Gems of Peril

By HAZEL ROSS HAILEY.

SYNOPSIS.

Mary Harkness undertakes to trap The Fly, whom she believes "framed" her brother, Eddie, with the murder of Mrs. Jupiter, and later ran Eddie down and killed him to keep him from telling. As bait she plans to use the famous Jupiter necklace of rubies, which the murderer failed to get. She is aided by Bowen of The Star. Mary's fiancee, Dirk Ruyther, objects to the notoriety.

Bruce Jupiter, absent many years, returns from Europe with a woman friend. His father orders him out and makes Mary his heir. Bruce swears to rout Mary, whom he thinks is a gold-digger.

Mary and Dirk quarrel because Dirk is jealous of Bowen and refuses to believe in the existence of The Fly. Mary writes to Dirk.

CHAPTER XXV.—(Cont'd.)

Dearest Dirk (she wrote): I'm sorry I walked away as I did last night—I don't suppose you'd like to forgive me, would you? I should never have mixed you up in all this. It just comes under the head of "unfinished business" that must be attended to before I can marry you, that's all. You remember you worked late at the office last night finishing up some matters that couldn't be left undone. It's the same with me.

Don't worry about it, and above all don't think you must help. I don't expect you to, and I'm not angry about it, really.

I am leaving Monday for Florida on the "Gypsy" with the Jupiters. Can't you come and see me before I go? If I don't see you again before I go, though, I make you this promise—that whether this job is finished or not, I will keep my date with you in December. (Or have I one?)

With love, always,
MARY.

When she had the letter sealed, stamped and ready to o she had the absurd impulse to run to Dirk with it in her hand. How could she wait until Monday for an answer? Perhaps if she went into the village and mailed it now, it might reach him on the late afternoon delivery.

Impatiently she threw off her clothes, found an old pair of riding breeches and shirt, and donned them. Then she telephoned the barns and asked to have a saddle put on Betsy, the mild little mare that was hers to ride when not more gainfully occupied at pulling the lawnmower or the station wagon.

Exhilarated by the prospect of getting out into the crisp autumn air, and by her errand, she went out whistling happily. Outside her door, she came face to face with Bruce, who had evidently moved into the room across the hall.

He said stiffly: "We are neighbors, it seems. I'm sorry if the proximity annoys you."

Marry seized the opportunity to talk to him outside his father's hearing. It was a chance she had hoped for, but would have found it distasteful to seek. "Let me understand you," she said, coming forward to look him straight in the eye. "If I accept your father's offer to make me his heir, it means that you will remain here, with him? That you will not go back to Europe as you planned?"

"How bright you are!"

"And if I refuse it, you will go on about your affairs as before?"

Bruce was obviously taken aback. "If I thought you meant it—yes," he returned hesitantly.

"Then I accept."

"Accept? But—" Bruce struggled with surprise.

Mary repeated, "I accept and I expect you to live up to your bargain. If the only consideration that will induce you to change your wholly selfish way of living and spend some time with your father is fear of me, then I am glad to be of use. It's too late now to do anything about it so far as your mother is concerned, but there's still your father who would like to see something of you, oddly enough."

Bruce was staring at her, a strange expression on his face.

"I've wanted to say this to you for six years," she went on undaunted. "Every since I came here. I've tried to do my own quaint little imitation of Mary Sunshine, anything to keep those two people from thinking how much they missed you, from realizing how little their money had brought them, after all. I didn't succeed, naturally, but it isn't odd that we all grew to be very fond of one another."

"I quite understand that, little rival!" Bruce murmured softly, a peculiar glow in his eyes.

Mary had dropped her bitter tone and tried to speak as sincerely as she felt. Now she drew herself up and rejoined stiffly:

"Regard me as a rival if you like. Regard me as anything you please. I don't want your money. But if you let that brunet Garbo take you away from your father again, I'll take it! That's my threat and I'm glad to be able to enforce it."

"Ah-ah!" Bruce cried. "I remember you now! I've been puzzling over where I'd seen you. You were the girl in the elevator at the hotel last night—with the man who held the whisky bottle, so! Louise spoke of it at the time." He laughed, delightedly. "Prohibition has its amusing aspects to a European!" Then he added, "Does my father know about last night? It was a rendezvous, of course!"

