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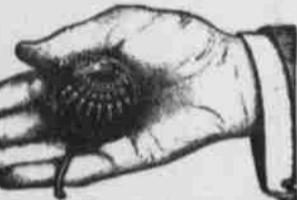
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Lord Stranleigh in Search of Game

(Continued from Page 4)

"I must sacrifice your linen," she said, calmly. "Please sit down again." In a few moments his shoulder was bare, and the girl's soft fingers pressed it gently.

"I shall have to hurt you a little," she said. Stranleigh smiled. "It is all for the best, I suppose," he said.

The girl smiled back at him. "There are no bones broken, which is a good thing. After all, it is a simple case, Mr. Stranleigh. You must remain quiet for a few days, and allow me to put your arm in a sling. I ought to send you off to bed, but if you promise not to exert yourself, you may sit on the verandah, where it is cool, and where the view may interest you."

"You are very kind, Miss Armstrong, but I cannot stay. I must return to Bleachers." "I shall not allow you to go back," she said, with decision.

Stranleigh laughed. "In a long and comparatively useless life I have never contradicted a lady, but on this occasion I must insist on having my own way."

"I quite understand your reason, Mr. Stranleigh, though it is very uncomplimentary to me. It is simply an instance of man's distrust of woman when it comes to serious work."

"Ah, it is you who are not complimentary now! You must think me a very commonplace individual."

SHE had thrown the coat over his shoulders, after having washed and dressed the wound. The bullet had been considerate enough to pass through, making all probing unnecessary. With a safety pin she attached his shirt sleeve to his shirt front.

"That will do," she said, "until I prepare a regular sling. And now, come out to the verandah. No; don't carry the chair. There are several outside already. Don't try to be polite, and remember I have ordered you to avoid all exertion."

He followed her to the broad piazza, and sat down, drawing a deep breath of satisfaction. Immediately in front ran a broad, clear stream of water; swift, deep, transparent. A wide vista of rolling green fields stretched away to a range of foothills, overtopped in the far distance by snow mountains.

"By Jove!" he cried. "This is magnificent! I have seen nothing like it out of Switzerland."

"Talking of Switzerland," said Miss Armstrong, "have you ever been at Thün?"

"Oh, yes." "You stopped at the Thünhof, I suppose?" "It was the largest hotel in the place, I believe."

"That would be the Thünhof," she said. "I used to sit out on the terrace there, watching the stream that runs in front of it. It made me homesick, it reminded me so much of this place."

"You are by way of being a traveller, then?"

"Only a dabbler," said the girl, laughing a little. "But for more than a year I lived in Lausanne, studying for my profession, and during that time I made brief excursions here and there, like my visit to Thün."

"Your profession?" asked Stranleigh, in evident astonishment.

"Yes," returned the girl, archly. "Can't you guess what it is, and why I am relating this bit of personal history on such very short acquaintance? You know Europe, of course?"

"I ought to: I'm a native." "Then you know that Lausanne is a centre of medical teaching and medical practice. I am a doctor, Mr. Stranleigh. Had your wound been really serious, which it is not, and you had come under the care of

either physician in Bleachers, he would have sent for me."

"Oh, I am not impugning your medical skill. I knew the moment you set about your work that you were an expert. It is your diagnosis of myself that is all astray. I have no such disbelief in the capacity of woman as you credit me with, and I have no desire to place myself under the care of either doctor in Bleachers. My sole desire for the delights of that town is of the most commonplace nature. I must get an outfit of clothes. I possess nothing in the way of raiment except what I wear, and part of that you've mutilated with your scissors. I had ample supplies, and I brought them safely to a point within sight of this house. In fact, I came hither like a sheik of the desert, at the head of a caravan, only the animals were mules instead of camels. All went well until we emerged from the forest, when a shot sounded and it seemed to me I was stung by a gigantic, invisible bee. My guide said we had met a band of robbers, and he and the escort acted as escorts usually do in such circumstances. They unloaded the mules, and made off much faster than they came."

The girl had risen to her feet. "And your baggage?" she asked. "Is in the hands of the brigands by this time, I suppose."

"What you tell me seems incredible, Mr. Stranleigh. There are no brigands, thieves, or road agents in this district."

"The wound you dressed so skillfully just now is my witness to the contrary."

"There is a mistake somewhere; the most energetic bandit would starve in this locality. There is no traffic. If your belongings were left along the trail, they are still there."

"Then why shoot the owner?" "That's what I shall discover. Excuse me a moment."

She passed through the house, and the young man heard a shrill whistle, which was answered by a call some distance away. The girl returned, and sat down again, her brow perplexed, and presently there came on the platform a stalwart, good-natured looking man, dressed in what Stranleigh took to be a cowboy costume; at least, it was of the kind he had read about in books of the Wild West. His head was covered with a broad-brimmed slouch hat, which he swept off in deference to the lady.

"Jim," she said, "did you hear any shooting out by the Bleachers trail about an hour ago?"

"No, ma'am; I can't say that I did, except a rifle I shot off."

"That you shot off! What were you shooting at?"

"Well," said Jim, with a humorous twist of his mouth, "I guess it was this gentleman."

"Why did you wish to murder me?" Stranleigh broke in, with pardonable impulsiveness.

"Murder you! I didn't try to murder you, sir. I could have winged you a dozen times while you were riding down to the house, if I'd wanted to. Where were you hit?"

"In the left shoulder."

"That's what I aimed to do. I set out to nip you, and scare you back where you came from."

"But why?" insisted the perplexed Stranleigh.

"You came with a posse behind you, and I thought you were the sheriff, but I wouldn't kill even a sheriff unless I had to. I'm the peaceablest man on earth."

"Well, I hope next time I'll fall among warlike people," said Stranleigh, sardonically.

JIM grinned. It was Miss Armstrong who spoke, and, it seemed to Stranleigh, she was unexpectedly mild, considering she knew so much of Europe. "I understand," she said. "But

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