





The Adventures of
THEODORE



IT TOOK FOUR MULES
TO DRAG THE BEAR. Page 209

The Adventures of
THEODORE

**A HUMOROUS
EXTRAVAGANZA
as related by
JIM HIGGERS**

to one of

The Rough Writers

**ILLUSTRATIONS
by HENRICH**

The

**H. J. Smith & Devereaux Co
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THE
ADVENTURES
OF
THEODORE.

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CHAPTER I

MAKING ACQUAINTANCES

I WAS detailed to go with Theodore in his hunt for adventure. The Superintendent of the agency couldn't exactly tell me what my duties were, except that I was to go along, make close observations, and to submit a report upon my return, doubtless for the guidance of future Vice-Presidents. My acquaintance with Theodore was limited, but encouraging,

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for once at a political meeting I had received full in the face a handful of mud intended for him. It seems that he remembered this considerateness on my part, and that it was at his own request that I had received the appointment to go with him. And now I submit my report, which must make up in truth for what it frequently lacks in incident. It must by this time be pretty well known throughout the country that Theodore is a man of the most peculiar sort of humor, or, I might say, humors, at times as grim as a grizzly, and then as playful as a kitten—sometimes the very statue of dignity, and then the harlequin of laughable trickery. In all these moods he has challenged my respect, and particularly so under strain, when no one could foresee how the prize fight would go, whether it would be won by the favorite or the comparatively new man. On

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such occasions I have seen him smile as calmly as if the result meant no more than the outcome of an ordinary Presidential election, and this, we must all agree, is the test of true greatness.

Equipped with a repeating rifle, and as much lead as I could carry, I joined Theodore at a little tavern in Michigan. It was not necessary to send up a card, and I went forthwith up the stairs, having been told by the landlord to listen in order to locate the great man's quarters, as the rooms were not numbered; and about the time I reached the head of the stairs I heard a violent thump and felt the house shaking. Then there followed furious scuffling and a tremendous jar. These manifestations of identity led me down to the end of the hall, where I rapped on a door, and, after a short silence within, during which I heard hard breathing, I was told to come in.

THEODORE

I did so, and there stood Theodore and a man of great size and muscular build, both panting. After a quick shaking of hands Theodore said: "Glad to see you. But just excuse me for a few moments, please. No, you needn't leave the room. And, in the meantime, shake hands with Lip Buck. He has come down from a logging camp to give me a few falls, and has just been accommodating me."

Lip Buck gave a sickly grin, and, looking at him closer, I saw that one of his ears was much dilapidated, and his nose quite out of the straight. Theodore braced himself, and Buck made ready. I have seen a good deal of wrestling in my time, but as a general thing it has been slow, a strain on both sides, with little action; but now I was to see something as full of pictures as a dance in a vitascope. The logger was one of the finest specimens of manhood I ever

THEODORE

saw, and he was surprisingly active, his enormous bulk in no wise hampering him. He was trained to a fine degree, and I found out not long afterward that he was the terror of all the camps. But these accomplishments and this prestige availed him nothing. I couldn't see how it was done, it was so sudden, but Theodore pivoted him on his hip, spun him around with an upward tendency and jumped from under him. Lip turned in mid air for a violent whirl or two, and then shot to the right, then to the left, and then came down upon his right shoulder, his legs tangling even after he had struck. After a time he was all down on the floor, where he lay without motion.

"Theodore," said I, in some alarm, "I'm afraid you have killed him."

A bright smile lighted the great man's face. "Let us hope not," he replied.

THEODORE

“Let us hope not, for the country can’t afford to lose good men, and Lip is a leader. See, he is coming round.”

Lip got up, and in a dazed way began to look around for his hat. He found it, put it on, and said: “Well, guess I’ll be goin’.”

“Don’t be in a hurry,” says Theodore. “You’ve got all day before you.”

“Yes, I know, but I got to see a doctor, I guess.”

“Oh, in that case don’t let me detain you. By the way, if you can wait till you get there, call on Dr. Mix, five miles out. He is an accommodating man, and helped me out not long ago when I felt lonesome and low-spirited. Although not much of a boxer, he stood up before me for two rounds, just to please. I told him I wouldn’t forget his kindness, and I’d like to throw trade his way. But if you can’t wait, you can’t, so that’s all

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there is to it. But hold on a moment, Lip. I want to thank you for your support. I——”

“That’s all right. I couldn’t vote agin you.”

“Oh, I don’t mean that sort of support. Voting is all well enough, but I mean for your support on this occasion—coming here and cheering me when you must have known that I was depressed. Well, good-bye.”

When the logger was gone Theodore smiled upon me, and I asked him, with some uneasiness, if I were expected to take Lip’s place. “Oh, no,” he replied, encouragingly. “You are simply to go along in the capacity of detective.”

“But not to ward off danger, for that is what you are looking for,” said I. “It must be for something else.”

Theodore smiled again, and said: “In all avocations a man is placed at a de-

THEODORE

cided advantage if he be accompanied by a trained mind—I don't mean the mind that has been brushed and dusted by books, but the mind sharpened by observation; in short, I thought that possibly you might, in your trained shrewdness, discover new combative pleasures, new tests and sensations for the spirit of adventure. The fact is, this tour of adventure is to be a profound secret——”

“And you want me to keep the reporters off. Is that it?”

The dark shadow of disappointment fell upon his face. “I see that you don't understand your business,” said he. “This is a secret, of course, but I want you to see that the reporters do get on to it—without my knowledge. That is one feature of your duties. But the main one is that, instead of keeping me out of danger, you must stealthily run me into it.”

THEODORE

“I understand.”

“Thank you. I begin to take hope. Let us go out for a walk.”

We walked out from the hotel. When some distance away, and after a long silence, Theodore said: “I have many pleasant memories of the campaign. It was a glorious epoch in our history. But, do you know, I have been sad since it was over? There was so much of life about it.”

“I can well believe you must be, and I am here to do my best to help you out.”

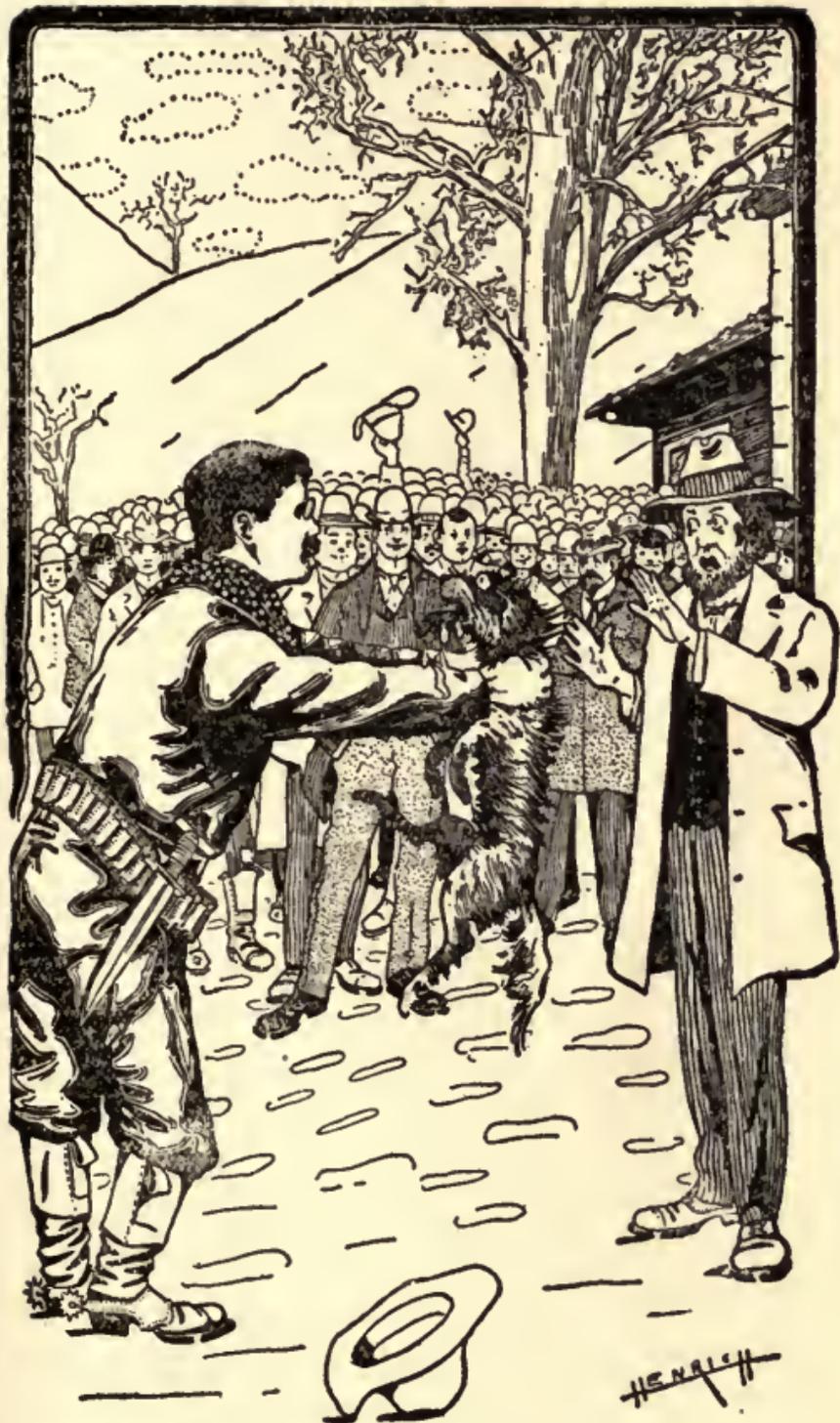
“Good. But would you mind stepping off there about ten feet and shying a stone at me by way of reminiscence?”

I stepped off, grabbed about, found a ten-ounce boulder and threw it at him. He ducked in a dignified way, and said, “Thanks.” The village was unusually quiet, considering who was in town, and

THEODORE

I said something about it, when all of a sudden there was a loud cry of "Mad dog!" The few villagers in the street took to their heels, and I was about to scamper, for I am never at ease when a mad dog is near, but Theodore quietly remarked: "Don't be in a hurry. The dog evidently doesn't know that I am here."

"And he ain't likely to care, even if he should know," I replied, feeling a chill creep up my back; and a moment later I believe that I should have run like a deer, for here came the mad dog with his tongue hanging out like a strip of red flannel; but Theodore touched me and all fear was gone in an instant. Still, I took the precaution to step behind Theodore. The dog made a lunge, and, in a dignified manner, full of self-respect and reserved strength, Theodore caught him about the neck



"PLEASE ACCEPT HIM WITH
MY COMPLIMENTS." Page 17



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with both hands, and, without the apparent strain of a muscle, choked him till his tongue lolled limp, then bowed to the Mayor, held forth the lifeless brute, and said: "Please accept him, with my compliments."

It struck me that our adventures were beginning ahead of time, but Theodore said we might expect them at any moment. "Some men are born lucky and some are born adventurous," said he, with a modest smile that I shall never forget.

Upon returning to the hotel we found the place in a stir and a fright over the carryings on of the cook, an enormous negro, who had come to the World's Fair as an East Indian lizard eater. Though of a gentle disposition, it seems that he had suddenly gone daft—at all events, he held a carving knife in his hand, had a Swede girl penned up

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in a corner, and was threatening her life. The terrified boarders were shrinking about, not knowing what moment he would turn upon them. "Bug house," said Teddy, pushing his way to the front. "Here, fellow, drop that knife."

"Kiougi kang ki ki!" exclaimed the madman, making a swipe at Ted. The landlady shrieked, and the local minister, who had dropped in to take dinner, began to mutter something that sounded like a prayer.

"Kuc mick ju ju!" exclaimed the lizard eater, preparing for another swipe.

"Oh!" cried the landlady. "Such language and in my house. Brother Peters, who would have thought that I should have lived to hear this?"

All this time Ted stood with his eyes fixed upon the lunatic, who, I noticed, had begun to tremble and to weaken.

"Drop that knife!"

THEODORE

“Hick, gi, gi!”

“Mercy!” groaned the landlord’s wife.

Ted quietly looked at his watch. “I am not in the habit of encountering crazy men,” said he, “but unless you recover your reason and hand me that knife within two minutes I will stuff your carcass with wheat straw and present it to the hook and ladder company.”

There was a gleam of reason in the eye of the lizard eater. His knees shook, but, with a grace that surprised us all, he bowed, handed the knife to Ted, and, in the softest tones, remarked to the landlady: “Shall I have chicken or a roast for dinner?”

CHAPTER II

A TIP ON THE HOLDUP TRUST

THE next day we put our traps on the train, and had seated ourselves when in came Siler, the great referee. Ted grasped him by the hand, with more feeling than I had ever seen him show, and cried out: "Siler, I am delighted to see you. Where are you going?"

"Oh, I heard you were here, and I just thought I'd have a chat with you. Wrestlin' much now, Ted?"

"Not much, Siler. I have had only a few falls lately, Siler."

THEODORE

"You are a great man, Ted. There ain't none like you."

"Thank you, Siler."

"And, by the way, Ted, I hear that you have dropped into another line of sport."

"What's that, Siler?"

"Why, I hear you've turned book-maker."

"No; that's a mistake, Siler. I have never done anything of that sort. Who told you?"

"I heard it from some of the boys. And they said you was particularly backin' a horse named Crampwell, or somethin' of the sort."

Then Ted laughed. "Oh, I understand," said he. "I wrote a book—the life of Cromwell."

"Wrote a book! How did you find time? But I guess a man has to idle and loaf once in a while to keep himself in

THEODORE

trim. It's that way with me. So I guess you got it up while you was restin'. But where are you goin' now?"

"Out West to look for sport."

"I didn't think anythin' was goin' on out there. Hadn't heard of a thing. Who arranged it? Is it a wrestle or a fight?"

"Oh, I am going out to kill things—lions and such."

"I don't want to offer advice, Ted, but if I was you I would quit cruelty and stick to the legitimate. I like a good fight as well as the next man, but I don't want to see anythin' hurt. What are you goin' to kill lions for? Are they doin' any particular harm? Why don't you kill welshers? Them lions don't hurt nobody."

"You don't understand, Siler. But you aren't an educated man, and it is not expected that you should understand."

"I ain't a statesman, that's a fact. But

THEODORE

do all great statesmen go about to kill things?"

"Yes, the really great ones."

"Did Lincoln kill things?"

"Well, Lincoln was different. In his day there were important matters before the public—something to engage his mind; but now there is practically nothing to circulate a man's blood."

"Why didn't you go to the Philippines, if you must shoot?"

"Well, there are several reasons—one is that I want sure game. I used to be a pretty fair sprinter, but the Filipinos are too swift for me."

I was glad when Siler left us, for there is nothing I dislike more than an argument. He is a good fellow, and all that, but he has been so long identified with the prize ring that he, as Ted well remarked, does not understand the real affairs of life. It seems that as the world

THEODORE

grows older man stands more and more in need of higher education. Even the detectives have begun to understand this, and particularly so the boys who read detective stories, for otherwise how could they write their experiences when abducted? One abducted boy that can write like the author of a detective story is worth three abducted boys that cannot. We have recently been given an example of this, and nothing that I can say is needed to make it stronger. And look how much better a wife a woman makes if she has had the advantages of higher education! Look how much more she is in demand, and observe how much better speech she can make at a club. Do you suppose a lot of hard-working, ignorant women could have talked, hour after hour, as the women of a certain club did not long ago, trying to wipe out the color line? I guess not.

THEODORE

Why, after a while a girl who doesn't cut up live things, and study the jointed snakes in water, and smile upon diseases that she has confined in a bottle—a girl who is unacquainted with such things may marry for love, but not for money. Men are getting so that they demand value received when they marry. While these reflections were running through my mind a man came along and, halting in front of Teddy, who for a few minutes had been quiet (having nothing to occupy his attention), looked at him critically for a few moments, and then said: "I beg your pardon, sir, but you look like a thinking man."

"You are off," says Ted. "Wake up some other passenger."

"Ah, I see you are a thinking man, and are modestly trying to hide it," and with that he flirted out a small-size newspaper. "Look at that and say that you

THEODORE

have gazed upon the product of the greatest mind of the century," says he, his lip quivering with emotion. Ted took the paper and says: "Why, this is the Commoner published by my old friend, Mr. Bryan."

The stranger's face lighted up at this. "Is he an old friend of yours, sir?"

"He is, and no mistake."

"Then you are a friend of mine, no matter what your name may be. But I am more than a friend of his. I helped him to start this paper, and I am now out canvassing for it."

"You didn't do half as much to bring it out as I did," says Teddy.

"Really, you interest me. But, pray, sir, what did you do to help bring it out?"

"I traveled all over the country making speeches," says Ted.

The man grasped him warmly by the hand. "Then, sir, you have done a pub-

THEODORE

lic good. Horace Greeley started his paper with not more than five hundred circulation; but, sir, you helped to start one that had fifty thousand from the jump."

