

SPICY ADVENTURE STORIES



JULY, 1941

Vol. 14, No. 1

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SPICY-ADVENTURE STORIES is published monthly by the CULTURE PUBLICATIONS, Inc. Editorial offices, 900 Market St., Wilmington, Del. The publisher assumes no responsibility for the return of unsolicited manuscripts.



By WALTON GREY **A S H E S**

A THIN sword of shadow swung like a pendulum in the blue Peruvian moonlight; crossed the bars of Bob Newton's tiny cell window. Newton sprang from his cot; leaped up; caught at the window's high bars. He hung there, waiting, watching for that shadow.

"She's alive! She *must* be alive. They can't have . . . murdered Ellen!" he muttered through clenched teeth.

A sandy mop of hair dropped down over his tanned, lean face. With a steel-hard grip he clung to the window's bars, his feet dangling almost a yard above the cell's stone floor. His shoulders ached with the effort of supporting his tall, muscular frame.

Again the shadow passed his window. But it was more than a shadow. It was a narrow ribbon of fragile silk, hanging down from the floor above.

Bob Newton tensed. There was a spill of paper tied to the end of the dangling ribbon.

He thrust out one hard, brown hand; clutched; missed. Then he tried again. This time he succeeded. He drew the scrap of paper through the bars of the window, unfastened it. Tying the dangling ribbon to a window-bar, he dropped to the floor and opened the paper.

In the brilliant moonlight, he read the message:

Bob—

*If it's you beneath, come
for me before it is too late!*

Ellen.

A wave of relief and hope flooded through Bob Newton's soul. Ellen—his Ellen—was alive! They had not harmed her . . . yet!

Desperately he ran his hands through his pockets. He must send her a reply. But he had nothing with which to write. Yesterday, Moreno's cutthroats had stolen everything, when they had kidnaped Newton and Ellen on the Callao waterfront . . .

THEN an idea came to him. Carefully he tore the note, until he had three words. They were "Bob," and the pair "It is." His message was: "*It is Bob.*"

He leaped back to the cell window with them, tied the scraps to the dangling ribbon. He jerked the ribbon lightly. Jubilantly, he saw the ribbon being pulled upward.

He dropped back to the floor of the cell; stared about him. He must break out—gain his freedom—rescue Ellen! But how? He was caged, imprisoned, helpless. The dungeon's only exit was a narrow, heavy door. In sudden red fury, Newton hurled himself at the wooden portal; crashed his two hundred pounds of bone and sinew against it.

Amazingly, it burst open, spilling him out upon the floor of the pitch-dark hallway outside the cell. Dazed, bewildered, Bob Newton scrambled to his feet and stood there for a brief moment unsteadily. He shook his head. He was out—free! He was free . . . and Ellen was on the floor just above

TO ASHES

The old man's prophecy was coming true. For he had warned: "The secret of the dead conquistador will bring bloodshed in its wake!" Bob wasn't worried for himself but for his fiancée



The bullet whined across the room. There was a sudden cry from the girl. . . .

in this strange house that had its cellar divided off into cells!

Stealthily, he crept down the hall. He found a narrow staircase; hesitated. Everything was strangely, ominously quiet. There was an atmosphere of danger, all-pervading and intense in the darkness. Newton still could not understand how his cell-door had come to be unbarred. And Ellen . . . ?

Up the stairs he went swiftly, noiselessly; gained the floor above. He was in another hallway now; and still he had encountered no sign of his abductors. Yesterday it had taken a half-dozen men to bring him here. Perhaps they were all gone—

He counted the doors on this floor, found the room directly over the cell in which he had been imprisoned. He tried the knob.

The door was unlocked. Slowly, quietly, he pushed inward. And then he was inside the chamber. He heard a faint sound in the solid darkness; crept toward it.

HE stumbled against a cot; put out his hands. His fingers encountered soft, warmly-pliant flesh . . . A girl's flesh. . . A woman's naked shoulder!

