THE GROOVE

A COMPLETE NOVELETTE

By Chester Andrews

The Cogon, heavy and soft with recent rain, gave no rustling warning as it would have done in the dry season. The steady thumping of the sentry's step abruptly ceased. There was a heavy thud, a smothered chuckle, and then silence.

An hour later Dean, accompanied by the corporal of the guard, came to relieve his younger brother, Joe. They found the boy in an inert heap on the wet ground, the back part of his head almost severed by the upward swing of a bolo. Next day Joe was buried with military honors in a lonely little graveyard at the edge of town. After three volleys were fired and taps blown, Dean bared his head and stood by the new-made grave.

"Joe," he said, "I'll git the yaller dawg that done this ef I have to stay in the Phillipines till I rct. Jest you rest easy, boy, kase I'm agwine to git the houn'."

Thereafter Dean mixed much with the natives around Lipa. He even persuaded a rather good-loking girl (it was easy) to teach him Tagalog. Then, one night in a vino shop, his efforts were repaid. Juan Planchez was drunk—loquaciously drunk—and certain remarks of his made it clear to Dean that his brother had gone down at the hands of Juan.

These remarks were not of a nature that would carry weight in court, but that made not the slightest difference to the white man. He was from the Tennessee hill country, where feuds are actual. His father and grandfather had lived by the hill code and died with their boots on. Whereupon Dean drew his revolver and shot the Filipino with the same justified feeling the average man has when he kills a snake.

The natives scurried out of the place like frightened rats. Not knowing the cause of Dean's action they very naturally thought he had run amuck. The shriveled little proprietor pattered to the guard house as fast as his bare feet could carry him, and chattered out a wild story to the effect that Dean had gone loco and was shooting Filipinos as fast as he could pull the trigger.

The sergeant, expecting to find dean vino-crazy, took two members of the guard and set out for the scene of action. Half-way they met their man calmly walking toward quarters.

"Well, what do you know about this?" said the sergeant. "A native just came in all scared up and told me you was down town waging a little war of your own. What's the row down there, anyway?"

"Wa'n'tmuch row," stated Dean. "I found out, t'night, who the skunk was that bolced Jim, and I sent 'im back to hell where he came frum."

"Bad thing to do now," said the sergeant. "You see, this civil government is all puffed up over itself. As I understand it, they claim this ain't war since all the big guns have been caught or come in. Say these gugus we been rounding up lately are about the same as outlaws would be back in the States; that we got to give 'em fair trials and all that. Say the only way we can make 'em respect us and teach 'em justice is to treat em just. Orders are strict about it, too. So I'll have to lock you up till morning."

The sergeant took Dean to the guardhouse and sent a corporal and two privates downtown to restore order. When the corporal returned he reported that Juan was not dead, but badly wounded and that he had taken the Filipino to the army hospital. When told of this, dean grunted his disgust.

"Huh," he said. That comes o' these here durned six-shooters. I could shoot straight wid 'em. Bet ef it hader been a rifle he wouldn't be pizenin' the air now."

Next morning when the case was laid before Colonel Burke, he shook his head.

"Pretty serious," he said. "If this Filipino dies we'll have to turn Dean over to the civil authorities; and it will be a murder charge, sure. On the other hand, if he pulls through, we can try Dean by court martial and make it a little easier for him. At any rate, keep him in the guardhouse till the doctors can be sure about Juan."

Nine days Juan lay in the hospital with a bullet hole through his left lung and hung between here and hereafter. And nine days Dean lay in the guardhouse and grew surly. Every one believed Juan guilty, but every one exerted themselves to pull him through. They hated to see a white man hang for a murderer. At last the doctors announced Juan safe. Then a court martial was convened and Dean tried for wilful assault on a native. That was the lightest charge they could make.

Dean made no defense, denied nothing. In fact, he said nothing except yes or no in answer to the questions asked him. To his mind it was an outrage that he should be tried at all for shooting a Filipino, and especially one that was rightfully his "meat." The truth is, Dean had been unfortunate (or was he fortunate) enough to get into this trouble when civil authority was just beginning to suppress the license of war time.

Two days after the trial, Colonel Burke had the sergeant of the guard bring Dean to his office.

"Dean," said the colonel, "you have been pretty lucky in this affair. First because the Filipino didn't die, and second because the court martial is going to let you off with a two year sentence in the general prison at Manila and a dishonorable discharge from the service."