Just at this moment a noise at the other end of the train attracted our attention. "You'll have to pay your fare or get off," exclaimed the conductor. Two burly fellows swore that they wouldn't, and the conductor, a smallish man, wiped his red brow, for he didn't know what to do under the circumstances. Notwithstanding the spread of higher education, there are men abroad who are still steeped in darkest ignorance. By this time Teddy was out of his seat, walking toward the men. He did not falter—that is never a feature of his programme. He walked up, demanded the name of the station to which they were going, and thereupon seized them,

THEODORE

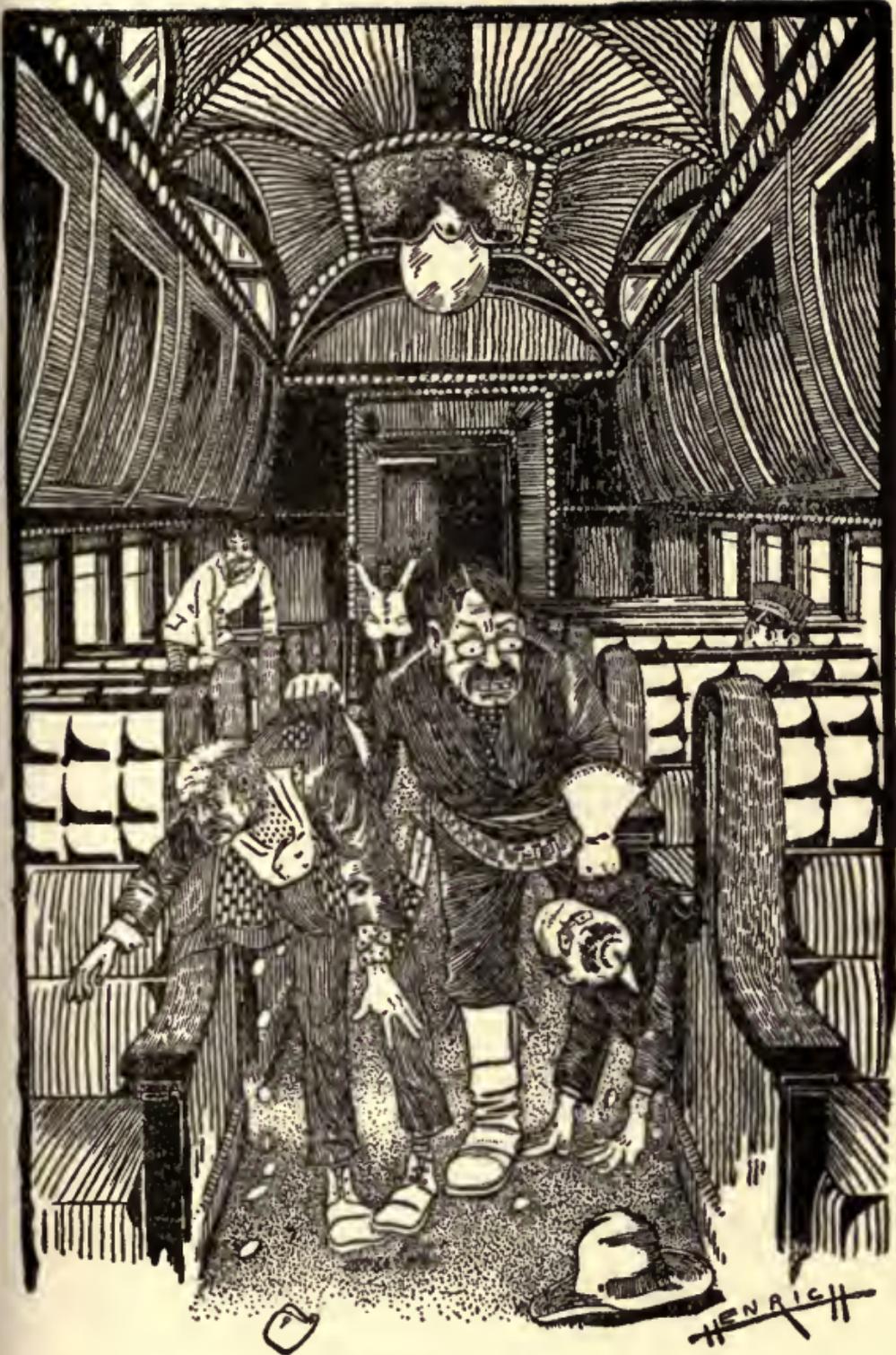
shook the exact change out of their pockets, told the conductor to help himself, and returned to resume his pleasant conversation with the canvasser. But he was gone.

And now, overcome by drowsiness for lack of something to do, Theodore dozed off to sleep, leaving me to my own observations and reflections, and I couldn't help overhearing a conversation between two men who had just got on. They were in the next seat forward. From what I could judge, they were hold-up men of Chicago, who had been off on a vacation.

"I am glad that work is so brisk in town," said one of them.

"Yes," replied the other, "but the divvy is too big. The police in my division are very exacting."

"In mine, too, but they say they have to be, to make it all right higher up."



SHOOK THE EXACT CHANGE
OUT OF THEIR POCKETS. Page 28

THEODORE

"I got a letter from my sub the other day and he told me they wanted half."

"That's too much. I don't mind giving a third, but a half——" and he shook his head.

"I understand," said the first speaker, "that the police are talking of organizing a hold-up trust, and if they do we ought to be in on the ground floor."

"Looks so to me. We have been in the trade long enough. Who are them duffers just behind?"

"I guess one of them is an English Lord and the other his valet."

"They must have dough. Suppose we try 'em when the train stops for supper?"

The other one agreed, and I closed my eyes just as he looked around, and from that time on I felt that I was watched; for, being a detective, I have many intuitions unknown to the average man. I

THEODORE

wanted to tell Theodore of our danger, but could not. They were villainous-looking ducks, and I knew that they would cut our throats in a minute. Just then the train reached the supper station and Ted woke up. "I have had a charming nap," says he. "I dreamed that some fellows had me tied to a stake out in Kansas and were going to burn me." He hastened out and I followed as fast as I could, with a view of telling him of his danger, but I did not overtake him until he was in the dining-room; in fact, he was seated and ready to eat when I reached the table. Fortunately, the two hold-up men sat at a table some distance off, so I had a chance to talk, but with extreme caution, for they were watching me. "Theodore," says I, "don't look round, but just over there are two men who have determined to rob us. They think you an English Lord and me your valet."

THEODORE

“A gross insult to you,” said he, tearing a piece of steak with his marvelous teeth. “Anybody ought to know that you are a detective. But I will deal with them.”

“That’s all very well, but they are not to be dealt with in the ordinary way. I know you are more than able to take care of yourself, but these fellows could knock you over in a jiffy, have your valuables and be off to the woods before anything could be done. I live in Chicago, and I know they belong to a privileged and a pampered class, and you must understand that it is hard to break through the lines of long-established prerogative.”

“Who are they—aldermen?”

“Not exactly that, but men who sometimes make it possible for the saloons of aldermen to exist. They are hold-up men.”

THEODORE

“I told you not to warn me of an approaching danger, and now here you go, turning the edge of pleasure. Leave them to me.”

I finished my supper in silence, somewhat nettled at the way in which he had received my warning. It was not my desire to intrude myself upon him to the extent of dulling an enjoyment; I wanted to see him have all the fun possible, but fun can be carried too far. And besides, the life of even a great man should not be given up wholly to sport. There are occasions when even a statesman ought to be serious, or at least considerate. By this time the keeper of the eating-house came up, and, seeing that Theodore must be a distinguished man, said to him: “I hope, sir, that you have enjoyed your supper.”

“That I have,” says Theodore. “This steak has given me plenty to do.” He

THEODORE

then got up, shook hands with the proprietor, and with never a look about him, started for the door, with the intention, I thought, of getting back to the train; but he halted just outside the door, I at his heels, and said to me: "Step on off there. I am going to wait for our friends." I knew that argument was useless, so I obeyed, just in time, too, for the men were coming, and as they stepped out he seized them each by the collar and brought their heads together with a bump. There are some things that even hold-up men cannot stand, no matter in how fine a state of training they may be. And these two men simply collapsed and lay upon the ground, when Theodore turned them loose. I thought that he had killed them, and he must have thought so, too, for he called for a light. The conductor came running

THEODORE

over with his lantern, held it down, and revealed the fact that they were barely alive. "Victims of the great American habit of rushing to and from meals," said Theodore. "They bumped into each other. But, fortunately, I heard them say that they were not going any farther on your train, so we might as well pull out." By this time the men began to recover, and as the train was behind time the conductor waited for us to satisfy our curiosity. The men came round after a while, and, as Theodore had predicted, did not resume passage on the train. That man's intuition is marvelous.

We were now running at a high rate of speed toward the land of real adventure, with nothing to disturb the calmness of our thought, save a red-haired boy of about four years of age. He began to bawl for something which his mother had refused to give him, and

THEODORE

after she gave it to him he continued to bawl. Pretty soon Theodore's eye fell upon the boy, and the youngster was silent in an instant, stopping on a half note, with his mouth open.

"Hush that," said Theodore.

"Yes, sir, if you please," says the boy.

"Why do you howl, anyway?" says Theodore.

"Because, kind sir, I didn't know any better; but I am wiser now."

"What is your name?"

"Alonzo P. Juniperberry, sir."

"What are you going to do when you grow up?"

"I am going to make speeches and kill bears."

"Madam," says Theodore, speaking to the boy's mother, "you have a marvelously intelligent and promising son."

"La," she says, "I never knew it be-

THEODORE

fore. But who are you that you should have such influence over him?"

I saw a laugh dancing in Theodore's eye, first on one foot and then on the other. "Madam," says he, "I am Carter Harrison."

"Pleased to meet you, Mr. Harrison. And where do you live?"

"I used to live in Chicago, but since my own administration began, I merely stay there."

"I don't quite understand."

"Madam," says Theodore with a profound bow, "permit me to enlighten you;—I am the mayor of the town."

"Oh, mayor. And what are your duties?"

"I have none, Madam."

"Then what is it you do?"

"Nothing," says Theodore, with another profound bow. "Of course this is a humorous exaggeration, Madam,"

THEODORE

Theodore says, seeing that the woman was greatly astonished. "I am sometimes kept very busy, hiring men not to clean the streets."

"And is it very difficult?"

"Madam, to one as well versed in politics as I am, it is dead easy."

"I am really very glad to have met you, sir, not for the information you have given me but for the miracle you have wrought on my dear child. Do you know that he is a very undutiful son? He has no respect for any one, and he threw a brick at me just before we left home. What ought I to do with him? And he is so dishonest, too. He has no regard for the rights of property. What ought I to do?"

"Send him to Chicago and let him be a constable, and when he improves his disrespect for law and property he might become a justice of the peace."

THEODORE

“Oh, sir, you give me such encouragement. Well, we get off here. Good-bye.”

The woman and the boy got off, and Theodore and I turned in for the night.

CHAPTER III

THE WOMAN WITH THE HATCHET

THE next morning we awoke out upon the broad fields of Kansas. Theodore was fresh and of a rosy hue, showing that he had slept well, with no traces of the previous day's adventures left upon him. I spoke about it as we met in the smoking compartment to put on our collars and cuffs. "Adventures," says Theodore. "You mean trifling dissipations. No; they never hurt me. I have a remarkable constitution, you know. Ah," he went on as he looked out, "we are coming to the land of real fun. Look at that jack rabbit.

THEODORE

I feel like getting out and having a romp with him. But seriously, I must now give over trifles and get down to earnest and business-like sport. No more pranks for me now, pretending to be one man when all the nation knows that I am another. But some of man's keenest pleasures come to him when his identity is hidden. The dignity of a name obstructs free communication, and to discover human nature in all its phases ought to be the aim of every really great man. Sometimes we pick up by the road-side a piece of wisdom that we could not find in the halls of state. Mr. Cleveland—and I regard him as really a great man—was wont, at troublous times, to go forth and learn from guides and boatmen; and but for his jug and his gun I do not believe that he ever could have settled so many vexatious questions. Once he said to me, 'Theodore,' says

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he, 'there is more good council in about five fingers of old rye than in ten heads of old men.' But we have had great men who were not of this opinion. Now there was Radford B. Hayes"—"Rutherford," I suggested, proud to be of any assistance to him.

"Was it? I believe you are right, and by the way, I wish to take this opportunity to compliment you, for I see that you are to be of assistance to me. Yes, it was Rutherford—and he did not believe in the jug. Consequently his administration was fraught with many mistakes, the institution of the civil service system being one of them. Good cheer was banished from the White House, and foreign ambassadors were compelled after a function to go home sober and complaining."

"But you don't drink to speak of," says I.

THEODORE

“No, that’s a fact. I do not advocate drinking, but I do advocate the spirit of liberality that makes men drink. In order to be really great, you must understand those little metaphysical differences.”

“Theodore, we are here alone, and therefore I can speak freely with you, can’t I?”

He gave me a smile which the fact that I mention it proves that I have not forgotten. “Yes, thank you,” I went on, taking my privilege for granted. “And now there is something that I wish to ask you. You know that as a rule a vice-president is not put up by a convention as a candidate for president.” Theodore was not surprised at this. He merely nodded and I proceeded: “Then how do you expect ever to be president?”

He answered without hesitation. “The average man put up for vice-presi-

dent shows weakness before the end of his term and, of course, is not mentioned for the higher place. He stagnates in obscurity—presiding over a body of men distinguished as the dull obstructionists of the more vigorous house. In this dignity he foreshadows his approaching death. He is rusted with sedentary importance—stilted inactivity. And by the time for another campaign, some one asks: ‘Who is that harmless-looking old gentleman?’ Now it is my aim to reverse this order. In all walks of life there has been a return to romance, both in fiction and in politics. We like to read of kings and princes more than we ever did—our households are set in a flutter over the picture of a royal petticoat. In this country we cannot have anything approaching royalty, but our rulers can imitate the kings of a former age—we can hunt and thereby

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challenge a romantic respect and establish ourselves firmly in the public mind. We know of a prince who had done little to endear himself to the people of his realm until he shot a buffalo that some cow-boys held for him. Of course his people thought that the animal came at him red eyed."

"Theodore," said I, "your argument is profound. They have a diner hooked on. Let us go back to breakfast."

This man might be a shedder of blood, I mused as we were at breakfast, but he is also a shedder of wisdom. The waiter came up and with insolence showed that he expected a tip, but Theodore gave him one glance, and he at once subsided into decency and respect. "How wonderful is man," I mused. I had heard this before, but not until recently had I seen it set forth with all the colors of the rainbow. Theodore asked several ques-

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tions and the waiter answered them, and he did not even slosh the water-bottle at me, but put it down in front of me with stupefied consideration. A baggage man came through and having looked at Theodore, did not shake his brass checks in my face. Surely the world was undergoing a great change.

There was yet a long and tiresome ride before us, and I could see that Theodore was beginning to grow restless, when a woman got aboard. That was nothing extraordinary, but this woman had an axe. She wore short hair and a hard and determined glitter in her eye. Theodore was at once interested. "Chopping wood for a living?" he asked.

And she gave him a look that made him dodge. "Attend to your own affairs and I'll attend to mine," she snapped.

"Good," cried Theodore, straightening up and bracing himself. He gave

THEODORE

her a look and a smile, but she wasn't fazed. She set her lips and looked at him.

"Who be you?" says she.

"Merely a man traveling for his health," says Theodore, somewhat cowed, I thought.

"Then travel on and keep your mouth shut," says she.

Just at this moment the train stopped at a small town. The woman looked out, snatched up her axe and got off. "You fail to wait for me if you dare," she says to the conductor, and he waited with lamb-like patience. The woman crossed a street and boldly walked into a saloon. Then came a hoarse cry, followed by the terrific smashing of things. Out came, rolling, a barrel of liquor. The woman caught up with it, knocked it in the head, and quietly got on the train.



"YOU FAIL TO WAIT FOR ME
IF YOU DARE." Page 46

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“You seem to be a pretty busy woman,” says Theodore, as she sat down near us. “I am,” says she, and then signaled to the conductor that he might go ahead. After the train was under way, Theodore spoke to her again:

“Granddaughter of John Brown, I presume.”

“Yes, you *do* presume. Shut your mouth.”

Theodore didn't like this very much, and he began to twist about on his seat. If she had been a man or an animal he would have known how to deal with her, but being a problem which even five fingers of old rye could not have solved, he sat mute in her presence. After a while she spoke: “Haven't you got anything to do but to travel about—*you?*”

“I beg your pardon, Madam, I am not traveling for my health,” says Theodore, taking water. “I am on business.”

THEODORE

“Then why did you want to lie about it? Haven’t you got any better sense than to lie—to *me!*”

“I beg your pardon, Madam. Ah, but may I ask what your specialty is,” says Theodore, growing bolder.

“I am as you have just seen, in the saloon business,” she says, tightening her lips.

“Pretty good business?” says Theodore.

“Very,” she says, looking out the window for another liquor joint as the train stopped. There was none, however, and she did not stir, but sat quietly nursing her axe.

