

a matter of small importance. But within the blood was throbbing. Would the dog decide for them?

Danforth flicked his whip against his boot impatiently. "Go, of course he will go. I am very fond of him. He was a puppy when Catherine and I were youngsters."

"Catherine and I." How easily he said it.

"Come, Barry," called Danforth, and mounted his horse

At the call the dog bounded forward. He followed for a little distance up the road, then stopped and looked back at the vagabond. Then he stood for a moment irresolute; in front of him the man of cool consideration, behind him the man in whose arms he had slept for many weary nights. He wheeled and made straight for the vagabond, and, reaching him, leaped upon him with joyful barks.

Far up the road Danforth was whistling for him, but Barry sank down at the vagabond's feet, and panting, gave no evidence of attention, except by the twitching of a half-cocked ear.

Danforth rode on, and the vagabond sat down and hugged the dog.

Barry had decided it. He would take her away—if she would go. But he knew she would go. Hidden somewhere in her was the wild nature that responded to the restlessness in him, and the woods called to her, and she would not close her ears. And the man who called her "Catherine" so easily! As his wife she would have society, family, friends. She would live the life that her grandmother lived, and that her granddaughter would copy. At her side would be this man, making a name for himself in the world—a name for her.

His eyes looked out over the fields, and toward the blue line of the mountains—the rugged mountains. He thought of her, of her white hands, of her perfumed hair, of the daintiness of her tastes.

And he would take her where the hands would grow brown, and the hair rough—he would take her into the dust and the mud of the road, and when she was old—he pushed the dog from him, and his heart stopped—for himself he was content to think of death as the brutes die, in some leafy hollow of the woods, with the birds to sing a requiem—but for her—horrible.

His forehead was knit into a frown.

"O, grandmother, grandmother, what big eyes you have," somebody chanted.

He turned his eyes to the gipsy-like vision. The red coat

was open. A rough yellow straw hat was on her head and its wreath of popples straggled down over her hair. She had been running, and a long curl fell on her shoulder.

"I ran away from them," she began.

"Catherine!"

In that one word he said all that he could say, and she understood.

"How did you know?" she whispered.

"When I heard it, it seemed to me that I had always known it," he said.

They sat down side by side on the log that lay near the stream. He knew it was for the last time, and he knew, too, that he should always see the rapt face, with the stillness upon it. That he should see the poppy that lay half against her hair and half against her throat. That he should see the little, restless, white hands that pulled at the lace handkerchief, and more than all, he should see himself yearning to do the thing he must not do—to fly with her to the end of the earth.

Out of the blue sky came the far away roll of thunder, and a puff of cool, damp air, the first hints of a storm, but they neither heard nor saw.

"Listen," he said, "I have told you much of my life, but there are some things that I have not told. There was one winter when I was ill. I had plenty of provisions, and at first I dragged around and helped myself. But there came a day when I could not get up. I could not reach for a cup of water, I could only suffer—suffer of fever, and hunger and thirst. My cat was the only living thing near me, and she came and went thru the little hole I had cut for her and kept herself alive. But she could do nothing for me. Do you know what it means, the loneliness—the dread? I was saved by a half-frozen woodsman, who sought my cabin for shelter."

She was troubled. The little mountain home seemed peopled by phantoms—hideous ones of starvation and death. What of the care-free life? If he would tell her of that. But his voice went on.

"That is well enough for a man, but suppose I had a wife, and that I had died, and she had been left alone on the mountain with only the old cat for company? She would have gone mad. Women are different from men."

"Yes, women are different," she whispered, but her eyes pleaded.

She rose, shivering. The thunder rolled nearer, the clouds were banked up in black masses, the trees bent, and

the leaves twisted about and showed little white signals of distress.

For a moment he stood looking down upon her, then the old look came into his eyes, and he placed his hand softly beneath the roundness of her chin, and raised her drooping face to him.

"From something that I see in your eyes, I know that I am no longer the outcast, the vagabond, but the king, the conqueror. Is it not so?"

He was answered as she clung to him.

