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NEW YORK MILLIONAIRES.

THEY THAT SIT IN DARKNESS

THE AUSTRALIAN NEVER-NEVER AVTHOR OF THE DEVILS PLAYGROUND AND SINNERS TWAIN."

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Gordon, but if you will"lican in the temple he was gone.

CHAPTER XVII. THIS IS A TERRIBLE TEN MINUTES. Midnight in the cave and two weary men peering over the barricade into the gloom, so as to guard against surprise. Twenty-four hours ago Daly kept watch was lying within a few yards of me under the yellow sand. Still he was richer in knowledge than all the centuries had What was to become of me before 24 hours? I would either, like Daly, have solved the great mystery, or I might be more muscular effort to stay myself de--and it was my cherished hope-on my way to bring help and deliverance to the little camp.

It is indeed a merciful Providence that denies a man prescience in regard to his future. Jack and Gordon slept in the cave.

to make the most of my time. Half past 12, and the base of the Southern Cross had described a half

"It must be 2 o'clock, Dick. Why on earth didn't you call us at the right time?" It was Jack who spoke. "Well, I didn't feel like sleeping and thought that I might just as well than thought. In that critical moment watch a little longer. Snowball's sound asleep there. I saw him nodding and do you see that sheet lightning away to the south? It's been pretty bad these last few nights. We may expect a lively thunderstorm at any time. Good night, old man!" And I left the terrace. asserting its sway over the suffering mortals in the cave and bringing brief respite of relief to the suffering and weary at heart. The little fire flickered spasmodically, casting grim, misshapen, furtive shadows upon the roof and sides of the cavern. The wounded,

his sleep. I entered noiselessly, lay down near the fire and slept. I sprang to my feet to see a woman putting a fresh log on the fire and the with dense, creeping plants. Compared yellow dawn light struggling into the to that which had just been accomcave. I could hear an organ magpie outside among the leaves piping his beautiful song. And now I saw it was

man stirred and muttered uneasily in

Norah Mackenzie who was attending to "Good morning! I hope you've slept well?" she inquired of me cheerily.

I looked at her face. It seemed to have grown thinner and paler within the last 24 hours, and it was no wonder. I could see she had not slept, and remarked as much. I had looked at her eyes secretly for the last time, but could not trust myself

to speak, being afraid that they might guess my purpose and prevent me carpenciled a note and gave it to Snowball, having taken that child of the forest into my confidence, and told him that half an hour or so after my departure he must give that note to Jack. It was a very brief one, merely saying that I had gone for help. In case of my not returning within 24 hours they would understand something had hap-Jack and Savile were still watching

at the breastwork, and the others were in the cave, seemingly asleep. I stepped into the crevasse, and Snowball followed. It was neck or nothing now. There was no such thing as drawing I had braced my hands behind me perienced an almost overmastering de- ever the eye of man looked upon was sire to look once more upon the woman stretched out before me.

the ascent, I inwardly breathed a short

There came a look on Daly's face that crawled up and along the narrow ledge, hope I never shall see again on the on which there was no room for turning, away to the south and at intervals a off, for they were not to be seen. as he looked entreatingly at Gordon, stood up on the ledge, leaned over until that part of the country. my hands rested against the opposite "It's years and years since I tried to, | wall, rested a foot on either wall, and broke into a run. I knew that the blacks of Mackenzie, the squatter, and seemed The Scotsman motioned to us again, was stretched in midair above a horri- that the squatter was coming, which "Parker," he said, "you are better and then knelt down on the ground be- ble yawning abyss. Just for a second or doubtless had caused then to take up now. I think. What is it you have side him. And in the silence that en- two the strip of yellow sand far be- their present position. sued Gordon began that sublimest of neath gleamed and quivered, and the It was midday. The heat was in- and recollect." prayers, the one that has stood the test noise of the falling water inspired me tense, the air was stifling, but I hurried Then I told him as briefly and coher of time and shall live when all else with a sudden terror. Luckily, my bcyperishes. The sick man repeated it in ish proclivities—how they stood me in and I was vaguely conscious of the fact there, adding: rocks going to rise up on either side of human machine.