“Any children?” says Theodore, noticing her affectionate manner.

“Any what!” she snapped.

“Children—little ones at home?”

“Children, little ones,” she repeated with contempt. “What do I want with

THEODORE

brats. I have a better mission than raising kids.”

“What brand of whisky do you prefer to smash?” says Theodore, gradually getting himself in better hand.

“It makes no difference to me so long as it’s liquor.”

“I suppose now and then you tap a keg of beer, or give an exhibition of a brandy smash?”

“It don’t make any difference to me—I smash anything.”

We were now approaching another town and the woman got up, with her axe firmly grasped in her hand. When she got off there was a slamming of doors and a scurrying in every direction, and just as the train started we heard the ringing crash of glass. And thus we got through the day, and as night closed in, with myriads of stars in the rarefied sky, Theodore said that the time had not been heavy.

CHAPTER IV

CAPTURING A PREACHER

NOW at last we were in sight of the great mountains. "Prehistoric upheavals of eternal adventure," says Theodore, nodding his head in approval at them. "There's nothing stale about those hills, at least there is nothing flat," he added with a smile that lives with me yet. "And here we drop the dull affairs of family life, such as we have been compelled to endure lately, and take up true adventure. I can stand a good deal of the tedium of existence, but after all, I have nerves, and dullness wears on me. And I am fond of the

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society of vivacious ladies, but that woman we met on the train yesterday soon palled on me."

We were to get off at the next stop, a small town in the foot-hills, and although the coming of Theodore had been kept reasonably quiet, yet we knew that we should be met by a goodly number of admirers. But on getting off, the demonstration was different from what we expected. The town was in a great uproar, and apparently not on our account. In fact, a moment's investigation was enough to settle the truth that we had nothing to do with it. A ferocious madman, confined for shipment on the train, had broken loose and was at large. He had been prominent in the silver craze, and was one of the most highly respected citizens of the place, but he went daft, and it was a matter of self-protection to confine him until the next

THEODORE

presidential election. Thus much of his history we were able to learn in a few moments. In fact we learned more. That morning after his escape he had committed all sorts of depredations. Knocking the station agent endwise, he ran across a strip of prairie to the house of the local banker, made himself master of the yard, bit the clothesline in two, kicked in the ribs of a harmless calf, bit a hemp-haired servant girl on the top of her head, ran round to the rear of the house and kicked high into the air a pan of mackerel that the banker's wife had put to soak on the steps. All this was likely to attract attention enough, but he did not stop here. Just over the fence lived the leading merchant of the place, and in his house the Ladies' Library Association had gathered to discuss the question of whether or not certain novels written by young women were to be

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admitted. Mrs. Callington W. Botts was speaking, in clear and distinct tones, when the madman appeared at the door. "No reporters are wanted here," said the hostess, seizing the madman and drawing him into the room.

"I want you to note the attitude I take," cried the speaker, "but I defy you to print it in your paper."

A light of insane joy illumined the face of the daft. He seized a Filipino battle axe (brought from Luzon by J. V. Patfitzric, suttler) swung it around, and with a distressing but it must be admitted a tuneful whang, brought it down upon the installment piano. The scene changed from one of literary progress, where experience counted for so much, to one of physical astonishment and fright, where experience counted for nothing. Just at this moment the servant girl entered with a broad tray of red

THEODORE

and yellow refreshments. The terrified company fled at the sound of the whang, but the stupid girl, thinking that the madman was giving some sort of piano recital, stood mutely waiting for him to taste her ware. He had been on the flattened outside of politics so often that kicking was his Prince Albert—I mean his long suit—and with his toe under the tray he plastered the red and yellow stuff on the ceiling. The girl picked up the tray and stupidly walked out to get another load, but the madman did not wait for her return. Out of an Oriental jar he grabbed an armful of golf sticks, ran into the yard and amused himself by throwing them at the fleeing members of the library association, giving hefty Mrs. Potgilder an awful thump as she was poised on the fence, unable to get off. By this time the city authorities were after him, but armed with a golf stick,

THEODORE

he swept them from his pathway and pursued his destructive course. And now, just as we got off the train, he was at large somewhere down the road. Naturally the helpless populace turned to Theodore for assistance, and I saw him smile. "Be of good cheer," said he to the mayor, and immediately set off down the road. "It seems that I am to be beset with lunatics," said he to me, as we walked along briskly together. I hadn't forgotten the lizard eater, but he had only a knife while this chap had a golf stick. Years ago I was scalped while playing shinny, and ever since then I have trembled in mortal dread at the sight of a crooked stick, but I concealed my fear from Theodore. He is all nerve and can't understand why any man should dread any sort of weapon. Well, we had gone some distance when we saw a man coming toward us, with a golf

THEODORE

stick in his hand. I drew back, but Theodore bade me not to be afraid, and his command—for it was a command more than a bidding—his command took some of the scare out of me as it always does; still, I was nervous. “I will pretend that I am going to pass him and then leap on him unawares,” says Theodore. I had provided a rope, and Theodore told me to have it handy. “And have your handkerchief ready to gag him,” says he. “Nothing can yell louder than a madman thwarted, and I don’t want any noise.”

The man came along at a brisk pace. He was a stalwart fellow, taller and broader than Theodore. And knowing that madmen are for a time gifted with an almost superhuman strength, I confess that I was not altogether easy as to the outcome of the struggle. And struggle it was. The madman evidently sus-

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pected nothing. His mind must have been wandering, for he was humming a tune, but I did not see any music in his eye as he raised it in a quick glance. The next moment he was in the bear-like embrace of our hero. He howled and strove with his great strength to free himself—but Theodore tripped him, and tied him while he still yelled. And then we gagged him. Then began the triumphant march back to the town. The people saw us coming and many of them ran to meet us—among them the president of the library association whose feminine instincts suggested to her that she should have first revenge for the yellow and red stuff still dripping from her ceiling. But when she reached us, she threw up her hands and gave a loud cry. “Mercy on us!” she shrieked, “this is the Rev. Mr. Solomon Brown.” And so indeed it proved to be. He was on his

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way to town to play golf with the young ladies of the Simpering Society. We stood dumfounded, not knowing what to say, but Theodore, who is never long at a loss for a word or a mode of procedure, remarked, when the minister had been liberated: "Sir, I fear that some mistake has been made here."

"So it appears, sir," replied the minister, trying to smile, but failing. Ah, it takes Theodore to smile at anything.

"I was under the belief, sir, that I was doing the public a good turn," says Theodore.

"Sir," says the preacher, "it is not doing the public a good turn when you muzzle the pulpit."

"I agree with you there, sir," says Theodore, "but let us put it down as one of the mistakes of the clergy."

"Sir, I have made no mistake. It is you who fell into error."

THEODORE

“Sir,” says Theodore, “I think you invited error, as the pulpit often does. You came along with a golf stick when it was known that dementia had assumed that staff. The men of old carried the shepherd’s crook, and flocks followed them; but you have taken up a fadish stick to follow a foolish flock.”

“Sir, I feel your rebuke.” Hereupon there was a murmur of applause, showing that Theodore had scored one on the ho-li man. Then followed good-humored hand shaking, and the kind-hearted clergyman extended to us his forgiveness if not his congratulations. He told Theodore that he hoped he would make a wise and considerate ruler. “I did not know it,” says he, “but I am glad to meet you.”

Theodore gave him a choice smile from a well-selected collection, and all was serene. On our way to town we

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were met by the civic societies, and particularly by the young ladies of the Simpering Society, who saluted us with their sticks. The minister, who had abandoned his club as a result of Theodore's rebuke, bowed his head with never a word.

That afternoon, while we were having our accoutrements put in order, we attended a reception given in the parlors whence the library association had been expelled, and the girl brought in red and yellow stuff; and so given was she to the force of habit that, going up to Theodore, she held out the tray and meekly said: "Do you wish to kick, sir?"

The firemen and the venerable association of Pikespeakers would have kept us up all night, but we retired early to bed, thrilled with the prospect of true sport so close at hand.

CHAPTER V

THE ROUGH WRITERS

THERE had been a skift of snow during the night, but the day dawned without a cloud. Down the stairs came bounding Theodore, younger by five years than he had been yesterday. We knew that there would be some sort of demonstration on the street when we went forth, and there was—the blowing of horns and the beating of tin pans as our procession moved along. Our cavalcade consisted of Theodore, myself and three pack mules loaded with ammunition. Just outside the town we were joined by a score of news-

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paper correspondents, "Rough Writers," as Theodore termed them. And now we all began our ascent of the foothills. At a little place, the last vestige of civilization—Sock Heel, I believe they call it—we were overtaken by Skin Bluke, a well known bear hunter. The meeting between him and Theodore was warm almost to emotionalism. Theodore and he had been together at a time that tried men's souls—and their bodies, too—for cutting wire fences.

"I'm glad to see you, and that's no joke," says Theodore, suiting his language to the occasion, ever ready to adjust himself to the highest or the lowest form of society.

"It's a pipe when I say I'm glad to see you," says Skin, who during his varied life had lived in the city.

"Have you had any sport lately?" says Theodore.

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“Very little,” says Skin, in choice language. “But things hain’t been altogether dull for the boys. They had one burning not long ago and may have another soon, now they’ve got their hand in.”

“Beautiful day,” says Theodore, turning the subject, for he has to overlook the barbaric pleasures of some of his friends.

“Couldn’t be better,” says Skin, with a poetic expression of countenance. “How much ammunition have you?” he says, again becoming practical.

“About four tons,” says Theodore. “Think that will answer?”

“On a pinch,” says Skin, shrewdly looking round at the mules.

“Old Sir Billy is still alive and at large, I reckon?” says Theodore.

“As live as a kitten.”

My curiosity being aroused, I asked

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to be informed as to the person referred to, and first by one and then by the other I was enlightened to this effect: Many years ago an enormous grizzly bear announced his appearance by killing three hunters and scaring a fourth into an epilepsy that had defied the skill of all physicians. Shortly afterward the same bear went to a camp supply store, killed the proprietor, snatched an arm off a harmless bystander, ate all the sugar on the place, and turned over the house. Later he attacked an ore-bearing mule train, killed the driver, broke the necks of all the mules and scattered the ore at his humorous pleasure. Bands of men were organized by the state to kill him; they were drilled and accoutered as if going to war, and indeed they were. Billy met the first detachment in a narrow defile. Some say he hurled great bowlders at them, others, more modest,

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declare that he simply used the weapons supplied by nature; but be that as it may or as it was, the detachment was almost wholly destroyed. Other engagements were fought, always with the same result, until the state grew tired. Since then men did not look for Sir Billy, but regarded themselves as fortunate when they succeeded in keeping out of his way.

Considering the lead that had been pumped into him, it was now estimated that he would weigh in the neighborhood of four thousand pounds. Skin swore that he could not be killed by man. Old man Heffner had suddenly come upon him. He had no weapon but his pick-axe; but this he wielded with fierce determination, knowing his antagonist at sight. It seems that Sir Billy was stupid, having just woke up, thereby giving Heffner the first blow.

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And it was no light one. He swung the pick-axe and brought it down on the bear's back. Sir Billy sniffed and sat down to scratch himself. The fact is that the point of the pick-axe entered a lump of lead and was not felt. Heffner owes his escape to some sort of miracle. He felt himself tumbling down the ravine, and when he reached the bottom he looked up, having fallen in a bed of soft snow, and saw the bear looking down at him, with the pick-axe still sticking in his back. The old man could not afford to lose his implement of daily labor—he knew that it was exempt from seizure by the law, and so he shouted: "Here, you can't take that. Throw it down here." And he swears that the bear threw it down. This was questioned by some who knew the ferocious habits of Sir Billy, but Heffner brought the pick-axe home with him. I asked Theodore

THEODORE

how he came by the name of Sir Billy.

“Once,” says he, “there came up here a representative of British royalty. Four of his men were killed by the bear, which you will learn to distinguish by a great bunch of red hair on his breast. This set the Englishman to thinking. ‘Ah,’ he said, within hearing of the grizzly, ‘I see your point. You don’t want to be killed. We will see about that.’ So he set a big steel trap and baited it with honey, and the bear was caught, but he broke the chain and walked off with the trap fastened around his ankle. ‘Bravo!’ cried his highness, ‘he belongs to the Order of the Garter.’ And ever since, recognizing his title to knighthood, we have called him Sir Billy. It was a long time before he got the trap off, but he did finally, and is now as free as ever, I am told, with the exception of his increasing weight, as more lead is added

THEODORE

to him. I have never encountered him, but I believe that if I get a good square shot at him I can fetch him down."

"Are you goin' to look for him?" says Skin.

"That is the main object of my visit," says Theodore. "To tell you the truth I don't believe that I could preside over the senate of the United States feeling that old Billy was alive. I have thought of it day and night and I know that I couldn't keep my mind off him, and a man in so venerable a chair ought not to have his mind distracted in that way."

Skin halted and said: "Well, if that's what you're after you may count me out, as the democrat said to the republican in the days of reconstruction. I know that bear."

"But you also know me," says Teddy, his pride rising.

"Yes, I do that same, but not as well

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as I do the bear. My wife has been a widder three times, she tells me, and it is not my intention to make her one the fourth time, if I can help it. I would like to fight lions and wolves with you, with an occasional fall out of any man that needs killin', but that bear reached out from behind a rock once, and made a swipe at me,—in five minutes I fell off forty pounds or more, and I haven't any flesh to spare at present." He turned back and we saw him fade away down the trail. And this was the sort of sport we were going to hunt. I hinted that, as Sir Billy seemed to be found easily, there was really no need of a detective, but Theodore reached over, put his hand on my shoulder, and I said no more; but I felt myself quaking from time to time. A little further on we met a man who, when questioned, said that the great bear had not been seen for some time, almost

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a year. The general impression was, not that he was dead, but that he had gone off somewhere to visit his relatives. The last time he was seen he had driven a number of miners away from their camp one bitterly cold day. Looking round, they saw him standing upright, with his back to the fire, warming himself.

When we halted for refreshments I drew the stranger to one side and asked him to give me his honest opinion about that ferocious animal. He smiled and said that there wasn't any particular opinion to give. Everybody knew him and everybody kept out of his way. He told me that an enterprising man rigged up a mountain howitzer on a mule and went up into Sir Billy's territory. There were bets as to whether he would come back or not. Among the company was a soldier who knew the workings and the utility of that sort of cannon, and he said



WITH HIS BACK TO THE FIRE
WARMING HIMSELF. Page 70

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that all the enterprising man had to do was to get the bear to stand still for a few moments; but, as every one knows the restlessness of a bear, the bets were against the success of the expedition. It seems, however, that luck in some degree was in favor of the bold man, whose name was simply Elias Smith. He walked on, leading his mule, and just about the time the sun was setting, he saw Sir Billy standing on a rock, bathed in gold. His breast was partly exposed, and the man saw the flaming bunch of red hair. From his coat pocket he took out a handful of oats and induced the mule to turn round. But to save him he couldn't get the exact sight. The screw, or whatever you call it, couldn't be worked, and the gun could not be raised high enough. But Smith was full of enterprise. He made quick calculation as to how much of a raise was

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needed, found two stones of the proper thickness and coaxed the mule to let him put them under his hind feet. The mule didn't like it, but Smith gave him more oats to distract his attention. And now all was ready. The bear had not changed his position. He stood as bears often stand when they have their pictures taken to be used for advertising purposes. Smith struck a match. But just as he touched it to the priming, or the infinitesimal part of a second sooner, the mule coughed and one of the rocks slid from under his hoof. Then there was a thunderous jar, the mule jumped like a rabbit, leaped off the rock and rattled down into the gorge three thousand feet. He almost carried Smith with him, and would if he hadn't held on to a sharp point of rock. But the bear! Smith looked, with his heart in his eyes, and there stood the bear, shaking chunks of

THEODORE

granite from his back and shoulders, ready to have his picture taken. The ball had struck about eight feet below him, and had sprinkled him with fragments of rock—that was all. Smith, being a man of resources, took to his heels, and the only reason he ever got back was the fact that the bear was preoccupied at the time. This adventure was told to me as I sat on a stone, trying to drink a tin cup of coffee. And I said to myself that it was almost criminal to invite slaughter. The bear couldn't be killed, that was evident, and whether or not we should come back alive, if we found him, depended not upon our strength, but upon his peculiar humor at the time of the meeting. I thought it my self-sworn duty to remonstrate with our hero; but at that instant he shouted to us to mount, and away we went, up into the jaws of Sir Billy.

CHAPTER VI

FIVE LIONS AT ONE SHOT

WE halted high up, just before passing the edge of the timber line, and a more picture-like place could not have been chosen for a camp. It was in a little plat of level ground and was surrounded by high rocks. At one corner there was a spring that boiled up like water in a pot. We were provided with a snug cabin for ourselves, a warm stable for the horses and mules, and a shed for the Rough Writers. One of the leading correspondents, a Rough Writer who had distinguished himself at hangings and stake performances, called on Theodore just as we sat

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down to our first meal in the cabin. With a salute showing that he had received a military training, he said: "I have these fellows out here pretty well in hand and would like to know as to what you want sent."

