

# Ellen gets Her Man

(P. 5)



**FIFTH INSTALMENT**

Her gaze was drawn again to the terrible drama before her. Unconsciously she started forward. Whitlow's hand locked on her arm and dragged her back. "Wait!" he rasped. "Wait!"

Benham's hands, locked about Deteroux's wrists until the backs of them were bloodless and rigid like steel, seemed to be dragging some of that awful pressure from his tortured eyes. He seemed to be gathering himself for superhuman effort.

Abruptly one knee drove upwards into Deteroux's body. A gasp broke from the bigger man. He cringed slightly, and Benham tore himself free.

Benham's eyes were swollen, almost shut. For a split second both men seemed to pause and gather themselves. Then Deteroux charged again, snarling like a wolf to kill.

With one lithe, twisting movement Benham bent sharply at the waist and hurled himself forward his right arm shooting out, a hard driven, muscle-ridge piston.

Just below the arch of Deteroux's lower ribs the blow landed and the "thock" of it was awesome. A hoarse, blubbery cry of pain erupted from Deteroux, his knees wobbled, and his head dropped forward. He reeled violently, and blood-stained saliva seeped through his lips.

"He's got him—the boy's got him now," was Whitlow's jubilant cry.

Swiftly alive to his advantage, Benham tore at his opponent, a merciless, implacable machine. Setting himself he ripped sledgehammer blows into Deteroux's sagging chin. Slowly, ponderously, the big man seemed to crumple. His eyes were rolling and glassy, his mouth open and his lips peel-

ed back in a grimace of fading consciousness.

Like an executioner before the block, Benham cut Deteroux down. Bit by bit he beat him lower until Deteroux's body was bent in a crouch and his nerveless arms swung helpless at his sides.

There was something almost magnificent in the manner that Deteroux called upon his great strength and vitality to stave off defeat. Out on his feet he refused to fall, his muscles subconsciously holding his body from utter collapse.

Abruptly Benham stopped his attack. His bloody, tight-locked fists fell to his sides. With a shrugging gesture he turned away and without a look to right or left pushed through the crowd and was gone. And in that moment of magnanimity John Benham was also unconsciously magnificent.

By all rules of conflict he was entitled to go on with his triumph until human resistance could no longer exist and Deteroux should lie supine at his feet. But he, too, could appreciate sheer, dogged courage, even in a man like Deteroux, who had not hesitated to take unfair advantage.

In that refusal to batter further a helpless man John Benham left behind him a white glow of sportsmanship which seemed to dissipate the blood-red haze of conflict.

Ellen saw Whitlow step forward grip Deteroux by the arm and force him to the ground. The milling crowd of Indians closed about them, and Ellen found herself alone.

Drawn by what seemed a resistless force, she moved in the direction John Benham had gone. She peered into tepees as she went but nowhere did she see him. Unconsciously she hurried her pace.

And then, below the camp at the edge of the lake, she found him.

He was crouched low, and beside him was the same ancient squaw, gently sponging his battered face and body with the icy lake water.

Timidly Ellen approached the pair. The old squaw looked at her in frank hostility. Then she turned again to her ministrations, crooning with pagan gentleness. Finally Benham looked up. His eyes were terribly bloodshot and swollen. Ellen gasped with pity, and her hands fluttered to her throat. It was Benham who spoke.

"Yes?" he queried, his voice slightly thick. He was still panting from his exertions.

Many words trembled on Ellen's lips, strange, hot, thrilling words—but somehow she could not utter them.

Yearning swayed her, yearning to crouch at his side, to take his battered head in her arms and spread the healing balm of love on every bruise and cut. But there was a certain hardness in Benham's expression which fended her off.

Now he laughed, harshly. "You may have him," he muttered. "He's paid to me, the dog."

"I may have him?" stammered Ellen. "I don't know what you mean."

"You should," was Benham's curt reply. "When the fight was coming my way you cried for me to stop. I did, and it gave him a chance to get the upper hand for a time." He pointed to his eyes. "He did his best to blind me—and nearly succeeded. But I beat him—with these," and he lifted his two hard fists. "It was a satisfaction long over-due, but it was worth the waiting. Yes—I'm through with him. And he's yours."

Ellen's thoughts were chaotic.

What madness was this? True, she had cried out when Benham was winning, but she had not meant to save Deteroux from punishment. It was just the eternal woman in her voicing an overwhelming repugnance to the utter brutality of it all. And—and Benham thought she had cried out to save Deteroux.

Again Benham looked at her. "Was there anything else?" he asked curtly. "Despite your scorn and pride you have not hesitated to accept favors from a— a half-breed. Remember that all your life, will you? That even a half-breed can be generous."

"You—you don't know what you are saying," Ellen sobbed.

"I ought to." He laughed grimly. "I'm giving you back your own words."

He stood erect now, his splendid chest and shoulders gleaming wetly. "Come, mother," he said to the old squaw. And the two of them walked away.

When Ellen Mackay finally went back to the scene of the fight she was again weary and apathetic. Her face was pale, and her eyes were lack-lustre and dull. She moved slowly.

Deteroux was sitting with his back to a tree. His hands were clasped between his knees, and Ellen could see the gleam of polished metal encircling his wrists.

