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CHAPTER IV.

It was a glorious and memorable ride for all of them. Four periect horsemen in a horseman's country. Such a taste of paradise as, in this weary old world, generally precedes trouble.

"How much of this belongs to the Risky Ranch, Mrs. Rolt?" asked Anstruther.

"All of it as far as you can see." "None of it," corrected Jim, "except few meadows and some water tront on the Fraser as you can't see."

know what I mean perfectly well.' "Only you don't say it, and he doesn't "Well, if it isn't yours," persisted the

puzzled Anstruther, looking from one to the other, "why should not anyone run their cattle over it?" "They might if they did not need water or hay. These two Harrison

boys are trying it now." "What Jim means, Mr. Anstruther, is duck-shooting should have little that we have corralled, oh, I beg your enough to do.

winter must sometimes have hay." cattle. I don't see any fences. "We don't keep them, they keep couple, an owl called from the timber themselves, in summer, and in win- which they were now skirting. ter-" she broke off abruptly, and

pointed to where a number of slowmoving beasts were strung out in line of march towards the river. "Do you see that band? Those are the first of our beasts coming in. For Isn't it early in the day for him to be

wandering ir by hundreds. They know the seasons as well or better than we do." "Do you mean that they have been

out all the summer and are coming in now of their own accord?" "Just that. In all sorts of beautiful little parks islanded in that black tim-ANYONE ONE NEEDING ber; in groves shady and deep, by little streams we have hardly seen, they have dreamed away their summer the sturbed and now they are coming come with their calves behind them, our income."

"It seems easy. Where does the

Mrs. Rolt turned laughingly in he addle to Jim. "sn't any work, is there, Jim?"

Jim, who was riding in his shirtsleeves, with his coat in a roll at the back of his saddle, looked meditativey at his own bare corded arms. "Might be some in the meadows in

'skeeter time,'" he suggested. the wolves have grown numerous, and ed for years to look upon all Indians "Rounding up the strays keeps a man | the deer all gone back away off," said as inoffensive, there would have been in the saddle quite a while, and there's he as the others came up, mimicking but little sleep in the white people's some don't hanker after too much the old woman's manner. "Seems like camp that night. branding and such like, but it's all in | it, doesn't it?" and he pointed to a a lifetime. If it is work it is better great square stack of fresh hides. Guess if I was the boss of the Risky, that, under those trees. They must fire, smoking and muttering among I wouldn't change places with anyone."

"That is pretty of you, Jim."

"I guess the boss agrees with me, her bent claws. and he knows England as well as he knows B.C., and has sampled the best there is to be had pretty nigh all over. "Yes, but he had his fill of England

first, Jim, and he is older." Her eyes followed the laughing couple which preceded them, as her thoughts followed Combe's, and the pain in his honest grey eyes was reflected in hers. She was sorry for her old friend, and knew that it was useless to explain. The old world had called its own, and both knew that

Kitty had listened to its call. Meanwhile the others had ridden pered Mrs. Rolt. ahead, and were now holding up their hands to keep the stragglers back. They left their horses, and stole quietly on to some tall trees which fringed a small lake, a blue turquoise set in the red gold of the reeds, and islanded of addressing a princess.

amongst the grey green of the sage For the last fifty yards the boy and girl, they were little more, crapt on their hands and knees, and when they raised their heads above the reeds there was a sudden splashing and scurry as a bunch of mallards sprang quacking from the water. In quick succession four reports followed one another, and two of the ducks tumbled back headlong into the lake. For a moment the rest of the birds looked as if they were going straight away, but some foolish prompting of curi-

osity brought them back, swinging in a circle high overhead. "Stand still, Miss Clifford," they heard the Englishman say, "now let them have it," and again there were four flashes, but even to the onlookers it was almost impossible to distinguish

more than two reports. Again two birds came down, not all aslant on struggling wings, but with their heads under them, dead in mid air, killed instantly, as if by lightning. "That's a fine performance, Miss Clifford. Very few girls at home could beat that," they heard Anstruther say. "You were too quick for

"What! didn't you shoot?" "No," he lied gallantly. "See, my gun is loaded still, and he threw open the reach, showing the two cartridges which he had slipped in with the rapidity of an old hand almost as he

"Then I killed those two mysels" "Unless they died for love of you." "And who killed the others?" "I suppose that you did."

"Oh, nonsense; I'm not going to believe that." "Well, we'll take one each then if can get them. Give me your hand, please, for a moment," and under the

transparent pretext of wanting support

whilst he balanced himself upon a par-

tially submerged pine pole, Anstru-

ther managed to retrieve his game.

Perhaps he held the little warm hand a trifle longer and pressed it a trifle harder than the circumstances war ranted, but the girl's rosy face regis-

tered no serious protest.

