

Carleton

VOL. XXII

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NO. 47

EDDY'S SEARCH OR A BRAVE BOY'S BATTLE.

TINA'S RESCUE.
Tina still lay on the wet ground, her senses still in a deep unconsciousness, the heavy mist falling on and around like a thick, fleecy shroud, when suddenly a sound broke the stillness of the night—the sound of a swiftly approaching wagon wheels.

Tina was lying directly in the road, and the night was dark.

And on came a heavy wagon drawn by two horses, approaching from the north—the direction in which Tina had come.

The wagon was whistling a delightful strain to keep himself occupied, and looking sharply into the shadows bordering the road on either side.

Suddenly, as the horses trotted leisurely, approaching within three feet of the prostrate little fugitive, they stopped abruptly, rearing and snorting violently.

"What in thunder do you see now? The skittish brutes!" exclaimed the driver, peering ahead. "Go on, Dick. Get up, Dandy. Go land."

He enforced the command by a pull at the bit, and by a vigorous application of the whip. The horses took a step forward, then reared again, and plunged with a violence that threatened to affect their speedy release.

The wagoner brook the animals to a halt.

"There's a stick in the road, I think," he muttered. "May be it's another brook like that a few miles back, that scared the horses so. I'll just see."

Taking the lines firmly in his hands, he leaped to the ground, and walked around to the front of his horses.

"It's a log some food has put here," he muttered, touching Tina with his foot. "That's no log! It's a human being—a young girl, I guess, and she seems to be dead."

He stooped over the little figure, struck a match on his boot heel, and lit the flickering light fall through the mist on Tina's face.

"A girl, sure enough!" he muttered. "So pretty as a picture. She don't look dead; only in a faint like—Greasier's Creek must be cross the road somewhere hereabout—ah, I see now where I am! Greasier's Creek about half a mile beyond. I'll carry the girl on to the creek."

He gathered her up in his arms, and put her upon the wagon seat. Then he mounted to a seat beside her and drove on rapidly.

A few moments brought them to a shallow creek, which crossed the road. The wagoner traversed the ford, lifted his horses and again alighted, helping Tina to the ground. He bore her to the wet stones beside the brook, her little head hanging helplessly over his arm, and kneeling down in the wet, he dipped his hands into the water, and rubbed them gently over the child's face and hands.

"She don't seem to come to," he muttered uneasily. "Yet she isn't dead. I can feel a little pulse in her wrist. May be she needs a little rougher treatment."

Putting his hand in an inner pocket of his coat, he brought to light a small wicker flask of brandy. Unobscuring this, he gently forced open the small pale mouth, and dropped into it a swallow of brandy.

Tina's face showed a sudden contraction of the child's figure, a sudden gulch in the little throat, as the brandy found its way downward, and then Tina's eyes opened feebly. As she beheld a man bending over her, she uttered a shrill cry, and tried to break from his grasp, trembling in every limb, an expression of absolute terror upon her ghastly face.

"It's Mr. Barker!" she cried, in a wailing voice. "Oh, let me go! Let me die!"

"Tan! Mr. Barker! What!" said the wagoner, holding her fast. "You the runaway little girl that rancho is looking after about a mile back?"

"Yes, I am that little girl!" said Tina quivering in every limb. "Don't let him get me. They are so cruel to me! He will kill me for running away. Oh, please be my friend, sir," pleaded the pitiable little voice. "Please take me home with you."

"Isn't that Barker any relation to you?"

"No, sir," said Tina eagerly. "He brought me from San Francisco to do his house-work. I'm awfully afraid of him. I haven't got any father or mother. All my friends are dead. Won't you be my friend?"

The wagoner hesitated, although the child's words moved him to the soul.

"Are you bound out to him?" he asked.

"No, sir. He brought me out here against my will. He just carried me off."

"He's coming, shrieked Tina, clinging to the wagoner with both arms. "Oh, don't let him get me!"

The pursuing horseman came nearer, and nearer. He carried a lantern swung at his saddle bow, and by the light of the lantern the wagoner saw that the horseman was as he expected, Barker.

"Hallo, there!" cried the farmer, as he galloped up to the tail of the wagon. "Seen anything of the little gal I was asking you 'bout a half mile back?"

The wagoner looked over his shoulder, muttering an unintelligible response, and drove on.

Barker gave his horse a smart cut that sent him forward at a bound. In a moment the farmer was abreast of the wagoner, and keeping pace with him. Then he unslung his lantern, lifted it, and flashed its red rays over the wagon and the driver.

"We're quit of that ruffian," remarked the wagoner, scanning his horse and calving them with a stare of hostile command. "You needn't be afraid Tina. You're safe. Won't you come out?"

