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THE HAND OF

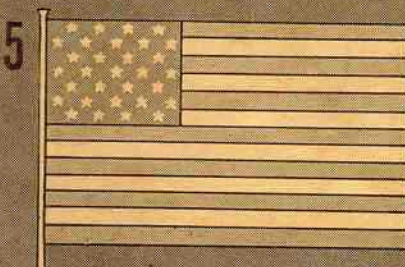
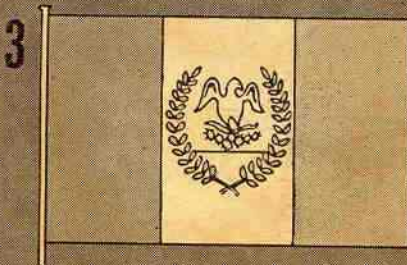
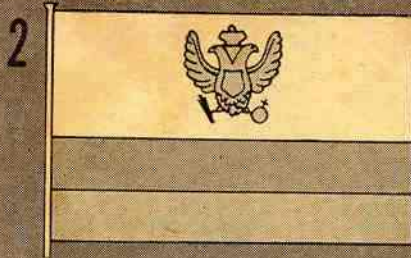
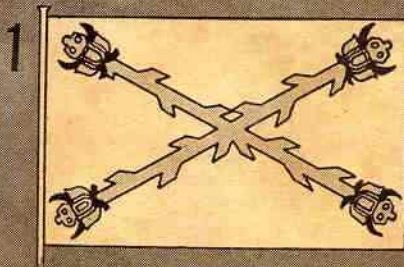
# ZORRO





# FLAGS OF CALIFORNIA

*California was explored and colonized by Franciscan monks and Spanish soldiers. Each military expedition flew a different flag—usually the personal banner of the nobleman commanding the expedition.*



1 But later on, the Spanish Army adopted this colorful banner. It flew over Spanish troops during the many revolts and the Revolutionary War that led to Mexican Independence.

2 While the Spaniards were busy in California, the Russians attempted to colonize Alaska. The Russian-American Trading Company was formed and soon it was sending expeditions further and further south until they reached California. A Russian trading post was established at Fort Ross just north of San Francisco. It flew this flag showing the double eagle of the royal family of Russia.

3 In 1822, the Mexicans were finally successful in their revolt against Spain. California became part of the Mexican Republic. This flag was raised above every fort and town hall. The golden eagle of Mexico is eating a snake which symbolizes evil.

4 On June 14, 1846, the American settlers in California revolted against the Mexican Government. The revolt was quickly crushed by the Mexican Army. The flag of the short-lived republic is now the California state flag. It shows a grizzly bear—symbol of strength and independence.

5 Then came the war between Mexico and the United States. It ended with the treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo. California became American territory and was admitted to the Union in 1850. It was the 31st state to enter and the American flag that Californians took special pride in hoisting was the flag of July 4th, 1851—it carried California's star—the 31st.



# The HAND of ZORRO

LADRONES! THE DREAD HIGHWAYMEN OF THE LONELY ROADS OF ALTA CALIFORNIA STRIKE...



NO MAIN ROUTE IS SAFE, NO COACH SPARED AND NO TRAVELER'S PURSE SECURE...

FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE HIGHWAYMEN ATTACK WITH THE CUNNING OF AN ORGANIZED BAND! FROM HILLTOP TO HILLTOP, MESSAGES FLASH, DIRECTING ROBBERS...



EVEN THE TAX COLLECTOR'S COACH, BEARING THE ROYAL ARMS OF CALIFORNIA'S RULER, HIS SPANISH MAJESTY, IS NOT IMMUNE.

TWO DAYS LATER, AS DIEGO VEGAS STROLLS INTO THE NEIGHBORING CASA CONCHOLA...

BUT DON VINCENTE, YOU CANNOT HAVE PAID YOUR TAXES! THERE IS NO RECORD OF IT!

YOUR OWN TAX AGENT DROVE OFF WITH MY MONEY IN HIS COACH TWO DAYS AGO!









AND IF  
THE SWORD  
IS GONE...

...THEN  
YOUR SON,  
DON DIEGO, MAY  
BE RIDING IN  
SEARCH OF THE  
HIGHWAYMEN--  
AS EL ZORRO!