"Send them all back down the trail," says Theodore, blowing his hot coffee with modesty and reserve.

The Rough Writer gave a hitch at his trousers. This proved that he had been in the navy. "That won't do," he says. "We have been sent up here to write, and we've got to write. Such are our instructions. Would you, therefore, mind making out a programme of action, and a list of the things you are going to kill, giving the exact number? Our instructions enforce exactness."

This pleased Theodore, and accordingly he scribbled off a list and handed it to the Rough Writer, who took it with

THEODORE

another military salute, and retired in a gentlemanly manner.

During all this time my mind had not wandered away from that infernal bear. Whenever I shut my eyes I could see the flaming bunch of hair on his remorseless breast. Of course my experience taught me that his exploits and his prowess had been exaggerated, as are nearly all things in this life, but even the grossest exaggeration may have some sort of foundation, and it was the foundation that scared me. I am not particularly afraid of a man or a woman. Together with four other plain-clothes men I once arrested Red Moll, alias The Dock Rat, and at another time I was one of a posse that gobbled up Newsboy Tim, alias the Weasel; but they were representatives, such as they were, of the human family. As I understood it, old Sir Billy had nothing human about him.

THEODORE

“Thinking about that bear, ain’t you?” says Theodore, shaking out his blanket upon the floor.

“It is upon him that my mind is at this moment resting,” says I, in choice rhetoric, to the shame of Prof. Brander Matthews.

“And you are aching for an opportunity to get at him,” says Theodore, winking at himself.

“Your honor,” I began, but Theodore told me not to talk like an Irishman just come over. “Don’t you know,” says our hero, “that according to the fattest personage known to the stage, we, or rather you, bringing it down closer, owe God a death? Don’t you know that?”

“Yes, I have heard of it, but I’m not indebted to any bear to that extent.” This pleased Theodore, and getting up, he opened the door, looked out and smiled at the night. When he returned

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to his blanket he was calmer. "Every man ought to have an ambition," says he, stretching himself out and looking every inch a soldier, "and it has for years been my ambition to kill that bear. I was about to organize an expedition against him when the Spanish war broke out to distract my attention for a time, and then the election; but during the lull after the storm the gnawings of my old and most laudable ambition were renewed; then my mind was finally made up. I am grieved to learn that the bear is now away from home."

"He must have heard that you were coming," says I; and Theodore turned over and smiled a luminous shadow on the wall.

"When detectives flatter, then is our speech infested with niceties," he says, turning again toward me. "But don't be frightened," he says—"I am here."

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I asked him if he would mind taking hold of my hand for a moment. He generously accommodated me, without a moment of hesitation, and thus assured and soothed, I dropped off to sleep.

The morning was bright, and one of the Rough Writers declared that the air was as full of sparkle as the eye of a Kansas City belle. This grace of comparison pleased Theodore, insomuch that he gave the man a smile, and rewarded him further with a chew of black plug. While we were making ready, a lion peered at us from the top of one of yonder rocks. Theodore's gun was not handy, but with his pistol he shot the lion between the eyes. The animal sprang high into the ambient air, and as a pretty stiff breeze was blowing, sailed over and fell at the feet of his master. And then the Rough Writers seized their pads and wrote; "The day dawned clear with the killing

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of five lions with one shot." In order to enforce accuracy upon the Rough Writers, they were not permitted to accompany us except at a distance. This was wise, for the reckless pen has given Theodore a great deal of annoyance. Just before we started, up came a party of men stretching a telegraph wire, and within a few moments a clicking machine was set up in our quarters. This was the enterprise of the newspapers. And I remember that afterward I saw the following statement, red-headed, in a sheet known for the swiftness of its flight: "The report of the killing of the last lion by the Colonel left our press and was out on the street thirty-eight seconds in advance of any other publication."

A few miles further up the gulch we left our horses and proceeded on foot. The Rough Writers were far in the rear at the time we dismounted, and soon

they were lost sight of, for now we were not compelled to keep in the path. But it was astonishing how far we could go without meeting an adventure. Up to noon there was but one incident. I saw Theodore seize a large yellow stick and, with the quick exercise of his muscles, break it over his knee. I walked along toward him, wondering what he meant by such a performance, but when nearer I discovered that what I had taken to be a stick was indeed an enormous rattlesnake, frozen stiff.

“Just think what his surprise will be when he thaws out,” says Theodore, again taking the lead.

The afternoon was far advanced, and still there was no adventure. We found a place where it appeared that some dozen of men had rolled a hogshead in the snow, but with rising spirits Theodore informed me that the imprints had

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undoubtedly been caused by old Sir Billy at play. This brought my trembling heart into my mouth, and I was compelled to breathe through my nose for fear of blowing it out upon the cold ground. Theodore noticed my agitation. "Your heart is weak," says he.

"Yes, I must confess it."

"Why don't you do something for it?"

"I don't know what to do. I am no physician."

"That is not necessary," says Theodore. "There was a time when a man needed a doctor, but not now. Here, eat a lot of this."

He thrust his hand into his bosom and took out a small buckskin bag. I opened it and found that it contained salt. "The Chicago University has discovered that salt is all there is to life," says he. "Eat salt and the drooping heart will hold up its head."

THEODORE

I licked up a handful of the salt and for a time forgot the bear, remembering only that I wanted water.

At last to my great delight Theodore said that it was time to turn back, as it would be dark by the time we reached the camp. But upon turning we found that we were lost. This sickened me, for I had my warm blanket in mind; but Theodore didn't mind it. He consoled me with this reflection: "A man is more likely to come upon adventure when he's lost. Don't you believe so?"

"I am afraid it is a fact," I admitted, and Theodore told me that I'd better eat more salt. Now onward rapidly we strode, down toward the timber line, and reached a few scrub trees just as the moon came up. Farther on we came to a large tree and here we sat down to rest and to eat some frozen bread and salt. While we were licking our cold chops,

THEODORE

there came a low howl in the distance.

“What is that?” says I.

“A wolf,” says Theodore.

Just then there broke out the worst howling I ever heard. Hagenback’s was a mere whispering compared with it. “The fun has begun,” says Theodore. “Let us climb up into this tree.” And we did. Theodore was usually in the lead, but I beat him up among the gnarled branches of the tree, and none too soon was either of us, for a great torrent of wolves came pouring down the hill. Amid the loud and ferocious cries for blood, we could hear their sharp claws rattling over the rocks with as cold a sound as a man might imagine. “They can’t climb, at any rate,” says Theodore, seating himself comfortably upon a limb.

“I am glad we have a moon. Ah, now the fun begins,” and with that we

THEODORE

both began to shoot. I am not much of a marksman, but here direct aim did not count, for all we had to do was to choose direction, vicinity, I might say. The wolves kept coming and we kept on pumping, ceasing only to let our guns cool for a few moments. We had brought as much ammunition as we could carry, and were prepared for a long campaign. The howling was frightful. It was almost as bright as day, better than day, in fact, for there was no glare. One of the wolves we noticed was a leader, and headed many a charge against us. He was so active that it was almost impossible to get a shot at him, but Theodore clipped off one of his paws. This made no decided difference, for he rounded up his forces and continued to come at us on three legs. We could see that his lieutenants were urging him to retire, but he shook his head, howled de-

THEODORE

fiance, and again sprang to the attack.

“Keep the base of operations well covered,” says Theodore. They are trying to gnaw us down.” A shudder passed over me. They had ceased their efforts to reach us by leaping, and were now biting at the tree. As soon as one fell he was dragged back, and another took his place. They were under marvelous discipline, which convinces me that the art of war does not belong to the higher intellectual pursuits.

“I have a sort of respect for that rascal,” says Theodore. “He has ability in his line, but the reward of ability is often death. Listen how they gnaw. Be a little steadier. It is necessary to aim now. Ha! I was trying to think of an old tune we used to hum out on the plains. Isn't it astonishing that I can't hit the captain? Look, his lieutenants are again persuading him to retire, but

he won't. See, he is charging up over the dead bodies of his men. He is making a San Juan hill of them. Oh, I got him then."

The wolf commander uttered a deep howl and fell back, shot, as well as I could determine, squarely through the head. But this did not end the fight. Indeed, it was but the beginning as we afterward found out. Another took his place, a slim and active fellow, and with this new blood, the attack was even more determined. "He dodges like a hell diver," says Theodore, "but we'll get him yet. How are you enjoying yourself?"

"I am pretty comfortable, thank you, but I am beginning to get a little tired."

"Well, lay off a while and take a nap, and you'll do better work when you wake up."

This was kindness itself, but I could not, under the circumstances, avail my-

THEODORE

self of it. At this moment I felt the tree sway slightly, and in the brightness of the moonlight I saw a shadow of concern on Theodore's face. The enemy had done fearful work at the base of our only protection. "Pump faster," says Theodore. The tree grew steadier, and I began to believe that we both had been mistaken, when it was discovered that so many dead bodies were packed about the trunk of the tree as to hold it firm. This was a mistake of the new commander, and doubtless would not have occurred had the other captain lived, for his orders had evidently been to drag back the killed and wounded. It grew darker for a time, and then the welcome streaks of coming day were seen in the east. "Ah," says Theodore, "we get everything good from the East. The West could not have served us so. But pump away, for we ain't done yet. Look!

They are charging up over the dead. Now, pump for your life."

When the daylight became broad we could see just a trifle of movement in the suburbs of the slain. The long fight was over, and now we walked down from the tree on a stairway of dead wolves. But what was this off a short distance to the right? The representatives of the enterprising press had heard the firing, and during the night had run their telegraph facilities up to within one hundred yards of us. As we approached, the machine was ticking gaily. The Rough Writer of whom I have spoken, one T. Ruth, came forward and, saluting Theodore, remarked, in a clear, sunrise voice: "Colonel, you have given us a hard night's work, but that's what we are here for. How many have you killed?"

"I don't know," says Theodore, "till

I count my cartridges and strike a balance."

"Well, no matter, for the news has already been sent. We couldn't wait."

I saw the account not long afterward, and am free to say, in the face of the fact that I am running the risk of antagonizing the most powerful pull in the country, that it was greatly exaggerated. I have noticed that the writers of private letters are usually truthful, politicians excepted, of course, but that as soon as a man begins to write for the public he is impelled to overdraw. I don't know why this is so, but it is. Should truth be considered dull because it is simple? Are we forever to go on; striving for forced effect? I knew a newspaper man who turned theatrical manager, and even then he occasionally let his love of exaggeration crop out in his writing, for one night when requested

to write a pass for one he wrote, "Admit fifty."

As we were now both hungry and tired, Theodore proposed that we should eat a bite and rest a few moments before resuming our search for old Sir Billy. I told him that we ought at least to rest five minutes, hoping that this sarcasm would fetch him, but it was lost. "Well, four and a half, anyhow," says he, and my hopes dropped.

It was easy enough to climb a tree to a safe retreat from wolves, and we might get out of the way of lions, but with Sir Billy it would be different. If half the reports were true, he could pull up a tree, with us in it, and thrash us to death against the ground.

After eating some hard biscuit, we returned to the place where we had left the horses, and found them—that is, the

THEODORE

best part of them. Their backs had been broken and their hind quarters had been carried away, high up among the crags. What cartridges we had left with them were chewed up, so we were compelled to go back to camp, and for this Theodore began to offer apology.

"Don't put yourself to any trouble on my account," says I, regretting the death of the horses, but immensely tickled at the prospect of going to shelter.

"It was that bear," says Theodore, as we stalked along. "But don't worry; we'll find him yet."

CHAPTER VII

AN ANCIENT CAVE DWELLER.

THEODORE consented to rest during the remainder of the day, but the next morning we started out with a cartridge train of mules. For a long distance the Rough Writers kept well up with us, trailing a telegraph wire, but along toward noon Theodore warned them off, and we proceeded in peace, that is, Theodore did; but I was troubled over the prospect of meeting the bear. And I was resolved that upon submitting my report to the agency, if ever such report were to be, I would resign rather than go out on another such detail. I

THEODORE

would even go under the Twelfth street viaduct, in Chicago—go at night, and alone—rather than risk my life with a man who had refused to acknowledge an acquaintance with danger. Yet, I like sport. I have amused myself for days at a time arresting pickpockets and fashionable shoplifters in the large stores. I am not lacking in a sense of humor. I have laughed heartily at seeing a well-dressed woman snatch a piece of watered silk and look dry. This may be whimsical, I admit, but after all, it shows a keen sense of the ridiculous. But there is nothing ridiculous in looking for a bear that you know can kill you in the fortieth part of a second. I call that suicide, and I have never found any fun in suicide. Understand, I am offering these reflections not for the philosopher, but for the boy who is to be kidnaped. To be fully developed, he

must learn the methods of the detective-story writer, as I have before observed.

Now we were high up where there was not a sprig of timber. The snow was deep and the air was benumbing, but on we strode, Theodore being as insensible to cold as to danger. He found the old tune that he had known out West, and he went along humming it, greatly to his satisfaction, but not to mine, for I am fond of music. I have sat for hours under the spell of the opera, brought us from the East; and I might have been still sitting there if the usher hadn't shaken me and informed me that it was time to go.

Suddenly Theodore halted in front of a cave. I drew back in alarm, but he told me to be of good cheer, for the tracks in the snow were the tracks of a man. "Let us enter," says he, and I followed him in. For a time we could see

THEODORE

nothing, and I received several sharp bumps against the rugged wall, but after a while we got along better. "Are you sure old Sir Billy ain't in here?" says I, and my blood ran cold when he replied: "I am sure I hope so." I got behind him, at this intelligence, and walked slowly along to my death. Suddenly, upon turning a corner, our eyes were astonished by the sight of a fire. And near it a man sat on a rock. "An ancient cave dweller," murmured Theodore, and I took heart, for I am not afraid of cave dwellers. It was well said that he was ancient, for the man seemed to have lived in years too remote for history.

"Good day," says Theodore.

"Sit down," says the cave dweller, moving over a bit.

"Fine weather," says Theodore.

"I don't know, but I infer as much," says the cave dweller.

THEODORE

Then we all dropped into pleasant conversation. Theodore asked our host if he knew anything about the bear, and he shook his head. "I am not here to think about bears," says he, "but to grieve over the mistakes of my country. I have done my best in my official acts and with my advice, but the country is bent upon going to the dogs."

"Anything particular eating you now?" says Theodore, and the old man sighed until the cave echoed as with a sad and hollow-sounding wind. "Yes," says he, "the Philippine question. I have warned the President, but to no purpose."

"Would you mind telling me your name?" says Theodore.

The old man looked downcast and replied: "I am Benjamin Harrison."

"I believe I have heard of you," says Theodore. "You were once President of the United States?"

THEODORE

"Yes, once. You have well said."

"But what are you doing up here? Where is your gun?"

"Gun," sniffed the old man, contemptuously; "I want no gun. I am a statesman, and I want to tell you that the President is wrong."

"What about Grover Cleveland?"

"Ah, he is another statesman."

"But he handles a gun."

"Ah, but when he does, just at that time he is not a statesman. He is a statesman when he objects to what has been done."

"Then, if I understand you, the essential part of statesmanship lies in objections."

"Ah, almost the whole of it."

"And what are you going to do when you leave here?"

"I am here, as I tell you, to muse over

THEODORE

the wrongs of my country, and then I will go out and air them."

"But, if I remember rightly, you don't come out squarely and say what you mean."

"Sir," says the cave dweller, "the essence of statesmanship is insinuation. Come, tell me what has been done within the past few days that I may give vent to appropriate grief."

"Well," says Theodore, giving me a wink, "the Philippine war is over."

"Over what?"

"Over the Pacific," says Theodore, scoring one on the disgruntled statesman.

"That, sir, is frivolity," says he. "I am here to be earnest. And if I could only get Mr. Cleveland to come here and rub heads with me I think we could make the entire country feel sad and humiliated. But your face is familiar."

THEODORE

“That’s what the Spaniards admitted,” says Theodore, scoring another on the statesman.

“Ah, I know you now. They tell me, sir, that you had an exciting campaign. I don’t know myself, for I was up here in my cave the most of the time.”

“It was not wanting in life,” says Theodore. “They kept me on the dodge most of the time.”

“And what are you doing up here now?”

“Well, being satisfied with my country, I thought I’d come up here and kill a few things.”

“Sir, what you should assist in killing are the measures which are now being introduced in Congress. Army and navy, indeed! Why, in my grandfather’s time a fleet of canoes was navy enough.”

“But we ain’t living in your grandfather’s days.”

THEODORE

“And so much the worse for the country, sir. Then the country was forging ahead, but now it is going backward like a crayfish.”

“I know what a crawfish is,” says Theodore, “and when you spring a crayfish on me I don’t wonder that you were President—once. But how long do you think it will take you to get full of grief this time?”

“I am filling up fast. I am, as you must know, a man of resources, and I shall soon pump myself full enough to appear before the public again.”

“Won’t you come out with us and let the sun shine on you?”

