

# **THE LAW OF THE BOLO**

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The law of the bolo by Stanley Portal Hyatt

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**STANLEY PORTAL HYATT**

**THE LAW  
OF THE BOLO**



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# THE LAW OF THE BOLO

BY

STANLEY PORTAL  
HYATT

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Author of  
"Black Sheep,"  
"The Marriage of Hilary  
Carden,"  
"The Little Brown  
Brother," etc.

Second Impression

Published at Clifford's Inn, London

By T. WERNER LAURIE

"Black Sheep" is without doubt a clever novel. It is one that should be read, if only for the life-like drawing of Jimmy Grierson. (a) Mr Hyatt has the art of making his people and his situations very real. (b) This is a strong, courageous story, worthy of Mr Hyatt's reputation. (c) The book is written in a series of terse and vivid phrases, and is fat with good things. (d) The writing of "Black Sheep" is far above the average in style and strength. (e) There is much to admire in Mr Hyatt's capable treatment of his subject, and his story never loses its grip. (f) It is one of very much more than ordinary merit, and one the theme of which will not be easily forgotten after the book has been laid aside. (g) May, Ida, and their respective husbands are inimitably drawn. (h) So long as the Magdalen remains a Christian saint, work like "Black Sheep" cannot be ruled out of literature, nor can it be held to be immoral. (i).

(a) Globe.

(b) Morning Post.

(c) Bookman.

(d) Daily Mirror.

(e) Pall Mall Gazette.

(f) Evening Standard.

(g) Liverpool Post.

(h) Manchester Courier.

(i) Nation.

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## FOREWORD

THE Law of the Bolo, which runs throughout the Philippine Islands, has the crowning merit of simplicity. Unlike the codes of other countries, with their folios of verbiage, their precedents, decisions, and interpretations, their hair-splitting subtleties and refinements of phrase, their hidden dangers for the unwary and unfortunate, the Law of the Bolo, of the terrible two-foot-long knife, with which a Filipino can cleave his enemy from collar-bone to the waist, has but one clause—that the spoil shall go to the man with the longest reach. Possibly the process is crude, but, at least, it is speedy and final. Judge, jury, counsel, the Bolo takes the place of all these; and there is no appeal, at any rate in this life.

The Law of the Bolo has also the merit of antiquity. It was in force when the Spaniards annexed the Archipelago; it is in force there

to-day, under the American successors of the Spaniards; and probably it will still be in force when, not only this generation, but half a dozen of its successors as well, have passed away—not because it is perfect, no law is, but because it is so admirably suited to local conditions.

Half the troubles in the Islands during the last century or so—a great many more than half, probably—have been due to the fact that white men would not recognise this elemental code. Mr Commissioner Furber, the head of the department of Constabulary and Trade in Manila, regarded it as scandalous, as did also Mr Dwight P. Sharler, the Chief Collector of Customs, and Mr Joseph Gobbitt, of the British firm of Gobbitt & Dunk, Eastern merchants; but both old Felizardo, the ladrone leader, and Captain Basil Hayle of the Philippines Constabulary, understood it, and acted on that knowledge, thereby avoiding many mistakes, as this story will show. . . .

# THE LAW OF THE BOLO

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## CHAPTER I

### HOW FELIZARDO TOOK TO THE HILLS

FELIZARDO was sixty years of age, a wizened little man, quiet of voice, emphatic of gesture, when the Americans displaced the Spaniards, and began to preach the doctrines of Law and Order, coupled with those of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, as defined by the Declaration of Independence. In appearance, Felizardo was not unlike a Japanese, being purely Asiatic by descent; but, so far as essential characteristics, were concerned, he was a son of the Tropics, with the qualities of his kind.

For all practical purposes, Felizardo's history begins thirty-five years before the coming of the Americans. Up till that point in his career, he had been an ordinary tao, one of the peasantry of a village some ten miles from Manila, outwardly apathetic and inoffensive,