BUT HOW DO THEY KNOW  
WHERE TO  
STRIKE AND--  
A LANTERN!  
SOMEONE'S  
SIGNAL--  
ING  
FROM  
THAT  
HILL!

ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH,  
WE USED TO HEAR OF A COACH  
BEING STOPPED BY A HIGHWAY-  
MAN-- BUT NOW THIS IS DIFFER-  
ENT!! NO COACH ESCAPES, AND  
THE ROBBERS SEEM TO CONTROL  
ALL THE ROADS!

AND IF IT'S A  
CALL TO OTHERS  
... THE MORE  
THE MERRIER!

MINUTES LATER...

SO IT WAS A SUMMONS TO  
PILLAGE! WELL, THEY RECKONED  
WITH ONE SWORD LESS!





ZORRO!

AIEE!!



GIVE THE TEAM FREE  
REIN! I WILL PAY FOR  
MY FARE WITH STEEL!



THE COACH CAME  
FROM THE MINES!  
THERE'S GOLD  
ON IT, AMIGOS!

AND THERE IS ALSO  
ZORRO ON IT!



COME, SEÑOR! THE JOURNEY  
IS LONG--BUT WHAT BETTER  
WAY TO PASS THE TEDIOUS  
HOURS THAN WITH A FEINT--  
AND THEN A PASS!

M-MY  
ARM!



NOW  
ZORRO  
FALLS!



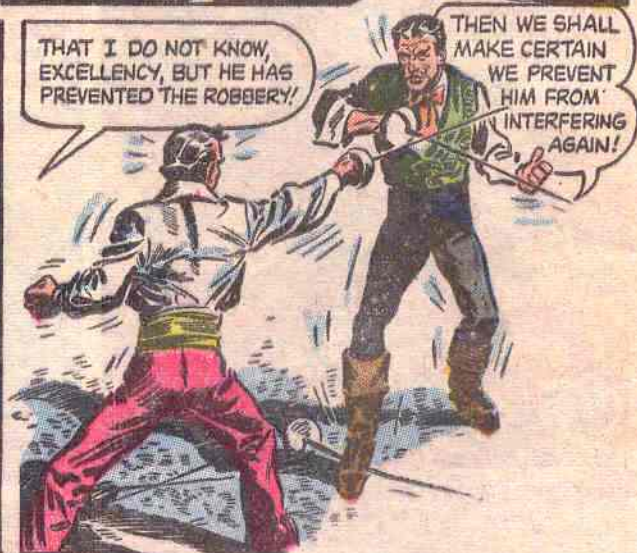


LATER, AT A CASTLE DEEP IN THE HILLS OF ALTA CALIFORNIA..





THE COACH FROM THE MINE GOT THROUGH!







MY PLAN WILL CONTINUE! YOUR SIGNAL MEN COMMAND THE HILLS! MESSAGES WILL BE FLASHED FROM HILL TO HILL TO ME HERE, WHEN A PRIZE IS SEEN! I WILL DIRECT THE ATTACK FROM THE CASTLE. IN A FEW DAYS, PERHAPS, I WILL HAVE ANOTHER TAX COACH OF MINE TO ROB! TILL THEN, LET US SEE WHAT OUR TRAVELERS PROVIDE!



THE NEXT DAY... HERE IS THE LETTER FOR THE GOVERNOR! IT REQUESTS HIS CAVALRY GUARD OUR ROADS! BUT IF YOU ARE LEAVING FOR SANTA BARBARA, YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO TAKE...

SÍ! AND I DO NOT KNOW WHICH IS WORSE TO FACE-- THE HIGHWAYMEN OR PANCHITA!

...PANCHITA TO THE BALL TONIGHT!



SOON...

YOU WON'T GO!

PANCHITA, I HAVE EXPLAINED THE IMPORTANCE OF DELIVERING THE LETTER AT ONCE! THINK--IF THE ROADS ARE NOT MADE SAFE, OUR WEDDING GUESTS AND PRESENTS MAY NEVER ARRIVE!

I DO NOT THINK OUR WEDDING DAY WILL EVER ARRIVE, DON DIEGO! AND SINCE YOU HAVE MORE URGENT THINGS TO DO THAN SEE ME--GOOD DAY!



LATER...

AS DON DIEGO, I WOULD SURELY ATTRACT THE PURSE-SNATCHER AND COULD NOT DEFEND MYSELF! BUT AS EL ZORRO--! WELL, I SHALL SOON SEE IF I WILL NEED MY SWORD!



