary to mention to the doctor his conversation with Tom Langley.

The doctor gave an explanation of the affair.

"Pablo had started this **litigation**", he went on, "and it seems that it wasn't going very well for him, but he knew quite well that if his father died he would get immediate possession of the money that he was trying to make his father give him."

"You're not asking me to believe, are you, doctor, that you think that Pablo intentionally caused his father's **death**?"

The doctor's answer was equivocal.

"I don't think anything, **señor Entergarde**—I'm a doctor, not a detective. It looks to me as if Mr. Langley died of an attack of '**angina de pecho**'—**whether** that attack was induced by some state of agitation intentionally brought on by another person, I cannot say. What the police may think is their own affair."

"Do you happen to know, doctor, if anyone was talking with Mr. Langley shortly before he died?"

"Yes, I do, and it was his son Pablo. I passed through this car awhile ago, and Pablo was sitting in this seat with his father. There was quite an argument going on, and both of them seemed very angry. When Pablo saw me, he got up, and I noticed that he followed me out of the car, without saying another word to his father."

"Well, I hope you won't draw **any** hasty conclusions from that, doctor", said Entergarde.

"**No**—I try to be just in my opinions, but if the police ask me what I have seen, I shall most certainly have to tell them the details."

"Quite right, doctor" agreed Entergarde, "but I feel sure that Pablo, though hot-headed and selfish, was at heart very fond of his father and would not have injured him for the world."

"I certainly hope that is so" answered the doctor—"I have the highest esteem for the Langley family and I would not wish to see them involved in any scandal or **trouble**—**Mr. Langley's** death is quite enough for them to bear."

After a few moments silence, Entergarde got up from his seat, put out one hand to steady the body, and addressed the doctor again:

"Doctor, will you sit here for awhile in my place, while I stroll around a bit to get this kink out of my **legs**?"

"Of course, **senor** Entergarde", and so saying the doctor moved over into the seat just vacated, and braced his arm against Langley's body. The policeman, who was sitting across the aisle, looked up, and Entergarde bent down and addressed a query to him in a low voice. Receiving his reply, he walked rapidly away towards the rear cars.

There were only two cars to the rear of the one in which he had been seated, and these were both half filled with the usual assortment of passengers found on any train. The unexpected death of one of their fellow travellers had affected them in various ways—some of them were discussing it with animation, and others were silent at this shadow that had fallen over their journey.

In the last car he found the group of young ladies who were engaged in the Red Cross campaign. They were all in a highly nervous condition and whispering agitatedly to one another.

"Tell me, **señorita**" he said, approaching the one from whom he had bought the ribbon, "did you pin that ribbon on **Mr. Langley's coat**?"

"Oh, yes I did, **señor Entergarde**" replied the girl tearfully, "isn't it just terrible what has happened?—the poor man—he was always so nice and pleasant. And he bought his ribbon right away and gave me two pesos for it instead of one—oh isn't it just too terrible?"

"Yes, it's very sad", said Entergarde, "but I want to know something—did you pin that ribbon on him just the way mine is pinned?"

"Yes, of course, **señor Entergarde**", said the girl, "we pin all ribbons on the same way."

"H'mm, strange", murmured Entergarde, half to himself.

"**Perdón, señor**—what did you say?" inquired the girl.

"No, nothing, **señorita**—I should like to know, as well, who else bought ribbons from you young ladies on our car."

"Why everybody in the car, **señor Entergarde**—I think there were only 15 people in that car altogether, including yourself—we went through it a second time just before Mr. Langley died. Wait just a moment now, and I'll make sure."

She reached down into her basket and pulled out a list.

"Yes, here it is—'carro numero 3'—that's your car—you see there are 15 crosses here, indicating 15 people, and a check mark after each cross, showing that each one bought."

"We always carry these lists", explained one of her companions. "because we work in teams and we like to be able to prove a perfect record for each team."

"Yes, I understand that", said Entergarde, "a very worthy cause to compete about, to be sure." "Now, could you remember" he continued, addressing the first girl again, "who those 15 people were?"

"Why no, I hardly think so" replied the girl, "I only knew a few—let's see—there was you and poor Mr. Langley, that's two—and a **señor Tobon**, that's three—and a **señor Miranda** and a **señor Ortega**—you know them both—I saw you salute them as you went out, and then there was a 'campesino' and his wife—and I don't remember who the rest were."

"Yes, I know **señor Miranda**, and **señor Ortega**", replied Entergarde, "and if **señor Tobon** whom you mention, is the

furniture importer, I know him also, but only by sight. He's not in this car—must be up forward. Now who were this countryman and his wife that you spoke of?"

"Well, I wouldn't know them, of course" she answered, "but they are sitting right over there" and she pointed to a man and woman sitting across the aisle, two seats away, surrounded by bundles and boxes.

Entergarde's eyes followed the pointing finger of the girl, and after studying the couple for a moment, he turned again to the young ladies.

"*Muchísimas gracias, señoritas*", he said, addressing all of them together, "I have to be getting along now. We'll be in Cali shortly and I want to get back to poor Mr. Langley. Adios."

"Before you go, señor Entergarde" one of them said, "I want to ask you if you think it would be possible for some of us to go up and sit with dona Maria and Elena for a few minutes?"

"Well, you can if you want to", replied Entergarde, "but I imagine they are pretty upset, and maybe it would be better to let them stay alone for the present."

"Senor Entergarde is right" interposed another of the girls, "we can see them tomorrow or the day after at their home. Pablo and Juan are with them, according to what the conductor told us, and I guess they would only get more upset if we went in there now. It's a terrible shock for all of them, and we better leave them alone."

At the chorus of assents from her companions, Entergarde nodded a second "adios" and made his way back towards his own car, pausing for a moment to exchange a few words with Mr. Ortega and Mr. Miranda. Arriving again, he seated himself opposite Dr. Beola, who was still at Langley's side.

"Well, doctor", he remarked, "it won't be long now before this unhappy trip is over. Not a very nice homecoming for the Langleys, is it?"

"I should say not", replied the doctor. "If you don't mind, señor Entergarde", he added, rising from his seat, "just change places with me again, will you? We'll be getting in soon, as

you say, and I'm pretty grimy. I'd like to go to the wash room and clean up."

"Of course", said Entergarde, and resumed his place by Langley's side.

As the doctor moved off, Entergarde looked again at the ribbon in Langley's lapel, and then addressed himself to the policeman who was still sitting across the aisle:

"Officer", he said, "have you got a clean handkerchief on you?"

"**Sí señor**, I have", replied the policeman, and reaching into his pocket he pulled out a freshly laundered handkerchief and handed it to Entergarde.

"Thanks very much, officer" said Entergarde, and wrapping the handkerchief around his fingers he grasped the Red Cross ribbon and pulled it out of Langley's lapel.

As he did so, a small slip of white paper, about $\frac{1}{2}$ of an inch long, and half an inch wide, that had been hidden under the ribbon, fluttered to the floor.

Entergarde, startled, laid the ribbon on the seat beside him and reaching down with the handkerchief, picked up the paper.

On it was printed, in small pencilled letters, these words:
—CON LA VARA CON QUE MIDES SERAS MEDIDO—

"H'mm", mused Entergarde to himself, as the policeman bent over to read the words, "WITH THE MEASURING ROD **THAT THOU USETH SHALT THOU BE MEASURED**". "Rather a Biblical sound! It begins to look as though old Tom may not have died from angina after **all!**"

And wrapping the ribbon and the slip of paper together in the handkerchief the policeman had given him, he put them in his pocket.

C H A P T E R F O U R



AS THE DOCTOR returned to his seat, the rippling waters of the Cali River, visible from the train windows, advised their approach to Cali, and a moment later three mournful blasts of the whistle heralded their unhappy entry into the station. Entergarde glanced at his watch and saw that it was just two minutes past midday. As the train came to a stop, he arose from his seat and said to the doctor:

"Well, here we are, doctor, back in Cali."

"Yes", replied the doctor "a very sad arrival, too."

On the platform of the station, Entergarde spied the Deputy Police Commissioner, accompanied by several officers and by a man with a little black bag, whom Entergarde recognized as the official medical examiner serving the Pacific Railroad. With him, as well, were the Cali station agent and various other employees of the railroad. A little to one side stood the American Consul, accompanied by a young man whom Entergarde recognized as the latter's secretary, and in another group, dressed in black, were several relatives of Maria Langley, the women with tear-stained eyes. A few curious onlookers completed the total of persons visible on the station platform.

The Deputy Police Commissioner, an upstanding and handsome young man, in a smart uniform, accompanied by one of his officers, and by the medical examiner and station agent, jumped on the train and entered the car indicated to him by the policeman who had made the trip from Buenaventura. He approached Entergarde and held out his hand.

"Buenos días, señor Entergarde," he said cordially, "I'm very glad to see you back again, but very sorry this sad thing has happened on the train."

"Thank you, Capitán Umaña" replied Entergarde, taking his

outstretched hand, "I'm glad to be back, too, but not under these circumstances."

The medical examiner was shaking hands with Dr. Beola; Entergarde greeted him and also the officer and the station agent who had accompanied Captain Umana.

"The Commissioner and I will have a talk with you this afternoon, **senor Entergarde**" said the latter, "meanwhile" he added, turning to the medical examiner, "I think it would be well, Dr. Ariza, if you would have a look at Mr. Langley here."

Dr Ariza, a florid, pleasant appearing gentleman of middle age, turned to examine Langley's body, conferring meanwhile, in low tones with Dr. Beola. Finally he straightened up and said:

"It might very well be a case of angina pectoris, Capitan Umana, especially in view of what Dr. Beola tells me regarding Mr. Langley's previous attacks. However, if you think that there are any circumstances to warrant it, we can have an autopsy in order to determine definitely the cause of death."

Entergarde drew Captain Umana aside and whispered to him for several minutes, at the same time handing him the two handkerchiefs that he took from his pocket, with their contents.

Captain Umana placed the handkerchiefs in one of the pockets of his uniform, and, turning to the others, said gravely;

"I have the ambulance here, and under the circumstances I think it will be best to take the body to the morgue and have an autopsy, which I would be glad if you would perform immediately after lunch, Dr. Ariza."

"Of course, Capitan, and I should very much like Dr. Beola to help me if he has time."

"I shall be glad to, Dr. Ariza" said the latter.

Captain Umana addressed Entergarde:

"As we had such scanty information about Mr. Langley's death, I had given orders to my officers to hold the passengers in the station until I had a chance to confer with you, and they must all be in the private waiting room by this time. I shall have my men take down the names and addresses of all of them, and at the same time try to determine which of the passengers

were riding on this car". "I think now", he said, turning again to Dr. Ariza, "that you can have your orderlies take the body off the train."

Dr. Ariza motioned through the window to two white clad orderlies who were standing on the platform holding a stretcher, and they immediately entered the car and carried Mr. Langley's body to the ambulance that was waiting a short distance away.

Captain Umana, Entergarde, and the rest of the group then walked out from the train onto the platform. Mrs. Langley, Elena, and the two sons were already there, surrounded by their relatives, and had been joined, also, by the American Consul and his secretary. Pablo and Juan were supporting their mother, who was in a state of extreme prostration. Entergarde walked over to the group, accompanied by Captain Umana, and they both offered their condolences to the family, as did the two doctors, who then took their leave, Dr. Ariza going off to the waiting ambulance and Dr. Beola into the waiting room in which the other passengers were already assembled.

"Don Pablo", said Captain Umana, "it's not necessary for any of you to remain here just now—your cars are waiting for you, and you best take your mother right home and get her to bed. However, don Pablo, I should like to see you in my office this afternoon at four o'clock."

"Thank you, Capitan", said Pablo and Juan together, and they shepherded their mother and sister to a waiting car, accompanied by the relatives who had come down to meet them.

Entergarde turned to greet the American Consul and his Secretary:

"How do you do, Mr. Waterfield; how do you do, Mr. **Brown**—this is a sad homecoming for Tom Langley, isn't it?"

"Yes indeed", said Waterfield as he and Brown shook hands with Entergarde and with Captain Umana. "we were terribly upset when we got the news; a bunch of us in the colony were coming down to meet the train, but we thought the Langleys weren't coming in till tomorrow. I guess Brown and I are about the only ones in the colony who know that they are here, and certainly the only ones that know about Langley's death.

We didn't have time to notify anyone after the Commissioner spoke to us."

"Mr. Waterfield", said Captain Umaña, "we're planning to have an autopsy of the body—one or two little things we'd like to clear up."

"That's all right as far as we're concerned, Captain", replied Waterfield, "this matter is entirely under your jurisdiction. I certainly appreciate your informing me, and I would be glad to learn the results of the autopsy—as soon, that is, as you feel that you can communicate them to me."

"Of course, Mr. Waterfield. I'd very much appreciate it if you would inform Mr. Langley's family that we will have the body ready late this afternoon so that it can be taken to the house tonight, and they can have the church services and burial tomorrow morning. I didn't like to speak about this to them just now."

"I'll be glad to, Captain. I'm going around there this afternoon and I'll make it a point to tell them that." Turning to Entergarde, he added:

"We were expecting you for a little shindig at the American Center for tomorrow night, but that'll be called off now, of course. Try to get around and see us at the house one of these nights, and we'll have a little drink together."

"I certainly will", said Entergarde, who had a special liking for this very agreeable young Consul. "Thanks very much."

"Well, we'll be off now", said Waterfield, "if there's anything we can do, please let us know."

He and Brown shook hands with Entergarde and Captain Umana, and went off to their waiting car.

Entergarde, now being left alone with Captain Umana, proceeded to relate to him all of the incidents that had taken place on the journey, including his conversation with Tom Langley, and the quarrel that had taken place between the two sons. He also gave the details of his conversation with the ladies of the Red Cross.

"As far as the questioning of the passengers is concerned, Capitán" he added, "I don't think you need me for that. The

conductor and trainmen and the policeman who was with us can help complete the data you need. I'm going off to the hotel, for a bath and lunch and a little rest, and when you get the autopsy and other reports this afternoon, give me a ring and I'll come around for a confab. I'll be at the Alferez, as usual."

"Very good, sefior Entergarde. Thank you very much for your help. We'll let you know as soon as we're ready for you."

They shook hands and Entergarde hailed a passing taxi.

"Hotel Alferez Real", he said.

"Your baggage checks, señor?" queried the taxi driver.

"Oh yes, to be sure", said Entergarde, "I've had a rather hectic trip and had forgotten about them—here they are."

The driver opened the door and Entergarde stepped into the cab and waited for the man to return with his bags. In another moment, they had been stowed away in the back, and the cab rolled off down 25th Street and into the spacious Avenida Uribe, turned left at the junction of 12th Street and the Cali River bridge, and stopped at the door of the Hotel Alferez Real.

C H A P T E R F I V E



ENTERGARDE, being a bachelor, had never wanted to go to the trouble of keeping up a house of his own, and preferred to live at the hotel. There were many first class ones in Cali, but he had stayed for years at the Alferez Real, and it was his favourite. As he walked into its spacious lobby, he was greeted by the Manager, an old friend of his, under whose expert direction this hotel had attained an enviable reputation throughout Colombia.

"Glad to see you again, senor Entergarde—are you going to stay with us for awhile?"

"I certainly am" said Entergarde, shaking hands, "but I don't know for just how long. Can I have my old room back?"

"Don't know if it's occupied or not, but in any case we'll give you one overlooking the river, which I know is what you want."

"You're right" smiled Entergarde, as he walked over to the desk to register. "What's new in Cali since I've been away?"

"Oh, everything is about the same—except Cali itself—we're putting a new face on the old town, as you can see."

"You certainly are", replied Entergarde, "I could see that as I came up from the station—new construction going on all around and half the old buildings are torn down."

"Well, we hope to be the biggest city in Colombia some day, you know, and if we could only get enough bricks and cement we could do the job faster, but still it's going along at a pretty good clip." "Here, boy, take senor Entergarde's bags up to his room", he added, handing the key to a boy.

"Well, much obliged—I'm glad to be back with you—see you later", and so saying, Entergarde followed the boy into the elevator.

After a brisk shower and a shave, he got into his dressing

gown, and going to the telephone, ordered luncheon to be sent up to his room, as he wanted to lie down for the usual midday 'siesta' after he had eaten. As he was waiting for his meal, he settled himself in a chair by the window, and gazed out across the Avenida Uribe at the Cali River, that was hurrying madly down to its junction with its big brother, the Cauca, some kilometres away. The waters were muddy and he gathered that it had been raining in the mountains. Across the bridge, in the big new Gutierrez building, he could see the offices of the Avianca, the Colombian affiliate of the Pan American Airways. People were hurrying in and out with air mail letters, and Entergarde reflected that through these same offices would pass the letters that Tom Langley's family would write to his relatives in the States about the tragedy of that morning. His thoughts went back over the incidents of the day and he reflected worriedly on what Dr. Beola had told him about Pablo's heated argument with his father. At that moment, a rumbling of the river brought him to his feet,—the waters were tumbling down with increasing violence. "Una creciente", he thought "a freshet" "what a beautiful sight!—it must be raining hard up in the mountains! If Dr. Beola were here, he would certainly use the old proverb as a metaphor to argue about Pablo's guilt—'cuando el rio suena, piedras lleva'—'when the river sounds, it carries stones'. Well, it certainly looks bad for the boy, but I don't believe he did it. Why should he have pinned that peculiar proverb on his Dad? I'm sure he didn't do it, and I'm going to make it my business to find out who did, even if it means that I can't take that vacation I've been looking forward to."

At a knock on the door, Entergarde arose and opened it for the waiter, who was standing outside with his lunch.

"Ah, I see you've got 'sancocho' today", he remarked with satisfaction—"I haven't seen that for almost a year!"

"Si señor—the maitre d'hotel knows that you like it and told me to bring it instead of the consomme."

"Please thank him for me", said Entergarde, as he settled himself to attack the 'sancocho'—a delicious thick soup, made of chicken, plantains, potatoes and yucca, plus a few trimmings.

"Colombians always miss this when they are away from home", he added.

"Si señor, you're right" agreed the waiter, as he finished arranging the table and withdrew from the room.