"But I am not very much of a fellow"; he tried to speak lightly. "God knows that if I were worth much I would forsake all this, and come to you to live as a man should live; and yet, I have this saving grace, that I will not take you into the roughness of my life."

The storm had come upon them fiercely. Her big hat blew back on her shoulders, and the wind caught her curls and flung them across his lips.

With a sudden, mighty effort, he put her from him, and pointed to the rain which was sweeping across the fields. "We must not stay," he said, and with the dog following them, they left the little stream, and went thru the trees to the roadside. Far away could be seen the blurred outlines of a hurrying carriage.

"They are coming for me," she whispered.

As she spoke the rain poured down upon them. He drew her under the trees, fastened the red coat around her, and tied his handkerchief over her head. Then he stood between her and the storm. His hat was off and his eyes blinded.

"What I might say to you I will not say. But you have come into my heart to stay forever, as I would have had you in my life, had it been best for you. That you would have gone I do not question, for you are mine, as I am yours."

And this to the girl who had ruled all her life.

The carriage came nearer, and the storm howled and beat upon him, but she was within the circle of his arm.

"They are almost here. It is good-by."

They heard now the splashing beat of the horses' hoofs, and with one touch of his lips to the clinging hands, he was gone into the muddy road, his hat pulled over his eyes, his shoulders squared to meet the storm.

Danforth found her standing against a tree, white and still, her hands on Barry's collar, holding him back from the man whom her heart followed as the rain shut him out of her sight.

SINBAD'S SIXTH ADVENTURE

From "Jack Hardin's Arabian Nights," by J. W. Scott.

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THE sixth time Sinbad went on a voyage he cut across Persia and India again and got passage on a ship at an East Indian seaport. When he got out a long ways on the ocean, the captain of the Mary Ann lost his course. Well, he couldn't advertise, so he poked around with a stick for it, and after awhile he hooked it up again. But when he got it he jumped off his high seat and threw up his hands and snaked his turban off and pulled his whiskers out and knocked himself on the nut, as if he had rats in his garret.

Sinbad said to him: "What's eating you? Did you forget to tell your wife to put the cat out, or what?"

"We're done," the captain said. "It's all off. We're done."

"Rare, medium or well done?" Sinbad asked him.

Then the captain told him and the rest of the push that the ship was in the most dangerous place in the whole sea.

"And where were you when we were getting here, Mr. Captain Kidd?" Sinbad said to him. "And what are we up against?"

"We're in a current," the captain said.

"We are? What of it? I've been in the swim before," Sinbad said.

The captain lets it out then that they're in a current that'll bump them on the rocks in about fifteen minutes, and advises them to pray, and goes on thumping his head and dragging his whiskers out. Some guy sets the sail the other way round then, but the ropes all break; and then the current shoots the ship straight at a mountain that sticks out of the sea, and bangs it on the rocks there and smashes it.

But nobody gets killed, and the gang fish a lot of provisions and some of their goods out of the water, and crawl up on the beach.

But when they get thru with this work, the captain says: "They've taken a big fall out of us this time, all right, all right. You fellows can all dig your graves now and say 'Ta ta' to this world. Nobody who gets shipwrecked here ever gets away. Because this is the jumping-off spot, and we've done the jump."

That was a love of a place. There were about a million wrecks along the foot of that mountain, and the biggest gilt-edged collection of human skeletons ever gathered under one tent, or words to that effect. There was no way to get over the mountain or around it, if I get Saryzade right, and there was nothing to eat on that beautiful shore, barring the bones. Sinbad said it was his opinion that plenty of people had died there.

All over the beach wherever you looked there were goods of all kinds, and lots of them were valuable stuff. There were rubies and emeralds and diamonds and tiger's-eyes and all sorts of precious stones, and aloes-trees and chunks of ambergris and a lot more things that were selling for big prices at Bagdad. It was enough to make your eyes water, the good things that were going to waste on that beach.

Another thing there was a fountain of pitch spouting into the sea. Sinbad said that the whales swallowed the pitch, and coughed it up again in the form of ambergris. Say, Charlie, what a world-beating ambergris factory a man could have started there with a band of healthy whales. Every time I hear a whale cough now I look around for a bundle of that stuff.

