

as a pair of skewers. After a time I got to a place where all my struggling seemed to make no difference, and I was just thinking of turning round, when, above the roar of the weir, I heard Mr. Silver shouting:

"Barby, come back; it isn't safe!" He, that man, had dared to call me "Barby," my own home name that belonged to dad and the boys—and mother I gave a tremendous pull, and I suppose the Tub must have got to where a bit of the current sets backward, for, quite to my surprise, she shot forward as fast as an arrow, then went round and round, while the spray from the weir pelted me like rain, and then went over. I can remember being in the water spinning about and dragged along most dreadfully and then I don't remember anything more until I was lying on the bank with the boys staring at me with most extraordinary grimaces, and Mr. Silver all wet, with his hair plastered down, and his eyes peeping out like a sky-ferrier, and I pointed out to them at once that I had won, and asked him to be sure and write it down on the bun-bag. Mr. Silver helped Archie to make me walk straight, but he wouldn't come in, and the boys told dad that he had jumped in and saved my life, and dear dad sat on the side of my bed, and said that he could never be sufficiently grateful to him, and that it was very beautiful to find that even the worst people weren't wholly black. I said that Mr. Silver must be a bit of a zebra, and even the boys seemed shocked at such a zoological reference to a person who had saved one's life.

They didn't understand, of course, how beastly everything was, how difficult it was to be good-tempered whilst half of me was as proud as proud, because he was a hero after all, and the other half, remembering that he was also a villain and a sneak, was wishing that anyone else in the world had done my bit of rescuing.

Next morning I was washing the boys' flannels, which had suffered somewhat from the regatta, in the back kitchen, when I saw him pass the window, and heard him tapping on the front door. "It will open if you push it," I called out; "then if you'll walk straight across the sitting-room you'll find me out here."

He found accordingly. "Good morning," I said. "I can't shake hands, because I'm soapy." If you want to sit down, take the clothes-peg and the cat off that chair."

Then I tried to consider how to thank him, and there was such a long silence that he spoke first after all.

"Are you sure you're no worse after all your adventures yesterday?"

"Oh, no, nothing to speak of. I think I must have bumped my head on the Tub. It feels so sore up here."

He watched by gesture with most apprehensive eyes, and went redder, and I thought he was afraid that I should put soap on my hair.

"I hope it doesn't hurt you much," he said thickly, "because I did it." The words came out with a jerk. "You were struggling so that we should have both gone down if I hadn't stumped you; but it was dreadful to have to strike you." He came nearer to me and stooped down, and took my slippery and soapy hand in his brown one. "Little Barbara, will you believe that it hurt me more than it hurt you; that although I did it to save you, it was the hardest thing I've ever done in all my life, because—Barbara little woman, I love you."

His voice had grown quite small and whispering, even before he stopped speaking, and I stood and looked down at his big, strong hand, and blinked hard to keep the tears out of my eyes, and something that had got into my throat, and made me want to put my head down on his broad shoulder and cry, stopped me for a moment from even trying to speak.

"You dare to say that to Phil's sister?" I said at last.

He pretended to look puzzled. "I don't see what Phil has to do with it, dear one—if you could only care for me?"

"He has just that to do with it," I said, "that I should have liked being drowned much better than being saved by you."

He went horribly red and guilty then, and began to stammer.

"You didn't imagine that I thought—that you knew? I mean, I never dreamed that my connection with Phil's affairs would influence you; I hoped you didn't know yet?"

"Well, I do, and I hate you and loathe

Diamond Cut Diamond.

Continued from page 45.

all the men have come, then the Tuans must arrest them; it will be quite easy. I will explain how when I return. I have brought the Tuans uniforms, for if the men saw only a Malay and a Sikh they might fight them at once, but they will be afraid to do so if they see two police officers."

"But what is the rifle for, Ning Wo?" asked Stuart.

"I shall use that if necessary, though I do not think I shall have to shoot

you and obliterate you altogether. To behave as you have to my brother, and then pretend to care for me, is an insult. You have been kind lately, no doubt, but that won't buy love, and I—I wish you would go away!"

