

Cutlass Empire By F. Van Wyck Mason

42 Boy Scouts Given Tests Here

CLARISSA

CHAPTER TWO

SIPPING AT HIS hot Madeira, Michell Measey ran an appraising eye over Clarissa's slender figure, tiny feet, curling flax-white hair and wide, cerulean-blue eyes; added to a little practical guile, such charms should secure for the girl not only wealth, but that title for which she yearned little less earnestly than himself.

Speculatively, the tanner's pale eyes narrowed before he caught his breath and said, "So, my young friend Morgan please you?"

Needle poised, Clarissa looked up, nodded carelessly. "More than a trifle, but, Pa, he's uncommon bold."

"You are to be sweet — very charming with this young gentleman from Glamorganshire."

"I will be easy. I do not, really I do," Clarissa declared in lacy accents, blue-veined lips half obscuring the clear blue of her lovely and long-lashed eyes.

The expression on Measey's gray-white, pudding-like features was not attractive. "You are no doubt aware, Rissa, in what esteem young Morgan's sort holds a tanner and his daughter? Mere underlings. If you're to win this handsome young gentleman you'll have to act 'cute and subtle. First," Measey held up a sausage-like finger, "you should know that he is involved in a — well, an effort to restore the Monarchy."

Clarissa beamed, gently clasped her hands. "Oh, how romantic! Dear King Charles! How wonderful it will be to be ruled by a king once more."

"Bah! You don't remember such times — further, Charles Stuart ain't yet astride his throne — not by a long canter." Measey belched, having too hastily swallowed his wine. "Now, listen well; king-making is a risky business, therefore, my chick, I would you shall learn all that you may from your friend Harry."

"Oh, Father, how soon do you presume Harry will call?"

"Tonight, 'tis more than likely. He's back in town and will have found your note. Remember now it's to our — er — your interest to coax out of him what he's about and who he's seen. Now in God's name, go scrape a message of that paint from your cheeks."

She had scarcely hurried upstairs than along the empty reaches of Baldwin St. sounded a ringing of feet being solidly planted and a big voice singing.

Admitted by Measey's yellow-clad butler, Harry Morgan strode into the large and pretentious house, stood waiting in the hallway, eyes busy with the rich hangings, fine Flemish tapestries and some well-polished brass candelabra.

Teeth gleaming in a rapturous smile and long-lashed eyelids fluttering, Clarissa came running downstairs and sailed up to him, vivid blue skirts a-swing. She extended tiny white hands redolent of a very costly French scent.

"Oh — Harry! Harry! How very wonderful it is to have you safely back."

BY 11 OF the evening, embers in the chimney place now only occasionally roused themselves to dart out little orange tongues of flame which briefly dispelled that comfortable gloom prevailing in Mr. Measey's walnut-paneled cabinet.

Side by side, their arms interlaced, Clarissa and her guest sat on a wide red leather settee, eyes fixed on the diminishing mound of jewel-bright coals.

"Are you not flattered that Major Armourer reposes such an extraordinary trust in your judgment? After all, Harry dear, you are not very old."

"I'm no lad! I'm one and 20 years," Morgan snapped. "And

Morgan, I campaigned with your Uncle Edward in Poland." Stevens smiled, then demanded in low tones, "You made certain you were not followed?"

"Aye, sir," Morgan's strong white teeth glimmered in a tight smile — "for all that there's an uncommon lot of Parliament dragoons riding the streets."

Measey judged it wise to draw attention to his presence. "I, too, noticed more than the usual of the garrison abroad. Let us hope that we all have been extra cautious in approaching this tavern."

Deliberately, Lord Rochester raised bloodshot eyes from an instant scrutiny of various documents, placed before him. His heavily bearded fingers drummed briefly, irritably on the rough and food-stained boards of the table as he drawled, "If you are apprehensive, Messer Measey, you have our permission to depart. Here we have no room for the timorous of heart."

The master tanner's plump, pallid and shiny cheeks flamed. "I crave your pardon, my Lord."

The conspirators gathered closer about that knife-scarred table upon which four beef-tail, low candles gave off a miserably poor, orange-red light and stank all the while like badly scorched beef.

