Stella Mordaunt;

—OR,—

The Cruise of the "Kingfisher."

CHAPTER XVII.

As he went he gave a shrill call with which the Indians are familiar; but no answer came, and after some hours of tramping, he was on the point of returning, when he heard the baying of wolves. The weird sound came fitfully through the snow-laden air, and he paused and leant on his gun and listened. The skin of the Vancouver wolf is valuable, and though he was not very keen about it—there was nothing about which he was keen now—he turned and went back towards the sound.

As he approached, the baying was broken by the snarling which indicated that the pack was quarrelling over some prey, and moving more cautiously through the undergrowth, he came in sight of them. They were gathered round some object, fighting and snarling over it; and Rath, creeping nearer on his hands and knees with the gun ready, saw with amazement that it was a horse. He knelt on one knee, and raising his rifle, was about to mark the largest of the wolves, when he saw some of the pack leave the horse, and, with the peculiar, skulking move of the animal, make for another spot, as if they were going to attack some other object.

Rath lowered his gun without firing, and crept nearer, and, with a thrill of amazement and excitement, saw a man crouching behind a fallen tree, over which he was pointing a rifle. The wolves were seeking for him, crowding and pushing on one another, and snarling like curs, their reeking jaws apart, their long fangs glittering whitely. As they were close upon his natural barricade, the man fired, and the nearest wolf dropped; the others fell back for a moment, then recovering from their fright, sprang upon the fallen tree. Rath saw the man rise painfully to his feet, clutch his rifle, and swing it round; but in another instant he would have been overwhelmed and dragged down by the number of his assailants; but Rath's rifle was at his shoulder in a twinkling: he brought down the wolf that was nearest the man's throat, and, with a cry, sprang forward and rushed into their midst, striking at them with the butt-end of his gun.

They scattered like sheep, and joined by their fellows worrying the dead horse, slunk off through the wood like spectres. The man they had been attacking sank on to the fallen tree, and with trembling hand wiped the sweat from his face. He was white with exhaustion, his arm was bleeding through a rent in his sleeve torn by the fangs of one of the wolves; but he nodded to Rath with the smile which a brave man always finds possible even at his last moment.

"You turned up just in time, sir," he said, trying to speak calmly, but panting in spite of his effort. "Another moment, and those devils would have made a supper of me. It was a near thing."

Rath leant on his gun, and, with his wonted gravity and calmness, regarded in silence the man he had rescued.

"Are you hurt?" he asked at last.

The man rose, a little shakily, and shrugged his shoulders.

"No; I don't think so. One of the beasts touched my arm; but it's a mere scratch. I'm afraid they've done for my horse, though!" and he looked towards the dead animal and sighed. He was young and tall, and something in his face and voice prepossessed Rath in his favour.

"Better the horse than you," he said, in his unconsciously philosophical fashion.

The stranger smiled, though rather sadly.

"That's true enough," he responded, "though the horse was a good one, and I'm grieved to lose him. But it might have been worse, as you say. You have saved my life, sir."

"I'm glad," responded Rath in his curt way. "How did you come here? Where are you going?"

The stranger straightened himself, as a man does when so interrogated.

"I am from Victoria," he said; "as to where I was going—well, I'm not certain. The fact is, I lost my way—if I had a way; about which I am not sure. The fast is, I left Victoria in search of—well, adventure; and, by George! I've found it!" He laughed rather ruefully as he regarded his dead horse. "Are you a trapper?"

"Yes," replied Rath after a pause.

"You live near here?"

"Yes. You had better come with me," he added after a moment; for, incredible as it may seem, he was not overjoyed at the presence of this stranger. You see, the island was sacred to him and the memory of Stella, and he did not welcome the threatened intrusion.

"I shall be very glad," said the young fellow. "Is it far—your house, I mean—for I'll admit that I'm pretty nearly done. I haven't tasted food since yesterday, and this bout with those beasts has played the Harry with me."

"It is not far," said Rath, gravely. "I am sorry that I have nothing for you to eat; but there will be plenty for you presently."

"That's all right," said the stranger as they stepped out side by side, but slowly; for he was evidently near dead beat. "The sight of a fire and a square meal will be very grateful."

"Let me carry your gun," said Rath, and he took it from him.

"Is there a settlement near?" asked the stranger.

