

"We may hear of the owner of this at the Roman House," Jimmy remarked, as he slipped the locket on the key-ring of a steel chain at his belt.

An hour later we came in sight of a spire, indicating to our trained intelligence the whereabouts of the Roman House bar, on the farther side of a hill at the head of a bay. We had been rather quiet over our paddles and pipes as we dipped our way inland from the lake; and when the silence was broken by a shout, and its echoes spoke from bank to bank, we experienced a shock.

"HELP!"

The voice was masculine, beyond a doubt; and "murder" was the thought that flashed through our minds, as we sat up, open-mouthed. We took a few strokes, staring uncertainly about; for there was not a human being in sight, and the cry was as great a surprise as if we had heard a report that we had both been promoted into the First Division. But scarcely had the echoes of that shout died away, when the word came again, and this time from a throat unquestionably feminine.

"Hel-l-l-l-pp!"

It sounded bad, at first.

Just for a moment we sat perplexed, with pursed lips and knit brows; then, like a hound that has found the trail, Jimmy dashed straight on. And I went with him. Inside of three lengths it was a race; but heroism, pure and unadulterated, didn't animate me. I simply wanted to beat Jimmy out. We had paddled at half a dozen meets that summer, and were 'in the pink'. The water curled and bubbled at our bows, and we left a wake that would have made an old-time Mississippi side-wheeler bury her nose in a bar out of sheer chagrin. Once our boats came together, and Jimmy said a bad word, and glared at me with the affection of a senior member of a Kentucky feud, while we shortened paddles and pushed viciously apart, as if a referee had said 'break.' But that was in the first round. Jimmy woke up then, and I got in his wake.

There came a sudden bend in the shore, and the Roman wharf and boat-house and other panoramic effects loomed large to my vision as I laboured busily on. Jimmy was now bearing heroically down upon a capsize skiff, to which were clinging a man and a girl. Jimmy's cedar blades were flashing with the rhythm and radiance of a white seabird's wings, the spray flew from their tips, vanishing gems in the sunshine, and I had to envy him his phenomenal speed. It was a grand practice spurt for the big championship Trophy Cup race at the International Meet, and Jimmy had said he was going to capture that cup or drain defeat out of it to the dregs.

To add to the variety of the movement of the scene, a man who had put out in a skiff from the boat-house was rowing toward the capsized boat as though going after a

record or chased by the sheriff; and for the moment, out of my petty envy, I harboured the hope that the man might beat Jimmy out. But for James he was only a pace-maker and spur all in one. Those lithe, bronzed arms of Jimmy's were propellers of steel.

The polished hull of his craft gleamed in the light of the morning sun as the hero dashed alongside the inverted skiff, and came to a short turn and sharp stop by a bit of work that would have done credit to Bruce Ridpath. The man in the skiff was lengths away, and before he or I could negotiate the mark Jimmy had drawn the girl into his canoe and was paddling smartly to shore. It was very sharp work, even for James; but a minute or two later I understood how inspired and stimulated his mind and muscle had been.

The man from the boathouse and I administered to the needs of the chap in the water, and towed him ashore. He was a long-armed fellow, and his nerve as he clung to the skiff took the gratifying vocal form of cheek of an unmistakably British sort. He admonished us, with an accent, to "hurry and be devilish quick about it." But when he struck up the bank, and I saw that his legs were in proportion to his other extremities, I wondered why he hadn't just taken a long breath and walked ashore; for he was taller than Jim. The latter, meantime, looked as though he felt himself in the King's suite of the Seventh Heaven House, and all the little cherubim bell-boys flying up with wine. He hadn't turned a hair over it all; but it was just elementary inference to settle how he felt about it.

The girl, as she squeezed the water out of her skirts, was chatting and laughing and making seventeen sorts of glad eyes at Jim. She didn't seem to have an arrow left in her quiver for her late partner in peril. But he stood stubbornly by, frowning fiercely at James from beneath a wealth of matted Saxon locks; and in his clinging wet flannels he managed to look about as haughty as a bent pin on a railway track. I saw that envy held the reins with a high and iron hand in the vehicle of his emotions, for he glared at Jimmy with such a bad eye that I didn't fancy the look of the other danger-lamp any too well either; and he alternated these ocular flashes of hate by staring at the laughing girl in a fashion that was cut out of the whole cloth of a directly opposite feeling; while she and Jimmy paid about as much attention to him as if he had been one of the wooden posts down at the Roman wharf.

I hitched Jimmy's craft to mine, the boat-house man being busy righting and draining the capsized skiff; and while we were thus supering Jimmy and his prize capered over the intervening meadow toward the village, the hero making her for a six-minute clip so she wouldn't take a chill, with the