“No, sir, I do not want to see the sun again for some time. Let me muse here alone. Leave me. You shall hear from me.”

“I shall do so with pleasure. One word more. I suppose you come here

THEODORE

to forget as well as to fill your tank with grief?"

"Ah, yes, to forget."

"Yes," says Theodore, "and the more you forget the oftener we shall hear from you," thereby scoring the third one on the haughty statesman.

CHAPTER VIII

AN OLD MAID'S CONVENTION

“YOU will observe,” says Theodore, as we stalked on further into the echoing defiles, “that these mountains are the resort of discontent as well as of adventure. It is not generally known, but thousands of reforms are rehearsed up here under these rocks, away from the prying eyes of the public, and are afterward taken down to stir up politics and society. But, in the meantime, I wish we could find old Sir Billy.”

“Don’t you think we are likely to find him soon enough?” I ventured to remark.

THEODORE

“Yes, soon enough for you,” says Theodore, with a small output of his great stock of sarcasm; and I walked on in silence, knowing that any time suitable to his pleasure he could score one on me.

It was plain that we were now lost again, but Theodore said it made no difference, as the Rough Writers were likely to find us with their telegraph line, and I looked at him in admiration. Never had I seen a man of such observation, and I am acquainted with observant men. I know Chief Kipley, of Chicago, the keen-eyed, who, at a moment's notice, can throw up his head, sniff the air, and discover that there is no gambling going on in his city. I also know Mr. Harrison, the Mayor, who discovers the fact that Chicago is not a mecca for the tramps of the country. All this knowledge intensified my admiration for

Theodore. How wonderful is the faculty of observation! It is the basis of all learning, since from an application of it we are able to draw the two schools of philosophy—inductive and deductive—and to set them fighting like two roosters.

All of a sudden Theodore halted and stood listening, and my heart fluttered, for I was afraid that he was receiving a communication from the famous grizzly. "I can't make out what that is," says he, to my great relief. "If it were not so discordant I should take it for a flock of blackbirds. Listen."

By this time a fluttering and a sort of chirruping became audible to me, and I listened with pleasure, for my fears were at rest concerning the bear. "It seems to come from some sort of cave or shelter," says Theodore, striding forward. The noise seemed to draw nearer,

THEODORE

and presently, rounding a rock, we came to a natural amphitheatre, which looked as if it had been cut out of the solid rock. But this was not all. Seated almost in a complete circle were a number of oldish women, all talking at once. Theodore, who, by this time, you must know, is not afraid of man, woman or beast, strode up, and with a bow, says, says he: "What's your lay?"

Hereupon there was a hush of the chatter, and a woman came forward to greet us. Her face, festooned with smiles, was not unpleasant, and Theodore had no hesitation in asking questions.

"Do you wish to know why we are here?" she asked.

"Yes," says Theodore, "for I am not quite onto your game."

The woman smiled and said that she thanked him for his impulsive gallantry.

THEODORE

This pleased Theodore, and he smiled at her. "We are," says she, "preparing ourselves to dominate a convention of mothers to be held in Chicago along in the spring."

"A most praiseworthy preparation," says Theodore. Just here the magpie chatter was resumed, and the woman who was talking to us, evidently the chairman of the meeting, turned round and commanded silence. "I won't hush," squealed a short-haired creature, snapping viciously. "If you want anybody to hush shut up yourself."

"And don't you dare tell me to hush because a man happens to come along," cried out another woman with pale curls. And with that they all fell to talking, and it was some time before the president could resume her conversation with Theodore. But at last, while a committee of the whole was drafting resolutions,

THEODORE

each woman writing out a set to suit herself, the chairman proceeded to enlighten us. "Mother conventions have accomplished so much in the past that we regarded it as our duty to take the matter in hand."

"You are all mothers, I presume," says Theodore, and the woman frowned at him. "You do presume, indeed, sir," she says, says she. "Do you suppose that in the past we have wasted our time merely with being mothers? We have had higher duties to fulfill. Mothers, indeed! Why, neither one of us has been married."

"All old maids," says Theodore.

"Yes, if you insist upon putting it that way. But who else can claim the right to instruct mothers? Mothers haven't had time to learn the essential requisites—they have been so tied down that they don't know how to bring up children,

THEODORE

while we have given years and years of study to the subject. Why, we make it a rule to write a paper every two months, thus preparing ourselves to settle all questions of motherhood.

“Don’t you admit a married woman to your order?”

“Well, yes, if she has not been so indiscreet as to become a mother. But we would rather have young girls or, as you term them, old maids. You can teach a young girl so much, and it is always so encouraging to get hold of a new and pliable subject. Ah, the women of Colorado have set the world a great example.”

“Particularly in a political way,” says Theodore.

The woman nibbled at her pencil, eager to get at a set of resolutions herself, but being a perfect lady, she did not otherwise betray her impatience. “Yes,” she

THEODORE

says, "the women of Colorado are now the greatest in the world. We have emancipated married women. We have made officeseekers polite to their wives, even in private."

"And, if I understand it, women hold office."

"Why, of course," she says, in surprise.

"Are there any women policemen?" says Theodore, managing to wink at me.

"Well, we had one in Denver—a very upright, efficient and pretty woman. And she did her work well, giving entire satisfaction, but one day two tramps came along and kissed her, and she resigned."

"That was unfortunate. Do you serve on juries?"

"Well, we have done so, but dissatisfactions have arisen. The wife of a grocer in Denver was summoned as a

juryman—jurywoman, I should say—and the case took longer than was expected. In fact, the jury was what they call hung, though why, goodness only knows; and the judge had them shut up. The grocer was detained at his business until a late hour, and when he went home he naturally asked for his wife, and was told that she was shut up with the jury. He went down to the court house, knocked down the door, and told her to come home. She was crying at the time, for the verdict was not going her way, but she left the jury room with a parting word or two, in which she called an Irishman and a lobster-looking Swede hateful things, and marched out triumphantly with her lord, but not her master—no, sir-ee! not her master. The law ought to have taken this house-breaker in hand, but it didn't. The men laughed, and that was all there was to it; and,

THEODORE

would you believe it, that good-for-nothing judge laughed, too. I wonder how they are getting along back there," she says, looking round at the resolutionists. "I suppose they are all trying to insert a new clause in our constitution. But is it clause or claw?"

Theodore said that, from his experience with conventions, it was as often claw as clause. "Then they are interchangeable terms," says she. "I thought so, and I remarked as much to Miss Lily, who took it in good part, but Miss Pearl objected and Miss Maud took her bonnet and vowed that if such were the case she would go home. But see, they are about ready with their resolutions. Won't you gentlemen come forward and sit down?"

We went forward and sat down, but not in the circle, for that was a privilege accorded to no man but a bachelor, to

THEODORE

which state neither of us could lay claim without falsifying his word. The president stood near and gave us much information concerning the habits, usages, personality and general disposition of the women who got up to read their papers. And, in a condensed form, this is about what she said: "That one is Miss Hortense Bone. She is as spiteful as a setting hen, and she wears her hat in a shocking manner. I have heard, but of course I don't vouch for the truth of it, that at one time she eloped with a minister and was caught at the railway station by the minister's wife, who forgave her husband, but wouldn't speak to Miss Hortense again, and it served her right. See that one reaching for the hair of Miss Hortense—there, they have separated them! Well, she is Miss Consuela Duggs. I have known her a long time, and she has many charming traits

THEODORE

of character. They got her mixed up in a little scandal out in Deadwood, but she says she wasn't guilty. She says so, mind you. And it is not for me to say that she was. That one there with her hands on her hips, gazing defiance, is Miss Honeysuckle Butts. And she is so sweet-tempered. I wish you could know her. And she's so charitable, too."

"Any scandal?" says Theodore.

"Now, who told you? Hush, don't you say a word about it."

"Look!" Theodore cried, pointing upward, and there, as I am alive—there, standing on a rock, was old Sir Billy, his bunch of red hair flaming. We had left our guns at the outskirts of the meeting, and it was evident that, with one leap, the bear could cut us out of them. But would he? My heart was in my mouth, and Theodore turned pale. The bear stood with his great mouth

THEODORE

open, but suddenly, catching sight of the convention, which seemed to have escaped his notice for a moment, he uttered a distressing grunt and took to his heels. We ran to the top of the rocks to watch him, and for a long distance there was a clean sweep, but the bear jumped all the way across it, without looking back, and disappeared over the mountain.

“Let us go,” says Theodore, in a sad tone of voice. We bowed to the convention and took our leave, taking up our guns and pursuing the course which Sir Billy had taken. It was a long time before Theodore said a word, but he sighed repeatedly. “I don’t blame him,” says he.

The afternoon was far spent when we reached the crest behind which the bear had disappeared, and there was a great rock torn loose from the hard soil, and all down the mountain side we saw the

THEODORE

evidences of his precipitous flight. But darkness was coming and we deemed it best to retrace our steps to the place where we had left our mules, which we did, finding them safe, with a telegraph wire strung about them. The Rough Writers were sitting there waiting for us with a telegraphic instrument faintly ticking on a mule's back. I am now about to relate an adventure which has not been reported by the press.

CHAPTER IX

KIDNAPPED

THE next morning we loaded ourselves down with cartridges and started out on foot, choosing a rugged pathway over the mountains and dodging here and there to throw the Rough Writers off the scent, as their wandering telegraph facilities frightened the game and drove the lions to cover. "I am a great believer in the press," says Theodore, as we humped along, "but I don't think that the young men who represent it should usurp a license when allowed a liberty. I am certain that Sir Billy is as much afraid of a telegraph wire as he is of an old maid's convention."

THEODORE

All of a sudden my blood began to freeze even before my eyes discovered the source of impending danger. A large lion leaped directly at us from a high rock. But Theodore, with scarcely a break in his interesting talk, whipped out his knife, held it up and permitted the sailing beast to split himself from lip to tail. It was the most graceful piece of work I ever saw. The lion fell spread out flat, like a tiger rug, and Theodore, looking on with a smile, observed in his sweetly modulated tones: "How handsomely he would set off a corner in a club room. But we have no time to stand here viewing our handiwork. Yonder comes a mule with a telegraph office on his back. If we could only induce the Rough Writers not to engage in such exaggeration I should feel more comfortable. Come, we must dodge."

He ran like a deer, and I followed him



A LARGE LION LEAPED
DIRECTLY AT US. Page 118

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as best I could, and soon all evidences of the press were left far in the zig-zag rear. But in our flight we threw away our provisions, to enable us better to carry the ammunition, and along toward noontime we became painfully conscious of having nothing to eat. But Theodore was equal, if not superior, to any emergency. With his rifle he brought an eagle down from a snow cloud, and I must acknowledge that with a little salt it was not bad. Theodore said that it beat embalmed beef, and I had eaten at the restaurants, set up in the big stores, too often to complain. Just after dinner we came upon a drove of lions, and we gave our right arms good exercise with pumping lead into them. I would have enumerated the result, but Theodore said we hadn't time, so we pushed forward into the neighborhood which old Sir Billy had claimed for his own. But

THEODORE

we found no trace of him, except a rock loosened here and there. Along about four o'clock we heard the scream of a panther, and as we had killed none of that species, and especially as it was rare to find one so high up among the mountains, Theodore said we must have him, so onward we strode, following the blood-curdling outcries. At last we seemed to draw near the sounds, and then, suddenly, in a level place, we came upon a low hut built strongly of huge logs. The cry now seemed to come from the interior of the hut, and we stooped down and peered in at the doorway. "This is a strange place," says Theodore. "Come on, we'll go in."

"Do you think it safe?" says I, endeavoring to restrain him.

"Sir," says he, "I don't know what you mean by safe. Follow me."

There was no hanging back after that,

THEODORE

and I followed him; but no sooner had we entered than a door fell behind us, startling me with its noise. Turning about I saw in an instant that we had been caught in a trap, baited with the screams of a panther. And Theodore realized it, too, for he sprang at the door and strove to break it down, but it resisted all his efforts, as indeed it would have withstood the strength of a dozen men, made as it was of heavy oak, studded with iron nails. There was one small window, about six inches square, cut for the admission of air, and against the wall there was a rude bench, which was the only furniture. But what was this over in a corner, that gradually became lighter as we gazed into it? A jug of water and three loaves of bread.

“I can’t understand this,” says Theodore, stamping upon the frozen earth floor. “Climb up to that window and

THEODORE

shout for telegraph facilities." I did so, shouting till I was hoarse, but there came no wire to relieve our distress. And it was distress, I can assure you, gentle reader. This is the first time that I have called you a gentle reader, if you are, and I desire you to remember that fact.

"I have been in many a box," says Theodore, "but this beats all. I wish we had that telegraph office. Have you any idea as to why we are caught thus?" he says, giving me a hard look.

"Why should I know? I am a detective."

"I beg your pardon," says Theodore, bowing courteously. Hereupon we sat down on the bench, ate a loaf of bread, which our hero generously divided, and refreshed ourselves with water from the jug. "Whoever keeps house here knows what good water is," says Theodore, taking another pull at the jug. "But, I

THEODORE

should like to understand why I am in this trap. And it is a trap, the strongest one I ever saw."

"Do you think, sir," says I, "that it was arranged and set by old Sir Billy?"

Theodore's eyes brightened for a moment. Then, with an expression of disappointment, he said: "No; impossible. He is a wonderful animal, the very statesman of bears, but he could not have done this. I give you credit, however, for thinking of the scheme. It is worthy of the keenest detective in the country. But how dark it is growing. I wish we had a light."

At that moment something came through the window—a wire-rimmed lantern, and it fell at Theodore's feet. He took it up, lighted it and hung it on the wall. "Now, what do you understand by this?" says he.

THEODORE

"I am further and further at a loss," says I.

"Ah, truly, a detective-like predicament," says he. "But what's this?"

It was an afternoon newspaper, and it came fluttering through the little window, almost damp from the press. "We're all right," says Theodore. "The Rough Writers will soon be here."

But they did not come. We sat there, reading exaggerated accounts of Theodore's exploits. And we learned much that was going on in the world; that Chauncey Depew was indisposed; that his physician had prescribed mutton broth and a speech; that a New York woman, after long persuasion, had consented at last to have her dog photographed; that the President had congratulated Edward VII. on the successful termination of his mother's reign; that in consequence of the visit

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of the Emperor to Osborne House the English were about to forgive the Germans for making knives; that Mrs. Lease had withdrawn divorce proceedings and had decided to try the old man a few more falls; that tallow candles were likely to take the place of fraudulent gas in Chicago; that John Tanner had decided not to be Senator from Illinois; that Jeanette Gilder was still writing her paid puffs; that F. Hopkinson Smith had sniffed at Uncle Tom's Cabin; that this particular newspaper was the best on earth, and that Hamlin Garland was considering whether or not he could afford the time to write the great American novel. This was all interesting enough, but what we wanted to know was why we were there. Who threw the lantern and the paper? One of the Rough Writers, of course; but why didn't he say something? Why didn't he take

THEODORE

steps to liberate us? Theodore swore that he would dig himself out, and he went to work with his knife, but soon broke it off in the frozen ground. At last he put out his lantern and said it was time to go to bed, which we did, and slept soundly till morning. The sun shone in at our little window, and this brought us good cheer for a time, but that was all, for no relief expedition had reached us. After we had breakfasted on another loaf of bread we sat down, for there was nothing else to be done, but the investigative mind of Theodore, refusing to rest, was constantly at work to solve the problem of our imprisonment. There never was a time when I was more anxious to help a man out of a difficulty, but, like himself, I was powerless. Our only hope was the Rough Writers, and it was for them that we were waiting. Suddenly there came a tapping on the

THEODORE

wall outside, and we leaped to our feet. A rescue was at hand.

“Open the door,” says Theodore.

“Not much, Mary Ann,” came from without.

“Who are you?” Theodore demanded.

“Oh, you know me. I am the chief of the Omaha kidnapers, and I’ve got you safe enough.”

“Kidnapers, indeed,” quoth Theodore, his anger rising. “But here, I am no kid.”

“You are, for all my intents and purposes. I have been on your track for some time, and now I have you. Your release will cost four hundred thousand dollars in gold. If you were Mr. Bryan I would take silver, charging, of course, double the amount, but as it is you I must have gold, and no compromise.”

“This is an outrage!” Theodore shouted.

THEODORE

“I am pleased to hear you admit it. Are you ready to write a request for the amount to the President at Washington, or to Congress? It makes no difference.”

“Never!” exclaimed Theodore, with determined expansion of chest.

“All right; then make yourself as comfortable as you can under the circumstances.”

“Come round where I can get a shot at you,” says Theodore, in his most persuasive accents.

“No, I believe not, this morning. Whenever you need more water throw out your jug. I will see that you are supplied with bread. Don't forget to wind your watch, and if you desire it I will give you a calendar, so you may keep track of the month.”

“Month!” echoed Theodore.

“Yes, for you are to stay in there until

THEODORE

the ransom is paid. Oh, I knew how to catch you. We tried to get Mr. Bryan just before the election, but we couldn't think of the right sort of bait. But with you it was different. Don't you think there is a good deal of music about the scream of a panther?"