"A settlement? No," replied Rath.

"No? Then where are we going?" asked his companion, with reasonable surprise.

"To my hut," answered Rath, quietly.

"Oh—ah, yes, to your people," said the other.

"I have no people," said Rath. "I am alone—live alone."

The young man regarded him with amazement.

"Alone! In this waste?"

"Yes; quite alone," said Rath.

"Good Lord! It's like a second Robinson Crusoe," murmured the stranger.

Rath made no response to this comment, and they walked on in silence until they reached the hut.

"Go in," said Rath, with natural courtesy. "I will get some supper ready. I have a goat killed, and will cook some of it."

The stranger leant against the end of the logs which supported the verandah.

"Thanks, very much," he said. "I wish I could express my gratitude. But I'm too astonished to express anything. Do you mean to say that you live—here—alone?"

"Yes," replied Rath, quietly. "Why not?"

"Oh, Lord! I don't know. But—but—how on earth do you manage it? Alone, quite alone?"

"Quite alone," replied Rath, as he turned the joint of goat on the gridiron.

The stranger stared, but said no more. Rath served up the meat, cooked to a nicety; and as the young man ate it, he said:

"We really ought to introduce ourselves. May I ask your name?"

"My name is Rath Rayne," said Rath.

"And mine is Edward Bryan," said the stranger.

CHAPTER XVIII.

While they ate their supper the two young men, of course, regarded each other with interest and curiosity; masked on Edward's side by the courtesy of culture; open and candid, yet gravely dignified, on Rath's.

Rath liked the look of the man he had saved from the wolves—liked his frank and pleasant face, his ready smile, and the open and direct expression of his blue eyes. And Edward was singularly prepossessed in favor of this strange being, this modern Robinson Crusoe, who though attired in the garb of a lumberman and trapper, had the bearing, the manner, and, above all, the voice of a gentleman.

That he should be living alone in this wild and, so to speak, unexplored place, seemed too romantic to be true. Edward had read of such cases, but had always relegated them to the region of fiction. He looked round the hut with frank and inoffensive curiosity.

"You have very comfortable diggings, Rayne," he said at last. "And—pardon me—there is a settled, substantial look about them, as if you had been here for some time."

"As long as I can remember," said Rath. "Why do you call me Rayne? My name is Rath."

Edward tried not to stare.

"Rath; certainly," he said at once. "And mine is Edward, you'll remember. And you have been here since—how long? But not alone, surely? Of course that's impossible."

"No; my father lived with me. He died some months ago."

"And there has been no one else—only you two?" said Bryan. "Forgive me; but I can't help feeling curious. You'll admit that your situation is an extraordinary one."

"Is it?" said Rath. Then, after a pause, he said, reluctantly: "There was some one else—two persons; but one is dead, and the other"—his voice grew low and hoarse—"has gone."

As he spoke he was glad he had put away the precious relics which Stella had left behind. They were hidden in a box beneath her bed, as if too sacred for even his own everyday gaze.

"And left you here alone! That was rather heartless, wasn't it? But perhaps you preferred to remain," added Edward, as Rath's face flushed, and he frowned heavily; for, all unwittingly, he had laid his hand upon Rath's still aching wound.

Rath nodded.

"Let me give you some more meat," he said, evading the question with the coolness and readiness of a man of the world, as Bryan noticed.

"Thank you. I was half famished. One more question, and my impertinent curiosity shall dry up. Are you too fond of your solitary state to accept a companion, or will you permit me to stay with you for a time? Of course, I don't propose a partnership," he went on, quickly. "I have not the capital to enable me to do so; but I will be glad to work for my bed and board, as we say in old England."

Rath was silent for a moment, as he considered the proposal, then he said, gravely:

"You shall stay if you wish."

"Thanks," rejoined Edward, with frank satisfaction. "I'm very glad. May I smoke?" He took out his pipe and pouch, and handed the latter to Rath, who declined it; then, as he leant back and puffed with intense enjoyment at his blackened briar, Edward went on: "I ought to tell you something about myself. I'm the second son of Sir Gilbert Bryan; we live at a place called Shorn Court, near Ratton—but I don't suppose you ever heard of it."

"No," said Rath.

He was sitting with his head resting in his hand, his eyes fixed with grave attention on the speaker.

