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COSMA RACOARE.

A Rumanian Wooting

BY MICHAEL SADOVEANIR.

Translated by Louise Waring.

Cosma was a powerful man, heavy set, with piercing, steel-blue eyes, and heavy moustache. A rough man was Cosma, ever on his horse's back, a rifle across his lap, and a long knife stuck in his belt.

I am an old man, and have travelled through many a land and seen much, but the like of Cosma Racoare I never met. He was of medium height, bony, sun-burned, looked like the average man, yet was unlike any of them.

In those days our country suffered many tribulations, Turks and Greeks devastated Rumanian land, and our people lived in misery and fear. Sorrowful times they were! Cosma seemed the only human being exempt from suffering, going and coming without a thought of tomorrow. All fled before the enemy, but not so did he. Taken prisoner, they put him in chains; these he cast off, as if by magic, jumped on his horse, and fled. It was written in the stars that none but a silver bullet could harm him. No such man lives in our time; those were the good old days. You may have heard of the other hero, the son of the Maid with the Golden Hair? Well, he stole in Wallachia, on the other bank of the Milcar River, while Cosma plundered in the Muldan. At nightfall they would meet and exchange their booty. No gendarmes ever caught him, for his horse was the fleetest of the fleet, and their bullets whistled powerless about his ears. He lived in the forests, knew neither pain, fear nor love. The hours when he should know the latter was drawing near.

At that time the estate Vulturesti belonged to a Greek, Nicola Zamfiride. Near by, at Frasini, lived the beautiful Rumanian, the widow Sultana. Nicola vowed she should be his, but all efforts seemed futile; neither soothsayers nor witchcraft were powerful enough to help him. Was he unsightly, misshapen? On the contrary, he was a proud Greek, brown-eyed, black-bearded, tall, and handsome; yet in spite of these physical attractions she would none of him.

One day Nicola sat in his room cogitating. He was thinking of the young widow. Why did she reject his wooing? A few nights ago, I hired a gypsy who sang a touching serenade under her window, but the house remained dark and silent. What must I do? Nicola reflects: "I am well to look at and have a clear mind; why then does she scorn me? She has no lover, for I have had the house watched, but no one has been seen to enter." Nicola loses his temper. As he steps into the courtyard he sees a groom carrying a horse. "Do you call that a well-carried horse?" he bellows; and with that he lashes the fellow with his whip. The gardener, whom he finds resting in the shade, fares no better.

But what avails venting one's fury on innocent parties?

He strolls into the garden and lies down under a linden. Sadly, autumn winds are sighing and golden leaves, like butterflies, flutter to the ground. An old man enters by the garden gate.

"Vasili, Vasili, come here!"
 "What would'st thou, master?"
 "Vasili, thou hast ever been faithful; neither the old soothsayer nor the gypsy wench have been able to help me; I have but you to look to. Vasili, the Sultana must be mine."
 "I might counsel, but dare not," replied Vasili.
 "Here is a ducat; speak."

"I know my master will find my counsel worth two, yea, three ducats. My advice is that the master ride to Frasini and carry the Sultana off by force."

"I will do as you say, Vasili. Here are two ducats."

"That very night Nicola, accompanied by six sturdy young grooms, reaches Frasini. The castle seems shrouded in gloom. By means of rope ladders, Nicola and his followers scale the outer walls. As they enter the open gate, cries of "Help!" are heard. A door opens, and there appears the Sultana radiant in flowing hair and soft white garment. She turns her glowing eyes on Nicola, who, beside himself, attempts to throw his arms around her.

"How dare you! And now I see it is only the worthy Nicola, when I had feared to face a band of robbers." Suddenly she strikes Nicola's head with the flat of her scimitar blade. He is stunned. His men rush to the rescue. One is wounded, the rest take to their horses. By this time the alarm is sounded and the Sultana's servants come rushing in. Nicola gains his horse and reaches Vulturesti more dead than alive. All that night he tosses and moans, "Wretch that I am!" Ah, woe, ah woe is me! Such a woman! Such eyes! God have mercy on me!" He calls Vasili. "Vasili, my faithful one, I have come back covered with shame and disgrace. Vasili, I'll give thee three ducats if thou'll counsel me once more."