In order to do justice to the 'sancocho' and to the unaccustomed beefsteak, the like of which he had been unable to obtain in the States during the meat shortage, Entergarde banished from his mind all thoughts of the tragedy of the morning. Then, after finishing his meal, he lay down on his bed to take the 'siesta' he had promised himself.

C H A P T E R S I X



AT THE insistent ringing of the telephone, Entergarde sprang up with a start and took up the receiver.

"Outside call for you, señor", said the hotel operator.

"All right, put it on", said Entergarde, glancing at his watch. It was half past five. "Good thing this phone rang", he thought, "I was about to sleep through until tomorrow, I guess."

"Señor Entergarde?"

"Si Capitán." He recognized Captain Umaña's voice.

"We're ready for you now, could you come around?"

"I'll be right over, Capitán; just give me about ten minutes to get dressed and get around there—my siesta was running overtime!"

"All right, we'll be waiting for you; hasta luego."

"Adiós", said Entergarde "see you in a few minutes".

Ten minutes later, as promised, he walked into the Police Commissioner's office, just a few blocks away from the hotel. In the office, seated at a large table, were the Commissioner (known in Colombia as the "Comandante") his deputy, Captain Umaña, and the District Attorney, a young lawyer by the name of doctor Nicanor Forega. (In Colombia, as well as many other Latin American countries, lawyers and engineers, as well as doctors and dentists, are addressed by the title of "doctor").

The Commissioner, Major Ruperto Sandino, of distinguished appearance and military carriage, about 40 years of age, was a retired Army officer, as was his deputy, Captain Umafia. As Entergarde came into the room, all three men rose to greet him. Major Sandino spoke:

"Glad to see you back, Richard."

"Thank you, Major; I'm glad to see you again, and you, too, doctor Forega. How are you, Captain Umaña?—you and I have seen each other already."

He shook hands with all of them, and the four men then seated themselves around the table, lighting cigarettes.

"Well, Richard", said the Commissioner, "we have the autopsy report on the Langley case, and the other reports as well. Captain Umana has passed on to me the information that you gave him, and of course we have had the pencil, pad, ribbon and slip of paper all tested in the usual way."

"What does the autopsy report show?" inquired Entergarde.

"It shows", replied the Commissioner with a grave voice, "that Mr. Langley received a heavy shot of a highly concentrated solution of 'curare', which I don't have to tell you is the terrible poison used by the Indians in the Amazon region to tip the arrows of their bows."

Entergarde showed no surprise.

"Then he didn't die from 'angina de pecho' after all?" he asked.

"The doctors cannot be absolutely sure of that", replied Major Sandino, "the heart showed severe lesions which would seem to indicate that Mr. Langley did suffer an attack of 'angina' that may have proved fatal before the poison took effect. However, it is certain that if he had not died from 'angina', aggravated, let us say, by the shock of the injection, he would have died anyway from the effects of the poison. This was injected, as I say, in a highly concentrated form, and would have killed him within a few minutes. We had the viscera analyzed by our chemist."

Entergarde thought for a moment and then spoke:

"I was struck by the fact that that Red Cross ribbon was pinned way down in the lapel of his coat, and the pin was stuck straight in and not neatly, as the ladies usually pin those ribbons on. I even asked them about it and they told me that Langley's ribbon had been put on in the usual way. I suppose whoever pinned that paper on him later, under the ribbon, must have put the poison on the pin, and as the tunnel was dark he couldn't see where he placed the ribbon."

"No, **senor** Entergarde", interposed Captain Umana, "there was no poison on the pin."

"No poison on the pin?" echoed Entergarde in surprise, "why how was it administered, then?"

"By a shot in the left leg, about midway between the knee and the hip", said the Commissioner, "the mark is quite clear."

"Whew!", whistled Entergarde, "were the passengers searched?"

"Yes, in view of the information you had given Captain Umana, they were", replied the Commissioner,—**"both questioned and searched, and their baggage examined, but of course as the autopsy had not been performed yet, we did not know exactly what we were looking for, so the search was necessarily perfunctory. However, even if we had known at the time, we would indeed have been looking for a 'needle in a haystack' because as the windows of the train were mostly all open, there was plenty of chance for the murderer to throw the needle out, and the syringe, too."**

"Yes, that's right", assented Entergarde.

"Of course, we have the names and addresses of all the passengers and can get ahold of them at any time", continued the Commissioner. "They are all people who are known either in Cali or in towns around the Department of Valle or Department of Cauca. We have made as thorough a check as we could in this short time, on all of the names, and as far as we can determine, no one of them would have had any motive for attempting against the life of Mr. Langley. Of course, we shall continue this checking."

"What do the pencil, pad, ribbon, and slip of paper show?" inquired Entergarde.

"Well, the pencil shows prints that check with those we have on file of you as a Government agent, and prints that check with those of Mr. Langley."

"Yes, that's natural", said Entergarde, "I lent him that pencil and no one else had touched it as far as I know."

"So that doesn't tell us anything", went on Major Sandino, "nor the pad, either, for that only had Langley's prints on it."

"And how about the ribbon and the pin?" inquired Entergarde.

"Well, the ribbon shows nothing of any kind except the pin perforations; no stains nor foreign substances. As for the pin, it is much too small, of course, to take any prints of value, and in any case it was perfectly clean."

"And the slip of paper?", queried Entergarde.

"Absolutely clean of prints of any kind", replied the Commissioner. "About time to change that cigarette of yours", he added, proffering his case to Entergarde.

Entergarde accepted the fresh cigarette, lighted it from the butt of his old one, and crushed this out in the ash tray by his side.

"Anything special in Langley's pockets?", he inquired.

"No, nothing of consequence", answered Captain Umaña, "just the usual things any man would carry. His wallet, with plenty of money in it, some of it American and some Colombian, various coins in his pocket; penknife, keys, a couple of handkerchiefs, some business and personal letters of no consequence at all, and a fountain pen with no ink in it. We suppose he emptied it for the flight down from Miami to Panama, because they continued from Panama to Buenaventura by boat, as you know. Probably forgot to fill it again. No pencil."

"Yes, that's why he borrowed mine", said Entergarde. "Did you have the slip of paper analyzed?" he continued.

"Yes", replied the Commissioner; "it's a thin onion skin paper, of the kind used for air mail letters. Very good quality, as you no doubt observed. It could have been cut from any large sheet or from any letter that anyone might happen to have in his pocket."

"No prints of any kind on it, you say?"

"Not a thing", said the Commissioner, "other than a little dust that it picked up when it fell down on the floor as you pulled that ribbon off."

"Would it be possible?", interposed the District Attorney, "for a person sitting on a train to take a letter from his pocket and cut a small slip of paper from it, write on it and then fasten it onto a ribbon, without leaving any prints?" "Unless, of course, he wore gloves", he added.

"Perfectly possible", replied the Commissioner, "as a matter of fact, it's easy, because I just tried it myself before you came in. However, I'm sure the printing was done before cutting the paper, and not afterwards; doing it afterwards would have been harder. Using a handkerchief, and working in the way I mention, it's not difficult at all. Of course, I was sitting here at this desk, but I don't think it would be much harder on a train."

"You didn't find any gloves on the passengers?" asked Entergarde.

"Only three of the ladies carried gloves, none of the men", replied Captain Umaña.

"Of course", went on the Commissioner, "we checked up and found out just who was riding in your car, but the data is of little use to us, because almost anybody on your car, or on either of the two cars immediately forward or to the rear, could be the murderer."

"That's what I'm thinking", said Entergarde, "the job was done while we were going through that long tunnel, undoubtedly."

"Precisely", said the Commissioner, "anyone who knew in advance of Mr. Langley's arrival, could have had the injection all ready in his pocket, and the slip of paper, too, as a matter of fact", he added, turning to the District Attorney.

"No", interposed Entergarde, "that slip of paper must have been an afterthought, because whoever prepared it had no way of knowing that those Red Cross girls would be on that particular train."

"Yes, that's right", assented the Commissioner, "he had to take advantage of the ribbon to **hide** it."

"Exactly", said Entergarde, "he couldn't be absolutely sure that he would have time enough to get back to his seat before the train came out of the tunnel, and he wanted to make certain that the paper wouldn't be observed until some time after he *had* gotten back."

"Pretty risky", commented the District Attorney, "whoever did it had very little time to spare."

"Well, don't forget", said the Commissioner, "that murders are almost always risky. People who commit murders very seldom have an absolutely clear field and they are usually prepared to take chances. A murderer, as a rule, is desperate."

"And that's a very long tunnel", added Entergarde. "The train goes through it very slowly, too, because there's quite a grade at that spot."

"You're right", assented Captain Umaña,—“we figure that anyone in any of the three cars, that is to say, your car or the ones immediately forward and to the rear of yours, could have done the job without too much risk of getting caught."

"Undoubtedly the injection was put first and the ribbon pinned next", said Entergarde.

"No doubt about it", said the Commissioner, "because if he had pinned the ribbon first, Langley would have noticed it and given some kind of an alarm, thinking that it was a pickpocket trying to take advantage of the tunnel. He might even have grabbed ahold of him. But he was so paralyzed by the injection, or by the shock it produced, that pinning on the ribbon was easy."

"And even if he had been able to cry out", said Entergarde, "I doubt whether anyone would have heard him, because the echo of the tunnel is very marked, and, besides, there was no one sitting anywhere near him—at least there wasn't when I left the car."

"We've confirmed that with the conductor", said Captain Umana, "he remembers very well that when he went through that car taking tickets, there was no one sitting anywhere near Mr. Langley. Your car had very few people in it."

"The Red Cross girls told me that there were 15 people in our car", said Entergarde, "were you able to find out who they were?"

"Yes, we have the names of all of them", said Captain Umana, "but don't forget", he continued, "that there were 55 passengers altogether in the three cars we have mentioned. We know that there were 55 passengers on those three cars, because we fortunately have the Red Cross lists to help us, otherwise we

wouldn't be able to tell for sure. This not being a Pullman, but a day-coach train, no record is kept, of course, of the seats occupied."

"And I repeat", interposed the Commissioner, "that any one at all of those 55 people could be the murderer", "as far as physical possibility is concerned", he added.

Entergarde crushed out the butt of his cigarette, then taking his case out of his pocket, passed it around, and lit a fresh one himself. He drew on it thoughtfully for a moment, and addressed the Commissioner again:

"You have no leads then, as far as you can see at the present time?"

"Only one", replied the Commissioner, "as far as motive is concerned, we do have a very definite lead."

"Meaning Pablo Langley, I suppose", said Entergarde.

"Exactly", said the Commissioner. "Everything points to him being the culprit. As a matter of fact, I asked the District Attorney to be present here this afternoon because we have about decided to issue a warrant for his arrest."

"I am in entire agreement with the Commissioner on this", interposed Dr. Fórega, "we are going to issue the warrant today."

Entergarde arose from his chair, strode to the window, looked out over the Park for a moment and then resumed his seat.

"Do you really believe?" he asked, addressing the Commissioner, "that Pablo would have been capable of doing away with his own father?"

"Well, look at the facts yourself, Richard", replied the Major. "Here we have a young man who has started litigation against his father to try to get control of a large sum of money that is at present invested in the family cattle business. So far, the suit isn't going very well for him. He has frequent arguments with his father about the matter, and, in fact, had a very violent one on the train, as we know from the testimony given by Dr. Beola and by what you yourself told Captain Umana down at the station. Seeing that he isn't getting along very well in the Courts, and that his father doesn't budge from the position he has taken, he naturally reflects that if his father were to die,

his problem would be solved, because he would immediately come into full control of the fund, without strings of any kind attached. The 5 years would be long enough for him to get his business well under way, and after that time, if his mother lived, she would probably let him keep the money anyway.

"That line of reasoning is at once indicated from a knowledge of the facts brought out in the suit. The District Attorney is familiar with all this, because he has heard that litigation discussed many times at the Lawyers' Club. He also had the briefs under study this afternoon at his office, so that he could personally apprise himself of the provisions of the will. We had informed him, of course, of the incidents on the train.

"There was therefore a clear motive on Pablo's part to desire his father's death. Added to this we have the fact that he is a graduate chemical engineer, which would give him some knowledge of poisons and of their effects. It all seems to point pretty clearly to him. There was no one else on the train who would have had any motive at all, as far as we can see, to desire Mr. Langley's death, and you know as well as I do that Tom Langley was well liked by everyone and had no enemies."

"And yet", mused Entergarde, half to himself, "that peculiar proverb would seem to indicate that he had."

"You mean the words on the slip of paper?" inquired the Commissioner.

"Yes Major—what do you make of it?—it mystifies *me*"

"Well, I don't know. If we assume that Pablo is guilty, we might interpret it to mean that he measured his father by the same standards by which his father measured him, and Pablo was often heard to say that his father esteemed him very slightly. But I certainly don't think that we can convict the young man on the basis of any hypothetical interpretation of that proverb. All we know is that the facts are against him, and we have to proceed accordingly,"

"Yes, I'll admit the facts are against him", said Entergarde, "I suppose", he added, turning to Captain Umana, "that you let him go home today out of consideration for his family?"

"Yes, that was one of the reasons I sent him home", replied Captain Umana, "and also because I did not feel that I could

hold him without consulting with the Commissioner and the District Attorney. After all, he had not been caught red-handed. However, you may have noticed that I instructed two officers to follow their car in a Jeep."

"I did notice that", replied Entergarde, "and I heard you tell him to come around here at 4 this afternoon."

"Exactly", said Captain Umana, "those men followed at a prudent distance so that they would not be noticed by the family or by people in the street, and kept the house under discreet observation to be sure that he did not leave it until it was time for him to come here. They followed him here and back, and will keep him under observation until we arrest him tomorrow."

"At what time will that be?" inquired Entergarde.

"Immediately after the funeral" answered the Commissioner, "out of consideration for Maria Langley and the rest of the family, we don't want to pick him up before. But he will be kept under the strictest watch without the family being aware of it."

Entergarde reflected for a moment.

"What did he say when you questioned him this afternoon?", he asked.

"Well", replied Captain Umana, "he was very much upset, of course, or pretended to be, and had difficulty in answering the questions. He admitted, however, that he had had frequent quarrels with his father, and he admitted to the argument on the train. Naturally, he denied having killed him."

"Did he say he had any idea who might have done it?" asked Entergarde.

"No," replied Captain Umana. "he said that his father had no enemies that he knew of, and that he couldn't think who would have wanted to commit such a crime."

"Are you going to question Juan?", asked Entergarde.

"Yes, but later on", said the Commissioner. "There is nothing at all to connect him with the crime, but we will, of course, question him as a matter of routine. However, we'll wait a few days, because I think that any more trouble right now would just about kill his mother."

Entergarde turned suddenly to the District Attorney.

"Tell me, Dr. Forega, is there any provision in that will as to who administers the money in case Pablo should die or be unable, for some reason, to attend to his affairs?"

"Yes, **señor Entergarde**—the grandfather naturally did not foresee such a situation as this, but the will definitely states that if Pablo should die or become unable to attend to his affairs, the management of the fund passes to Juan, under the same conditions."

"Thank you", said Entergarde. "Now I want to point out", he continued, "that assuming that Pablo has any common sense at all, and I'm sure you'll all agree that he has, he would have been able to figure out very easily that if he killed his father he would lose the management of the money, so he would only be cutting off his nose to spite his face."

"Yes, he could easily see that he would be the logical suspect", replied Dr. Forega, "and perhaps even be arrested, but between that and being convicted is a big step, and he may have felt that we wouldn't be able to convict him and that therefore his troubles would only be temporary. And as far as that's concerned, he would be **right**—we have to have **proof** and if we don't get proof we'll have to let him go."

"And that, Richard, is where you come in" said the Commissioner.

Entergarde turned to him.

"Major" he said, "are you thinking of putting me on this case?"

"I don't see how I can help it", replied the Commissioner, "we're very understaffed right now, and some of our best investigators are head over heels in work on that case of those international **crooks**—the one that broke just before you left for the States. Besides, because of your special training, you're the logical person to handle this. We've got to work quickly on this matter of **Pablo**—**either** prove him guilty or let him go, because we can't hold him very long just on suspicion. Not only that the law doesn't let us do it, but his mother's people are so powerful that we'd get into a peck of trouble."

"By the way, Dr. Forega", said Entergarde, "what are you going to charge him with?"

"Attempted homicide", replied the District Attorney, "we can't charge him with homicide because the doctors are unable to assure us that he died from the effects of the poison; as a matter of fact the indications are that 'angina' was the direct cause. Naturally, as the Commissioner said, he would have died from the **poison** anyway, but under the circumstances we don't feel that any charge but attempted homicide would be justified."

"Bad enough for him", observed Entergarde. "However, I suppose that if you didn't arrest him, a lot of people would think that you ought to, so perhaps it's just as well to bring things to a head."

"And now, Major", he continued, turning to the Commissioner, "I had been looking forward to a rest, and there are some things on my ranch that want attending to, but if you need me, I'll certainly be glad to help out. I don't think that Pablo is guilty, and I don't believe that any of you really do, either, but I realize that as **officers** of the law you have to issue that warrant. He's the logical **suspect**—no doubt about that."

The Commissioner smiled.

"Regardless of what our personal opinions may be, Richard", he said, "our duty is clear, as you say. If Pablo isn't guilty, I only hope you'll be able to find out who is, and I'm sure you can do it if anyone can."

"Thanks, Major", replied Entergarde. "There's **only** one thing I would like to request—please let me have tomorrow and half of the next day to attend to some personal affairs, and I'll be ready to start in day after tomorrow, in the afternoon. O. K.?"

"Quite all right", replied the Commissioner, "I know that once you get started, things will move fast."

"Don't be too sure", said Entergarde, "this is going to be a tough case to crack. I haven't even got any ideas yet."

"Well", he continued, rising, "I guess there isn't anything more to say today, so I'd best be getting along to dinner."

And shaking hands with all three men, he directed his steps again towards the Hotel.

