

MAGIC BAKING POWDER
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TORONTO, ONT.
WINNIPEG MONTREAL

Stella Mordaunt;
—OR—
The Cruise of the "Kingfisher."

CHAPTER V.

She had emerged from the edge of the wood, and stood on a slight elevation looking over the plain of "burrow" to the sea.

As she stood there, not knowing what to do of which way to take, she heard footsteps, and instantly she took alarm. It might be the young man Rath, or it might—well, be something in the shape of one of the wild beasts with which her imagination peopled the island.

Mechanically she threw herself down behind a bush, and waited.

The steps came nearer, and she saw Rath coming across the open space. Her heart beat fast as she watched him approach. He had a rifle over his shoulder, and was walking slowly, with his eyes cast down, as if he were deep in thought.

Girl-like, she could not help noticing the strength and grace of his supple form, the almost classic beauty of his face, and its absorbed, self-contained expression, which is only to be found on the face of the solitary.

That he should find her hiding from him, crouching as if with fear, was intolerable to her, and she rose slowly and stood erect, an exquisite picture against the background of firs.

Rath heard her, and looked up, and in an instant brought his Winchester to position, and aimed at her.

Stella went white, and she quivered like an aspen leaf; she could scarcely feel the bullet striking her heart; but she did not scream or cry for mercy.

Slowly she stretched out her arms, and looking straight along the barrel of the rifle, said in a low voice:

"Fire; but let me speak first!"

Rath hesitated, and lowered the Winchester; but held it as if ready to shoot at any moment.

"What do you want to say?" he said, not angrily, but with the calmness of the judge demanding of the prisoner why the sentence of death should not be passed.

The girl's breath came a little more easily.

"Come up here," she said; then, as Rath hesitated, she could not withhold the taunt. "Oh, you need not be afraid, I shan't hurt you—though I am a girl. Besides, you can shoot me just as easily up here as down there."

This argument being quite incontrovertible, Rath, after a moment's hesitation, ascended the rise and stood within a few yards of her, leaning on his rifle, his eyes regarding her steadfastly.

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No other remedy treats Catarrh so directly, so quickly; every breath you draw through the Inhaler carries a marvelous lot of healing virtue—carries death to the germs that cause the trouble.

You can't keep Catarrh—nor can you hang to a cold, or have any chest

Her heart was beating fast, but she managed to conceal her agitation, and actually looked out to sea, as if something had attracted her attention, and she had, for the moment, forgotten him; then she turned her gaze upon him, and enquired, with the calmness of the girl who addresses a man who is about the same age as herself, and therefore of course, only a boy in her sight:

"Will you please tell me why you were going to shoot me?"

Rath did not reply. Though this was the first woman he had seen, his man's instinct told him that it was safer not to reply to some of their questions.

"Oh, I suppose because you were afraid of me. How very strange that a big man—man like you should be afraid of a girl; and I'm not a very big one, either. But I assure you there is no need for alarm. I shall not hurt you."

A civilized being would have flushed with shame under this sweetly uttered taunt; but Rath heard it unmoved.

"I am not afraid," he said in a matter-of-fact way.

"Oh! then it is because you don't like me—my sex—and want to get rid of me," she said. "I'm very sorry to have intruded; but you'll do me the justice to admit that I'm not here by my own choice; and I assure you that I—well, my mother and I—would be as pleased to get away as you would be to get rid of us. Can you help us to escape?"

Rath shook his head.

"Not yet," he said, quietly. "It is far from the town where men and women live. I do not know the way by land—you would be lost; and there is only the boat and my canoe, which would not live in the sea outside the bay. The Indians do not come again for eight months."

"A ship might see us and take us away," she suggested, eagerly.

He shook his head again.

"No ships pass within sight of this part of the island."

Stella sighed, and slid slowly to the ground.

"So we must stay prisoners until when—for months? Oh, it is dreadful! dreadful for us and you, but worse for us. I think, perhaps, after all, you had better shoot us."

He looked down at her thoughtfully.

"I suppose that you would kill us quickly; we should not have much pain," she remarked.

He frowned.

"I am not going to kill you. I will do you no harm—if you will keep out of my way."

She looked up at him with innocent—or mock innocent—widely opened eyes.

"Thank you—thank you very much. I am grateful. I have also to thank you for your kindness in putting the milk and things outside the door last night."