"Yea, master, I know it all. A superb creature, the Sultana; but I also know that my second counsel will be worth five—six ducats."

"Speak, Vasili, speak."

"When my master wins the Sultana, he shall want to give old Vasili six times—yea, twenty times as many ducats. I will bring Cosma Racoare; he will do your work." At the name of "Cosma Racoare," Vasili starts. "Be it so," he mutters.

On the third day after this interview, Cosma appeared. He was clad in a close-fitting fustian, heavy boots, and a Russian cap well drawn over his head. His rifle slung across his back and leading his horse, he leisurely and sullenly approached Nicola, who sat under the linden, smoking his pipe.

Vasili whispered into Nicola's ear: "Look at him, master; that fellow will fetch you the devil himself."

Nicola stares at Cosma; then the latter says: "God be with you."

As if waking from a dream, Nicola answers: "The same with thee."

"Thou knowest what I ask of thee; well, then, what is thy price? Will fifty ducats satisfy thee?"

"Yes," answers Cosma.

"Vasili, go fetch my money pouch—"

"No, not yet; when I shall have accomplished my task you can pay me. I bring you the woman, you pay me the money."

So saying, Cosma walked into the garden, wrapped his cloak about him, and threw himself on the grass.

"He seems the right man for my work; a weight is lifted off my heart," murmurs Nicola.

As night drew near, Cosma tightened his stirrups and mounted his horse. "Await my return in the meadow, master," and away he flew like an arrow.

The full moon flickered through the fog, enveloping hill and forest in a gossamer shroud. Only the clatter of the horse's feet broke the dead silence. On reaching Frasini, he found the outer gates locked. After repeated knockings, a voice from within cried: "Who is there?"

"Open the gate," thundered Cosma.

Then, impatient at the delay, he calls out: "It is I, Cosma Racoare."

A light is seen flitting by, then the sound of voices, and at last the bolts are withdrawn. Cosma enters. He finds the house door open.

"A woman without fear," he mutters. His steps resound through the long, dark corridor. A door is thrown open, and there on its threshold stands Sultana, radiant as before, clad in white, and flowing hair, her hand clutching the scimitar.

"Who art thou? What seekest thou here?" she cried.

"I came to carry you off, and take you to Nicola Zamfiride," answered Cosma.

"So this is thy errand!" she said scornfully.

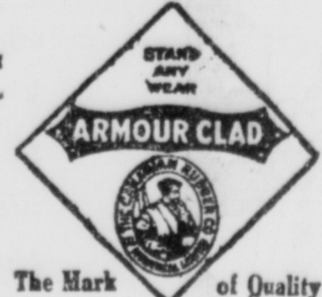
"Beware that the fate of Nicola do not befall thee."

Cosma draws nearer, gives a slight twist to her wrist, and the weapon falls to the ground. She shrinks back in dismay, and calls out: "Gabriel, Nicolai, Foader, help!" They came no farther than the entrance. Cosma lays hold of her arm, but she frees herself and



