

The Wings of the Morning

By LOUIS TRACY

Copyright, 1905, by Edward J. Clode

"No shoot it," he roared. "Me English speak it."

"Don't you speak Hindoostanee?" shouted Jenks in Urdu of the higher proficiency.

"Yes, sir!" was the joyful response. "Will your honor permit his servant to come and talk with him?"

"Yes, if you come unarmed."

"And the chief, too, sahib?"

"Yes, but listen! On the first sign of treachery I will shoot both of you!"

"We will keep faith, sahib. May kites pick our bones if we fall!"

Then there stepped into full view the renegade Mussulman and his leader. They carried no guns; the chief wore his crozier.

"Stand close to me," said Jenks to Iris. "Let them see you plainly, but pull your hat well down over your eyes."

She silently followed his instructions. Now that the very crisis of their fate had arrived she was nervous, shaken, conscious only of a desire to sink on her knees and pray.

The two halted some ten paces in front of the cavern, and the belligerents surveyed each other. It was a fascinating spectacle, this drama in real life. The yellow faced Dyak, gaudily attired in a crimson jacket and sky blue pantaloons of Chinese silk, a man young and powerfully built, and the brown skinned, white clothed Mohammedan, bony, tall and gray with hardship, looked up at the occupants of the ledge. Iris, slim and boyish in her male garments, was dwarfed by the six foot sailor, but her face was blood stained, and Jenks wore a six weeks' stubble of beard. Holding their rifles with alert ease, with revolvers strapped to their sides, they presented a warlike and imposing tableau in their inaccessible perch. In the path of the emissaries lay the bodies of the slain. The Dyak leader scowled again as he passed them.

"Sahib," began the Indian, "my chief, Taung S'Ali, does not wish to have any more of his men killed in a foolish quarrel about a woman. Give her up, he says, and he will either leave you here in peace or carry you safely to some place where you can find a ship manned by white men."

"A woman!" said Jenks scornfully. "That is idle talk! What woman is here?"

This question nonplused the native. "The woman whom the chief saw half a month back, sahib."

"Taung S'Ali was bewitched. I slew his men so quickly that he saw spirits."

The chief caught his name and broke in with a question. A volley of talk between the two was enlivened with expressive gestures by Taung S'Ali, who several times pointed to Iris, and Jenks now antithematized his thoughtless folly in permitting the Dyak to approach so near. The Mohammedan, of course, had never seen her and might have persuaded the other that in truth there were two men only on the rock.

His fears were only too well founded. The Mussulman salaamed respectfully and said:

"Protector of the poor, I cannot gain say your word, but Taung S'Ali says that the maid stands by your side and is none the less the woman he seeks in that she wears a man's clothing."

"He has sharp eyes, but his brain is addled," retorted the sailor. "Why does he come here to seek a woman who is not of his race? Not only has he brought death to his people and narrowly escaped it himself, but he must know that any violence offered to us will mean the extermination of his whole tribe by an English warship. Tell him to take away his boats and never visit this isle again. Perhaps I will then forget his treacherous attempt to murder us while we slept last night."

The chief glared defiantly, while the Mohammedan said:

"Sahib, it is best not to anger him too much. He says he means to have the girl. He saw her beauty that day, and she inflamed his heart. She has cost him many lives, but she is worth a sultan's ransom. He cares not for warships. They cannot reach his village in the hills. By the tomb of Nizam-ud-din, sahib, he will not harm you if you give her up, but if you refuse he will kill you both. And what is one woman more or less in the world that she should cause strife and bloodletting?"

The sailor knew the eastern character too well not to understand the man's amazement that he should be so solicitous about the fate of one of the weaker sex. It was seemingly useless to offer terms, yet the native was clearly so anxious for an amicable settlement that he caught at a straw.

"You come from Delhi?" he asked.

"Honored one, you have great wisdom."

"None but a Delhi man swears by the tomb on the road to the Kutub. You have escaped from the Andamans?"

"Sahib, I did but slay a man in self defense."

"None but a Delhi man swears by the tomb on the road to the Kutub. You have escaped from the Andamans?"

"Sahib, I did but slay a man in self defense."

"Whatever the cause, you can never again see India. Nevertheless you would give many years of your life to mix once more with the bazaar folk."

The brown skin assumed a sallow tinge.

