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A Living Prisoner;

Or, Friends in Name, Enemies at Heart.

CHAPTER XXVII.—(Contd.)

As Harry stood, and gazed in astonishment at the marvelous transformation which had taken place since he and Annie had wished each other good-bye on the evening before, he was suddenly roused by a cry from Jens of "Zeal, seal." He glanced in the direction indicated, and, sure enough, saw the troubled waters below the "fos" part for a moment, whilst out came the round, dark, shiny head of one of those destructive fishermen, who, doubtless, had swum in with the tide, in order to enjoy a little quiet fishing on his own account. Evidently he regarded the "fos" pool as a sort of private pleasure-ground, wherein he could dispose himself amongst the sulky salmon to his heart's content and take his lordly fill.

Unfortunately for him, Harry did not view matters exactly in the same light. As the seal bobbed up and down, fishing as well as any old angler, and quite as bent on slaughter, Jens declared that it would never do for them to stand tamely by, and see one of their best pools poached in this effective and barefaced fashion.

"Very bad ting," he explained to Harry, "frighten all de ator lax away. No do; we must kill him." And he showed his strong yellow teeth in quite a vindictive manner.

"But how can we kill him, Jens? It's not so easy. The brute is so infernally active."

"Don't know yet; but we will wait and see. Most likely 'e get tired by and by. So they selected a couple of flat stones—the ground was sopping wet—and sat down patiently, to watch the movements of the intruder, who had acted on the selfish principle of "first come, first served." Fully a quarter of an hour elapsed, and still the seal pursued his avocation with unabated vigor, but little by little he began to grow fatigued by swimming up and down, backwards and forwards, round and round in the strong current, which tore from one descent to another at racing pace, and made it a wonder how any living thing could contend against it. Now, on the left side of the pool—that on which Harry and Jens were seated—was a round black rock, worn perfectly smooth by the action of the water. It protruded about a couple of feet. All the other rocks were already covered, so rapidly had the river risen.

Presently the seal tried to clamber on to its slippery surface, which afforded the

only convenient resting-place within reach. Jens put his fingers to his lips as a warning signal, and the seal, who remained perfectly motionless, was taken by two pairs of sharp human eyes. All events he took no notice of their steady gaze. Once, twice, thrice, he fell back into the surging waves which ran up the sides of the boulder like hungry living things. The fourth time he succeeded on to the wet stone. It was just large enough to allow of his stretching out his legs, and rather fine, at full length, and he lay there looking the picture of content, blinking his eyes with an expression of good-humor as the rain-drops fell upon them and trickled down his cheeks.

"Oh, for a gun," This thought flashed simultaneously through the minds of both spectators, as they beheld what a tempting shot he presented. The sight, indeed, was more than Jens could withstand. He seized the gaff, crept noiselessly down the bank, sheltering himself behind a friendly bush and stone, then suddenly rushed into the water past his waist, and swung forward as far as he could, with one quick stroke of his long arm, made a feint as if he were about to seize the seal, but he was nearly carried off by the raging stream, and retired, and considerably disappointed, and considerably wetter than when he left it. He seemed almost like an amphibious animal, judging from the fearless way he splashed in on every occasion.

Fortunately his slow, tenacious mind, when once thoroughly roused, was not so easily deceived by trifles, and he now believed in a hut, perched high on the rocks on the opposite side of the river. This individual was a great hunter, and, having, according to report, actually in former days killed a "ryper" (ptarmigan), possessed a rusty old brass-bound wooden weapon which he dignified with the name of rifle.

Struck by this happy thought, Jens marched off, crossed the bridge higher up, and went in search of him. Dietrich Landmark was at home, and willingly lent the antiquated fire-arm, which he viewed with such pride and fond affection; but a slightly difficult access, he had to make ready, and was under the necessity of retiring to his back premises in order to forge a couple of cartridges. This took a considerable time, and Harry began to grow tired of waiting, and to wonder what Jens could be about. At length, however, he reappeared, shouldering the long rifle, in triumph, and followed by the venerable Dietrich, whose interest in all sporting matters was still keen. Meantime Jens, after the fright he had received, took a permanent leave of the rock, and recommenced fishing.