"An' you was the jedge at the trial," said Dean. "Now you han' me this here mess an' tell me I'm lucky, Colonel, I thought you was a man."

"It could have been ten years just as well as two," said the colonel tolerantly. "The offense warranted a heavy sentence. The dishonorable diseharge, of course, is inevitable." A short silence and then: "Dean, the officer of this post, myself included, have almost stretched a point of duty in your favor, and yet you are unable to see it. You seem utterly incapable of gratitude. Man, you are in a groove! Wake up. Climb up and look over the edges—do a lot of thinking in the next two years."

"I will," said Dean, but there was a nasty meaning in his voice.

"That's all, sergeant," said the colonel.

II.

The military prison at Manila was one of those low, flat, adobe structures of the old Spanish type. It had been built during the Spanish regime for the housing of a heterogeneous collection of prisoners. All attention had been given to the economy of space and none whatever to comfort. In the dry season the walls became bone-dry, and held the heat. Then the prisoners called the cells "bake ovens." In the rainy season they were damp, slimy, cold and then they called them "tombs." It was a place well fitted to embitter a man's soul.

Here Dean existed, worked in the day, slept at night—sometimes. He thought much, but not as the colonel had intended; in fact, his brooding drove him deeper into the groove rather than lifted him out. No matter what the hardships he endured, Dean charged them, one by one, to Colonel Burke's score. If the food was bad, it was the colonel's fault, if his back ached from hard work the colonel was to blame. So at the end of his two years, Dean had quite an account to settle with Colonel Burke, and he was fully determined to settle it.

On being released from prison, Dean searched the Army and Navy Journal, and learned that his old regiment was stationed at Davao, Southern Mindanao. Davao, then, was his objective. But the first thing to be considered was money. So Dean became a driver of mules, worked impatiently for one month, and then headed south. On his way he stopped at Lipa. Shortly after his arrival there, Juan Planchez disappeared from among men. No one knew where or how, which shows that Dean had changed his methods.

From Lipa, Dean hade his way part by land and part by sea to Davao, and began to watch for his chance. Several times he saw Colonel Burke, even passed him on the street one day and was not recognized. This was gratifying. But so far no chance had offered itself for Dean' purpose. And he was becoming impatient when, one evening just after sunset he noticed his "meat" strolling toward the beach.

Dean followed at a safe distance, and the colonel made straight for a high promontory overlooking the gulf at Davao. At the edge of the cliff he took off his hat, unfastened his blouse at the throat, and stood looking down at the tide-waves beating against the rocks 30 feet below. He inhaled great drafts of brisk sea air, and his massive shoulders heaved with every breath Dean noted those shoulders and calculated the chance of getting an arm's length without being seen or heard. It was no part of his plan to do any shooting. A light blow at the back of the head with the butt of his revolver, a shove over the cliff and—the impression of accident or suicide.

When about 30 paces from the colonel, Dean drew his revolver cautiously, crouched low, and crept forward, using every hummock and inequality of ground as cover. Five paces more were gained and then something moved. A pair of neakd brown shoulders, topped by a flat, black head, raised themselves seemingly out of the ground. A long muscular arm was raised like a snake ready to strike, and on the hand was a small- thin-bladed creese.

"Moro," muttered Dean. "Tryin' to rob me outer my meat."

The Moro moved a step nearer the colonel, the long arm swung back, Dean's revolver spat fire, and the form sank to the ground, quivering.

The colonel turned in a flash, revolver in hand. The Moro lay at his feet still cluching the knife, and 25 yards away Dean stood with smoking revolver. The situation was plain. The colonel stepped over the naked brown body and walked toward Dean.

"I want to thank you, sir," he said. "Unquestionably you have saved my life. Well, by the Lord, if it's not Dean!"

The colonel shifted his gun to his left hand and stepped forward, holding out his right, but Dean appeared not to see it. The hand dropped and the colonel stepped back quickly.

"Well," he said, "I don't quite understand. You just did me the greatest favor of all favors, and now you refuse to shake my hand. If that's the way you feel toward me why didn't you let the Moro do his work?"

"Kase," said Dean, "you wa'nt his meat. You air my meat."

"I see," said the colonel. "Still in the groove. Then I presume you came on the same gentle mission as the Moro did. It's rather flattering, I must say, to have one assassin kill another for the honor of killing me."

