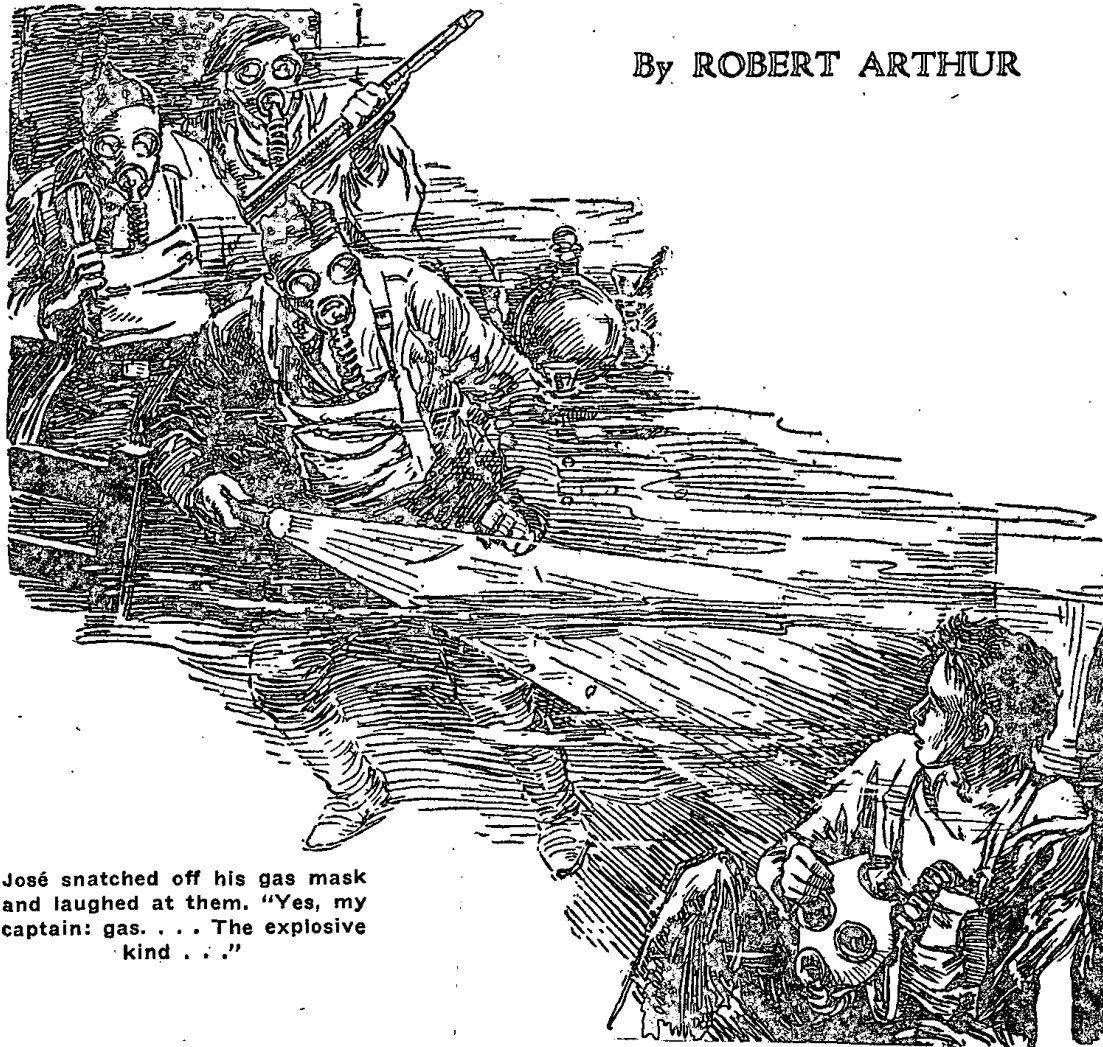


By ROBERT ARTHUR



José snatched off his gas mask and laughed at them. "Yes, my captain: gas. . . . The explosive kind . . ."

