

A RIDE WITH A MADMAN.

And he sprang at me with frantic rage, grasping me more at my throat, but I was on my guard this time. I got both of his hands in mine, and we struggled together for more than a minute, when by a sudden effort I stepped upon the seat, raising myself above him, and by sheer force of weight threw him once more upon the floor, with my knees on his chest. He came down this time so heavily that I feared I had knocked the life out of his body, and for a moment he remained motionless. I looked up at the strap upon my travelling shawl which hung in the rack; if I only had a strong rope I might tie his arms behind him before he awoke, and then I could easily manage him. I had nothing suitable, however, for this purpose.

I was actually glad when I saw him open his eyes once more, for I began to dread lest I had killed him. "Have you cleared those devils all out?" he asked me very quietly, and with a heavy sigh. "Every one of them. Get up and sit in the corner—it is the safest place, and I will keep them off you."

These last twenty minutes seemed an eternity. Should we never get to our journey's end? By a glance out of the window I could get a glimpse of the distant Adriatic. Surely we must stop in five minutes more. Patience!

The stranger began to be restless again. What would he attempt next? I kept my eyes fixed upon his, which seemed unconsciously to quail beneath mine; yet I could see that he was growing momentarily more uneasy, and that a paroxysm was undoubtedly pending. I dared not suggest a word lest it should hasten his fit, and so could only keep upon my guard.

It was already sunset, and the air seemed full of golden mist, as the train at last began to move more slowly, and then it stopped altogether. Just as the guard threw open the car door with the ringing cry, "Venizia!" to my infinite satisfaction.

The moment the door opened my mad companion made a rush to get out, and, leaping upon the platform of the depot, was instantly seized by two stout fellows, while a third handcuffed him. He was expected, as the conductor told me afterward, a telegram having been sent forward to secure him. It seemed that he had escaped from an insane asylum, near which he had taken the train, when he purchased his ticket and made all proper arrangements for the journey to Venice with as much correctness and knowledge of detail as though perfectly sane.

I am a person of more than average coolness, and accustomed to meet various exigencies, but I must confess that my nerves were considerably shaken by this Ride with a Madman.

A sure and pleasant tonic and invigorating appetizer—MILBURN'S Aromatic Quinine Wine.

KELLUP'S CANOE.

Toward the latter end of winter Kellup disappeared after supper almost every night, and presently you might have noticed a light in the woodshed. Try the door though, and your rattle would only provoke a louder pounding within. Even his old friend Sammy Calhoun possessed no "open sesame" and had to betake himself to the house. "What's the old man up to now?"

"I'm not supposed to know," and Susan shook her head solemnly at the work in her lap.

Presently Sam picked up a book from the floor full of cuts of boat models. Then he reached another from the sewing machine and found it treating of "Canoes and Canoeists."

"Aha!" This was long drawn out. "A-hah-h-h!" Now I know what he's building," said accusingly. "His time of life, too." This last in a deprecating tone.

"I know it," sighed Susan, "I've been through that; but what do you suppose he says?" and she looked up quick at Sammy with big eyes and her lips set tight.

"What do you suppose he says?" says Nesmuk was older than me when he quit paddling. All I'm afraid is he'll want to sleep in it nights, or under it out in the yard, and catch his death. This is a flannel shirt I'm making him now."

By the look on her face Sam thought she might be making him a shroud. "Yes," he said, "he'll probably sleep in it. I expect that's what he wants it for. There's no water near by." Then he said he guessed he'd be going, but he would be on hand on Fourth of July evening, because Susan said that was Kellup's next holiday and he had engaged a man to haul the boat to a little river out in the country.

Well, on Monday evening Sam dropped in about 8 o'clock and found Kellup sitting there with his sleeves rolled up, rubbing vaseline on his arms—a pair of thin, sinewy arms.

"Hello, Calob! Where'd you get such a color as that?" Kellup commenced to smile. First a little round the mouth, then a set of wrinkles took it up and communicated to others till presently the whole furrowed, beardless countenance was covered with smiles. "Sammy?" then he stopped and took his knee in his hands and it looked as if he was going to start another smile, but he checked it and finished his sentence. "Did you ever go canoeing?" Sam said no, and intimated that a steamboat would suit him better.

wobbling. I coaxed and coaxed and at last she slid off like an alligator.

"Big river, Caleb?" "No, just about wide enough for three larks abreast. Well, I trained her out of the meadow into a thick, swampy wood with grapevines hanging from tall trees and trailing in the water and the underbrush thick as a hedge and dripping in the river, too, and oh, Sam, I tell you with the current deep and slow and all shut in like that it seemed like, like—well, like floating on a tropical inundation."

"See any game along?" "Well, no. Saw a watersnake wriggling over the surface toward the leafage, and by and by coming around a bend I surprised a chipmunk on his way to drink; and what do you suppose his way was? Why, a big old chestnut leaped out from the bank and dropped a limb till the water rippled up against his elbows, and that was his pathway. The little rascal chattered at me. But, by George, Sammy, I wish you could have seen the quiet cove I came to. I just lay there watching the brown scum on the surface, a kind of pollen scum, that left the current and came slowly round the bend to trace an intricate scroll work among the yellow lilies. Pretty soon I got on a move with the double paddle, slowly, slowly, till I got pretty close, and then I stole out the 'pudding stick,' the single blade, you know, and—" "What for?"

"What for! Why, Nesmuk always stole up on a deer that way, always," and Kellup got up, indignant, and pretended to rummage on the mantelpiece for his tobacco. When he sat down again Sammy commenced: "What 'y' got all over your flannel shirt collar, Cale?"

"Well, you see, along about noon the black flies got pretty thick, so I spread on the fly daub. Some I made last—"

"Black flies, man, there's not a black fly in the State."

"Well, mosquitoes, then, hang it?"

These interruptions were irritating. The thread of his eloquence seemed broken, and he only mentioned casually the things he noticed on the trip down stream in the afternoon. The warm sun, the restless wind, the vines all swaying and showing the white of their leaves, the dark retreats where the trees overarched, and the meadow vista of bushes and high tufted grasses, with red-winged blackbirds and a Bob-White sweetly calling—somewhere—There was a place worn smooth on the bank near a willow that looked like an other slide, but might have been made by boys in bathing, and there was a butterfly that lit on the prow and basked in the sun—a long voyage.

"But oh, Sammy, you talk about the 'poetry of motion.' I just lost myself for a minute once and thought I could paddle on forever, and paddle on and on and on and right into heaven, mebbe."

Then they all kept still for a minute till Sammy winked at Susan and broke the spell. "Yes," he says, "that's what your wife's afraid of."

Kellup didn't seem to realize that some one had sprung a joke anywhere round, so after Sammy had a good loud laugh by himself he said good night.—Jefferson Scrib in Forest and Stream.

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