

Irene realised that she was herself again, and her powers were at their best and brightest. Yet this Jack of hers! The young husband experienced a qualm of terror such as he had not known since his boyhood. He feared that he couldn't stand comparison with the stage as a drawing card to a woman like Irene. Had his enemy been a man standing between him and that sweet wife of his, he might have used his fists to good purpose, but the stage, he could never cope with that. She would, of course, return again to the footlights. She loved all that brilliancy, and poor Jack was not literary, and had not even a sense of humor. Unlike most Irishmen, a joke had to be analysed for him to see its point, though he had come from Tipperary.

'March over here to me, Captain Jack!' she commanded with a prettily imperious air.

She had used that same gesture as 'Beverly of Graustark' when she pretended to be the 'Princess Yevive.'

He obeyed, and knelt down like a big innocent boy, and looked with adoration into the face of his goddess. She thrilled with pride at her power over this strong, clean, boy-like man. Why, he was worth all the matinee maids in creation to an actress. She slid her arm about his neck, and looked smilingly into his eyes, her face very close to his.

'What shall I do?' she asked.

She noted the look of anxiety and fear that tightened his brows, and drew pencilled lines under his fine eyes. How like his eyes were to Camilla's! He couldn't answer, though she saw his throat moving.

'You know you never once came after me when I left,' she accused.

'Do you mean that if I came, you'd have returned with me to Shamokin?'

'Haven't I come back as it is, without your even asking me?'

'But you will leave again.'

'Not this time. Camilla has won out over "Camille." Jack, you and our little girl are a heap sight dearer to me than all the stage money I've ever handled, real or counterfeit.'

Suddenly she dropped into 'The Chorus Lady.'

'Jack, I'm no knocker; and you never hear me leadin' an anvil chorus, but if certain parties was where they belong, they'd be makin' beds.'

He looked puzzled; he was always so adorably dull. She got his head closer to her heart.

'I mean you're going to be my leading man for the rest of my life.'

Then he understood.

—WILL W. WHALEN, in *Church Progress*.

## A DOUBLE TRAITOR

It was only a short newspaper despatch, and no details were given, but my heart sank and my blood ran chill, when I read that Lieutenant Peter Obregon had been shot as a traitor.

Obregon dead! I could scarcely believe it—so young, so full of life and hope was he when last I saw him. It is almost a year since I read of his execution in Mexico by a firing squad. I remember well that day, for it happened to be the feast of the chair of St. Peter at Rome, which occurs on the 18th of January.

I'm afraid I read my office on that day with more than the usual distractions. I could think of nothing but Obregon, blind-folded, facing his own troops, while they fired the fatal shots. My thoughts were very little with the great St. Peter at Rome, as I read the responses to the lessons in the office, 'If thou lovest Me, Simon Peter, feed My sheep.'

'Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee.' Yes, Obregon, these words applied to you once, alas! No longer—for you were a traitor, a double traitor—a traitor to the Church which you once hoped to serve as a priest, and a traitor to the First Chief. Otherwise you would not have been compelled to face the firing squad.

'Even if I should die with Thee, Lord, I will not deny Thee.'

Oh, Obregon, my friend of old, once you, too, would have had these words ready on your lips had occasion demanded, for you were a good, pious lad in those days, and quick and impulsive like your patron, St. Peter. And yet, like Peter of old, when the time came, you denied your Lord. Like him, I pray God, you repented.

'I have prayed for thee, Peter, that thy faith fail not.'

'Yes, indeed, I often prayed for you Peter, ever since I heard that you were serving in the army of the First Chief, that your faith would not fail, for I liked you, Peter Obregon, you who the press says was shot as a traitor.'

Thus my office was read with sad distractions, for I had known Obregon well, when we were students together in Rome. The first time we met was at the Sala Pia, where the various seminary choirs had been assembled in one vast chorus to take part in the music of the jubilee Mass of Pius the Tenth under the direction of the great Perosi. Ordinarily the students of the national colleges in Rome do not meet, especially when they attend different universities, and Obregon lived at the South American College and went to lectures at the Gregorian University, while I as an American, lived at the American College and sat under the professors of Propaganda.

However, at the great rehearsals, we were grouped as tenors, baritones, and basses without regard to national divisions, and so I found myself next to a young Mexican whose name I soon learned was Peter Obregon. He was a sociable, chatty lad, and we became well acquainted at the various rehearsals. There seemed to be a bond of sympathy between us, and we found that we had much in common to talk about. Later, when I was a post-graduate and more free, I often met him at Babbingtons in the Piazza di Spagna, where I frequently dropped in to tea after an afternoon walk.

Truth to tell the first time I saw him there I was surprised, as seminary rules are strict in Rome, and I noticed that Obregon gave the rule which forbade students to enter stores a very liberal interpretation. Indeed, it was a reckless thing for him to do, for it meant expulsion from the seminary if it came to the knowledge of his superiors.

Spying me at one of the tables, he came over immediately, his frank, boyish face lit up with a broad smile, his dark eyes sparkling, and he asked if he might join me.

'With pleasure,' I answered. 'I am delighted to see you, Peter.'

After a little conversation I said abruptly, 'Peter, though I'm glad to have you with me, aren't you making very light of your vocation? Don't you realise that you are risking expulsion and all that that means, just for the sake of a little pleasure?'

He laughed cheerily and mocked a little at my seriousness, and then confessed that he was thinking of leaving the seminary and that this accounted for his indifference to the rule.

'I find the life too restrained, too irksome,' he said with a gesture of impatience. 'I want freedom. I was never sure of my vocation, and my father was utterly opposed to my entering the seminary and has always been urging me to leave. He's a liberal,' he said half defiantly.

'Oh,' I said, 'and your mother?'

'Dead, God rest her. She put the idea into my head, and urged me to try at least. So I have tried, and I like it well enough at times, but my father's letters urging me to leave upset me. I have taken no sacred orders, and I intend to quit at the end of the term.'

When I bade him good-bye that evening I did not dream I would never see him again. I supposed he would forget his difficulties and remain at Rome, but to the sorrow of the students and faculty, among whom he was a general favorite, he carried out his resolve

**"PATTILLO"**

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