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"Love in the Wilds"
—OR—
The Romance of a South African Trading Station.

CHAPTER XXXIV.
THE ATTACK.

Laurence crawled on his hands and knees to where the lad, utterly ignorant of his frightful danger, stood, in the very range of the shots, and pulled him to the ground.

"Keep below the window, Cecil," he shouted in his ear. "Don't you see that they are firing in?"

The lad nodded and clung to his breast.

Laurence looked troubled. He saw in his present state of terror the boy was in the most imminent peril.

"Cecil," he whispered hurriedly, and keeping his eyes fixed upon the window, "you must be brave. Look at me! There, come, lad, have no fear while I am here to protect you. Come, pluck up some courage, for my sake!"

The youth clinched his teeth and moved his lips into "I will."

Laurence pressed his small hand encouragingly.

"That's right," he said; "now I can put you to some use. Lay along there, crouch down as low as you can, and hand me a loaded gun whenever I need one."

Cecil nodded eagerly, and seeming inspired with courage by the prospect of helping him, did as he was told, loading quickly and watching eagerly for the moment when Laurence should want a fresh gun.

Laurence, now feeling more easy on the lad's account, felt his heart leap again, and stealing up to the window, jumped up with the rapidity of a jack-in-the-box, fired at the man who was climbing the wood-work and fell to the floor again as the crack of a rifle rang out and the bullet intended for him flew over his head and buried itself in the ceiling.

The yell of rage that rose told him that he had either killed or wounded the climber, and he smiled grimly and cast about for some other means of taking aim, for he knew that he could not venture his last feat a second time.

While he was thinking of some plan and keeping the barrel of his gun pointed at the window, a shout from Mr. Stewart apprised him of some

fresh movement of the gang upon the stairs.

"They have got some of the blacks there. Some new dodge is on hand." The next moment the peculiar yell of the natives rang out and, to his horror, Mr. Stewart saw that the ruffians intended using them as shields, and were forcing them up the stairs, keeping behind the shelter of the blacks.

When he had told this to Laurence, Laurence's blood rose to fever heat, and heedless of his danger sprang to his feet.

"Quick—quick!" shouted Mr. Stewart.

And Laurence leaped to his side.

"I have it," he said; "take aim between that poor lad's legs. The cowardly brutes are crouching rather low down and we shall lame them. Do not move."

Laurence saw at once what he meant and, waiting until the first shrieking native was pushed forward, aimed low between his feet.

Mr. Stewart did the same and uttered a shout of triumph as the two ruffians, with yells of pain, rolled back again, clutching the negroes as they fell.

"Now—now!" shouted Mr. Stewart, as from his peep-hole he saw them rush up, and once more they poured forth a deadly shower of bullets.

But the attackers pressed on, yelling and swearing vengeance.

Mr. Stewart danced with excitement and rage.

"Give me some more guns!"

And Cecil, who was now all ablaze with courage and spirit, brought him a rifle and revolver.

"At 'em again!" shouted the settler.

And again Laurence's accurate aim levelled one, while Mr. Stewart's volley scattered the others.

Their numbers were now thinning, but as they decreased in quantity they rose in passion, and three of the remaining twelve gained the barricade with the ferocity of madmen.

Laurence saw imminent danger if the barricade gave way, and he shouted to Mr. Stewart to direct a continu-

ous fire at the spot where they were standing, and on his part waited until they should happen to step back into his range.

At that critical moment, when both men were fully engaged in watching and guarding the barricade, Cecil, happening to turn, saw a head above the window ledge.

With a cry of alarm he lifted the gun he had in his hand and, taking the best aim he could, fired.

Laurence, turning at the report, uttered a shout of encouragement and delight, although the shot had taken no effect; and, inspired by his approval, Cecil sprang forward and, swinging the still smoking gun, brought it down upon the intruding head with a force that knocked the yelling ruffian from his grasp and caused him to fall headlong to the ground.

"Bravo!" shouted Mr. Stewart.

Laurence said nothing, but Cecil flushed at his nod of approval and cried:

"Laurry, I'll stop here and guard this window."

At this juncture a shout from the stairs gave notice to the two men that something was occurring.

Mr. Stewart, bending down and peering through the peephole, saw that the men had hit upon a new idea.

"Laurry," he cried, "this means mischief. The bounds are getting cunning. They have taken one of the doors off its hinges and are coming up behind it. Look here!"

Laurence nodded and saw that such was the case.

"What's to be done?" he asked.

"They will reach the barricade in five minutes; already—"

Before he could finish Mr. Stewart dragged him to the floor just in time to save him from a passing bullet, which Tim, who had been hammering at the barricade, had fired through the first hole.

"Now comes the rub," said Mr. Stewart, ominously. "It is all up with this."

And he nodded to the friendly wood-work which had guarded them so long.

Laurence set his lips tightly and stepped back into the room.

"Come back, sir," he said; "we'll fight to the last, Cecil!"

