



Chapter Fourteen

VA-CATION DAYS

DURING the Christmas recess, Tonio had a chance to be with Mrs. Del Valle a great deal of the time. Before the sun was up, she took long walks through country lanes and Tonio was her sole companion. She asked him about his school work, his teachers, and friends. She showed a keen interest in the boy's past life, in those years when Tonio and his Lolo had to go begging. He related to her his experiences with street boys and how he almost fell into the hands of thieves and shop-lifters.

"Why did you have to beg?" asked Mrs. Del Valle once. "What about your parents?"

"My parents?" Tonio turned a puzzled look at his companion.

THE ADVENTURES OF A BEGGAR BOY

•
by Julio Cesar Pena
•

Tonio realized that he had never asked himself that question. His Lolo had taken such good care of him that he did not think of asking for his parents. He remembered having thought of a mother only once and that was when he dreamed of a kind lady who welcomed him to her beautiful home.

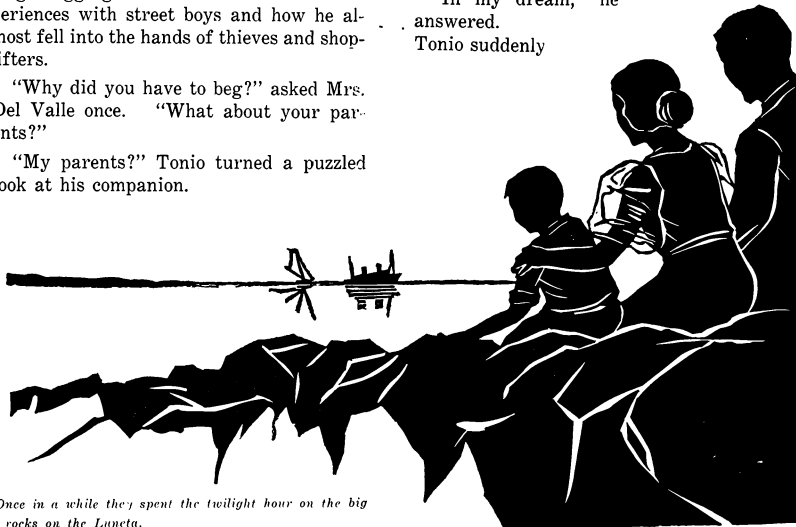
When he looked at Mrs. Del Valle again, there was a strange light in his eyes.

"I remember now," he exclaimed. "I have been trying hard to recall where I first saw you, Mrs. Del Valle."

"Where could you have seen me?" she asked.

"In my dream," he answered.

Tonio suddenly



Once in a while they spent the twilight hour on the big rocks on the Luneta.

realized having said something that must have sounded foolish to Mrs. Del Valle.

Assuming his usual serious look, he answered her first question, "I never knew my parents. I know of no relatives. My Lolo is my all."

Mrs. Del Valle's heart went out to the boy in deep pity. She thanked heaven for having found him. Whatever she did for him worked both ways. While her help gave the boy an assured future, it also afforded her an interest which drew her thoughts away from her own sorrow.

Twice a week, Mr. and Mrs. Del Valle went to the movies in the City and took Tonio along. Once in a while, they spent the twilight hour on the big rocks on the Luneta.

Tonio was given longer hours for play. With his friends he explored the streams and woods of the locality. While the carabaos took their midday wallow, the boys dug up wild turnips and hunted for half-ripe guavas and green mangoes. To his astonishment, Tonio found that he derived much greater pleasure from munching unripe fruit than from eating delicious apples at home.

Once in a while, the boys took a plunge in the river and raced to the other bank. Then they would roll on the sand or play



The eye specialist they consulted declared that an operation might bring back the old man's sight.

hide-and-peek among the camachili trees that lined the river edge.

Noticing how deeply tanned Tonio had become, Mrs. Del Valle suggested to her husband that a bicycle be bought for him to keep him more at home.

"Let him have a full share of the joys of a normal boy's life," Mr. Del Valle said. "There is nothing like the companionship of boys of his age. It will teach him how to get along with people."

"But he stays at the river when he ought to be resting. He might meet with an accident when the tide is high."

"Well, you may warn him, but don't forbid."

The following day Mr. Del Valle brought home a bicycle. He answered his wife's questioning look with, "Every boy must learn to ride a bicycle."

Mr. Del Valle himself taught Tonio how to get on and how to keep his balance. The older man's face lit up with almost boyish pleasure as he performed his demonstrations before a group of gaping boys.

"Lolo, you certainly have brought a strange influence over this house," the old cook remarked that evening as he had his after-supper chat with the blind man.