Mary turned on her heel and left him. She did not want to be drawn into an open quarrel with him. They would have to live in very close quarters on the "Gypsy" and it would crowd that small craft to hold them both as it was.

She urged the surprised Betsy to a brisk gallop going into town. Having dropped her letter, she felt better. Both she and her mount were content to take the long hill road home at a sedate walk, letting the cool air and the bright autumn scene heal her anger.

As they passed the Tabor grounds, Mary's head jerked quickly about for a second glance at the tall, white-shirted figure who leaped to meet Corelia Tabor's swift serves with a lightning racket. Her heart drained utterly of blood as she recognized Dirk.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The "Gypsy" was made ready to sail on Tuesday. Monday night Mary had a telephone call from Dirk. He had just received her letter, he said.

"Did you want to see me?" he asked formally.

"Why, yes," Mary replied. "Don't you—want to see me?"

There was a short wait before he answered, "Of course. Shall I come over?" He was setting a distance between them but then it was he whose feelings had been injured. They would talk it over and it would be all right.

Mary dressed without any particular enthusiasm. Dirk was coming now but tomorrow she would be gone. It was a rather hollow sort of happiness she felt, but it was better than not seeing Dirk at all.

When he came, he sat down beside her casually, but made no move to touch her. Mary felt the least bit rebuffed. He looked worried and strained, and her heart went out to him.

"I'm sorry I left you like that," she said gently.

"I know," he said. "That's all right."

Another silence fell.

"I had to know about those finger-prints. Whether they were The Fly's," she explained. "I couldn't wait. Haven't you ever felt that way?"

He shrugged. "I suppose you were anxious, of course," he said. "What did you find out?"

"They were his. The Bertillon men at police headquarters checked them."

Dirk cleared his throat. "You understand, don't you, that the gun's being his doesn't prove conclusively that it was The Fly who fired it? It was the murder gun, of course; I've had it in the hands of ballistic experts, and there's no doubt about that part. But—I don't mean to hurt your feelings again—but how can you prove to a jury that it was The Fly who was the murderer, rather than—than someone else?"

"We can't. We're not even trying to. The Fly himself will do that for us."

"If you're lucky."

"If we're lucky. And if we play our cards just right. But the least slip, the least word—and it's all spoiled. It's possible that's happened already. You aren't very popular with George Bowen just now. The Fly's left town, you know."

Dirk looked at her in bewilderment. "I'm not popular? What've I to do with it?"

"Didn't you go back to Shay's with a warrant for him?"

"Certainly not."

"Well—! Then who—?"

This was a new state of affairs. Somebody else on The Fly's trail? Who could it bt?

"Bowen naturally supposed it was you," she faltered apologetically. "You'd just been saying the thing to do was arrest The Fly and when the police came down on the place Bowen jumped to the conclusion—"

"He does a good deal of that, I'm thinking," Dirk commented drily.

Mary was in no mood to resent anything Dirk might say against the absent Bowen. She was too mystified—to busy speculating.

"Who do you think it could have been?" she asked.

"He's probably got a dozen rackets," Dirk replied. "The cops might be after him for any one of them. Or it might be for some fool thing like parking overtime. He ran, like they all do. They don't like a pinch, even for a minor offense—it's bad for their rackets.

Considerable wind had been taken out of Mary's sails by this discovery but she was none the less regretful that it had taken place. The Fly was gone and what assurance had she that she could find him again? Nothing but Bowen's guess—and Bowen could be wrong, as this slipup showed.

For a moment she felt panicky—she was committed to so much, just on the strength of that chance that The Fly would show up at the track when his horse ran her big race. If he were really frightened he might stay away. Although he would probably feel himself safe enough. Unless the offerse were a serious one, extradition from Florida would be more than the New York police would trouble with.

The idea that The Fly's arrest had been sought by Inspector Kane occurred to her but as instantly dismissed. Kane had been "bought off," and he would stay that way, she was sure.

(To be continued.)

