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The Agent's Daughter ♥OR ÷ SCIENCE ÷ AGAINST ÷ SAVAGE ÷ FORCE

CHAPTER I.

KANSAS KIT KNABBED BY KIOWAS.

An Indian stronghold on the far borders of the Territory and Texas, in a piece of timber, bounded by the Red river and one of its tributaries on two sides, and by wooded mountains on its third. Rude huts and wigwams are scattered among the trees, and a large circular space, marked by the ashes of the fire of council or of torture, is in the centre. The squaws and children hurry from the huts with welcoming cries, for two large bands of Kiowas and Camanches are entering the camp in a hasty and confused manner. One band comes from Texas, rich with the plunder of rancho and hacienda; the other from the reservations, laden with the spoils of the settlements, and red with the blood of the squatters and half-civilized Indians. KANSAS KIT KNABBED BY KIOWAS. ers and half-civilized Indians.

Every conceivable sort of plunder was there. Clothing torn from the bodies of murdered women and children, stained with their blood, articles of merchandise from the gutted stores of the frontier traders, horses and cattle from the plundered farms of Texas, and the arms and clothes of the desperatemen who had vainly tried to defend their homes and dear ones.

The squaws, assisted by the boys and dogs, were striving with great uproar to get the frightened cattle and horses into a corral formed for them by a circle of ropes tied from tree to tree. Others were lighting fires and setting up pot-holes, and soon all along the banks of the stream and river the camp fires were crackling and blazing, and the steam and smoke were curling up in fifty places.

That pretty virl with the sad robes and sad-That pretty girl with the sad robes and sadder face, sits bound and trembling in the midst of all this hubbub. She is intended for the bride of the chief.

Soon the slaughter of cows and oxen began on a large scale, and in a very short time the ground in every direction was thickly strewn with horns, hides, and entrails. Every one, man, woman, and child, seized whatever they could, and bore the yet throbbing flesh away in chunks to the fires, to wrangle over who should have the privilege of dressing theirs first.

In spite of all this turbulence, however, it was apparent to the young prisoner that this was a regular camping-ground, or gathering place, and that they were making great preparations for either a feast or a sacrifice—or both. And a strange feeling of partly pain and partly that hope which companionship in misery gives, came over her as she saw other parties of savages dragging more prisoners, both Indians and white, into the camp.

This detachment had lately encountered the Texans or soldiers, and as each dead warrior was borne into sight the women and children raised the mourning cry. "Wah-homo-min!" repeating it in wild, varying cadences, and, stooping to the ground, caught up the leaves and dirt and threw them into the air, and the warriors waved their lances with In spite of all this turbulence, however, it

the leaves and dirt and threw them into the air, and the warriors waved their lances with the bloody scalps affixed, and answered the lamentations with shouts of joy and triumph. But suddenly the lamentations of the women and children were changed into cries of execration and anger when a mounted warrior, known to be an important chief by his plumes and ornaments, rode rapidly in, followed by a band of breech-clothed, bare-bodied heroes, mounted on swift steeds. The cause of the angry cries was the appearance of another prisoner, who rode, bound to his horse, between the two foremost warriors of the band. He was a small, wiry-looking man, with

He was a small, wiry-looking man, with handsome, sunburnt features and eagle-like eyes, that looked unflinchingly around upon his captors and seemed to smile at the weapons brandished about his head. his captors and seemed to smile at the weapone brandished about his head.

"Kit! Kit!" was echoed in a sort of
and "Kansas Kit!" was echoed in a sort of
descondant supresses by the other heads. But no one was
the dispatched the prisoner with that, but Black
Bear stepped in to protect him as a matter of
property, and was assisted in pacifying the
Wolf by the captains and seniors, who used
the amagine argument that it around be close that the lips that uttered them seemed

It was a sound of wonder that he should be It was a sound of wonder that he should be taken, for he was not only the most daring but the most slippery of the daring seouts of the frontier, the leader of most of the successful expeditions, and the terror of the marauding Indians. Even while the savages gave vent to their joy at his capture, they looked upon him with fear and respect. Not so the widows of the slain. According to the mourning custom of the tribes they had already haggled the hair from their heads with knives, and then, with the wildest screams, they rushed upon the prisoners, slashing them with the knives, and beating them with the severed tresses. The first act was dangerous, the last

tresses. The first act was dangerous, the last

ridiculous.

