

GRANICE HARRY

HUNTED DOWN;
OR, FIVE DAYS
IN THE FOG

Harry Granice

**Hunted Down; or,
Five Days in the Fog**

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Harry Granice

Hunted Down; or, Five Days in the Fog / A Thrilling Narrative of the Escape of Young Granice from a Drunken, Infuriated Mob

PREFACE

I write this narrative while confined in the Modesto jail awaiting my trial for the shooting of the defamer of my mother's name on the 7th of December, 1874. It will be seen by reading the following statement, that I gave myself up to the sheriff to be held to await the decision of the law. I will here explain why it was necessary for me to be taken to the Modesto jail. There was no safe jail at Merced, and it had been the custom for several months to take Merced prisoners to Modesto, a town in the adjoining county, and a distance of about forty miles. The cars passed through Merced about noon on the day of the shooting, five hours after the affair happened, and direct to Modesto. Why did not the sheriff improve this opportunity of taking me to a place of safety? Failing in that, a good span of horses could have conveyed us to Modesto during the afternoon. He knew the jail was not safe, and instead of doing what every sensible man would conceive to be a sheriff's duty, he chose rather to send me out handcuffed, with two men, on a public highway, to a lone wayside inn, seven miles from Merced, and ten from Snellings. It seems from my brother's and several other gentlemen's statement, that every horse was engaged at the livery stable in Merced before eight o'clock on that night.

There is another question which will naturally arise in the thinking mind: Where did the sheriff go, and what was he doing that night while the mob was getting ready? The mystery may be solved some day.

I wish to show in this simple statement that I did not flee coward-like from justice, but that I was making my escape from a drunken infuriated mob, after being duly liberated by the deputy sheriff. I understand that the mob, or a portion of the mob that night returned and destroyed my step-father's printing office, although the sheriff was in town.

H. H. GRANICE.

Hunted Down; or, Five Days in the Fog

Oh, why this fog, so thick and dark for five long days and nights?
It seems as though kind Providence has veiled the heavenly lights,
That he who seeks his life to save shall live the tale to tell
Of drunken mobs and demon cries, like legions just from hell.

On Monday morning, at about fifteen minutes to eight o'clock, December 7th, 1874, immediately after the shooting, or as soon thereafter as I could collect my scattered senses, which was in about three minutes, I inquired for the sheriff for the purpose of giving myself up; but he nor any of his deputies were on the spot. After waiting a few minutes longer I began to grow impatient at the delay of the officers, and not wishing to move from the scene of shooting for fear the movement would be misconstrued and I be accused of trying to effect an escape, I sent a messenger in quest of Sheriff Meany (I forget now who the messenger was). In a short time thereafter Sheriff Meany arrived on the spot, and perceiving him, I addressed him thus: "Sheriff Meany, I am your prisoner." He grabbed me in rather a rough manner by the lapel of my coat, took me to the lock-up, thence to the El Capitan hotel, and after remaining at the latter place for half an hour (for what reason I know not), he conducted me back to the lock-up, thrust me in, and turned the key on me. In a short time thereafter my breakfast was brought to me without knife or fork to eat with. The victuals were not fit for a dog to eat. I so expressed myself to Meany, and asked him to give me a decent breakfast. He answered me thus: "That has got to answer. Can't treat you different from other prisoners." With the exception of the coffee, I set the breakfast aside.