"You must eat," said Rath.

"Yes," she admitted, repressing a smile; "but I don't like being beholden to a person who hates me so much that he wants to shoot me every time he sees me."

"Why did you deceive me?" he said, rather sternly. "You pretended to be a boy."

"I didn't," she retorted, indignantly; then she blushed furiously. "Oh! you mean because I was dressed like one. It was not my fault. I was asleep when the ship was sinking, and I took the first clothes the man flung to us. I didn't suppose you would take me for a boy, that it was necessary to inform you that I wasn't."

He did not reply, and she sat for a moment in silence; then he said:

"Is there anything you want? Now you are here, and must stay here—"

"You don't want us to starve," she finished. "It is very good of you. Is there anything I want?" She sighed.

"Oh, plenty of things! I want my trunk that went down with the ship"—she glanced ruefully at her one mother, and a piano, and a brush and comb and back-hair glass—Oh, what is the use of telling you what I want?"

"There is a brush and comb in the small cupboard—" he began; but she interrupted him.

"But what I want most is to get away from this place."

As he had already informed her that he could not help her in this, he did not deem any further assurance necessary, but sat regarding her for a moment in silence, then he said:

"What is your name?—what are you called?"

"My name is Stella—Stella Mordaunt," she replied. "Do you like it?" she demanded, dryly.

"I don't know," he said, gravely.

"Well, it can't be helped, if you don't."

Do you suffer from Indigestion

Indigestion is largely due to a debilitated condition of the stomach. In this condition the stomach is unable to digest food—this is, extract the nutrient from it. Therefore, the food lays in the stomach and ferments, causing pains, fullness and heartburn. You almost dread mealtimes because of these terrible indigestion pains afterwards.

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Yesterday you refused to tell me why you disliked women and feared them. Won't you tell me now?"

"They are dangerous things," he said. "I promised my father—"

He stopped, and she regarded him with keen interest and curiosity.

"I never heard such—nonsense!" she said, in girlish fashion. "It is very evident that you have not met many—"

"You are the first I have seen," he said, calmly.

"It was so amazing that she had to reflect over it; then she said:

"Won't you sit down, and put that ugly gun aside?"

"It isn't ugly; it is a very good Winchester," he remarked; but he laid it on the grass and sat down, but not too near her.

"Is it loaded still?" she asked; and as he replied in the affirmative, she took it up gingerly, but raised it to her shoulder and pointed it at him.

"Now, why shouldn't I kill you?" she demanded, her eyes dancing with a girlish grin and triumph. "Why shouldn't I kill you, and take the island? It is yours, you say. It would be only fair."

He did not move a muscle, but looked her straight in the eyes.

"Yes, it would be only fair," he said, with perfect calm.

She lowered the rifle and held it out to him with a feminine little shudder.

"Put the thing behind you, where I can't see it," she said.

He obeyed her, with a touch of colour in his face; for, despite his calm, he had, in his ignorance of woman's pleading little ways, fully expected her to fire.

"Now, if I owe my life to you, you owe yours to me, and we are quits. But it isn't very pleasant to be threatened, is it?"

He did not reply, and she sat for a moment in silence; then he said:

"Is there anything you want? Now you are here, and must stay here—"

"You don't want us to starve," she finished. "It is very good of you. Is there anything I want?" She sighed.

"Oh, plenty of things! I want my trunk that went down with the ship"—she glanced ruefully at her one mother, and a piano, and a brush and comb and back-hair glass—Oh, what is the use of telling you what I want?"

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"My name is Stella—Stella Mordaunt," she replied. "Do you like it?" she demanded, dryly.

"I don't know," he said, gravely.

"Well, it can't be helped, if you don't."

"How did you come here?" he asked, presently, and reluctantly, as if he were fighting against his curiosity.

"In a boat," she retorted, then, as if relenting, she went on: "That's a long story."

"Where did you come from—an island, like this, or a town?" he enquired.

"From an island—England; and from a town—London. I suppose you have heard of it?"

He nodded.

"Yes; I know there is such a place. I have heard my father speak of it."

She stared at him. That a man who spoke as he did, like a gentleman, should know no more than this was little short of incredible.

"Where is your father?" he asked.

"My father is dead, I think."

She added the last words pensively, doubtfully.

