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The Chalice Courage

A Romance of Colorado

By Cyrus Townsend Brady

CHAPTER XIII.

The Castaways of the Mountains. The man was evidently seeking her, for so soon as he caught sight of her he broke into a run and came bounding up the steep ascent with the speed and agility of a chamois or a mountain sheep. As he approached the girl rose to her feet and supported herself upon the boulder against which she had been leaning, at the same time extending her hand to greet him.

"Oh," she cried, her voice rising nervously as he drew near, "I am so glad you are back, another hour of loneliness and I believe I should have

Now whether that joy in his return was for him personally or for him abstractly, he could not tell; whether she was glad that he had come back simply because he was a human being who would relieve her loneliness or

whether she rejoiced to see him individually, was a matter not yet to be determined. He hoped the latter, he believed the former. At any rate, he caught and held her outstretched hand in the warm clasp of both his own. Burning words of greeting rushed to his lips torrentially; what he said, however, was quite commonplace, as is often the case. Word thought and outward speech did not correspond.

"It's too cold for you out here, you must go into the house at once," he declared masterfully, and she obeyed with unwonted meekness.

ANYONE ONE NEEDING had grown suddenly chill. Still holding her hand, they started toward the pairs, Cement Curbing or foot was of little support to her and cabin a few rods away. Her wounded Culvert Tile, see spite of his hand she swayed; without NO. SCHUETZ or myself at the shop a thought he caught her about the ieorge Whitmore the door. It seemed as natural as it was inevitable for him to assist her in this way, and in her weakness and bewilderment she suffered it without comment or resistance. Indeed, there was such strength and power in his arm, he was so secure there, that she liked it. As for him, his pulses were bounding at the contact; but for that matter even to look at her quickened his heart beat.

Entering the main room, he led her gently to one of the chairs near the table and immediately thereafter lighted the fire which he had taken the precaution to lay before his departure.



In Spite of His Hand She Swayed.

It had been dark in the cabin, but the fire soon filled it with glorious light. She watched him at his task and as he rose from the hearth questioned

"First your supper, and then the story," he answered, turning toward the door of the other room.

see that nothing is of any importance kept on as long as I dared and still to me but the story? Did you find the leave myself time to get back to you

"I found the place where it had

"Where it had been!" "There wasn't a single vestige of it left. That whole pocket, I knew it well, had been swept clean by the

"But Kirkby, and Mrs. Maitland

"They weren't there." "Did you search for them?"

"But they can't have been drowned," she exclaimed piteously. "Of course not," he began reassur ingly. "Kirkby is a veteran of these mountains and-"

"But do you know him?" queried the girl in great surprise. "I did once," said the man, flushing

darkly at his admission. "I haven't seen him for five years."

lation, thought the woman, keen for the slightest evidence as to her companion's history, of which, by the way he meant to tell her nothing. "Well?" she asked, breaking the

"Kirkby would certainly see the cloud burst coming and he would take the people with him in the camp up on the hogback near it. It is far above the flood line; they would be quite safe loved, I mean, and they-"

"And did you look for them there?" "I did. The trail had been washed out, but I scrambled up and found un disputed evidence that my surmise

greatly relieved and comforted by his put it on again." reassuring words. "And Robert Maitland and the rest on the mountain, what do you think of them?"

escaped, too. I don't think any of him in her heart for such generous them have suffered more than a thor- and kindly consideration. ough drenching in the downpour and that they are all safe and perhaps on their way to the settlements now."

"But they wouldn't go back without searching for me, would they?" cried the girl.

"Certainly not. I suppose they are searching for you now." "Well then-"

"Wait," said the man. "You started down the canon, you told everybody you were going that way. They naturally searched in that direction, they hadn't the faintest idea that you were going up the river.

of going up the canon when I started out in the morning, it was the result for your wounded foot, and giving

The question flashed across his own mind and into the woman's mind at the same time when she heard the incompleted sentence; but she, too, checked the question that rose to her

'This is the way I figure it," continued the man hurriedly to cover up his confusion. "They fancy themselves alone in these mountains, which, save for me, they are; they believe you to have gone down the can-Kirkby with Mrs. Maitland and the others waited on the ridge until Mr. Maitland and his party joined them. They couldn't have saved very much to eat or wear from the camp, they probably divided into two parties, still face-"all winter," he added, desthe larger with the woman and chil- perately. dren, started for home, the second went down the canon searching for your dead body!'

permitted me to be of service one place and one direction to search for you."