"I?" asked the old man in surprise.

"Tonio, your boy, has."

"In what manner?"

"You know, this house used to be very quiet. Mr. and Mrs. Del Valle kept to their rooms all the time. They mingled with the neighbors only on two occasions, on Christmas day and on a birthday."

"Have they ever been in trouble?"

"Yes, they suffered a great sorrow."

"Poor dears! May God send them a balm for it!" Lolo murmured.

"Everybody can see the change in them. The Mistress talks with life and moves about with alacrity. Mr. Del Valle's laughter sometimes rings through the house."

The old man's conversation was interrupted by the entrance of a servant who informed the blind man that he was wanted

(Continued on page 129)

STRANGE FACTS

In ancient Egypt a brother and sister marriage was said to be an ideal one.

In England, there are many canals and inland waterways. And on these canals and waterways, about 10,000 boats are registered as dwellings. 40,000 persons live in these boats.

The war in Ethiopia has had many strange effects on trade. All rhinoceros in the London market are now immediately shipped to China. There they are ground into powder. Then they are made into magic potions that will assure courage and bravery. From China, the powders are sent to Ethiopia and sold to the soldiers of Haile Selassie.

In the Civil War of the United States, more Union soldiers died from disease than were actually killed in the battle.

Camphor balls are not made out of camphor. They are made of naphthalene.

Bats are not blind. Most of us believe that they are blind. Bats possess very good eyes which are hidden under the fur on the face.

Eskimos were free from disease before visits by white men.

and in order before they leave for duty. Baby contests are held to stimulate interest and encourage better care of babies. There can be no greater pride for a mother than to have her baby acclaimed as the most healthy.

Let us not forget to pay a visit to any hospital or hospitals on this particular day. We can be sure of being received with hospitality in all hospitals, for there, even strangers are always welcomed.

An elephant talks through its nose.

Ice cream is not cooling. In fact, it makes you warmer. Ice cream contains starch and sugar. These foods are classed as fuel foods which produce body heat.

Among the frogs—the he frogs make all the noise—while the she frogs remain mute.

Enrico Caruso, the late opera singer, will long be remembered in Italy. In a tiny chapel, there stands a candle sixteen feet high, which is burned once a year in his memory. That candle will last eighteen centuries.

Flaubert, noted French novelist, wrote poetry when he was young with a human skull on his desk for inspiration.

Georges Clemenceau, the late French statesman, often wore slippers and gloves when he went to bed.

Alexander Dumas, who has written 298 books, finished "The Three Musketeers" in the middle of a page. He drew a line underneath the end of the novel, then he started "The Count of Monte Cristo" on the same page.

AN ANGEL OF GOD

(Continued from page 107)

In 1923 the Fontgallands made a pilgrimage to Lourdes. There, his Heavenly Mamma spoke to Guy: "My dear little Guy, I will soon come to take you. I will come to seek you on a Saturday in the arms of your mamma and will bear you straight to heaven." Again, the boy said, "Yes, yes."

All these came to pass. Guy died of diphtheria on a Saturday in the year 1925. It was only when he was about to die that His mother knew of his secret. His last words

A boat painted red will travel faster than a boat painted blue or white. The reason is that—barnacles fasten themselves to the hull of boats. And boats that have plenty of barnacles can not travel easily. Now, barnacles do not love for the color red. So that if a boat is painted red, barnacles will not fasten themselves to it. Hence, a boat painted red can travel faster.

Like hens, turtles don't have teeth. They have horny beaks which usually have sharp cutting edges. The tortoises have most of their bones on the outside like shellfish. Some fish also have beaks instead of teeth.

Nowadays we know a good deal about bird migrations. Bird-banding and other methods of identification have helped our knowledge. Back in 1703 an English writer seriously suggested that British birds flew away for the Winter to the moon!

On the roof of the New York "Journal" building in Manhattan 76 carrier pigeons live. They bring pictures of in-coming celebrities from ships at Quarantine 14 miles down the Bay. Time averages 12 minutes—against two hours for the newspapers that wait until the ship docks. An aluminum capsule on the carrier's leg takes two ounces of film negatives or "copy" to be set.

THE ADVENTURES OF

(Continued from page 119)

by Mr. Del Valle.

The next day Mr. Del Valle took Tonio and his Lolo to the City. The eye specialist they consulted declared that an operation might bring back the old man's sight.

(To Be Continued)

were: "Jesus . . . I love You Mamma!" Madame de Fontgalland knew that the last word was not for her but for his Heavenly Mamma.