me for ever and ever? My arms were beginning to ache by reason of the continuous strain upon them. If some sort of resting place did not soon present it self, it could not be possible for human endurance to hold out much longer. with me, sitting where Snowball to- Then, horror of horrors, the walls of throb wildly. It was that of several ward the sun shines out brilliantly as if of a white man to Snowball were mys- another. However, his wishes are paranight strove with sleep; now his body rock began to bear away from one another, and the strain upon me was more shouted aloud in my joy, for it meant the reason of this Egyptian gloom? than mortal man could endure. It was just a toss up with me then. I must made any living philosopher, for he screw my courage up to making some knew what lay beyond life's bourn. supreme effort or else drop to swift destruction, for I realized the impossibil ity of descending again—it would take scending than it had done to raise me

to that height, and I was utterly ex-

"God help me!" I cried, and it was the sincerest prayer I ever breathed. Then I remember noticing such trivia. things as the widening of the rent across with one of the boys, and they had there was a small flower of a pale blue with appalling swiftness crashed and boy, for what you've done this day." Snowball in a manner that was meant bullet ready for her in the event of her granted my request. My idea was to color which I had never noticed before plowed its way through the forest, "But you can't go in this darkness," to be conciliatory, pointing to the strip capture. Poor Savile-grew red at the have a "good square think." It might growing in a cleft of the rock right catching up debris and dust, shooting I cried. "Why, you won't be able to of blue sky overhead. be my last night on earth, and I wanted alongside; that just round the edge of them high into the heavens in tortured see your hand in front of you!" the rock a shaft of sunlight fell, and spouts, rending the limbs of mighty "What!" that there were a good many quartz trees asunder and prostrating these "What I say," I persisted, somewhat vasse, striking from side to side in the asked where the missing member of the pebbles studded through the rock. I also began to think that the world was very beautiful and life very sweet. I thought of those in the cave and of those wh were dear to me on the other side of the

I lived a lifetime of normal existence Moreover, my brain was a sensitized told him he might drop off. I say, Jack, plate that received and recorded the most trivial details around me. I looked upward and set my teeth, telling myself there must be some there was. Another foot higher still Sleep, like the angel of death, was and my body was stretched as on a rack. Truly Providence helps those who was reached. I did not hesitate one single instant, but hurled myself on to it with what little strength I had left. clung to and rolled on to it, then lay or my back for a few moments to rest and

regain the use of my limbs. It was as if some one had suddenly snatched me from the jaws of death. But was the danger over yet? Apprehensively I lookon the rocks above? ed around. The face of the cliff was rugged but retreating and was covered



pack. I took on my beat plished, what remained to be done my hat, that my right boot had liter who stood within a few paces of him so tory of Australian colonization. round my neck and figurened my best seemed mere child's play. I rose from ally gone to pieces and that my foot ence to God's immutable laws thou- cool and collected. She was probably round my waist. I looked up at the seemed mere child's play. I rose from little strip of blue sky which showed between the great rugged walls of rock. She was probably and began to ascend again. It was now between the great rugged walls of rock. between the great rugged walls of rock. The places I might as well have shouted to the to play their parts in the grand scheme ion at his long grizzled upturned must have been at least 200 feet comparatively easy work. In places I mythical man in the moon A cold wind would mean in my ascent. It would mean a quick, but horrible death. I ex- of the most wonderful panoramas that black cloud swellowed me up. The de-I took the pocket handkerchief from

terror and instinctively look for a hid-It was a little above where the river

ley, overlooking a narrow gorge, and there, all along the brink, were a great number of savages. There might have been a hundred or more, and they ap peared as if waiting patiently for some- to myself again was listening to

drew my body up. In another instant 1 must have been told by some signal fire somewhat unsteady as he spoke.

become inky black. At last I stood on it in the daytime before."

deliverance to those in the cave. There was an ominous murmur in ing. Struggling to my feet, I put out own account. But Snowball was not to if I desired it, one of his numerous sons the air, and that grim, all enveloping, my hand, and grasped some one. There be left long to these speculations. inky cloud traveled up swiftly from was a dead silence now that was apthe south. There was something sinister palling in its significance, coming after tress, "what for you look out that one royal family. What do you say to it, and portentous, a suggestion of sup- that pandemonium of warring elements. | rock?" pressed force and fury, in the way it Again I heard the voice of the squatter. came rushing on that made one think He caught and held my hands.

rivaled the peals of the thunderbolts. strange, incomprehensible ejaculation. blood red flashes of fire of every con- go over the cliff if you don't."

what this one was like. I could see the some horrible nightmare. All was hurry and confusion.

