His Squaw's Necklet

By Izola Forrester

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Vivien reined in her pony at sight of the major. He was visibly disturbed. She could see that from his troubled, uneasy gaze as he watched the stumbling, ungainly figure of old Broken Bow pass down the road that led from the post to the reservation.

"Now what?" called Vivien, anxiously. "Aren't you going to ride this glorious morning—with me?"

He came up to the pony, and stroked its velvet nose gently.

"I cannot, dear, this morning There's trouble over at the camp. Broken Bow tells me that their medicine man has lost his squaw's necklet."

"Lost what?" laughed Vivien. "How interesting!"

"It may become more so. They are very superstitious, and most abominably obstinate over these things. It is a necklet of elk teeth and eagle claws, a sacred affair that has been handed down from chief to chief for generations, and is supposed to convey miraculous powers to its possessor. The last chief had no son. therefore his daughter kept it, and married the medicine man."

"And he——"

"Thereby acquired part of the gift. Broken Bow has been trying to explain it to me. The whole tribe is up in arms over it. It is believed that the woman's cousin, a young brave named Flying Fox, has stolen it, and will rally the tribe against the peaceful rule of old Broken Bow."

"Aren't they just like children?"

"Hardly. More like frightened animals that rush panicstricken into unknown danger. This foolish necklet affair may bring on a tribal war, and already the colonel has ordered me out to settle it, with force if need be."

"And you cannot ride?"

"No. Best not venture far yourself."

Vivien laughed back at him over her shoulder as she let the pony go. Danger? There was no danger, she was sure.

Straight away from the post she rode, choosing the river road as her favorite. The post lay in the valley, and she loved the trails that led over the far-lying buttes up to the purple reaches of the foothills. Mile after

Her Companion Waited.

mile the pony cantered, until the white and yellow houses of the post looked like mere tiny boxes set up on the plain. There was water at a certain turn, Vivien remembered, and she wanted a drink herself. As she reached the pool she slipped from the saddle, giving the pony its chance to drink first. The noise of other hoofs beating up the opposite path startled her, and instinctively she drew her own pony back from the water into the shelter of the trees.

They were both Indians. She knew that as soon as she saw their rough, ungraceful ponies. One was a woman, and she was young. She slipped from her saddle before her pony came to a full stop, let it go free and scrambled up the bank above the drinking pool, while her companion waited.

Vivien watched, holding her breath, one hand over the pony's nose. The squaw bent over the stump of a lightning-blasted pine tree, remained for perhaps a minute and returned, mounting in silence, and both departed as they had come.

"Well, upon my word!" said Vivien with the calm assurance of a Vermont girl, born and bred. "I think you are up to some mischief, my Minnehaha. Stand steady a minute, Belle."

She went up to the pine stump and reached down into its hollow. There were dry leaves, and beneath small rocks, freshly placed there, but under both her hand came in contact with something foreign, something sharp and queer to the touch. She lifted it out, held it up to the light and gave a quick gasp of amazement. Then, returning, she turned about and made for the post.

It was mid-afternoon before she reached the post, too late to stop the detachment that had already started for the reservation to head off the war parties. Signal fires must not be lighted that night on distant hills or by morning there would be open war and bloodshed. When Vivien arrived she threw her bridle to the first soldier she met, and limped toward the colonel's quarters, lame and almost dazed after her race; but clasped in her hand was the necklet.

"Can you ride with me to the reservation?" asked the old fellow, watching the flushed girl face narrowly. "I shall need you."

"I could ride anywhere now," she said.

Fifteen minutes later, on a fresh horse, she rode with the colonel and escort straight out toward the reservation.

"Whoever carries that necklet bears power to sway the whole tribe," the colonel told her. "That brave you saw at the spring must have been Flying Fox himself, but who was the woman? The wife of the medicine man is over thirty-five, and is fat and already old."

"Oh, this girl was young, and almost handsome, colonel," protested Vivien. "And she wore two eagle feathers behind her ear."