C H A P T E R S E V E N



IT WAS almost eight o'clock as Entergarde walked into the dining room of the *Alferez Real*, and most of the guests had already eaten and left. He took a seat by the window and as he waited for his meal to be served, looked out again at the waters of the *Cali* river, as he had done that afternoon. The multi-coloured neon lights of the buildings on both sides of the river, lent an enchanted glow to the balmy atmosphere of the tropical night, and the jealous stars seemed to shine with a more determined brightness as if to prove that no mere invention of puny man could hope to compete with the candles of God that were already old and wise when they had lighted our Saviour on His journey. The old moon, beginning to arrive again at fullness after its prolonged and wearisome travels, smiled in satisfaction at the thought that a few nights hence neither neon lights nor stars would avail against its own all-embracing brightness. It was an enchanting sight, and Entergarde sat spellbound.

"Fairyland", he thought, "Paradise". "Only Miami and Havana, seen from the air on a clear night are equal to it!"

He was aroused from his reverie by the arrival of the waiter, and after finishing his meal he went out for his first stroll, in almost a year, around his native city.

Crossing 12th. Street, he reached the new Avenida Colombia, and then followed this in its parallel course along the *Cali* river. Although, as he had observed earlier in the day, it had been raining in the mountains, no rain had fallen in the vicinity of *Cali*, and the streets were dry. On the 8th. Street bridge, he stopped to watch a group of shouting youngsters scooping up minnows in the water below with big nets. In a moment their forms were darkened as the fickle moon hid its face under an approaching cloud, and Entergarde continued his walk up towards the *Penon*,

a residential district of the city, situated on a low hill. His attention was caught by two men, with large armsful of black bordered, printed notices that they were affixing to the walls with buckets of paste that they carried. He stopped and read;

THOMAS F. LANGLEY

has died

His widow and children invite
attendance at the burial services
to be held tomorrow morning
at the Cathedral, at 9. a. m., and
later to accompany the deceased to
the Cemetery.—

There were many others in identical form, on which appeared the names of Clubs, the Cattlemen's Association, and relatives and friends of the Langleys, each one of them also inviting attendance at the services and burial.

"Curious customs we have here in Colombia", mused Entergarde, "this would look very queer in the States, but Americans down here are used to it and like it—I notice there's one in the name of the American Society. It's rather nice, I think, and indicates that death is a matter of interest to everyone—the bereaved family doesn't feel so much alone that way. I must be up in time to go to those services."

(It must be explained here that the custom in Colombia is to effect burial of deceased persons either on the same day of death or on the day following.)

He resumed his walk through the Penon, and reaching the summit of the hill, continued along the Avenida Belalcázar until he came to the junction of the 'Carretera al Mar'—(Road to the Sea), that had just been completed after many years of persistent effort, and he reflected with satisfaction that Cali could now boast a highway over the mountains to Buenaventura.

"Must try that route sometime", he thought, "instead of making the trip by train or plane."

He continued his walk, following the bend of the Avenue, and came presently to the 'Barrio Centenario', Cali's newest and

finest residential section, constructed in commemoration of the 400th. anniversary of the founding of the city. Lighted **windows** in one of the houses, and large groups of people dressed in black, entering and leaving the house, reminded him that he had arrived at the residence of the Langleys. Before dinner, he had donned a dark suit and black tie, thinking that he might call in for a moment to pay his respects here. He now entered and exchanged sober greetings with several of his friends, and with members of Mrs. Langley's family. The immediate family was not to be seen; they had retired to their rooms, and Entergarde understood that the trials of the day had been too severe for them to be present. The **coffin** reposed on a large table in the hall, flanked by flowers on all sides, and by candles that were set in huge copper candelabras. A black robed priest was intoning a prayer, with responses from those assembled about.

After remaining for some fifteen minutes, Entergarde sent renewed condolences to the family through one of Mrs. Langley's sisters, and betook himself once more to the hotel. Reaching his room, he undressed and sat in his dressing gown, revolving in his mind the events of the day. He was puzzled, in particular, by the words pencilled on the slip of paper which he had found attached to the ribbon in Langley's lapel.

"Con La Vara Con Que Mides". . . , he mused,—“it certainly has a Biblical sound”.

With a sudden impulse, he went over to his table, opened a drawer and took out the Spanish Bible which he had carried in his suit case, as was his custom on all his travels. Resuming his seat, he opened to Proverbs and painstakingly went through its 27 pages in his search for the origin of the phrase. "No", he finally said to himself, "it isn't **here**—I wonder if it would be in the New **Testament?**”

Turning to the Gospels, he continued his search. He did not have to go very far, for in Matthew, Chapter 7 Verses 1 and 2, he found the following:

"No juzguéis a los demás, si no queréis ser juzgados.

Porque con el mismo juicio que
juzgáreis, habéis de ser juzgados,
y con la misma medida que midieréis
seréis medidos vosotros."

"Well, that's it, all right", he thought, "except that in the form of a proverb, as we use it, the plural has been changed to singular, and the word 'vara' substituted for 'medida'. However, the meaning is the same and its origin is clear. Wonder how it sounds in English?"

He replaced the Bible in the drawer, went to the telephone, and asked to be connected with the night clerk. From the latter he inquired:

"Do you, by any chance, have an English language Bible down there?"

"Si señor," replied the clerk, "we always keep one on hand for the English speaking guests who require it."

"Could you send it up to me?"

"Of course, señor, right away."

When the Bible was delivered, he tipped the sleepy-eyed porter, and, sitting down again, turned to the same Chapter and Verse.

"Judge not, that you may not be
judged. For with what judgment
you judge you shall be judged,
and with what measure you mete,
it shall be measured to you again."

"Yes, it's just the same", mused Entergarde, reflecting that the satisfying of his curiosity had not brought him any nearer to a solution of why the words had been used.

"Well", he thought, "I guess I'll sleep over it". He looked at his watch and was surprised to find that it was almost 2. a. m. "No wonder I wasn't sleepy after that long 'siesta' I took this afternoon."

He made ready for bed, and then, throwing open his window, he looked out on the street. The strains of guitars and the sound of singing voices came to him over the night air, and though he

couldn't see from his window the house that was being favoured, he realized that it was just a short way around the corner. He could visualize the scene: the young lover in the street, accompanied by his friends, and the girl behind a half closed and darkened window, giggling delightedly in the company of her sisters, as they listened to the serenade. Entergarde heard the strains of "Flores Negras", then "Un Viejo Amor", and finally the beautiful music and words of "Perfidia". He hummed to himself:

"Mujer, si puedes tú con Dios hablar,
 Pregúntele si yo, alguna vez,
 Te he dejado de adorar-
 Y al mar-espejo de mi corazon,
 Las veces que me ha visto llorar
 La perfidia de tu amor!
 Te he buscado donde quiera que yo voy, y no te puedo
 hallar,
 Por que quiero otros besos si tus labios no me quieren
 ya besar?
 Y tú-quién sabe por donde andarás?
 Quién sabe que venturas tendrás?
 Que lejos estas de mí!"*

He then hummed the air again, this time using the English words that he himself had adapted to it some years ago, at the behest of one of his American friends:

"Woman, if thou canst with God commune,
 Ask Him if I have ever ceased to adore thee—
 And ask the sea, that mirror of my heart,
 The times it has seen me weep over the perfidy of thy love.
 I have sought thee wherever I have gone, and cannot find
 thee,
 Why do I desire other kisses, if thy lips wish not to kiss me?"

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And **thou**—**who** knows whither thou goest?
Who knows what adventures thou mayest have?
So far art thou from me!

"Not so good", thought Entergarde, "you lose the cadence of a song when you try to translate it from one language into another. It just goes to prove that the two cultures are complementary to each other and cannot be fused—each has something that the other lacks and therefore each can find something of value to itself in the other."

And to the strains of "Yo Soy Colombiano" that the serenaders were now singing, Entergarde dropped off to sleep.

C H A P T E R E I G H T



HE WAS aroused the next morning by the chimes of "La Ermita", whose beautiful Gothic spires reared themselves heavenwards a little distance from the hotel. Noting the lateness of the hour, he hurriedly bathed, dressed again in his dark suit, and went down to the dining room for his breakfast. The evening papers of the day before, had carried the news of Tom Langley's death, but had not said anything about the homicidal attempt, because the police had not given out as yet the information regarding the autopsy. They had commented questioningly on the reason for the interrogation and searching of the passengers, in the matter of a death that had seemed, from all appearances, to be due to perfectly natural causes.

The morning papers, however, gave full details regarding the poison found, and in their columns speculation was rife as to who had committed the attack on Mr. Langley. No mention was made of possible suspects, because the police, as a matter of precaution, had not communicated to the newspapers their intention to arrest Pablo. Entergarde read the accounts with interest, and speculated on the bombshell that would fall when Pablo's arrest took place later in the day. He knew, however, that there would be many people who would not be surprised at this development.

Finishing his breakfast, he left the hotel and betook himself towards the Plaza de Caycedo, just two blocks away. It was now close to nine o'clock, and as he reached the Plaza he perceived the long procession of people who were coming up 11th Street, accompanied by numerous victorias, in each of which had been placed a huge wreath adorned with a black ribbon, bearing in gold letters the name of the person or family who had sent it. Behind the victorias came the empty hearse, and then three priests accompanied by their acolytes. Then came a group

of men sadly bearing the coffin. Among these he noticed Juan and Pablo, as well as other relatives of the Langley family, and several Americans. Behind these, came a large group of persons who had accompanied the coffin from the house.

The procession arrived at the doors of the majestic cathedral, whose chimes were meanwhile tolling mournfully, paused a moment while the first rites were administered, and then the bier was carried in and set at the head of the nave, lighted candles being placed about it. The solemn Mass for the eternal rest of the departed soul then began.

The Cathedral had meanwhile filled with people, and Entergerde reflected that Tom Langley, who was himself a Catholic, had attended many funerals in this same Church. He entered, remained throughout the hour-long services, and then left, as the procession wound its mournful way towards the cemetery, the coffin still being borne by men on foot, and the hearse riding empty ahead of them. He noted that Pablo and Juan were now riding with their mother and sister in a closed car, accompanied by two relatives. With sad reflections on this last journey of his good friend, he retraced his steps to the hotel, went to his room and changed into old clothing, as he felt it necessary to spend the rest of the day on his ranch before starting in on the job that he had undertaken at the behest of the Commissioner. He then left the hotel again for the street.

When he reached the Avenida Uribe, the funeral procession had already passed, and he walked the three blocks to the garage where he had left his old car at the time he had departed for the States. He had given instructions to the man in charge to take it out frequently so that it would be in running condition when he returned, and he found that he had no trouble in starting it. He turned down towards the station, and driving along 25th street, came to the highway that leads, in a north-easterly direction, towards Palmira.

Following this highway, he soon passed the large military air base at 'Guabito', and noted that many new buildings were being put up by the Government to accommodate the increasing number of student flyers who were entering Army aviation,

partly from the Government military school at Bogota, and partly from civil life. He reflected on the enormous strides that had been made by Colombia in both civil and military aviation, and recalled that this country had been the first in the world to establish commercial flying, years ago when he had been a young man. The skill of Colombian pilots in flying safely, day in and day out, over these high and treacherous mountains, had often inspired admiring comments on the part of American Army fliers who had visited the country on special missions.

Continuing on the highway, he crossed the huge old bridge over the Cauca River, and paused to watch the brisk traffic in bananas, plantains, and bamboo poles (called in Colombia 'guadua'), that was being carried on, along the river banks below.

"This is really a scene for a movie", he thought.

Country people (known in Colombia as 'campesino'), cut huge bamboo poles in the luxuriant growths that are found many miles distant up-river, lash them together to form a raft, and then build themselves a little lean-to on the same raft, and float down the river to Cali, cooking, eating and sleeping meanwhile on their improvised floating home. Before starting out on their journey, they load the rafts with huge bunches of bananas and plantains and then, reaching their destination, they sell these, and at the same time dismember their rafts and sell the bamboo.

"No housing problem here" he reflected smilingly, "maybe the Housing Administration in the States could get some ideas from **this!**"

He continued on, passing huge ranches whose smell of cattle was sweet in his nostrils. Although only a short distance from Cali, tropical growth was heavier and more luxuriant here, because of the proximity to the Cauca River, prodigal, as always, in nourishing the soil. He came, after a bit, to an enormous bend in the road, known as "La Vuelta de los Cordobas" (The Turn of the Cordobas), named after a family which had formerly owned much of the land thereabouts. Here the river made a sharp turn and in other years, in times of heavy rains, had been wont to push angrily over the banks, flooding the highway

with majestic ruthlessness and interrupting traffic for days. However the Colombians, accustomed through many long years to waging defensive battles against Nature's excesses, had constructed mighty walls of rock, thus putting an end to the river's angry incursions. The waters, which Entergarde noted were again rising, measured their strength against the height and breadth of these walls, and then, prudently turning, resumed their normal course. Crews of men, with road machines, were already engaged in paving the highway at this point, secure in the knowledge that man's ingenuity had again triumphed over the rugged strength of Nature.

The road, deviating now from the course of the river, bore him on through Candelaria to Palmira, the center of large sugar mills and cattle estates. Continuing on through the town, he came again to the open road, and some miles further on paused to gaze at the old ranch house of "El Paraíso", nestling in the protective hills to his right. This was the scene of the beautiful and historical novel "Maria", which brought tears to Colombian eyes and immortality to the pen of its author, Jorge Isaacs.

Further along, a turn to the right brought him to his own ranch, which bordered on the highway. He had spent only a little more than an hour on the trip. Getting out of his car, he opened the old iron gate, which he noted was in a more dilapidated condition than ever. A winding road bore him to the ranch house, where he perceived his 'mayordomo' and 'vaqueros' (cowboys) branding calves that were being separated from their mothers. He reflected on the difference in methods of raising calves in this country and that employed in the States. Here the calves are left to run with their mothers, for about half a day, until such time as they become weaned, some nine months or a year later. The next morning, the calves are brought back to their mothers at milking time in the early morning, and allowed to suck for a few moments, to bring down the milk. If this is not done, very few of the cows will give their milk. Only two nipples are milked and two are left for the calf. The result of this is a relatively small milk yield, but the ranch owners are more interested in raising stock than in selling milk.

When his men observed him, they came running forward in delighted surprise. He greeted them **affectionately**—all of them had worked with him for years, and he regarded them as almost part of his family.

Among them was his 'mayordomo'—a tall, grizzled man, with a sun-burned, leathery face, and sleek black hair which betokened his Indian blood. Lean and strong, he strode forward in his flapping leather chaps, his long spurs clanking on the ground. He and Entergarde greeted each other delightedly.

A pair of chaps, and one of his favourite horses was immediately provided for him, and mounting, he rode off with his 'mayordomo' to inspect the old ranch that he had not seen for almost a year.

C H A P T E R N I N E



IT WAS late that night when Entergarde again reached the Hotel and he was so wearied after his long ride around the ranch, that after a frugal meal he went directly to bed. At eight the next morning, he was seated in the dining room at breakfast, reading, at the same time, the accounts in the newspapers of the developments in the Langley case. There were detailed accounts of the funeral, and in parallel columns the news of the arrest of Pablo, which had taken place at about one o'clock in the afternoon. In the editorial columns he found mixed sentiments as to the justice of this arrest.

At nine o'clock he was again in his room, arranging some of his things, when the telephone rang.

"Outside call for you, señor".

Entergarde directed that it be put through.

"Señor Entergarde?", queried a voice in meticulous Spanish.

"Sí señor, a sus órdenes—whom am I speaking with?"

"Sefior Entergarde, I don't believe you know me—my name is Gaspar Tobon Almendáres—I am a furniture importer here in Cali."

"Yes, senior Tobón—I know you by sight. What can I do for you?"

"I would like to invite you to have lunch with me today, sefior Entergarde, at the Hotel Columbus."

Entergarde reflected for a moment.

"What do you wish to see me about, sefior Tobon?"

"About the Langley case—I have some important information for you."

"Why don't you go to the Police Commissioner or to the District Attorney?"

"Well, this is purely private information and I thought best to

communicate it to you, as I know that sometimes you have worked on cases of this sort."

"I am not working on this case at present", countered Entergarde, feeling that a half truth was sufficient.

"No matter, senor Entergarde—you will know to whom to transmit the information—I should very much appreciate it if you would lunch with me."

"All right, I'll accept", said Entergarde suddenly, "where shall I meet you and at what time?"

"If convenient, I will call for you at the Alferez at 12 o'clock".

"That will be fine—I will be waiting for you."

"Thank you, senor Entergarde—hasta luego, then."

"Adios", said Entergarde, and hung up.

He sat thinking for a moment, and then continued with the arrangement of his things; then for the next few hours occupied himself with writing a detailed report for his superiors on his activities in the States. At a quarter to twelve, he prepared himself to go out, and before going down to the lobby, glanced casually out of the window. Standing at the corner, he saw Mr. Tobon talking with another man who, after a moment, shook hands with him and walked off. Entergarde left the window, closed his room, and went down to the lobby in the elevator. Mr. Tobon was already there. Entergarde had already recognized him from the window as the same gentleman he had seen entering his car at Dagua, at the time he had greeted Mr. Miranda and Mr. Ortega, when they had gotten on the train in company with the ladies of the Red Cross.

Mr. Tobon was a pleasant looking gentleman of about middle age, clean shaven, of medium height, and black hair just beginning to turn gray at the temples. His figure was spare, and his dark complexion denoted something, Entergarde thought, of Arab ancestry. As he caught sight of Entergarde, he stepped forward with alacrity and held out his hand.

"Señor Entergarde, I am very pleased to see you. I know who you are and I know you by sight, of course, but never had the honor to meet you. Gaspar Tobon, a sus órdenes."

"Thank you, senor Tobon, I'm glad to know you, also", said

Entergarde, taking the outstretched hand. "Would you like to have a drink with me before we go out?"

"Permit me to invite you, señor Entergarde; we can have our drinks at the table while we are ordering lunch." "A very sad occurrence, that of Mr. Langley", he added; "I was on the train with you."

"Yes, I know you were", assented Entergarde, "I saw you there."

They stepped out into the street together and turned towards the Plaza Caycedo. Five blocks further on, they arrived at the Hotel Columbus.

Entergarde stopped to gaze at the huge addition to this fine hotel that was going up.

"Whew!", he commented, "I hadn't seen this before—what are they planning to do here?"