"That is good speaking," he gurgled. "Then help me and my friend to escape. Compel your chief to leave the island."

"The fact is," he said, with a feeble attempt at cheerfulness, "we are both hungry and consequently grumpy. Now, suppose you prepare lunch. We will feel ever so much better after we have eaten."

The girl choked back her emotion and sadly essayed the task of providing a meal which was hateful to her. A few tears fell now and made little furrows down her soiled cheeks. But they were helpful tears, tears of resignation, not of despair. Although the "destruction that wasteth at noonday" was trying her sorely, she again felt strong and sustained.

She even smiled on detecting an involuntary effort to clear her stained face. She was about to carry a biscuit and some tinned meat to the sailor when a sharp exclamation from him caused her to hasten to his side.

The Dyaks had broken cover. Running in scattered sections across the sands, they were risking such loss as the defenders might be able to inflict upon them during a brief race to the shelter and food to be obtained in the other part of the island.

Jenks did not fire at the scurrying gang. He was waiting for one man, Taung S'Ali. But that redoubtable person, having probably suggested this dash for liberty, had fully realized the enviable share of attention he would attract during the passage. He therefore discarded his vivid attire and by borrowing odd garments made himself sufficiently like unto the remainder of his crew to deceive the sailor until the rush of men was over. Among them ran the Mohammedan, who did not look up the valley, but waved his hand.

When all had quieted down again Jenks understood how he had been fooled. He laughed so heartily that Iris, not knowing either the cause of his merriment or the reason of his unlooked for clemency to the flying foe, feared the sun had affected him.

He at once quit the post occupied during so protracted a vigil.

"Now," he cried, "we can eat in peace. I have stripped the chief of his finery. His men can twist him on being forced to shed his gorgeous plumage in order to save his life. Anyhow, they will leave us in peace until night falls, so we must make the best of a hot afternoon."

But he was mistaken. A greater danger than any yet experienced now threatened them, for Taung S'Ali, furious and unrelenting, resolved that if he could not obtain the girl he would slay the pair of them, and he had terrible weapons in his possession.

CHAPTER XIII.

RESIDENTS in tropical countries know that the heat is greatest, or certainly least bearable, between 2 and 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

At the conclusion of a not very luscious repast Jenks suggested that they should rig up the tarpaulin in such wise as to gain protection from the sun and yet enable him to cast a watchful eye over the valley. Iris helped to raise the great canvas sheet on the supports he had prepared. Once shut off from the devouring rays, the hot breeze then springing into fitful existence cooled their blistered but perspiring skin and made life somewhat tolerable.

Still adhering to his policy of combatting the first enervating attacks of thirst, the sailor sanctioned the consumption of the remaining water. As a last desperate expedient to be resorted to only in case of sheer necessity, he uncorked a bottle of champagne and filled the tin cup. The sparkling wine, with its volume of creamy foam, looked so tempting that Iris would then and there have risked its potency were she not promptly withheld.

Jenks explained to her that when the wine became quite flat and insipid they might use it to moisten their parched lips. Even so, in their present superheated state, the liquor was unquestionably dangerous, but he hoped it would not harm them if taken in minute quantities.

Accustomed now to implicitly accept his advice, she fought and steadily conquered the craving within her. Oddly enough, the "thawing" of their scorched bodies beneath the tarpaulin brought a certain degree of relief. They were supremely uncomfortable, but that was as naught compared with the relaxation from the torments previously borne.

For a long time—the best part of an hour, perhaps—they remained silent. The sailor was reviewing the pros and cons of their precarious condition.

of a siege in that rocky prison, almost distracted her.

Jenks was very stern and curt in his reply.

"We must make the best of a bad business," he said. "If we are in a tight place the Dyaks are not much better off, and eighteen of their number are dead or wounded. You forget, too, that Providence has sent us a most useful ally in the Mohammedan. When all is said and done, things might be far worse than they are."

Never before had his tone been so cold, his manner so abrupt, not even in the old days when he purposely endeavored to make her dislike him.

She walked along the ledge and timidly bent over him.

"Forgive me!" she whispered. "I did forget for the moment not only the goodness of Providence, but also your self sacrificing devotion. I am only a woman, and I don't want to die yet, but I will not live unless you, too, are saved."