AND NEARBY...

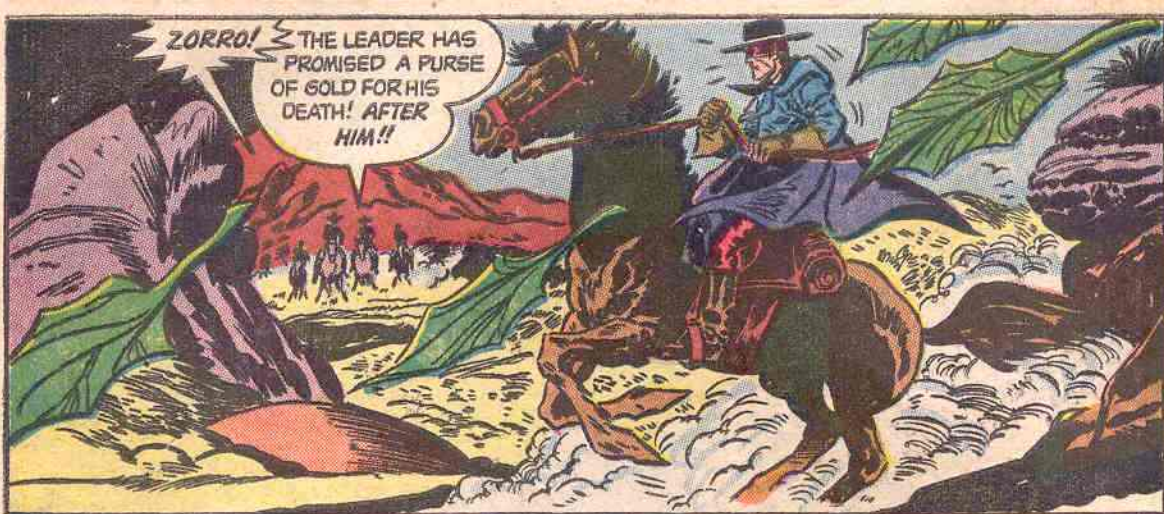
THERE IS A WAVE OF THE TORCH ACROSS THE VALLEY! A LONE RIDER COMES!

HE SHALL HAVE COMPANY, EH, AMIGOS?



ZORRO!

THE LEADER HAS  
PROMISED A PURSE  
OF GOLD FOR HIS  
DEATH! AFTER  
HIM!!



IF YOU ARE SEEKING  
GOLD, AMIGOS, YOU WILL  
FIND ONLY LEAD  
AND STEEL!



AIEE!!  
MY SHOULDER!



IF THEY SEE  
ME SWING UP HERE,  
I SHALL REALLY BE  
OUT ON A LIMB!



SECONDS  
LATER...

WHERE IS HE?  
THERE IS HIS  
HORSE AHEAD!  
FORWARD!







LATER, AT THE GOVERNOR'S PALACE...

DON DIEGO, THE CONDITIONS OUTLINED HERE BY YOUR FATHER ARE SERIOUS! I SHALL SEND A DETACHMENT OF CAVALRY TO THE TERRITORY AT ONCE!

THANK YOU, EXCELLENCY! AND WITH YOUR PERMISSION, I WOULD LIKE TO RETURN WITH THEM.



CERTAINLY! I DO NOT KNOW HOW YOU GOT THROUGH! BUT A MAN LIKE - WELL, YOU ARE NO SWORDSMAN! YOU WILL BE GIVEN PROTECTION!

YOU ARE MOST KIND!





LATER...

CAPTAIN, MAY I  
SUGGEST YOU SEND SOME  
RIDERS AHEAD TO SCOUT! WE  
ARE ENTERING THE  
LADRONES' TERRITORY!

MY DEAR SEÑOR VEGAS, I CAN  
EASILY UNDERSTAND WHY ONE  
OF YOUR-- YOUR PEACEFUL  
NATURE MIGHT BE FEARFUL  
BUT DO NOT WORRY!  
NO ONE DARES  
ATTACK HIS  
MAJESTY'S  
CAVALRY!



SOON...

EXCELLENCY, A MESSAGE HAS JUST  
ARRIVED! ROYAL CAVALRY ADVANCE  
ALONG THE CAMINO DE NORD!

THE CAMINO  
DE NORD? LET US  
LOOK AT THIS  
MAP!