"He's a very fluent liar," muttered Mrs. Rolt half to herself as they rode

"Bags his game very neatly," an swered Jim. "And she's a little fool," said the lady viciously, but Anstruther neither

heard the criticism nor the praise any morr than did Kitty. In their veins the young blood was "How annoying you are, Jim. You beating so that their ears were deafened to everything except the mea

sure of one old song, which once truly learned becomes the music of a life-For them the scent of the sage brush, the hurry and roar of rising wings, and the blue of lonely upland lakes, would be as the keys of paradise as long as they both should live.

pardon, Kitty, secured the exclusive | Unfortunately that song is a duet right to all the water and all the hay and gives pleasure to two only, so that meadows in the district, and without though the pools seemed innumerable, these the run would not be worth any- and the glory of the day unstinted, an thing. Stock must have water, and in | end came to Jim's loquacity. He was all eyes, but his tongue had failed him. "I see, but how do you keep your; Suddenly as Jim and the boss's wife followed soberly behind the younger

bringing back dreams with which

The two in front had pulled up, and were waiting for Mrs. Rolt to join them. When they came alongside Anstruther asked:

"Did you hear that owl, Combe? the next fortnight you will see them calling? There do you hear him? He must be quite close to us."

"That ain't no owl," "What is it, then?"

"A Chilcoten telling his pals that there are white men coming. You'll see the smoke of their camp as soon as this umber opens up again. I guess I'll ride on ahead," and so saying he put his horse into a gallop. "Why is he in such a hurry?"

"I expect he wants to get a glimpse of their camp before they have had time to cache anything," replied Mrs. Rolt. "Jim is looking for things not mentioned in the game list.

But when the three reached the In dian camp they found Jim Combe sitting loosely in his saddle, the bridle thrown carelessly on his horse's neck. talking with the utmost good temper to a grey-haired old mummy, as if he were enjoying a gossip in his native

"Says that the tribe is hungry, that

many suns have you been hunting?" evil glances toward the spot where He looked at her smiling, no ways he asked, turning again to the squaw. the white people lay.

"Ten suns," showing the number on "And how many men stop here?"

"Kineeshaw," whined the old hag in instincts of the savage remain, and

curious sing-song. "Oh! Cultus Jack, eh?"

"Nawitka, white man's name Cultus gloom as a storm centre.

Khelowna's wife, Emma?" "Nawitka, me Emma." "You don't mean to say that awfu

old woman is the chief's wife," whis-"Yes. She's the princess. Nice prin

camp here, Emma." Anstruther smiled at Kitty. Combe's seemed a somewhat informal manner

"Not much wood," grumbled th "Oh, the wood's all right. It's

warm night and we shan't want much." "Water very bad, makes men sick." it. All right, old Loveliness. I'm on tering. The intent scrutiny of those to your curves. Doesn't seem to hanker much after our society, does she, Mrs.

Rolt?" he said laughingly, as he took the horses, and led them away. Returning in a little while, his axe chopped out the roots at which Anstruther had been vainly tugging, cut down a dozen trees and stripped them whilst he whistled, so that the beds were heaped high with sweet-smelling hemlock; the fly was tightened and set firmly between its guy, and the fire

heart in the gloom. It is not a bad thing for other people to have one man amongst them who gang was travelling the Risky run that knows how to help himself.

Indian appeared dragging the first lock of his Winchester. deer into camp.

four others returned at one time. bringing with them seven deer in all nary care for a month or six weeks.

had grown tired of doing nothing, murderer. 'Just think what a ripping picture all make, squatting by the fire, with the his half closed lids heavy as lead. princess grubbing in the ashes.

replied Mrs. Rolt. "Like it. It can't hurt them. They ought to feel flattered that any one cares to preserve their awful faces," and so saying, he strolled nonchalantly over to the neighboring camp. "I wish he would not do it," mut

tered Mrs. Rolt, undecidedly.

about those Indians. I've photographed them before and they did not mind a bit, but he will come back if you call him.'

Unfortunately, Mrs. Rolt wavered and neglected her opportunity. With perfect assurance Anstruther strolled up to the four sullen figures who glowered at him as he came, but

did not move a muscle. "Nice evening," he said, "isn't it. I don't happen to speak your lingo but hope I see you well. Ever had your pictures taken?"

