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A Child of Sorrow.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Notwithstanding the darkness, and trusting to his horse, which, under such circumstances would be certain to follow another horse, he got upon Smythe's track. Maida's mare was young and fresh, and Robert knew that it would gain upon the fugitive. Within a few hours he would overtake the parson, bring him back, and compel him to perform the ceremony. He rode on with, if not a light heart, one buoyed up by hope and confidence; and presently the hope and confidence shot up into a flame of certainty as he heard the sound of another horse just before him. He spurred the mare and rode more quickly, and presently he was startled by finding that the sound came from his left and came towards him. He pulled up and waited, and through the gloom a horseman rode up almost upon him. The man pulled up. Robert's revolver was pointed at him. "You cur, you scoundrel!" he cried. The voice of the other horseman cleaved the darkness. "Is that you, Mr. Robert?" he cried. "Come back to Milda Wolda at once, for God's sake! We are attacked by a gang of bush-rangers. There's a mob of them. They'll burn the house down—I got away to fetch you. Come at once, or it will be too late!" Robert sat upon his panting horse like a figure of stone. He could scarcely believe his ears. It seemed as if Providence were playing a game

with him, a game at which he must inevitably lose. "What did you say?" he demanded, hoarsely. The man—one of Milda Wolda's oldest hands—wiped the sweat from his brow. "It's what I say, Mr. Robert," he responded. "A gang of bush-rangers and scallywags came down upon us this afternoon. They're all round the house. They threaten to burn us out—I got away and rode after you—I thought you might be at the hut. They're five to one—we can do nothing. The poor mistress!" Robert broseley drew a long breath. He felt himself pulled as by cartropes in different directions. On one side was the woman he loved with a passion that absorbed his whole being, on the other was the safety of Milda Wolda, of his mother. Like most strong men, he felt that his presence might turn the scale; that his property might be saved, if he were there to protect it. After all, Maida had Carrie; there were provisions in the hut; the two girls might wait. He could go to Milda Wolda and protect it, and return, when the danger was over, the attack defeated, to Maida and Carrie. They were safe; they were locked in; they could wait. "Get on!" he cried to the man. "How many, do you say?" "A pretty large gang of them, Mr. Robert. They come most of 'em, from the Dartford lumber camp. I heard some of 'em boasting that they robbed the Dartford station and set it on fire before they come on to us; and that when they'd served us the same, they meant going on with the game elsewhere." Robert swore terribly through his

clenched teeth; but even as he rode forward at a hand-gallop, he glanced back towards the hut wistfully. CHAPTER XXXV. They took the unconscious Lucy out of Heroncourt's arms and carried her to the shed which Dartford and his men had saved from destruction by cutting away the burning part of the house. Here, too, they carried the wounded and attended to them as well as was possible under the circumstances. Heroncourt insisted upon helping both in clearing away the burning ruin and in carrying the wounded under shelter; but at last, when the heaviest part of the work was done, he found himself sitting—lying, rather—at the foot of a tree; and presently he fell into a dead sleep, the sleep of utter exhaustion. When he awoke, the brilliant sun was shining over the scene which the devilry of men had for a few hours ago turned into a pandemonium. Baxter had placed a folded rug under his head and had covered him with another, and he rose feeling refreshed and almost as fit as usual; there is no recuperation like fresh air, and it is because they sleep in the open that soldiers in the most arduous campaigns are able to perform the feats of strength and exhibit the powers of endurance which seem incredible and impossible, and would indeed be impossible under other circumstances. David Jones and Baxter, who had been keeping an eye upon him, now approached with some breakfast. "We have all had ours, sir," Baxter said, answering Heroncourt's questioning look as he took the welcome

tin of steaming tea; "but we thought we wouldn't wake you." Baxter had a handkerchief tied round his head, but, like an old soldier, was quite calm and cheerful; and David Jones was as impassive as usual, as if nothing particular had happened to upset him. Dartford came striding towards the group. "How are you getting on, old man?" he enquired, cheerily; like Mark Tapley, and the general run of thoroughbred Englishmen, Dartford always came up smiling from under difficulties. "I'm all right," said Heroncourt. "The women?" Dartford nodded cheerfully. "They're all right," he said. "The little girl has come to, and though she's a bit knocked out of time, she'll pull round all right. She must be a rare plucky 'un, if all they tell me about her is true."