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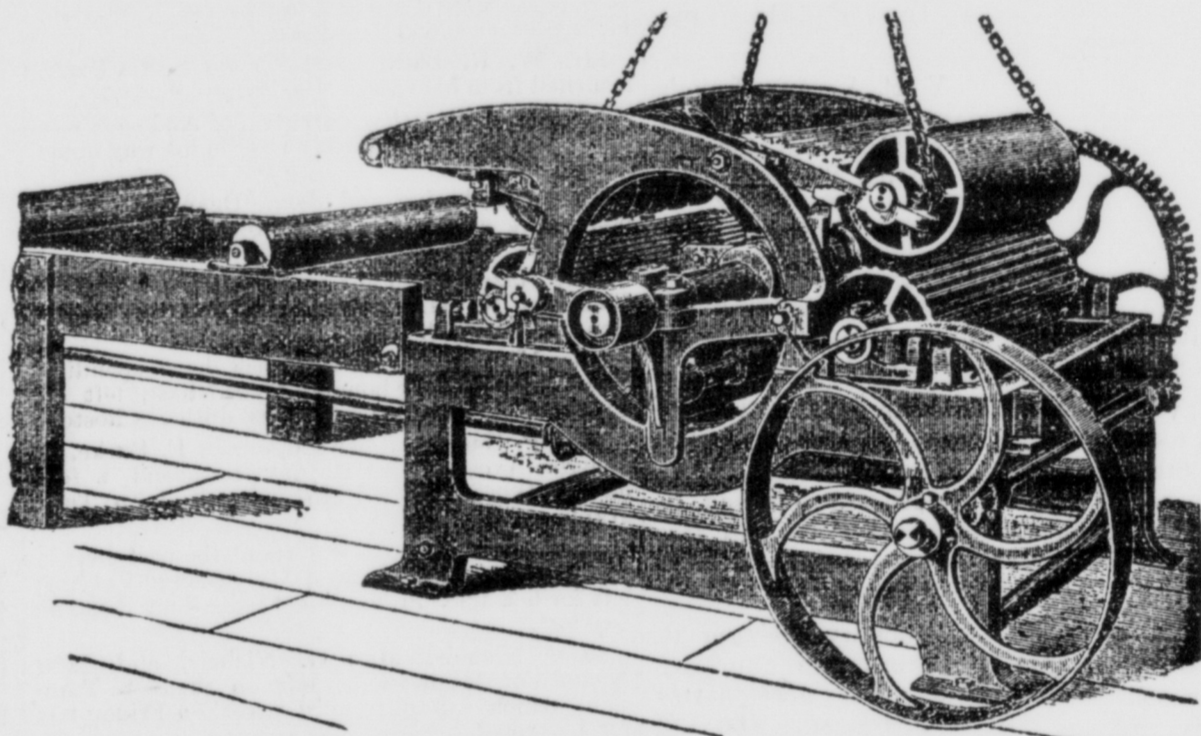
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Fly Nets.

FRANK L. ATHERTON

(At the Sign of the White Horse)

King Street, Woodstock

In the Supreme Court in Equity.

Between William M. Connell, Plaintiff, and Janet McGeachy, Margaret Smith and Malcolm McGeachy, Defendants.
 TAKE NOTICE that under and by virtue of a decretal order in above cause, made by Mr. Justice Barker, Judge in Equity, on the Fifth day of May A. D. 1903, there will be sold at Public Auction in front of the office of the Registrar of Deeds and Wills in the Town of Woodstock, in the County of Carleton, on FRIDAY the FIFTEENTH day of DECEMBER, A. D. 1905, at the hour of two of the clock in the afternoon, the following described lands and premises namely,—All that piece and parcel of land and premises situate in the Parish of Woodstock in the County of Carleton and Province of New Brunswick, fronting on the western bank of the River Saint John, bounded on the south by the Springfield road, on the north by lands owned by the heirs of the late Elias Yerxa, the whole of which lot containing by estimation fifty acres more or less, being the same land conveyed by the late Charles Perley to John McGeachy.
 At which sale all parties have leave to bid. Dated this 30th day of September A. D. 1905.
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DRIVING HORSE FOR SALE.