ANY ANSWER, EXCELLENCY?

SÍ! WHEN THE  
CAVALRY  
REACHES  
THE NARROW PASS  
BELOW MONTE DIABLO  
OUR MEN WILL  
START AN  
AVALANCHE!

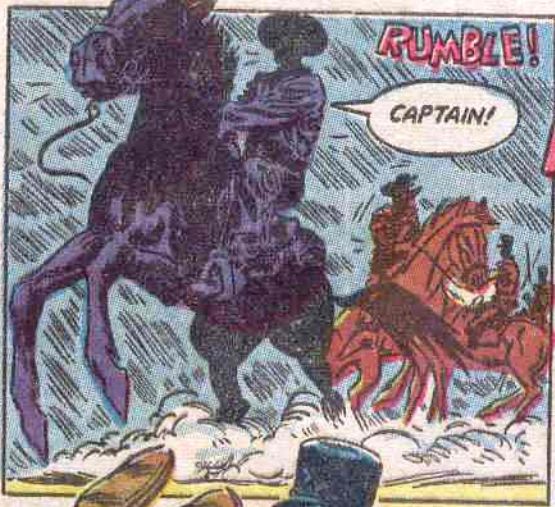
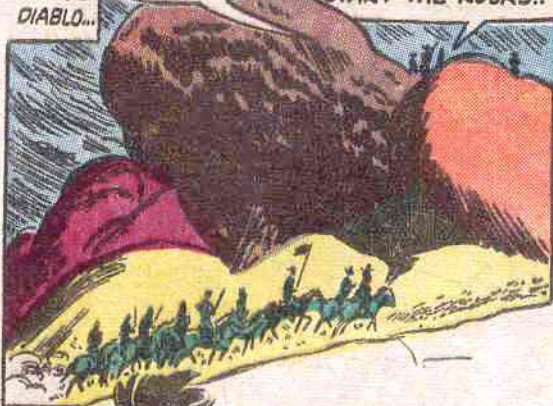
una  
California  
España



LATER,  
BY  
MONTE  
DIABLO...

THEY ARE ALL  
IN THE PASS!

HIS EXCELLENCY PLANS WELL!  
THEY WILL ADVANCE NO FURTHER!  
START THE ROCKS!!



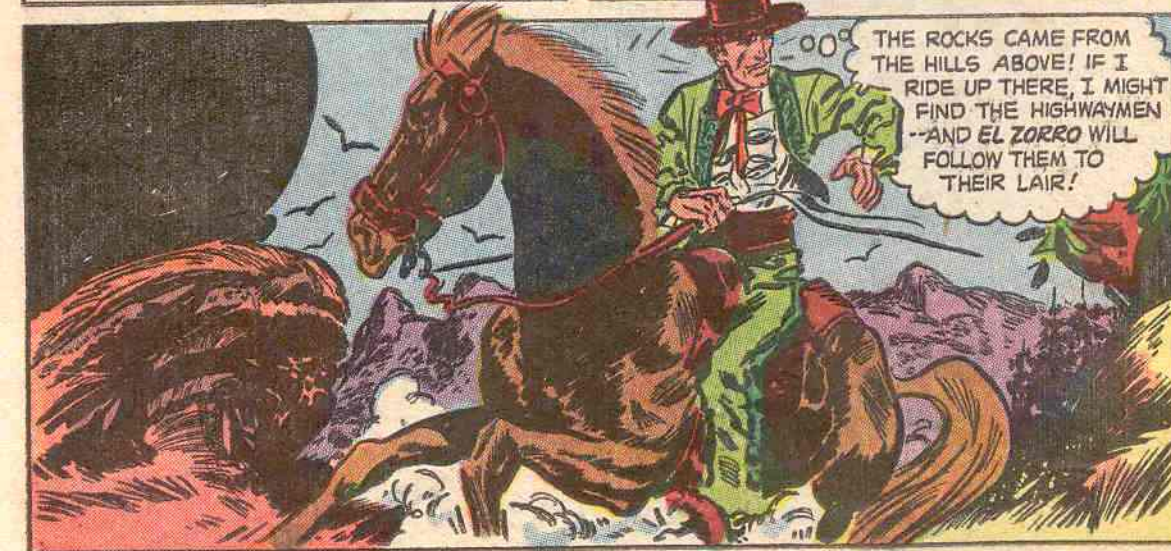
RUMBLE!