Still the four remained motionless. "Not in a conversational mood, eh? Well, perhaps that is better. Mustn't talk whilst the operation is being performed. Put your head a little on one side, sir. No savvy, eh! Well, think of 'er, old chappie," and he pointed to Imma with a grin, and kneeling down djusted his camera, aiming it right nto the faces of the silent group. "As he did so Emma disappeared

nto the tent. "Whoop! Gone to ground," he shouted with a laugh, and the four, rising with a growl, turned their backs

For a moment he was nonplussed, but the devil of island insolence had possession of him, and he knew that Kitty was watching him. Still on his knees he reached for a long stick from the fire, and bending forward, tossed it so the hot end of it fell upon the nearest Indian's bare foot.

Quick as thought the Chilcoten turned, and for a moment the women drew their breath and feared for what was to come, but the camera clicked and the fire still divided the aggressor "Got you, my beauty," said the un-

conscious artist," with quite your most engaging smile on," and utterly careeyes, he put his camera into its case, Mrs. Rolt and Jim, who had returned eading shoes for style, qualtoo late to interfere, did not join in his laugh, but the sullen faces of the out- ity and fit, also many other

raged four, and the sight of Emma, the beautiful, peeping out to see if all was lines at lower prices, the safe again, were too much for Kitty, who laughed till the tears ran down Sovereign, Ever-right and

Anstruther, between his peals of laughter, "there is nothing to look so men in all sizes. We have serious about. One would think that you had been photographed. I didn't also many lines of Low hurt the sulky brutes, and if they didn't like being photographed, what Shoes for men and women to matter. You aren't afraid of Indians

in this country, are you?" "No, but we don't want enemies. At any rate, for goodness' sake, stop prices. laughing. You can see how they hate

It is a curious trait of the Indians, Don't Fail to See at any rate of the Far West, that they themselves seldom or never laugh, whilst the merest hint that you are laughing even in the mildest way at them, puts their backs up immediately. Like the vast plains and dumb forests through which they roam, they are by nature sombre, and a laugh is as much of an outrage to them as a thrush's song would be to the forest

CHAPTER V.

If Anstruther had not been young and reckless, and the ladies accustom-

Th Indians did not sleep. Through all that long night the hunthan any play I ever heard ten of. "There's another stack just back of ters of the Chilcotens sat round their have killed forty or fifty deer. How themselves, casting now and again

Constant contact with men, armed with weapons of precision, has taken the courage out of the grizzly; it has "My son, his fader, and two more." | had the same effect upon a tribe which "Who is your son? What you call is naturally one of the boldest and fiercest in Western Canada, but the anyone with half an eye would have

recognized that dull glow in the fores An hour or two passed by, the night "Then his father is Khelowna. You deepened, the drone of growling voices went on and then a figure detached itself from the gloom and slipped without a sound into the firelit circle.

Just then Jim Combe stirred in his sleep, and throwing one arm restlessly from his blankets, turning over on his cess, isn't she? Well, we're going to side towards the Indian's fire, muttering in his sleep.

As he did so, the figure glided back into the shadows.

The bushes which seemed to have crept nearer to the fire listening, until their black leaves were tipped with red light, swallowed him up and for a full minute the droning ceased.

The silence which followed was more "That is why you have camped by ominous even than that incessant mutwatching eyes made itself felt. At last the chief spoke.

"The white dog dreams in his sleep, he said, "but his eyes are shut," and at once the figure returned and took its place in the muttering circle. Good hunter as Khelowna was, he made a mistake. His forest training should have taught him that the hunted feign often. If he had remembered that, Jir Combe might not have recognized in the fifth figure Davies' murderer, an made to leap and glow like a merry Indian who had been wanted by the police for the last three years. As it was, Jim Combe knew what kind of a fall, and the hand which was beneath And now as the afternoon waned, an the blankets closed quietly round the

But he did not stir in his place. He In the course of the next hour he and wanted that man's life as every cowboy in the district did, who had ever heard of poor old "Lofty" Hart, shot enough meat to last them with ordi- through his cabin window as he read his home letters by lamplight, but he "I wonder if it is too dark to take a was not prepared to risk the safety of photograph," asked Anstruther, who the women for the chance of taking a

So he lay still and watched, his those solemn-looking beggars would whole body crying out for sleep and Just before the grey of dawn came "It's much too dark, and, besides, I into the sky, he saw Khelowna hand don't think that they would like it," something to his visitor, who put it

One of the dogs, which had lain all night just inside the edge of the firelight, rose and attempted to follow growing in value year after year. him. It was his own dog probably, for though it cowered at the chief's low growl, it took no other notice of his "Oh, what nonsense, . Mary," replied the girl. "you really are too absurd

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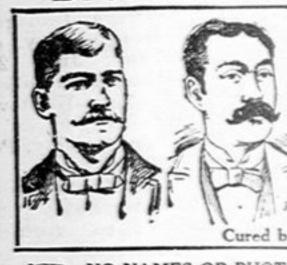
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