"An addition to the hotel", replied Tobon, "the owners are very enterprising, as you know".

"Yes, I know", said Entergarde, "but can Cali provide enough guests for two big hotels like the Alferéz and the Columbus, plus all the smaller ones that we have?"

"It looks so", said Tobón.—"hotels here are always filled, and remember that we are to have the Eucharistic Congress here this year."

"Yes, that's right," assented Entergarde, and taking the elevator, they proceeded to the luxurious upstairs dining room, secured a table, and ordered their drinks and lunch.

"Well now, what is it you wish to tell me, señor Tobón?", inquired Entergarde.

"Just this, señor. I have seen the news in the paper this morning about Pablo Langley being arrested for the murder of his father."

"Yes, I saw it too—what about it?"

"Well, they have the wrong man, that's all."

"That's a matter for the Police Commissioner and the District Attorney to decide, I think", replied Entergarde dryly.

"When you hear what I have to say, they will release him."

Entergarde looked at him inquiringly.

"I know who killed Mr. Langley, sefior Entergarde."

"**What!**", exclaimed Entergarde, starting up in surprise, in spite of himself. "Who killed him?" he asked, more calmly, settling himself in his seat.

"It was his son Juan", replied Tobon, his eyes blazing, and tapping the table with his knife as he spoke, as though to lend greater emphasis to his words. "And", he continued, "I don't propose to allow Pablo to suffer for Juan's crime if I can help it."

"Naturally not", replied Entergarde, as, having finished with his soup, he proceeded with the fish course that the waiter had put before him. "I suppose", he continued, "that you have some good basis for making this grave **accusation?**"

"Si, senior, I have".

"Well, out with it then; wait a moment", he continued; "you understand that you are not speaking to me in confidence, and that anything you say will be communicated by me to the Police Commissioner and to the District Attorney?"

"Yes, I understand that perfectly".

"All right then, proceed."

"Pablo would not have committed that crime, senior Entergarde, because in view of the provisions of that will, which almost everybody in **Cali** knows about, he would immediately lose the administration of the money that the police say he was trying to get."

"That **is** a purely hypothetical conclusion, senior Tobon, and besides, I'm not interested in hearing about whether Pablo couldn't or wouldn't have committed the crime; I'm interested in hearing about **Juan—whom** you are accusing."

"Juan had two motives in desiring to see his father dead", said Tobon.

"Now we're getting somewhere", said Entergarde, "what were they?"

"Well, in the first place, Juan wanted to marry a girl that his father didn't approve **of—he** is head over heels in love with her, but his father wouldn't hear of the marriage."

"I hadn't heard about that", said Entergarde, "who's the girl?"

Tobon told him.

"What does his mother think about the marriage?" inquired Entergarde.

"She says she won't oppose her son if he insists, but at the same time she made him promise that as long as his father were alive, he would respect his wishes."

"So Juan couldn't marry the girl as long as his father were alive", observed Entergarde, "is that right?"

"Yes, that's right."

They went on to their meat course, with which the waiter served a bottle of expensive wine that Tobon had ordered.

Entergarde reflected for a moment.

"Who told you all this?" he asked, "Juan?"

"No, I don't know Juan personally—it was told to me by a good friend of his who is also a friend of mine."

"Who is he?" inquired Entergarde.

Tobon gave him the name and Entergarde noted it down, at the same time noting down the name of the girl that Tobon had said Juan wanted to marry.

"Sounds like a Spanish name—that name of your friend", observed Entergarde.

"Sí, sefior Entergarde, he is a Spaniard; you will find him registered here in the foreigners' file of the Police Department—all foreigners here have to be registered, you know."

"Yes, I know that," answered Entergarde dryly.

"All right", he continued, "that's one motive—you spoke of two—what's the second?"

"The second motive is", said Tobon, "that Juan knew that Pablo would be accused of the crime, because all appearances were against him."

"That's not a motive", corrected Entergarde, "you're just advancing a theory about what Juan might or might not have thought."

"Wait a moment, sefior Entergarde—Juan must have known that if his father were murdered, Pablo would be accused of the crime. Is that correct?"

"All right", assented Entergarde, "I'm willing to admit for

the sake of argument that that may be correct. What next?"

"Well, Juan knowing that **Pablo** would be arrested, could figure out that he himself would come into possession of the money that Pablo was supposed to administer if his father died, because Pablo would be unable to administer it."

"Possession as owner no; control yes", corrected **Entergarde**.

"All right, control", assented Tobon, "now, with absolute control of the money, he could go ahead with his plans to marry even if his mother should withdraw her consent."

They had by now finished their meat course, and the waiter served dessert.

"I don't understand", said **Entergarde**, "didn't you say that his mother had given her consent?"

"Yes, she had, but there was always a chance that she might withdraw it in view of the circumstances of her husband's death. And if Juan had control of the money, he could more or less force assent, under threat to injure the family business."

"**Pretty far fetched**", observed **Entergarde**—"you're making him out to be a rather low sort of fellow, seems to me."

"**Proper** investigation will show that he is, senor **Entergarde**."

"I'll reserve judgment until that investigation has been made", replied **Entergarde**.

"Now", he continued, "you have propounded what you regard as two **motives**—have you any reason for supposing that Juan had any means of obtaining such a rare poison as **curare**?"

"A very good and precise reason, senor **Entergarde**; Juan had a much better opportunity of obtaining it than Pablo had."

"How is that?" queried **Entergarde**, his eyes narrowing.

"I don't know whether you know it or not, senor **Entergarde**, but Juan, soon after graduating from law school in **Bogotá**, was sent by the National Government to the Amazon region—the **Putumayo**—on some official investigation or other."

"Is that so?" said **Entergarde** in surprise, "I didn't know about that."

"Well, he was only gone for a couple of months, and maybe you were out of the country at the time. Furthermore, while he was there, he had occasion to learn how to administer in-

jections, for various fevers and things, because there were very few doctors there at the time, and Juan made it a point to learn so that he could help out in case of need."

"You seem to have pretty complete information on Juan's activities", said Entergarde, "where did you find out all this?"

"From my friend whom I mentioned—he knows Juan very well."

Coffee and cigars were now served, and *pousse cafés*, as well.

As they were smoking over their coffee, Entergarde suddenly addressed his companion:

"Why have you told me all this, *senor Tobón?*—"are you a special friend of Pablo's, or do you bear some grudge against Juan?"

"Neither one nor the other, *senor Entergarde*", replied Tobon, "I once had a small business transaction with Pablo in the payment of some cattle for account of a friend, and the young man impressed me very favourably, but I am not a friend of his. As for Juan, I don't know him at all. I am only looking to see justice done."

"Well," said Entergarde, looking at his watch and rising, "I thank you very much for the lunch and for the information—I'm not used to such a big meal in the middle of the day, and I'm afraid it's going to make me lazy for work this afternoon. But I have a lot to do, so I'll say good bye now."

"I'm glad to have had you, *senor Entergarde*,—just a moment while I pay the check and I'll go out with you."

Tobon paid the check and they left the dining room together.

"I'm sure you'll find", he said to Entergarde, as they descended in the elevator together, "that everything I have told you is true and that Pablo isn't guilty of this crime."

"Well, I hope he isn't, and I hope Juan isn't, either", commented Entergarde.

They parted at the door and Tobon turned left and walked up Ninth Avenue. Entergarde turned his steps up Eleventh Street, in the direction of the Plaza, on his way to the Police Commissioner's office.

Suddenly, across the way, he noticed the '*campesino*', or

countryman, that one of the Red Cross girls had pointed out to him on the train, as having been a passenger in his car. Noting that the man had not observed him, he slowed his steps, crossed the street, and followed him.

The man turned right and walked down three blocks until he came to 14th Street, and walking along that street for some distance, entered a small "pension" whose doors were standing open.

Entergarde walked over to a policeman who was standing on the corner. He showed his badge and said:

"I'm Richard Entergarde, special agent."

"Si sefior, I know you."

"Did you see that man that just walked into that pension there?"

"Si sefior, I saw him."

"Well, you stand here till he comes out, and be sure that he doesn't observe that you are watching him. Then go in to the desk and find out who he is and where he comes from, and bring me that information right away to the Comandante's office. If I'm not there, leave it for me in writing."

"I will, sefior."

"And tell them at the pension that they're not to mention to their guest or to anyone else, that you made the inquiry. Orders of the Police Department and that they will do well to obey them."

"Si sefior, I understand."

Entergarde took his leave of the policeman and turned his steps once more in the direction of the Police Commissioner's office.

C H A P T E R T E N



“**W**ELL, Major Sandino”, said Entergarde, as he stepped briskly into the latter’s office, “here I am—all ready to begin.”

The Commissioner, who was seated at his desk dictating a letter to his secretary, arose with a smile on his face and extended his hand.

“Glad you’re getting started, Richard”, he said, “we’ve had Pablo ‘incomunicado’ since one o’clock yesterday and you’ll have to work fast, for some of the papers were complaining this morning, as you may have noticed.”

“Yes, I noticed it, Major, but I don’t want to create any false illusions. I’m quite certain that we won’t be able to break this case during the few days that you are able to hold Pablo—if break it we ever do. I’ll do my best, but I’m afraid Pablo will be out long before I’m finished.”

“Well, let’s hope for the best”, said the Commissioner, “have you any news for me?”

“Yes, I have”, replied Entergarde, and he recounted in detail the incidents of his lunch with Tobón.

“Whew!”, whistled the Commissioner, “that complicates things—you’ll have to start checking on that data right away.”

“First thing I want to know”, said Entergarde, “is whether Juan was ever in the Putumayo or not. I knew that the Government had sent him to different places, but I hadn’t heard that he’d been down there.”

“I can’t tell you about that, but the District Attorney, being a lawyer, might know. I’ll call him.”

He reached for the phone, got the District Attorney on the wire, and conversed with him for several minutes.

“Yes”, he said, hanging up and turning to Entergarde, “he says Juan was there soon after graduation on a short assignment.”

"He says **furthermore**", he continued, "that he can't issue any warrant for Juan's arrest on the basis of such an unsubstantiated charge as your friend **Tobón** is making."

"No, I know he can't," said Entergarde, "that wants a lot of checking yet. The fact that he was in the **Putumayo** and that he wanted to marry that **girl** doesn't say that he killed his **father**—he was never known to have had any quarrel with him, was **he?**"

"Not to my knowledge", said the Commissioner, "whereas Pablo's differences with his father were a matter of public comment."

"Yes, that's correct", said Entergarde.

"Now, Commissioner", he continued, "I want to ask you to let me see the pencil, pad, and ribbon, that I delivered to Captain **Umaña**. Also the slip of paper with the proverb."

"Of course", said the Commissioner, and at once directed his secretary to procure the articles from the proper Department.

"By the way", he said to Entergarde, "I just got this **cable**—read it".

Entergarde took the cable which was marked '**URGENT**', and dated the same day from Savannah, Georgia. It was addressed:

POLICE COMMISSIONER OF THE CITY OF CALI
CALI-COLOMBIA-SOUTH AMERICA-

and read:

'JUST RECEIVED FAMILY'S CABLE WITH SAD
NEWS OF MY BROTHER'S DEATH. STOP.
WILL ARRIVE IN CALI WITHIN A FEW DAYS
BY PLANE—

PHILIP LANGLEY—

"I know him", said Entergarde, handing the cable back to the Commissioner, "he's Tom **Langley's** twin brother. Was down here a couple of years ago and I was introduced to him over at the American Center. Very nice chap—very much like Tom."

"What do you think he's coming down for?" inquired the Commissioner.

"I understand that Tom Langley had some money invested up there with his brother and that his brother also had some money invested here with Tom", replied Entergarde. "No doubt he's coming down to square up accounts with the family."

"Yes, I suppose so," said the Commissioner. "What do you want?" he inquired from a police officer who had just come in.

"Con su permiso, mi Comandante, I have come to give some information requested by senor Entergarde."

Entergarde, turning, recognized the policeman he had left on watch at the 'pensión'. He explained the circumstances to the Commissioner. Then he addressed the policeman:

"What did you find out?", he queried.

"The man's name, senor Entergarde, is Talico Rosales Guasaca, and he lives in Piendamó, in the Department of Cauca."

"H'mm, sounds like he was Indian on his mother's side", remarked Entergarde.

(It must be explained here, for the benefit of such readers who may not be familiar with the fact, that in Latin America all persons have two last names—the first one is always their father's and the second one is always their mother's. In the present case, for example, "Talico" is the given name, "Rosales" is the father's last name and "Guasaca" the mother's last name. The individual, however, is always known by his father's name, and the mother's is only used in signatures, documents, etc., as a further means of identification. The name of the man we are speaking of would therefore be, for all ordinary purposes, "Talico Rosales". "Guasaca", the mother's family name, is clearly of Indian origin, as Entergarde remarked.)

"Comes from Piendamó, eh?" Entergarde inquired.

"Sí, senor, from Piendamó."

"Major, will you get out your lists and see if this name is on the list of passengers that were in my car?", requested Entergarde.

The Commissioner turned to his secretary, who had already brought in the articles previously requested, and asked her for the lists,

"Here they are, Comandante", said the secretary, and pro-

duced them from her desk. "I have them here **for re-copying.**"

Entergarde ran his finger down the list that the Commissioner handed him.

"Ah, here it is", he remarked, "the same name and the same town; thank the Lord for ~~that~~—it has saved us a good deal of time."

The major nodded. "Yes", he assented, "if this officer hadn't checked at the 'pensión', we would have had to interview each of the passengers in your car who wasn't known to us, in order to find out who this man was, and some of them must be out of town by now."

Entergarde commended the policeman for his work and the latter saluted and left.

"Major", said Entergarde, "may I have a copy of these passenger lists?"

"Of course", assented the Commissioner, "here's an extra one right here", and he handed Entergarde one of the copies.

"Thanks", said Entergarde, "and now", he added, "let's have a look at these things."

So saying, he walked over to the desk, and picking up each article one by one, examined them all carefully. When he came to the pencil, he pulled an exact duplicate of this out of his pocket, and compared the two carefully.

"You see", he observed to the Commissioner, "these two pencils are exactly alike in every particular". "Except for one thing", he added.

"Yes, I see that", replied the Commissioner, "they are both exactly alike, except that the one you lent Langley has some of the printing scratched off it."

"One of the letters is scratched off", amended Entergarde, "and", he added, "I'm going to make it my business to find out why that letter is scratched off, and I think when I find that out, then we'll have some light on that proverb and on the whole crime in general."

"**Whew!**", whistled the Commissioner, "a pretty slim **clue**—a pencil. Well, you have your own methods of working, so go to it."

"Major", said Entergarde, "will you give me a card to the Director of the Foreigners Registration Bureau in your Department? I may want to see some of his records."

"I certainly will", replied the Commissioner, and forthwith proceeded to write the desired introduction, with the necessary explanations.

"Thank you", said Entergarde, "now, another thing—will you put a Jeep at my disposal—I don't want it with a chauffeur—I want to drive it myself." "I notice they're quite the thing around here, now", he added.

"They certainly are popular", assented the Commissioner, "the streets and highways are full of them. A very useful car. We have a number of them in the Department; I'll be glad to let you have one."

"All right", said Entergarde. "I'd appreciate it if you would have it made ready for me tomorrow morning early, and please have the official license plates taken off and private ones put on. I don't want to be too conspicuous."

The Commissioner pressed a button and gave the necessary orders to a uniformed subordinate who appeared.

"All fixed", he said to Entergarde, "is there anything else you want?"

"There's one thing more", said Entergarde, "Piendamo is in the Department of Cauca, and I will have to have some kind of introduction to the authorities there to make investigations on this man **Rosales Guasacá**. How can we fix that?"

"We'll have to do that through the Governor", replied the Commissioner, "I tell you what I'll do—I'll see him first thing in the morning and ask him to phone the Governor of Cauca, in Popayan, to send down a letter by special courier, instructing the authorities in his Department to cooperate with you. How will that be?"

"Fine", said Entergarde, "what time do you think that letter will get down here?"

"Well", replied the Commissioner, "our Governor here gets to his office early—at about 8 o'clock—and if he can get through a call to Popayán say by about 8.30, and the letter is despatched

at nine by Jeep or motorcycle, it ought to be down here by about one o'clock—will that be time enough?"

"Yes", said Entergarde, "I'm going down to Dagua in the morning and I'll stop by here after lunch and pick it up, when I leave for Piendamó."

"All right", said the Commissioner, "if I'm not here, ask my secretary for it."

"Oh, by the way, Major", inquired Entergarde, "how did Pablo take his arrest?"

"Didn't say a thing", replied the Commissioner, "he was very sullen. My men went to the house to get him."

"Was his family around?" asked Entergarde.

"His mother and sister were in their rooms, and Pablo was in the living room with Juan, when our men went in. I sent plainclothesmen, so that no one would know what they were there for. Pablo asked permission to pack his bag, and when he came out with it he told Juan to tell his mother and sister that he had had a wire from the ranch manager saying that he was urgently needed there for a few days. Juan and Pablo said good bye to each other very affectionately, so my men tell me. They also said Juan was furious about the arrest and sent to tell me that it was unthinkable that his brother could have committed that crime."

"Yes", said Entergarde, "those two young men have always been very fond of each other. "I imagine", he added, "it will be pretty hard for Juan to keep the news from his mother and sister, now that it has come out in all the papers. They'll hear about it, one way or another."

"No doubt", assented the Commissioner. "Well", he added, "is there anything more you'll need before starting off?"

"No thanks, Major", said Entergarde. "I'll probably be gone for a few days", he added. "Don't worry about me. If you possibly can, try to find out in the meanwhile what the truth is about that affair of Juan with the girl. And if Philip Langley comes in while I'm gone, please give him my regards and tell him I'll see him when I get back."

"We won't worry about you", said the Commissioner. "If

anyone is able to take care of themselves, you are. And I'll be glad to give your message to Philip Langley."

"Well, that's about all for today, Major", said Entergarde, "I'll say good bye now, and I hope when I come back I'll have some news for you."

"Good bye, Richard—we'll be looking forward to seeing you."