While with his penknife shaping a sharper point to his goose quill, Mr. Stevens observed, "My Lord, it would appear that our efforts in His Majesty's cause this time stand an excellent chance of suc-

ceeding. King Charles II's offer of amnesty to all rebels against his father, saving only the actual regicides, has produced a most happy effect. Better still, the old, false friendship between Spain and Cromwell is at an end. Admiral Penn and General Venables have driven the Spaniards from Jamaica."

"Where is this Jamaica?" Rochester demanded shortly. "Curs'd if I know."

Morgan, too, wondered, Stevens explained.

"Why, my Lord, 'tis an island somewhere off the coast of America."

Frail lace at Lord Rochester's cuffs gleamed as suddenly he leaned forward, over fine features bent and with every trace of his former languid manner dispelled. "Listen well, I brought you a piece of intelligence most secret. Within a week, some 6000 men will rise. You will be the more honored, gentlemen, that the standard of revolt is to be raised first of all here in Bristol and then in Gloucester!"

Pierce excitement sent the blood leaping through Harry Morgan's veins. At last! At last! A week from now the royal standard would fly from Bistol Castle, steel would flash and cavalry would thunder at the charge, crying, "Long Live the King!"

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JUST WHAT inspired Harry Morgan to simulate the necessity for visiting a jakes in the rear of the Rose Tavern he could never explain, yet the impulse was so powerful that, quietly, he arose from his bench and started for the door.

On purpose Morgan picked an unhurried course through the well-patronized taproom.

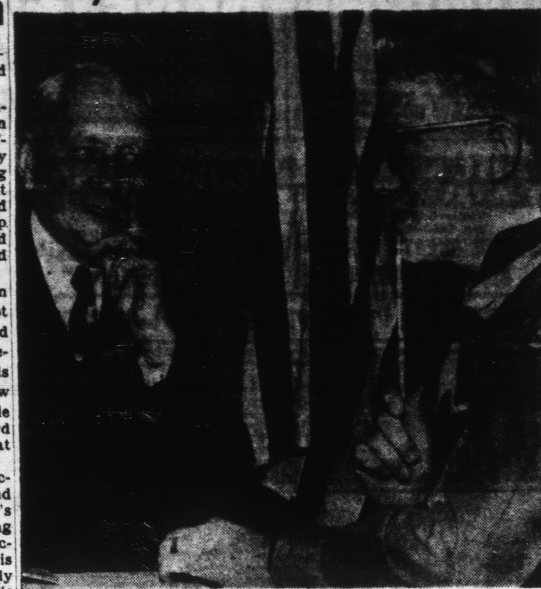
He was forced to traverse a stiffling hot and smoke-veiled kitchen before he could enter the cool freshness of a stable yard.

A covert movement caught his eye — not for nothing had he stalked stage on many a misty morning. He was able to discern the shadowy outlines of a pair of pikemen standing, all but merged with the deep shadows obscuring an alley entrance off this court, near the far end of the latrines.

Sensing that these soldiers must be about ready to close in on "The Rose," Harry Morgan made hurried preparations which consisted of winding a short cloak tightly about his left arm and of tightening his broad, brass-studded belt before easing his sword from its scabbard.

The pikeman was granted just enough warning to level his short-shafted weapon and shout, "Halt! Halt! In the Lord Protector's name!"

The other soldier, meanwhile, fell back still further, all the while fumbling frantically for the fuse match with which to touch off his cumbersome firelock. Once he saw the pike point flashing towards him, Morgan put his full weight behind his blade and slashed so hard that his steel



Eagle Scout Board of Review gave tests to 42 Boy Scouts from the Central Indiana Council Friday at the Athletic Club. At a luncheon, Lt. Charles H. Hutchins, Wabash, Ind., who commanded a destroyer during the war, spoke. In the photo, Dr. William F. King, state board of health, reviews Scout Mike Wayt, Michigantown on his knowledge of health matters.

LAUDER 'COMFORTABLE' seriously ill of cerebral thrombosis and uremia, spent "quite a 3 (UP)—Sir Harry Lauder, 79—comfortable night," his physical year-old Scot minstrel, who is cians reported today.



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