The other women and children had already provided themselves with the bludgeons and rods used in the torture of the ganutlet, but the mourners were too much exasperated to wait upon ceremony and the other prisoners were too insignificant for their vengeance.

With yells, that would have terrified any but the stoutest heart, they rushed upon the pinioned scout with flashing knives and flaming eyes, but the warriors became alarmed leat their prisoner should receive too sudden lest their prisoner should receive too sudden and easy a release from life, and cried aloud

and easy a release from life, and cried aloud in guttural tones:

"No kill!"

But they did not hinder the shorn-headed squaws from cutting the cords that bound him to the horse and dragging him to the ground. This preliminary torture was a part of the privileges of their grief.

"One at a time, ladies! Be modest! Be reasonable!" he cried, as they seized upon his pinioned arms. "I ain't Brigham Young."

Young."

As they pulled him from the saddle he wriggled his lithe body from their grasp and gained his feet, and good advantage he made

of that gain.

"Stand off, you crowd of petticoated bruisers," he cried, planting his toe beneath the chin of one of the knife-flourishing squaws with a force that nearly dislocated her dusky neck. The stomach of the next received the impress of his heel, then a quick shove of either shoulder sent a couple more sprawling, and he burst away, and, pinioned as he was, ran like a deer in the direction in which they had brought him.

had brought him.

The warriors had stood laughing at the

The warriors had stood laughing at the sprawling of the overturned squaws. But now as they saw him going like a shadow, in their own dodging manner, through the trees, they became afraid of his escape, and seizing their weapons hurried with whoops and yells in hot pursuit.

The hearts of the prisoners palpitated wildly, for their own hopes of safety were bound up in the success of his desperate attempt. They, as well as the scout himself, knew that the Indians would only fire on him as a last gesort—the bullet would be too easy a death for so important a foe.

But, hark! that sharp, irregular sound of rifles and bow strings, then wild cheers from the pursuers and more distant ones answering, and they knew that the brave scout was either killed or recaptured.

They were not left long in doubt, for the pursuers soon reappeared, trailing him along, feet forward, covered with sand and blood, and threw him into the ashy circle in the middle of the encampment. He was not dead, for he strove to rise, and immediately the bereaved squaws sprang upon him with wild howls, when such a wild, frightful scream echoed from the air above their heads as split every ear and made the blood run sold in every vein.

It was not one scream, but a succession, a continuation of screams and shrieks combined of every horrible tone of which sound is capable. It ddilnot come from one spot, but circled about over the heads of the hearers, sometimes seeming in a dozen places at bnce.

their foreheads to the earth, crying as with one voice:
"Wakon-Loutin! The Wind Spirit! The Spirit of the Wind!"

Spirit of the Wind!"

The women captives cried out with terror, and the men looked up to see from whence came the sound—even Kansas Kit, aroused from the half-stupor caused by the abuse he had suffered, raised his head to see the cause. Nothing was visible but the blue sky through the tree tops, and the green foliage made half-golden by the yellow light of the sun. The poor stricken Quaker girl had nea. ly fainted with affright, and dropped her head with dry lips and face of deathly whiteness against the tree to which she was bound, when she heard a voice, low and assuring, say: and the men looked up to see from whence came the sound—even Kansas Kit, aroused from the half-stupor caused by the abuse he had suffered, raised his head to see the cause.

Nothing was visible but the blue sky through the tree tops, and the green foliage made half-golden by the yellow light of the sun. The poor stricken Quaker girl had neally fainted with affright, and dropped her head with dry lips and face of deathly whiteness against the tree to which she was bound, when she heard a voice, low and assuring, say:

"Fear not! They will not harm you. The Spirit of the Wind is your protection!"

With a wild thrill of astonishment and

The words of the Apache had given him hope, but it was dissipated by the expression of Lone Wolf's face, and as hope grew less the reckless spirit of resistance, grew great proportionately.

"Wa-al, old top," he said, looking up with an expression of humour that it must be confessed belied the feelings of his heart. "How are you, and how are all the wolves at home? When were you at the station? Did you get your bullets, and blankets, and rum and sugar? You grumbled, you know, last time I saw you there, because you didn't get as much as you deserved for murderin' the settlers at Skinner's Bend."

"Silence, dog!" exclaimed the angry chief.

"Don't wonder a bit at you bein' angry,"

that, even with his single hand, he might assail these fiends. It was in vain he wished, and tried to wrench his wrists free from the cords that bound him.