But the greatest scenic effect nalled up on the wall in that ward was a fresh-water river that came out of the sea and went into the mountain. Oh, yes; that's no dream. That's what the river did. It flowed out of the sea and into the mountain, and Sinbad sat on the bank and watched the chips go by.

And the water was fresh, all right. Sinbad had it as-sayed, and the samples gave three per cent mud, seven and a half per cent bugs, salt nit and the rest just water. It was the first river of that kind Sinbad had got next to, and he lay down on his stomach and took a long look at it.

Well, when the gang got the situation sized, they divided up the feed-fare and gave every guy what was coming to him, and then they entered a scientific competitive contest to see who could live the longest on the grub given him. I put my dough on Sinbad, of course. I knew he was a cherrp ripe,

and would gallop in, whatever happened. His staying qualities were his main hold.

Maybe old Sinbad didn't learn to dig graves at that place. Well, I guess not. The guys with him eat up what they had, and croaked one by one as the roses fall. It was a cold day when there wasn't somebody to bury for about two weeks. Sinbad helped stow them all, and the last two or three he had to bury all by himself. He got to be a first-class popular grave digger, neat, handy and reliable. He could give satisfaction to all and he held the belt for quick work. He could dig the grave, plant his man and round off the mound in nineteen minutes, and that was the record in those parts.

Well, when he'd got the last man buried, his own grub was pretty near gone. He was living on two spoonfuls of beef tea and one gingersnap a day then, and his legs were beginning to wobble. So he dug his own grave and got into it, in order to be there when he went out. When he was digging his grave he felt tough and he was sore at himself; and he said:

"Well, this is the wildest play I've made yet. I seem to have a passion for suicide, and I get the wrong ticket every time the wheel turns. It's a wonder I couldn't get onto myself, and stay at home and be a farmer or something. But I guess this is the last flop out of the box. I'm done up sure this time, starved, blueed and ironed."

But while he was wiggling round in his grave, damming the pebbles and trying to find a soft spot, he gets it into his nut to go and take a long look at that fresh-water river that runs into the mountain, and while he's rubbering at that his ideas begin to smoke up and he says to himself, "Maybe this river that goes in here comes out some place else."

Oh, my; oh, my; it's a wonder he or some of those nab-dubs he buried didn't think of that before. When that eighteen-carat notion bounced down on him he grabs his head and holds it tight so it won't explode. Old Sinbad was clever and game and a good fellow, but he was a shade slow to catch on sometimes. You had to fall a house on him or something to wake him up.

Well, he built a raft and loaded it with diamonds and rubies and cat's eyes, and ambergris and aloes-wood and rich goods, and cut loose on that river that was flowing backward, and floated into the mountain. He ought to have tied one of those coughing whales to his hind ax, too. If he'd ever got it home where he could feed it on pitch, he'd had made a heap of money out of it.

The river ran into a dark cave, and Sinbad scooted along for several days inside the mountain. He finished his last can of tea and his last snap, and then he lay down on the barge and went to sleep. When he woke up, he found himself in the open country on the other side of the mountain; and the raft was tied to the shore, and a lot of colored people were rubbering around it. They told him they had spotted his craft bobbing down the Wabash, and had hauled it inshore. They were irrigating a bunch of corn fields and watermelon patches, and they wanted to know how he came to be picknicking on the wet. When they heard his little tale they held up their hands and said his experience was a Johnny Coker, and that he'd have to go and spring it on their king. So they packed him on a horse, and took his goods and waltzed him up to the king's place.

Well, the king was so struck with Sinbad's adventures that he had the yarn written in gold letters and filed in the county recorder's office. Sinbad unrolled his parcels and showed the king what a lot of fine cat's-eyes and diamonds and stuff he had picked up on the seacoast, and offered to give him the whole thing. But the king said that wasn't his style. He not only wouldn't take anything, but he said he'd do something for Sinbad himself before he left there. Then he turned Sinbad over to a main guy, and told him to give him a good time.