Was I to miss them now that they whispering about?" were so near me—to let them drive It was an experience to live in one's now? But they knew her too well to in a certain time the blacks would come past unseen in the darkness and fury memory forever. would be an easy prey to the savages awful darkness. I gathered myself together and dashed

flashed through my brain and a pang of one had placed a hat on my uncovered talked away at a rattling pace. One

was in my heart—something struck me | please. It's rather hot here, don't you not a little of the old spirit of mischief -I threw up my hands, and that dread- think?" I said, feebly stretching out in her eyes. ful light burned into my brain. The my hands like a child groping in the "His request is a modest one. Elsie end of all things and nothingness had dark. come to me at last, and I knew no more.

CHAPTER XVIII. A LAND OF DARKNESS. The first thing I remember on com

thing that was to pass through it un- swish of the rain-that downpour derneath them. The situation flashed which follows a tropical thunderstor upon me in a second. The squatter's On moving my limbs there was a vague party had been seen coming, and they consciousness of the fact that some o were lying in wait to effect a surprise. had wrapped me in heavy folds of can-But the savages had reckoned without vas, probably a tent, and that there were several men standing around tal There was an ominous blackness now ing. But the darkness had not pass face of any one. It spoke of fear and until it stopped abruptly, and the walls subdued rumbling in the air. The first could not remember ever having expeagony, but it passed in another second of the crevasse came together again. I of the great thunderstorms had begun in rienced such darkness after a thunderstorm. A voice which sounded strange-My pace was quickened till at last it ly familiar addressed me. It was that

come to tell me? For mercy's sake try

ever weakening words, and so did we stead now-had given me a fairly that the foot was chafed and bleeding. "If you follow the creek along-not all. Then a shudder ran through his good sailor's head, so that the momen. But still, after all, that was a minor in the gorge, but in the high country— Snowball that first made her suspect. Then the blacks made a dash at the breastframe and with something upon his lips tary experience of dizziness soon passed. | consideration. I was hungry and half you'll surprise the blacks that are lying something wrong. This gentleman, aftthat sounded like the cry of the pub. I looked upward, and raised myself inch dead with anxiety and fatigue, but in wait for you there. I'll lead the way er I climbed out of sight, had become hair like the yellow rocks and the checks

of some horrible nameless thing con- "Parker," he said, "you'll stop here way of gaining time is much the same gravity of the situation the party could serving its strength with evil intent. with Clements, the black boys and the all the world over. Though all around was peaceful and pack horses until we come for you! I the sun shone fiercely down, yet from don't thing you're in a fit condition to ed, beginning to have a suspicion that the honor that probably awaited her if that cloud there came a noise as of the travel yet. We must hurry on, if it's something was wrong and going into she were captured. But she did not rushing of a mighty wind. It was a not too late, and we'll come back for the narrow passage. the knee of my left trousers leg; that cyclone and thunderstorm in one, which you in a few hours. God bless you, my

giants themselves with a noise that testily, wondering at the squatter's course of its descent.

That cloud was instinct with a wild, "Don't you think you'd better stop till against it, experiencing a rap on the of the savage. She told him that I was unholy, lurid light. It glowed with you can see? You'll miss the way and side of his head that made him feel a spirit, had taken the form of a pigeon world. Truly there is nothing swifter ceivable shape and size from the long, It is clear to me now that my brain low plenty coolah, I t'ink it." rugged, jagged rent to the startling must have been dulled after the shock I And now the murder was out, and surely as they made any further at swordlike flash. It breathed of unspeak- had been subjected to; otherwise I there was not a little excitement in the tempt to molest her party, the pigeon able horrors. It was the living embodi-should have realized the true state of cave. Norsh Mackenzie said that I would come back, and bring a large ment of the pent up fury of the ele-affairs sooner. What struck me as must be seen by the blacks and neces- body of white men who would surely ments. It was the passage of Jupiter's strange was that those around me were sarily killed. She scolded poor Snewball destroy them utterly. The black fellow triumphal car. It was the realization whispering in low, hurried, excited for not having acquainted some of the looked thoughtful but incredulous. of death, destruction and devastation. tones, as if they did not want me to party with my intentions.