Dean made no answer and the colonel stood quiet, intensely thinking Suddenly he leveled his revolver at Dean's chest.

"Drop that gun!" Dean obeyed. "Step back! A couple of steps more."

Keeping his eye on Dean, the colonel stooped and picked up the other's revolver. Then he emptied the chambers of both guns and threw them on the ground well behind him, took off his blouse and hat and tossed them over the guns.

"Dean," he said, "when my old daddy couldn't reason with me, he licked the whey out of me. Now step up, Dean, and let's see what you're made of."

Dean knew nothing of the stand-up fist fighting. His accepted mode of warfare was gun and knife, but he was, at least no coward. He put his head down and rushed. The colonel met him with a crashing uppercut, but Dean merely shook his head and bored him. He had just one idea—to clinch. Blow after blow he took on face and body, but at last he locked his long, sinewy arms around his antagonist in a pythonlike grip. The two men went down. Dean was the stronger of the two, but was so awkward that he could not use his strength to advantage.

On the other hand the colonel was quick and accurate, and therefore able to protect himself from most of the other's molling blows and, also, to work out of the powerful embrace They rose, and Dean tried kicking. The colonel cooly side-stepped, caught Dean's foot as it came up and turned him a double somersault. By this time Dean was in a frenzy. He rushed blindly, flaying with his great arms like a wild ape.

Some of these blows the colonel blocked and some of them he took. But his own straight, stinging punches finally had their effect. Dean went down, he didn't fall, nor was he knocked down. He just slowly sank to his hunches and sat looking at the colonel out of one swollen eye—the other was closed tight.

"You air shore some man," he said with admiration.

The colonel calmly put on his hat and blouse, picked up the two revolvers, stuck his own in the holster and handed Dean's to him.

"Good night, Dean," he said without a trace of anger.

Three days later Dean came, haltingly, into the colonel's office. There were still dark circles under his eyes, and a bruise here and there on his

"Colonel," he said, "I ain't out to git you no longer. I wanter to go back home an' take keer o' my maw, but I wanter go back like I left. I wonder if you could fix it so's I could enlist ag'in an' git a hono'ble discharge?"

"I think I can," said the colonel "You go to the first sergeant of Company C, and tell him you are to eat and sleep with his company till we can get the necessary permission from headquarters."

Dean's big frame straightened to the position of the soldier. He saluted and went out.

Colonel Burke drummed on the desk with his fingers and smiled. It was the smile of a man who has accomplished a purpose.

Perfume Manufacture a Poetic Industry

The history of perfumes is a part of the history of civilization itself. From the perfumed sails that wafted Cleopatra down the Nile to the scented bath of milk that was the daily enjyment of the Empress Josephine, or the sweet smelling fountains in the royal palace at St. Petersburg in the days of the Czars, the essence of flowers has been indispensable to the luxurious existence.

The perfume center at the present time is the quaint old French town of Grasse, in the Maritime Alps, the poetic industry of which is the basis of its prosperity.

In ascending to the town of Grasse from the picturesque little station, the visitor finds his path lying through beautiful terraced plantations of jasmine and the lovely Provence rose, and past orchards of olive trees, beneath the shade of which are cultivated violets. The area devoted to flower culture covers 115,000 acres.

During the months of April, May, June and July the fields are literally alive with sunny faced men, women and chandren gathering the fragrant harvests. They pick the blossoms by hand into baskets and then carry them to the factories, where they are divided and sorted.

As the women come from the adjoining fields they empty their loaded baskets out on the floor until it is knee deep in flowers, and to walk across it would mean the crushing of thousands of roses. In one season a single establishement uses 1900 tons of orange blossoms, 930 tons of roses, 147 tons of violets and 127 tons of quantities of scented woods.

After the sorting which is done at long benches by scores of white-capped girls, the flowers go to the distillery. Some yield their perfume after distillation with water or steam; others undergo what is called maceration. In this process the flowers are steeped in heated fat, where they are left until all their fragrance is extracted. Next they are drained off in wooden trays and fresh flowers are added to the fat. The fat that has absorbed the essence of the flowers is called pomade, and is sent in this form to perfumers all over the world, who by means of alcohol extract its sweetness.

The jasmine, tuberose and violet are so delicate that they scarcely give out any essence by distillation and must be subjected to enfleurage.

The most expensive perfume is, of course, attar of roses, for it requires no less than 48 pounds of rose leaves to make one gram of oil.