"Ellen!" Bob Newton whispered. Something caught in his throat. Was she unconscious? Had they hurt her? "Ellen!" he breathed again, harshly. In the blackness his hands groped for the warm loveliness of her unseen body. Tingling thrills raced through his veins as he pulled her close. Never before had he been so near to Ellen Lanhart, his *fiancée*. Her natural modesty and reserve had forbidden any situation

as intimate as that which danger now forced on them. . . . She wore nothing now but a brief tissue-thin wisp of underthings . . .

"Ellen—my dearest dear!" Newton whispered for the third time, desperately.

The girl moved, stirred uneasily. "Bob!" she moaned.

"Ellen—waken!" he panted. "We've got to get out of this place—quickly!" He bent over her, slipped an arm under the lovely sweetness of her waist, lifted her. Then some impelling attraction forced him to draw her toward him, crush her against his chest.

Her usual reserve had vanished; he heard her sigh, felt her breath against his cheek. . . . She quivered against him, and her arms drifted about his neck. "Bob—darling!" she whispered. "We cannot leave here, until you have told them the secret they want to know!" Her voice sounded oddly thick and accented.

"Secret?"

"Yes! The secret of Pizarro's bones!" her whisper held a sharp, vibrant quality. To Bob Newton's nostrils came a faint suggestion of perfume. It was strange; because Ellen never used perfume—

"Pizarro's bones!" Newton repeated, wonderingly. And then, suddenly, he remembered! The reason for his abduction and imprisonment was abruptly clear to him. And he cursed the blind chance that had brought him and Ellen here to Callao on a pre-nuptial, round-the-world tour. . . .

PIZARRO'S bones! Bob Newton recalled the legend which had existed in his family for three

generations. It was a legend handed down by Bob Newton's grandfather, who once had been an archaeological explorer in Peru, in Cuzco. The story dealt with the fabled bones of Francisco Pizarro, Spanish *conquistadore* who had subdued Peru centuries ago.

There was a mummy on exhibit at the cathedral in Lima—a mummy reputed to be Pizarro's body. But most historians agreed that the mummy was a fake; that it was not the mortal remains of the real Pizarro—

Pizarro's bones, according to the legend, were hidden in some other place, a secret crypt. And Bob Newton's grandfather was supposed to have stumbled upon that fabled tomb; to have discovered the last resting-place of the true Francisco Pizarro.

During the older Newton's lifetime, he had never revealed to his family the exact location of his discovery. "The knowledge will come in due time, and it will bring bloodshed in its wake . . ." the old man had often mumbled.

And now, Bob Newton realized the truth. His captor, Moreno, must have discovered in some way that Bob Newton was the grandson of the older Newton, the man who had found Pizarro's secret tomb. And Moreno thought that Bob Newton knew the secret! Moreno wanted to learn the tomb's location, so that he could exhume Pizarro's mummified body for exhibition purposes. . . . It would mean a fortune for Moreno!

Bob Newton fingered the huge, old-fashioned signet-ring on the third finger of his right hand, the ring his grandfather had willed to

him. He held the girl closer to him. "I can't tell Moreno where Pizarro's tomb is located!" he whispered.

"Why not?" she asked sharply.

"Because I don't know! My grandfather never told me!"

"You lie, Señor Bob Newton!" the girl said suddenly, viciously. And as she spoke, Bob Newton stiffened; and a great amazement filled him. This girl in his arms—with her accented voice her exotic perfume—*she was not Ellen Lanhart!*

Even as he realized it, lights flashed on in the room. Newton dropped the girl. She fell back toward the cot. He stared at her.

She was Spanish—a brunette. And Ellen was blonde.

"Who are you?" Bob Newton rasped out suddenly.

The strange girl's hand darted under her pillow; emerged with a flat automatic. She smiled mirthlessly, cruelly. "You are right, Señor Newton. I am not Ellen. I am Conchita Moreno, sister of the man who abducted you and your sweetheart!"

Bob Newton's widened eyes saw a trailing ribbon which ran zig-zag across the floor to the shuttered window. "You—you sent me that note!" he accused. His face went slowly pale.

"Si. I sent you that note. It was a trick to bring you up here. I thought to dupe you into mistaking me for your *fiancee*, in the darkness. I planned to make you tell me the location of Pizarro's tomb."