Once already that day she had expressed this thought in other words. Was some shadowy design flitting through her brain? Suppose they were faced with the alternatives of dying from thirst or yielding to the Dyaks. Was there another way out? Jenks shivered, though the rock was scorching hot. He must divert her mind from this dreadful brooding.

"The fact is," he said, with a feeble attempt at cheerfulness, "we are both hungry and consequently grumpy. Now, suppose you prepare lunch. We will feel ever so much better after we have eaten."

The girl choked back her emotion and sadly essayed the task of providing a meal which was hateful to her. A few tears fell now and made little furrows down her soiled cheeks. But they were helpful tears, tears of resignation, not of despair. Although the "destruction that wasteth at noonday" was trying her sorely, she again felt strong and sustained.

She even smiled on detecting an involuntary effort to clear her stained face. She was about to carry a biscuit and some tinned meat to the sailor when a sharp exclamation from him caused her to hasten to his side.

The Dyaks had broken cover. Running in scattered sections across the sands, they were risking such loss as the defenders might be able to inflict upon them during a brief race to the shelter and food to be obtained in the other part of the island.

Jenks did not fire at the scurrying gang. He was waiting for one man, Taung S'Ali. But that redoubtable person, having probably suggested this dash for liberty, had fully realized the enviable share of attention he would attract during the passage. He therefore discarded his vivid attire and by borrowing odd garments made himself sufficiently like unto the remainder of his crew to deceive the sailor until the rush of men was over. Among them ran the Mohammedan, who did not look up the valley, but waved his hand.

When all had quieted down again Jenks understood how he had been fooled. He laughed so heartily that Iris, not knowing either the cause of his merriment or the reason of his unlooked for clemency to the flying foe, feared the sun had affected him.

He at once quit the post occupied during so protracted a vigil.

"Now," he cried, "we can eat in peace. I have stripped the chief of his finery. His men can twist him on being forced to shed his gorgeous plumage in order to save his life. Anyhow, they will leave us in peace until night falls, so we must make the best of a hot afternoon."

of a siege in that rocky prison, almost distracted her.

Jenks was very stern and curt in his reply.

"We must make the best of a bad business," he said. "If we are in a tight place the Dyaks are not much better off, and eighteen of their number are dead or wounded. You forget, too, that Providence has sent us a most useful ally in the Mohammedan. When all is said and done, things might be far worse than they are."

Never before had his tone been so cold, his manner so abrupt, not even in the old days when he purposely endeavored to make her dislike him.

She walked along the ledge and timidly bent over him.

"Forgive me!" she whispered. "I did forget for the moment not only the goodness of Providence, but also your self sacrificing devotion. I am only a woman, and I don't want to die yet, but I will not live unless you, too, are saved."

Once already that day she had expressed this thought in other words. Was some shadowy design flitting through her brain? Suppose they were faced with the alternatives of dying from thirst or yielding to the Dyaks. Was there another way out? Jenks shivered, though the rock was scorching hot. He must divert her mind from this dreadful brooding.

"The fact is," he said, with a feeble attempt at cheerfulness, "we are both hungry and consequently grumpy. Now, suppose you prepare lunch. We will feel ever so much better after we have eaten."

The girl choked back her emotion and sadly essayed the task of providing a meal which was hateful to her. A few tears fell now and made little furrows down her soiled cheeks. But they were helpful tears, tears of resignation, not of despair. Although the "destruction that wasteth at noonday" was trying her sorely, she again felt strong and sustained.

She even smiled on detecting an involuntary effort to clear her stained face. She was about to carry a biscuit and some tinned meat to the sailor when a sharp exclamation from him caused her to hasten to his side.

The Dyaks had broken cover. Running in scattered sections across the sands, they were risking such loss as the defenders might be able to inflict upon them during a brief race to the shelter and food to be obtained in the other part of the island.

Jenks did not fire at the scurrying gang. He was waiting for one man, Taung S'Ali. But that redoubtable person, having probably suggested this dash for liberty, had fully realized the enviable share of attention he would attract during the passage. He therefore discarded his vivid attire and by borrowing odd garments made himself sufficiently like unto the remainder of his crew to deceive the sailor until the rush of men was over. Among them ran the Mohammedan, who did not look up the valley, but waved his hand.