Handsome Bay Mare, 8 years old, weighs about 900 lbs. Kind and Sound, and extra good driver, quite speedy and well broken, enquire of R. B. JONES, Manchester House.

snatches a dagger from a table.
 "What are ye gaping at, ye cowards? Advanced and bind him!"
 "You are wasting words, fair lady. I admire your courage, but it avails you naught." Then the servants were heard to whisper terror-stricken:
 "How may we bind him? It is Cosma Racoare, the invincible."
 "Ye wretches," she shrieks, and in her fury attacks Cosma. He catches her in his arms, takes both hands and pinions them with a leather strap.
 "Make room!" he cries, and all step back. Quietly, he leads her out; the while muttering to himself: "What a superb creature! Such eyes! Such pride! Nicola has chosen well."

Sultana glares at her terrified vassals, and realizes her captivity; she meets the dark gaze of her captor, and bows her head.
 "Who are you?" she asks.
 "I am Cosma Racoare."
 She sees fear depicted on the faces of her people. Now she understands all.
 Cosma mounts his horse and places Sultana in front of him. Away they speed. To Cosma it seems as if he were flying through infinite space on a phantom horse. Now and then he would murmur: "Such a glorious woman!"

The moon shone radiantly. Sultana turned her head and looked at Cosma.
 On they sped, her black hair falling in ebony waves about her. She trembles and feels his eyes burning into her soul.

"Why do you look at me? Why do you tremble? Are you cold?"
 On, on, they fly. Suddenly, vague shadows are seen flitting hither and thither in the distance.

"What is it?" she whispers faintly.
 "Your master, Nicola, awaits you there."
 Suddenly with a spasmodic wrench she frees her wrist and before Cosma has time to regain his wits she takes the reins out of his hands and turns the horse's head. Her left arm clasps his neck, and her head rests upon his breast.

"I will go with you; do not take me to him," she sighed.
 With lightning speed they turned back, leaving no trace behind; on, on, to a safe haven in the mountains.

Diagnosed Her Case.

A famous American physician was summoned to the bedside of an elderly grande dame of distinguished name and many millions and who is one of the leaders of American society. The physician examined her carefully. Then he said:

"You must get up every morning at 6 o'clock. Take for breakfast a cup of weak tea and two pieces of dry toast. From 9 to 11 exercise, either walking or sweeping or dusting. At noon lunch on a slice of cold meat, filtered, uniced water and stale bread. Don't sleep in the afternoon; exercise again. For dinner take nothing but a little meat, a vegetable and toast; no sweets, no wines, no social dissipation of any kind."

The eyes of the gramee dame flashed with fire as she said:

"But, doctor, do you comprehend my position? Do you know who I am?"
 "Perfectly, madam," answered the physician. "You are an old woman with a sour stomach."—New York Press.

An interesting record is that of the voyage of the steamer "Stork" in that great inland Canadian sea, Hudson's Bay. This steamer arrived at the West India docks in London on Wednesday last with a cargo consisting of some £50,000 worth of furs for the Hudson's Bay Company. She started from Charlton Island, in Hudson's Bay, on September 19, 1904. A succession of gales was accompanied by pack ice, but after many escapes the "Stork" was driven back to Charlton Island, where the crew subsisted for nearly ten months on the food they hunted, principally wild rabbits. The average temperature was 22 degrees below zero, but sometimes it went down to 40 degrees. The crew, to vary the monotony, made a banjo out of a tin, and danced to its music. While picking her way out of the ice the "Stork" encountered the ship "Discovery," which, though herself ice-bound for five weeks, shared her provisions with the "Stork's" crew. Such a lengthened adventure as this does not seem to accord with those who insist that the navigation of Hudson's Bay and transatlantic commerce there with is an easy matter.

Where Bird Seeds Come From.

What we call "canary seed" is the seed of a kind of grass, and all of it used in this county is imported from Europe.
 Although the plant that produces the rape seed supplies to canaries is grown in the United States to some extent for fodder, all of this kind of seed required for the feeding of cage birds is imported.
 Rape seed comes mainly from Abyssinia and India, where the plant that produces it is cultivated for oil and also used as a condiment.
 Hemp seed, likewise fed to cage birds, is produced quite largely in Missouri and adjacent states.