It was Rath's turn to look surprised.

"Don't you know?" he asked.

She shook her head.

"I can just remember him; a tall man, with a pale, stern face—like yours when you stood down there just now with the gun raised. We were living then in the country; I can only just remember that, too. It was at a big house, with great rooms and a big garden. I can remember the terraces where I used to play; there were two huge stone lions with snarling faces—they used to frighten me when I was a very small child—that crouched at the side of the stone steps. And there was an old gardener who used to pick flowers for me; he was very kind. Then we left the big house, mother and I, and went to live in a street in London. It was a quiet street, out of the crowd and noise, but it seemed dreadfully narrow and poor and miserable after the big house with the large gardens and green fields."

"Why did you go?" Rath asked.

"I don't know," she said, calmly; "but I have witnessed the fury of the waves too often to be smitten with the awe which one unaccustomed to the sea would have felt at this reflection. "So that your friends will not search for you? They will think you are lost."

"We have no friends," said the girl. "It will not matter to anyone if we are dead or alive—except to you, who, of course, must wish that we were dead."

"No," he said, judicially; "I do not wish that, though I am sorry you came here."

"The girl bit her lip.

"It is a pity I am not a boy," she said, ironically.

"It is," he assented, with something like a sigh. "I should like you, if you were not—yes, there is something about you I like; you have a pleasant face—different to the Indians; and your voice—Are all women's faces and voices like yours?"

The girl stared at him.

"Oh, no," she said, simply. "They are much better, prettier, and sweeter."

"Are they?" he said, reflectively.

"I wonder why they are so wicked, so dangerous?"

Stella shook her head.

"They are not all," she said.

There was silence for a moment, then she turned to him, as if suddenly smitten with an idea.

(To be continued.)

MRS. THOMSON TELLS WOMEN

How She Was Helped During Change of Life by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

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Change of Life is one of the most critical periods of a woman's existence. Women everywhere should remember that there is no other remedy known to carry women so successfully through this trying period as Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

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Unconsciously, he drew a little nearer to her, and stretched himself at full length, leaning his head on his hand, his dark, earnest eyes fixed on her face.

"I don't know," replied the girl. She was almost speaking to herself, or as one might speak who was talking to someone who would not fully understand, so that it did not matter very much if she were too confidential.

After the loneliness, the mere act of talking was grateful and pleasant.

"My mother cried when we left the big house, and, of course, I cried, too; and my mother was ill and unhappy—always unhappy."

"Why did you leave the town, the big city, and come to sea?" he asked, presently.

"My mother got worse, and the doctor said she would die if she remained in England. It is nearly always cold and wet and damp there, and in London—the big city—there are fogs that stifle you."

"Then why does any one live there?" he exclaimed, wonderingly; "why not come to an island like this?"

She looked at him, as if any attempt at explanation would be hopeless.

"So we had to come abroad. I was glad to leave London, but sorry to leave England. Ah! you don't understand!" Her voice fell. "But my mother did not care; she was, she is, too ill to care for anything. Oh! I have forgotten her! Is it far from the hut?"

She sprang to her feet.

"No; it is just round the bend. You can almost see it; you can hear if any one calls."

She hesitated a moment, then sank down again, and Carl snuggled up beside her and stretched his paws on her dress, and rested his head on them, and gazed from one to the other, no doubt rather relieved to find that the shooting was over for the present. Stella stroked his rough head as she went on:

"Then the vessel sprang a leak—is that right? I think it struck a rock

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on one occasion had a bet with his comrades that he could hit a tin mug from which a Boer in a distant encampment was drinking. The soldier won his wager, for from a range of 600 yards he knocked the tin from the Boer's hand. Later on the incident had an astonishing sequel. The shock of the bullet hitting the Boer's tin caused a crust to slip down his throat, which actually suffocated him.

"What became of the rest of the people on the big ship?" Rath asked.

Stella shook her head sadly.

"I don't know. There were not many boats; it was not a regular passenger ship. I heard one of the men say that nothing could live in such a storm, and I suppose it was only by a miracle that we escaped. Perhaps we were the only two."

"It is very likely," he assented, calmly; he had witnessed the fury of the waves too often to be smitten with the awe which one unaccustomed to the sea would have felt at this reflection. "So that your friends will not search for you? They will think you are lost."

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