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GYPSUM WALL PLASTER?

CHAPTER XXIII.

the scouting party sent out by Jim re

"Our people have driven the In

dians clear out of the country," as

serted Anstruther. "Arson at night

is the limit of their daring. It is not

likely that such miserable devils

would make a stand against armed

But Jim thought otherwise, and de

affording dangerous cover for an at

ther, watched Jim and his men

but his tone belied his words.

Mr. Austruther thinks."

tell him, Mr. Anstruther."

me," said Mr. Anstruther,

in the eyes of the woman he loved.

thing, and never asks him to do a

"But he can't do anything."
"Jim might let him try."

our special guard, sir.

place on guard.

work, "but I suppose Jim is right."

ported all clear to the sky line.

marauders.

tacking force.

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us; we will see that you are supplied. ... W. G. Patrick & Co., Limited, Torento

until to the poor little woman, the love that had been so nearly spoken Each of the men seemed bent on leaving her to the other. She detested Jim for his many perfections, and could not love Frank because he sim-

for her playmates. Now she had no

playmates; she had not even a lover.

Since his return to the ranch Jim had.

watched over her and Mrs. Rolt with

the most unfailing courtesy; had for-

gotten nothing; had forestalled every

wish; and even to Anstruther had

been courtesy itself; but avoiding any

outward demonstration, he had kept

titude Frank had done, but in some

undefinable way he had drawn him-

self further away from her every day,

Kitty at a distance

ply would not let her.

"They may be here any minute, They are too strong to sit down un-In the absence of Rolt, Jim Combe der the dressing we gave them. There took command of the party at the must be fifty armed men at least, and ranch, and military law was declared; they know that there are only four of that is to say, Jim insisted upon look- us, and one of us wounded. How is ing on the house as in a state of siege. Al now?"

though, as Anstruther protested, "Oh, he will do all right. It was there was not an Indian in sight nor, only a flesh wound. He has lost a he averred, ever likely to be again. lot of blood, but the old chap says The men were divided into watches, that he has plenty more. But if we so that there was not an hour of the tear down the stables, what are we day or night when some of them were going to do about the horses?" not on guard, whilst no work was un-"Turn them loose to rustle for themdertaken which could lead the de-

selves, and take their chance of being fenders to any distance from their shot. We can do nothing else." "It won't do to leave ourselves with-On the first day after the departure out horses. We might have to ride for of the posse, shots were heard over our lives, after all." the hog's back, and Jim, who made a "It can't come to that."

reconnaissance in person, reported "It might, Rolt. Think of the that a band of Chilcotens was killing cattle, but though the loss inflicted Rolt groaned, "I'm never thinking would be serious, he would not listen of anything else, Jim. What do you to Anstruther's suggestion that an at. advise?"

tempt should be made to drive off the "Well, if you ask me, I should knock out a partition or two, and make the dining-room and one of the He was determined that the story of the burning stacks should not be devil with a stable. It will play the devil with the house, but we can fix. that up again when the trouble is over. If you say the word 'I'll have the danger of a rush upon the house, feed brought in, and horses for the On the second day there was not ladies and half the men." even the sound of a shot to keep up "Why half?" the vigilance of the defenders, and

"We can't manage more, and shouldn't want them. If it comes to a show down some of us will have to stay to hold the Indians whilst the others get through."

"Which horses shall we bring in "Mrs. Rolt's, Miss Kitty's, your own, that stallion (he will have mended by now), and two more. The two sorrels I should think are best." "What about Mr. Anstruther's huncreed the destruction of certain barns ter?"

and outhouses beyond the corrals, as "His looks won't pay for his keep. He ain't the horse for this job. We aren't going fox hunting or hurdle They are valuable buildings in a jumping, and he'd play out before he country where lumber is not as plenti- got half way. The country breds are ful as it is at the coast, and Mrs. Rolt the only ones that could stay the diswatched the destruction of them with tance.