Blaze of Glory

You'll wear no uniform, José, when you make your gift to Spain. But your way will be lighted by a blue flame, and a thousand guns will sound your requiem

THE boy José wriggled himself carefully down into the shallow muddy crater of a shell hole and there, pillowing his face on his arm and smothering the sound with his sleeve, gave way to the coughing fit he could no longer hold back.

It was over in a moment and he spat. The saliva was pinkish.

José did not think he had been heard by

the accursed sharp-eared Moors. The coughing had been drowned by the distant, almost bored chatter of a machine gun, and by the deep grunt of a trench mortar hurling death across the shell-plowed wasteland into the ruined hospital that sheltered the Moors.

José lifted himself on his elbows and peered above the rim of the depression. His sharp young face was alert and fox-like. His eyes were bright in the darkness—too bright. But that was the fever.

For a moment the boy paused, summoning the reserves of his energy. Then, drawing himself by the elbows, he slid his gaunt

body up across the slippery clay lip of the shell hole and onward toward the ruins of the hospital. Where the Moors waited with beady-eyed eagerness for the attack that was to come with the dawn, when Death would throw the shadow of his cloak all across this earth and gather to himself many brave Spaniards.

Onward, guarded by the night, José slid. Behind him the silent lines of his countrymen retreated. Ahead of him, bleak and black against the spangled robe of the heavens, the shell-pocked walls and gaunt window holes of the hospital came slowly closer.

For a year the Moors had held those ruins. It was the spearhead of their drive. So close had they come to the dark and silent city behind José, and no closer. Yet never had they been driven away. Always they remained, waiting for a relaxing of vigilance, a slackening of courage, an instant's giving way to weariness to sweep down and take the city.

On the morrow, once again the attempt to drive them back would be made. And as had happened a dozen times before, the bodies of brave Spaniards would pile high here, like stacks of wheat spewed out of a reaper. And the dark earth would drink deep of red blood, the bright sun would shine down into many an eye that did not blink before its glare.

And as had happened a dozen times before, the attack would probably fail. So that one day—a day which could not be far off—the devilish Moors would come sweeping across this bit of ground and into the city, to kill and burn and rape.

This José knew, and fierce hatred for the invaders, the savages from across the water, hammered in his breast like a hot flame consuming him. So that a dozen times he had taken his place in the enlistment lines, and begged for a rifle; had pleaded for a gun and bullets, that he might join the legions of grim men who had put down their tools — their hammers, their saws, their scythes, their shovels—to man the trenches and thrust back the enemy.

But that coughing he could not cease,

the pink blood that came sometimes to his lips, the fever—those things had prevented. Always the doctors had shaken their heads and said no. Always they had told him to remain quiet, to avoid exertion, to leave the fighting to others, if he would get well of the cough.

But José knew, though they did not tell him so, he was not going to get well. Had Pedro, his uncle, gotten well when the fever took him? Had Jiminez, his cousin? Had his sacred mother? God had not willed that they should, and was not he, José, the weakest and least worthy of them all? No, it was quite clear that soon he too would be too weak to leave his bed, as they had been at the end. And after that—

Eh, well; priests had their place. But if he must die, he, José Respos, preferred to die fighting like a man. Like a soldier, taking the enemy with him in his death. And if he could not fight with a gun and bullets, if he could not have a uniform, there was another way that had come to him.

Madre de Dios! it was simple. All it required—aside from a few brains—was the ability to die. And that he, José the Cougher, could do as well as another. In a very blazing burst of glory, as a soldier dreamed of dying. Who would choose to live when he could die as José planned to, with the enemies slain by his prowess heaped about him like flies?

And so now José Respos crawled on his belly in the mud—skinny, coughing, unarmed save for an idea—across the torn clay toward the enemy. And presently he reached the guarding barbed wire, presently a voice spoke in the night, sharply, and José answered.

"I am a deserter," he whispered carefully into the blank shadows. "I wish to surrender. I bring news of value."

A grunt answered him, then a third voice spoke. José crawled slowly and carefully forward. . . .

IN the city, wrapped in the mantle of a lightless night against the possibility of bombers roaring over to drop destruction the general in charge of the coming morn

ing's attack and the major who had persuaded him nothing could be lost by the experiment stood on a rise of ground and peered through night glasses toward the ruins of the hospital.