He looked at me for a moment, and he was pale enough now and very serious; then he went, and I finished the washing with the tears trickling down my nose very lamentably and tumbling off into it.

That night by the last post came a letter from Phil. He had got a new berth—a better one. Gregory Silver's uncle, the one who was part of the firm, had used his influence with some friends of his, and had got it for him.

"He is a perfect brick," wrote Phil, "not so very much older than I am, but as keen and clever as they're made. I've found out that it was he who persuaded them not to prosecute me. He paid back that money to the firm out of his own pocket, and he has had to guarantee my honesty—we may as well call a spade a spade—to get me this good job. He was going to hire a steam yacht and go abroad for his holidays, but because of spending so much tin on me he has given up the idea; has got an old house-boat, and is camping out somewhere on the river. Perhaps he will come through Little Abington some time. The only nasty thing about him is that his name, like his precious nephew's, is Gregory Silver."

I don't think I slept much that night, and early the next morning, when the dew was on the grass and the sky all faintly blue, I stole downstairs and took the dear old Tub and rowed up to the Philomela. Her boat was away, so I knew he had gone bathing, and I boarded her and went into the little cuddy and lit the oil stove and made myself be most dreadfully bold, and lay breakfast in the cabin for two.

Presently the dip of his oars sounded down the backwater, and I felt awfully afraid of him for the first time in my life, and hid my face in my hands, but I think he must have heard the bacon cooking, and noticed the Tub, for he hailed the Philomela. "Who's there?" and his voice was all funny and fat, and sounded as if he were years older than he had been yesterday. I stepped out on deck then, and wished ever so much that I hadn't attempted to do my hair up, and felt quite sure that I must be looking ridiculous.

However, when he saw me, he didn't seem to find me at all funny, but went as white as his neck's is below the sunburn mark, and didn't even stay to tie up his boat, but leaped on board with the painter in one hand, and took mine in the other.

"Barby!" he cried, "what are you doing here?"

"I'm cooking your breakfast," I answered. "And, oh, I have been so miserable! Why didn't you tell me you weren't Gregory Silver?"

"But I am," he said.

"But not the Gregory Silver," I corrected him. "You're only his uncle."

And then the uncle dropped the painter, and hadn't ever the presence of mind to stand on it, and took me into his arms.

The birds were singing just beautifully, and because we were so still a kingfisher like a jewel dared to flit about among the branches overhead. The sun-rays struck on the river below us, and flashed in points of light on the willows above, and on our faces, and it was early morning. It was all very beautiful and very serious, and I had no idea till I felt how Gregory's arm trembled, and heard his heart beating so near mine, that loving anyone was such a very serious thing; but I liked it all the better for that, and could have been content to stay there and learn and listen all day long. I think, only the coffee-saucepan boiled over and interrupted us.

anyone. It will only be to frighten them. I must go now, or I shall be late, for I have far to walk in two hours."

He left us without another word, and disappeared into the jungle.

Stuart stared at me and I at him for a full minute, and then we both burst out laughing.

"I wonder if the beggar knows how to handle a rifle?" he remarked. "Strikes me if there is any occasion for him to use it we stand as good a chance of being shot as any of the gang, for, from all I can gather, you and I have got to go out and interview these gentlemen in the open."

"Again I say you can set your mind at ease," said I, "though I am as much in the dark as you. If, in the plenitude of his power, Ning Wo had brought a twelve-pound field-gun with us, you could rely on his putting it to a proper use. I confess, though, that I am curious to know how he proposes we should arrest seven or eight armed men. But what is the good of speculating? Ning Wo is stage-manager of this little play, and we have to do as he directs."

"Let's get into our proper clothes, and then smoke or sleep," said Stuart. "I'm thankful I'm not a Sikh, to have to wear twenty yards of stuff round my head whenever I go for a walk."

We got through the next five hours somehow between smoking and dozing, when, suddenly, Ning Wo appeared, carrying in his hand a small bundle.