"You failed!" Bob Newton said slowly. His hard jaw jutted forward. "And now that you've failed

—where is Ellen Lanhart? What have you done to her?" His voice rose vengefully, savagely.

The dark-haired girl shrugged. Her swollen white breasts undulated with the movement of her smooth shoulders. "Señorita Lanhart is with my brother, Rico Moreno. He will entertain her very well!" she sneered.

AT Moreno's name, Bob Newton's face hardened. Rico Moreno—the Peruvian whom he had befriended a year ago, back in the states . . . and who had repaid the friendship by kidnaping Newton and Ellen Lanhart here in Callao! With a snarled oath, Bob Newton whirled toward the room's door—

"Stop!" Conchita Moreno called sharply. She leaped to her feet; leveled her automatic; squeezed the weapon's trigger.

The gun barked, and a singing slug whined past Newton's head, spanged into the wall before him. He froze; turned slowly to face the Spanish girl.

He sucked in his breath, and unwilling admiration dawned in his angry eyes. In the subdued light of the room's single electric lamp, she was beautiful with a feline, pantherish beauty as she stood there, legs spread wide, automatic held waist-high. Raven coils of hair tumbled about her pearly, naked shoulders. Despite an air of hardness about her lithe, slim figure, she was utterly feminine. Her dark eyes were narrowed, cat-like, glowing. . . .

"The next bullet will not miss, Señor Newton!" the girl spoke evenly.

"You wouldn't dare!" Bob Newton flung at her.

Her dark brows rose. "No? Try me and see!" she challenged.

He read the purpose in her narrowed, feline eyes. He knew that she would shoot him, without fear and without compunction, if he attempted escape. And then he thought of Ellen, his lovely, yellow-haired fiancée. . . .

Ellen was somewhere in this house; was in Rico Moreno's clutches. Abruptly, Bob Newton knew that he must tread carefully; that it would require all his guile, all his cunning to get to Ellen and save her from . . . death or worse. . . .

He forced a slow smile to his lips. "I believe you'd actually shoot me!" he whispered.

"I would indeed, Señor Bob Newton!"

His eyes went to her generous breasts; took in the wide arches of her hips, the cream-smooth, ivory-white contours of her legs, her thighs. . . . Then, once more, he met her eyes with his own. "It's hard to believe that one so beautiful could be so hard!" he said.

She laughed, shortly. "I shall not be fooled by your flattery. Your tongue is smooth—but not smooth enough!"

"You think I'm flattering you when I say that you are beautiful?" he asked her gently.

She shrugged. With her left hand, she patted lightly the curves of her hip. "I know that I am beautiful. I do not need you to tell me so."

"Your loveliness is a weapon far more potent than that automatic!" Bob Newton insinuated.

"Meaning—?" she purred, her dark eyes narrowing once more.

"Meaning that a bullet wouldn't make me tell you the secret you want to know. But you might learn it, through other means!" he said boldly, audaciously.

She stared at him. A new, comprehending light dawned in her gaze. She grinned faintly. "Then you *do* know the resting-place of Pizarro's mummy?"

"Maybe!" Bob Newton's heart leaped a little, but he strove to maintain the expressionlessness of his tanned features. He had a plan—a desperate plan. If he could trick this dark-haired girl into accepting his kisses, his caresses . . . he might wrest that automatic from her . . .

She lowered the automatic. "Kiss me!" she commanded.

HE went toward her; gathered her into his arms. He kissed her—and she responded with all the sultriness of her Latin nature. Despite himself, Bob Newton felt a tingling, electrical sensation of desire lancing through his veins.

This girl was a smouldering volcano of feminine passion—passion that leaped from her parted lips to his, and from her body to his body. He felt her quivering against him . . .

He pressed her close; kissed her shoulders, her throat. She clung to him, caught a sharp breath as his lips moved over her throat. She was like a vibrant flame that set fire to his soul—with a fire that charred his senses, seared his consciousness. He held her still for a moment, felt the little shud-

der that suddenly possessed her . . . He lifted her in his arms.

And then, abruptly, from somewhere behind him, Bob Newton heard a smothered, gasping sob—a woman's bitter cry of hurt and disillusionment. It was the voice of his fiancee, Ellen Lanhart—

And then a door slammed!