For the best part of an hour, he kept up a most exasperating game of hide and seek, now popping up quite close to his foes, as if they were on the most friendly terms; then diving, and in an incredibly short space of time appearing fifty yards and more away. There was no chance of getting a shot at him. He took provokingly good care of that.

At length, when the patience of the watchers was rapidly becoming exhausted, he once more approached the rock. It was an anxious moment. Their hopes and fears were about equally balanced. Would he or would he not rest on it again?

Yes, he tries to scramble up as before, falls, but his strength is somewhat exhausted, but finally succeeds. Now is the opportunity. Harry, not knowing the captives to Jens to fire. The latter creeps stealthily forward among the low juniper bushes that line the bank, making as little noise as possible, and proceeding with the caution of a Red Indian. Thank goodness, the seal lies motionless. He is evidently fatigued by his recent exertions, and suspects no danger.

A breathless pause ensues. Then—ping goes the bullet as it whistles through the air and wakes every echo within twenty miles, rumbling like thunder among the mountains.

"By Jove! he has missed him. No, he hasn't. Bravo, bravo!" cries Harry, starting to his feet in frantic excitement, as the poor seal tumbles sideways with a dull thud into the river, and there lies struggling. Jens drags him to the bank, and gives him his coup de grace. In another minute the water for yards around, is dyed red with his blood, as it oozes out from the deep gash across his throat, inflicted by Jens' sharp blade. The active creature, whose movements they have so long and so curiously watched, now lies dead at their feet, a soft and shapeless mass of sodden flesh. He has caught his last fish and will never more disturb the "fos" pool. The transition from perfect health to sudden death seemed awfully sudden. It was impossible not to feel sorry for the poor seal whose adventitious spirit had caused his undoing. Harry, whose heart was very tender, had many a compunction as he gazed at him, or rather her, for she proved to be an expectant mother; but Jens was jubilant, and declared that she was a good riddance, as she would have completely ruined the pool had she been allowed to make it her headquarters for any length of time. Dietrich was presented with the carcass in compensation for the use of his rifle, and he was delighted with his reward, although the skin would not fetch more than a krona or two. But money goes long way in Norway, and people visiting that country for the first time, are surprised to find how happy and well-off they can be, when their wants are few and their tastes simple. It teaches them that the English, as a race, are far too luxurious, and that love of eating, love of drinking, of pleasure and personal comfort, is rapidly producing deterioration of the entire nation.

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After this adventure was over, Harry fished on steadily until the day began to show signs of rain. The result was again disappointing, although, for once, the seal had a legitimate excuse, the state of the water quite accounting for their silliness. Two hours were wasted, and one small job-trout about a pound and three-quarters in weight, constituted the bag. Jens' hopes were extremely high. He foretold brilliant sport after the rain, and appeared so confident, that his expectations proved communicative. In fact, Harry was quite cheerful, anticipating the morrow's doings, and began to believe that even in Annie Thompson's absence, he might still prove bearable, and contain a few pleasurable elements.

Anyhow, the incident of the seal, combined with the fresh air, the cool rain, and the prospect of a quiet day, had a most refreshing effect on his mind, and he felt more like himself again.

As they trudged home, horribly wet but wholesomely hungry, they were treated to one of the fine atmospheric effects for which Norway is celebrated. Towards sunset ceased and the mist rolled away, leaving all the heavens dark and stormy, with great heaped-up masses of blackish clouds, except just in the west, where about a quarter of eight, the mountains stood out dark as night in silhouette, casting their subtle reflections on the water. The surface of the sea was smooth as glass and serene as a single ripple. But farther from the land, and where the light of day caught the quiet water, and with burning lights made it gleam like molten ore, un-conscious his movements were being watched by two pairs of sharp human eyes.