With Indians in the Black Hills

We travelled eastward for two days, and then the gloomy ridges of the Black Hills rose up before us. The village passed along for some miles beneath their declivities, trailing out to a great length over the arid prairie, or winding among small detached hills of distorted shapes. Turning sharply to the left, we entered a wide defile of the mountains, down the bottom of which a brook came winding, lined with tall grass and dense copses, amid which were hidden many beaver dams and lodges. We passed along between two lines of high precipices and rocks piled in disorder one upon another, with scarcely a tree, a bush, or a clump of grass. The restless Indian boys wandered along their edges and clambered up and down their rugged sides, and sometimes a group of them would stand on the verge of a cliff and look down on the procession as it passed beneath. As we advanced, the passage grew more narrow; then it suddenly expanded into a round grassy meadow, completely encompassed by mountains; and here the families stopped as they came up in turn, and the camp rose like magic.

The lodges were hardly pitched when, with their usual precipitation, the Indians set about accomplishing the object that had brought them there; that is, obtaining poles for their new lodges. Half the population, men, women, and boys, mounted their horses and set out for the depths of the mountains. It was a strange cavalcade, as they rode at full gallop over the shingly rocks and into the dark opening of the defile beyond. We passed between precipices, sharp and splintering at the tops, their sides beetling over the defile or descending in abrupt declivities, bristling with fir-trees. On our left they rose close to us like a wall, but on the right a winding brook with a narrow strip of marshy soil intervened. The stream was clogged with old beaver-dams, and spread frequently into wide pools. . .

After having ridden in this manner six or eight miles, the scene changed, and all the declivities were covered with forests of tall, slender spruce-trees. The Indians began to fall off to the right and left, dispersing with their hatchets and knives to cut the poles which they had come to seek. I was soon left almost alone; but in the stillness of those lonely mountains, the stroke of hatchets and the sound of voices might be heard from far and near. . .

Wild as they were, these mountains were thickly peopled. As I climbed farther, I found the broad dusty paths made by the elk, as they filed across the mountain side. The grass on all the terraces was trampled down by deer; there were numerous tracks of wolves, and in some of the rougher and more precipitous parts of the ascent, I found foot-prints different from any that I had ever seen, and which I took to be those of the Rocky Mountain sheep. I sat down upon a rock; there was a perfect stillness. No wind was stirring, and not even an insect could be heard.—From "The Oregon Trail," by Francis Parkman.

Suited

A firm advertised for a girl clerk, and the next morning hundreds of applicants arrived. So numerous were they that the chief told the office-boy to admit no more.

Shortly after this an aggressive woman arrived, and, pushing her way past the others, asked to see the chief. By this time the office-boy had grown deaf to all protestations, and had but one answer.

"Not today, madam," he said.

"But I'm his wife" she said majestically.

"Not today, madam," was the inexorable reply.

A judge was pointing out that a witness was not necessarily to be regarded as untruthful because he altered a statement he had previously made. "For instance," he said, "when I entered this Court to-day I could have sworn that I had my watch in my pocket. But then I remembered I had left it in the bathroom at home." When the judge got home that night his wife said: "Why all this bother about your watch—sending four or five men for it?" "Good heavens!" said the judge; "I never sent anyone! What did you do?" "I gave it to the first one who came; he knew just where it was."

Love and esteem are the first principles of friendship, which always is imperfect where either of these two is wanting.

We must not take the faults of our youth into our old age; for old age brings its own defects.—Goethe.

Five Fathoms Deep

Paul Brown in Field and Stream, July, '32.

The waters of the Bay of Gonaive (Haiti) were fairly quiet. Our small boat rose and fell gently on the swells as I stepped over the side and descended the ladder. As my shoulders approached the water I stopped, and the heavy copper helmet was slipped over my head and fastened under my arms. I could see the grinning black natives start work at the pump and hear the slight hiss of the air escaping through the valve over my head. A slap on the helmet told me all was and I started to the floor of the bay, five fathoms beneath the surface.

I landed in a new world—an incredibly beautiful and fantastic world where everyone of my preconceived notions was wrong. Even walking I had to larn all over again. A step could not be taken quickly. A small jump was likelp to be extended to a flying leap which carried far beyond the original objective but very slowly. Arms and hands had to be moved deliberately. The light from the surface was a soft glow, permeating everything, an illumination without shadows.