"We will find her. Whoever she is, she is the thief."

It was almost sundown when they came in sight of the tepees of the reservation. On a small hillock an arrow's flight from the entrance to the stockade were the major and his men, waiting the going down of the sun as the signal to open fire. Up and down, before the tepees raced the young braves on their war ponies, nearly nude, and brightly painted, yelling wildly. The dull thud of the tomtoms came faintly over the plain.

Not until they reached the main tepee, where Broken Bow himself held court, did the colonel dismount and help Vivian from her horse. The major had galloped to meet them, his face stern and haggard as he realized their peril.

"The truce ends at sundown, colonel," he shouted.

"It is not sundown yet, my boy," said the old man, and he led the way into the tent where Broken Bow waited, with the medicine man and his wife and the old men of the tribe. The chief returned the colonel's salutation gravely.

"It is too late," he said; "I have no power to quell them. Flying Fox has been acclaimed their chief, and rides to light the signal fires to call the other tribes. I have no power now."

A long high wail came from the medicine man, and his wife looked at Vivien, as one women stares at another she has never seen. Suddenly she gave a shriek and sprang at the girl, tearing at the necklet that rested about her throat. Vivien threw off the clinging hands, and held the necklet high above her head out of reach to the hands of Broken Bow.

"The white squaw holds the balance of power in her hands," said the old chief. "Send messengers to say we have the necklet, and the gift returns to our side, not Flying Fox's."

Suddenly Vivien heard a low gasp behind her, and turned to find the girl who had hidden the necklet at the spring. She caught her wrist, and held fast, as she called to the major what she knew of her.

"It is Evening Star," said Broken Bow, sternly, "my own daughter. She had stolen the necklet for him, to give him victory. What shall her punishment be at the hands of the great white father?" He looked at the old colonel, and the colonel looked at Vivien, standing beside the major. And Vivien, reading the look in the Indian girl's eyes, gave sentence.

"Let her be banished with Flying Fox to the North country."

"Thou hast said," replied Broken Bow, but the girl smiled back at Vivien as they led her forth to her exile, and understood.

FLED FROM CONGO CANNIBALS

Superintendent of Rubber Plantation Saw a Cauldron He Feared Might Be for Him.

It is not every day that a man arrives in this town who has looked into a boiling cauldron which cannibals held in preparation for him. But such a man came here the other day from Antwerp on the Red Star liner Vaderland. He was Emile Van Baelen, a Belgian, who was in charge of a rubber plantation in the Congo and had the small task of bossing ten thousand black men.

Mr. Van Baelen knew all about the rubber business, but he wanted to learn something of the mineral treasures of the interior of the Dark Continent, so he ventured one day with three servants on an expedition that led two hundred miles from his camp. He found gold and other rich deposits in the interior, but as he was about to return to camp he was surrounded by a hundred dusky Dongalese, big savages, who consider human flesh a food delicacy.

The servants fled and were captured. Mr. Van Baelen stood his ground, and as the savages approached him he drew his revolver and dropped a couple of them. The others were held at bay. Strategy becoming his only hope new, he said, he raised his hands, and addressing them in their own tongue declared that he was a white god. The blacks took him at his word and instantly salaamed.

He did many things mysterious to the tribe, such as lighting a match and rolling a great stone by a lever, and suddenly he found himself their adored guest. He was invited to sleep in the hut of the king of the tribe, and a feast was prepared for him. Fearing that he might have to sample a part of one of his missing servants, he escaped in the night and got back to his camp. He is on his way to Mexico to raise coffee.

He Was Hateful

"Don't talk to me, Ernie, I tell you!" said Miss Zimmerman, heatedly, after she had devoted fifteen minutes to telling him her exact opinion of him.

"But I'm not talking to you," objected Ernie. "I haven't had a chance! It's been so long since I heard the sound of my own voice that I don't know now whether it's myself talking! Is it?"