As they looked, the clouds kept moving on, and closed in around the tongue of flame that made their blackness more conspicuous. The sea, with the last ray of red, the earth seemed to have had an extinguisher put upon her, and the sun, which had been shining brightly, was now hidden behind a thick veil of grey shrouds.

Then Harry sighed and felt sentimental, and thought of Annie. Nevertheless he managed to eat a most excellent dinner, and although he looked the part of the very strongest tackle he possessed, in anticipation of the monster salmon that was to be his dinner, he did not get down in the estimation of all romantic people, he slept like a top, and Margrete, in the soft overhead, could hear his peepers open and shut at five o'clock when she arose as usual.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The following morning Harry was up betimes, and the first look out of the window enabled him to see that the day promised well and was likely to prove a propitious one. A heavy shower of rain had fallen during the night, but the weather, though dull and with a cloudy sky, was not so disagreeable as that from the south-west blew just strongly enough to make the birch leaves show their lustrous linings.

Shortly after breakfast, Jens appeared and reported that although the river was still very high, it would in all probability get to be low by the day next, and which case some capital sport might confidently be expected. He therefore proposed to start at once, and to get started, take their luncheon with them, and fish all the upper pools first, leaving the lower ones until the afternoon, when according to present appearances, the conditions ought to be extremely favorable.

To this proposition Harry readily assented. Consequently a little after ten o'clock they started in the "Stolkjærre." Jens was in the lead, and Harry followed in commencing proceedings. Jens examined the color of the water, then looked up at the high mountain side, and a large Pogram, quite an inch and a half in length.

"Very good fish for to-day," he said. "Water dark, but the light bright."

By eleven o'clock Harry was hard at work casting, with an energy and eagerness that was quite unusual. He had long felt a welcome tug, and had the intense gratification of looking upon the fish, which was a troutman's dream, namely, a bending rod and a whistling reel. But the fish, though active, was evidently not the ardently desired for "ator lax." He spun the line out merrily, and darted here and there in most vivacious fashion, but he did not hang heavy enough on the arm for a prize of great value.

"What is he, Jens?" asked Harry doubtfully.

"A rye, I think," responded that worthy, "but no quite sure. May-be Lax orret (sea-trout)."

Whatever he was, he dashed off again, making another spirited run for the pool, and Harry, who had not caught a decent sized fish for many days past, he treated the superior fish as if it were a most precious jewel, and he most vigorously, purposely prolonged the pleasure of playing him, although Jens, who was in the lead, in several times uttered an impatient, "Now, Jens, now!" But Harry was not to be hurried, and let the fish play about until he was somewhat tired, and then he cast the line to him that every minute increased the chance of losing the captive, or that if he should be lost, the matter in a serious light.

Meanwhile the fish, unable to struggle any more, turned on his side, and lay white and gliding on the top of the water, with his red gills working convulsively.

Harry had not had much practice in mooring tolerably good fish in to the bank, and he bungled a great deal, but Jens came to the rescue as usual. He was a splendid fellow, and an invaluable assistant, and never seemed to mind getting wet one bit. His clothes and boots he treated with supreme disdain. He would rush in almost up to his waist after a miserable one pound trout if he thought there was any likelihood of losing him, and he now darted into the stream over his head, and he lay quite straight and still on the bright, fresh grass, with barrels and butternuts lending their beauty to his death-bed.

He was a remarkably handsome fish, perfect in shape; small-headed, fat-bodied, and well-colored; and the seal was still in his proving how recent had been his arrival from the ocean. Jens was almost as pleased as Harry, prophesying a first-rate day's sport, and he strongly advised his employer to let the gillie for his own eating.

"Be very good," he assured him. "No 'ard, no dry. All de gentlemen, who comes 'ere dey like de gillie."