At last the drums and fifes and chichicoses cased their horrid din, and the headling became less. The council had opened. He could faintly hear the voices of the speakers, but was not able to distinguish words. At last two savages came into the hut with a wooden bowl, containing a black, greasy substance, and small bunches of wool. With last woo deserved for murderin' the settlers at Skinner's Bend."

"Silence, dog!" exclaimed the angry chief.

"Don't wonder a bit at you bein' angry,"

"Slence, dog!" exclaimed the angry chief.

"Don't wonder a bit at you bein' angry," answered Kit. "It's enough to make a mule mad to be cheated out of his honest arnings. If they'd even given you two or three yards o' rope, now, with a slip-knot and the loan of a tree."

With a cry of rage Lone Wolf struck his moccasined foot on the breast of the speaker, and dashed him back to the ground, at the same time drawing his knife to scalp him. But Kit's dander was raised also, and quickly drawing his feet to his chin he dashed his two heels into the pit of Wolf's stomach, sending him tumbling through the dirt for a considerable distance.

In an instant the savage was on his feet, and in a fury of passion hurled his hatchet at the offender, but his very fury rendered his aim unsteady, and the ax whizzing past Kit's head was buried with quivering handle in the tree behind him. Seeing his blundering aim,

speak.

"Dog of a white man!" cried Lone Wolf, striking the helpless savage with his foot; "you will be white no more. The children of the Kiowa have darkened your face so that your paleness may not make their hearts like the hearts of squaws."

The prisoner writhed and grinned and groaned to the great delight of the savages.

"Now, white man, listen to the words of Lone Wolf," said the chief, with his foot still on the breast of the dark form, "I call you Om-lish-caw, the Snake, for you have crept in among our people as a friend, and got our squaws and boys to teach you our words, that you might find out the talk of our conneils. You told lies about us, and sent the Quick Rider and his black horsemen to kill our people. Our brothers, the Chief's Santanta and Big Teee, are kept in the strong prison in Texas, because you said they did murder. Om-lish-caw, you shall lie no more. My young

preserve could remiss in the belay. The corrust has been when the belay in the beauty of the beauty

He pulled her back upon the sward, still holding her mouth. She was too much surprised and terrified to struggle. The captive girl was as much frightened as she.

"Don't be afraid, Miss Brandon, it's I, Kirt."

"Don't be afraid, Miss Brandon, it's I, whispering in his ear. The Indians guessed it, too, and the name "Waken Loudin" researched man was rolling his eyes wildly from side to side, and trying his eyes wildly from side to sid

devil to come and receive the soul of the sacrifice.

The boys stood with their arrows notched, the widows threws their blankets out of the way of their arms, and the fire torturers waved their splints to and fro to make them burn more fiercely.

The Great Medicine and his chorus danced around the victim with wild gestures of the arms and horrible contortions of the body, now throwing themselves flat, now jumping in the air, all the time singing at the extreme stretch of their lungs.

"Matcho Manito!" they sang, "listen to the prayer of the red man. The red man fears Matcho Manito and trembles when he hears his voice in the thunder, and turns from the lightning flash of his eyes. The red man wants Matcho Manito to be his friend. Look at this splendid present the red man give

Act the entrance of the camp.

"You must be very brave and very strong now, Miss Brandon," he said, "I am going to try a bold plan—it is our only chance. We must cut directly through the crowd of redskins, and to try to get to the canoes in the stream above."

CHAPTER IV.

AT THE STAKE—MYSTERY AND MUMMERY—THE BLACK DANCE—INVOKING SATAN—A DEVIL TOO MANY—A SERIOUS FIX.

She tried to speak, but tegror made her voiceless.

The stream above the camp as the sir, all the time singing at the extreme stretch of their lungs.

"Matcho Manito!" they sang, "listen to the prayer of the red man. The red man fears Matcho Manito and trembles when he hears his voice in the thunder, and turns from the lightning flash of his eyes. The red man wants Matcho Manito to be his friend. Look at this splendid present the red man give him. He was a great brave among his people. He has killed his enemies by scores. He has no fear, He would scold his enemies now and spit upon them, but they have stopped his month with a bone, for his tongue is as sharp as a scalping knife, and they did not want him to stab the ears of Matcho Manito. Come!"

"I HAVE COME!" exclaimed a deep, rolling.

Matcho Manito. Come!"

