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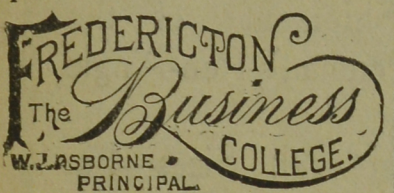
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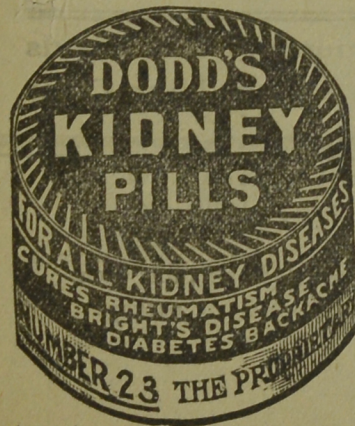
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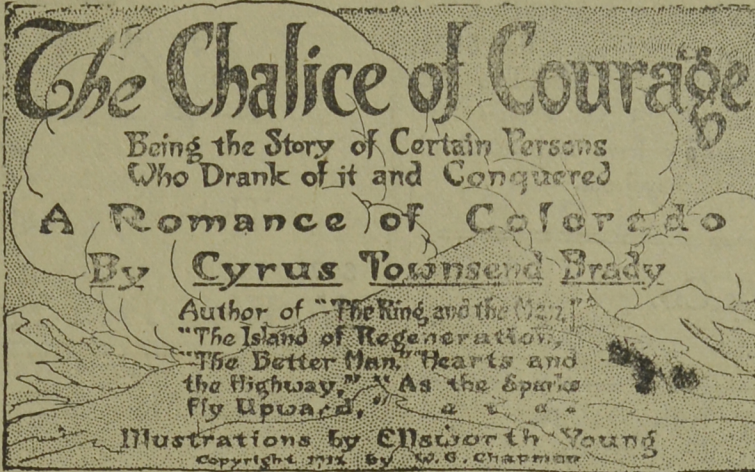
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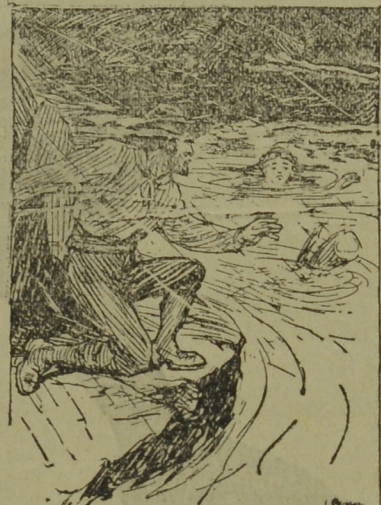
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and indeed it was a short range for a huge target, he pumped bullet after bullet from his Winchester into the evil monarch of the mountains. The first shot did for him, but making assurance double and treble sure,



He Caught a Glimpse of Her White, Desperate Face.

he fired again and again. Satisfied at last that the bear was dead, and observing that he had fallen upon the clothes of the bather, he turned, descended the stream for a few yards until he came to a place where it was easily fordable, stepped through it without a glance toward the woman shivering in the water, whose sensation so far as a mere man could, he thoroughly understood and appreciated, and whose modesty he vain would spare, having not forgotten to be a gentleman in five years of his own society—high test of quality, that.

He climbed out upon the bank, uprooted a small tree, rolled the bear clear of the heap of woman's clothing and marched straight ahead of him up the canon and around the bend.

Thereafter, being a man, he did not faint or fall, but completely unnerved he leaned against the canon wall, dropped his gun at his feet and stood there trembling mightily, sweat bedewing his forehead, and the sweat had not come from his exertions. In one moment the whole even tenor of his life was changed. The one glimpse he had got of those white shoulders, that pallid face, that golden head raised from the water, had swept him back five years. He had seen once more in the solitude a woman.

Other women he had seen at a distance and avoided in his yearly visits to the settlements. Of course, these had passed him by remotely, but here he was brought in touch intimately with humanity. He who had taken life had saved it. A woman had sent him forth; was a woman to call him back?

He cursed himself for his weakness. He shut his eyes and summoned other memories. How long he stood there he could not have told. He was fighting a battle and it seemed to him at last that he triumphed. Presently the consciousness came to him that perhaps he had no right to stand there idle; it may be that the woman needed him; perhaps she had fainted in the water; perhaps—He turned toward the bend which concealed him from her and then he stopped. Had he any right to intrude upon her privacy? He must of necessity be an unwelcome visitor to her; he had surprised her at a frightful disadvantage, he knew instinctively, although the fault was none of his, although he had saved her life thereby, that she would hold him and him alone responsible for the outrage to her modesty, and although he had seen little at first glance and had resolutely kept his eyes away, the mere consciousness of her absolute helplessness appealed to him—to what was best and noblest in his too. He must go to her; yet stay, she might not yet be clothed, in which event—But no, she must be dressed, or dead, by this time, and in either case he would have a duty to discharge.