In a flooding, receding rush, desire departed from Bob Newton's veins; was replaced by disgust, dismay. Disgust with himself and with the blackhaired Conchita Moreno, whom he held in his arms. Dismay that Ellen Lanhart should have seen him in such a position!

NOW he remembered that he had begun making love to the Spanish girl for a certain definite purpose . . .

Like a flash, he leaped to his feet. At the same instant, his hand darted forward, seized the automatic from the brunette's grasp.

"You damned slut!" he rasped. Leveling the weapon, he backed away from the girl, toward the closed door of the room. Ellen Lanhart had been at that door, an instant before; and now Bob Newton would follow her, find her, rescue her . . . tell her the meaning of the scene she had inadvertently witnessed . . .

Conchita Moreno sprang to her feet. With a lithe bound, she reached the door first. Her fingers found the key; flipped it in the lock. Then, before Newton could stay her, she dashed for the window, pulled aside the drapery, flung the key out into the moon-drenched night.

"Damn you to everlasting hell!"

Newton snarled. He sprang at the girl.

She fought him with tooth and claw. He felt her sharp nails raking diagonally downward across his cheek. With an oath, he slapped her with his open palm, full across the mouth, with all his rage-born strength. She cried out; staggered backward. Newton hurled himself upon her, bore her backward to the floor.

His anger, built up by frustration, could be neither controlled nor checked. He pinioned her; reached at the window's heavy drapes; tore at them.

With a muffled crash, the velvet curtains came down, bringing the drapery-pole with them. Swiftly, Bob Newton yanked at the curtains, pulled away their long, tasseled cords. With the cords, he bound Conchita Moreno—trussed her, hand and foot. He stuffed his handkerchief into her open mouth, gagging her.

Her eyes glared up at him, twin pools of venomous hate. But Newton knew no remorse for the way he had man-handled her. Cursing, he leaped at the window, swung himself outward. In the baleful glare of the moon, he dropped.

He must find that key—get back into Conchita Moreno's room—unlock her door—and then commence a frantic search for the yellow-haired Ellen Lanhart! Desperately he went to hands and knees on the ground, seeking the key which the Spanish girl had tossed through the window.

To the left, below the hill on which the house stood, the Pacific was a broad gleaming jewel in the

moonlight; and on the open harbor of Callao, among that welter of anchored ships, was the steamer *Spardian* which had brought Bob Newton and Ellen Lanhart here.

In the opposite direction, the fertile valley of the Rimac widened toward the distant spires of Lima, limned against the purple range which ran inward to meet the might Andes

FRANTICALLY, Bob Newton searched for the key; and then, suddenly, he went cold. Something round and hard and metallic was boring into his back—

A gun's muzzle!

"Get up, Señor Newton. And no tricks!" a sibilant whisper came to Bob Newton's straining ears.

The American straightened, turned—and stared in the glittering eyes of Rico Moreno, the man who had abducted him!

"You Peruvian rat!" Newton rasped. His muscles tautened.

"One false move and you are a very dead *Americano!*" Morneo spoke silkily. "Come back into the house. Since my sweet sister's plan failed to elicit from you the information I desire, we will try a different scheme!"

For an instant, Newton toyed with the idea of chancing combat with the Spaniard; of hurling himself at the man, knocking aside his revolver, smashing his fist home against Moreno's jaw. But that would be foolhardy . . . and besides, there was Ellen somewhere within the house. She must be saved. Newton dared not risk a bullet through his belly just now. Not until Ellen was out of danger!

Moreno was leading him into the

house now; was prodding him up the corridor, toward an open door. They entered a room.

It was Conchita Moreno's room. Evidently there had been a duplicate key, for the door was now unlocked and open. Conchita herself was unbound, ungagged. And now a tight-fitting silken dress covered her voluptuous body.

Rico Moreno spoke. "*Listen*, Señor Newton!" he rasped. "You are going to tell me the location of Francisco Pizarro's tomb—do you understand?"

"How can I tell you something I do not know?" Bob Newton grunted.

"Ah, but you *do* know!" Moreno said. "You admitted as much to my sweet sister here. I overheard you. That was when I brought your lovely, golden-haired fiancée to the door of this room and permitted her to see you making love to Conchita!"