They could see nothing, but still they peered. Presently the major looked at his wrist watch, made out the time by the faint starlight.

"An hour, general," he said. "Shall I give the signal?"

The general nodded and lowered his glasses. He was a stout man, with a moustache that bristled fiercely, and a furrowed brow.

"I wonder," he muttered to himself, "how the scheme came to him?"

The major shrugged, and turning so that his body shielded the light, pressed the catch on a flashlight three times. A small white eye winked back; and below, behind the rise of ground, machinery of some kind whined with the even rhythm of a pressure pump.

"Perhaps," suggested the major, who was a man lean of frame and bright of eye, "it was the fever. Fever sharpens the mind. And I think he worked in the hospital for a time, as a messenger. He hoped to be a medical student. At all events, it is an ingenious scheme."

"If it works," the general grunted.

"Even if it does not work," the major murmured. "Of course, there are many things that may go wrong. The pipeline may be broken."

"Or the boy may not manage to get into the basements. He may be shot down first," the general suggested.

"True," the major agreed. Behind him the machinery in the hollow continued its pumping. "But if all goes well, in a few moments we will be forcing chlorine gas directly into the basements of the hospital. The thought is amusing, is it not?"

The general nodded.

"But if the ending of the affair is as the boy planned it," he said, "it will be even more amusing."

. . . José stood erect before the Spanish officer in command of the Moorish detach-

ment that held the hospital. He strove hard to keep the coughing back, but could not. When it was over, he wiped his lips and once more met the man's eye.

"It is as I say, captain," he said stoutly. "I have news of value for you."

"You're a Red," the captain snarled. He was a tall man, big-boned, dark-featured, with a sabre slash across his cheekbone. He sat at his ease in a swivel chair in what had once been the office of the chief of staff of the hospital, a lighted candle on the desk beside him, and scowled at the boy. "All Reds are tricky. I think I'll have you shot."

"Captain," José insisted with dogged stubbornness, "I am not a Red. My father was a loyal subject of the king. And my uncle was a priest. They took him and—No matter. I hate the Reds. But I didn't crawl on my belly across that stretch where death takes his ease just because I hate the Reds."

The captain lit a cigarette and tossed the flaming match to the stone floor. In the doorway a dark-skinned Moorish sergeant awaited orders. But for the moment the officer reserved his decision.

"Very well." He shrugged. "Tell your story. No matter what lies you tell, you shall be shot. But there's no hurry."

José drew in a deep breath and tried to still the pounding of his heart.

"I am ill," he said boldly. "I die anyway. What loss is there in taking a chance? The doctors said that to live I must go far, to a place called Switzerland. To a hospital there. It will cost much money. *Madre de Dios!*" The boy made an eloquent gesture. "Where should I get much money?"

"Where indeed?" the officer grumbled. "What has that to do with your presence here? Bore me no more with your illness or I'll shoot you myself."

"As you say, captain," José agreed respectfully. "Nevertheless, I am here because I have learned of something worth much money that is here, it is my thought you will pay me for telling you of it, and perhaps finding it."

The officer sat up straighter and flicked the butt of his cigarette against the wall, from which it dropped with a shower of sparks.

"Son of a pig!" he snapped. "If there is anything of value in this worthless wreckage, you will tell me of it without pay."

He leaned forward, and his scowl deepened.

"Spit it up!" he commanded. "What of value would there be we have not found?"

"I will be paid?" José demanded. "So that I may go to Switzerland and be cured?"

"Your throat will be cut if you don't speak!" the captain roared. José sighed.

"But I die anyway," he murmured. "If I am not to be paid, as well by a cut throat as another way. As well tonight as tomorrow."

The lean officer swore, then shrugged.

"You will be paid," he said, "if you speak the truth—which I doubt. Now out with it! What of value have we overlooked?"

José's voice dropped to a whisper.

"The radium, captain. I think you have not found that, have you?"

THE captain found himself on his feet, swearing fluently. "Whelp of a mountain goat!" "What kind of lie are you trying to put over on me? I'll slice your ears off personally and string them around your neck before I shoot you! I'll—What radium?"