He flashed a quick glance at her, and then his gaze bent to the ground again. His face was sullen and defiant. Old Moosac was crouched near him, his beady eyes inscrutable.

Ellen looked around for Whitlow, and discovered the trooper in animated conversation with several sullen, frightened Indians. His pencil and notebook were at work again.

Whitlow spied her, put his notebook away, and came hurrying up. His face was glowing with satisfaction. "My lucky day," he announced triumphantly. "I've got Deteroux where I want him now, and no mistake. Where is Benham?"

"In one of the tepees, I imagine," she answered dispiritedly. "When can we leave for Edson?"

"In an hour or two. I want to get Benham's evidence also to

make my case against Deteroux unshakable."

Whitlow went away on his search, and Ellen moved down to the canoe and crouched in it, her back to the camp, her brooding eyes sweeping across the shimmering waters of the lake.

A great bitterness gnawed at her—a tremendous disappointment. She was not angry at John Benham. She knew no shame over the fact that he had virtually dismissed her.

She had gone to him in all honesty, intending to apologize fully for the wrong she had done him, and he, in equal honesty, had repulsed her. She knew it, and admitted it fully.

In some ways triumph also was hers. Her father's future and reputation were assured. The facts were clear in that respect. She had the satisfaction of knowing that her efforts had indirectly moved to this culmination.

That these same efforts had moved to render her the possessor of unrequited love, merely proved the irony of life. And there lay the great hurt.

Ellen went back in memory to her first meeting with Benham. How arrogant and sure of herself she had been in approaching the free-trader with her request to be taken along on the trip north. And how hurt and humiliated she felt when Benham curtly refused. It was hurt pride as much as anything that had caused her to seek old Pat McClatchney's help in stowing away on the Benham boats. Ellen, for whose favor men had vied with one another in jumping to her bidding, now had to plead for the favor of this man and was compelled to force herself upon his care when the favor was refused.

She remembered her tremendous fear when they had passed the cascades and she had brazenly revealed herself, certain in the knowledge that Benham could not return her to Athabasca Landing without serious delay and loss to himself.

Benham had been very kind and a gentleman when he discovered how she had thwarted him through the help of Pat McClatchney and Pierre Buschard. He

had said no words of blame and had not scolded or ragged at her as many others would have done. She had offered to pay for her transportation and he had abruptly refused. She remembered now that certain glint of triumph that shone in his eyes as he told her. "My payment is assured, I'll exact my pound of flesh."

Ellen had not understood then but she did now. Benham's pound of flesh had been paid by the flare of anger and the deep humiliation of her father when the old factor learned of his indebtedness to the man he hated most in all the world—John Benham, the free-trader. That had been the payment Benham expected, his revenge for her impertinence in stowing away on his boats, but the payment had been far heavier than that since she had discovered in her heart the deep regard she held for him. It was love... love almost at first sight, she now realized.

Benham had leaped ashore to secure birch boughs and fashion a small enclosure on the boat to give her shelter and privacy. She had been touched by his consideration and thoughtfulness then, and again when they had stopped for the night and she had care-

lessly gone for a walk in the wild, uncharted wood and Benham, fearful of her safety, had waited for her return in spite of the fatigue from the heavy day's work.

*Continued Next Issue*

**KIDNAPERS OF 170 CHILDREN ARE JAILED**

Calcutta.—With sentences ranging from two years' imprisonment to transportation for life, the Lahore case in which 31 people were tried on charges of kidnaping children has ended.

Eighteen men and six women were sentenced in this, the first step in the government's drive against a gang of kidnapers who have been terrorizing the Punjab and United provinces.

Police have restored to their parents about 170 children, some of whom were kidnaped 10 years ago.

Forty more people, including women, are still awaiting trial.

The diamond is the hardest substance in nature, says an authority. They are also hard to pay for on the installment plan.

**PAUL GWYN**  
PHONE 258

All Lines of  
**INSURANCE**

Representing Strong Stock  
Companies Only—No Mutuals

**SAVE FROM 10% to 25%**

**PAY CASH - PAY LESS! SAVE ON FINE NEW FURNITURE DURING ELKIN BARGAIN DAYS!**

Bedroom Suites—Living Room Suites—Dining Room Suites—Breakfast Room Suites—Studio Couches—Overstuffed Chairs—Tables—Kitchen Cabinets—New Perfection Oil Stoves—Faultless Washing Machines—Rugs

We'll save you a substantial sum on furniture purchases during Elkin Bargain Days! Save from 10 per cent to 25 per cent by paying cash... or if you wish to buy on our Easy Payment Plan, we'll sell you at rock bottom prices! There's no time like Spring to beautify your home. Make it more beautiful... more livable by buying new furniture now. Buy before further price increases for additional savings. Be sure to come in and see our large new stock of every kind of furniture for the home.

**HAYES & SPEAS**

Fine Furniture Phone 76 Elkin, N. C.

While Here For Bargain Days Be Sure to See and Hear the Beautiful New **Philco Radio** WITH AUTOMATIC TUNING IT'S THE NEWEST THING FOR 1937 AND— **ONLY PHILCO HAS IT!** Hear It Sure!