Entergarde left the Commissioner's office and made his way to the Foreigners Registration Bureau. He presented the Commissioner's card to the Director, and showed his badge at the same time.

The Director welcomed him cordially.

"What can I do for you, *senor* Entergarde?"

"I'd like to look through some your records, if you please" said Entergarde, and so saying he handed a slip of paper to the Director.

The Director pressed a buzzer, ordered the records brought, and handed them to Entergarde.

"Here you are, *señor* Entergarde", he said. "Here are the records you want, and here's a pad of paper for any notations you wish to make, and you can sit right down here at this other desk and make yourself at home."

Entergarde thanked him, and sat down with the records and pad in front of him. He spent upwards of an hour making notes, then took leave of the Director, and returned to the hotel. It was by that time six o'clock.

CHAPTER ELEVEN



ENTERGARDE had an early dinner, spent some time chatting with friends in the lounge of the hotel, and then be-took himself to the movies. On returning, he went immediately to bed, as he wanted to start in early the next day on the job he had set himself to do.

At six the next morning, he was already in his bath, and by seven he had dressed and breakfasted. As he came out of the dining room, he was saluted in the hall by one of the policemen on duty in the Commissioner's office.

"Your Jeep is waiting for you outside, *senor* Entergarde."

"Thank you—is it all ready for a trip?"

"Sí *senor*,—gas, water, air in the tires, and tightened up all around."

Entergarde walked out into the street, received his Jeep, climbed into it, and drove off.

Turning up the Avenida Colombia, he followed the same route that he had taken on foot, the night of his arrival in Cali, and came presently to the Carretera al Mar.

"Well, it seems that I am going to use this highway sooner than I expected", he thought, "though I am not going all the way to Buenaventura this time."

The road carried him up into the mountains, and the gorgeous panorama of the Valley below unfolded beneath his eyes. As he proceeded further, the temperature became noticeably cooler, and he began to pass the country estates of the Cali families who made it a practice of taking their children into this colder climate to spend their vacations.

"Good for the malaria", he commented to himself.

Upon reaching the summit, the road dropped down again into the lowlands, and he soon found himself approaching the

small town of Dagua. As he drove into the town, he looked at his watch.

"Just an hour and a half from Cali", he said to himself, "not **bad—these** Jeeps certainly travel fast."

He drove up to the small hotel, parked at the side, and went in.

After a half hour consultation with the owner, who was an old friend of his, he left the hotel, and directing his steps to the Plaza nearby, visited two or **three** of the largest stores. He then returned to his Jeep and set out again for Cali.

Returning to the Alferéz Real, he went up to his room, packed a small bag, and came down into the dining room for lunch. It was by now **12.30**.

After lunch, he notified the hotel that he would be gone for a few days, asking them to hold his room. He then had his bag placed in the Jeep, and drove to the Commissioner's office, where he **found** the latter's secretary awaiting him with the letter that had arrived a few moments before from the Governor of Cauca. He then headed South towards San Fernando.

Driving straight through this residential section, he kept South, past the rolling golf links of the Country Club, and passing the enormous properties of the **Garcés** family and the extensive Hacienda of 'Piedra **Grande**', he came presently to the boundaries of the 'Asombro', another large cattle estate. Turning left, he soon arrived at 'Hormiguero', and crossed the new bridge over the Cauca River, the river being the boundary line between the Departments of **Valle** and of Cauca at this point. A short distance further on, he came to the bustling river town of Puerto Tejada, center of a large cocoa growing industry, and then to the old sleepy town of **Santander**, his Jeep bumping merrily over the cobblestones of its ancient streets. From there, the road climbed into the mountains, and ascending steadily, carried him through Pescador and Tunia, to Piendamó.

He glanced at his watch. "Four o'clock", he commented, "still time to see the Mayor."

Piendamó is a small town and it was not difficult for him to find his way to the Mayor's office. He sent in his card, together

with the letter he had received in Cali from the Governor of Cauca. The Mayor received him cordially.

"Pleased to know you senior Entergerde—" Alcides Forero Roldán—a sus ordenes."

"Thank you, sefior Forero, very pleased to know you, too. I want to know if you can tell me anything about a man called Talico Rosales Guasaca, whom I understand lives here."

"Yes, I know him slightly, sefior Entergerde—he lives here and is in farming in a small way. He has a pretty valuable piece of property on the outskirts of this town. We had some trouble with him a few years ago."

"You had some trouble with him?" inquired Entergerde, "what about?"

"Well, I can't tell you exactly", replied the Mayor, "I wasn't in the Municipal Government at the time, but come across the way here and I'll introduce you to the City Attorney, who has all the records on file."

So saying, he piloted Entergerde across the street and introduced him to the functionary in question.

This gentleman very cordially placed at Entergerde's disposal all of the information they had on file with regard to Talico Rosales Guasaca, and Entergerde then went over to the Public Registry Office and asked to be shown the history of certain titles. Having accomplished his purpose, he sat meditating for awhile, and contemplating the ink pencil with which he had been making notes, and which was an exact counterpart of the one he had lent to Tom Langley. He turned it over in his fingers, studying it intently for several moments, and then slowly scratched out one of the printed letters with his fingernail. Suddenly he smiled comprehendingly, replaced the pencil in his pocket, thanked the Registrar of Public Deeds, and then returned to the Mayor's office.

"Senior Forero", he said, as the Mayor stepped out to greet him, "thank you very much—I have obtained all of the information that I required. Now, will you please direct me to a good hotel? I shall stay the night here and leave for Popayan early in the morning. And oh, by the way, I think I left my letter here."

"Yes", said the Mayor, smiling and handing him the letter—"here you are". "You'll find a good hotel just two blocks down the street. I wish you good luck, senior."

Entergarde thanked him, got into his Jeep and drove to the hotel that the Mayor had recommended to him. He went in, registered for a room, had his bag sent up, took his Jeep around to a service station to get it fueled for the next day, and after putting it up in a garage, returned to the hotel and had his dinner. After this, he strolled around for an hour and then went to bed.

CHAPTER TWELVE



THE next morning he was up very early and it took him but a short time to bathe, dress and have his breakfast. He had had to use blankets the night before, and this morning he had taken the precaution to put on a sweater, for it was extremely cold in this high mountain air. Getting into his Jeep, he started off on his hour-long ride to Popayán.

As he drove out onto the highway, he noted the many Indians that were trudging into town, the backs of some laden with produce of all kinds, and others driving little donkeys before them, the animals also heavily laden. He recalled that it was Saturday, market day in Piendamó, and that these Indians were coming down from their mountain homes to sell their produce in the town. It was almost impossible to distinguish the women from the men, because of their similarity in dress, and all were wearing numerous necklaces of heavy beads.

He stopped his Jeep and essayed conversation with several of them, and they answered him shyly, their vocabulary in Spanish being very limited. Their language, as he recalled, was a dialect derived from the ancient Chibcha, and he reflected that these indigenous people had preserved their culture and customs almost intact throughout the long centuries. Many of them had come down from their mountain retreats to live in the towns, and the resultant mixture with whites had given the Colombian people many of their finest characteristics.

He soon came to the ancient Spanish bridge, over the river 'Molino', constructed of brick and stone, and which, despite its audaciously flat arches, had resisted the traffic of centuries. As the Spaniards had not anticipated that it would be used for anything except pedestrians and animals, it was wide enough for only one vehicle. He was now in Popayan, founded in 1536 by the Spanish Conquistador, Sebastian de Belalcázar. Here is the

cultural center of Colombia, the cradle of Presidents, the birth-place of innumerable great men. Slumbering peacefully among her memories, and holding tenaciously to her age-old traditions, Popayan has disdainfully allowed her sister cities to pass her by in growth and commercial supremacy. She is content to be the repository of some of the greatest and rarest collections of works of art, antique furniture and weapons, and of rare and precious jewels, to be found anywhere in the world. Once every year, Colombians from all parts of the country, as well as many foreigners, come to pay homage to Popayan, on the occasion of the beautiful and solemn festivities of Holy Week.

Visible in the far distance, were the snow capped peaks of the volcano "Puracé", and Entergarde recalled that his father had recounted to him how, in other days, the inhabitants of the city had brought this snow down by mule back, to serve in place of ice, refrigeration not yet having been introduced. Purace, the angry sentinel of Popayán, still erupted in occasional fury, and the slate coloured appearance of the town's roofs attested, as Entergarde knew, to the volcanic ash that had fallen upon them.

Rolling along the surprisingly well paved streets, Entergarde stopped at the Hotel Lindbergh. He deposited his bag at the desk, and then set off in direction of the office of the Registrar of Public Deeds.

He spent some two hours here in the study of various titles and documents, making copious notes meanwhile on a pocket memorandum pad, and then betook himself to the office of the Mayor.

His card, and the Governor's letter, secured him an immediate audience.

"Very pleased to know you, señor Entergarde", said the Mayor, as he ushered Entergarde into his office, "In what way can I be of service to you in your investigations?"

"I should like very much to inform myself, Mr. Mayor", replied Entergarde, "about the details of litigation that I understand is pending in the Courts here, in connection with a certain land transaction." "I should also like to have some information about the individuals connected with those transactions."

"The City Attorney is the man for you to see, sefiior Entergarde—he knows everybody in Popayan, and at the same time he can probably inform you regarding the litigation you are interested in, or secure the information for you."

The Mayor instructed his Secretary to take Entergarde to the offices of the City Attorney, and personally called the latter by telephone, requesting him to assist Entergarde in every way possible.

Entergarde remained closeted with the City Attorney for a period of about two hours, in the course of which time this gentleman despatched an assistant to the Courts to check up on data that he himself was not entirely familiar with.

When he had completed his investigations, Entergarde thanked the Attorney for his courtesy, returned to the Mayor's office to bid good bye, and then betook himself once more to the hotel, passing on his way, the venerable University of Cauca, which boasts as its graduates many of Colombia's greatest men.

He had lunch at the hotel, called for his bag at the desk, and climbing into his Jeep, proceeded to the outskirts of the city and headed west. It was now one thirty in the afternoon.

Through El Zarzal, Piagua, and San Joaquin, a winding mountain road carried him, after three hours, into the busy little town of El Tambo. After a brief pause to ask directions, Entergarde continued through the town and began a precipitous ascent into the mountains. Twisting and turning, the road carried him up and up, and he was thankful that he had brought the Jeep and not his old jalopy. He had been told that his destination was about an hour from the town, and looking at his watch, he found that the hour had now passed. He stopped a passing 'campesino' and made an inquiry.

"Sí, señor, right down there in the hollow", answered the man.

Entergarde perceived, some distance below him, a large white house, built of wood, and surrounded on all sides by fields of flowering coffee trees. A small winding path, barely wide enough for his Jeep, took him, after a moment, to the house. It was now 5.30 and the weather was exceedingly cold.

Entergarde drove into the yard, and as he descended from his Jeep, a tall, grizzled man, sunburned and lean, about 65 years of age, came out of the door to meet him.

Entergarde approached him with outstretched hand.

"My name is Richard Entergarde, *senor*." "I have come here to investigate the matter of some land transactions in which I believe you are interested." "I bring a letter from the Governor of this Department to accredit me."

The man grasped Entergarde's hand.

"Diego *García Fonseca*, *senor*—a sus *órdenes*."

He took the letter that Entergarde handed him and was evidently much impressed by its official appearance and by its *seal*.

"Of course, *senor Entergarde*" he said, "I shall be glad to give you any information that I can. But I see that you are shivering and have your coat collar turned up. It's quite cold *here*—come in first and have an '*aguardiente*', and we can talk afterwards."

Entergarde accepted with alacrity and entered the house with his host, who proceeded to serve him a generous portion of the native Colombian *drink*—made from the juice of sugar cane.

"This is literally '*agua ardiente*'—'*fiery water*'", thought Entergarde, "but it certainly goes to the right spot in this cold weather."

"Did you have a pleasant trip from Popayan?" inquired his host.

"Yes, very nice—the road's not so good, but I came up without trouble." "I notice they're fixing it, though", he added.

"Yes", said his host, "the Government is improving all the roads around here. It goes slowly, as there is a great deal to be done."

He paused and regarded his guest reflectively for a moment.

"It's really too late, *señor*," he said, "for you to think of going back to Popayan tonight, and you could only just get to El Tambo before dark if you left right away. Why don't you stay and have supper with us and spend the *night*?"

Entergarde accepted with pleasure.

"Of course", continued his host dubiously, "our country fare is very simple, and we can only give you a bed made of **boards—with** a straw mattress on it—we don't have any **feather** mattresses here, you know."

"Don Diego", answered Entergarde, "I would rather have one of your 'sancochos' than the finest meal in the best hotel, and as for mattresses, I prefer to sleep on **boards—I** always use them out at my ranch."

"How strange is human nature", observed his host, "we who have only boards wish for **feather** mattresses, and you who have feather mattresses prefer boards."

Entergarde smiled. "Well", he said, "I'll get out my bag."

"Don't you bother, I'll get it," said his host, and straightway brought in the bag, together with some **Cali** and **Popayán** newspapers that Entergarde had left under the seat. "Well now", he continued, "no doubt you're hungry and it's just about time for us to eat."

The large room in which they were seated, served as both living room and dining room, and Entergarde noticed that the table was already set. Up to this moment, no other members of the **family** had appeared, but they now began to enter shyly, each one being presented to Entergarde by his host. The latter was of mixed white and Indian blood, but his wife, Entergarde noted, was pure Indian. She spoke Spanish, however, as she had never learned the native tongue. The rest of the family consisted of two grown boys, about 23 and 25 years old, and three girls ranging in age from about 17 to 22. All were barefoot. They courteously offered Entergarde a place at the table and then all sat down.

Entergarde noticed that his hands were grimy, and getting up, asked where he could wash them.

The youngest girl jumped up, ran out to the garden with a pitcher and filled it at a stream that flowed nearby. She then motioned him to a washbowl in the patio outside, and provided him with a towel and soap.

When Entergarde returned to the room, he found the girl occupying his seat, under the disapproving looks of her family.

"Here, young lady", he said smilingly, poking her in the ribs, "you've got my seat!"

She looked up at him with twinkling eyes.

"El que va para Quito

"**Pierde su banquito!**"

she said.

"**Hah!**", laughed Entergarde; "He who goes to Quito loses his little bench". "Pretty good—I supposed you learned that in school, eh?" "What was your name again?"

"**Rosario Garcia Santochá, a sus órdenes, señor**", and so saying, she jumped up and gave Entergarde his seat.

A heaping plate of 'sancocho', then meat, rice, potatoes, and plantain, and a sweet of 'manjarblanco', with black coffee afterwards, comprised the meal, and Entergarde did full justice to it. After eating, they all went out into the garden.

"Nice moon tonight", commented Entergarde, "I'd like to walk around a bit and have a look at your coffee trees."

"The youngsters will take you, señor" said his host, "I have a little touch of rheumatism and this night air is bad for me. I'll stay here and look over those papers you brought up, if you don't mind—we don't get them very often here. We can talk when you get back."

When Entergarde returned from his stroll with the younger members of the family, he found his host pacing back and forth, manifestly very nervous.

"Oh, señor Entergarde", he cried, as soon as the latter appeared, "what a terrible thing—señor Thomas Langley has died!"

"Yes, don Diego—I was going to tell you about that—I was present when it happened. I didn't want to mention it at dinner, though, as I knew it would upset you."

"Oh, yes, terribly—my whole fortune is lost now—I am ruined, ruined!"

"I don't think it's so bad as all that", said Entergarde, "I think I'm going to be able to help you. But first you must tell me all about the transaction that I came up to ask you about."

Garcia sent his family out of the room, and sat down alone

with Entergarde. The conversation lasted for two hours and then his host said:

"You must be sleepy, **señor**, from the cold and from that long ride, and as you're going back early tomorrow, it's best that we go to bed."

They retired for the night, and Entergarde slept **soundly**, being awakened at five the next morning by the mooing of two cows that had been brought into the yard for milking.

He dressed quickly, and after a hearty breakfast, exchanged a few more words with his host.

"**Tell** me again", he said, "**just** how to find that property you **bought**—I'm not sure that I got it all straight last night."

"It's right on the main road between El **Tambo** and **Popayán**, **señor**, you can't miss it—you passed it on the way up." And **García** repeated carefully the directions he had given the night before.

"Fine", said Entergarde, "now, another **thing**—how often do you send to El Tambo for mail and telegrams?"

"Twice a week, **señor**—**Wednesdays** and **Saturdays**, when we send down for supplies."

"All right", said Entergarde, "that will be all right for **this** week and the next, but beginning the week after, I want you to send down every day, because I'm going to send you a telegram from **Cali**, and I want you to be in **Cali** the day after you get it, or at the latest, two days **afterwards**. Can you do it?"

"Easily", replied his host. "I have plenty of youngsters to send to town every day, and the day after I get your telegram I can leave the house here at three in the morning, by horseback, be in El Tambo by five, and get to Popayan by bus at eight. From there I can go on by bus or train and be in Cali shortly after noon. But why don't you tell me what day you are going to send the telegram?"

"Because I don't know", replied Entergarde, "I know it won't be within the next two weeks, but it might be any day after that. It might not be for three weeks or even more. But I want to be sure that you get it the same day I send it."

"I shall certainly comply with your wishes, sefior, and thank you very **much!**"

Entergarde packed his bag and then prepared to take leave of the **family**.

"Young lady", he said to Rosario, chucking her playfully under the chin, "be careful you don't play any more tricks on me the next time I come up."

"Oh sefior", she replied laughing, "if you ever come up on the '**Día de los Inocentes**', you will see the tricks we shall play on you!"

"'**Día de los Inocentes**'—'**Day of the Innocents**'", said Entergarde, "December 28th." "In the United States it comes on the first of April, and they call it '**April Fools Day**'" "Well, I'll be ready for you, now that you've warned **me!**"

And shaking hands all around, he climbed into his Jeep and set off on his return journey.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN



WHEN he reached El Tambo, Entergarde stopped at a hardware store and bought a small compass and a large measuring tape. He then proceeded on his way towards Popayan, and after about an hour's ride, began to ask questions of passersby. He had no difficulty in locating the property that Garcia had described to him, and alighting from his Jeep, he spent upwards of two hours making measurements of the land that bordered on the highway, and in taking compass directions. At the same time, he made notes and a rough sketch on the pad which he carried in his pocket. He then set off again.