At my feet, as I landed, a hermit crab scuttled into its usurped shell, camouflaged with a waving anemone, and lumbered away. A big starfish contracted and simply disappeared. Ahead of me was a miniature fairy castle, etched in moral with moats and ports and bastioned towers. It was inhabited by gay little fishes gorgeous with all the colors of the primary spectrum. They swam in schools from their protective fissures to the very glass in the front of my helmet and peered in at me with motionless eyes. Then, suddenly, they all departed as if by signal. Almost at once they were replaced by a small group of parrot-fish—great, vividly shaded creatures with beaks that enabled them to wrench knobs of coral from the reef and lunch on the small fish and crustaceans that their house-wrecking activities disclosed. Then a small shark, perhaps five feet long, swam past lazily. For a long moment it stared at me, but as I reached for the threetined spear which swung from the belt of my bathing suit and backed toward the coral cliff behind me, it swam away into the dusky oblivion 30 feet from me.

As I approached, the coral had suddenly changed from a glowing mass of yellow and lavender and orange mosaic into a uniform pinkish brown! I leaned forward. The entire surface of the coral cliff was covered with sea worms. These worms live in tubes of their own construction which they anchor to their host and into which they disappear at the slightest notice. These tubes, which looked for all the world like gray and irregular clay pipe stems, were soft and yielding. The tops were tightly closed, and there was no sign that beautiful flower-like animals were concealed within. I leaned my shoulder against the coral while I pried one of them from the cliff. Instantly the whole color scheme of the reef changed again as the minute pinkish polyps flashed into their stony shelters and left me gazing at the pure whiteness of the coral itself.

Then a big grouper came idling through the fissures of the reef and flirted its tail at me. Presently I became aware of many groupers around me. I hauled from my pocket a six-foot piece of fishing line fitted with a heavy hook, and baited it with a small crab. The tide carried the baited hook toward the feeding groupers. A two-foot grouper looked at it just once and then calmly swallowed it. I struck. The fish struck back, then went insane in a mad series of whirling, flashing, twisting contortions at the end of my short line. I became enormously concerned in merely remaining upright. That two-foot fish gave me a battle I would not have believed possible. Later I realized this was due to my own inability to move rapidly. I was in the midst of a school of groupers that, with their businesslike teeth, could have made a hospital case of me had they attacked together. As my catch grew weaker, one of this school of groupers bit a huge chunk from the captive's tail. Instantly a general attack was launched at the injured fish, and before I could haul it to me there was little more than the head left on the hook. The eternal voraciousness of the creatures of the sea was never more graphically illustrated.

In the meantime the appearance of the sea bottom had changed. The chrysanthemums, gardenias, gently waving nasturtiums and gay little asters that are the living animals of the sea, had withdrawn into their protective homes. I sat down on a brownish violet stool equipped with a soft cushion—to find it a sponge that quivered beneath me. I changed to a large lump of brain coral and watched the seascape unfold and come to life again. A jewfish, awkward and hideous, billowed past. A number of little puffers, their spiny bodies looking like overgrown chestnut burrs, went on their leisurely way unmolested. Red snappers suddenly became frequent members of the milling fish before me and I caught at least 20.

It was sport of the best kind. I could never be sure whether or not the fish would upset me and let a rush of water into my helmet; never be certain that the line about my wrist would not cut deeply enough to bring blood, which would have been dangerous; nor be sure that the larger fish would not attack me.

I had no idea how long I had been submerged. My fingers had already assumed the "washer-woman wrinkles state which is usually a signal to ascend. But I still wanted to see what was around the bend of the reef, and started for the edge of the coral growth which jutted into deeper water. As I rounded the bend a veritable marine garden opened before me. Weeds and grasses grew in lovely, gracefully swaying luxuriance. Brown and violet chimney sponges sprouted from shafts of volcanic rock. Elkhorn coral flung its arms about with embracing picturesqueness. A brilliant butterfly-fish, tiny and almost iridescent, swam past—then another, then many, all concerned with something that was beyond my ken.

I watched these fish as they rounded the corner of the reef and disappeared, but while I looked one of them disappeared forever. It swam just a bit too close to one of the large "flowers," which was a tube worm. As soon as the sensitive feelers of the worm (which were the petals of the flower) felt the passing fish it closed like lightning and took the tiny fish into the maw that was at the same time its protecting tube.