Largest Cheese

The largest cheese ever seen in New York City, weighing nearly three and a half tons and made from 30,500 quarts of milk, one of the features of the national milk and dairy farm show, was cut by W. E. Dana, president of the council of farms and markets. The first five-pound piece was offered at auction and the proceeds given to the Red Cross.

Josie—"Mame says she's afrid she has heart trouble."

Risie—"Pshaw! I shouldn't think a little thing like that would trouble her."

Highest Mountain As Forest Outlooks

The growing importance of the forest fire service has led the federal government to adopt a standard type of house for erection on lofty lookout points commanding a view to the surrounding region. As many of these houses have to be erected at distant points that can be reached only with pack animals, it has been found best to have the timbers and boards cut into short lengths and tied into handy bundles that can be readily carried on pack animals. Even at this it is considerable of a job to move one of these knock-down houses to some distant mountain peak up over a winding trail, for the total weight of the lumber, nails, bolts, and other materials are needed for building one of these houses is in the neighborhood of 6400 pounds. A letter or number is placed on each piece and thus the constructing officer is readily enabled to put the house together when once the materials have arrived on the site of the lookout.

The main room of the house is 12 feet square and has windows on all sides for observation purposes. The cupola that surmounts this room is six feet square and also has a continuous band of windows besides being equipped with all the instruments required for observation and report. Naturally as these lookout houses stand in spots where the elements have full play they are exposed to some terrific storms. For this reason the walls and floors are of double construction, as the high winds would soon drive the rain through a building of ordinary construction. To prevent the houses from being blown away bodily, they are securely anchored by cables attached to each corner.

In the Columbia National forest standard lookout houses have been erected at Mt. Adams, elevation 12,307 feet, and Mt. St. Selena, elevation 9675 feet; in Rainer National forest on Kiona peak, elevation 6100 feet; in the Cascade National forest on Huckleberry Mountain, elevation 5500 feet; and in Crater National forest on Windy peak, elevations 4920 feet; on Mount McLaughlin ,elevation 9760 feet; on Rustler peak, elevation 6200 feet. On Rustler peak it was necessary to perch the house on top of a twelve foot tower in order to give the necessary elevation.

The great value of the work done bw these lookout men is unquestioned. Time after time they have discovered fires which soon might have gained headway enough to have done tremendous damage. The lookout man on the summit of Mt. hood, at an elevation of 11,225 feet, reportdd 56 fires in 1917 and 64 in 1918. On two occasions he discovered and correctly located two fires at the foot of Mt. Adams, more than 50 miles away. All but five of the fires that occurred in 1917 between Mt. Jefferson and the Columbia River, a distance of 80 miles, were first discovered from the Mt. Hood lookout. These five small fires were campfires that were not put out, but they were discovered and extinguished before they had gained sufficient headway to cause any considerable damage.

Would Be a Malay and Shoot at Parrots

Billy Thought It Would Be Great Sport to Live in Jungle a la Robinson Crusoe

"I'd like to be a Malay boy, and shoot parrots in the jungle with a bow and arrow instead of going to school every day," announced Billy, who was "looking over" his geography lesson preparatory to studying it.

"Well, that would be very nice," agreed his father. "I tried that out once in the woods on grandfather's farm, pretending that an old owl was a parrot. The only trouble was that by the time I had lost all my arrows and the owl, I mean parrot, had lost himself in a hollow tree, I was five miles away from home and it was a long walk back."

"But I'd ride back on my bicycle," said Billy.

"If you were a jungle boy you wouldn't need a bicycle, because you could run twenty miles without stopping, and besides you wouldn't have a bicycle because they don't grow in the jungles and all a savage has is what he finds growing, or can dig out of the ground."

"You see, Billy," continued his father, "the difference between an American boy and a Malay boy isjust this. For about 1500 or 2000 years, the American boy's fathers and grandfathers and great grandfathers and so on back, have been saving money and making things in bigger and bigger quantities instead of living off the fruit they could pick or the birds and animals they could kill day by day.

"It would take one man a year or two to build a bicycle all by himself, but in a factory they turn out one every minute or two."

"The reason why America has more factories and railroads and more telephones and automobiles than any other country is because we have saved up the money to do things in a big way and learned how to do them that way.

"One person's saved up money, which is called capital, doesn't amount to much, but the savings of 100,000,000 are almost too big for figures.