"I HAVE COME!" exclaimed a deep, rolling, speculchral voice, in the very centre of the prostrate circle of medicine men.

It seemed to proceed from the very spot where the prisoner's stake stood, and the actonished performers looked up, and seeing nobody to the voice sprang to their feet in undisguised alarm. The prisoner was alarmed too, and trembled with terror from head to foot. He expected that moment to feel the Satanic claws in his flesh.

Satanic claws in his flesh.

Some of the Indians turned and fled. But Lone Wolf was one of those persons who must see to believe. He had no respect for anything invisible. He laughed aloud at the consternation of the jugglers, but suddenly a wild mockery of his own laugh came rushing down from the air above his head until it roared in the very porches of his ears. His opinion of the invisible powers rose, so did



ose that the lips that u to touch her ear.

Almost at the same instant Kansas Kit was startled by a voice at his ear:
"Keep up, brave heart! The wind shall

"Keep up, brave heart! The wind shall bring you rescue!"

He stared around in wonder, but not a soul was near him but the widowed squaws with their cropped heads abjectly buried in the ashes. Whence came those words of hope? Was it from one hidden in the foliage above, or in the wooded mountain side at whose base the encampment was? The nearness of the voice hindered such a thought.

Then there must be some white friend, some of his daring fellow-craftsmen disguised among the Indians about him. He scanned every dusky form and face within range of his vision, but saw no sign. He was lost in wonder. These thoughts took but seconds. Words are slow to express the action of the mind.

Again the frightful scream—more terrible Again the frightful scream—more terrible than before—more borrifying than their own war-whoops—caused the savages to grovel closer to the earth among the ashes, and then a wild, thundering voice, changing as the cry did from place to place, was heard in the air:

"Beware, redskins, beware! Comanches! Kiowas! Apaches! see that ye harm not the friends of the Spirit of the Wind lest the tornadces sweep away your dwelling-places."

Kiowas! Apaches! see that ye harm not the friends of the Spirit of the Wind lest the tornadoes sweep away your dwelling-places and your camp-fires be quenched by the blood of your people! Beware!"

The last word was so prolonged and seemed to die so gradually away that it sounded exactly like the fall of the wind, though there was not a breeze to rustle a leaf. The prisoners were lost in astonishment, and there is no knowing how long the effects of the scare would have remained on the savages but for the sounds of buffalo horns, followed by the clatter of horses' hoofs approaching through the woods, and before they had time to start from their recumbent positions a tall, powerful chief on a spirited horse dashed into the camp, and through himself from his seat.

This was Lone Wolf, the head chief of the combined tribes. He was dressed in a vest of crimson cloth, with a breast-plate of hairpipe, and a long, flowing mantle of blue, and his big, dusky head was befeathered and bedecked with brass and glass in the most approved style.

"How!" he cried, looking around on the prostrate people. "Why are the warriors grovelling like nigs when their white-faced.

prostrate people. "Why are the warriors grovelling like pigs when their white-faced prisoners sit straight?"

"The Spirit of the Wind! Wakon-Loutin!" cried the chief, who had arrived before him, and the words were echoed by several of the warriors.

warriors.
"What!" cried the facetious Wolf, addressing the other chief. "Is the Black Bear so much afraid of the whisper of the wind that he must lie down in the dirt like the hogs?"
Black Bear looked as savage and glum as his namesake when he answered:

his namesake when he answered:

"Black Bear is afraid of the sound of the wind no more than Lone Wolf. He is an Apache. He has heard the voice of thunder in the mountains and his heart never trembled. But the Wind Spirit has frightened the hearts of all the warriors—the Comanche and Kiowa as well as the Apache. The Wind Spirit is the friend of the prisoners of Black Bear—this white brave—who has often made the heart of Lone Wolf feel httle and chased the Kiowas over the plains. Black Bear will not hurt the friend of the Wind Spirit."

PLANTING HIS TOE BENEATH THE CHIN OF ONE-A SHOVE SENT A COUPLE

the amiable argument that it would be sheer foolishness to murder the prisoner right off, when they could have so much fun with him at the feast about to take place.

only prayed to Heaven that he would venture the third. The savage rubbed his head in doubt; the temptation was very great, but his fear of consequences was equally

the samiable arguments that it would be electroficial them to murder the reinconer right of when they could have so much the with mat the feast atom to take place.