That was on the island of Sarahdub, or something like that, and Sinbad stayed there for a month looking around. He went to see a place on the island where they had Adam in jail after he was fired from the Garden of Eden. I didn't know Adam had ever been in jail, but it's there in the book.

The cop at the jail told him Adam had been dead some time, and that most of the family had moved away from

there. He said Adam was a warm number when he was alive—a dead game sport. He was willing to take a chance at anything, and he won out pretty near every time, except once when he took a flyer in apples on a tip from his wife, and got dumped hard.

By and by Sinbad hit the king for a passport so he could go back to Bagdad, and the king was such a real gentleman he offered him two, and gave him a fine present of something. Besides that, he gave him a letter and a present for O'Herrin Alraschid. O'Herrin was the Caliph of Bagdad. The letter was written on the skin of a yellow goat, or some beast that was worth money, and the ink used was blue. The letter went something like this:

"From the King of the Indians, whose parade stars off with a hundred elephants, and who lives in a big palace frescoed over with a hundred thousand rubies, and who has twenty thousand diamond covered crowns in the safe deposit vaults, to Caliph O'Herrin Alraschid. Dear O'Herrin—The little gift I send you isn't much, please accept it for friendship's sake. I'm a friend of yours, old man, and you can bet your eye on that. I'll prove it any time you want me to. I hope you're a friend of mine, because I believe I'm in your class, and a man you'll find it a good thing to tie to. Good-by."

The present was a flowery offering, Charlie. There was a cup made out of a single ruby, and it was six inches high and an inch thick and full of pearls. There was a wagonload of aloes-wood and camphire, and a snake-skin with scales as big as twenty-dollar pieces; and you couldn't get sick if you lay on that skin. But the article in the invoice that faded everything else was a prize beauty. She was a prize beauty—a beauty from Beautville. It would make you light in the garret to look at her, and her pinafore was hung with diamonds. I guess she was perfectly miserable, from what Sinbad said.

Sinbad took these things and his ambergris and stuff and blew home to Bagdad, and he delivered the prize beauty and the letter and the rosy tumbler and the snake-skin to O'Herrin Alraschid.

When O'Herrin read the letter, he said: "Is this on the level? Is this Tommy as big a duck as he says he is?"

And old Sinbad said: "Cross my heart he is. He isn't swelling it a bit. The tpalace of his would make you blink. When his nibs goes out for a ride, he sits on a throne on an elephant's back, and the government officials and all the court hands line up in double ranks on both sides; and a guy rides in front of him on the elephant, with a gold lance, and another mark rides behind him on the elephant and holds up a gold rod with an emerald six inches long and an inch thick on top of it; and he has a thousand soldiers mounted on elephants riding ahead of him to keep the street open, and the swatties and the elephants are dressed up in silk and gold cloth in high-toned style. While the procession is blowing along, the monkey with the lance keeps hollering: 'Behold the big, high muck-a-muck, the high-tempered, hard-hitting, dead-game Sultan of the Indians, whose brown-stone front sheds rubies the year round, and who has two million diamond crowns on the bank's books! Behold his crowned jagst! He is a hotter dog than old Solomon, and a higher stepper, and the bell-wether king of any one or place. Take a look at him and die!' And the bloke with the emerald, on the back steps of the throne, keeps answering, 'But this great, all-wood, three-ply king must croak, must croak, must croak.' And the people all yell together, 'And—that's—no—dream.' Besides that, the Sultan of the Indians is so square, and the people are all such good boys, that everybody does the right thing, and there are no courts in the country."

When he heard that O'Herrin said: "His letter shows he's a wise one," and O'Herrin was puffed up because his Indian joblots wanted to be friends, and he gave Sinbad some more presents and sent him home. I wonder what he did with the beauty from Beautville. I suppose he handed her a number and a shakedown in the harem, and forgot about her.

"May I have your hand?" he whispered, in low, anxious tones.

Which words nearly cost him his life, they being overheard by the man who had opened the jackpot.