When all had quieted down again Jenks understood how he had been fooled. He laughed so heartily that Iris, not knowing either the cause of his merriment or the reason of his unlooked for clemency to the flying foe, feared the sun had affected him.

He at once quit the post occupied during so protracted a vigil.

"Now," he cried, "we can eat in peace. I have stripped the chief of his finery. His men can twist him on being forced to shed his gorgeous plumage in order to save his life. Anyhow, they will leave us in peace until night falls, so we must make the best of a hot afternoon."

But he was mistaken. A greater danger than any yet experienced now threatened them, for Taung S'Ali, furious and unrelenting, resolved that if he could not obtain the girl he would slay the pair of them, and he had terrible weapons in his possession.

CHAPTER XIII.

RESIDENTS in tropical countries know that the heat is greatest, or certainly least bearable, between 2 and 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

At the conclusion of a not very luscious repast Jenks suggested that they should rig up the tarpaulin in such wise as to gain protection from the sun and yet enable him to cast a watchful eye over the valley. Iris helped to raise the great canvas sheet on the supports he had prepared. Once shut off from the devouring rays, the hot breeze then springing into fitful existence cooled their blistered but perspiring skin and made life somewhat tolerable.

Still adhering to his policy of combatting the first enervating attacks of thirst, the sailor sanctioned the consumption of the remaining water. As a last desperate expedient to be resorted to only in case of sheer necessity, he uncorked a bottle of champagne and filled the tin cup. The sparkling wine, with its volume of creamy foam, looked so tempting that Iris would then and there have risked its potency were she not promptly withheld.

Jenks explained to her that when the wine became quite flat and insipid they might use it to moisten their parched lips. Even so, in their present superheated state, the liquor was unquestionably dangerous, but he hoped it would not harm them if taken in minute quantities.

Accustomed now to implicitly accept his advice, she fought and steadily conquered the craving within her. Oddly enough, the "thawing" of their scorched bodies beneath the tarpaulin brought a certain degree of relief. They were supremely uncomfortable, but that was as naught compared with the relaxation from the torments previously borne.

For a long time—the best part of an hour, perhaps—they remained silent. The sailor was reviewing the pros and cons of their precarious condition.

of a siege in that rocky prison, almost distracted her.

Jenks was very stern and curt in his reply.

"We must make the best of a bad business," he said. "If we are in a tight place the Dyaks are not much better off, and eighteen of their number are dead or wounded. You forget, too, that Providence has sent us a most useful ally in the Mohammedan. When all is said and done, things might be far worse than they are."

Never before had his tone been so cold, his manner so abrupt, not even in the old days when he purposely endeavored to make her dislike him.

She walked along the ledge and timidly bent over him.

"Forgive me!" she whispered. "I did forget for the moment not only the goodness of Providence, but also your self sacrificing devotion. I am only a woman, and I don't want to die yet, but I will not live unless you, too, are saved."

Once already that day she had expressed this thought in other words. Was some shadowy design flitting through her brain? Suppose they were faced with the alternatives of dying from thirst or yielding to the Dyaks. Was there another way out? Jenks shivered, though the rock was scorching hot. He must divert her mind from this dreadful brooding.

"The fact is," he said, with a feeble attempt at cheerfulness, "we are both hungry and consequently grumpy. Now, suppose you prepare lunch. We will feel ever so much better after we have eaten."

The girl choked back her emotion and sadly essayed the task of providing a meal which was hateful to her. A few tears fell now and made little furrows down her soiled cheeks. But they were helpful tears, tears of resignation, not of despair. Although the "destruction that wasteth at noonday" was trying her sorely, she again felt strong and sustained.

She even smiled on detecting an involuntary effort to clear her stained face. She was about to carry a biscuit and some tinned meat to the sailor when a sharp exclamation from him caused her to hasten to his side.

The Dyaks had broken cover. Running in scattered sections across the sands, they were risking such loss as the defenders might be able to inflict upon them during a brief race to the shelter and food to be obtained in the other part of the island.

Jenks did not fire at the scurrying gang. He was waiting for one man, Taung S'Ali. But that redoubtable person, having probably suggested this dash for liberty, had fully realized the enviable share of attention he would attract during the passage. He therefore discarded his vivid attire and by borrowing odd garments made himself sufficiently like unto the remainder of his crew to deceive the sailor until the rush of men was over. Among them ran the Mohammedan, who did not look up the valley, but waved his hand.