"And that was?" "Down the canon?"

"What did you do then?" "I went down the canon myself. think I saw evidence that some one

had preceded me, too." "Did you overtake them?" "Certainly not, they traveled

rapidly as I; they must have started early in the morning and they had several hours the advantage of me." "But they must have stopped some-

where for the night and-" "Yes," answered the man; "if I had only myself to consider, I should have "Now tell me," she began, "you pressed on through the night and

overtaken them when they camped." "Only yourself?" "You made me promise to return here by nightfall. I don't know wheth-"No," pleaded the girl, "can't you er I should have obeyed you or not. I

by dark." She had no idea of the desperate speed he had made to reach her while it was still daylight.

"If you hadn't come when you did, I should have died," cried the girl impetuously. "You did perfectly right. I don't think I am a coward; I hope not. I never was afraid before, but-"

it's not necessary; I understand ev. sea—"together. You have shown me ly except when you bid me enter, as the yard office when the force by sunset that I left off following their my foot gets well, if you can teach me

"I should, I did," admitted the girl. "It wasn't so bad during the day time, but when the sun went down and you did not come I began to imagine everything. I saw myself left alone here So that was the measure of his iso ed, without a human being to speak I could not bear it."

"But I have been here alone for five years," said the man grimly. "That's different. I don't know why you have chosen solitude, but I-"

"You are a woman," returned the other gently, "and you have suffered, that accounts for everything." "Thank you," said Enid, gratefully.

"And I am so glad you came back to "Back to you," reiterated the man,

and then he stopped. If he had allowed his heart to speak he would have said, Back to you from the very ends of the world. "But I want you to believe that I honestly did not leave the trail until the ultimate moment," he added.

"I do believe it;" she extended her hand to him. "You have been very good to me, I trust you absolutely."

And for the second time he took that graceful, dainty, aristocratic hand in his own larger, stronger, firmer grasp. His face flushed again; under other circumstances and in other days perhaps he might have kissed that hand. As it was he only held it for a moment and then gently released it.

"And you think they are searching for me?" she asked. "I know it. I am sure of what I

myself would do for one I love-I "And they will find me?"

The man shook his head. "I am afraid they will be convinced that you have gone down with the

was correct. I haven't a doubt that "Yes," said the woman, "and a

As she spoke she flushed a glorious crimson at the remembrance of that hension as to your material comfort; meeting, but the man was looking I have lived in these mountains for a "I am sure that they must have away with studied care. She thanked long time. I am prepared for any

"They will have gone down the There is a cave, or recess rather, bestream with the rest, and it's just possible that the searchers may find them, the body of the bear, too. This river ends in a deep mountain lake and I think it is going to snow; it will be frozen hard tomorrow."

"And they will think me-there?" "I am afraid so."

"And they won't come up here?" "It is scarcely possible." "Oh!" exclaimed the woman faintly

at the dire possibility that she might not be found.

"I took an empty bottle with me," "No," admitted Enid, "that is true. said the man, breaking the silence, "in I did not tell anyone. I didn't dream which I had enclosed a paper saying that you were here and safe, save "God bless that-" burst out the I built a cairn of rocks in a sheldirection how to reach the place. man, and then he checked himself, tered nook in the valley where What had he been about to say? the tightly corked bottle wedged on your camp had been pitched and left top of it. If they return to the camp they could scarcely fail to see it."

"But if they don't go back there." "Well, it was just a chance."

"And if they don't find me?" "You will have to stay here for a while; until your foot gets well enough to travel, anyway," returned the man, evasively.

"But winter is coming on; you said the lake would freeze tonight and if it

"It will snow."