"It seems a pity, doesn't it?" she staying powers." said, as she and Kitty, with Anstru-Anstruther had come in unobserved

"He must be," asserted Anstruther, white and his eyes glittered angrily. "It would be a terrible sell if the Indians really had gone for good, as "We could put up with that, Kitty look at. All right in the shires, no don't you think, although I confegs doubt, horses and pink coat, and pabusiness," retorted Combe coldly. "Why don't you tell Jim to let them

stand till Mr. Rolt comes back? You he had been overhauling his trunk, by the sudden illumination. "I? Scarcely, Miss Kitty. Jim is and at the moment when Jim came commander-in-chief. I am only the in upon them he had been showing Kitty valid, I am not even honored with a

the fancy-dress ball at Victoria. "Jim does not think you are fit for But he left Combe's semark unanduty yet, and you know that you are swered. Instead of a direct reply he asked Rolt if, as no Indians were in hem "I know that I am fit for very little, but I should like to try to be of come sight, he did not think someone might get through to Soda Creek to send use if the admirable Jim would le down the road for help. "He gives you the place of honor as

was thinking of it, and mean to send some one as soon as it grows dark if the coast is still clear." "Then, sir, if you will allow me,

"Yes, he is good enough to consider me fit to be left with-in charge of can save stable room for Ruddy-gore. Mrs. Rolt smiled. She understood I will take myself to Soda Creek towhat he would have said, and did not . make allowances either for the irra-"Nonsense, Anstruther, You could

tience of a man put at a disadvantage | dent-" "Try to put up with us yet a little pardon, Mr. Rolt, but I cannot be an while," she said. "Dick will be back invalid forever. I am perfectly able to

Kitty said nothing until he had left I would rather ride my horse to fods the room, then she turned to her Creek than abandon him." For a moulent Rolt's handsome face "I think Jim treats Mr. Anstruther clouded. He was himself a hot-tempered man, but he had learned since "Badly? What do you mean, Kitty? his marriage to hold himself in check.
He sees that he has the best of every- beside which the antagonism between

hand's turn. What more can Mr. An- was intelligible enough.

struther expect?" "Very well, Anstruther. I'll const. "I think he would rather have less der what you say. We shall not she match after match and trusted to consideration as an invalid and more sending anyone for an hour or two. chance, but even then Jim was meth-

"At any other time, yes, and so no of the doubt he would, and do his work for ladies. him after he had made a mess of it, What transpired there is not re- his fire and making sure that the but Jim can't afford to think of peo-ple's feelings just now, and to be can-did, I don't think your friend is show. gan to close in around the ranch, the faggots rattled and flew in all ing to advantage. We have done all Ruddy-gore was led into the disman-we can for him, and now he sulks." thed dining-room, and two figures, almost on his hands and knees, to the Kitty flushed to the temples. She knew that there was more than a clough, rode quietly away, the one to shadow of truth in Mrs. Rolt's charge, wards Soda Creek, and the other to excrescence replaced the furniture but her sympathies were with Frank, wards the Franklyn Ranch, to bring though even to her he had been cur- help, if possible.

lously cold and distant since Jim's "We are in a serious position, and they were the best men to send," was her life had Kitty's bright the explanation which Rolt vouch to shoot now as well as we can, but safed, and thereafter for twenty-four they won't come close whilst we have hours, Anstruther barely opened his that light. Tell the women to keep been used all her life to have men

CHAPTER XXIV.

A sullen gloom settled upon the house and on the prairie outside the spoke to one another, and both of them did their best to avoid Kitty. whilst the pines in the brule stood waist deep in the fog and long col umns of mist rose from amongst the had her patient. Everything trees like vapors from a witch's caul

But for two whole days no Indian

Ask Your Doctor

All run down, easily tired, thin, pale, nervous? And do not To this uncomfortable state of things Dick Rolt returned, acquiescing in all the arrangements which Sarsaparilla. No alcohol, no stimulation. A blood purifier, a "I did not tear down the stables until you came, but they ought to go along with the other buildings if you think that the Indians are still likely doctor decide. Montreal, Canada.

hope that, when the help sent for arrived, there would be no work for the helpers to do.

Mrs. Rolt was the life of the party,

but though she rallied the men on their silence and insisted upon songs in the drawing-room at night, and though Dr. Protheroe and her husband did all that they could to aid and abet her, her attempts were not crowned with success.

Every night, at least three different fumates of the ranch stole out to go over the defences. There was always some one missing from the group around the plane, trying the doors and re-arranging the barricades whilst no one was looking. The blow fell in the third night.

The whole prairie land had been swallowed up in gloom in which no star showed, no wind moved, when Mrs. Rolt woke her husband with a gentle pressure of his arm.