The pool having been disturbed they now went to another. Jens, who was still very high, and one of two were almost unfishable, nevertheless, they contrived to pick up a couple of small ones before luncheon, weighing respectively four and a half and six pounds. They should have had another and larger fish, but Harry lost him, owing it must be confessed to his clumsy handling. Angling is by no means an easy art as it appears to the uninitiated onlooker, who has no notion of the skill and dexterity required, and it cannot be learnt all at a sudden, even by the most promising pupil. Harry had made fair progress since his first arrival at Sandthel, but of course he had yet much to learn, and could not be expected to gain experience without making a few mistakes.

About two o'clock they sat them down under a birch tree, whose silvery bark had

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He was quite evidently from the country, and he was also quite evidently a Yankee, and from behind his bowed spectacles he peered inquisitively at the little old Jew who occupied the other half of the car seat with him. The little Jew looked at him deprecatingly. "Nice day," he began politely. "You're a Jew, ain't you?" queried the Yankee. "Yes, sir, I'm a clothing salesman," handing him a card. "But you're a Jew?" "Yes, yes, I'm a Jew," came the answer. "Well," continued the Yankee, "I'm a Yankee, and in the little village in Maine where I came from I'm proud to say there ain't a Jew." "Dot's why it's a village," replied the little Jew quietly.

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EARLY ENGLISH HOMES.

Mostly Wooden Huts With Fire in Middle of Floor.

English common people for centuries made their homes in wooden huts of one room. When a family increased in number, or wealth another hut was built to it, or rather a lean-to was added, and another and another, as needs required. Sometimes they followed a straight line, other times they were built out from the central hut at various angles. The roofs of these huts were thatched. In the centre was left an opening for the fumes and smoke of the fire to escape. The fire was always built in a hollow in the centre of the room.

Beds were straw, often a shake-down in a corner. Occasionally the straw was held in a frame like the ribs of a ship.

Houses built by Saxon knights were much more pretentious. They were big halls, like the Roman atrium, with a lofty roof thatched with slate or wood shingles. The floor was hard clay. In the middle was a great fire of dry wood. The thin, acrid smoke from the fire escaped through an opening in the roof directly above the hearth.

Around the fire were long benches on which hearthsmen and visitors sat when not fighting or at work and talked and drank the hours through. The tables were long boards on trestles. At night, like the less prosperous folks, the

Mrs. Lott—"Is there no way you can break yourself of that habit of talking in your sleep?" Mr. Lott, tremulously but hopefully—"Do you think it would help at all, my dear, if you'd let me talk more when I'm awake?"

SOME OLD-TIME REMEDIES.

Tiger's Flesh and New Born Pup-ples Among Medical Aids.

Some quaint medical remedies that were popular once were described by Dr. F. M. Sandwith, Gresham professor of physics, in a lecture at the city of London school recently.

Tiger's flesh and new-born puppies were among the old remedies. One book recommended a live spider to be rolled in butter and formed into a pill, and then swallowed as an antidote to jaundice.

A broth made from vipers was said to strengthen the eyesight. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries powdered mummies were prescribed, and so great was the demand that fraud led to more mummies being supplied than ever came out of Egypt.

One old book recommended the plant called "Solomon's seal" for the taking away in one night of the blackness of bruises "caused by falls or women's wilfulness in tumbling upon their hasty husbands' fists, or such like."

"Isn't a baby's hand the sweetest thing in the world?" she gurgled. "I don't know," rejoined the mere man. "They always feel so sticky that I never cared to taste one."

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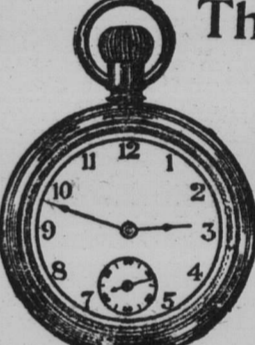
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