"Ah!" José said wisely, cocking his head to one side and looking down his nose at the officer. "Then you haven't found it."

"Radium!" the captain bellowed. "What would radium be doing in a ramshackle stable like this ruin? And what do you know of radium anyway, gutter-sweepings?"

"Nothing," the boy said hastily. "Nothing, my captain, except that it is something doctors use, and is of much value. How much I do not know. But—" his voice sank into a whisper and his eyes were round—"I have heard it said that the radium hidden here in this building, before

your brave soldiers captured it, cost one million pesos."

The Spanish officer stared at him, hard-eyed. In truth, it was always possible there *might* have been radium here. This had been a hospital—the finest in Spain. Radium would be used in a hospital. It might easily be overlooked in the abandonment of a place during an attack. And its value—well, even if it were far less than a million pesos, it would be rich prize indeed.

Being a fighting man, the captain was not well informed about radium. But that much he knew.

He sat down and lit another cigarette.

"Sparrow," he said, his voice silken, "you are a fool. You have heard somewhere, no doubt, a rumor concerning this radium and you have taken it for the truth. It is a lie, but I am curious to know just what it was you heard."

José spat into a corner, and the officer promptly cursed him.

"My captain," the boy replied, "that is the truth. I did hear such mention, among the doctors to whom I went to have my cough cured. They grieved much that the radium had been lost. They are anxious for it back. Their leaders wish to sell it. Money is needed. It would buy much flour, and many guns."

"Of course," the captain muttered. "Get on, get on."

"So," José announced with a flourish, "it is simple. You know that they, the accursed Reds, attack at daybreak?"

"That is known," the officer told him. "We are well prepared. As always. Our friends have signaled from the roofs. The dirty Reds will lie in their own blood as thick as acorns underneath an oak tree."

"Eh, well," the boy said, "why is the attack? For no other reason than the Reds are desperate, and will do anything to get money. They wish to capture the building to regain the radium from its hiding place to sell it. Lives are cheap. Money is scarce. Does not my tale now make sense?"

The rebel captain gnawed his long, horsy lower lip thoughtfully.

"Then, supposing what you say is true, how is one to find this radium?" he asked scoffingly. "I suppose you, spindle-shanks, know the secret of its hiding place?"

José shook his head sadly.

"No, my officer. But this I do know. It is hidden someplace in the basements. Down in the bowels of the building. There were—so the talk I heard said—laboratories down there where one worked with the radium. And its hiding place was described. I think I would recognize it when I saw it."

"Then repeat the description to me," the captain commanded.

José coughed, and when the spell was over, shook his head.

"I shall recognize it," he insisted. "I can find it. Besides, there is little time. I have other news for you. News you will not like."

The heavy eyebrows of the man drew together.

"What is this news?"

"Just this," José replied, watching him a little fearfully. "The fiendish Reds have hit upon a scheme—how they will do it I do not know, except that it has to do with the sewer-mains in some manner—to drive you from the building before they attack. They plan to fill the cellars with a very poisonous gas, my captain, and kill all your men like rats!"

A second time the officer came to his feet with a rush.

"Thunders of hell!" he bellowed down at the cringing form of the boy. "If this is true, how do you know of it, stable sweepings? Speak!"

José hunched his shoulders but stood his ground.

"I heard it whispered among the officers, captain," he said meekly. "I am only a boy, a sick, coughing one, to whom no one pays attention. Would I tell you if it were not so, and I was not of your side?"

The rebel captain muttered a string of unsavory oaths to himself and then clamped a heavy hand on José's shoulder.

"The sewers," he grumbled aloud. "Poison gas sent through the sewers. It is a

mad idea. And yet—yet—No doubt the sewers are broken and there are many openings into the basements. If it were true and I took no action—"

He made up his mind and spoke decisively to the Moorish sergeant, still standing at attention in the doorway.

"Clean the cellars!" he rasped. "Get the men up to the ground-floor level until further notice. All equipment and munitions with them."

The sergeant saluted and vanished. The officer propelled José toward the door.

