

**MIDSHIPMAN'S
EXPEDIENTS AND
OTHER TALES, IN
TWO VOLUMES, VOL. II**

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Midshipman's Expedients and Other Tales, in Two Volumes, Vol. II by Edward Howard

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EDWARD HOWARD

**MIDSHIPMAN'S
EXPEDIENTS AND
OTHER TALES, IN
TWO VOLUMES, VOL. II**

MIDSHIPMAN'S EXPEDIENTS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"RATTLIN THE REEFER;"

AND OTHER TALES,

BY

CELEBRATED WRITERS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL II

[By Edward Howard]

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CONTENTS

OF VOL. II.

	Page
THE GUERRILLA. By Sheridan Knowles, author of "The Hunchback," &c. - -	5
ONE WITNESS, A TALE OF THE LAW. -	35
THE PREACHER PARROT; OR, THE TRIALS OF TRUTH. By Douglas Jerrold. Chapter I.	53
Chapter II. - - - -	60
Chapter III. - - - -	69
Chapter IV. - - - -	73
Chapter V. - - - -	77
THE RIVAL COLOURS. By Alexander Campbell. - - - -	79
THE VICTIM, (Extracted from Notes in the Diary of a Surgeon.) - - - -	91
THE MAN WITH MANY NAMESAKES. By Maurice Harcourt. - - - -	103
THE PLEASURE PARTY. By Edward Mayhew.	109

THE IMAGE-MAN, - - -	143
THE HEBREW BROTHERS, - - -	161
MONKWYND: A LEGENDARY FRAGMENT, -	179
THE CONVICT, - - -	199

THE GUERRILLA.

BY SHERIDAN KNOWLES.

Author of "THE HUNCHBACK," &c.

ON came the crowd, shouting, "The Guerilla! The Guerilla!" ferocious exultation in the sound of their voices and in their looks. On they came right to the place of execution, gathering new accessions at every yard. Arrived at the fatal spot, they stopped; and, drawing back on every side, formed a little ring, densely bounded; in the centre of which stood a Guerilla, with a boy about fifteen or sixteen years old, apparently his son; and along with them a Spaniard of superior rank, one or two public functionaries of a subordinate class, and the executioner.

Several murders had been recently committed in the mountains; among the rest one upon the son of the Spaniard who was extremely popular in Burgos; and against the Guerillas the retaliation of summary justice was proclaimed by the edict of the people; of which act of popular despotism the man and the boy, who had been taken at a few leagues' distance from the city, were now about to become the victims.

Nothing could be more striking than the contrast between the two. The man, of swarthy complexion and stalworth form, with lank black hair, and just sufficient of intelligence in his countenance to give direction to a bold and reckless nature; defiance, not

deprecation, in his eye—the boy, with a skin of bright and transparent olive; a frame, slender, though not spare; dark—jet-dark hair hanging almost to the waist in clusters of curls; and a countenance shining with sensibility and intellect; his eye, with an expression of intense terror, cast here and there upon the crowd; with one hand clasped in that of his robust companion, and with the other grasping his arm, to which he shrickingly clung. There was something so irresistibly subduing in the group—now that their tormentors had halted, and had leisure to look on—that clamour subsided into perfect silence, which lasted for several minutes. At length the Guerilla, with a smile, stretched forth his hand—

“Fellow-Christians!” he exclaimed—but his voice was instantly drowned with cries of execration.

“Pinion him! Strangle him!” was vociferated from a thousand mouths.

Finding it impossible to obtain a hearing, he now had recourse to gesture, and his extended hands were gradually lowered in the direction of the boy; then moving his eyes from right to left, backwards and forwards, as far as he could turn his head—occasionally glancing at the boy—while the smile never once quitted his face, he plainly told what he would say. The promiscuous mass was touched again, and clamour once more was superseded by silence.

“Pinion me!” exclaimed the Guerilla. “Pinion me, and execute me if you please. I am a fair object for your vengeance, and you shall see that I will prove myself worthy of it; but why wreak it upon a child?—a boy who has done nothing to you? He is not a Guerilla, nor the son of a Guerilla. He is one of yourselves. Burgos was the place of his birth.”

Hesitation, doubt, pity, dissatisfaction, revenge, were variously painted in the faces of the crowd. At

length one—who seemed to be a sort of leader—by a single word recalled the passion which had originally predominated.

“Antonio!” was all he said, but in a voice in which there was doom, without refuge or mitigation. He was echoed by a thousand throats. The air resounded with “Antonio.”—It was the name of the Senor’s son—the young man that had been murdered. Cries of “Pinion them!” “Strangle them!” succeeded. The executioner looked towards the Senor.—The Senor nodded; and the former instantly proceeded to pinion the boy. The boy, submitting without a struggle, looked up in the Guerilla’s face. The Guerilla looked down at the boy—and still with a smile!

The process was nearly completed, when the Guerilla in a voice of thunder and command cried, “Stop!” The executioner, mechanically desisting, gaped at the Guerilla, as did also the Senor and the crowd—all seemed electrified by the tone in which the Guerilla uttered that single word.

“Is there a man in Burgos—” in the same tone proceeded the Guerilla, “Is there a man in Burgos who lost about sixteen years ago a daughter two years old?”

The Senor started, and now bent upon the Guerilla a look of the most intense interest and eager inquiry.

“What mean you?” said the Senor.

“What I say!” replied the Guerilla, and repeated the question.

“Yes, I am that man!” said the Senor: “I lost a daughter sixteen years ago at the age of two years old! Knowest thou aught of that girl?”

“You see I do!”

“And what?”

"Unbind the boy!" said the Guerilla, calmly folding his arms.

"Does she live?" impetuously inquired the Senor.

"Unbind the boy!"

"Knowest thou where she is?" asked the Senor with increasing impatience.

"Unbind the boy!"

"Wretch!" furiously vociferated the Senor, "you shall be put to the torture!"

A loud hoarse laugh was the reply of the Guerilla, and "Unbind the boy!" was again calmly repeated. The indignation—the impatience, of the Senor all at once subsided. The expression of his eye changed to something like respect and deference as he kept it still fixed upon the Guerilla, upon whom the crowd now gazed with a feeling rather of admiration than hostility. The boy never moved his eyes from his companion, whose smile seemed as permanent as the hue of his cheek while he stood like a figure hewn out of rock. There was a dead silence of several minutes.

"Unbind the boy!" at length said the Senor. He was obeyed. "Now?" said he, addressing the Guerilla.

"Remove us hence!" calmly rejoined the latter.

"Do you sport with me?" with renewed impatience, inquired the Senor.

"No!"—coolly replied the Guerilla. "You know I don't. You know that a child—a girl of two years old—was stolen from Burgos sixteen years ago, and that you are the father of that girl. You may well believe, Senor, that what I know a part of, and so well, I can reveal wholly—thoroughly! I will do so; but not here. Take me to your own house. There, but there alone, will I disclose to you what it will be