As I watched the process, I slowly realized that a lengthy shadow had appeared just beyond the coral. I peered again—and found myself staring at a six-foot barracuda! It was surveying me with motionless, hollow-looking eyes. For a moment I was powerless to move. The shark that had passed didn't really frighten me but the barracuda did. Everything depended upon what this savage torpedo-shaped killer decided to do with me, and not what I decided to do. Then I realized that I had failed to roll up the fishing line, which still sported a chunk of crab dangling from the hook. The current had slowly lifted the bait toward the barracuda. I was actually fishing for the beast, but I certaintly didn't want to catch it. I was only hoping it would decide not to catch me. I twitched the hook toward me, intending to get the line stowed away before the big murderer had a chance to bite. But the barracuda moved faster than the hook and grabbed the bait. I tried to snatch the line to me, and thereby set the hook in the barracuda's jaw.

With a terriffic, wrenching surge the fish started away. I was pulled to my knees, falling slowly, like a man in a slow-motion movie. When I landed flat on the bottom, the sea started gurgling into my helmet. It was splashing around my nose before I could struggle to a kneeling position. All the while, the terror at the end of my line, pulling and wrenching my arm, was an almost indistinguishable blur because of the frenzy of its efforts to escape the hook.

I reached desperately for my trident, vaguely intending to slide it down the line until it penetrated the head of the plunging barracuda. But I could not hold the trident against the line, for the fighting fish started dashing from right to left. I tried to slip the line from about my wrist, but was unable to; neither could I cut it with the trident. While I was frantically wondering what I could do. I was suddenly knocked back on my haunches. The fish had struck at my helmet! Only the fact that it hit the copper rather than the glass, saved me.

Tired and hurt, I hooked by arm about a jutting piece of tube coral, made a blind stab toward the swirling blur and felt the steel strike home! Again and again I stabbed toward where I knew the fish must be, and eventually I felt the strain on my arm and wrist lessen. Cautiously I pulled in my almost nerveless arm until I could catch the line with my other hand, then slowly I manoeuvred the fish into position close to the bottom. I thrust the trident against it and leaned on the handle. The fish gave one fearful convulsive struggle, which almost threw me on the bottom again. Then it rolled over and floated, belly up, in the current.

Slowly and painfully I worked my way through the blank area which had been so beautiful when the fight started. I was unable to find the rope leading to the surface, or the anchor chain, and I was still too exercised to hunt much for them. I wanted to go up—and up I went, hand over hand up the air line and light rope leading to my helmet. And so I emerged with the dead barracuda dangling from my cut and bleeding wrist, my trident still protruding from its head.

That was the first of many times I made off the coral reefs of Haiti. Diving in shallow water on reefs or beside them, where fish are sure to be numerous, is one of the greatest experiences an angler can have. Sharks pass so often they arey are disregarded; and there seems to be no real danger—except for the occasional voracious barracuda!

"Whistling" Pigeons

Travelers in the north woods of Ontario next Summer may be astonished when they hear and see what they may take to be a new species of bird, and into their heads may pop visions of whistling swans and wild pigeons, says the Department of the Interior at Ottawa. They may see the birds, real pigeons, and hear the whistle, but the two are separate entities, joined, it is true, but only for a space and then to carry out an idea.

Next Spring, after a period of training, teams of homing pigeons will be transported to various fire patrol points where communication by wireless is now difficult or impossible. Reports of fires, forced landings and important messages may be relayed by the use of these birds to the base camps of the Provincial Air Force. The whistle: That is to scare away hawks and other pedatory birds that might attack the homers, and is attached to their legs along with identification tags.

Trust in God implies thust in one's self as God's agent. The Christians who have the most serene faith that God's kingdom will some time come upon the earth are those who are doing something to make i come. They make effort themselves because God is making use of their efforts. They have courage to work, because they know that it is God that worketh in them.

He was making plans for an autumn holiday, and visited a travel agency to discuss details. "You'd better take one of our pamphlets, 'Where To Go and Where To Stay'," said the young man behind the counter. "Thanks, I won't trouble," replied the visitor. "My taxi-driver told me that last night."

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