"As for you, fleabite," he said, "you and I are going to visit the underground levels now. Be sure you are telling the truth. There are worse things for liars than death."

MEEKLY the boy preceded him down a hallway littered with plaster from ceilings and walls. The upper floors of the building had been reduced to wreckage by gunfire, and the roof had fallen in.

But the ground and first floors still stood, as well as the walls of the floors above, and were tenable. The openings in the bricks made fine machine gun ports; and the cellars, all concrete, were practically bombproof.

It was a strong point that had stood against every attack for months, and would have taken the heaviest of modern artillery to reduce. Until the building had been razed literally brick from brick it was almost uncapturable. And with the dawn, the boy José knew, its walls would stand off still one more attack while the Moorish marksmen within pleasantly killed the advancing Spaniards. Unless—

The heavy hand on his shoulder guided the tatter-clothed lad past scores of Moorish soldiers, sprawled asleep in the corridor. It turned him down a stairway guarded by a sentry, down a flight of dark steps which the captain illuminated with a pocket flashlight, and deep into the bowels of the building.

Below, many scores more of the Moorish legionnaires were bivouacked in the hallways and rooms, old laboratories, store

rooms, and other space in the hospital basement. Awakened, they were grumpily getting to their feet, collecting equipment and filing upwards as the sergeant carried out his orders.

In fifteen minutes the last of them had quitted the cellar, leaving dust thick in the air and the stone walls reverberating to the tramp of feet and the harsh, strange words of their cursing. There was left only the captain, a lieutenant who joined him—a short, dour-seeming man—and the sergeant. And José.

The captain sniffed the air.

"No gas," he said. "Quickly now,ascal. The radium!"

"If I may have the light—" José suggested humbly; and with an impatient curse the Rebel officer gave it to him. José moved forward confidently down the long narrow corridors, where the shadows leaped and danced like spirits of evil cutting capers on a sinner's grave.

The three followed on his heels, suspiciously. José turned into the first room he came to, flashed the light briefly, and backed out. It was but a storeroom, smelling of Moors, and of no interest.

But the next was a room he sought. It had been a laboratory. Or a research room. The wreckage of shelves that had held equipment was still there. So were broken sinks. And gas jets, where burners had been attached.

José moved toward them, and as he came close, flashed the light into other corners of the room. Swiftly, under cover of darkness, his fingers found the gas jets and turned the cocks to open. There was no gas to flow, of course. The pressure had long since been cut off—if indeed the buried mains had not been blown up by shellfire—a contingency which José addressed a silent prayer to the Holy Virgin to make not so.

When, shrugging, José led them onward, four open gas cocks stood in the room behind them.

He led them through more rooms, and another laboratory where he successfully repeated the opening of the gas connec-

tions. But now the captain was swearing audibly, and the time was short. In a small room that had many shelves and many broken bottles, José paused.

The torch made a circle of light about a steel door three feet square set in the wall. The door had once been locked. Now the lock was broken and it sagged on its hinges.

José allowed a little sound of disappointment to escape his lips.

"It is as described!" he cried. "But—it has been opened."

"Of course it's been opened!" the Rebel captain sneered. "If your radium was hidden there—"

"But it is small!" the boy cried eagerly. "So tiny! Perhaps—"

He ran toward the door, and as he did, tripped over an obstruction on the floor. The light flew from his hand. José grunted, and as he painfully rose to his feet, his fingers took something small and heavy from its hiding place, tucked inside his sock at the ankle. He had been searched of course; but who would examine a waif's muddy socks and shoes?

Then he gathered up the light, flung open the steel door, and revealed inside a second door that had also been forced. The second door, opened, showed steel shelves on which broken glass lay, little heaps of old chemicals, a broken microscope, and some rusty instruments.

José reached up and fumbled along the empty shelves within his reach. When he withdrew his hand it was empty.

"I—I can not find it," he stammered. "It should be a small thing—a box or bottle. I don't know which. But very heavy. This radium, so I heard, is kept within walls of lead. It might have been overlooked—"

"If it was ever here," the captain said unpleasantly, and took the light from him. "I will look for myself!"