"Tina don't answer."

"Fainted again?" asked her defender in alarm.

The oilcloth raised a little at this, and Tina crept out with a movement so feeble and slow that it was plain that she had nearly swooned again in her terror. The wagoner stopped his horse, and lifted her over upon the seat beside him. Then he drove on from under the high seat a couple of dry horse blankets. This he wrapped about the shivering, uncomplaining child.

"I wish I had something to cover your head!" he said.

"I don't want," said Tina gratefully. "You're very good to me, and I thank you, sir. Papa and Eddy would thank you too, but they are dead. Did—did you kill Mr. Barker?"

"No, but I broke his arm, I think. Won't he be set, Pavey, and come after?"

"Let him. I've got more shots handy. They won't make anything by attacking Jack Spike."

His tone reassured Tina. She moved a little nearer to him, feeling safe for the first time during those weary weeks of her bondage, and dreading that wild night of flight.

"Are you going to take me to your house?" she inquired.

"Yes, to the house where I live. I'll take you to my own room. I think I'm overcast of a big ranch down in the San Joaquin Valley, and I live in the house with my employer. He is kind-hearted and tender always to the helpless and the innocent. Can't you go to a better man for protection?"

"Do you think he'll let me stay?" asked Tina tremulously. "And will you look after me? I'm willing to work hard."

"Amitie like you work hard? I guess you won't have to do any hard work. He won't have been a day there two years. And as to letting you stay, why Judge Burns would not turn his head if he saw a helpless animal, let alone a child."

"Who—who?" cried Tina, half springing from her seat. "Who is your employer?"

"Judge Burns, of course, of the great Burns ranch. Have you ever heard of him?—but of course you have."

"Judge Burns?" said Tina, breathlessly. "Judge Richard Burns?"

"And I'm bound to him!" exclaimed Tina, laughing and crying together.

"We were looking for you, Tina, to-day. I'm afraid Eddy is dead. Why I thought I was going to Judge Burns house when Barker brought me from San Francisco. He said he was Judge Burns' overseer. And I am really, really going to him! Oh, Eddy, he was Eddy's father—my father! Can't you make the horses go faster? I want to see Judge Burns and tell him all about Eddy!"

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"Makes me think of Old Mother Hubbard," said Gorse, as the two men then proceeded to the Down East Hotel. "You have doubtless heard in your juvenile days, the affecting story of how she travelled around in the various shops of her native town? Mr. Perry," he added abruptly, changing his tone, "I've got an idea!"

"I an glad to hear it," said Mr. Perry, a little bitterly. "For I see as you have none lately. I feel all the time as if I were going to our hotel, settle the bill as we go in, and step up to our room. There we will disguise ourselves. There we'll go out upon our errand, apparently a couple of miners, but in reality a pair of detectives, a pair of human blood-hounds. We will go, thoroughly armed, of course, to the various saloons about the city. I may chance to come across one of those men who attacked Eddy and me. Such ruffians frequent drinking houses. Once I find them, and we have a clue to the fate of Eddy and Tina."

"True. Lead the way, Gorse. I place myself under your directions. You know the city so much better than I. We will not look for our missing one, nor for the nameless ruffian. But for the human blood-hounds. We will go, thoroughly armed, of course, to the various saloons about the city. I may chance to come across one of those men who attacked Eddy and me. Such ruffians frequent drinking houses. Once I find them, and we have a clue to the fate of Eddy and Tina."

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The two men proceeded to their hotel. Mr. Perry settled their bill, and

they went up to their room. They to work upon their toilet, and arranged their faces, necks, and arms, the deepest tan tint, Mr. Perry's naturally dark complexion the treatment—his having grown pale during his long illness—and doing all that was possible of loss by accident. He checked shirts and their rough outer garments completed a disguise so effectual that each stared at the other in surprise.

"I shouldn't know you if I met you in the street, Mr. Gorse," said Mr. Perry.

"And I should not know you if I met you in a saloon," said Gorse.

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From the hair-dresser's they proceeded to a hatter's, where they prepared a couple of slouched, broad-brimmed hats. Then they went to a clothing establishment, buying each a suit of ready-made clothing of the rough style favored by miners.

"Makes me think of Old Mother Hubbard," said Gorse, as the two men then proceeded to the Down East Hotel. "You have doubtless heard in your juvenile days, the affecting story of how she travelled around in the various shops of her native town? Mr. Perry," he added abruptly, changing his tone, "I've got an idea!"