"This is part of the robbery," said he, throwing it down. "Now I will tell the Tuans exactly what to do."

"In about half an hour the men will begin to arrive, and we must lie very quiet. When they are all here some of them will begin to dig up the ground to bury what they have stolen. I have found out to-night that everything they have got by all their other robberies is buried here," so Tuan Stuart can get it all.

"As soon as they are all engaged, Tuan Stuart must walk out and call on them to surrender. They will be too astonished to do anything for a minute when they see you. He must tell them he has twenty men with him who are watching them, and that it is no good resisting. Perhaps some of them may try to run away, and if they do Tuan Stuart is to call out to someone to shoot. That is why I brought the rifle; I will try not to hit anyone, though. As soon as they see they will be fired at they will give in."

"Tuan Stuart must then order them to stand in a row, and he will call Tuan Mackenzie to bring the handcuffs; he will handcuff the men all together, two and two. There are seven of them."

"That is all. The Tuans must then march them to Riban, which is the nearest police-station. I shall, of course, disappear, for it would not do for me to be seen."

"How do we get to Riban station?" asked Stuart. "I don't know where I am. Do you, Mac?"

I shook my head. It had never occurred to us to think of the geography of the surrounding country, and I did not know if I was in my own State or Stuart's.

Ning Wo enlightened us; it was about a five-mile walk.

Everything turned out as he had predicted, and at dawn the men began to

arrive singly. When the seven were present they carried on a long conversation in an undertone, and then one of them called out a single word. Ning Wo pointed to himself, meaning they were calling him.

Apparently they got tired of waiting, and two of them began to dig with hoes, which they brought out of the jungle on the side opposite us, and the others all gathered round to watch.

Ning Wo touched Stuart and nodded his head.

Raising his six-foot-two of stature from the ground, and hitching his revolver forward, Stuart walked out into the open as calmly as if he were going to shake hands with the men.

"Stand up, all of you," he ordered. "I have managed to catch you at last. You need not think you can resist or run away, for I have twenty policemen with me."

One of them, however, thought differently, for he turned and ran.

"Fire!" shouted Stuart.

Bang! went a rifle, and a charge of buck-shot rattled on the ground close to the man. He pulled up as if he had been actually shot.

"I told you it was no good," said Stuart. "The next man who tries to escape will be shot dead. Now, stand in a row."

They obeyed like lambs, looking very much like those harmless animals.

"Bring half-a-dozen handcuffs, Mackenzie," shouted Stuart.

This was where I came in at the game of bluff, and my cards consisted of six pairs of high, polished handcuffs.

I walked behind the row, and handcuffed each man's right wrist to his neighbour's left. Having left their booty hidden in the jungle, we marched them to Riban station. The sergeant in charge, on hearing that we two alone had captured them, merely remarked that Allah was great. Stuart agreed that that was so.

The possession of the proceeds of all their robberies was sufficient evidence, and they were all sentenced for life.

Some few months later a police officer from one of the other States had occasion to be sent to Stuart's seat of government on duty, and one morning he accompanied the latter when he visited the jail.

"Hallo!" he suddenly cried.

"You have got Ah Yok!"

"Who's he?" asked Stuart.

"That chap working over there," was the reply, pointing out the man.

"He is one of the gang you and Captain Mackenzie captured, sir," said the head jailer, who was accompanying them.

"But how on earth do you know him?" asked Stuart of his visitor.

"Oh, he was one of our Chinese detectives for about a year, and one of the biggest scoundrels we ever had. I got him dismissed as useless."

Stuart whistled a few bars of the National Anthem.

"That accounts for the milk in the coconut," he said. "No wonder that gang knew the ways of the police so well. I wish to goodness you had kept him, though, for, from my own personal experience of his exploits in this State, it strikes me he might have become an ornament to your force, and ended by retiring on a pension. You chaps in Perak don't seem to know when you have got hold of a good thing."



Reactor: "Can I see the master of the house?" Husband: "Just wait a few minutes. Me and the old girl's in the middle of settling that question!"