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BEFORE ADAM

By **JACK LONDON**

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He was a monster of cruelty, which is saying a great deal in that day. He beat his wives—not that he ever had more than one wife at a time, but that he was married many times. It was impossible for any woman to live with him, and yet they did live with him, out of compulsion. There was no gain-saying him. No man was strong enough to stand against him.

Often do I have visions of the quiet hour before the willigt. From drinking place and carrot patch and berry swamp the folk are trooping into the open space before the caves. They dare linger no later than this, for the dreadful darkness is approaching, in which the world is given over to the carnage of the hunting animals, while the forefathers of man hide tremblingly in their holes.

There yet remain to us a few minutes before we climb our caves. We are tired from the play of the day, and the sounds we make are subdued. Even the cubs, still greedy for fun and antics, play with restraint. The wind from the sea has died down, and the shadows are lengthening with the last of the sun's descent. And then suddenly from Red Eye's cave breaks a wild screaming and the sound of blows. He is beating his wife.

At first an awed silence comes upon us. But as the blows and screams continue we break out into an insane gibbering of helpless rage. It is plain that the men resent Red Eye's actions, but they are too afraid of him. The blow ceases, and a low groaning dies away, while we chatter among ourselves and the sad twilight creeps upon us.

We, to whom most happenings were jokes, never laughed during Red Eye's wife beatings. We knew too well the tragedy of them. On more than one morning, at the base of the cliff, did we find the body of his latest wife. He had tossed her there, after she had died, from his cave mouth. He never buried his dead. The task of carrying away the bodies, that else would have polluted our abiding-place, he left to the horde. We usually hung them into the river below the last drinking place.

Not alone did Red Eye murder his wives, but he also murdered for his wives, in order to get them. When he wanted a new wife and selected the wife of another man, he promptly killed that man. Two of these murders I saw myself. The whole horde knew, but could do nothing. We had not yet developed any government to speak of inside the horde. We had certain customs and visited our wrath upon the unlucky ones who violated those customs. Thus, for example, the individual who defiled a drinking place would be attacked by every outlooker while one who deliberately gave a false alarm was the recipient of much rough usage at our hands. But Red Eye walked roughshod over all our customs, and we so feared him that we were incapable of the collective action necessary to punish them.

It was during the sixth winter in our cave that Lop Ear and I discovered that we were really growing up. From the first it had been a squeeze to get in through the entrance crevice. This had had its advantages, however. It had prevented the larger folk from taking our cave away from us. And it was a most desirable cave, the highest on the bluff, the safest, and in winter the smallest and warmest.

To show the stage of the mental development of the folk I may state that it would have been a simple thing for some of them to have driven us out and enlarged the crevice opening. But they never thought of it. Lop Ear and I did not think of it either until our increasing size compelled us to make an enlargement. This occurred when summer was well along and we were fat with better forage. We worked at the crevice in spells, when the fancy struck us.

At first we dug the crumbling rocks away with our fingers, until our nails got sore, when I accidentally stumbled upon the idea of using a piece of wood on the rock. This worked well; also it worked woe. One morning early we had scratched out of the wall quite a heap of fragments. I gave the heap a shove over the lip of the entrance. The next moment there came up from below a howl of rage. There was no need to look. We knew the voice only too well. The rubbish had descended upon Red Eye.

We crouched down in the cave in consternation. A minute later he was at the entrance, peering in at us with his inflamed eyes and raging like a demon. But he was too large. He could not get into us. Suddenly he went away. This was suspicious. By all we knew of folk nature he should have remained and had out his rage. I crept to the entrance and peeped down. I could see him just beginning to mount the bluff again. In one hand he carried a long stick. Before I could divine his plan he was back at the entrance and savagely jabbing the stick in at us.

His thrusts were prodigious. They could have dismembered us. We shrank back against the side walls, where we were almost out of range. But by industrious poking he got us now and again—cruel, scraping jabs with the end of the stick that raked off the hide and hair. When we screamed with the hurt he roared his satisfaction and jabbed the harder.

I began to grow angry. I had a temper of my own in those days and pretty considerable courage, too. Albeit it was largely the courage of the cornered rat. I caught hold of the stick with my hands, but such was

his strength that he jerked me into the crevice. He reached for me with his long arm, and his nails tore my flesh as I leaped back from the clutch and gained the comparative safety of the side wall.

He began poking again and caught me a painful blow on the shoulder. Beyond shivering with fright and yelling when he was hit Lop Ear did nothing. I looked for a stick with which to jab back, but found only the end of a branch an inch through and a foot long. I threw this at Red Eye. It did not damage, though he howled with a sudden increase of rage at my daring to strike back. He began jabbing furiously. I found a fragment of rock and threw it at him, striking him on the chest.

This emboldened me, and, besides, I was now as angry as he and had lost all fear. I ripped a fragment of rock from the wall. The piece must have weighed two or three pounds. With all my strength I slammed it full into Red Eye's face. It nearly finished him. He staggered backward, dropping his stick, and almost fell off the cliff.