In the meantime, quite a crowd had collected outside the jail, and Meany was inciting them to mob violence by his vindictive expressions against me. I kept perfectly quiet and said nothing to Meany nor his deputies. Suspecting the duplicity of Meany, I despatched a courier for my brother George, who was living some fifteen miles north of Merced. My brother arrived in town about noon, and immediately came to me. He was searched by Meany and then admitted into the lock-up. He had hardly shaken hands with me when he heard Meany say something, and turning to me, remarked: "I hear Meany talking, and I think it unsafe to be in here, as I am in their power while shut up in here." He immediately asked to be let out, and his request was acceded to. In the course of the day a fellow named Packard, a shoulder-hitter of Meany's, came skulking around the jail and, picking up a gun, attempted to get an opportunity to shoot me through the bars of the lock-up. I perceived his intention in time to hug the wall directly under the bars, thereby preventing him from assassinating me. The deputy sheriff told him to put the gun down; that he had no right to pick it up. After loitering around a few minutes longer, Meany came up, and then this Packard commenced to annoy me with insulting remarks; and although Meany was there and heard him, he said nothing to him. He left shortly after, indulging in the remarks mentioned above, and I afterwards learned that he returned and tried to shoot me through the bars of the jail with a pistol. I knew that my danger was great, and my only hope was in my friends protecting me, not the Sheriff, for he had expressed himself in such a free manner in my hearing, although he did not know that I was listening, that I knew there was no protection to hope for from that source. Knowing this, I did not beseech him to save me; I merely asked him, when I gave myself into his custody, to take me before a justice of the peace; I would waive an examination and go to Modesto. It was eight o'clock in the morning when I delivered myself up to Meany.

The cars would leave for Modesto at 1 p. m. There were, therefore, five hours in which to allow me to do that which would take but ten minutes, to wit – take me before a justice of the peace, and allow me to waive an examination. I told him it was dangerous for me to remain in Merced, and I wanted to waive, and go to Modesto for safety. My attorney, P. D. Wigginton, mentioned the matter

to many in my presence, about nine o'clock in the morning. One hour passed – two hours – three – four. It was one o'clock, and still Meany had done nothing, although repeatedly urged by my friends to do something. Well, when one o'clock arrived, and I still remained in the lock-up, I knew what I could expect from Meany. I then made up my mind to say nothing to him, but let matters take their course, and await developments. He, no doubt, was surprised that I did not beg him to take me to some place of safety; but I knew it was useless to ask him to save my life. I had asked him to take me to Modesto in order to prevent violence; and one o'clock arriving, I knew what his action meant, on account of his expressions used in my hearing while I was lying in the lock-up. It was plain to me that he was in sympathy with the mob, which I knew was rising. I said nothing, but kept my own counsel.

A heavy fog came up about five o'clock p. m., and it was near dark at that hour. Meany opened the door and ordered me, in a quick, sharp, rough voice, to put on my coat, which I had taken off in order the more easily to slip through the hands of the mob in case they broke in the lock-up to take me out. Said Meany:

"Be quick! Put your coat on. Got to take you out of this right now, as they will be down here in less than an hour and hang you!"

I merely said to him, "Why didn't you take me to Modesto when you could have done so with safety?"

That question was a poser to him, and he made some inarticulate reply. I put on my coat, and accompanied by Meany and Deputy Sheriff Breen, one carrying a double-barreled shot-gun, the other a repeating rifle, started towards the new court house, which lies just at the edge of town. Upon reaching the south-west corner of the enclosure surrounding the building, I perceived a thorough-brace awaiting us. John Hathaway had the lines, and I was handcuffed and put in the carriage with Deputy Breen, and Meany told Breen to go as far as the Half-Way House and there stop. After giving this order, he started back to town. I then saw through the whole arrangement. He had put me into the hands of a deputy, and as he confidently expected the mob would hang me, he would be free from blame, and could say, "Granice was not in my hands, but in the hands of a deputy."

During all this time I said nothing although I thought a great deal. Hathaway drove, according to Meany's orders, toward the Half-Way House. It struck me, as well as the deputy sheriff and also Hathaway (as I afterwards learned from their conversation), that the mob was lying in wait at the bridge, at the crossing of Bear Creek. I kept a sharp look-out ahead, and in a few minutes the Bear Creek bridge loomed up through the fog, about one hundred yards ahead. I kept a steady eye on the structure as we drew near, expecting every second to see the forms of the devils.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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