He thrust José aside and played the light within the little safety closet. Then he swore, incredulously, reached in and drew forth a small object the size of a man's thumb.

"Lead!" he exclaimed.

"Lead!" José echoed him. "A lead bottle! It is the radium! It burns! It must be kept within lead for safety!"

The three rebels stared at it, brows creased. The lieutenant took it and hefted the small lead vial in his hand.

"It is heavy," he said knowingly. "And this radium is kept in lead tubes. I have read it. Otherwise it is dangerous."

"We shall see," the captain replied curtly, and thrust the thing into his pocket. "I am still suspicious of this scrubby, coughing monkey. I shall—"

And then the Moorish sergeant threw back his head and sniffed. The lieutenant did likewise. And it was he who cried out—

"Gas! *Chlorine!*"

ACROSS the lines the general and the major still stood on their rise of ground. It lacked less than an hour of daybreak, and the general was fretful.

"You have made the change?" he demanded.

The major nodded. "Everything's going smoothly," he reported. "Twenty minutes of the chlorine, to give 'em a good sniff and keep 'em out, and then we shifted over. We've sealed up the break we made and turned on the pressure again, normal. Of course it was cut off months ago.

"There will be a lot of waste of course: bound to be cracked joints in the pipes, if nothing worse. But so far as we know the main is intact as far as the hospital. If God wills it, we will succeed."

"I suppose there's no use hoping too much," the general conceded gloomily. "Still, it would be fun to see those accursed Moors—Well, we can only wait. And see."

... José sat huddled on a broken box in the captain's room. Almost an hour had gone by since they had hustled him up out of the basements, where the sharp, pungent chlorine smell had begun to waft down dark passages as if feeling its way with invisible fingers toward its prey.

After that the annoyed officer had ordered all doors leading into the under-

ground sections closed off and made gas-proof. The troops, who were awaiting the dawn attack, squatted in the halls or manned machine guns at gaps in the wall, and felt uneasy.

"I do not like it," the captain swore heavily to his lieutenant, his aide. "Chlorine through the sewer mains—it's a fishy idea. Yet how else *could* the stuff be gotten here?"

"Those Reds!" the lieutenant spat. "They're a tricky bunch. God knows what else they're up to. Good thing we had the lad's warning."

"Is it?" the captain snarled. "I wonder. I don't trust him. Radium! Chlorine in the cellars! Pfui! I wish I knew the truth. I've sent for a chemical man who used to be attached to this place. Major Armandos. He'll be able to tell us if its possible the sewer mains—What is it, gutter-snipe? You seemed startled. Do you know Major Armandos?"

"I? *Madre de Dios*, no!" José exclaimed piously. "I merely jumped because a flea bit me."

"Radium!" the captain snorted. "Come to think of it, if there was radium in this place, why didn't Armandos ever mention it? He must have known. He was assistant to the chief of staff. He could hardly have forgotten the existence—"

"Major Armandos!" the guard at the door said, bringing his rifle to attention; and the captain and the lieutenant wheeled toward the plump, red-faced man who came in, stamping the mud from his feet.

"Well?" he exclaimed testily, as the two saluted. "You sent for me, Captain Barios. What in the name of a thousand Basque devils do you want?"

The captain explained in terse, clipped words, while the major's face grew redder.

"Radium!" he cried. "Chlorine through the sewers! What lunacy is this? There was no radium among the supplies; and as for gas being forced into the basements through the sewers, the idea is fantastic!"

The burly captain grew purple. He seized José by the shoulder and jerked him to his feet.

"Then this walking scarecrow has been spouting lies to me!" he roared. "He has been a part of some trickery! He—"

"José!" the major exclaimed. "José Respos! He was a messenger here, until he was found tubercular. What does this mean, whelp?"

Captain Barrios swung an open palm against José's cheek with such force that the boy went spinning into a corner and fell. Then the man jerked him upright again.

"Speak!" he roared, bringing his contorted face within inches of the boy's. "Speak, you red weasel! What trick have you been playing?"

José cringed.

"Don't—don't hit me again," he gasped. "I'll tell. I'll turn it off."