He was a ferocious sight. His face was covered with blood, and he was snarling and gnashing his fangs like a wild boar. He wiped the blood from his eyes, caught sight of me and roared with fury. His stick was gone, so he began ripping out chunks of crum-



He Staggered Backward, Dropping His Stick.

bling rock and throwing them in at me. This supplied me with ammunition. I gave him as good as he sent and better, for he presented a good target, while he caught only glimpses of me as I snuggled against the side wall.

Suddenly he disappeared again. From the lip of the cave I saw him descending. All the horde had gathered outside and in awed silence was looking on. As he descended the more timid ones scurried for their caves. I could see old Marrow Bone tottering along as fast as he could. Red Eye sprang out from the wall and finished the last twenty feet through the air. He landed alongside a mother who was just beginning the ascent. She screamed with fear, and the two-year-old child that was clinging to her released its grip and rolled at Red Eye's feet. Both he and the mother reached for it, and he got it. The next moment the frail little body had whirled through the air and shattered against the wall. The mother ran to it, caught it up in her arms and crouched over it crying.

Red Eye started over to pick up the stick. Old Marrow Bone had tottered into his way. Red Eye's great hand shot out and clutched the old man by the back of the neck. I looked to see his neck broken. His body went limp as he surrendered himself to his fate. Red Eye hesitated a moment, and Marrow Bone, shivering terribly, bowed his head and covered his face with his crossed arms. Then Red Eye slammed him face downward to the ground. Old Marrow Bone did not struggle. He lay there crying with the fear of death. I saw the Hairless One out in the open space beating his chest and bristling, but afraid to come forward. And then in obedience to some whim of his erratic spirit Red Eye let the old man alone and passed on and recovered the stick.

He returned to the wall and began to climb up. Lop Ear, who was shivering and peeping alongside of me, scrambled back into the cave. It was plain that Red Eye was bent upon murder. I was desperate and angry and fairly cool. Running back and forth along the neighboring ledge. I gathered a heap of rocks at the cave entrance. Red Eye was now several yards beneath me, concealed for the moment by an outcrop of the cliff. As he climbed his head came into view, and I banged a rock down. It missed, striking the wall and shattering, but

WAR, PATRIOTISM AND FREE SPACE

(An Editorial from Printers' Ink)

At the beginning of the war great pressure was brought to bear upon the newspapers of the various belligerent nations to donate their advertising space for patriotic purposes. From so many quarters did the appeals come that it soon became evident the publishers would go bankrupt if they yielded to all the calls. Consequently, they soon saw the necessity of a definite policy and of concerted action. They were patriotic and were anxious to do all they could to promote the cause of their respective governments.

But—is not advertising space a commodity with just as definite a value and just as fixed a manufacturing cost as a case of cart-ridges or a carload of canned goods?

If the manufacturers of munitions and other supplies were to be paid for the products of their factories, then why should not the manufacturers of advertising space be paid for the products of their factories? To give their space away would be to depreciate the value of advertising in the mind of the public at large.

We are all familiar with the advertising campaign in England to secure recruits, and we all know what great results were achieved. Now, this space was paid for in cash—not donated. The individual publishers contributed to the fund in the shape of checks and taxes, just like other business men.

Similarly, in Canada, the publishers had to decide what their policy would be. Did patriotism demand that they donate their space to all the objects growing out of war conditions? Or, were they justified in viewing their advertising as having as fixed a value as any other commodity needed for the equipment of the army and the prosecution of the war?

The answer is supplied in a letter to Printer's Ink from Charles F. Roland, president and general manager of the Winnipeg Telegram. We commend Mr. Roland's logic to the body of men who, in the years to come, expect to continue making their living out of the sale or purchase of advertising space:

"The policy adopted by the three Winnipeg papers is to charge the 10,000-line rate to all patriotic, Red Cross societies and organizations doing war-relief work. This plan was considered from a business standpoint, as advertising space is the only commodity the newspaper has to sell.

"I might add that the three Winnipeg papers are contributing

in cash to patriotic funds \$7,000 this year; the Winnipeg Free Press giving \$3,400, the Winnipeg Telegram \$2,500 and the Winnipeg Tribune \$1,200. I understand this same policy was adopted in Toronto by the Toronto Mail and Empire, the Globe, the World and the News.

"Previous to February 1, when I became associated with the Winnipeg Telegram, I held the position of secretary-treasurer of both the Manitoba Patriotic Fund and the Manitoba Red Cross Society. During the first year of the war we raised by public subscription, through the use of from four-column to full-page appeals in the newspapers, over \$1,000,000 in cash; for the Red Cross Society we used only small space, which had the result of bringing in over \$250,000 in cash and supplies during the first year.

"Ten days ago Winnipeg required \$50,000 additional funds for patriotic purposes. The committee in charge of the campaign used five-column display announcements in each of the three Winnipeg papers for five days, and when the campaign closed the amount was over-subscribed.