of that storm and perhaps on to their The squatter took both my hands in themselves in readiness for whatever ward, and the little party retreated to fate, for they would have to pass his and the voices ceased. There was a might occur. through that narrow gorge, where they silence that was more terrible than the

Some one stammered out: "Great heavens, he must be"down the side of the ravine, faster, The squatter put his arm round my if postable, find out their plans. We may in with me. faster, before that black cloud, like waist as if to steady me and spoke in a learn something and gain time." voice that shook: "Have courage, my | The blacks still stood some 200 yards | the fierce thunderstorm broke. No soonboy. God never deserted a man yet off. Then she went down the terrace er had the storm lifted than the blacks

when he was in trouble." er, and I knew that the sun shone high | bough and waved it over his in a like | help could come now, so they must iry n the heavens again—aye, high and manner. bright in the blue heavens, but not for | The girl had evidently made herself | Norah Mackenzie, at co me-not for me.

oyous resurrection under the influence | setected by one in se doing.

mythical man in the moon. A cold wind of creation. There were a freshness and tache.

I suppose it was because there was no I lay on the ground where I had sung age had not understood what she said.

"That's right, old man. I know it's she mimicked the high flown tones o all very well for me to talk, but I'm the old reprobate-"if the lady with the glad to see you take it like that—it's the sure sign of a brave man." And he led me to the shade.

While I swallowed a morsel of food and drank some tea that Clements insisted on my taking, I learned that it was the survey party which accompanied the squatter. They had run out of rations when defining the 138 degrees of east longitude, and had taken the opportunity of the squatter's pilotage to take their pack horses into the Macarthur for fresh supplies. It was a fortuitous circumstance, as, perhaps, may be as well to show at this stage of

CHAPTER XIX.

CAUGHT IN THEIR OWN TRAP. When that morning I had left the cave, and scaled the crevasse, with the somewhat wild hope of falling in with the squatter's party, and bringing back help, it was Norah Mackenzie who first missed me, and it was the conduct of by inch and foot by foot. Were these there was still some work left in the if you give me a horse. It's unfortu- strangely uneasy and apprehensive as to like the color of the setting sun will nate, though, that this darkness doesn't his own share in the matter. Every min- give herself up and enter into a state Away to the south the heavens had lift. I never experienced anything like ute he had expected that my lifeless of connubial felicity with him he will body would come hurtling down the withdraw his forces and let us all dethe edge of a gully which led right The rain had ceased as suddenly as it rocks, and this caused him to gravitate part in peace. His people, he says, are down to the valley through which flow- begun, now that the storm had passed. in an aimless and undecided sort of here from very different motives, that ed the creek, and there I saw on the op- In the tropics storms do not generally fashion between the narrow passage and of revenge being one and that of a posite bank a sight that made my heart last long, and in a few minutes after- the cave for some little time. The ways check to our future movements being

> red to Snowball that I was following to say that, although he does not person-The men around me were still talk- Daly's example, and going off on my ally admire me, still, he has no doubt,

> > quite understand. The old fashioned It was a grim joke, but despite the "Where is Mr. Parker?" she persist- nearly became sick at the thought of

> > "That fellow bin go up," grinned in that crowd who would have a rifle Just then my handkerchies, with the quential savage.

queer for a second or two. "That fel- and flown away to where there was a

Only those who have seen a tropical hear. It was exasperating, incompre- "We must distract the attention of the Giant Killer" looks much in the thunderstorm can form any idea of hensible — the whole thing was like the blacks," she said and, going on to same way when it is told that if it does the terrace, uttered a loud "coo-ee." In not behave itself an old woman riding party of horsemen stop, "round up" . "What's the matter with you?" I an instant a number of them came to- on a broomstick will come down the and seize their horses, tie them together cried again. "Why doesn't some one ward the cave, and the attention of the chimney and take it away. He, howand make for the shelter of the cliff. speak? You can't go too soon, but you whole camp was attracted. Those in ever, said that if the lady with "the can't see to go now. What are you all the cave were somewhat mystified. yellow locks and the cheeks like the set-