FARMERS' BONE

Proved the Best Fertilizer
By a Record of Twenty Years' Success

You are banking on experience when you fertilize with Farmers' Bone. No other fertilizer is so well balanced in the plant food supplied from sowing time to harvest. Don't take a substitute. Farmers' Bone has no equal for any kind of crop. It is the leading fertilizer of the South.

Works Freely In Any Drill

It has been proven by over twenty-one years of successive use that Fish and Animal matter is superior to any other known ammoniate for growing cotton. Farmers' Bone is the fertilizer

MADE WITH FISH
BECAUSE IT GROWS CROPS

ITS SALES GROW	1885-250 TONS
	1890-1,500 TONS
	1895-12,000 TONS
	1900-58,455 TONS
	1905-130,091 TONS

F. S. ROYSTER GUANO CO.
Norfolk, Va. Columbia, S. C. Tarboro, N. C. Macon, Ga.

It would, of course, be a matter of supreme importance were the Indian to be faithful to his promise. Here the prospect was decidedly hopeful. The mah was an old soldier, and the ex-officer of native cavalry knew how enduring was the attachment of this poor convict to home and military service. Probably at that moment the Mohammedan was praying to the prophet and his two nephews to aid him in rescuing the sahib and the woman whom the sahib held so dear, for the all wise and all powerful Indian government is very merciful to offending natives who thus condone their former crimes.

But, howsoever willing he might be, what could one man do among so many? The Dyaks were hostile to him in race and creed, and assuredly infuriated against the foreign devil who had killed, or wounded in round numbers one-fifth of their total force. Very likely the hapless Mussulman would lose his life that night in attempting to bring water to the foot of the rock.

Even if the man succeeded in eluding the vigilance of his present associates, where was the water to come from? There was none on the island save that in the well. In all likelihood the Dyaks had a store in the remaining sampans, but the native ally of the beleaguered pair would have a task of exceeding difficulty in obtaining one of the jars or skins containing it.

Again, granting all things went well that night, what would be the final outcome of the struggle? How long could Iris withstand the exposure, the strain, the heartbreaking misery of the rock?

He shook restlessly, not aware that the girl's sorrowful glance, luminous with love and pain, was fixed upon him. Summarily dismissing these grisly phantoms of the mind, he asked himself what the Mohammedan exactly meant by warning him against the trees on the right and the "silent death" that might come from them. He was about to crawl forth to the lip of the rock and investigate matters in that locality when Iris, who also was busy with her thoughts, restrained him. "Wait a little while," she said. "None of the Dyaks will venture into the open until night falls. And I have something to say to you."

There was a quiet solemnity in her voice that Jenks had never heard before. It chilled him. His heart acknowledged a quick sense of evil omen. He raised himself slightly and turned toward her. Her face, beautiful and serene beneath its disfigurements, wore an expression of settled purpose. For the life of him he dared not question her.

"That man, the interpreter," she said, "told you that if I were given up to the chief he and his followers would go away and molest you no more."

His forehead seamed with sudden anger.

"A mere bait," he protested. "In any event it is hardly worth discussion." And the answer came, clear and resolute:

"I think I will agree to those terms."

At first he regarded her with undisguised and wordless amazement. Then the appalling thought darted through his brain that she contemplated this supreme sacrifice in order to save him. A clammy sweat bedewed his brow, but by sheer will power he contrived to say:

"You must be mad to even dream of such a thing. Don't you understand what it means to you—and to me? It is a ruse to trap us. They are ungoverned savages. Once they had you in their power they would laugh at a promise made to me."

"You may be mistaken. They must have some sense of fair dealing. Even assuming that such was their intention, they may depart from it. They

have already lost a great many men. Their chief, having gained his main object, might not be able to persuade them to take further risks. I will make it a part of the bargain that they first supply you with plenty of water. Then you, unarmed, could keep them at bay for many days. We lose nothing; we can gain a great deal by endeavoring to pacify them."

"Iris," he gasped, "what are you saying?"

The unexpected sound of her name on his lips almost unnerved her. But no martyr ever went to the stake with more settled purpose than this pure woman, resolved to immolate herself for the sake of the man she loved. He had dared all for her, faced death in many shapes. Now it was her turn. Her eyes were lit with a seraphic fire, her sweet face resigned as that of an angel.