"The Canadian Red Cross Society has sent millions of dollars' worth of goods to the battlefields of Europe, and the Manitoba Patriotic Fund, which helps to provide for the wives and children of the soldiers on active service, is paying out nearly \$100,000 per month.

"It would be just as reasonable for the Red Cross Society to go to one of our wholesale dry-goods houses and ask them to supply one hundred rolls of hospital linen as it would be to come to our newspapers and ask us to contribute our space free. Our space is just as much of a staple commodity with us as the linen is with the wholesale dry-goods house.

"The policy adopted has received no criticism; on the other hand, the patriotic societies only use a limited amount of space at such times as they are absolutely in need of funds."

There can be no question but that the stand of the Canadian and English papers is both patriotic and business-like. Under such a policy as Mr. Roland describes, advertising will emerge from the war with respect for it increased, rather than diminished.

Supporting the Canadian publishers had chosen to give away a million dollars' worth of space. People would have been quick to say, "Oh, it didn't cost anything—probably it isn't worth anything!"

But, instead of giving away a million dollars' worth of space, the Canadian papers charged their government a fair price and then, from a modest campaign, produced a million dollars' worth of results.

Which is the better advertisement of advertising—to give away a million dollars' worth of space, or to demonstrate that intelligent advertising can be made to yield a million dollars in direct returns?

And as for patriotism—we think the stand of the Canadian publishers was absolutely unimpeachable. What is freely given away is always lightly esteemed. If the Canadian dailies had donated out of hand a million dollars' worth of space, the chances are the space would have been filled with perfunctory, flabby copy. There would have been no returns worth talking about, and advertising would have received another black eye.

The American Newspaper Publishers' Association, meeting this week in New York, has just put out a bulletin to its members, the sentiments in which seem, not only to Printers' Ink, but to a great number of advertisers and advertising agents, to be thoroughly sound and deserving of applause. This is the official expression of the greatest and most influential organization of newspapers anywhere in the world:

"Is the American Newspaper Published for Love?"

"Great Britain advertises in the newspapers for recruits and pays the newspapers for transmitting its messages to the public.

"Canada pays the newspapers for advertising her apple crop, for patriotism and production, a campaign to secure increase in agricultural production and a town-plot-cultivation campaign to increase the number of backyard gardens under cultivation, and also a campaign to increase the consumption of peaches and plums.

"The United States Government, and some others, seem to view the newspaper as an omnibus, designed for free transportation. The Government, however, pays its way in all other lines, including billboards for securing recruits.

"Are the newspapers of Great Britain and of Canada lacking in patriotism? Henry Ford pays for his peace advertising. The American Defense Society seeks the news columns to push its propaganda."

Printers' Ink believes in patriotism, preparedness and publicity—but refuses to believe they are objects of charity.

the flying dust and grit filled his eyes, and he drew back out of view.

A chuckling and chattering arose from the horde that played the part of audience. At last there was one of the folk who dared to face Red Eye. As their approval and acclamation arose on the air, Red Eye snarled down at them, and on the instant they were subdued to silence. Encouraged by this evidence of his power, he thrust his head into view, and by scowling and snarling and gnashing his fangs tried to intimidate me. He scowled horribly, contracting the scalp strongly over the brows and bringing the hair down from the top of the head until each hair stood apart and pointed straight forward.

The sight chilled me, but I mastered my fear, and, with a stone poised in my hand, threatened him back. He still tried to advance. I drove the stone down at him and made a sheer miss. The next shot was a success. The stone struck him on the neck. He slipped back out of sight, but as he disappeared I could see him clutching for a grip on the wall with one hand, and with the other clutching at his throat. The stick fell clattering to the ground.

I could not see him any more, though I could hear him choking and strangling and coughing. The audience kept a deathlike silence. I crouched on the lip of the entrance and waited. The strangling and coughing died down, and I could hear

him now and again clearing his throat. A little later he began to climb down. He went very quietly, pausing every moment or so to stretch his neck or to feel it with his hand.

At the sight of him descending, the whole horde, with wild screams and yells, stampeded for the woods. Old Marrow Bone, hobbling and tottering, followed behind. Red Eye took no notice of the fight. When he reached the ground he skirted the base of the bluff and climbed up and into his own cave. He did not look around once. I stared at Lop Ear, and he stared back. We understood each other, immediately, and with great caution and quietness, we began climbing up the cliff. When we reached the top we looked back. The abiding place was deserted. Red Eye remained in his cave, and the horde had disappeared in the depths of the forest.

We turned and ran. We dashed across the open spaces and down the slopes unmindful of possible snakes in the grass, until we reached the woods. Up into the trees we went, and on and on swinging our abnormal flight until we had put miles between us and the caves. And then, and not until then, in the security of a great fork, we paused, looked at each other, and began to laugh. We had on to each other, arms and legs, our eyes streaming tears, our sides heaving, and laughing and laughing and laughing.

(To be continued tomorrow.)

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