It was one o'clock when he reached Popayan and without stopping there, he continued on towards Piendamó.

"Ought to be in Cali by about 5.30", he thought, "still time to see the Commissioner."

As he passed through the main street of Piendamó, he noticed Talico Rosales Guasacá standing on the corner. He continued straight on, without stopping, and at a little after 5.30 rolled into Cali, and made for the office of the Police Commissioner.

"Here", he said to a policeman who was standing outside, "watch my bag, will you?" "Comandante in his office?"

"Sí, señor Entergarde", replied the policeman.

Entergarde strode into the office.

"Well, Richard", said the Commissioner, shaking his hand cordially, "very glad to see you—we were hoping you might get back today, as we haven't been able to turn up another thing on Pablo and we're going to have to let him out tomorrow."

"No help for it, I guess", replied Entergarde, "I haven't any proof against anybody at all so far—just suspicions—but even if I can't get proof, I hope to make the murderer confess just as soon as I come back from the Putumayo."

"Are you going to the Putumayo?" asked the Commissioner in surprise.

"Yes, **Major**—I'm going off on the early plane tomorrow, and will go first to Florencia, in the '**Caquetá**'. From there I'll find out how to get where I'm headed for."

"**O. K.**", said the Commissioner. "Now sit down here and tell me all about your trip, and what you have been able to turn up so far, and what your plans are."

Entergarde spent upwards of an hour recounting to the Commissioner the details of his investigations in the Department of Cauca, and in detailing his future plans.

"By the way", he said, as he finished his recital, "I noticed Talico Rosales Guasaca standing on the street in Piendamó."

"Yes", said the Commissioner, "he left here yesterday; as there were no charges against him, we couldn't stop him. He didn't even know that he was under observation."

"Well", said Entergarde, "I wish you would arrange with the Governor of Cauca to have him brought down here at any time that we may call for him; I shall want him here as soon as I come back. Can you do it?"

"Certainly", replied the Commissioner, "that will be **easy**—just send me a telegram from Florencia when you are ready to return, and I'll have the man here before you arrive."

"That's fine", said Entergarde. "Now", he continued, "when you get that telegram from me, will you immediately send one in my name to Diego Garcia Fonseca, of El Tambo, asking him to come down to Cali right **away**?"

"I certainly will", assented the Commissioner.

"Another thing", continued Entergarde, "is Philip Langley here yet?"

"Yes, he arrived this **morning**—came in to see me right away. He's staying over at the Langley house."

"**Fine**—I won't be able to see him before I go tomorrow, and it doesn't suit me to, either, because I don't want to have to answer any questions. I'd be obliged if you'd call him after I leave, and give him my regards and ask him to stay around for awhile longer. He'll find it very interesting, I'm sure."

"I will", said the Commissioner, "I'm sure Langley won't be able to get away for a couple of months yet; he told me that he had lots of accounts to square up with the family, and that he would be here for some time."

"All right", said Entergarde. "Now, I'm particularly anxious, Major, that Juan Langley doesn't go away on any trip. It's all right for him to go out to his ranch, but do you think you can keep him from going out of town for more than a day or two?"

"We'll find a way to do it", said the Commissioner, "don't you worry about it. He'll be right on tap any time you want him."

"That's fine", said Entergarde, "I guess we've about covered everything now—oh, don't forget to send that cable to Spain I mentioned, will you?"

"Tomorrow morning, first thing", said the Commissioner "We'll have the answer long before you get back."

"All right", said Entergarde. "Well, I'll say good bye now, Major, I'm off tomorrow early, as I told you. I may not be able to communicate with you except from Florencia, but don't worry about me." "Oh, how about the Jeep?", he added.

"Just tell that policeman at the door to ride down to the hotel with you and bring it back—he knows how to drive. We won't worry about you, and I only hope you can turn up what you want, because the newspapers are about driving us crazy. Hope you have a good flight down."

The two men took leave of each other, and Entergarde drove down to the Hotel, delivering his Jeep to the policeman, as instructed.

He had dinner in the hotel, and remained in his room until bedtime, arranging his things for the journey he planned for the next day. At this stage of the proceedings, he did not want to meet anyone, much less any member of the Langley family.

Early the following morning found him on the plane, and three days later the Police Commissioner received a wire from him announcing his arrival at Florencia.

The jungles of the Amazon then enveloped Entergarde's movements in mysterious secrecy.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN



TWENTY THREE days later, Captain Umana walked into the Commissioner's office with a telegram in his hand.

"Wire from Richard Entergarde, Comandante", he said, "from Florencia".

The Commissioner took the telegram and read:

"Will be in your office at two in the afternoon on Saturday. Stop. Please have Philip Langley, Pablo, and Juan there; also Gaspar Tobon Almendáres. Stop. Diego Garcia Fonseca and Talico Rosales Guasacá should be present, but in another room, and on no account should be allowed to see or communicate with the others until we are ready for them. Stop. District Attorney should be present—also two stenographers to take transcript of what is said. Stop. Kindest Regards—

Richard Entergarde"—

"H'mm", said the Commissioner, "that sounds interesting, Capitán." "Well, we'll have everything all ready for him. Better get those telegrams off to Piendamó and El Tambo right away. See that the Langleys don't leave town, nor Tobon, either."

"The police in Piendamó are all ready to bring Talico Rosales down at a moment's notice, Comandante", said Captain Umana. "I'll get those telegrams off right away." And he hurried off to attend to the matter.

At two in the afternoon, on the day appointed, the Police Commissioner was seated at his desk, flanked by the District Attorney and Captain Umana. Facing him, on a large upholstered leather sofa, were Philip Langley, and his two nephews, Pablo

and Juan. Gaspar Tobon was seated apart, in a large arm chair. Two stenographers, a young man and a young lady, were seated at desks in one corner of the room. The door opened and Richard Entergarde came in.

He greeted the Commissioner and the other two officials, and then turned to exchange greetings with the Langleys and Tobon. Then, walking back to the Commissioner's desk, he held a short whispered conference with him and his two companions. The Commissioner picked up a cable that was lying on the desk and handed it to him.

After reading the cable, Entergarde, accompanied by Captain Umaña, walked out and entered a closed room some distance down the hall. Captain Umafia rejoined the others, and resumed his seat by the Commissioner's side.

Meanwhile, the Langleys conversed in low tones with each other, and Tobon occupied himself in reading a magazine that he had picked off the table. The three officials conferred among themselves.

Ten minutes later, Entergarde returned and took a seat near the Commissioner's desk, facing the Langleys and Tobon.

"Well, gentlemen", he said, "we're all ready to begin." "I'll start with some questions":

"Juan", he said, "do you know señor Tobon here?"

"If he's the man that's in the furniture business, I've seen his sign", replied Juan, "but I don't know him."

"Do you know him, Pablo?", asked Entergarde.

"Only slightly", answered Pablo, "I once sold some cattle to a friend of his and his friend sent the money through him. He came in and paid us, but I haven't had any other dealings with him."

"Well, I just wanted to make sure of the relationship between you", said Entergarde, "and furthermore I wanted your uncle to be present, as this is a matter of great interest to the Langley family."

"What has this Mr. Tobon got to do with my brother's death, Richard?", inquired Philip Langley.

"Just this, Philip," replied Entergarde quietly, "sefior Tobon accuses Juan of being guilty of the murder."

"What's **that!**", cried Juan, white faced, and starting out of his chair. "Why the man's crazy! Why I don't even know him! What right has he got to accuse me of such a thing?" "It's a lie, an absolute **lie!**"

Philip Langley's face was a study in consternation, and Pablo's agitation was evident. The latter interrupted Juan to say:

"What does all this mean? First I am accused, and now my brother! It's a shame, a downright shame, that our family should be treated in this way! We have enough to bear with our father's death, and the delicate condition that our mother is in, without being subjected to this torture that the police are putting us through!" "What do you mean, you skunk," he shouted, turning on Tobon, "to come here with such a lying story as that?"

Tobón's eyes flashed, but he maintained his composure and said nothing, Entergarde addressed him:

"Sefior Tobon, please repeat the accusation you made to me the other day at luncheon."

"I repeat", replied Tobon, in even tones, "that Juan Langley is guilty of the murder of his father. He had a definite motive for desiring his father's death, because his father opposed his marriage with a girl, and he was able to obtain the poison because he spent some months in the Putumayo."

"It's a **lie!**", shouted Juan again, jumping from his seat, "it's a dirty, damned **lie!**—my affair with that girl was off long ago and it never affected my feelings for my father, either, and as far as the Putumayo is concerned, I never was anywhere near the Indians that use that poison! How can you believe the lies that this filthy creature is telling about me?"

"In spite of your denials and your abuse, sefior Langley" said Tobon, addressing him direct, "I shall be looking at you through bars one of these days."

"I agree with you", said Entergarde quietly.

"**What?**", shouted Juan, who had remained on his feet,

"**what!**—you dare to say that you believe the story of this lying wretch?"

He was beside himself with fury, and his uncle and brother gave evidence of their extreme agitation.

"**Listen** here, Richard", expostulated Philip Langley, breaking out into English from the unaccustomed Spanish, "you can't be thinking that what this man says is true?"

"Please keep out of this, Philip", said Entergarde, "**you're** here as a spectator only." "And you young men will please sit down and maintain your composure", he added, addressing Juan and his brother.

The two sat down as directed, and Entergarde resumed:

"Now", he said, "we shall request the presence of another person here." "Commissioner", he added, "will you please have Talico Rosales Guasacá brought into the room?"

The Commissioner signalled to a policeman standing at the door, and the officer went off and returned directly with Talico Rosales. The latter bowed politely to everyone in the room.

"Sit down, señor Rosales", said the Commissioner, and motioned him to a chair.

Rosales took the seat indicated.

"Now", went on Entergarde, addressing Juan, "do you know this individual?"

"I do", said Juan.

"And, sefior Rosales", inquired Entergarde from the latter, "do you know sefior Juan Langley?"

"**Sí** senor, I do", answered Rosales.

"All right", pursued Entergarde, "now that we have established that you two gentlemen know each other, we will proceed to discover under what circumstances you met." "Please tell us, Juan, where you met senor Rosales."

"In Piendamo", replied Juan.

"Under what **circumstances?**"

"I was City Attorney in Piendamo", said Juan. "I had recently graduated from the University, and as my mother's people come from the Department of **Cauca**, one of my uncles got me a position there in Piendamo as City Attorney, so that

I could get experience. I had considerable trouble with this man."

"Tell us the circumstances, please."

"Well, he had a large piece of property on the outskirts of the town, right alongside of a new city development project. We wanted to put a street running past his place, and past the places of other property owners, and in accordance with the usual custom of **all** towns we assessed a development tax on all land bordering on the street, so of course he would have had to pay the tax like all the rest of them. But he tried to get out of paying it."

"How was that?" inquired Entergarde.

"Well, you see", explained Juan, "each property owner had to pay in proportion to the area of his land bordering on the street, so do you know what this man did?"

"Please tell us", said Entergarde.

"He measured off two metres in a straight line and sold it to his sister, so naturally he didn't border on the street any more; therefore he didn't have to pay any tax."

"I see", said Entergarde, "but as his sister's **land** did border on the street, the tax would be paid by her, wouldn't it?"

"Yes", said Juan, "but as her area was so small in proportion to the total of his land, the tax was only about one hundredth of what he would have had to pay, if he hadn't done that crooked work."

"I see", said Entergarde. "Pretty **clever**".—"what did you do then?"

"**Well**, there was only one thing to do, as I saw after I studied the matter for a few days. I got the City Council to condemn the two metres owned by his sister, as land necessary for public **use**—we then expropriated it from her, paying her the market price. Then we widened the street at that point, and in that way her brother, that's to say this man Rosales, again bordered on the street and had to pay the full tax he was supposed to pay."

"I see", commented Entergarde. "Therefore", he went on, "it is to be supposed that this man Rosales had some animosity against you—is that so, **Juan?**"

"Well, I suppose so", said Juan, "though he never gave any

evidence of it. He saw that he couldn't get away with his crooked work, and paid up the tax and we never heard anything more about it."

"I commend you for your ability as a lawyer, Juan", remarked Entergarde, "And now", he added, "while we're on legal matters, let's hear another story having to do with the law." "Commissioner, would you be so kind as to send for Diego Garcia Fonseca?"

The Commissioner signalled again to the policeman in attendance, and Diego Garcia Fonseca was brought into the room. He greeted everyone with a courteous "buenas tardes", and walked over to the seat indicated to him by the Commissioner.

"Now", said Entergarde, addressing him, "will you please relate to us, senor Garcia, the history of a certain land purchase that you made, bordering on the highway that leads from Popayan to El Tambo?" "We're not interested in hearing any names right now", he added, "just give us the details of what happened without mentioning the names."

Garcia cleared his throat and spoke:

"About two years ago, senor Entergarde, I was shown a ranch located on the highway that runs from Popayan to El Tambo, as you said. This ranch measures 200 metres wide, that is, from East to West, and 3,000 metres long, that is, from North to South, running back from the highway."

"Is the length the same on both sides?", interposed Entergarde.

"Si, senor, it's exactly rectangular", replied Garcia.

"So we can say that the ranch had 600,000 square metres, that is to say, 200 by 3,000—is that correct?"

"Well, that's what you explained to me the other night, senor Entergarde, but when I was looking at the ranch, I didn't know anything about metres—the owner told me that it had 60 hectares."

"That's correct—600,000 metres would be 60 hectares, because each hectare has 10,000 square metres. Now tell me, was this ranch offered to you for sale?"

"Si, senor, it was."

"For how much?"

"For one thousand, one hundred pesos a hectare."

"And you bought it?"

"Si, señor, I bought it—but I was able to get it for a little lower price—the owner reduced the price to one thousand pesos a hectare."

"So that would be sixty thousand pesos—is that correct?"

"Si, señor, sixty thousand pesos. I asked for a little time before signing the deed, because that is a great deal of money for me, and I had to mortgage my ranch in El Tambo in order to get it, and that took some days."

"Yes, I understand, señor Garcia. Now then, what happened?"

"Well, after I got the money, the owner submitted to me the title by which he had bought the land, and I gave it to a lawyer to study, and he said it was perfectly all right—all registered and everything. So I told the owner he could make out the deed and take it to a Notary, and that when it was ready to sign, he should let me know and I would come down from El Tambo and sign it and pay him the money."

"So then what happened?"

"Well, after about a week, he sent up to advise me that everything was ready and that I should come down, so I did, and I brought the money with me in cash, and we went to the Notary's office and signed the deed, and I gave him the money and went back to my ranch in El Tambo."

"Didn't you go to take possession of the ranch?"

"No, señor, not for some weeks; you see we were in the middle of the coffee crop and I was very busy. So I told the man whom I had bought it from that he could keep his cattle on the place for some time, and take care of it for me in the meanwhile."

"And then what happened?"

"Well, when I came down to take possession of the ranch, I was met by this man here . . ." and so saying, he indicated Talico Rosales Guasacá, "who told me that the ranch didn't belong to me but to him—that he had bought it from the owner the day after it had been sold to me."

"That sounds very strange, señor García—of course you immediately produced your title and claimed possession as first purchaser, I suppose?" said Entergarde.

"Si, señor—I went to the authorities right away, and submitted my title, and they found that I didn't own the ranch at all."

"You didn't own it?" "What had you bought, then?"

"A strip of land two metres wide, running the length of the property, right alongside of the ranch I thought I was buying."

"In other words, what you bought was a strip of land, 2 metres wide, by 3,000 metres long, that is to say 6,000 square metres, instead of the 600,000 square metres you thought you were buying?"

"Si señor—that's right—I don't understand much about metres, but that's the calculation they made."

"And how did this strange thing happen?"

"Well, you see, señor, the man who sold me the property had bought it many years before from a neighbour, and the very next day after he bought it, he bought from that same neighbour a strip of two metres wide, of the same length, for the purpose, I understand, of avoiding some trees so that the fences could be put up more easily."

"I see; so the purchase of the large ranch and the purchase of the two metre strip were two separate transactions, then, and appeared under different deeds?"

"Sí, señor, that is correct."

"Now tell us", pursued Entergarde, "didn't you show the draft of the deed to the lawyer before it was taken to the Notary to be inscribed and signed?"

"Sí señor, I did—I received the draft of my deed from the owner and took it to the same lawyer that I had taken the owner's original deed to, and he said it was all right and could be taken to the Notary to be inscribed and signed."

"And what did you do then?"

"I took it back to the man I was buying the ranch from and told him that he could take it to the Notary and let me know

when it was ready, and that I would come down and sign, and pay him—just like I told you."

Garcia paused, and Entergarde observed that he was wearied by this unaccustomed excursion into legal matters.

"Just one more question, señor **García**", he said kindly, "who was your neighbour to the west, that is to say, who was the man that your seller had bought the ranch from?"

"Senor Thomas Langley, señor—the gentleman who died on the train."

"Very good", said Entergarde. "Now gentlemen", he continued, addressing the others, "this poor man is tired, so I will carry on from here, and supply the missing details at the same time."

"Many years ago, Mr. Thomas Langley bought a ranch on the road that leads from **Popayán** to El Tambo. About ten years ago, he sold approximately half of it to a man whom we will call, for the present, Mr. X. The deed on this sale bore the number 306 and the date was December 6th. At the time of signing the deed, the purchaser, Mr. X., asked Langley to sell him an extra two metres to facilitate the putting up of fences, because he had noticed that morning that there were some trees in the way. Langley agreed, but as the first deed had already been made out, they decided to make an additional one for the two metres, which they signed early the next day, December 7th., and which bore the number 307, as there had been no more transactions in the Notary office between those two. All of this occurred about ten years ago.

"Soon after making the two purchases from Mr. Langley, Mr. X. bought another ranch on the other side of the one he had purchased, that is, to the East of his, so he now had three properties:

- (1) the ranch he had bought from Langley.
- (2) the strip of two metres he had bought from Langley.
- (3) the second ranch he had bought from a neighbour to the East.