The woman stared at him appalled. "And in that case-"

"I am afraid," was the slow reply, "that you will have to stay here." they were miles from a settlement; He hesitated in the face of her white,

> "My God," exclaimed the girl, "alone, with you?"

"Miss Maitland," said the man, reso-"And had it not been for you," cried lutely, "I might as well tell you the the girl, impulsively, "they had found truth. I can make my way to the settlements now or later, but it will be a journey of perhaps a week. There will answered the man, simply. be no danger to me, but you will have "I can follow their speculations exact- to stay here. You could not go with ly; up or down, they believed you to me. If I am any judge you couldn't have been in the canon when the possibly use your foot for a mountain cloud burst, therefore there was only journey for at least three weeks, and by that time we shall be snowed in as effectually as if we were within the arctic circle. But if you will let me go alone to the settlement I can bring back your uncle, a woman to keep you company, before the trails are impassible. Or enough men to make it practicable to take you through the canons and down the trails to your home again. I could not

do that alone even if you were well in the depth of winter." The girl shook her head stubbornly. "A week alone in these mountains and I should be mad," she said decisively. "It isn't to be thought of." "It must be thought of," urged the man. "You don't understand. It is cither that or spend the winter here

The woman looked at him steadily "And what have I to fear from you?" she asked.

"Nothing, nothing, as God is m witness," protested the other; "but the world?"

"The world," said the woman reflectively. "I don't mean to say that it means nothing to me, but it has cause enough for what it would fain say now." She came to her decision swiftly. "There is no help for it," she continued, "we are marooned"-she smiled faintly as she used the old "Don't apologize or explain to me, word of tropic island and southern and this shall be your room exclusive- One day he happened to be in

"The decision is yours," said the keep up the fire and prepare what we man, "and yet I feel that I ought to have to eat."

point out to you how-" "I see all that you see," she inter- outdoor work, but in the rest I must rupted. "I know what is in your do my part." mind. It is entirely clear to me. We

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can do nothing else."

"So be it. You need have no appreemergency. I pass my time in the summer getting ready for the winter. hind the house which, as you see, is



"And Who Is James Armstrong?" built against the rock wall, ar filled with wood enough to warm for two or three winters an ample supply of provisi clothing for my own Beecs. need something warmer than that

wear," he continued. "Have you needle, thread and clotta?"

she asked. "Everything," was the prompt

"Then I shall not suffer."

"Are you that wonder of wonder asked the man, smiling lightly, educated woman who knows how to

"It is a tradition in Philadelphia," answered the girl, "that her daughters should be expert needlewomen." "Oh, you are from Philadelphia." "Yes, and you?"

She threw the question at him so deftly and so quickly that she caught him unaware and off his guard a second time within the hour.

"Baltimore," he answered before he thought, and then bit his lip. He had determined to vouchsafe her no information regarding himself, and here she had surprised him into an admission in the first blush of their acquaintance, and she knew that she had triumphed for she smiled in recognition

She tried another tack. "Mr. Newbold," she began at a venture, and as it was five years since he

had heard that name, his surprise at her knowledge, which after all was time. "We are like stories I have read, people who have been cast away on desert islands and-"

"Yes," said the man, "but no castaways that I have ever read of have been so bountifully provided with everything necessary to the comfort of life as we are. I told you I lacked nothing for your material welfare, and even your mind need not stagnate."

"I have looked at your books already," said the woman, answering his glance.

This was where she had found his name, he realized. "You will have this room for your own use and I will take the other for mine," he continued. "I am loath to dispossess you."

erything you feel. It was only because that you are a man and a gentleman. when I bring you your meals. I shall was out. The telephone range

ter except to take care of the burros, others do.

Continued on page 7.

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answered. He walked over to the instrument, took down the re-

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HE HAD A NAME.

"There isn't much to do in the win- transmitter, just as he had seen

"Hillo!" he called. "I am afraid I should be unequal to the other end of the line. "Is this eight-six-one-five-nine?" "Aw g'wan! Phwat d' ye tink Ol am? A box-car?"

Bank .

man to This great

dewn the and in the when the time present structu young Billingses be telling of the great-great-grand We're glad the but the long wait preciate it all the