"*Turn what off?*" the captain bellowed, and the boy trembled.

"The chlorine," he whimpered. "It's being pumped through a special pipe—they told me how to turn it on. You didn't notice when I turned the valve—"

"Stop gibbering!" the captain shouted. "And speak sense. Major Armandos, have you any idea what pipe he could be referring to?"

The squat major's face was taking on purplish tinges.

"Captain Barrios!" he said with ominous precision, "I don't know and I don't care. It's obvious you've let this young liar lead you by the nose like a pig going to the sticking. For the sake of your own skin I hope—"

THE captain slapped José's cheek again with a rough hand, made harder by the officer's own fear. "What pipe? What valve?" he almost screamed, and José cowered lower.

"Please, captain," he gasped, "let me go down there with a gas mask on. I will turn it off. All will be well. I swear it. Someone remembered this pipe and offered me money to trick you. I will show you—"

"By the thunder of the devil's wings, you will indeed!" the captain said grimly. "Lieutenant! A gas mask for this whelp.

You and the sergeant will accompany us. Major Armandos, do you care to descend into the basements with us?"

"I do!" the major spat. "This José Respos was a clever urchin, as I remember him. A full report will have to be made."

He glanced at the window and saw the faint lightening of sky that hinted of the dawn's grayness.

"And the time is short!" he reminded the captain with heavy sarcasm. "The attack we are awaiting will begin at any minute."

He glared angrily at Barrios and started for the door.

"Come!" the Captain snarled, and jerked at José's arm. The boy stumbled down the corridor after the rebel officer, fumbling with the gas mask that the lieutenant had flung at him. At the first door leading to the gas-filled basements they paused while the three officers and the Moorish sergeant adjusted masks.

Then, snouted like monsters from the earth's entrails, they descended into the darkness, the captain leading the way with his electric torch throwing a path of light ahead.

There was a wispy foginess in the air as they advanced — the chlorine. And the damp silence was disturbed by a sound: a faint hissing whisper like the noise of snakes beneath a rock.

The clutch on José's shoulder was peremptory. Obediently he turned into a doorway. And in the room they entered that soft and ominous hiss was louder.

It was one of the old laboratories. The officers heard the soft sibilant sound, and through the round goggles of their masks they stared at each other. Then with an abrupt movement the major sprang across to one of the open gas cocks and held his hand before it. The cool stream of invisible death pouring from it told its own story.

The stout officer made a movement with his fist that was in itself a curse, and the captain who held José, unable to swear because of the mask, raised his fist and dealt the boy a blow on the ear that spun him

against the wall, from which he slid to the damp stone floor.

José sat there, staring at four masked men dimly visible by the light of the electric torch, and his eyes were mocking. He snatched off his own gas mask and laughed aloud at them.

"Yes, my captain!" he cried, and they heard him though they could not speak. "Gas from the gas mains. I turned on the gas cocks, and in the city they restored the pressure that has so long been turned off. First they pumped some chlorine through to scare you.

"But that was only the beginning. Then they forced through the valves I opened, into the basement here which you so obligingly made gastight for me, the natural gas. The explosive kind. It was my idea, my officers. All mine. So that the attack might succeed. Now—watch!"

His hand, in his pocket, came forth. It held a large match. He reached to strike it, but the captain saved him the trouble. His pistol leaped into his fingers, and even as the aghast major tried to wrest it from him, the gun spoke. And death leaped from the muzzle.

José saw the pale blue balloon of flame spurt into life at the pistol's muzzle, and in a time too short for the human mind to reckon it, flare through all the rooms and corridors of the basements of the hospital in which so many hundreds of the enemy waited now for the attack from the city. And then nothing . . .

IN THE city, the watching general and major saw the rest, as uneasily they stared at the distant brick shell of the hospital, taking form against the graying eastern sky.

"The attack begins in one minute," the general said fretfully. "The boy has failed."

The major was about to speak, but was interrupted. The brick ruins across the lines were rising bodily in the air. They rose, the walls opened outwards, the floors soared skyward in a confusion of stones and dirt and men; and then all collapsed together into a soft gray pall of dust, soundlessly, for the terrific slap of the explosion did not come for a pair of seconds afterwards.