"Don't make a noise, dear," she whispered, "but listen. I suppose it is only a rat."

"Not even that, Polly. It must have been your fancy. Go to sleep, little woman, and don't worry." But at that moment a low knock spunded on the bed-room door. Instantly Rolt rose and opened it. Jim Combe was there with his rifle in his

"Bring your gun along, Rolt. They are trying to fire the house." In silence the two crept down the stairs, at the foot of which stood Anstruther, Old Al and Jack Fairclough with their Winchesters in their hands. The doctor was not there, but Jim led the way into a small room which jutted out from the face of the house,

a room which they had laughingly christened the excrescence. Roit had built it on as a conservatory for his Both sides of it, as well as the top, being of glass, it was the weakest point in their defences, and in it, therefore, had been piled more than its share of furniture barricades. I formed the foot of a letter L, of which the main front of the house was the

This room was in absolute darkness when the men entered it, but it seemed to Rolt that something stirred feebly in the corner of it, Presently a voice, barely audible even to their straining ears, whis-

"Are you there, Jim?" Combe moved silently across to wards the voice.

"Put that in your pocket for me, will you, old chap, until we've played this hand? Are you ready, now? Has each man picked his panel? Never mind the glass. Ready!"

There followed a faint scratching. "I think you underrate my horse's and then a feeble blue flame appeared for a second, after which a great and lurid red light lit the whole conand heard the last remark, and though servatory, and flooded the front of the very calm in speech, he was very house, showing up with the utmost distinctness the piled furniture, the "Maybe, but I wouldn't have crowded and broken limbs of Mrs. thought him any more good for this Rolt's favorites, and the figure of the job than them things you was hauling doctor behind a soup plate filled with out of your trunk for Miss Kitty to some stuff to which he had set fire.

But the five men had no eyes for these things. In front of them, all that I don't like seeing my buildings tent leather pumps, but not built for along the face of the ranch house, they saw bundles of faggots piled, and Anstruther flushed and bit his lips. amongst them a score of figures To pass the time during the siege momentarily arrested in their work

The Chilcotens had seen this Chinese fire the Christmas before, but it Clifford a red coat which he had had been lighted then to amuse them; brought with him at her request, for low it clung to their crouching figires, bathing them in its hideous glow, and betraying them to the rifles. which suddenly opened

When the roar of the Winchesters and the crashing of the glass had subsided, and the Chinese fire had died lown to a dull red glow, which hung for a time on the face of the fog. there were a dozen of the Chilcotens who could not have crawled away to save themselves from the conflagradon which they had come to kindle. "Let's get out of this quick, for heaven's sake!" cried Combe, coughtability of an invalid, or the impa not ride half the distance. Your acch Lend a hand to clear away these faging from the fumes of the chemicals. gots. We can't leave them there." Following his example, they all scrambled out, and swiftly and in

silence removed the faggots to a dis-The fog shrouded them and no one

"Now get back, and don't pull up As the others obeyed Jim went on his knees and laid a fire with more the two men, whilst it annoyed him, rapidity than he had ever laid one in

Another man might have struck Let Mr. Anstruther's horse be brought in instead of mine, Jim," and with laying them in closed packed bundles, that he turned his back on the pair so that when the small star of light of them and went upstairs to the appeared it grew steadily, and still the watchers could see Jim feeding

almost on his hands and knees, to the tongues of flame roared as they climbed upwards.

"We can't help that. They can see away from the windows, and let each man watch from behind something Don't spare the cartridges

"Get round to the back and watch house. Jim and Anstruther barely out there. I guess you can see in the dark better than most. Where's No one answered.

"Doc! Ho! Doc!" Jim cried, but "Did any of you see him outside? We haven't left him out, have we?" "He wasn't outside. Perhaps he knew enough to keep in out of the rain," sneered Fairclough, who detest ed the doctor, whose butt he had all

"He knows a good deal now, 'mongst other things, what a blanked fool you are! Poor old chap! There was a curious choking sound

know what to take? Then go in Jim's savage voice, as he groped about in the dark and turned something over on the floor. thing over on the floor. "Thank you, Anstruther. Will you take his feet? Here, Rolt, strike a light. We've got to chance their

shooting." Rolt struck one, and in the short gleam of it the others saw Jim and Anstruther lift the body from the floor and put it upon the table where the red fire had been.

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