Cecil sprang to his side.

"Keep behind me. When I rush forward cling to my belt behind and come, too—you understand?"

Cecil nodded.

"Yes, Laurry," he said, breathlessly; "I will keep by you until they kill me."

"They shan't do that while I'm alive, lad," said Laurence, with a tender flash in his eyes. "Mind; cling tightly!"

Almost before the words had left his lips the crash of the axes upon the frame-work rendered further speech impossible, and in another minute or two the whole barricade fell in with a tremendous noise.

"Now!" said Laurence.

And amid the horrible din he rushed forward, firing straight before him and on each side until all the barrels were emptied, then waving his rifle round his head, cleared the passage and sprang down the stairs.

Thrown off their guard by this sudden and stubborn attack, the runners gave way for a moment, and with Cecil still behind him, Laurence leaped down the stairs with the rapidity of lightning.

One man sprang before him as he reached the bottom, but he went down, levelled before the swift rush as an ox goes down before the dash of a lion, and Laurence gained the back door.

By that time, however, the pursuit had commenced.

Through the atmosphere of smoke Laurence saw one man leap over the balustrade and make toward him, and, whispering to Cecil to draw the bolts of the door, he stepped in front of him with a gun upraised ready to receive the pursuer.

The light of a torch smouldering on the ground revealed the features of Tim, the cause of all this blood-shedding and havoc, and Laurence's eyes, as he confronted the diabolical, blood-stained countenance of the ruffian, shot fire.

"Keep off!" he shouted, as Tim, who seemed to have no weapon, was advancing. "Keep off!"

Tim uttered a yell of defiance.

"Ah, ah, Mr. Laurry; I've an account to settle with you and the young 'un first!" and he made a spring toward them.

At that moment Cecil unfastened the door.

Laurence shouted:

"Go and get the horses!"

And as Cecil, with an answering cry, sprang forward, Laurence dealt Tim a fearful blow on the side of the head and, not waiting to see the result, leaped through the doorway after Cecil.

CHAPTER XXXV.
A VILLAIN'S DOWNFALL.

So part we sadly in this troublous world
To meet with joy in sweet Jerusalem.
—SHAKESPEARE.

The black and the chestnut were brancing about the large room, terrified and excited by the unwonted uproar.

Shouting to Cecil to unbolt the outer door, Laurence called the black to him, and, snatching at the bridle of the chestnut, led them with all possible rapidity into the court.

"Quick!" he cried, as Cecil stood panting beside him and the rearing, plunging animals. "Spring on the chestnut, lad, and clear the fence."

And as he spoke he sprang upon the back of the black, holding the chestnut as still as he could for Cecil to mount.

The youth made a vain effort to reach the saddle and, with a cry of vexation, attempted a second time. But before he could do more than tug at the bridle and prepare for the spring the door behind him swung open, and with an awful yell Tim, followed by Sam and another runner, staggered out.

Cecil uttered a low cry of despair, but Laurence drowned it in a shout of defiance, and suddenly sweeping down upon the terrified lad caught him and, with a mighty effort, placed him on the saddle in front of himself. Then, with a shout of encouragement to the gallant horse, put him at the fence.

He cleared it at a bound and, shaking his black mane as if in scorn of all pursuit, dashed over the prairie like an eagle.

Sam uttered a yell of disappointment, and a bullet whizzed past the fugitives.

Laurence ground his teeth, and drawing a pistol from his saddle turned and took as deliberate aim as possible.

"One last shot, Cecil lad," he said, as the youth shuddered and hid his face in his hands; "one last bullet, and may Heaven direct it where 'tis due—to the heart of the black miscreant who has shed all this blood! Ah!" he cried, with a mighty shout of joy; "he has it! Look, lad—look Cecil!"

Cecil took his hands from before his face and saw the staggering form of Tim lying writhing upon the ground, and knew by the yells and execrations of his companions that Laurence had dealt out the fit punishment of death.

(To be Continued.)

Fashion Plates.



Pattern 314 was employed in this instance. It is cut in 4 sizes: 2, 4, 6, 8 years, and will require 2 3/4 yards of 27 inch material for a 4 year size. As here shown, natural shantung was selected with embroidery in red, and bright red buttons for trimming. Gingham, lawn, percale, voile, china silk, challie, repp, poplin and velveteen would be good for this design.

A pattern of this illustration mailed to any address on receipt of 15c. in silver or stamps.

A DAINTY DRESS FOR MOTHER'S GIRL.



2808—Batiste, voile, charmeuse, satin, taffeta, velvet, serge or gabardine could be used for this model. The tucks on the skirt may be omitted. The dress may be finished without the bolero and with long or short sleeve. This style lends itself nicely to combinations of material.

The Pattern is cut in 4 sizes: 6, 8, 10 and 12 years. Size 8 requires 3 1/2 yards of 27 inch material for the dress and 1/2 yard for the bolero.

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