"Now, what did Mr. X. do? He fenced off the entire original purchase he had made from Langley, cutting down

the trees that were in the way, and then he fenced off the extra two metres, also, thus having a fenced strip of two metres wide, that bordered on the East with his own land, and on the West with Langley. To anyone who asked why he had done this, he merely answered that it was a double fence to make sure the cattle would not stray out. Then he just sat back and waited for a victim.

"Some two years ago, he heard that this man Garcia was looking around to buy a place, and he sent to offer him the ranch he had bought from Langley. Garcia liked it and they negotiated for sixty thousand pesos. Mr. X. told Garcia that the ranch had 60 hectares, which Garcia's lawyer was easily able to verify from the title number 306 that was given him to study. Mr. X. made out a draft of the deed of sale and gave it to Garcia, whose lawyer said it was all right, also. It was then given back to Mr. X. to take to the Notary, so that it could be entered in the register, ready for signature by the interested parties, and the transaction thus completed.

"Mr. X. received this draft from Garcia, and before taking it to the Notary, he changed the number of the deed by which he had acquired the property, and the date—that is to say, he substituted the number 307 for the number 306, and December 7th. for December 6th. The price remained the same. This was the deed that he took to the Notary office."

"But wait a moment", interposed Pablo Langley, "as Dr. Forega here can tell us, and Juan also, the custom in Colombia is to always mention the boundaries, and those would have changed."

"No, they wouldn't", said Entergarde. "The two metre strip bordered on Mr. Langley to the West, which was the boundary that Garcia had seen; on the North it bordered with the highway, which was the boundary that Garcia had seen; on the South it bordered on the property of the Asturia family, which was the boundary that Garcia had seen; and on the East it bordered with Mr. X., the seller, which was what Garcia had seen, because he knew that Mr. X. had another ranch to

the East. So the boundaries remained the **same**—that is, the names of them did."

The others nodded in comprehension.

"**Now**", went on Entergarde, "Mr. X., knowing that Garcia is a **simple**, honest countryman, very trusting as most all such people are, and understanding nothing about deeds nor legal language, felt very sure that he would not notice, when the deed was read to him in the Notary's office, that the references to the number and date of the original title, had been changed. 306 or 307 was **all** the same to Garcia, and December 7th sounded the same as December 6th. He wasn't fixing his attention on those details at all, and wouldn't have noticed the changes if he had been. He was visualizing the ranch that he thought he had bought."

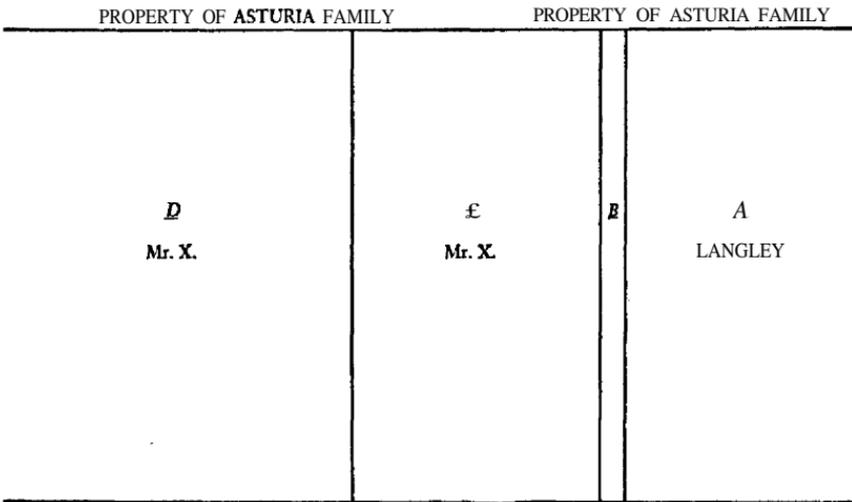
"But", interposed Philip Langley, "I understand that the custom everywhere is to mention the area of the land that is being sold, and it seems strange that Garcia did not notice that he was only buying 6,000 metres."

"That's true", replied Entergarde, "the area usually *is* mentioned, but, as Dr. Forega can tell you, when a property is being sold that was acquired in its entirety by means of a single previous deed, it is sufficient to state that the parcel being sold is the identical one acquired by the previous deed, no other sales having been effected. And this is what Mr. X. did. As the original deed referred to was number 307, the area was therefore only 6,000 metres, but Mr. X. shrewdly refrained from mentioning it. But even if the area *had* been stated as 6,000 metres, it is doubtful whether Garcia would have noticed it, on account of his **unfamiliarity** with such measurements. But there was always danger that the Notary might have commented on the high price being paid for so small an area, thus arousing Garcia's suspicions. Therefore Mr. X. prudently avoided taking chances."

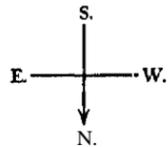
Entergarde paused. "Now gentlemen", he went on, "it's four o'clock. I propose we call a recess **for 15** minutes to take **coffee** and have a smoke, if the Commissioner will so permit."

The Commissioner nodded assent, and an attendant was despatched for the demi-tasses or “tinto”, as it is called in Colombia, while those assembled lighted cigarettes.

“In the meantime”, added Entergarde, as he drew from his pocket the sketch he had made of the property on his return trip from El Tambo, “you can all take a look at this—it might help to fix the details more clearly in your minds.”



- A, B, C—Original property of Thomas Langley.
- C— Ranch of 60 hectares sold by Langley to Mr. X. by means of Title No. 306, dated December 6th.
- B— Two metre strip, sold by Langley to Mr. X., by means of Title No. 307, dated December 7th.
- D— Second large ranch, bought by Mr. X. from his neighbour to the East.



C H A P T E R F I F T E E N



"**N**OW GENTLEMEN", pursued Entergarde, after the coffee cups had been removed and all were again in their places, "let's continue with the story."

"We have seen that senor Garcia, never doubting that Mr. X. was a perfectly honest man, signed the deed, paid his money, and returned to his home in El Tambo. When he came down to claim his purchase, he found that it had been sold to Talico Rosales **Guasacá** here, who refused to allow him to take possession. He went to the authorities, his title was studied, and he was told that what he had bought was a strip of 6,000 square metres.

"Now, as you know, it is very **difficult**, I might almost say impossible, in Colombia, to upset a publicly inscribed deed, provided this has been completed with all the necessary formalities of registration, and so forth, as this one had been. Subsequent declarations almost never avail against a document of this kind, but in view of the manifest fraud that had been committed, **García's** lawyer told him that if he could get two declarations, that is to say, the declarations of two people who had been present at the time the property was bargained for and negotiated, then it might be possible to upset the fraudulent transaction and recover the ranch. He also advised Garcia to start a criminal action against Mr. X., as well as the civil one.

"Fortunately for Garcia, there *had* been two witnesses present at the time the bargain was **closed**—that is to say, at the time the meeting of minds had been effected. These two witnesses were Mr. Thomas Langley, and one of the young men of the **Asturia** family, both of them neighbours. In the course of the litigation, Garcia obtained the declaration of senor **Asturia**, and that is on file as part of the suit.

"Now, Garcia being a peaceful man and very much **upset**

by all this **trouble**, never wanted to start the criminal suit against Mr. X., and as a matter of fact, delayed a long time in starting the civil suit, because he was anxious to make a **friendly** arrangement with Mr. X. Not being able, however, to get any satisfaction out of this gentleman, he finally started the civil suit, but only a short time ago. In the meantime, Mr. Langley had left the country and had not yet returned. However, Garcia knew that as soon as he did return, he would give him the required declaration. He knew this, because Mr. Langley, in his presence, had upbraided Mr. X. for his conduct, and had told the latter that he was prepared to declare in Garcia's favour in case the matter came to litigation.

Entergarde turned to Juan.

"Juan", he said, "did you ever hear your father mention this transaction?"

"Yes", replied Juan, "he did comment on it to me once, and I remember being struck by the fact that this Talico Rosales, whom I had had trouble with, was mixed up in it. However, the other names were unknown to me, and I paid no particular attention to the matter. At the time, I was practising law and not yet helping him with the management of his ranches, so I did not know any of his neighbors. He sold the rest of his property there immediately afterwards, and had been in the States continually ever since."

"Did you ever hear your father speak of it, Pablo?", asked Entergarde.

"No, I did not", replied Pablo, "you can see that it was something that did not affect our interests in any way; just a matter, apparently, of his doing a favour to this poor man here", he added, indicating Garcia.

"All right, gentlemen", went on Entergarde, "we now have established the **fact** that this Mr. X. had a very good and definite reason for not wishing Mr. Thomas Langley to return to this country, because he knew that Mr. Langley would certify to the fraud committed, and that would provide the second declaration necessary to Garcia's case. Besides, in the meantime, that land has gone up very much and is now worth about twice

what it was sold to Garcia for, so Mr. X. would stand to lose about 120,000 pesos."

"But", objected Pablo, "you said that in the meantime Mr. X. had sold the ranch to this Mr. Rosales here."

"Yes", replied Entergarde, "he **had**—we'll learn more about that sale in just a moment." "We now seem to be coming", he went on, "to the passageway that leads out of this labyrinth."

He turned to Talico Rosales.

"Senor Rosales, do you know **señor Tobon**?"

"**Sí**, señor, he is my brother in law."

He turned to Diego Garcia Fonseca.

"Senor Garcia, do you know **senor Tobón**?"

"**Sí**, **señor**—only too well; he is the man who sold me the ranch—this Mr. X. as you have been calling him."

"**Gaspar Tobon Almendáres**", said Entergarde, turning to the individual in question, "you are hereby charged with the murder of Mr. Thomas Langley."

The three Langleys were on their feet, angrily approaching Tobon, but they restrained themselves at a sign from the Commissioner.

Tobón's face grew pale, but he maintained his calm.

"You are mistaken, **senor Entergarde**", he said quietly, "Juan Langley is the responsible one." "Who accused me to **you**?", he added.

"You yourself did."

"**I**?", said Tobon, aghast.

The faces of the Langleys, Rosales, and Garcia, were a study in perplexity.

"Yes, you", repeated Entergarde. "Now, **senor Tobon**," he went on, "as you ushered in this unhappy drama with a proverb, I shall **offer** you one in return:

'Quien te hace fiesta, que no te **suele hacer**,

'**O** te quiere **engañar**, o te ha **menester**'

"That means, Philip", he added, turning to Philip Langley,

'**He** who entertains you when not accustomed so to do,

'**Either** wishes to deceive, or has some need of **you**'

"Now, Tobón," he went on, and then paused. . "you will notice that I have dropped the prefix that we always use in Colombia when addressing well behaved persons—I really don't think that you deserve it—well, now, as I was saying, inasmuch as your guilt has been established to our entire satisfaction. . . ."

"Just a moment", interrupted Tobon, "it makes no difference to me how you address me, but you say that my guilt has been established to your entire satisfaction—well, it hasn't been established to mine!"

"It will be in just a moment, Tobon," replied Entergarde, "and by the Police Commissioner himself."

"As I was saying", he went on, "I had no idea at all that you might be connected with the crime; the fact of your having been a passenger on the train gave us no reason to suspect you. You never had had any difficulties with any of the Langley family—so much so that Juan did not even know you, and Pablo only slightly. Your land transaction with **senor García** occurred two years ago and brought you into no legal conflict with Mr. Langley. He had not made any declaration as yet in the suit, and the fact that his name had been mentioned as a possible declarant, would never have been known by the police authorities in Cali, in all probability. Even if it had, it would not have been cause enough to suspect you of the crime.

"Therefore", he continued, "you were in no danger of being suspected, and had you not given yourself away, you probably never would have been."

"How did I 'give myself away', as you call it?", inquired Tobon.

"By showing me an uncalled for and unexpected attention", replied Entergarde, "you not only invited me to lunch at a very fine hotel, but insisted on serving me drinks, expensive wine, **pousse café**, and cigars as well. And all for the purpose of transmitting so called information that you could just as well have taken to the Commissioner here, through the usual channels."

"Why did you do it?" "That was the thought that kept running through my mind all the while that I was having lunch with

you. Because you wished to deceive me?—or because you had need of me?. I quickly came to the conclusion that it was both,

"As you knew that I frequently worked on cases of this sort, you rightly concluded that I might be working on this one; therefore you wished to show your attentions direct to me. You wanted to impress on me that you were an attentive and courteous gentleman, and naturally it would be supposed that, as you were ostensibly seeking the ends of justice, it would have been unthinkable that you yourself could have been connected with the crime in any way.

"In addition to this, you hoped to attain another end—revenge on Juan Langley."

"Revenge for what?" inquired Tobon, "we don't even know each other—we have both testified to that."

"You told a half truth there", said Entergarde, "in other words, you told a half lie. And, to quote another old saying, Tobon, remember that:

'Para mentir y para comer pescado,
'Hay que tener *mucho* cuidado!'

"Don't ask—I'll tell you", he said to Philip Langley, in English, perceiving the look of inquiry on the latter's face. "That means:

'In telling a lie and in eating fish,
'One has to be *very* careful'

"Yes, Tobon", he went on, "you should be more careful; you should cover up your tracks a little better. Yes, it's quite true that Juan Langley didn't know *you*, but *you* knew *him* quite well."

"Senor Rosales", he said, turning to the latter, "who does that land belong to that is held in your name in Piendamó?"

"It belongs to my brother in law, Gaspar Tobon", answered Rosales, "he only put it in my name because he owed a lot of money and wished to avoid paying it."

"Was that before Mr. Juan Langley was City Attorney in Piendamó?"

"Oh, si señor, long before—that land has been in my name for a very long time, but it really belongs to him."

"You see, Tobon", continued Entergarde, "the taxes that Rosales had to pay in Piendamó were really paid by you. So you had a motive for hating Juan Langley and trying to do him an injury."

"Now", he went on, turning again to Rosales, "how about that ranch he sold you up in Cauca—the one he had sold to Diego García here?"

"That was only a fictitious sale", replied Rosales, "that is to say, it is legal, according to the law, but there is a private document between us that says I have to deed it back to him any time he wants, and if he wins the suit that señor Garcia has put against him, I am supposed to do it then."

"And would you?" asked Entergarde.

"Certainly", replied Rosales, "it's not mine—it belongs to him, just like the land in Piendamó belongs to him. Why should I keep what is not mine?"

"You have an honest brother in law, Tobon", remarked Entergarde, "and you probably knew that very well, otherwise you would not have made use of him."

"Now, to go back", he continued, "to our lunch together." "You gave me the name of a Spaniard that you said had given you the information about Juan Langley, and I purposely jotted it down so that you would believe that I was going to look him up in the Foreigners Registration Bureau. Well, I did look him up there, just as a matter of routine, and found that he is all right, just as you said, but that's not what I went there for. I went to look up *your* name, for I easily perceived by your accent that you are a Spaniard."

"Of course I'm a Spaniard", said Tobon, "is that anything to be ashamed of?"

"Nothing at all—on the contrary, it should be a matter of pride", answered Entergarde. "However, I'm not so sure", he added, "that Spain would be very proud of *you*"

"I found your history there, and we supplemented it by a cable to Spain the other day. You were born in Spain of gypsy parents,

and as a young man you studied pharmacy. You later came to Colombia. We have discovered, through investigations just made in the **Putumayo**, that you lived for some time in that region, and that you served as a sort of medicine man among the Indians there. That, naturally, gave you knowledge of, and access to, their poisons. You **also** made a practice of giving hypodermics."

"You told me the other day", interrupted Tobon, "that my accusations against Juan Langley were entirely hypothetical, and I now say that yours against me are exactly the same. You can't convict me on any such evidence as that."

"Just a moment, Tobon, let me continue", said Entergarde.

"While in the **Putumayo**, you accumulated a fairly substantial capital, and you then came to establish yourself in the cattle business in the Department of Cauca, taking up residence in **Popayán**. Your business took you occasionally to **Piendamó**, and there you met and married **Talico Rosales'** sister. It was while you were established in the Department of Cauca that you made the purchases and sales of land that have already been described."

"Finding yourself in considerable difficulty with creditors, or shall we say, with people whom you had deceived, you made the fictitious sale to your brother in law that we already have discussed, and then came down to **Cali**, where you established yourself in the furniture business, in which you are at present engaged.

"Possibly merely as a whim, or possibly for some deeper motive, you had brought with you from the **Putumayo**, a small stone flask of the dreaded poison '**curare**'.

"When you learned that Mr. Langley was returning to Colombia, and knowing that he would declare in the suit against you, you arranged to be at **Dagua** in time to get on the train on which you knew he would be travelling, and you took with you a syringe filled with '**curare**', and a needle. However, you forgot your gloves and had to buy a pair in **Dagua**."

"It's a lie", shouted Tobon, jumping to his feet, his face **livid**, "I have no '**curare**' in my possession; I didn't kill Mr. Langley,

and I didn't buy any gloves in **Dagua**; I went to **Dagua** on a simple pleasure trip.!"

"You didn't buy any gloves in Dagua?" repeated Entergarde raising his eyebrows.

"No, I did not, I tell you", shouted Tobon, "I took gloves with me from **Cali!**"

"Thank you", said Entergarde. "Now, Major **Sandino**", he said, turning to the Commissioner, "I should like special note made of the fact by the stenographers here, that Tobon did not buy any gloves in Dagua and that he took gloves with him from Cali. He was very positive in making that statement."

"Got **that?**" queried the Commissioner of the stenographers.

"**Sí, señor**", they both replied.

"Very good", proceeded Entergarde, "now, perhaps if I address a question to **señor** Tobon here, very politely, and using the prefix before his name as befits a gentleman, he will answer me as such and tell the truth."

"I have been telling the truth", muttered Tobon.

"Very well, **senor Tobón**,—now will you kindly explain two **things—first**, why you should have taken gloves on an overnight trip to such a very warm place as Dagua, and second, why, if you took gloves with you, they were found neither on your person nor in your baggage after you arrived in Cali?"

Tobon's jaw dropped.

"I suffer from poor circulation", he muttered, "and have to use gloves at night when I go **out—and** as for their not being found, I must have lost them."

The **face** of **Talíco** Rosales **Guasacá** had been darkening as he listened to the unfolding of this story, and he bestowed a look of distaste on his brother in law.