"I think there is a good deal of insolence about you, and I wish I could get a shot at you. Here, a moment. It may be well enough to entrap me, but you have an innocent party—a detective."

"Oh, that's all right. If he's a detective he doesn't know he's shut up yet."

"Sir, your sarcasm is unbecoming a gentleman and a scholar!" I cried, unable longer to control my indignation. I heard him laughing. "It will not be long," I says to Theodore. "Let him enjoy himself while he can." And the fellow, overhearing me, made answer: "We will see about that."

THEODORE

“But don’t you know that the telegraph office will soon be here?” says Theodore, with a fine shade of just anger overlying his manly countenance. “Don’t you know that? And then, sir, we shall be set free.”

“It would seem so,” the man replied, “but you needn’t expect any assistance from that quarter. The press has withdrawn its forces to watch for social outbreaks in Kansas, and, with the exception of one report a day, made up mostly at home, they are to pay no further attention to you.”

“Can this be true?” Theodore groaned. “Are my exploits no longer to be chronicled? Then am I undone, indeed. Fellow, the money cannot be raised. I have not one-third of that sum, and to appeal to Congress or the President would be unconstitutional. Besides, the state of Colorado would resent such interference.

THEODORE

Open this door and I will make it all right with you."

"I will open the door when the money is put down by a red lantern, five hundred feet to the right of the left-hand corner of this house, and not before. Any communication which you write must be in plain English, with no suggestion of cypher. I have a little score to settle with you, and, besides, I need the money, which, of course, makes all financial operations legitimate."

"A score to settle with me?" says Theodore.

"Yes. I was once a wire-fence cutter in the far West, and you declared me an outlaw, and made it so uncomfortable for my line of business that whenever a man was found with a can-opener in his pocket he was strung up. Do you wish writing material?"

THEODORE

"I will stay in here until the day of judgment," says Theodore.

"Just as you please; it's not that I care. But I guess six months will be enough for you."

"Sir, you can't keep me here. The entire populace of this country will rise up."

"Yes, to express their grief that you were killed by a grizzly. It will be easy enough to send off such a report. The press would be delighted to publish it. And I can very easily furnish the mangled remains, and if the worst comes to the worst, I can mutilate that detective and send his lacerated body as mute evidence. Don't you see?"

"I wish I could see you," says Theodore, seizing his gun, working his elbow and pumping a few pounds of lead into the wall. When the firing ceased the man said: "That is good exercise. When

THEODORE

you get out of cartridges I will see that you get a fresh supply. Well, I'll call again in the morning."

We heard him striding off on the frozen ground. "I don't know what to do," says Theodore. "Can't you think of something?"

I wanted to get out. I was having my fill of adventure, and I told him that he might as well yield. "Impossible," says Theodore. "The people would regard the whole thing as a joke if I should appeal to them. The paragraphers would laugh at me, and my chances for the Presidency would be forever ruined. No, I can't entertain such a thought."

While he was talking the window suddenly darkened, and I could not suppress a cry, for there, shutting out nearly all the light, was the head of old Sir Billy, slightly drawn back, or otherwise it would have thrown us completely in

THEODORE

the dark. Theodore seized his gun and fired; the bear shook his head and, with a broad grin, spat out something. It was the bullet. Theodore was about to fire again, after observing the effect of his first shot, but the bear ducked, and we felt him rubbing against the house.

“He may huff it down like the bear in the story,” said I.

“The bear you are thinking of was a wolf,” says Theodore. “You should be a little more careful with your citations. But he may rub our house down, that’s a fact. And if he does, at least one of us is likely to pay the penalty, and somehow, for I am inclined to look on the bright side, I don’t think it will be your Uncle Edward,” meaning himself, of course. I groaned aloud. “If he would only kill that kidnaper I would thank him,” says Theodore.

THEODORE

"He may be in league with him," I suggested, and Theodore replied:

"A picturesque idea, for a detective; but of course it is necessarily wide of the truth. Still, I give you credit for expressing it. Whenever you have nothing else to do express such ideas. They will help to while away the time. Helloa, he's taken himself off!"

And such was the fact, for we could hear him rolling down rocks from the mountain side not far away.

The day was long and tedious, and I for one was in hopes that our captor would pay us another visit; but the night closed in, and we heard nothing of him. He came with the morning, however, and, tapping upon the wall to announce himself, asked how we were getting on.

"We haven't advanced any since yesterday," says Theodore, not forgetting his fine grade of sarcasm.

THEODORE

“But don't you think you are soon likely to get on further toward writing that paper?”

“The time for my first message has not arrived,” quoth Theodore, with his humorous mind on the White House.

“And when it has arrived it may cost the country more than four hundred thousand dollars,” says the man outside, and we heard him chuckle. “I have decided to shut off your newspapers,” says he, chuckling again. “About all an American needs is a newspaper, anyway, and with it you are likely to be too well provided. But from time to time, as the months pass by, I will tell you some of the most important news.”

“The months,” echoed our hero.

“I said months,” quoth the kidnaper. “And I will begin now. Mme. Bernhardt has expressed herself as being greatly pleased with society.”

THEODORE

“Has she consented to let them take her up?”

“I mean the society of the stock yards. She dipped her handkerchief in a steer’s blood and waved him a good-bye. She says that she there saw the finest drama ever played. She took a phonograph along to catch a few squeals to use in the future, when she produces her great rural piece. She then will have the noise of the genuine hog.”

“Why didn’t she catch the whistle of an Illinois Central train?”

“Your brightness deserves a better fate,” says the kidnaper. “But here is some more news.”

“Let us have it; but let it be something of interest. I am not stuck on actresses.”

“All right. The resolutions of the late peace congress show that there are to be no more wars, proving that the Czar

THEODORE

is a great peacemaker, and should, therefore, be blessed."

"How many warships is he building, and what are his recent appropriations for the army?" says Theodore.

"Big," says the kidnaper. "But that is all the news I can give you at present. I am afraid you'll find yourself too comfortable if I keep on. You won't care to come out at all."

"Look here," says Theodore, "this joke has gone far enough. Open the door and I will walk away and ask no questions. And if you don't, when I'm President I will veto the bill that declares your irrigation ditch navigable. Then look at the money you will lose."

"You indeed move me deeply," says the kidnaper; "but I know my duty when it is spread out before me, and I am not to be tempted. Well, I must be going." And off he went.

CHAPTER X

HELD FOR RANSOM

IT is painful thus to linger over the memory of our imprisonment, but I have been set to the great task of telling the simple truth, and I suppose you know, gentle reader—second time—that all simple truths are full of details. If this were not true, there would not be news enough in the world to warrant the getting out of more than one newspaper in a week.

Ah, but now we had work to do. In his restlessness Theodore discovered that the logs were pine, and that with persistent effort one of them might be cut in two with our knives. His was

THEODORE

broken about half way of the blade, but this did not impair its effectiveness. In fact, if anything it was a help. So to work we went, whistling at our labor, and made good progress. The log was about two feet through and we had hopes that it might be hollow. But it was not. Our captor didn't call during the day. We expected him at night, and grew impatient for his cheerful voice, but he did not come until nearly bedtime; then he arrived in a merry mood and tossed us in a can of oil for our lantern.

"Beautiful night out here under the stars," says he, and in my mind I could see him looking up at the Milky Way.

"Won't you come in and sit down a while?" says Theodore, never for a moment ceasing his work at the log.

"No, I believe not. What are you gentlemen doing in there?"

THEODORE

“Exercising the great Yankee privilege of whittling,” says Theodore.

“Good. And if your knives get dull you may call on me for a whetstone.”

“Thank you,” says Theodore; “you are very polite. What was your business before accepting the presidency of the Amalgamated Association of Kidnapers?”

“I told you that I cut wire fences for a living.”

“I mean before then. What gentle calling did you follow?”

“I sold coal in winter and ice in summer.”

“And what are you going to do when you retire from your present position?”

“I thought that I might buy out a street-car line. But how about your mind? Have you made it up?”

“Yes, to the extent of telling you that it is impossible to give in.”

THEODORE

"Then it is impossible to get out."

"This is the worst outrage of the century," says Theodore, whetting his knife on his boot and falling to work with renewed vigor.

"That may be, but new enterprises are coming up every day, and one never knows what to expect."

"Suppose that, as a last resort, I am compelled to thwart you by ending my own life?"

"Then you could never be President."

"That's a fact," Theodore admitted, with a deep sigh. "I didn't think of that."

"But you should think of such things. This is a day of thought. Did you ever contemplate that?"

Theodore said that he had, still cutting away at the log. I had seen him under different emotions, standing the strain of varied trials, but never before

THEODORE

had I been afforded the opportunity to admire him in the exercise of the muscles of industry. And, although a detective, I hold with the great political economists that we owe all our wealth to—the industry of others; and whenever I see a man at work, be he statesman or hodcarrier, a feeling of enjoyment ripples up my back like refreshing water on a hot day. And how much a great man can perform in a short time when he consents to labor! We all know the story of the workingman who left his pick hanging in the air when the six-o'clock whistle startled the echoes of the dying afternoon. His time was up, and nothing could have induced him to complete the blow. But with a great man it is otherwise. The sounding of the whistle makes but little difference to him. He is looking at the work to be done rather than at the time.

THEODORE

“Is your knife holding out all right?” says the considerate kidnaper.

“Reasonably well,” says Theodore, never for a moment finding fault with the tool which conditions had offered him.

“I have a reasonably good Barlow you may try when that one gives out.”

“Oh, thank you,” says Theodore, “but keep that, please. I shall use it after a while to cut your throat with. It would be a good joke to sever your jugular with your own knife.”

“Yes, and I will take the joke when I give you the opportunity. But I waste time. I neglect business. We have other enterprises on hand. We have our plans laid for the kidnaping of other great men. You didn’t know that we had Billy Mason once, I suppose?”

“No,” says Theodore, “I never heard of it.”

“But perhaps your friend in there, the

THEODORE

detective, can tell you something about it.”

“If he can it will be the first information I ever have been able to get out of him.”

“Then he understands his business. But we had Billy once.”

“Did he raise the ransom?”

“No. We couldn't make him understand that he was kidnaped. He thought he was in the Senate Chamber, speaking on an important matter—persisted in telling us funny stories, and we were forced to let him go. Even a kidnaper takes life seriously at times, and Billy's levity distressed me so that I couldn't hold him any longer. One word more before I go. A man in public life should have had varied experiences, and this imprisonment will give the finishing touches to your education.”

“And the final touches to your rich

THEODORE

deservings — death,” says Theodore, again whetting his knife on his boot. The kidnaper went away, whistling o’er the lea, and for a long time we labored in silence. When we left off for refreshments it was with satisfaction that we estimated that two-thirds of the difficulty had been cut away. While we were eating, the bear came and looked in upon us, smiling grimly. I reached for my gun, for I knew that he couldn’t get at me, but Theodore placed a restraining hand on my arm and told me to desist. “Let him alone and perhaps he may eat up our captor,” says he.

“But in that event we’d starve to death in here,” says I, with a burst of inspiration, and Theodore complimented me. “We learn from children, drunken men and fools,” says he, smiling upon me. The bear smiled, too, and for a time they stood trying to outsmile each other,

THEODORE

but finally the bear shook his head and got down out of sight. Then he climbed upon the low roof of our prison and stretched himself out for a nap. He must have eaten something that weighed heavily upon him, for he snored distressfully.

“Here, up there, stop that!” Theodore shouted. “If there’s anything that jars me it is a snore.” But the bear kept on, and we bent ourselves to our work. When evening came we sat down to a well-earned rest. How delightful is rest when you feel that you have merited it! At such a time we look upon a blister in the hand as a badge of honor, but even honors pall on us after a while. The bear finished his long nap, came off the roof, stuck his nose in at our little window, smiled and was gone. I felt that I had earned a night of sound sleep, and after bread and water it was my desire

THEODORE

to stretch myself out, but Theodore said that, as we were in a sort of rush, I was expected to work overtime. So, by the light of the lantern, we resumed our unfinished task. And I shall never forget our hero's laugh of victory as we struck the bark on the other side of the log.

"The light ought to be shining through from without," says Theodore. "But I suppose it's too dark. Hold the lantern closer."

He worked faster and faster, and suddenly fell back with a cry of anguish. Between two log walls was a partition of sheet iron. I could but groan as I gazed at it.

"Fate is against us," says Theodore. "Why does fate so often array herself on the side of the wrongdoer? Now, I know why that infernal bear smiled so. But he shall pay for it. Come, we waste precious time. Perhaps the sheet iron

THEODORE

may not go all the way up. Let us cut higher."

"It is worse than useless," say I, clasping my blistered hands.

"What, discouraged? And now when victory seems so near?"

I told him that I was not greedy of conquest. I admitted that I was enterprising; that I was also a man of discernment, but that I could not see my way through iron.

"Short sighted," muttered Theodore, whetting his knife. "Sir," says he, "success in this life is a reward lying at the end of a rocky road. Even a detective ought to know that."

I replied that I did know it, but that I was not ambitious. "Remember," says I, "that I am not a statesman."

"Then do you expect to stay in here like a rat?"

"I wish I could burrow out like one."

THEODORE

“Ah,” says Theodore, brightening, “there is a good suggestion. We will burrow. The foundation can’t be very deep, and even frozen ground can be cut.”

So we went to work, chipping off thin flakes of frozen earth, and along toward morning we struck a solid rock. This time it was our hero who groaned. I was past the point of any emotion whatever. Upon the ground we stretched ourselves, and refreshing and well-merited sleep closed our eyes. The dull morning broke with a heavy fog pouring through our window. Theodore strove to smile, but the effort was too much for him. We waited for our visitor, the bear, but he did not come. However, along toward ten o’clock, the kidnaper tapped on the wall.

“I have a fountain pen and some very fine tinted paper here,” says he. “Now, perhaps you feel like writing.”

THEODORE

“That I do,” says Theodore, “provided it were the signing of your death warrant.”

“Romantic, even unto the last,” says the kidnaper. “But don’t you feel disposed, in view of difficulties which beset you, sheet iron and solid rock—I say, don’t you feel disposed to write me an order for four hundred thousand dollars in gold coin?”

“I will give you the order if you will set us at liberty.”

“Oh, that’s advancement. But I cannot set you at liberty until the order is honored. That would be against the best interests and the positive order of the kidnaping trust. But give me the order and I will see that you are made comfortable until we find out.”

“But suppose it should not be honored.”

“Then we should be compelled to put out your eyes.”

THEODORE

“Well, I could stand that.”

“Could you? Then we would pull your teeth to rob you of your smile.”

Theodore groaned. “Heartless wretch,” he muttered.

“You see,” says the kidnaper, “that you have every inducement to make the order strong.”

“Say, can’t you cut the price in two?” says Theodore, with a momentary gleam of hope in his bright eyes.

“Lower prices! What are trusts for?”

“I am beginning to feel what they are for,” says Theodore, “and the time may come when I can influence legislation against them.”

“Oh, I don’t know as to that,” pleasantly replied the kidnaper. “It might have seemed so once, but times have changed.”

“What’s the news?” says Theodore, after a moment of deep thought.

THEODORE

“Well, our brothers in New York, the trusts, are giving ten-thousand-dollar dinners.”

“Are they? But tell me, is Dr. Harper pulling Rockefeller’s leg to advantage?”

“The doctor is ever an advantageous puller,” says the kidnaper. “But you must know that he is a public benefactor. He is like a circus—the money he gets could be got in no other way. A monument to vanity may become a temple of learning, you know.”

“What a political spellbinder you would make,” says Theodore. “Before I go away from here I wish you would give me your address.”

“When you go away you won’t need addresses.”

“Reassuring,” says Theodore. “But say, why don’t you go and get Benjamin Harrison and shut him up?”

THEODORE

“He has appointments with the peace commission when he comes out of his cave of discontent. And I am a man of peace. I don’t believe in wars—all I believe in is the trust.”

“Well,” says Theodore, “I suppose all I can do now is to give myself over to Providence.”

“Why, that’s exactly what the trusts are doing, and every time they do prices go up. The trusts believe that they have a corner on the mercies of Providence.”

“Blasphemous wretch,” muttered Theodore.

“Well, but doesn’t it seem that way?”

Theodore was forced to admit that it did. But he added that a day of reckoning was coming. “Yes,” says the kidnaper, “and it has been coming ever since the world began, but it hasn’t got here yet. By the way, I have another piece of news. The literati has met Mme.

THEODORE

Bernhardt at the house of Fernando Jones, in Chicago. The Twentieth Century Club did the honors."

"Who are the literati?" says Theodore.

"Why, those who don't write and don't care for what has been written. I thought you knew that."

"And were there no writers at the reception?"

"Yes; the reporters stood on the back steps."

"I think I was once entertained by the Twentieth Century Club," says Theodore. "And, as I remember it, there were many bright minds present."

"Yes, for most of the members sell polish. A number of the ladies speak French as well as they do Irish."