CAPTAIN!

AVALANCHE!









**Q**UICKLY CHANGING CLOTHES, EL ZORRO RIDES INTO THE HILLS...

THE SIGNAL LIGHT! NOW IT SHOULD BE EASY TO FIND THEM!



THEY HEAD SOUTH WITH THE CAVALRY'S ARMS! WHERE THE LOOT GOES-- THERE THE LEADER MUST BE!



**C**AUTIOUSLY KEEPING WELL BEHIND, ZORRO FOLLOWS THE HIGHWAY-MEN...



I WAS RIGHT! I DID HEAR SOMEONE FOLLOWING!

EL ZORRO!









IF HE DOES NOT COME TO THE SURFACE IN A MINUTE, IT IS CERTAIN HE HAS DROWNED!



SÍ! THE FORCE OF LANDING IN THE RIVER MUST HAVE TORN IT OFF!



THE VULTURES WILL TELL US WHEN IT COMES TO THE SURFACE!



MY TASTE IN HATS IS EXCELLENT!  
THERE IS JUST ENOUGH AIR TO LET  
ME BREATHE!



LATER, DON DIEGO TELLS HIS FATHER OF THE CAVALRY'S ROUT...

NOW THEY HAVE DRIVEN BACK THE CAVALRY,  
NO ONE IS SAFE HERE! IF ONLY WE KNEW  
WHO LEADS THEM!



WHOEVER HE IS, HE  
COMMANDS THE  
HIGHWAYMEN BY  
SIGNAL FIRES AND HIS  
HEADQUARTERS IS TO  
THE SOUTH-- BUT  
THAT IS ALL I  
COULD LEARN!



BUT ONE THING  
BECOMES CLEARER!  
THE HIGHWAYMEN'S  
LEADER IS AFTER  
THE CONTROL OF  
OUR ROADS!



ELSEWHERE...

THE FRUITS  
OF VICTORY,  
EXCELLENCY!

SPLENDID! THE CAVALRY WILL  
NOT COME TROTTING INTO OUR  
LANDS AGAIN TOO SOON! WE  
HAVE ESTABLISHED WHAT I HAVE  
SOUGHT-- CONTROL OF THE  
ROADS! AND IN THIS THINLY  
SETTLED AREA, WHO CONTROLS  
THE ROADS--RULES!





**QUICKLY  
THE  
TERROR  
SPREADS...**

**LADRONES!**

**BUENAS DIAS,  
SEÑORS! WHAT  
FINE CATTLE! BUT  
THEY ARE WORTH-  
LESS IF THEY DO  
NOT REACH  
MARKET!**

**AND TO REACH MARKET,  
THEY MUST USE THIS  
ROAD! SEÑORS, THIS  
ROAD NEEDS REPAIRS--  
A SMALL GOLD COIN FOR  
EACH HEAD OF  
CATTLE WILL  
TAKE CARE  
OF THE ROAD  
TAX!**



**NOT EVEN THE NIGHT PROTECTS THE TRAVELERS.**

**STOP, AMIGO!**



**FROM THE  
ARMS ON THE  
COACH, WE  
HAVE A  
NOBLEMAN!**

**TEN THOUSAND PARDONS,  
MY LORD! BUT AS SOON  
AS YOUR FAMILY PAYS A  
PETTY RANSOM YOU CAN  
FINISH YOUR JOURNEY!**

**AND  
LATER,  
AT THE  
CASTLE...**

**HERE IS A PRIZE, EXCELLENCY!  
SHE WAS OUT RIDING  
NEAR CASA CON-  
CHOLA! WE BLIND-  
FOLDED HER AND  
BROUGHT HER  
HERE!**





FORGIVE ME IF I DO NOT DOFF MY HAT, SEÑORITA, BUT IT IS BETTER IF I REMAIN UNKNOWN! CASA CONCHOLA CAN AFFORD TO PAY DEARLY FOR YOUR SAFE RETURN!

NO! THEY WILL NOT GIVE A CENTAVO TO YOU! I WILL NOT ASK THEM!

SO MUCH THE BETTER! THE LONGER THEY DELAY, PAYING, THE BETTER ACQUAINTED WE CAN BECOME!

WH-WHAT? WHERE IS QUILL AND INK?



THIS WAY, SEÑORITA! BUT THEY SHALL PAY A GOOD PRICE FOR DEPRIVING ME OF YOUR COMPANY!