"Ugh! Good! good!" exclaimed the Wolf, appropringly. "We will try how brave he is. The squaws will cut little to the off his Best and the boys shoot at his heart. Let them he beaten. Ugh the word, and the stood trembing before him, ready to wink with terror.

all but the Quaker girl, whom the Wolf of the word, and she stood trembing before him, ready to wink with terror.

All the terror was the man, and the red man gord and the stood trembing before him, ready to wink with terror.

All the words and the women prisoners are were dragged awart and combined in the huist between the word, and she stood trembing before him, ready to wink with terror.

All the words and the women prisoners are were companied to the word, and the stood trembing before him, ready to wink with terror.

All the words are word man, and the red man gord the word and word in the word of the word and word in the word of the wo

Not to kill him. No, he could do that by the mere continued compression of his hand, for already the eyeballs of the savage are staring from their sockets, and his tongue was lolling from his mouth. The scout has other designs than killing him.

With a rapid action he inserts the knife blade between the thicknesses of the deer thong that hold the gag, and the bone drops to the floor. In a moment he has inserted it into the mouth of the savage, who had laughed so heartily at seeing it in his, and binds it fast. The cord that bound his wrists binds those of his captive, and freeing his own feet he transfers the thongs to the anklea of the other. This is all done as quick as he could skin a rabbit.

He buttoned up the coveted coat on the new captive, and jumped into the despised homespun himself, for the ambitious Apache had left him nothing but his shirt. Then donning the plumed skin cap of the savage, and appropriating his arms and accouterments, he made a very passable looking savage himself. For, thanks to the two Kiowa artists, his face and hands were as black or blacker than his prisoner's, and his habit of wearing his hear long stood him in good stead now.

Just in time was this double transformation.

of all the warriors—the Comanche and Kiowa as well as the Anache. The Wind Spirit is the friend of the prisoners of Black Bearties white brave—who has often made the heart of Lone Wolf, rephretely acquainted with all the dialects.

They were not left long in doubt, for the pursuers soon reappeared, trailing him along, feet forward, covered with sand and blood, and threw him into the sahy circle in the middle of the encampment. He was not lone Wolf feel httle and heard the Kiowas over the plains. Black Bear will not hurt the friend of the Wind Spirit.

CHAPTER II.

LONE WOLF AND KANSAS KIT—CONDEMNED TO TORTURE—A CHANGE OF COSTUME—THE TABLES TURNED.

A black frown settled on the brow of Lone Wolf, and a wolf-like growl arose to his lips at these taunting words, but as the Apache. It dishort come from one spot, but orcled about over the heads of the hear-er, sometimes seeming in a dozen places at rene.

The Indians dropped their victim, and with wries of terror threw themselves flat, pressing

for the Quaker maiden. The stomach of Lone. Wolf is sore with the kick of your heels. He will be revenged. He will make you sore from the heel to the head. The squaws will shoot at you, and the arrows in your flesh shall be more numerous than the thorns of the prickly pear. Your mouth will be kept close that you may not call upon the Wind Spirit, your friend. Beat him, braves! make his bones sore, that I may see him kick."

Thereupon the braves commenced to thrash the captive most unmercitully, and it was pitiful to see the writhing of the victim, and his endeavours to escape the blows and make himself known to the torturers. Kit got up and shook himself, Indian fashion, with a grunt. He could not stand this—it was too much. He felt like taking his tomahawk, and splitting Lone Wölf to the brisket where he stood. But his own safety was the mann thing. He said to Lone Wolf, in Indian, with the deepest guttural he could command:

"White prisoner belong to Lone Wolf. The Apache go."

"Ugh!" said the chief, never turning his

The search of th DANCEROUS GROUND—"NEVER HALLO TILL
YOU'RS OUT OF THE WOODS"—FOILED, NOT
TRIGHTEND.

Kanaaa Kit lowered his head lest the low
door top should strip him of the tall plumed
Apache headdress, which fitted him none of
the best, and stepped out into the open air.

But Kanaaa Kit did not wait long to take
notes of the surroundings. If the bonds of
the but and stepped out into the open air.

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the hut. He wound his way daringly
through the crowds of ladam, shough he expreted at overy moment to hear the slarun
announcing that his trick had been discovere
d. It was a boild venture. A common man
would have feel at once while three was inno,
and looked after his own safety only. But
Kanasa Kit was not made of each stuff. He
the choice of a chief, but now she had been
tradied for him, and belonging to the wild
Apache, Black Bear, and there was no known
ing when he might take it into his head