"They couldn't tell you too much," said Heroncourt, his cheek flushing under its tan, his eyes glowing as he thought of the girl's heroism. "She fought like a man, was as unselfish as a woman: she saved my life." He turned away to fold up the rug. "So I hear," said Dartford, gravely. "And your life's the most important thing here, old man," he added as Heroncourt looked towards the mouldering ruin and sighed. "The shanty has gone; but we'll soon run up another. And as to the money—ah, well, it's no use crying over spilt milk. Besides, you've been doing big things while you've been running the show. Oh, I've heard all about you from Brown, the dealer, and his son; they talked of nothing else all the way we were coming along. They declared you were the best boss this side of Melbourne, and that you had made the Dartford station the finest in the district. By George! it was a lucky night for me when I dropped you on the club and found you so down on your luck as to take my offer. Never you mind the money, old man."

"The money's all right," said Heroncourt. He went to the spot where it was buried and struck the spot with his heel. "It lies here. You haven't to thank me for that; it was the little man, David Jones, who managed it." He described the clever trick by which David Jones had secured the safety of the money. Dartford strode across to the little man and shook him by the hand. "You're a trump," he said. "It's one of the cleverest things I ever heard of, and, by George! we'll share the money amongst you, eh, Heroncourt? You deserve it and more."

A strange smile curved the little man's lips for a moment, and he opened them as if he were going to refuse; but he seemed to change his mind, and, touching his cap, muttered his thanks. As Heroncourt and Dartford walked towards the house, talking of the fight and of their future plans for the rebuilding of the house, Dartford said: "I suppose these scoundrels will clear for the bush; you taught them a terrible lesson last night: we've just been burying the dead—a regular pile. What's the matter?" for Heroncourt had stopped short, as if struck by a sudden and grave apprehension. "I was thinking of the other stations," he said. "Once started, men of that kind are likely to go on, like the tiger that has once tasted blood. There is a station not very far from here called Milda Wolda, and, from what Brown said, I fancy it was not much better protected than our own; but, fortunately, it occurred to me to send them a word of warning so that it will be prepared if the ruffians should pay them a visit."

"That's all right," said Dartford. "Are you going in to have a word with the girl? You'd better, perhaps; she was raving about you, and asked after you directly she came to. She won't believe that you aren't hurt or killed. Pretty little girl," he glanced at Heroncourt; but Heroncourt's face gave no indication of self-consciousness. "Tells me that her father's a farmer; seems to have come of respectable people and all that. Yes, she seems very anxious about you; you'd better go perhaps and say a word or two to her." (To be Continued.)

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WAR TAX

By JOHN ANDERSON. When the Chancellor of the Exchequer brings before the House of Commons any bill brought about by increased upon Banks, Trade, or Commerce consults with the leading London, Business Men in the experts in Finance. It is gratifying to know Finance Bill last month House of Commons containing providing for the increase of tutory percentage for arriving pre-war standard of profits where there has not been one trade year. In submitting, get resolutions, the Chancellor intimated that a provision would be made in regard interest on new capital employed stated that the increase in of public companies would cent—from 6 to 9 per cent the case of private firms 4 from 7 per cent to 11 per cent. It was hoped the Government the Hon. Minister of Finance accept an amendment to the allowing 6 per cent on all employed in Business, this concession asked for, if in or Limited Liability Companies Britain are allowed Interest tal 9 p.c., Private Companies In Canada 7 p.c. Interest on allowed to Incorporated. The ordinary business trade the Canadian Act is allowed. The members of the Commission of the accounting periods mentioned, by adding the c. of the capital will be companies and private trade. When we consider that a corporated bodies are scattered over the country doing business the Act respecting companies 63 Vic., Cap. 10, and are in this Colony. Shareholders composed of all classes, rich many depending upon dividends. Let us take for example nesses, which may be established companies with a tal, having a number of ers some undoubtedly in but other shares being of families of men who these enterprises and who passed away, their widows are dependent on the of such companies for hood; or such business in by private individuals; ment in each case is equal. Had he so wished he invested his capital (or a in channels other than instead of which, in the greater number of our they have consistently profits they made to add tal, develop and extend and whilst it is conceded so done with the hope still further gain, it remembered that all in development of local a distinct benefit to the. Assume Firm 'A' to be one hundred thousand have needed and secured their bankers during the average, of say two hundred dollars, and to have made of ten thousand dollars ment would appear: Capital, \$100,000. In Taxable 20 p.c. on \$ 400.00, leaving a dividend of \$38,000.00, 8 2/3 p.c. Firm 'B' has a capital of a hundred thousand dollars entirely on their own business at a similar statement would appear: BULL BY CA Yes Is W Get Not C the "Green for