

The King of Arcadia

edy, which last was the fault—or the misfortune—of poor Billy's temperament, it appears; though he was a sober enough fellow when he was here learning his trade. Let me prophesy awhile: I shall live and I shall finish building the Arcadian dam. Now let us side-track Lassley and his cryptogram and go back to what I was trying to impress on your mind when he butted in; which is that you are not to forget your promise to come out and loaf with me in August. You shall have all the luxuries a construction camp affords, and you can geologise to your heart's content in virgin soil."

"That sounds whettingly enticing," said the potential guest. "And, besides, I am immensely interested in dams; and in wire cables that give way at inopportune moments. If I were you, Breckenridge, I should make it a point to lay that broken guy cable aside. It might make interesting matter for an article in the *Engineer*; say, 'On the Effect of the Atmosphere in High Altitudes upon Galvanised Wire.'"

Ballard paid the tributary laugh. "I believe you'd have your joke if you were dying. However, I'll keep the broken cable for you, and the pool where Braithwaite was drowned, and Sanderson's inamorata—only I suppose Macpherson obliterated her at the earliest possible. . . . Say, by