"I have thought it out," she murmured, gazing at him steadily, yet scarce seeing him. "It is worth trying as a last expedient. We are abandoned by all save the Lord, and it does not appear to be his holy will to help us on earth. We can struggle on here until we die. Is that right when one of us may live?"

Her very candor had betrayed her. She would go away with these monstrous captors, endure them, even flatter them, until she and they were far removed from the island, and then—she would kill herself. In her innocence she imagined that self destruction under such circumstances was a pardonable offense. She only gave a life to save a life, and greater love than this is not known to God or man.

The sailor, in a tempest of wrath and wild emotion, had it in his mind to compel her into reason—to shake her as one shakes a wayward child.

He rose to his knees with this half formed notion in his fevered brain; then he looked at her, and a mist seemed to shut her out from his sight. Was she lost to him already? Was all that had gone before an idle dream of joy and grief, a wizard's glimpse of mirrored happiness and vague perils? Was Iris, the crystal souled, thrown to him by the storm lashed wave, to be snatched away by some irresistible and malign influence?

In the mere physical effort to assure himself that she was still near to him he gathered her up in his strong hands. Yes, she was there, breathing, wondering, palpitating. He folded her closely to his breast and, yielding to the passionate longings of his tired heart, whispered to her:

"My darling, do you think I can survive your loss? You are life itself to me. If we have to die, sweet one, let us die together."

Then Iris flung her arms around his neck.

"I am quite, quite happy now," she sobbed brokenly. "I didn't imagine it would come—this way, but—I am thankful—it has come."

For a little while they yielded to the glamour of the divine knowledge that amid the chaos of eternity each soul had found its mate. There was no need for words. Love, tremendous in its power, unfathomable in its mystery, had cast its spell over them. They were garbed in light, throned in a palace built by fairy hands. On all sides squatted the ghoul of privation, misery, danger, even grim death; but they heeded not the inferno; they had created a paradise in an earthly hell.

Then Iris withdrew herself from the man's embrace. She was delightfully shy and timid now.

"So you really do love me?" she whispered, crimson faced, with shining eyes and parted lips.

He fondled her hair and gently rubbed her cheek with his rough fingers. The sudden sense of ownership of this

fair woman was entrancing. It almost bewildered him to find Iris nestling close, clinging to him in utter confidence and trust.

"But I knew, I knew," she murmured. "You betrayed yourself so many times. You wrote your secret to me, and though you did not tell me, I found your dear words on the sands and have treasured them next my heart."

What girlish romance was this? He held her away gingerly, just so far that he could look into her eyes.

"Oh, it is true, quite true," she cried, drawing the pocket from her neck. "Don't you recognize your own handwriting, or were you not certain, just then, that you really did love me?"

"Dear, dear! How often would she repeat that wondrous phrase! Together they bent over the tiny slips of paper. There it was again, "I love you," twice blessed in magic symbols. With blushing eagerness she told him how, by mere accident, of course, she caught sight of her own name. It was not very wrong, was it, to pick up that tiny scrap or those others, which she could not help seeing and which unfolded their simple tale so truthfully? Wrong! It was so delightfully right that he must kiss her again to emphasize his convictions.

They grew calmer, more serene. It was so undeniably true they loved one another that the fact was becoming venerable with age. Iris was perhaps the first to recognize its quiet certainty.

"As I cannot get you to talk reasonably," she protested, "I must appeal to your sympathy. I am hungry, and, oh, so thirsty."

The girl had hardly eaten a morsel for her midday meal. Then she was dependent, utterly broken hearted. Now she was filled with new hope. There was a fresh motive in existence. Whether destined to live an hour or half a century she would never, never leave him, nor, of course, could he ever leave her. Some things were quite impossible—for example, that they should part.

Jenks brought her a biscuit, a tin of meat and that most delicate cup of champagne.

"It is not exactly frappe," he said, handing her the insipid beverage, "but, under other conditions, it is a wine almost worthy to toast you in."

She fancied she had never before noticed what a charming smile he had.

"Toast," is a peculiarly suitable word," she cried. "I am simply frizzling. In these warm clothes!"

She stopped. For the first time since that prehistoric period when she was "Miss Deane" and he "Mr. Jenks" she remembered the manner