"It doesn't make any difference," retorted Miss Zimmerman with infinite scorn. "When a person makes as much noise as you do and says as little it isn't necessary to bother wondering who's talking, because nobody listens, anyhow!"

"Wow!" said Ernie.

"How do you soak 'em! Straight from the shoulder! I almost begin to think that you're mad at me!"

Miss Zimmerman nearly choked. "Mad!" she repeated. "Have you just got it through your head, Ernie Casey, that I'm not making love to you? You didn't think, did you, that I was calling you pet names the last half hour? If that's your idea of a lady's way of expressing undying affection, you're behind the times! I'd have you know that I am mad, good and plenty! And what's more, I'm mad for keeps!"

"Well," said Ernie, "I am surprised. The worst is what you say about there being no hope of your ever getting over it——"

"Never!" cried Miss Zimmerman. "I know I have an easy going disposition and people think I'm meek, but when I get stepped on I know it and I have spirit enough to resent it and stand up for myself! And you needn't sit grining there, Ernie Casey. It's serious!"

"Now, Evangeline!" began Ernie, cooing like a dove. "You pain me by——"

"Oh, piffle!" interrupted Miss Zimmerman. "Pain your grandmother! As though you cared! As though it made the slightest bit of difference to you if every girl on earth got mad at you! You're just a paving block, Ernie Casey, and I'm glad I discovered it in time! Why haven't you got any more feeling in your heart—as for that, you haven't got a heart! It's some kind of a machine that keeps things running. Something like an alarm clock. And how much more convenient! It never disturbs you when you do hateful things to other people! I suppose that's why you can't understand that the rest of us are really human and can be hurt! It's really your misfortune!"

"I'm glad," remarked Ernie with becoming gratitude, "that you are sorry for me, Evangeline! Pity, you know——"

"Sorry for you!" cried Miss Zimmerman, agitatedly. "I'm not wasting any sorrow on you! There's people that better deserve it! I just despise you! I didn't know it was possible for me to be so downright furious at a man as I am at you! I——"

"Yes," said Ernie, as though convinced at last against his will. "I can see that you are actually annoyed. I didn't believe it at first, but——"

"Annoyed!" almost shrieked Miss Zimmerman. "Land o' godness! Is this your idea of 'annoyed?' Why, if I got any madder I'd explode! You needn't try to be funny, Ernie Casey!"

"I feel far from funny," declared Ernie. "I'm all of a tremble, I'm so nervous! I'm not used to being jumped at and eaten alive! Kind treatment is what I've been brought up on and I haven't a bit of doubt that I'll have a nervous chill when I get home!"

"You—you're a brute!" choked Miss Zimmerman. "You don't care! You just enjoy it!"

"Excuse me," protested Ernie firmly. "You mean I just endure it!"

"Well, I wish you'd go home!" snapped Miss Zimmerman, feeling for her handkerchief with her chin very high in the air. "Good-bye, Ernie Casey!"

Ernie, rising, walked over and looked down at her sternly. "See here, Evangeline," he demanded, "just what are you so mad about, anyhow?"

For an instant Miss Zimmerman glared back at him. Then a little bewilderment drifted into her eyes. She clutched the table back of her and swallowed.

"I—I can't seem to remember," she said vaguely. "We've said so much since that—I guess I'm all mixed up! But, anyhow, I had a perfect right to get lots madder than I did and I'll do it again if you do what you did to make me mad, whatever it was—and look out, Ernie Casey—you're knocking all my hair down—no-o-o, I won't k-k-kiss and make up—I won't—"

"Well, I did, anyhow!" said Ernie, calmly, "and that's what really counts."

Brought Strangers.

Visitor—Last time I was here your board of trade was booming the town. Didn't they keep it up?

Uncle Eben—Nope! We called them off pretty quick. First thing we knew there was a lot of people coming into town that we didn't know at all!—Puck.

Honeymoon or Divorce.

"Where are you headed for now?"

"Oh, the falls, as usual."

"Niagara or Sioux?"