LATER...

DIEGO, THE HIGHWAYMEN HAVE CAPTURED PANCHITA! LOOK AT THE PRICE THEY ARE DEMANDING!

I SEE... BUT YOU WILL NOT PAY IT!



BUT PANCHITA--

I SHALL RESCUE HER!

EASILY SAID, DON DIEGO! BUT YOU FORGET ONE THING--WE DO NOT KNOW WHERE SHE IS HELD PRISONER!

TRUE, VINCENTE, BUT I HAVE A WAY TO MAKE THE HIGHWAYMEN LEAD ME TO HER!





**S**oon... BERNARDO, ARE THE CLOTHES PACKED?

BERNARDO, ARE  
HES PACKED?

SÍ, DON DIEGO! THE  
GUISE OF EL ZORRO  
IS CAREFULLY CON-  
CEALED IN THE LUG-  
GAGE, AS YOU  
SUGGESTED!

GOOD! HAVE OUR BEST COACH  
PREPARED AT ONCE! YOU WILL  
DRIVE ME AS WE PLANNED!

**M**INUTES LATER...

SEÑORS, I SWEAR BY  
THE GOLD ORNAMENTED  
HILT OF MY CASTILIAN  
SWORD, THAT I SHALL  
BRING BACK  
PANCHITA!

**VIVA, DON  
DIEGO!**

VIVA!!

FORWARD, BERNARDO! AND  
WOE TO THE LADRONES!

GOOD FORTUNE!

WOE TO DON DIEGO! YOU  
CANNOT STOP HIGHWAYMEN WITH  
A SILK HANDKERCHIEF AND A  
*DRESS SWORD!*





THE PEOPLE  
THINK THE LAMB  
IS BEING LED TO  
THE SLAUGHTER!  
IF THEY ONLY  
KNEW DON DIEGO  
IS REALLY ZORRO!  
THIS PLAN IS A  
DARING ONE... HE  
RISKS ALL!

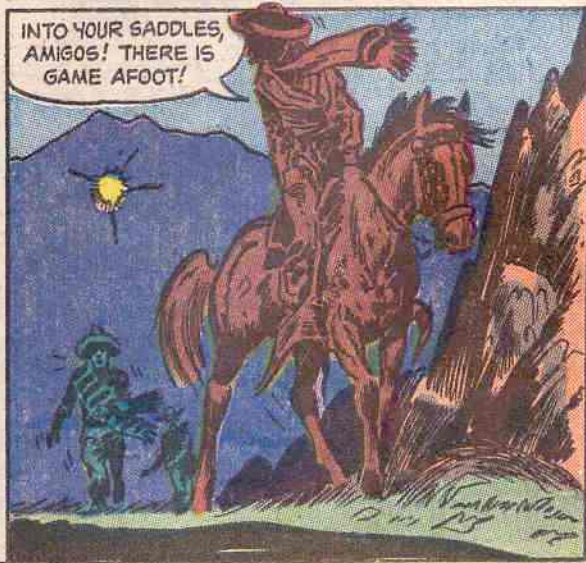


SOMETIME LATER...  
NOW THERE IS NOTHING  
TO DO EXCEPT DRIVE UP AND  
DOWN THESE HILLS AND  
WAIT FOR THE  
INEVITABLE!



A NOBLEMAN'S  
COACH!

SIGNAL  
THE RIDERS!



INTO YOUR SADDLES,  
AMIGOS! THERE IS  
GAME AFOOT!



THE HUNTING HAS BEEN  
POOR. WHO IS THE FOOL  
WHO TEMPTS FATE BY  
RIDING THE ROADS  
ALONE?



ONLY A DRIVER  
RIDES WITH HIM--  
NO GUARD!

HE IS ASKING TO BE  
TAKEN! LET US NOT DENY  
HIM HIS WISH!





AT LAST THEY  
COME! STOP THE  
COACH,  
BERNARDO!

SI!



BACK! KEEP BACK  
OR YOU SHALL FEEL  
THE POINT OF  
MY SWORD!

AMIGOS, HE JOKES!  
THAT DRESS SWORD  
HAS NO POINT!



O-OH GUARD!

LEAVE THIS  
FOPFISH CLOWN  
TO ME! HE LOOKS  
READY TO DANCE,  
NOT DUEL!