"Senor Entergarde", he said, "will you permit me to speak?"

"Certainly, **senor Rosales—go** ahead."

"Well", said Rosales, "this man is married to my sister, and I have tried to help him in every way that I could, even letting him use my name for things that didn't seem to me **right—like** those land transactions, but when it comes to murder, it's a different story, and I shan't stand by him. I saw him drop his

gloves out of the train window—I was sitting on the same side of the car."

"It's a lie!", shouted Tobon, leaping to his feet, "he probably killed Langley himself, and he's trying to accuse *me!*"

Rosales ran over and shook his fist in Tobon's face.

"Shameless one!", he cried. "You invited me and my wife down to Dagua on what you said was a pleasure trip, and now you're trying to say that I murdered that poor gentleman? The Devil take your soul!—you're a corrupt and miserable wretch, and if you're guilty of this crime, I hope they convict you!"

The policeman in attendance, at a sign from the Commissioner, pushed both men back roughly into their seats.

"Now, Tobon," continued Entergarde, when calm had been restored, "You made four statements awhile back, two of which were false and two of which were true. The false statements were that you went to Dagua on a pleasure trip and that you did not kill Mr. Langley. Those were both false."

"Both were true", muttered Tobon.

"Both were false", repeated Entergarde, "and the true statements were that you did not buy any gloves in Dagua and that you have no '*curare*' in your possession."

A look of triumph spread over Tobon's face, and he rose to his feet and addressed the Commissioner.

"You see, sefior Comandante", he said, "what a fool this man is, and how he is trying to persecute me unjustly? We know that Mr. Langley was killed by '*curare*', and yet he says in the same breath that I killed him and that I have no '*curare*' in my possession! How could I kill him if he was killed by that poison, and I have none? At last he is forced to admit the truth!"

"Purely a question of grammar, Commissioner", interposed Entergarde. "Senor Tobon's education in the matter of tenses was woefully deficient."

"What are you talking about, you idiot?" shouted Tobon.

"I said that you have no '*curare*' in your possession and I also said a little while ago that your guilt would be established to your entire satisfaction by the Police Commissioner himself. I shall now proceed to satisfy you on both points."

"Major Sandino", he went on, turning to the Commissioner, "I understand that your men have searched Tobón's apartments during the time that we have been here. During the 15 minute recess we took, you told me that they have something for us. May we see what it is?"

The Commissioner pressed a button, and an officer entered the room and handed him a small package. Major Sandino passed it to Entergarde.

"Now, Tobon", said the latter, "here is the 'curare' that you *had*, but that you no longer *have*, in your possession".

And so saying, he unwrapped the package and disclosed to view a small stone bottle, with a stopper made of wood.

Tobon was a picture of abject terror.

"Where did you find that?" he stammered, "I thought . . . all right. . . . I will confess", he finally said in a low voice. "I will confess if you will accept a plea of attempted homicide and not homicide."

Entergarde looked inquiringly at the Commissioner and at the District Attorney. These two officials consulted with each other for a few moments in low tones, and the District Attorney then said:

"We have decided to accept a plea of guilty for attempted homicide, señor Entergarde, provided this man dictates a full confession at once."

The Commissioner motioned to the stenographers to make ready, and then said to Tobon:

"Proceed with your confession."

In a dazed voice, Tobon began:

"My name is Gaspar Tobon Almendáres. I am a Spanish citizen and live in Cali. When I first came to Colombia, I went to the Putumayo, engaging in my trade of pharmacist. I was already practiced in administering hypodermics. While in the Putumayo, I came into possession of some of the poison, 'curare', which I brought back with me in one of the little stone bottles used by the Indians. I got it merely as a curiosity. I later established myself in the Department of Cauca, in the cattle business. While there I had some trouble with a man called Diego Garcia Fonseca

over a land deal and I knew that Mr. Thomas Langley would declare against me and make me lose a large sum of money. I knew that if he died, I would be in no danger of losing the suit that Garcia had established against me. I therefore obtained information from friends in Panama, by cable, as to the date of Mr. Langley's departure for Buenaventura, and went down to Dagua to be able to get on the same train. I invited my brother in law and his wife so as to create the impression that it was a pleasure trip. I took with me a needle and a syringe filled with the 'curare', and got on the same car that I saw Mr. Langley was on. As the train passed through a tunnel, which I already knew was to be a long one, I hurried over to his seat and put the injection in his leg. I used gloves that I had brought from Cali and later dropped them secretly out of the window, with the syringe and needle, just after we came out of the tunnel, at a place where the train passes by a deep precipice." "I think that's all", he added lamely.

"No, it isn't", said Entergarde. "Put in there that you cheated Garcia out of his land, and that the transaction was fraudulent."

"I don't admit it", said Tobon, bristling. "It was a perfectly legitimate transaction—the deed was read to him and he knew what he was doing. I won't put that in—that land belongs to my brother in law."

"And we won't accept your confession unless you do, Tobon", said the District Attorney. "If you want us to charge you with homicide, just go ahead and say so."

"In any case", interposed Rosales, "I shall turn that land over immediately to sefior **García**—I want no part of a murderer's fortune!"

"All right", said Tobon, "I'll add in what you want me to", and he proceeded to do so.

"Now, another thing", said Entergarde, "how about that ribbon—when did you put that on and when did you put that printing on the slip of paper?"

"That was an idea that came to me when the Red Cross girls came through", answered Tobon. "I printed the words on in a moment, using a piece of paper that I cut from a letter in my

pocket, wiping it clean first, and using my gloves. I went into the washroom to do it, so no one would observe me. I fastened the paper under my own ribbon, and after I put the injection in his leg, I substituted my ribbon for his."

He paused. "I think that's all", he said.

Entergarde nodded and looked at the Police Commissioner.

"Seems all right", said the latter. "How about you, Dr. F6rega, is there anything more you want him to add?"

"No", said the District Attorney, "it seems complete enough".

The Commissioner motioned to the policeman in attendance.

"Put the handcuffs on him and take him away", he said.

The officer advanced to Tobon, handcuffed him dexterously, and started to lead him out of the room.

"Just a moment", added the Commissioner, "I want to say one more word to that man".

The officer stopped, Tobon shackled to his wrist.

"You, Tobon", said the Commissioner, addressing him, "will spend quite some years in prison for this detestable crime. But you have committed another offense—one against the hospitality of this country. Colombia received you with open arms many years ago; here you have married, accumulated some substance, and enjoyed the protection of our laws. You have repaid us very shabbily, I think. When your term is up, proceedings will be started against you to secure your expulsion from the country. And we shall be well rid of you—though I doubt that the mother country will thank us for sending you back. That is all."

The policeman reached the door with his prisoner. Arriving there, Tobon turned and addressed Entergarde venomously:

"You're a wise Devil!" he said.

"MAS SABE EL DIABLO POR VIEJO QUE POR DIABLO", replied Entergarde, and Tobon was marched out.

"Now, what in thunder does that mean?" queried Philip Langley, in English.

"That means, Philip", replied Entergarde slowly:

THE DEVIL IS WISER BECAUSE OF HIS AGE THAN
BECAUSE OF BEING THE DEVIL

"I'm 49 years old, you know, and I've had to tackle a lot of hard cases in my time. One learns by experience."

"Yes", assented the Commissioner, "and I hope our friends here, *señor* Garcia and *señor* Rosales, will also learn by experience. You, Garcia, to be more careful what you sign, and you, Rosales, to be more careful whom you associate with. You two gentlemen can go now, and I thank you very much for your help."

The two men arose and said good bye to all those assembled. When Garcia reached Entergarde, he said to him, with tears in his eyes:

"You have saved me from ruin, *señor* Entergarde. When this ranch is given back to me, I can sell it for a fine price, and pay the mortgage on my place in El *Tambo*, and have plenty left over. How can I ever thank you?"

"Don't give it a thought", replied Entergarde smiling. "If you want to do me a favour, just ask me up for another '*sancocho*' sometime. And I hope it will be on the '*Día de los Inocentes*', because I have some tricks up my sleeve to play on *Rosario*!"

Diego Garcia laughed heartily, shook his hand again, and followed Rosales out of the room.

As the Langleys rose to go, Juan walked over to Entergarde, the colour rising in his face.

"Richard", he said, "you owe me an apology".

"What for?", queried Entergarde.

"Tobon said that he would be looking at me through bars, and you said that you agreed with him!"

"That's right, Juan", replied Entergarde smiling, "just go and visit him and he will."

Juan laughed, slapped Entergarde on the back, and the three Langleys took their leave.

"Now, gentlemen", said the Commissioner to his fellow officials, "I think we can call it a *day*—or a *night*, rather" he added, glancing out of the window at the gleaming electric lights. "I'll meet you all at the Club tomorrow afternoon to talk it over."

CHAPTER SIXTEEN



THE following afternoon, at five o'clock, the Police Commissioner, Captain Umaña, Doctor Fórega, and Richard Entergarde, were seated on the spacious terrace of the 'Club Colombia', discussing the events of the previous day, over their whiskies and soda. The Commissioner spied Philip Langley in the lounge, and motioned to him to join them.

"Sit down here, Mr. Langley", he invited, "Richard is about to tell us how that pencil he lent your brother, was linked up with the crime."

Langley thanked him and took a place at the table.

"Well", proceeded Entergarde, "you recall that I lent Tom a pencil just before I moved forward to say hello to his family. This was a perfectly new pencil—one of three that I had bought in Panama two days before, and I knew that it had no marks on it of any kind, because I had been looking at it myself, while making some notes just before I lent it to Tom. When I picked up the pencil later, my attention was caught by the fact that one of the letters in the printing had been scratched off, and I knew that he must have done it, either accidentally or intentionally, but of course I couldn't figure out how or why. Although it struck me as strange, I didn't attach very much importance to it until later on when I discovered the piece of paper with the proverb, which discovery convinced me that we were dealing with a crime and not with a natural death.

"In Panama, as I said, I had bought 3 of these pencils, and at various times in the next few days I studied the printing on the others, to see what conclusions I could come to regarding the letter that had been scratched off. For some reason, which I could not explain to myself, I had a feeling that the pencil I had lent Tom, was bound up in some way with the crime, but I couldn't determine how.

no

"Then before I had even started working on the case I was invited to lunch by Tobon, and you all know how this aroused my suspicions regarding him. As yet, I had no idea that he would turn out to be the actual culprit, but I felt that he was exaggerating the information about Juan, and that he had some special reason for doing so. So I resolved to investigate him, and find out what possible connection he might have had with the Langleys and their affairs.

"Just before he called for me at the hotel, I had noticed him talking in the street with the same countryman who had been travelling on our car in the train. When Tobon and I parted in the street after lunch, I saw this man walking ahead of me, and resolved to follow him, because as my suspicions had now been aroused regarding Tobon, I was anxious to know what this man's connections with him might be. We discovered, as you know, that he was Talico Rosales Guasacá.

"As soon as I learned this, I resolved to go to Piendamó to investigate this individual, but first I went to look up Tobon's record in the Foreigners Registration Bureau. I might mention that in his file, I found no record of his having been in the Putumayo; it seems that from there he returned to Panama, obtained a new Spanish passport, and re-entered Colombia, through Buenaventura, as a new resident, making no mention of having been in the country previously. Had he not covered up this fact, it would have made things easier for me. What I did discover in his file, however, was that he was married to Talico Rosales' sister.

"Before going to Piendamó, I decided to go to Dagua to check up on the passengers who had taken the train there on the day of the crime, particularly because Tobon and Rosales had been among them. I found that these two men, accompanied by Rosales' wife, had arrived from Cali on the day before the crime and had spent the night in the hotel. However, neither they, nor any of the other passengers who had gotten on at Dagua, had done or said anything during the time they were there, to arouse anyone's suspicions, so I obtained no clues in Dagua.

"Just a minute", said Philip Langley, "didn't you say yester-

day that you had found out that Tobon bought gloves in **Dagua?**"

Entergarde smiled.

"Yes, I did say that", he replied, "but only to see what his reply would be. I knew very well that if gloves had been used in the commission of the crime, the person who did it would never have bought the gloves in **Dagua**—in the first place, they don't sell any there, and in the second place, even if they did, the purchase of gloves so soon before the crime would immediately have directed suspicion against the purchaser. I visited various stores there, but I was principally looking for some handkerchiefs for myself, as I had come away without one."

"But", objected Langley, "how did you know that Tobon was going to say that he had brought gloves from **Cali?**"

"I didn't know it, of course", replied Entergarde, "I was only hoping he might say it, because I was convinced that if gloves had been used, they had been taken from Cali, and I hoped that if I accused him of buying gloves in Dagua he might fall into the trap and tell the truth, which is just what happened!"

"**Now**", he went on, "at this stage all I knew were the following things: **first**—that **Pablo** was the logical suspect; **second**—that **Juan** had been accused by Tobon; **third**—that Tobon's action in making this accusation aroused my suspicions, and **fourth**—that he had married **Talíco Rosales'** sister. So the next step was to go to Piendamó and see what I could discover there, and that is just what I did.

"In Piendamó I was told by the Mayor that the city had had some difficulties with Rosales at one time, and the City Attorney explained to me what these were. I also learned that Juan Langley had been City Attorney when these incidents took place. As Rosales was apparently only a simple 'campesino', I resolved to look up the history of his titles to see whether these showed him to be connected in any way with someone clever enough to think up such a scheme for defrauding the city.

"The records showed that some years before the incident of the tax evasion fraud, Tobon had sold this **land** to Rosales, and the suspicion formed in my mind that the sale might have been

a fictitious one. But of course, the only one who could tell us the truth about that, outside of Tobon himself, was Rosales, and he did so yesterday.

"I felt that I could assume that the sale to Rosales had been fictitious, and in consequence there seemed to be a pretty clear motive for animosity on Tobon's part against Juan Langley. However, there was nothing in the Piendamó documents to indicate that Tobon had had any connection, nor much less any trouble, with Tom, and had it not been for one thing, I doubt whether I would have made any further progress from there."

"What was that, Richard?" inquired Philip Langley.

"The pencil", replied Entergarde. "About two years ago, just before Tom left for the States, he and I were sitting in the American Center one evening, having a drink. The bar boy brought him some chits to sign, and he took a pencil out of his pocket to sign them with. Then he looked at it and said to me.

Tunny how I came by this pencil, Richard. The other day, up near **Popayán**, I was having an argument with a fellow about some crooked deal he had put over on a neighbour of mine, and he got sore and tried to jab me with his pencil. I took it away from him and put it in my pocket.' "

"'It's a good pencil', he went on 'look at it'. I did and saw that it was one of the same kind that I always use myself.

"Then he told me about the incidents of the fraudulent sale to **García**, but I don't remember that he mentioned the names of the people concerned, or if he did, I paid no attention to them, because none of them were known to me, and the incident passed out of my mind.

Entergarde took a pencil out of his pocket and passed it around.

"Now", he continued, "while I was in the Registrar's Office, in Piendamó, taking notes, I used another pencil, just like this one, which, you will note, is identical with the one that I lent to Tom. Up to that time, I had been unable, as I said before, to explain why I had a feeling that the pencil had something to do with the crime, but the incident of the two metres sold by

Rosales to his sister, to avoid paying taxes, suddenly reminded me that when Tom had used this same kind of pencil, he had told me that he had taken it from a man who had sold a strip of two metres to a neighbor, instead of a ranch that he thought he was buying. So I scratched off the same letter that we had found scratched off, and then the whole thing was suddenly clear to me.

"Now, Philip", he went on, "you will notice that, among other printing, this pencil has the trademark on it, which is NOBLOT. Commissioner please tell Mr. Langley which was the letter that we found scratched off."

"The 'L' ", said the Commissioner.

"Exactly. Now, if you eliminate the 'L' on this pencil what do you have left?"

"NOBOT", replied Philip Langley.

"Precisely", said Entergarde, "now, read that backwards, and what do you get?"

A look of comprehension dawned on Philip Langley's face. "That's pure wizardry!", he said.

"Not at all", said Entergarde, "as a matter of fact, I felt rather ashamed of myself for not having discovered it before."

"However", he went on, "I now had a definite indication that Tobon, who had been on the train, and who had apparently been mixed up in some way with the tax evasion sale in Piendamó, might possibly be the same man who had made the two metre sale in Popayan, and who had tried to jab Tom with the pencil. So I resolved to go to Popayan and look into that transaction. Had it not been for the pencil, I would never have recalled the Popayan incident and probably would have returned to Cali to see what other clues I could turn up."

"But Richard", interposed Philip Langley, "are you trying to tell us that Tom scratched off the 'L' on that pencil in order to leave a clue as to who attacked him?"

"Of course not, Philip", replied Entergarde smiling, "it would be the height of absurdity to suppose that. It's clear that Tom died immediately after being attacked, and could never have left such a fantastic clue as that, nor even thought of it, for that matter."

"How do you explain the missing letter, then?" persisted Langley.

"Well, we can only form a theory", said Entergarde, "and mine is this: That Tom perceived Tobon entering the car as I left, and that reminded him of the fact that this man had once tried to jab him with the same kind of pencil which he then had in his hand. I believe that in reflecting over it and looking at the pencil, he casually noticed that the word NOBLOT formed Tobón's name backwards, if the 'L' were eliminated, and he probably smiled over it and just scratched it off as an experiment. It must have occurred that way, because there is no other reasonable explanation. Of course, at that moment he had no idea that he was going to be attacked, because as far as I was able to learn from Garcia, Tobon had never made any threats against him. The incident of the pencil seemed to have been just a matter of momentary anger, and had no other consequences at the time."

"Now, Major", he continued, turning to the Commissioner, "how about that vacation you've been promising me?" "It seems like about a hundred years since I had the last one."

The Commissioner smiled and replied:

"No hay mal que dure cien años,
Ni cuerpo que lo resista,
Ni medico que lo atienda,
Ni enfermera que lo asista."

"You can start tomorrow, if you want", he added.

"What was that the Major said?" inquired Philip Langley.

"He said", replied Entergarde:

"There is no ill that lasts one hundred years,
Nor body that can resist it,
Nor doctor that can attend it,
Nor trained nurse to assist it."

THE END

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