

that'll be worth more to the company than the day's work. All right, sport, you can go to work—until Pete and his crowd scare you out, which I predict won't be long. And while you're here, if you get itchy for trouble don't look for it among the men, come to *me*."

"Well, I'll—" gasped Munford. "Why, I could twist you like—" Then he laughed in pure delight at Burton's spunk "Oh, sure! *Sure*, I will."

It took Munford no longer than a day to get the hang of the work. He was already more than a demigod in the eyes of Bridge Gang No. 3, and that counted for much. They were eager and ready to show him what they knew themselves, whereas the ignorance and rawness of any other newcomer would have been turned to good account in the shape of gibes and jests at his expense. In two days, from a natural adaptability coupled with his great strength, that was the strength of two men, Munford had fitted into place with the same nicety that one part of a well designed machine fits into another.

To the crews of the construction trains bringing up the bridge material he was pointed out with pride by his mates—though, indeed, that action was superfluous—as "the boy who did the trick at Pete's." And from these in turn Munford learned that down at Big Cloud, Pete and others of his ilk had sworn that, sooner or later, they would fix him for it. At this he only laughed and, doubling his great arm bared to the shoulders, intimated that there could be no greater pleasure in life for him than to have them try it. And