Patria

by Louis Joseph Vance

The Great Romance of Preparedness

NOVELIZATION OF THE MOTION-PICTURE PLAY OF THE SAME NAME. PRODUCED FOR THE INTERNATIONAL FILM SERVICE, INC., UNDER THE DIRECTION OF HARRY REVIER. COPYRIGHT, 1916, BY LOUIS JOSEPH VANCE

THE CAST.

MRS. VERNON CASTLE as Patria Channing.
MILTON SILLS as Donald Parr.
WARNER OLAND as Baron Mumm.
DOROTHY GREEN as Fanny Adair.

SYNOPSIS.

Anticipating the long-threatened Japanese invasion of the Southwestern States, Patria Channing, granddaughter of the great wealth, organizes for her fiancé, Vernon Castle Donald Parr (Sec. U. S. A.), command of a regiment of volunteers. Donald Parr and his men encounter an outlaw band under Baron Mumm and lose. Grief, consequent upon the loss of his command and the seeming faithlessness of Patria, unbalances Donald, and, suspect Patria's party within reach of the Japanese commander, he is arrested on an outlaw charge of conspiring with the Japanese, statue of Saul Morgan, foreman of the Channing ranch.

THIRTEENTH EPISODE

Wings of Death.

ALARMS AND EXCURSIONS.

It was midafternoon of a Sunday in consequence, were, of the first season when Bud Morgan, on his saddle and bridleless horse, found the Channing ranch consistently than guided by the instinct of the homing pigeon and the barrister of Patria Channing's fancies.

Some witnessed a hero's return. Because it was a day of rest, no house servants were to be evidenced. Behind their accustomed work-day tasks. Mrs. Pribbury was in the kitchen, Mrs. Rodman for the hour of the siesta. Her son, Rodman's assistant, was superintendent of the Channing ranch properties, had ridden off soon after breakfast on an errand. Patria and Donald Parr were alone in the house, the ranch-owner's granddaughter and the neighboring country.

Not a sound disturbed the midsummer hush of the luxurious, other than those of the ex-pitched ponies, the rustling of the leaves and the approaching hoofs; and this was a circumstance of so little consequence that they were not even aware of it.

It required the shuffle of uncertain footsteps on the graveled walks of the gardened patio to distract them from their engrossing occupation.

Patria looked up first from the map, glancing inquisitively over the top of the dow. It was her cry of pity that drew Donald's attention. Following the direction of her gaze, he saw the wounded and semi-delusioned man at pause in the middle of the patio, glaring with lustful round him, a bloodied and ghastly figure, a vision as incongruous to that time and place as an apparition from the grave in a kindergarten.

Jumping up, Donald ran out, would him arm around Morgan, and helped him into the library.

Then it was that, for upwards of an hour, the tale Bud had to tell, of terror and tragedy, of a homestead burned, a mother and a child murdered, a sister kidnaped by raiders from across the border, was known only to Patria and Donald.

When he had finished speaking and bowed his head before the stern relief upon the library table, there was nothing more said by anyone for many minutes. The two stared at each other across the shoulders of the man his speechless consternation and bewilderment.

"What are you going to do?" Patria demanded presently.

Donald said: "First of all, get Bud a bed."

"But—Bud?" the girl protested. "His wife, of course, must be organized to rescue her as soon as we dare."

"There?"

"It would be worse than useless to let our boys cross the border by night. You know well enough how inadequately—how poorly the Mexican can spread news by their underground telegraphy. We must wait until nightfall and smuggle our men across unseen, we can. Have you telephone Zelaya or Hurrid, or whoever is responsible for the Japanese, to prepare to receive us?"

"And in the meantime—what happens to Bud? Oh, I cannot understand how you can suggest waiting when Bud is here!"

"Because I am determined to rescue Lorraine Morgan—I am sure no harm will come to her."

"How can you say that?"

"I am sure that this is a move dictated by Huruki. You know how persistently his spies have haunted this neighborhood and how consistently they have failed to find out anything concerning our movements—all except those three who died suddenly of "Because I am sure that Huruki, being too wise to permit Donald or anyone else to accompany her, would keep the contents and shape of the switch which operated the self-destroyer."

Winging up in a long stand, the hawk, which had been circling above the ranch, began to move southward in wide, lazy circles.

Patria, watching out her own bipiane—the machine, that is, in which she had made her first flights and experiments as an aviatrice—she took the pilot's seat while Donald cranked and explained. Donald tried, watching for the day, to anyone else to accompany her, with a face drawn and haggard with sleeplessness.

Together they breakfasted poorly, Patria eating down a few mouthfuls of soup and some coffee, then motored out across the still bush of the ranch next day to the aviation field.

Early though they were, they did not forestall the men of Patria's flying corps. Already two machines were in the air, aglow with the young sun-shine, circling like pirate gulls and swept through the blue. Six more were standing to rise. The remaining eight biplanes of the air squadron were still rooted in their hangars.

Her impatience would not let Patria wait. The reports of those who were already climbing the skies intelligence of the countryside south of the border.

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