"Why did you do that?" Newton asked harshly.

"I thought to destroy her faith in you, Señor. I thought perhaps she, too, knew the secret—and if she believed you to be unfaithful to her, she might decide to loosen her tongue. Unfortunately, your fiancée could tell me nothing."

"And neither can I!" Newton retorted.

Rico Moreno's dark brows went up swiftly. "No? But perhaps there may be a way of unlocking that stubborn mouth of yours!" He raised his voice. "Fernando—Felipe! Bring the yellow-haired girl here!" he called loudly.

Bob Newton tensed. And then, a moment later, two saddle-colored Peruvian natives entered the

room, hauling between them the struggling form of Ellen Lanhart!

Lovely she was, with a slim entrancing youthfulness. Her blonde wavy hair, her fair shoulders, the seductive lines of her tiny breasts beneath her linen dress, the winsome contours of her slender hips and delicately-tapered legs, all combined to make a picture of naive deliciousness. When Bob Newton saw her, his heart gave a great bound.

"Ellen—my dear!" he gasped hoarsely.

She looked at him; and a dim contempt came into her starry blue eyes. Her red kissable lips were tremulous as she turned her gaze away from Newton . . .

It was more than he could bear. He whirled on Moreno. "Damn you!" he rasped. "You've made her think that I—" His fist smashed at the Peruvian's jaw.

MORENO staggered, almost went down under the exploding impact of Newton's savage blow. And then Moreno's two henchmen leaped at Bob Newton, bludgeoned him with the butts of their automatics, hammered him down under the force of their battering attack. Raging pain made a Niagara of agony through Newton's brain. He sagged into stupefied semi-consciousness. . . .

"Water!" he dimly heard Moreno's rasping command.

And then one of Moreno's henchmen leaped from the room, to return in a moment with a bucket brim-full of cold water. Moreno took it; flung its contents full

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Ashes to Ashes

[Continued from page 87]

into Bob Newton's blood-smeared face.

"D-don't. . . ! You b-beast!" Ellen's voice rang out sharply. And to Bob Newton, slowly reviving, her attempt at intercession was like a reprieve from hell. Then she still loved him—didn't want him to be tortured.

But even as he opened his eyes, Moreno had whirled on the golden-haired girl. "You keep your mouth shut!" the Peruvian snarled. And he dashed the remainder of the water on Ellen Lanhart's shrinking body.

It soaked her thin dress; and where the garment clung to her lovely body, wet and tight, it revealed more than ever the sweet outlines of her young breasts. Like a second skin the wet material limned every seductive curve, every enticing line. Two alluring mounds of girl-flesh pressed outward through the wet dress until they appeared so clear in detail as if they were bared

Bob Newton groaned, staggered to his feet. Rage made a red haze of hatred before his eyes. He

tried to fling himself at Rico Moreno.

But the Peruvian's two native henchmen were upon him, pinioning him so that he could not move. Helpless in the grasp of his captors, Bob Newton stared foggily at the scene before him.

Rico Moreno held Ellen in his hard arms. The man was leering wickedly. He turned his hard eyes on Newton. "Now, Señor Gringo!" he barked. "You are helpless, and I have your sweetheart here as my prisoner. Will you tell me what I want to know? Will you reveal the secret hiding-place of Pizarro's bones?"

"I've already told you I don't know!" Newton panted thickly.

"You are a stubborn jackass, my friend. But perhaps I know a way to cure that stubbornness!" With that, Moreno's claw-like hands went to the neck of Ellen Lanhart's frock. He ripped downward, savagely—

ELLEN cried out; tried to struggle away from her captor. But it was useless. Moreno was ripping, tearing at her dress, until at last he had snatched all but tattered remnants from her lovely form. . . . She tried to turn away, tried to cover her breasts with her fluttering palms. . . .

Wide-eyed with rage, livid with a consuming hate, Bob Newton felt a surging and consuming fury welling up in his throat. Moreno had defiled Ellen Lanhart—the girl Newton loved. And for that Moreno would pay, the American swore silently!