It devolved upon him to make sure of her safety; he was in a certain sense responsible for it, until she got back to her friends, wherever they might be; but he persuaded himself that otherwise he did not want to see her again, that he did not wish to know anything about her future; that he did not care whether it was well or ill with her; and it was only stern obligation which drove him toward her—oh, fond and foolish man!

He compromised with himself at last by climbing the ridge that had shut off a view of the pool, and looking down at the place so memorable to him. He was prepared to withdraw instantly should circumstances warrant, and he was careful so to conceal himself as to give no possible opportunity for her to discover his scrutiny.

With a beating heart and eager eyes he searched the spot. There lay the bear and a little distance away prone on the grass, clothed but whether

er in her right mind or not he could not tell, lay the woman. For a moment as he bent a concentrated, eager gaze upon her he thought she might have fainted or that she might have died. In any event he reflected that she had strength and nerve and will to have dressed herself before either of these things happened. She lay motionless under his gaze for so long that he finally made up his mind that common humanity required him to go to her assistance.

He rose to his feet on the instant and saw the woman also lift herself from the grass as if moved by a similar impulse. In his intense preoccupation he had forgot to observe the signs of the times. A sense of the overcast sky came to him suddenly as it did to her, but with a difference. He knew what was about to happen, his experience told him much more as to the awful potentialities of the tempest than she could possibly imagine. She must be warned at once, she must leave the canon and get up on the higher ground without delay. His duty was plain and yet he did it not. He could not. The pressure upon him was not yet strong enough.

A half dozen times as he watched her deliberately sitting there eating, he opened his mouth to cry to her, yet he could not bring himself to it. A strange timidity oppressed him; halted him, held him back. A man cannot stay away five years from men and women and be himself with them in the twinkling of an eye. And when to that instinctive and acquired reluctance against which he struggled in vain, he added the assurance that whatever his message he would be unwelcome on account of what had gone before; he could not force himself to go to her or even to call to her, not yet. He would keep her under surveillance, however, and if the worst came he could intervene in time to rescue her. He counted without his cost, his usual judgment bewildered. So he followed her through the trees and down the bank.

Now, he was so engrossed in her and so agitated that his caution slept, his experience was forgotten. The storm in his own breast was so great that it overshadowed the storm brewing above. Her way was easier than his and he had fallen some distance behind when suddenly there rushed upon him the fact that a frightful and unlooked for cloudburst was about to occur above their heads. A lightning flash and a thunder clap at last arrested his attention. Then, but not until then, he flung everything to the winds and amid the sullen and almost continuous peals of thunder he sent cry after cry toward her which were lost in the tremendous diapason of sound that echoed and re-echoed through the rifts of the mountains.

"Wait," he cried again and again. "Come up higher. Get out of the canon. You'll be drowned."

But he had waited too long. The storm had developed too rapidly; she was too far ahead of and beneath him. She heard nothing but the sound of a voice, shrill, menacing, fraught with terror for her, not a word distinguishable; scarcely to her disturbed soul even a human voice, it seemed like the wild cry of some wild spirit of the storm. It sounded to her overwrought nerves so utterly inhuman that she only ran the faster.

The canon swerved and then doubled back, but he knew its direction. Losing sight of her for the moment he plunged straight ahead through the trees, cutting off the bend, leaping with superhuman agility and strength over rocks and logs until he reached a point where the rift narrowed between two walls and ran deeply. There and then the heavens opened and the floods came and beat into the open maw of that vast crevice and filled it in an instant.

As the deluge came roaring down, bearing onward the sweepings and scourgings of the mountains, he caught a glimpse of her white desperate face rising, falling, now disappearing, now coming into view again, in the foamy midst of the torrent. He ran to the cliff bank and throwing aside his gun he scrambled down the wall to a certain shelf of the rock over which the rising water broke thinly. Ordinarily it was twenty feet above the creek bed. Bracing himself against a jagged projection he waited praying. The canon was here so narrow that he could have leaped to the other side and yet it was too narrow for him to reach her if the water did not sweep her toward his feet. It was all done in a second. Fortunately a projection on the other side threw the force of the torrent toward him and with it came the woman.

She was almost spent. She had been struck by a log upheaved by some mighty wave, her hands were moving feebly, her eyes were closed, she was drowning, dying, but indomitably battling on. He stooped down and as a surge lifted her, he threw his arm around her waist and then he braced himself against the rock to

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