"Just the saving of the school children of the country are enormous, because there are 20,000,000 boys and girls in our public schools. The school children working all together, are doing things in the same big American way that the grown ups are."

"I see," said Billy. "It's like Gulliver and the little people. One of them couldn't have done anything, but all together, they pinned him down."

"That's it," said his father. "That's why the Treasury Department is calling upon every school boy and girl to become a buyer of Thrift Stamps and Government Savings Stamps to work on farms during the summer vacations and to save the money earned during the summer.

"What one or two children save don't make any difference, but what they all save means millions. And as you will understand when you grow up it means more for you than it does for the country.

"O red and green parrot in the jungle is pretty to look at but not very good to eat but a green Thrift Stamp and a red Government Savings Stamp, when you have saved up for them are a big start for success."

Pretty Plans for An Announcement

If It's Before Rose Time, Here's an Idea

There is no prettier function to be given than the announcement luncheon, when the happy girl invites her dearest friends to her house to tell them the good news, for there are so many clever twists that may be given to the way the hostess divulges her secret.

One girl, who was famous in her "crowd" for her original ideas got the idea for her lovely engagement luncheon from an exquisite luna moth that her young brother brought in to her one morning from the garden. It was the wonderful pale green of the wings that appealed to her first. It seemed the ideal color for an early affair.

She bought several rolls of crepe paper of that shade and cut from it a luncheon set, using one of her own linen ones for a pattern. There was the large centerpiece, the smaller plate doilies, and the still smaller tumbler doilies. Then, using the moth for a pattern, she cut from the paper several wings and fastened them to little rolls of the paper for the bodies. Those she suspended over the center of the table from the chandelier, on green silk threads of various lengths. In the center of the table was a slender pale green vase containing several sprays of apple blossoms, and among the branches were tiny green cocoons, wound with green sewing silk, strands of which were extended to each cover.

The first course was on the table when the guests sat down. It was simply balls of canteloup cut from the melons with a round scoop made for that purpose, iced and served in sherbet cups. Then there were salmon croquettes, green peas, creamed potatoes and mint jelly; a butterfly salad made of slices of cucumber cut in half and arranged to represent wings, a roll of cream cheese for the body, and tiny threads of pimento for the attennae and pistache ice cream, with little cakes iced in green.

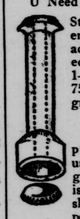
At the end of the luncheon, when each guest dislodged her cocoon at the end of the silk, a green tissue paper moth was discovered inside, with the name of the hostess written on one wing and that of the fiance on the other.

A 200-Year Job

At the present rate 200 years will be needed to finish mapping the world. Great areas remained unexplored and little is known of millions of square miles of land. By using the aeroplane for map-making this work may be done in the next twenty years. Instead of climbing mountains and laboriously measuring the iand foot by foot, we shall do the work while flying a hundred miles an hour. A special camera is placed in the bottom of the car and photographs are taken automatically, so many to the second or minute. These photos are then fitted together in what is known as a mosaic map which shows every house of towns or cities and every road and tree of the country. No such maps have ever been made before. The aero map is one of the inventions of the war which will prove invaluable.—Boys' Life.

Cheer up! The trials of life sometimes result in a verdict of acquittal.

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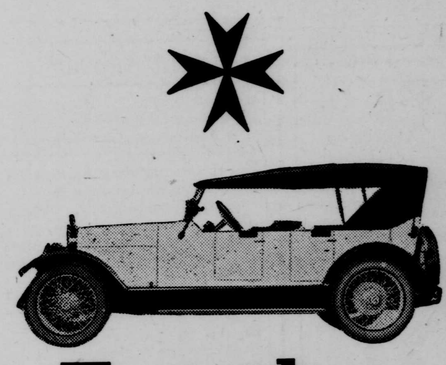
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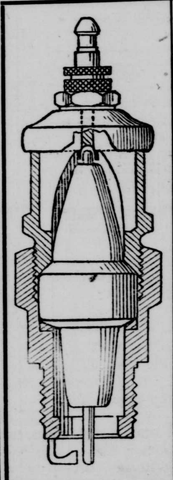
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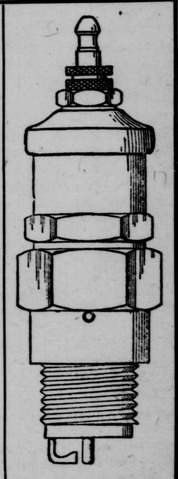
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