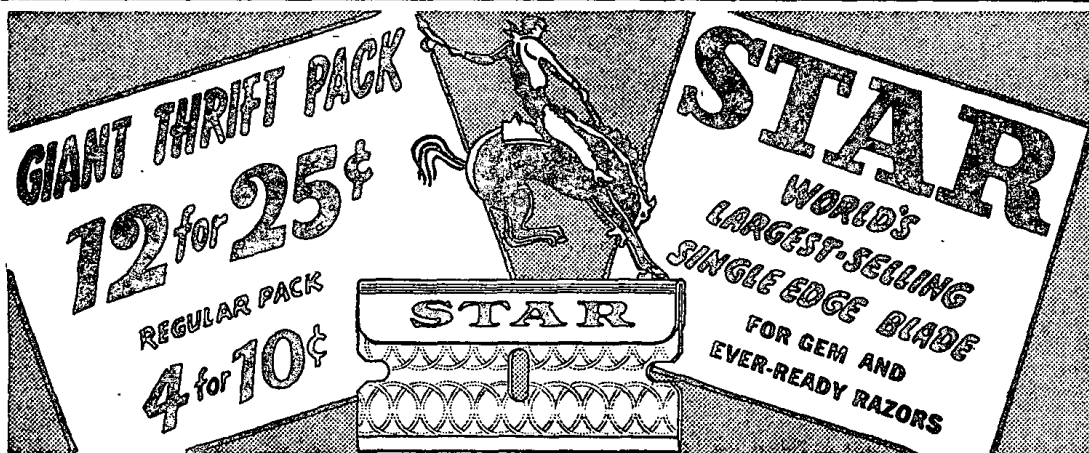
A single great blue flare for an instant had outlined the collapsing building. Then it and the building both were gone forever.

As if the explosion had been a signal, machine guns burst into hysterical chattering and rifles began to talk in rumbling chorus. Light artillery punctuated the symphony with a *slap-bang! slap-bang!* and moving lines of running men came dimly into view. But the general appeared not to notice the attack had begun. For a moment longer he kept his glasses fixed on the dust-veil that hid the building from which so long the enemy had menaced the city.

Then he drew a deep breath.

"A good soldier," he muttered gruffly, "has died."

It was the requiem Jose would have wished.





MEN of FIGHTING MAN

BORN TO TROUBLE. THEY SAID OF PAT MEADE EVEN BEFORE HE COULD TODDLE ABOUT THE DRAFTY OLD IRISH MANOR HOUSE. MOVING TO ENGLAND, HE FOUGHT HIS WAY TO LEADERSHIP OF THE VILLAGE BOYS WHO IN TURN TAUGHT HIM WOODCRAFT AND ALL THE SUBTLE TRICKS OF POACHING AND ELUDING GAMEKEEPERS.

AT 16, LEARNING HE WAS DESTINED FOR THE PRIESTHOOD, PAT LEFT SCHOOL VIA A KNOTTED BEDSHEET AND STOWED AWAY ON A BOAT THAT LANDED HIM IN AFRICA. DETERMINED TO BECOME A SOLDIER THE HARD WAY, HE ENLISTED IN THE SCOTCH GUARDS IN EGYPT.

COURTING A PAIR OF HAREM BEAUTIES WITH ANOTHER GUARDSMAN, HE WAS SURPRISED BY A EUNUCH WITH A HUGE KNIFE, AND DIVED THROUGH THE NEAREST WINDOW JUST IN TIME.

AS A SCOUT WITH THE CAMEL CORPS, PAT FOUGHT THROUGH SEVERAL NATIVE UPRISINGS, THEN WENT TO FRANCE WITH THE GUARDS WHEN THE WORLD WAR BROKE OUT. SEPARATED FROM HIS REGIMENT, HE WAGED A SINGLE-HANDED WAR AGAINST THE ADVANCING GERMANS. ON HIS 20TH BIRTHDAY HE TOOK OFF HIS BOOTS FOR THE FIRST TIME IN A MONTH AND SLEPT.

A True Story in Pictures Every Week