BLINDFOLD AND TIE HIM AND THE  
DRIVER! WE'LL TAKE THEM TO  
THE CASTLE!

MY  
SWORD!



HERE! USE MY HANDKERCHIEF!  
I WILL NOT HAVE SOME DIRTY  
RAG TOUCHING MY FACE!

SÍ, SEÑOR! THE SILK  
HANDKERCHIEF WILL DO.  
TURN THE COACH FOR  
THE CASTLE!



LATER...

THE COACH  
IS SLOWING UP,  
DON DIEGO!

YES, BERNARDO! WE ARE COMING  
TO A CASTLE! I CAN SEE PER-  
FECTLY--AS I KNEW I COULD,  
IF THEY BLINDFOLDED ME WITH  
THIS FINE SILK HANDKERCHIEF!



NOW I RECOGNIZE THE  
HIGHWAYMEN'S HEADQUARTERS  
--IT IS THE OLD CASTLE  
ANGELO!



YOU CAN UNTIE  
THEM AND REMOVE  
THE BLINDFOLDS!  
YOU WILL BE TAKEN  
TO OUR LEADER!

BERNARDO, CARRY MY LUG-  
GAGE INSIDE! IT APPEARS  
WE ARE TO BE DETAINED  
HERE A WHILE--I  
NEED A FRESH  
CHANGE OF CLOTHES!



EXCELLENCY, THE  
NOBLEMAN WHOSE  
CARRIAGE BEARS  
THE ARMS OF VEGAS  
HAS COME TO  
JOIN US!

AH, BY YOUR MASK I TAKE  
IT WE SHALL HAVE A MASQUERADE  
THIS EVENING! I HOPE I CAN  
IMPROVISE A PROPER  
COSTUME!

NO! THIS MASK IS  
TO KEEP YOU  
FROM LEARNING  
WHO I AM! SUFF-  
ICE IT TO SAY,  
AT PRESENT,  
I AM YOUR  
JAILER!











IN CODE, BERNARDO!  
BUT THE NOTE--  
THAT'S WHAT TOOK  
ME SO LONG! THE  
FIRST LETTER OF  
EVERY SECOND WORD  
WILL TELL MY FATHER  
WHERE TO SEND THE  
CAVALRY!

I EXPECT THE BEST  
ACCOMMODATION!  
PERHAPS A VIEW--

YOU'LL BE  
LUCKY IF YOU DO  
NOT HAVE A  
VIEW OF A  
RAT'S HOLE!



PANCHITA!!  
DIEGO!! YOU, TOO!  
BUT DO YOU KNOW  
IF VINCENTE  
RECEIVED MY  
LETTER? WILL HE  
SEND THE MONEY  
SOON?

NO, PANCHITA! I ADVISED  
HIM AGAINST IT! I PROMISED  
HIM I WOULD RESCUE YOU!

AND A FINE  
JOB YOU HAVE  
MADE OF IT!



THIS CELL SEEMS TO  
BE BY ITSELF! AT LEAST  
WE SHALL HAVE PRIVACY!

UNTIL YOUR RANSOM IS  
PAID, YOU WILL HAVE ALL  
THE PRIVACY YOU  
COULD WANT!





**E**ARLY  
THE  
NEXT  
MORNING...

BY NOW, MY FATHER SHOULD  
HAVE RECEIVED THE LETTER AND  
SENT FOR HELP, BERNARDO! THE  
TIME HAS COME FOR  
**ZORRO**  
TO ACT!

YOU PLAYED YOUR  
PART SUPERBLY,  
DON DIEGO! THEY  
NEVER EVEN LOOKED  
INSIDE YOUR  
LUGGAGE!

AND IF THEY DID, THEY WOULD HAVE  
ONLY FOUND A LOT OF ODD CLOTHES AND  
NEVER HAVE SUSPECTED THAT IN THE  
LINING OF THIS CAPE, THERE WAS...



...THE SWORD  
OF ZORRO!

SÍ, BUT  
WE ARE STILL  
LOCKED IN  
THIS CELL!

NOT FOR  
LONG! CALL  
THE GUARD!

GUARD! GUARD!

NOW TO  
SLIDE THIS CAPE  
UNDER THE  
BARS...

...THERE! JUST BE SURE,  
BERNARDO, YOU MANEUVER THE  
GUARD ONTO THE CAPE!