"I an glad to hear it," said Mr. Perry, a little bitterly. "For I see as you have none lately. I feel all the time as if I were going to our hotel, settle the bill as we go in, and step up to our room. There we will disguise ourselves. There we'll go out upon our errand, apparently a couple of miners, but in reality a pair of detectives, a pair of human blood-hounds. We will go, thoroughly armed, of course, to the various saloons about the city. I may chance to come across one of those men who attacked Eddy and me. Such ruffians frequent drinking houses. Once I find them, and we have a clue to the fate of Eddy and Tina."

"True. Lead the way, Gorse. I place myself under your directions. You know the city so much better than I. We will not look for our missing one, nor for the nameless ruffian. But for the human blood-hounds. We will go, thoroughly armed, of course, to the various saloons about the city. I may chance to come across one of those men who attacked Eddy and me. Such ruffians frequent drinking houses. Once I find them, and we have a clue to the fate of Eddy and Tina."

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seemingly possible for him to recognize the Ohio under his disguise, and Gorse experienced no alarm, not even the vaguest apprehension.

Barker stood behind the screen, presently disappearing, and passing the door into the next compartment and rapped loudly for a waiter.

"Who is it?" whispered Mr. Perry, under cover of the noise.

"The man who was with Vellis at the house in Dupont street," answered Gorse, in a still lower whisper.

"Mr. Perry flashed back a look of surprise, mingled with satisfaction, but he did not reply.

"Bran's all wright," observed Gorse, in the thick, incoherent utterance of an intoxicated person. "Feel sleepy? Tired's dog!"

His head nodded forward heavily upon his bosom. Barker put his head out from behind his partition and peered at him.

"Who's that drunken fool, Charles?" he asked of the waiter who had appeared and was awaiting his orders.

"Do 'em, Mr. Barker. Some fellow that's just from the way he goes. Been jingling his money. Why he goes on, it'll melt out of his pockets before to-morrow night, and he'll have to go back for more. The men are both drunk, I think."

"Been into the card-room?" asked Barker.

"No, sir. Just came in. One of the men in the bar-room says those chaps have been guzzling all day in every saloon in town."

"They ought to try a game of cards, Charles," said Barker, in a low, confidential voice, which was, however, distinctly audible to Mr. Perry and Gorse.

"If they've got money, they ought to leave some of it here. Hogart might persuade them. Where is he?"

"I don't see him in the next room."

"Might have been out temporary," said the waiter. "Do you want to see him, sir?"

"Yes, you find him, and tell him Barker wants him to come out and take something with him."

The waiter moved towards the gaming room. Behind the screen was a man on guard before the door of the inner room. This waiter passed him, entering the gaming saloon. He presently returned, announced that Hogart would come out in a few minutes, and he hurried away to order Barker's supper.

A few minutes later Hogart appeared, passing Perry and Gorse, and entering the next compartment, greeted Barker with effusion.

"The night of Eddy's capture had been dark, as will be remembered, and Gorse's eyes of Hogart had necessarily been imperfect, Hogart having lingered in the rear of the Ohio to capture Eddy, while Vellis and Barker assailed Gorse in front. Gorse's view of the man upon that occasion, he knew, as Hogart passed the man Hogart had been the confederate of Vellis and Barker on that fatal night."

A sudden flash leaped to his fierce eyes, and his frame shook with suppressed excitement. He was tempted to look at the next compartment, and Gorse and Mr. Perry moved singly toward the crowd toward the tall, green-shuttered screen.

"They don't want to see me," they said, in an individual, "on them two men, and I'm to-day."

"We were looking for you, Tina, to-day. I'm afraid Eddy is dead. Why I thought I was going to Judge Burns house when Barker brought me from San Francisco. He said he was Judge Burns' overseer. And I am really, really going to him! Oh, Eddy, he was Eddy's father—my father! Can't you make the horses go faster? I want to see Judge Burns and tell him all about Eddy!"

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"Yes, saw him to-day. Says he got back last night, and came around to see you first thing," was the guarded reply.

"So me? I guess it was to see the boy—What was that noise? Oh, the waiter over your shoulder. He brought Burgoyne with him. I should like to see you and I might make a fine thing out of that Burgoyne. Vellis says he's rich."

"You can get any price out of him that you choose to ask," said Barker.

"He hates that boy worse than I do. Has Vellis given the lad his floggin' yet?"

"No, I wouldn't have any such thing happen in my house. I've got my reputation to maintain. I don't know as I ought to speak out so frankly in this room," he added. "Some one might hear us."

"Then don't speak above a whisper, and there won't be a person within a rod of us? Those people over there make too much noise with their knives and forks to hear us. You're too particular, Hogart, that's what you are. There's such a thing as prudence, and there's a dog in the name. But if you please you any better, we'll talk of other matters."

They proceeded to do so.

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