"And did Mme. Bernhardt understand them?"

"Oh, perfectly. She had her interpreter with her."

THEODORE

“Ah, but this is idle persiflage,” says Theodore, a consciousness of his captivity weighing heavily upon him. “I must get out of here.”

“Then you are ready to write?”

“Sir, I have been accounted a ready writer. I studied the compendium, and am acquainted with nearly all forms, but the kidnaping form was not in my book.”

“Then you must give me the pleasure of originating a form for you. But you are weary now. Lie down to peaceful slumbers and I may call again soon.” And with that he took himself off, leaving us to nurse our loneliness.

But he was a kind and obliging kidnaper, and returned not long afterward, seeming to take an interest in our work. “What decision have you come to,” he inquired, rubbing his back against a corner of the cabin and muttering something about blessings on the Duke of Argyle.

THEODORE

"I am where you left me," says Theodore, with a sigh that did not escape my detective ears.

"I can well believe that," says the kidnaper, leaving off the ancient Scotch diversion of scratching his back. "And it does not require any particular foresight to assure you that you are likely to stay there unless you come to terms."

"I care nothing for your opinions," says Theodore. "What I want is news. You forget that I am an American."

"Well," says our outside entertainer, "as I have not been connected long enough with the trust to become wholly inhuman, I will oblige you. Poor old man Carnegie has been frozen out of the steel combine."

"You don't tell me! And how much did he find with him out in the cold?"

"Oh, about eighty-five millions—for a part of his holdings."

THEODORE

“Poor old man,” sighed Theodore. “His was a gentle spirit. What is he going to do for a living now?”

“He would go to a Soldier’s Home, I suppose, but he was only a telegrapher during the civil war. But surely his friends won’t see him suffer—he has given them so much good advice. And now he says that a man ought to marry a woman at least twenty years older than himself.”

“Oh, generous advocate of the old ladies’ home. But why didn’t he say forty years older and give the ballet girl a chance? Now for your other news. I pant!”

“Well, the Czar has made the President a present of an album containing pictures of his coronation.”

“Oh, generous monarch! And what did Mac say?”

“‘Much obliged, Czarie. I’ll send you

THEODORE

some views taken along the Little Miami,' which may be worth more to art if not to history."

"Kidnaper, I thank you for that sentiment. But what else have you?"

"Mrs. Nation has visited Chicago."

"Who, Mrs. Helen D. Nation?"

"Oh, no; Mrs. Carrie Nation."

"What did she do?"

"Snatched a cigarette out of a man's mouth, and made a saloonkeeper put clothes on a nude figure."

"And where was Carter Harrison all this time?"

"Dodging. But she found him at a ball and asked him to give her his confidence."

"Why didn't she ask Kipley to give her one of his confidence men? But go on, I prithee."

"She asked Carter if he ever lied."

"And what did he do?"

THEODORE

"Bowed and blushed for the city hall."

"Anything else?"

"Yes, Chicago will make an effort to grab off the Olympic games."

"Why doesn't it make an effort to get rid of its other games?"

"I beg your pardon, but the political trusts—and all trusts are kin—assure the world that there is no gambling in that city. Ask your detective."

"There is none," I spoke up brightly, true to my training.

"Anything more?" says Teddy, with his face pressed eagerly against the wall.

"Yes. Chicago is about to solve the question that confronts the unemployed."

"How so?"

"By expelling them from the city."

"But how can this be done?"

"By providing work for them. This would be dead wrong—it would interfere

THEODORE

with the design of sweet and blessed charity. Charity says, 'If you give them work there will be no excuse for my vast machinery. If you break up my bureau you cut off the salaries of good and true men, who sit so gracefully and comfortably asleep at their desks. They themselves might be compelled to work for a living, and that would be a shame. The money that they receive might be devoted to cleaning the streets, and that would be an outrage.' But time speeds. I must go," and with that he left us.

CHAPTER XI

RIDING THE BEAR

DURING the rest of the day and until bedtime that night Theodore was more depressed than I had ever seen him. Even the strongest heart must grow faint after a while, when hope seems to be but mockery. He sat with his back against the wall and talked of the past; he said that he would like to write his memoirs, and this proved to me that indeed he considered our case as one of abject despair. And to think that at one time years ago I had been tolerant of a kidnaper! I remember it well. 'Twas on a summer's evening when the cry arose that a boy had

THEODORE

been stolen. There was great excitement, as I pushed through a crowd of mothers in the street, but I told them to take heart. Over in an adjoining lot I found a man, a bearded tramp, who had grabbed a boy. The tramp had liberated the boy, and the youth, unappreciative of his freedom, was standing off viewing the kidnaper as he drank a can of beer. I arrested the scoundrel and struck him only three times with my club—I was not a plain-clothes man then, but one of the uniformed force; and did not hit him again until we arrived at the station, when I gave him another swat by way of a parting salute. Many another man would have treated him harshly, but I was always tender-hearted. But what did it avail me now that I was shut up, far from home and from friends, whom I owed small sums ranging from fifty

THEODORE

cents to ten dollars? Alas, in my great time of need, there was none to show me mercy!

Theodore dozed off to sleep where he sat, too despondent even to lie down, and I sat there watching the lantern as it winked and sputtered on the ground beside him. At his feet, where it had fallen from his discouraged hand, lay his well-worn knife, last remnant of his determination. Hours passed. What would not I have given to hear the ticking of a clock! The universal enemy of sleep, the cat on the back fence, would now have been a joy to me. But I heard nothing save the distant howl of a wild beast and the wailing of the wind deep down in a gulch. Finally there came another sound, now grown familiar, that of the bear climbing to rest on our roof. I was becoming so accustomed to him that I could read all his movements by

THEODORE

the noises he made. Now he was yawning, now scratching himself, now stretching out to sleep. The hours continued to pass and Theodore was sleeping peacefully. Occasionally his forefinger would twitch, as if he were working a trigger. Ah, he was dreaming of innocent conquest among the wild beasts of the forest. "Dream on," I said. "Sip your pleasures in sleep, for all too soon there will come an awakening, when your too restless spirit again will fret under the power of the kidnaping trust." Suddenly he leaped to his feet with a loud laugh. I thought he was still dreaming, but with wide open eyes he turned to me and said: "Fools that we were!"

"Yes, to come in here," I admitted.

"No; not to get out. Look, we have cartridges. We can unload them, stuff this hole in the wall with the powder and blow up our prison."

THEODORE

“But won’t that be dangerous?” I asked, and then he spoke in tones of suppressed contempt: “Oh, of course. It is dangerous to breathe, to eat, and to sleep. It is dangerous to do anything.” But he softened toward me and continued: “Come, pour out your cartridges, and get to work. It is better to blow ourselves up than to have our eyes put out, although such a condition might improve your efficiency as a detective.”

His sarcasm nerved me, and I fell to work with a will. Unloading brass cartridges is not an easy job. The bullets were in tight, but Theodore’s wonderful teeth now came into practical play, for he bit them out like biting corn off the cob. And by the time a pale shaft of daylight fell through our window, we had almost a hat full of powder. That there should be no possibility of waste, he thrust

THEODORE

the hat—my hat—into the hole and then packed earth and chips tightly about it. Ah, how devotedly he labored now. An inventor, about to reach a climax, could not have exceeded him.

“I hope the kidnaper will reach here about the time we touch her off,” says Theodore, ramming in a handful of earth.

“The bear is asleep on the roof now,” says I.

“Is he? Then we will wake him up; for after all it was he that got us into this trap. Dig up some more dirt there and hand it to me. Ah, we couldn't have made a better hole for a blow-up if we had tried. I wonder why we didn't think of it sooner. But no matter, we *have* thought of it and will soon be at liberty, I promise you.”

“But, as I said before, it will be attended by a good deal of risk,” says I,

THEODORE

watching him as he neared the completion of his task.

“That’s true. One of us may be killed.”

“But which one? That’s the question.”

He halted a moment and looked at me. “Why, you, of course. You must know that in such cases the mortality is rarely more than fifty per cent.”

“But isn’t it possible for you to represent that fifty per cent?”

“I refuse to accept revised figures,” says he, resuming his work, upon which he was now putting the finishing touches. I was afraid of the thing. I was down on the drainage canal once and saw a number of men, all strangers to me, sailing through the air, and I remember thinking at the time that they were going to have a hard time of it, and they did. Little did I suppose that I should ever emulate their awful example. But

THEODORE

that time was now approaching. Theodore was tearing a strip from his handkerchief, of which "to make a fuse," he pleasantly remarked. It was now broad day and I heard the twitter of a bird, doubtless the last I should ever hear. Through my mind there swept a host of memories, of reward money I had received for nabbing the wrong man, and of a ballot box I had seen stolen on the West Side. But it was now too late to repent of anything done in the past. The fuse was smoking, and what a scent, that burning rag! Theodore crouched down in one corner and I in another.

"It takes a long time," says he, growing impatient.

"There is no time so long as that which is poised on the edge of eternity," says I, remembering that I had seen the epigrams of the Rev. Frank Crane.

"I wish that thing didn't smell so,"

THEODORE

says Theodore. "I like to smell powder, but a little of burnt rag goes a long ways. Listen, did you hear that bear sneeze?"

"I can hear nothing now, save the beating of my own heart," says I.

"Well, perhaps it won't disturb you long," says he. And then—and then—with logs and fragments of wood whirling about me, I was sailing through the vibrating air! There came the sound of the explosion, far below. It was a bright morning and I looked about for Theodore, but could not make him out, there were so many obstructions. I wondered how I was to get down without hurting myself. Oh, how I wished for an elevator. But now, having reached my height, I was falling, faster and faster, and down I came in a snow drift. I scrambled out and looked about to see if I were hurt; I felt of myself and



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SIR BILLY'S EARS. Page 171

THEODORE

finding that I was all right, complimented myself. But where was Theodore? And now a thrilling sight rewarded my search. Not far off was our hero, galloping across the country on the back of old Sir Billy, holding on by his ears. He had come down astride the bear, and being a man of quick decision, had decided to ride him. I forgot my fear of the great beast and yelled out to Theodore to wait a moment; he heard me, and pulled hard on Sir Billy's ears, but there was no slacking of his headlong speed. I followed on as fast as I could, fearful of the result while rejoicing in my freedom; but they soon passed out of sight over a great crest of rocks, bounding toward a cliff. If the bear should take this leap, I knew that it would be fatal not only to himself but to Theodore, as well; and I halted long enough to pour forth a groan on the cool and invigorating air. But

THEODORE

while following, let me observe that the kidnaper was not there to share in the explosion. I would like to say that he was killed by a flying timber, but he was not. Truth compels me to say that he is still alive and doing a thriving business for all I know. I put an advertisement in the Denver newspapers, but nothing came of this, my strong effort to bring him to justice.

As I was nearing the cliff my heart bounded at the sight of Theodore, sitting on a rock, with his eagle eye fixed on the unfamiliar sun.

“Good morning,” says he, as I came up. “I hope you had a good night’s rest.” And then his old smile illumined his countenance. He told me that the bear had run under a hanging rock that scraped him off. “But never mind,” says he, “I will get him yet.”

“But don’t you think that we ought

THEODORE

to make it our business to look for that kidnaper?" says I, being hot against our captor.

"My dear boy," he says, affectionately, "there are some things you don't seem to understand. We are at liberty, and that is enough. Do you suppose we can afford to bring all the trusts in the country down upon us? Let him alone now, and I will see if there can be any legislation introduced against him. Personal vengeance is below the dignity of a statesman. I am a hunter of animals and not of men."

I did not agree with him. Man-hunting was my business, and as I before mentioned, I strove to find him with an advertisement.

Now, with light hearts, we tripped down the scaly mountain sides toward our camp, expecting from what the kidnaper had told us to find it deserted; but

THEODORE

he had issued a false statement, for there were the Rough Writers in our cabin, making themselves at home. Theodore greeted them pleasantly, and then we were shown the reports that they had sent off during our absence. It seems that never did they even suspect our captivity. Once they trailed a telegraph wire within a hundred feet of our prison, but halted not, pushing on to report the number of lions slain. I asked Theodore if he did not intend to rest during the day, and he winked at me as much as to tell me to hush, that such a thing was impossible. We did not tell the Writers of our captor, nor of blowing up the prison. Theodore said he did not want them to send off sensational reports.

“Get ready to go with me,” said Theodore, after we had eaten a bite. “I must

THEODORE

have that bear or the whole thing will be but a failure."

"You had him once," said I.

"Yes; and if I had thought to take my knife up with me all might have been different. But get ready. We waste time."

CHAPTER XII

LOST AGAIN

I WAS in hopes that our trials, which Theodore called adventures, were at an end, but such was not quite the case. I was anxious to get home, and told him so. He replied: "What are your duties compared with mine? I informed you that I could not preside over the Senate, knowing that Sir Billy still roamed at large, and now you remind me of your duties." I apologized and told him to lead on, that I would follow; and again we struck out in search of the bear. The telegraph followed at an unobtrusive distance, the weather was fair, and

THEODORE

all seemed well. Theodore whistled merrily as he strode up the trail, our mules close behind. They had found their way home during our captivity. Indeed, it was their habit to find their way back to camp whenever they got a sniff of Sir Billy.

We returned to the place where the log house had been blown to atoms, and Theodore, who is contemplative as well as active, sat down and mused for a time. "This is the scene of one of the most remarkable events in the recent history of this country," said he, "and I want to fasten it upon my memory. I was about to forget it and happily arrived here in time to avert such a loss. But I charge you, do not exaggerate in your report of it."

"That is not likely, sir, for I am not a trained writer."

"True," says Theodore, warmly press-

THEODORE

ing my hand. And then after deep thought he added: "I have been forced to decide that it is useless to try that bear with a gun."

"I would advise poison," said I, looking at him with strong appeal.

"Do you take me for an assassin?" says he, seeming to regret that he had pressed my hand.

"Oh, not at all, sir; but I thought it was his demise you were after."

"It is; but he must be killed in a fair fight. Do you think there is any prowess in poisoning a bear?"

I admitted that I did not. "Come," says he, "we waste precious time."

Onward we went, up into a part of the mountains which as yet we had not explored, and at noon sat down to refreshments. Just as Theodore lifted a bottle to his lips it was dashed to pieces by a panther that leaped at him from a high

THEODORE

rock. The brute ran off a short distance to get another start, and was crouching for a spring, when Theodore, catching up his gun, remarked: "Impolite beast, take the consequences of your rashness!" and with that the rifle cracked. The panther weighed three hundred pounds, and yielded one of the finest skins I ever saw.

We entered a steep gulch and were climbing upward at a fair rate of speed, when we discovered that our immediate progress was blocked by a drove of lions. For nearly half an hour we pumped our magazines, and then came the toilsome work of climbing over the dead. Being freshly killed and therefore yielding, the beasts were hard to walk over. One of them, not being quite dead, bit off the heel of Theodore's boot, but he took it in good part and cut the lion's throat. At last we were up in the highest grade,

THEODORE

and it was with difficulty that I could breathe, but Theodore didn't mind it. He whistled, and sang, and shot a panther that he saw skulking in the distance. But night came with no traces of the bear, and we turned camp-ward, when again we discovered that we were lost. "If you hear the scream of a panther, the grunt of a bear, or any other sound, don't follow it," says I. "Remember our trap."

"You are growing strangely cautious," says he, listening.

"I am growing wise if you call that caution."

"I will agree to see you safe within the smoky precincts of the detective agency," says he, with a touch of protection in his manly voice. "Suppose we camp here."

We rolled up in our blankets and com-



NOTHING OF NOTE HAPPENED
DURING THE NIGHT. Page 181

THEODORE

posed ourselves for sleep, and nothing of note happened during the night. Once a lion stole up and blew his hot breath in my face; at another time a panther socked his teeth into Theodore's boot, and ran away with his blanket; an avalanche of snow came down and covered us to the extent of about ten feet; but aside from these petty annoyances the night was as pleasant and eventless for sleeping purposes as we could have desired. Early in the morning Theodore killed three lions and then struck out in a westerly direction. At about nine o'clock we sighted a flock of Rocky Mountain goats. They were amusing themselves by leaping off a bluff nearly a thousand feet high and lighting on their horns, bounding up with astonishing elasticity. One of them bounced over near us and we made a fine meal off him, the flesh being tender and juicy. Shortly

THEODORE

afterward I saw an animal that did not excite my fear, although it was most unfamiliar to me until I tried to catch it—then Theodore commanded me to go off somewhere and bury my clothes. I told him that the weather was too cold to strip.

“Then go and bury yourself,” he said through his nose. “Don’t come near me. Stand up yonder and let the wind blow on you.”

I did so, while he waited in the distance. And as I stood there I heard a great scratching upon the rocks, and looking around with a start, I saw the bear climbing after me. I shouted in alarm, and just then a fortunate breeze from me struck Sir Billy and he tumbled off the rock, sniffing the air distressfully, and was gone. Theodore soon forgot my perfumery in his anxiety to reach the bear, which he could not—for he was

THEODORE

gone; and I think that our hero was mortified to reflect that even I, a modest detective, had power enough to frighten the lord of the mountains. But I assured him, as he must have known very well, that it was no unaided force of my own.