**M**INUTES LATER...

**ZORRO!**

QUIET, PANCHITA!  
THE OTHER PRISONERS  
SLEEP!



**COME!**



BUT HOW WILL  
WE GET OUT OF  
THE CASTLE  
UNSEEN?

UP THESE  
TOWER  
STEPS!



FROM THE TOWER, WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO  
SEE THE WHOLE CASTLE AND PLAN OUR  
ESCAPE!



**Z-ZORRO--**

**KEEP BACK!**







HURRY WITH THAT MESSAGE!  
HIS EXCELLENCY MUST LEARN  
AT ONCE THE CAVALRY HAS  
ENTERED CALIENTE PASS!



ZORRO, IF  
THEY STOP  
THE  
CAVALRY--

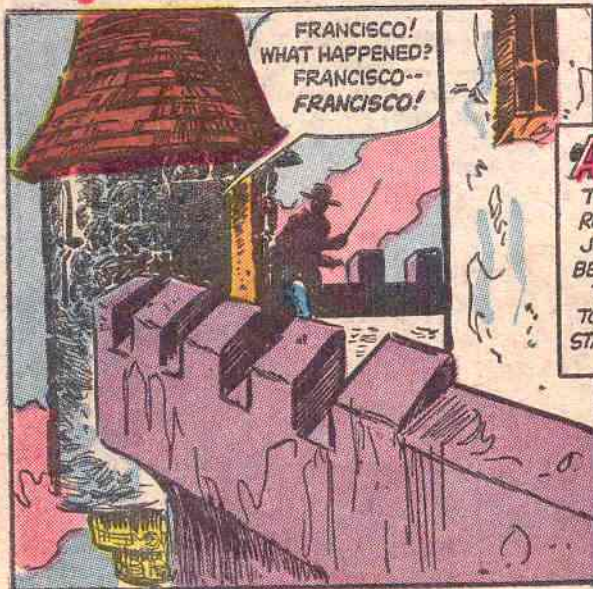
THEY WON'T-- IF THEIR LEADER DOES  
NOT RECEIVE THE MESSAGE!



OWW!



THUD!



FRANCISCO!  
WHAT HAPPENED?  
FRANCISCO--  
FRANCISCO!



IT SOUNDED LIKE SOMEONE  
FALLING! IF ONE OF THE  
MEN ON WATCH IS DRUNK,  
HE WILL PAY DEARLY!

AND  
IN  
THE  
ROOM  
JUST  
BELOW  
THE  
TOWER  
STAIRS...









EXCELLENCY, A MESSAGE CAME-- CAVALRY ENTERED CALIENTE PASS...

CALIENTE PASS! THEN THEY WILL BE HERE IN LESS THAN HALF AN HOUR UNLESS OUR MEN RECEIVE THE IMMEDIATE ORDER TO ATTACK!



LET HIM TRY TO REACH THE SIGNAL LIGHT AND HE WILL FEEL THE LENGTH OF MY BLADE IN HIS BODY!



MAKE FOR THE LANTERN! I WILL KEEP THIS BRAGGART BUGY!



A BEAT AND A LUNGE! YOU DUEL WELL!

TOO WELL--AS YOU WILL LEARN TOO LATE!



I WAS BANISHED FROM SPAIN BECAUSE MY SWORD SPILLED TOO MUCH NOBLE BLOOD! THEY GAVE ME A DULL POSITION HERE! BUT SPILLING YOUR BLOOD WILL MAKE MY EXILE BEARABLE!



MEANWHILE, THE FIRST GUARD HAS RECOVERED AND EDGES BEHIND ZORRO...



ZORRO! BEHIND YOU!



GRACIAS! THIS ONE HAS NOT LEARNED, ONCE BIT TO BE TWICE SHY!

AIEE!



AND NOW, SEÑOR, PRAY EXCUSE MY ABSENCE, BUT I SHALL RETURN TO YOU!



**F**OR TEN MINUTES, TWO BLADES FLASH IN THE MORNING SUN, AS ZORRO AND THE MARQUIS DE RIGOS PARRY AND LUNGE IN AN EVENLY MATCHED DUEL TO THE DEATH, AS SUDDENLY...



LISTEN, HORSES!

ZORRO, THE CAVALRY COMES!

LET THEM TEND TO THE HIGHWAY-MEN! THEIR LEADER SHALL BE MY PRIZE!