(To be Continued.)

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JACK JOHNSON.

Alas, poor Jack Johnson, badly whipped, and of his wreaths and honors striped! When he appeared in yonder ring, he was that ring's unconquered king; and when he left it, sick and sore, he was a has-been, nothing more, and all the country felt relief when Brother Johnsing came to grief. No words encouraging he heard; no breasts with sympathy were stirred, but all were glad to see him slump before Jess Willard's cultured thump, and e'en the men of his own race exulted in his loss of place. 'Twas not because his skin was brown that men rejoiced when he came down. But Johnson, since he gained his fame seemed destitute of sense of shame, and laughed with foul, unholy glee, at all the claims of decency. An outcast from his native land, and by most other countries banned, he'll skulk, since from the height he's hurled, along the edges of the world, a blot on every decent scene, a leper with the sign, "Unclean." A man all morals can't defy, and with that sort of thing get by; and when he falls, as fall he must, rejoicing follows long disgust.

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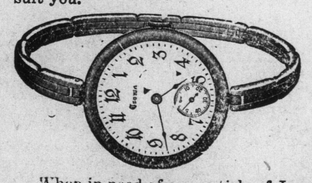

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MINARD'S LINIMENT CURES GARGET IN COWS.

PHOTOGRAP

'PHONE 76

Private Holland "Played the Ga

PHIL JENSEN BELIEVES HEROIC CHUM WAS KILL

Carbonear, May 12th,

Editor Evening Telegram.

Dear Sir,—I have received communications from my brother in London, and when he wrote it was to sympathize with us. I have nothing since I wired him a we in reference to the message r by the Rev. C. Jeffery. By th Canadian papers it appears the 2,300 men missing, and as o is not officially reported kil may be that he is among the ing." This seems strange an fleting from the subjoined let brother received from Private Jensen. I am making a copy so that Jack's friends may kno

2nd Southern General Hospit
New Southmead Infir
Bristol, April 28th

To G. Hollands, Esq.,
East Sheen, London:

Dear Sir,—On my way to th pital, I had a postal written death of your nephew, and a greatest friend Hollands. I have six shrapnel bullet wou my back; my arms are near less, but I am trying to wri this letter. You will, I know, my writing. Dear old Jack have been chums for years, we like brothers; my mother thou much of him almost as myse have been together throughout campaign, slept side by side, m same, fought same. A night or fore the battle in which he di were lying side by side—he s me, "Phil, take this address uncle in London, so as to com cate with his people. I feel am not coming out of this fig laughed at him and said, don such stuff. While the fight progress, he was a hero all th helping the wounded and doing in every way. He was struck shell on the 23rd, and died ins Thank God, he did not suffer He died as a Britisher likes "Playing the Game." May Go fort his parents to bear this blow, but ones loved should be of their dear ones dying such a Will write you later.

Respectfully yours,
(Sgd.) P. J. JEN

Yours sincerely,
C. W. HOLLA

Banking Skipper Broke His

AND SPLINTED IT HIMSE

Characteristic of the pluck of foundland fishermen, the subjoi cident speaks for itself.

Capt. J. W. Daley, aged 35 yea belonging to Salmonier, St. Bay, was engaged codfishing schooner on George's Bank. On day morning last a heavy sea too heavy to allow the dories to their trawls. Suddenly the which was holding the strain large anchor, snapped off, one it striking Capt. Daley and thr him violently against the side vessel. He then fell on the deck he lay for a few moments befor ing assisted to the cabin, as he unable to go alone, his left leg broken at the thigh. Capt. Daley mediately realized the nature injuries, having heard the bone Though suffering great pain he the injured member into impro splints himself. The vessel brought into Bay of Islands Capt. Daley was landed and joine first incoming express train, rea the city last night. On arrival he put into the ambulance and con to the General Hospital for treatm

Local Fishery.

Ice Wrought Havoc to Gear

A number of boats were at entrance to the harbour again y day. Mr. F. Wilcox of the Ba was high-liner with sixty fish. the fishermen visited the ground ly yesterday morning they obs some small fish or 'tom cods' de the surface, supposed killed b acid from the submerged D This season ice conditions, were unprecedented, is a great and impediment to the fishery previously mentioned in the gram, considerable damage was to traps that were left in the all winter.

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