Night found us still following the bear, but as we were now near the camp, we decided to turn in. I was thankful for this, having a cheerful fire in view; and I enjoyed it all to myself, Theodore choosing to sleep in the shed with the Rough Writers. But by morning I was presentable—I mean endurable, and cheerfully we set out over the mountains. The Writers did not follow us, however, and Theodore, turning to me, said: "So, you see, everything is of some use."

"Yes," says I; "and I hope you will forgive me."

THEODORE

“I will; but when you see another one of those little animals, let your invitation to visit another neighborhood be very pressing.”

“Did you ever encounter one, sir?”

“Once. It was during my gallant days on the plains. The night was beautiful. There was to be a ball in the dance hall at Blue Nose. I was on my way thither. My horse was an easy trotter, my health was perfect, and nothing more could be desired. Suddenly something gleamed in the moonlight in front of me. The horse stopped, stiffened his ears, and snorted. I touched him with the spur and he jumped straight up. This was singular. What, afraid of so little a thing as the white and black animal that gleamed and darkened in the road? I touched him harder with the spur. He leaped to one side. The little animal sat down in the road with the moon

THEODORE

full upon him. His eyes looked like two sparks of fire. 'Beautiful creature,' I said to myself; and the horse shuddered. I was to dance the first set with Miss Magnolia Knockknee, a charming half breed. I remembered to have heard her express a fondness for pets. I would take this one to her and present it with a graceful bow. So I dismounted and strove to lead the horse toward the little animal, but he pulled back, with his eyes rolling. With the toe of my boot I assisted him to come forward a few feet, and then, when it was too late, it was plain that I had gone too far. Cooper wrote about the awful outcry of a horse. I never heard it until that night, when my poor sorrel sat down on his haunches, lifted his grinning lips and poured forth upon the still air a wail the like of which I hope never to hear again. I couldn't cry—I was choking. Well, the horse

THEODORE

broke loose from me and ran away, and after shaking myself, and pouring over my clothes a bottle of perfumery which I was taking as a present to a colored fiddler, I pronounced myself all right, and set forward again. As I went down the hill toward the dance hall the twang of tuning fiddles fell upon my keen and sensitive ear. They were making ready, and I pushed forward to be in time for the first set with Miss Magnolia. The door was opening. I could see the fluttering of soft drapery. I stepped in, with a sweeping bow, and a red-haired boy cried out, 'Oh, gee whiz!' And then all was changed. There may have been a dance that night, but I did not participate. But what have we here?"

It was a great pile of raw flesh and fresh bones. A mule train had been demolished, and by that bear, too; for he had left his tracks in the blood.

THEODORE

Pretty soon a professional mule driver stuck his head from under a rock and asked us if he were gone.

“Come out,” says Theodore. “I will protect you.”

The man came out, looking pale and worn with fright. He told us that he was going along peacefully with his four mules, when down upon them all came the bear, like a storm of teeth, claws and grizzly hair. Flight was worse than useless on his part, so he slipped under a rock. The mules were less fortunate. They had to stand the storm, and the manner of their standing it was sad to behold.

“I am out now looking for that bear,” says Theodore.

The driver's face turned yellow. “Surely, sir,” says he, “you don't know what you are looking for. I would rather meet the day of judgment than

THEODORE

that fellow. Did you ever see him?"

"I rode with him quite a distance once," says Theodore, "but there was no formal introduction. Was this your first meeting with him?"

"No; I met him once before, or rather he tried to meet me, and would have done it, too, but I got under a rock. He sat down and waited for me to come out, his size preventing him from coming in, but I stayed there until the monster's appetite compelled him to go below and attack a wagon train."

"Your language betrays the school," says Theodore, and the driver smiled sadly. "You see, sir," says he, "a college remnant of a club of base ball players. Once they put me in a wagon and hauled me about the streets, with music by the band and flowers strewn by fair maidens, but alas! When base ball died my knowledge of chemistry assured me

THEODORE

a position at a soda fountain, near an institution of learning, but they accused me of poisoning a professor of Greek—”

“And so you were compelled to resign.”

“Yes; when they failed to prove it on me they demanded my resignation. After that, of course, my grade was lower. And on my way down I wrote a society novel. One more step remained, that taken, I found myself driving mules in the mountains.”

We bade him farewell and pushed onward. Night came without further adventure, except that a man shot at us by mistake, clipping off a lock of Theodore's hair. “Permit me to apologize and to keep this,” said the man, stooping down and picking up the short, wavy tress.

“With my compliments,” says Theodore, and again we went onward. We should have slept well that night had it

THEODORE

not been for another avalanche, and this disturbed us somewhat, burying us to the depth of about eighteen feet four inches. We dug out by sunrise and, after eating a bit of frozen meat, set forward with rising spirits. I think it must have been about noon when, far above, old Sir Billy stood looking down upon us. The air was clear and we could see him plainly. His tuft of red hair caught the sun and flamed in the light. At the prison window he had smiled at us, but now he wore a frowning countenance. Theodore set his teeth. He knew, and so did I, that the great contest was about to begin.

“He will come after us,” says our hero. “Even if we should try ever so hard, escape would be impossible. We must fight, or rather I must, for you are to have no hand in the slaughter. The victory over him must belong to me alone.

THEODORE

I will hang his skin behind my chair in the Senate. Mark, he is coming. Get over there behind that rock." I scrambled to a place of comparative safety. Unless Theodore should fall, I might remain unnoticed. On he came, with his great mouth open. Theodore stood with his gun in his hand and with a long knife under his arm. It was a majestic sight. When the bear came within one hundred yards of his stand, Theodore opened a steady and well-directed fire. But the terrific onrush of the bear was not impeded. Undoubtedly he was proof against the force of lead. "Agamemnon of his race," muttered Theodore, with admiration in his eye, but with never a sign of fear. How the brave admire the brave! Onward came the bear, cutting short the distance with great bounds, spitting out mouthfuls of bullets as he leaped. One might have thought that he was immor-

THEODORE

tal as well as inhuman. And now a trembling seized me. "Stop that!" cries Theodore. "You will bring an avalanche down upon us and spoil it all." Seeking to calm myself, I took a pull from a bottle. "I wish I had time to take some of that, but I am busy now," says Theodore, throwing aside his impotent rifle and grasping his knife. The bear made a great lunge. I shut my eyes. And then I found myself unable to move. We were all covered by an avalanche. I dug out as fast as I could, and when I reached the surface, there stood Theodore.

"Where's that bear?" he demanded imperiously.

"You had him last," says I.

"You may well say that I had him. But he is gone. A rock rolled between me and him, and when I dug over it he was not there. Is it possible that at last he has turned coward? Follow me!"

THEODORE

I implored him for an hour's rest. "Rest," says he, with contempt in his voice, "what have you been doing? Come with me or I will report your inefficiency."

This threat nerved me and I followed him, but during the long hours we saw no sign of our enemy, and at last we were forced to return to the camp.

CHAPTER XIII

LIKE A FAIRY TALE

THE Rough Writers left off their card game to gather about us and ask for news, but Theodore assured them that there was none. "Just as we expected," said the chief of the scribes. "But no matter, we have already sent in our daily report."

That night, beside the cabin fire, Theodore was sadder than I had ever seen him. He seemed more depressed than on the last night of our imprisonment. He had received a dispatch urging him to come at once to Washington. "It is almost impossible to acquaint Mac with

THEODORE

the gravity of this situation," says he, with his eyes fixed upon the fire. But I am going to have that bear."

"Do you think, in view of all that has happened, that it is quite possible for you to get him?" says I, dodging as he looked up at me.

"If you were other than a detective I should mutter, 'fool that you are,' " says he, and fell into silence.

An old man, one of the early pioneers, came in to visit us. And it was not long before he began to talk of Sir Billy. "I have known that bear going on twenty-five years this coming spring," says he, looking back into the past, "and nobody has ever killed him yet. An old Gipsy woman used to tell us that he represented the spirits of all the grizzlies that had been slain, and that if he were ever killed, the remaining bears would not fight but give in, all of them. She said

THEODORE

that his death would mean the extinction of the race."

"Then I have been appointed to bring this about," says Theodore.

"Did the old woman mention that fact?"

"No; she didn't say that anybody was to kill him."

"Then she didn't know her business, that's all there is to her."

"She wasn't the only one that seemed to know all about him," says the old man. "An old Indian woman, the grandmother of Slit Ear, the chief, told us about him. She said that he was the great spirit of all bears, and that he had existed for thousands of years. She said he had slain all the animals whose bones are found in the rocks."

"That's a very pretty story," says Theodore. "Go on."

"She said," continued the old man,

THEODORE

stroking his white beard, "that there was once a great prize fight between this bear and a mighty mastodon."

"Prize fight!" exclaimed Theodore. "Now do you interest me much. Go on."

"The mountains were new in those days," says the old man. "They had just raised up out of the marsh, and it was a dispute among the animals as to who should own them. The mastodons, and all the thing-o-ma-jig things with long names and tails, swore that the new land was theirs by right of being there first, but along comes the grizzly and declared that he was there as soon as anybody, beating the sunrise by about seven points. This raised a great laugh among the animals sunning themselves on the rocks, so the fight was arranged. There was a mighty crowd on the day of battle. The mastodon came up, laugh-

THEODORE

ing to himself, and then along came the grizzly, looking pleased but modest. The fight began about high noon and lasted till nearly sunset. The mastodon, every one allowed, bore himself bravely, but the bear was too much for him. There was a great wailing in the mountains that night, for all the mastodons and dinosaurs and lizard things knew that their day was past. And so it was, for on the following morning the great bear went out and slew the whole kit of them. This old woman said that these truths were revealed to her, and she was willing to swear to them before a justice of the peace. And now what do you think?"

"I think that I am more than ever determined to kill him," says Theodore. "For look," says he, "if it hadn't been for him, we would have had great game in the Rockies."

THEODORE

I went to sleep, leaving Theodore and the old pioneer still talking, and when I awoke the sun was shining. Theodore was already up and dressed. "This day shall see the finish of it all," says he. "Get what provisions you can, for I am not coming back till this prolonged contest is at an end." I saw by his countenance that he meant what he said, and accordingly I cooked eight days' rations.

"And there is something else to be attended to," said Theodore. "We must take mules enough to haul him in."

"You don't appear to have any doubt as to the result," says I, stuffing bread into a bag.

"None in the least. The die is finally cast. My only fear is that he may evade me. But no, he has confidence. He is game. He must know that his time is bound to come, and I think he would

THEODORE

rather yield his spirit to me than to any one else."

The mules must have had an inkling of what we wanted with them, for they kicked and bit at each other and at me as they were led forth. A short distance from the camp we met the soda-water scholar and invited him to go along to conduct the mule train, but he shook his head sadly and refused. "Good-bye," he says to me. "I may never see you again." I felt somewhat nettled at his singling me out, but said nothing, only that I was pleased to bid him farewell. And now once more, and for the last time, I believed, we were on the march against Sir Billy. I did not believe that Theodore could kill him, but I believed that this last effort would discourage all future attempts. Everything was propitious except the mules. They hung back, and bit at one another spitefully.

THEODORE

But Theodore was patient. There was something sublime in his manner. Was he going to slay the ancient master of the mountains? And when the master were slain, would the mountains sink again—down into a marsh? These were things for Theodore to consider, and I suggested as much; but, pointing toward the mountain top, he said, “Onward!”

CHAPTER XIV

THE BATTLE ROYAL

WE MET a man who came tumbling down the trail, and he reported that the bear was coming. Instantly the mules wheeled about and struck out for the camp. I would have followed them, but Theodore intimated that doubtless I should be required as referee. Further on a pack of wolves swept past us, with their ears lying back flat. An eagle, appreciating their danger and their fright, screamed, mockingly, high in the air above them. The sweeping wolves paid no attention to us. They did not even make an effort to bear

THEODORE

off to the right or the left, but so pressed were they for time that one of them ran between Theodore's legs. This was excitement of a high order, but as yet we had seen nothing of the bear. We knew, however, by the frightened man and the terror-stricken wolves, that he was coming.

"He has nerved himself for his final and, I hope, his last effort," says Theodore, as I exerted myself to keep pace with him. "I am glad the sun is shining, and I hope it won't go down till victory is assured—to one or the other," he continued, after a short pause. Then he halted and said: "I will choose this level place for a battle ground. No avalanche can save him here."

I looked about me as Theodore halted. There was but one rock within reach, and our hero commanded me to climb upon it, out of harm's way. And

THEODORE

this I proceeded to do without argument, and with no hesitation. Looking far ahead, I saw what seemed to be a flurry of snow. But it was not—it was the bear, surrounded by mists which his own hot breath created. I looked at Theodore and saw him brace himself. He had not brought his useless rifle, but he had a knife that looked like an ancient Roman sword. “I shall never have the opportunity to vote for you again,” I mused. Why do great men persist in throwing themselves into the red jaws of fate? On came the bear, looking neither to the right nor to the left. And now his movements were not swift and bounding, but rather slow and majestic. I fancied that his mind flew back to dwell upon that pre-historic time when he slew the mastodon. I had my gun beside me, and believing that it was my duty as a detective to render all possible assistance,

THEODORE

I took good aim at his head and fired. He caught the bullet in his mouth, spat it out, looked at me with contempt, and came right on as before, with measured tread.

“Put down that pop and cease meddling in affairs that don’t concern you,” says Theodore, bracing himself anew and giving me a fine exhibition of the quiet and well-contained play of his muscles. By this time the bear was within fifty yards of him. I wondered if Theodore’s great spirit would not faint at the last moment. But it did not. With head bent slightly forward, and with one foot well braced behind, he nerved himself for the shock. When within about six feet of him, the bear reared to the full of his enormous height and sprang forward to seize Theodore in his arms. And he succeeded, to my surprise, for I had expected Theodore to duck. But he did

THEODORE

not. He let the bear grab him. He doubtless relied on the strength of his buckskin garments. Ah, he did not count amiss. And now came a wrestle the like of which has not been seen on this continent. The bear pinned down Theodore's right arm, so that he had no chance to use his knife. The first fall I am compelled to award to the bear. But Theodore was up in a moment, though he had lost his knife—the bear was trampling it under his feet. They broke loose and, for a few moments, squared themselves and boxed, and such boxing! Where could a bear have received such training? One would have thought that he was from Harvard. Choosing his time Theodore gave him a punch in the jaw and downed him, but he was on his feet in an instant. Then they closed again, and this time Theodore threw him, but it was in the nature of a



HE LET THE BEAR
GRAB HIM. Page 206

THEODORE

foul, for he fell on his side. Theodore strove to turn him over and press his shoulders against the ground, but he arose with his antagonist and at it again they went, more furiously than before. And now it was Theodore's turn to fall, and it was a hard one. I was mortally afraid that he would not get up in time, but he did, his vigor seeming in no wise impaired. But this great strain could not long be borne. Theodore knew his danger—he knew that the bear would wear him out at last, so now his efforts were directed toward the recovery of his knife. The bear's activity increased with each moment of the fray, and the knife had been kicked some distance away. Five times did Theodore lunge for it, but the bear grabbed him each time and hurled him back. Would he never get it? Ah, with a mighty bound he reached the knife, seized it—plunged it into the bear,

THEODORE

and turned it round. There came a gurgling noise and a great spurt of black blood, but the bear was not vanquished. Indeed, he appeared to fight with added fury. Theodore seized another opportunity and let him have the knife between the shoulders, but it struck a lump of lead and did no harm. They closed again and waltzed as if to music. I noted with delight that the bear was losing strength in consequence of his flow of blood. Suddenly he stopped to cough, and Theodore stabbed him in the breast. He reeled, and again he got it, in the throat. Now he was on his haunches, with his head swaying. He strove to get up, but Theodore was too alert for him. Time after time the knife went home and came out dripping. And then all the air was filled with a great groan, as if low thunder were poured from a heavy cloud—there was a gasp and a gurgle, and all

THEODORE

was over. I expected Theodore to leap upon his dead foe and wave his hat, but he did not. He looked up at me and says, "Would you mind fetching those mules?"

I went after the mules, and when we made them understand that the bear was dead, they approached willingly. It took four of them to drag the bear, and all the way down the mountain we saw other grizzlies, but they ran away like rabbits.

Counting the lead, and this was fair as it had become a part of him, the bear weighed nearly four thousand pounds. It took us all, including the Rough Writers, until daylight to skin him, and when the task was done, Theodore wrapped himself in the hide and lay down to peaceful dreams. His great work was accomplished. The Rocky Mountains were now open to peaceful pursuits. I went out and looked up at the stars, and upon

THEODORE

the towering mountain peaks, wondering if these great masses, the admiration of the world, would sink back into the marsh.

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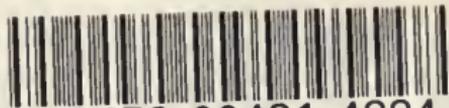
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