Rico Moreno once more pulled Ellen toward him; enfolded her

half-nude body in his arms. He locked her in a rough and savage embrace. . . . He kissed her, despite her agonized struggles to free herself from his brutal arms. . . . Then he turned to Bob Newton. "Will you tell me the secret, gringo dog?"

Sweat stood out on Newton's strained forehead. Desperately, vainly, he attempted to release himself from the two natives who held him. "I tell you I don't know where Pizarro's bones are buried!" he cried hoarsely, insanely.

"Still stubborn, eh?" Moreno's eyes narrowed. He barked a command to his henchmen. "Rope the *Americano* to the wall!"

Newton felt his wrists being bound with a length of rawhide. His arms were jerked over his head; fastened to a huge spike which protruded from the wall. He swayed against his fetters.

Moreno turned to the cringing Ellen Lanhart. His hand dropped to his wide leather belt; unfastened a many-thonged quirt. He handed the whip to the yellow-haired girl. "Here!" he barked. "Take this and whip your lover until he is ready to tell me what I wish to know!"

Ellen's eyes widened in horror. "You—you want me to whip Bob Newton?"

"Si!"

"I won't do it!"

MORENO turned to his sister, dark-haired Conchita. "Take a whip from one of my men. Then whip this girl until she in turn whips her sweetheart!"

Conchita's cat-like eyes lighted up sadistically. "With the great-

est of delight, my brother!" she grinned readily. She snatched a thick-handled rawhide quirt from the belt of one of Moreno's underlings. She hefted the lash; swung it deftly, viciously—

The long, snaky thong curled out and cut sharply across the snowy, flawless whiteness of Ellen Lanhart's back. . . .

Ellen screamed. Again Conchita Moreno raised her quirt, brought it singing down across Ellen's rounded hips. And Ellen moaned with agonized pain—

"Ellen—for God's sake do as you've been ordered!" Bob Newton gasped out desperately. "Go ahead and lash me!"

Ellen hesitated. Once more Conchita's quirt descended upon the yellow-haired girl's naked back. And then, because she had no other course, Ellen raised her own whip, brought it down across the chest of her sweetheart, Bob Newton.

And as Conchita's stinging whip-blows bit into Ellen's cringing white flesh, Ellen in turn increased the tempo of her own lashes at Newton's squirming body.

Newton closed his eyes to the pain. Ellen's quirt was cutting through his shirt, biting into his flesh. . . . But he knew that this torture was not really meant for him. Rico Moreno had another purpose, now. The man was a fiend, a sadistic monster, a flagellant. . . .

Like some modern Caligula, the Peruvian was gloating over the scene now being enacted before his narrowed eyes. Slash—slash—slash—the whips descended, upon Bob Newton and upon the

agonized Ellen Lanhart—

Newton's shirt was ripped and slashed to ribbons, now, and his flesh was raw, bleeding. Ellen Lanhart's unwilling and inexperienced hand could not control her whip, and every blow she dealt him was like a razor-cut. Whereas Conchita Moreno, more adept, was careful not to draw blood from Ellen's lovely white body.

Conchita's slashing quirt was a thing of finesse, of exquisite and graduated cruelty that raised angry weals on Ellen's back, but drew no crimson. . . .

Bob Newton gritted his teeth under the double torture of being whipped and seeing his beloved Ellen similarly lashed. And then, abruptly, hope leaped into his heart. The rope, which bound him to that overhead spike in the wall, seemed to be loosening!

He pretended to sag, semi-conscious; and he threw his full weight against the rawhide thong. It slipped, stretched—

And he almost slipped his hands from the noose!

AT THE same instant, Ellen saw what he was doing. Like a flash, she pivoted—and her next quirt-blow, instead of lashing down on Newton, sang through the air and sliced full across Conchita Moreno's face.

Conchita screamed a harsh, agonized cry. Blood dripped from her mutilated cheek. She dropped her whip, staggered backward. . . . And simultaneously, Bob Newton launched himself headlong at Rico Moreno, Conchita's brother.

Moreno was totally unprepared for the attack. He went sprawling;

punched up against the far wall. And as he fell, Newton leaped after him, flicked the Peruvian's automatic from the man's broad leather belt. Newton whirled.