> she said, "but see that they're handy. of blacks had been kept from straggling We'll interview the blacks, keep them off to the highlands in pursuit of game, from ascending in the meantime and, where they might possibly have fallen

before any one could dissuade her and, began a determined attack upon the I felt a warm glow steal all over me. | breaking a small leafy bough from a cave, their idea being to force it at any heard the "crick, crick" of a tree, waved it over her head. In another risk. Things began to look serious. grasshopper, that fanatical sun worship- minute a tall savage had taken another would be little less than providential

sufficiently plain to the blacks, because personal danger, again harangued the "O God, have mercy upon me!" I most of them retired to some little dis- old chief. She kept him at least half an cried in my agony, falling upon my tance, and the chief advanced. Then, hour talking. At last he began to see before Jack or any of the party could through the ruse and darted forward as For I knew now that he had laid his prevent her, the girl went forward on to | if to seize her. He had begun to t hand upon me—that I had been struck a clear space some 50 yards from the that after all the dark eyed, sun kissen terrace. The black fellow also came to- maiden was the better of the two wom-I could hear the "crick, crick, crick" ward her. Suddenly she stopped, stamp- en, but with a laugh the girl drew he If the grasshopper as it gloried in its ed her foot significantly, and the savage revolver and leveled it full in his face. existence, basking in the sun's hot rays. dropped the spear he had been dragging He ducked his head and promptly recould hear a million living things along the ground by his toes. He looked tired, not being prepared to die. that had been for months parched and ashamed, and so he was, but not bedead, like the grains of wheat in an | cause he had taken a spear with him to | breastwork. For a good 20 min Egyptian tomb, spring into a full and | meet a woman, but that he had been | kept discharging a flight of spears from

f that reviving rain. Some light heart- The party gradually came down from well as bucks had climbed o ed bird broke into a glorious rhapsody | the terrace, all save Gordon, who came | terrace, where they began to tear f song. There was a whir and a mur- and sat on the breastwork so as to keep the loose stones, quite regardless of the mur in the balmy air as nature awoke a lookout. The chief, who was a white fact that their comrades were falling tefreshed from her long winter's sleep. haired, rakish looking individual with dead around them. could hear the splash and the ripple | breast and arms cicatrized in a groof hundreds of little waterfalls and tesque and horrible fashion and who gether deserted the little band. miniature rivulets as they fell from the had several possum skins hung on variswallowed me up and destroyed me ut- cliffs and coursed down the sides of the ous parts of his body, looked with not there would be another addition to the terly. I was conscious of having lost valley to make a freshet in the sadly a little surprise on the "White Mary" long list of bloody massacres in the his

The girl tried another tack. The sav-

you have a chance of doing a noble Some one seized me by the arm and deed and sacrificing yourself for others. This gentleman says''-and here



horsemen with a mob of pack horses. I nothing had occurred. But what was terious. Doubtless it may have occur- mount. He has also done me the honor "Well, Snowball," asked his mis- | then have the honor of belonging to the Elsie? It's a tempting offer. Shall we Snowball tried to look as if he did not go with this nice old gentleman?

not refrain from smiling. Poor Elsie know that there was one stanch soul

stone in it, came sailing down the cre- After a little more talk the savage company had gone. Then Norah Mac-"My!" cried Snowball as he dodged kenzie tried to work on the superstition large camp of white men, and that, as child who has given up reading "Jack What was this strange girl going to do ting sun' did not give herself up withask any questions. They only held and fetch her. He then retired back the cave. Some considerable time had "Place your rifles on the ground," been spent in this parley, and the mob

It was well on in the afternoon when

Then the blacks made a dash at the their wimmeras. The black gin

It seemed as if Providence had alto-If in a few minutes aid did not con were crawling over the barricade. In

would soon be all up with the little party. Must Savile and Jack put into execution what they had agreed upon or would one of the women relieve them of the work and do it herself? In an--that which has been done by here women before rather than they shoul fall into the hands of fiends-had not