Moreno's two henchmen were closing in. Bob Newton's finger tightened on the automatic's trigger. He squeezed hot lead out of the weapon's flame-belching muzzle; and the two natives went tumbling down to some Peruvian hell, with bullets through their skulls.

But in that brief instant, Rico Moreno had regained his feet. Now he hurled himself upon Bob Newton from behind; and the American went down, with Moreno on top of him. Desperately, Newton squirmed over on his back, so that he was face to face with the savage-eyed Moreno who pinioned him.

Moreno was battering at the American's face; was snatching at the automatic in Newton's right fist. Newton strove to bring the gun's muzzle upward; to blow a hole through Moreno's guts. But suddenly, the Peruvian plunged his knee into Bob Newton's groin; and as the nauseating agony ate like a cancer through the American's abdomen, Moreno got the automatic.

He got it, raised it, aimed it—

With the last ounce of his strength, Bob Newton smashed upward with his fist, knocking the automatic aside even as it spat flame and belched leaden death. The bullet whined across the room. Newton heard a sudden, wailing, feminine cry—and the thud of a slumping body.

Cold horror gripped at the

American's vitals. Had that deflected bullet struck Ellen Lanhart . . . killed her. . . ? He twisted, and a new, rage-born strength flowed into him. Savagely he raised his head; and his teeth closed down into the side of Rico Moreno's straining neck. Like a wolf the American clamped his hard jaws. . . .

Moreno shrieked wildly, insanely, as Newton's teeth met in his jugular. . . . The American felt a spurting, brackish hot fountain in his face; tasted the salt tang of the Peruvian's blood. . . .

And thus, by the fangs of a man who had momentarily turned savage, Rico Moreno died. . . .

BOB NEWTON staggered to his feet, nauseated, sick, horror-stricken at what he had done. But it had been his life or Moreno's. . . a fight to the death. . . . Newton squared his shoulders, whirled around, searching—

Searching for Ellen Lanhart, desperately afraid that she had been struck by that singing slug from Moreno's deflected automatic. And then, suddenly, Bob said, "Ellen—Ellen my dear!"

She was standing there in the far corner, wide-eyed, white-faced, exquisite . . . and unharmed! Newton looked at his left. He saw a slumped figure—a feminine figure.

The body of Conchita Moreno, with a bullet hole in her breast! She was dead.

He leaped at the Peruvian girl's corpse, callously stripped away its tight silken dress. Then he turned to Ellen. "Come, my dear. Put this on!" he commanded gently.

She swayed toward him. "Bob—
Bob darling . . ."

He caught her in his arms.
Kissed her reverently. . . .

And then she dressed, and they
went out of that house of death.

THEY were on the afterdeck of
the steamship *Spardian*, Bob
Newton and Ellen Lanhart. The
descending sun was a glowing
orange disc on the western rim of
the Pacific, and Callao was a dim
memory, far behind them.

"My grandfather always said
that death and destruction would
follow in the wake of any attempt
to disinter Pizarro's bones," New-
ton said softly. He fingered the
signet-ring on the third finger of
his hard right hand, the ring which
his dead grandfather had left to
him. And then, as he touched the
bauble, something happened.

The entablature of the ring
popped open!

Newton stared at the secret hol-
low place thus revealed. He saw

a folded, tiny scarp of tough,
onion-skin paper.

Bob!" Ellen Lanhart whispered.
"What is it?"

Wondering, he withdrew the
paper. Unfolded it. Held it up in
the day's dying light.

"A map!" he breathed. "Look—
Ellen! A map showing the loca-
tion of Pizarro's tomb, in the Per-
uvian wilderness!"

Ellen shuddered. "Death . . . and
destruction . . . following in the
wake of Pizarro's bones . . ." she
whispered unsteadily.

Bob Newton looked at her; then
at the unfolded map. He smiled,
a little grimly. Then, with calm
deliberation, he tore the map into
many tiny fragments, and spilled
them from his palm.

The little pieces of paper danced
and settled to the roiled surface of
the Pacific.

Bob Newton turned and gath-
ered Ellen into his arms. And
somewhere beyond the Styx Fran-
cisco Pizarro smiled approval.

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