## UATERMAIN'S WIFE

By IL RIDER HAGGARD

"My people," said Mr. Carson, when the singing was done and we had kissed such other before them all—"my people, Macumasahn and the Star, my daughter, we now man and wife, to live in one brank, to eat of one bowk, to share one fortune till they reach the grave. Hear now, my people, you know this woman," and, turning, he pointed to Hendrika, who, unseen by us, had been led out of the prison hut.

"Yes, yes, we know her," said a little

three, though occasionally he though

that she was his own daughter in her childhood, and would ask her where her

mother was. This state of affairs lasted

for some seven months. The old man gradually grew weaker, but he did not

cluded the idea of our leaving Babyan

Kraal till all was over. This was the

more distressing to me because I had a

nervous presentiment that Stella was in-

curring danger by staying there, and also because the state of her health ren-dered it desirable that we should reach

a civilized region as soon as possible. At length the end came very suddenly

We were sitting one evening by Mr. Carson's bedside in his hut, when to our

astonishment he sat up and spoke.
"I hear you," he said. "Yes, yes, !

forgive you. Poor woman! you too have suffered," and he fell back dead.

I have little doubt that he was address

ing his lost wife, some vision of whom

had flashed across his dying senses

Stella, of course, was overwhelmed with grief at her loss. Till I came her father

had been her sole companion, and there-

fore, as may be imagined, the tie be-

tween them was much closer than is

usual even in the case of father and

daughter. So deeply did she mourn that

I began to fear for the effect upon her

health. Nor were we the only ones to

grieve; all the natives on the settlement called Mr. Carson "father," and as a

father they lamented him. The air re-

sounded with the wailing of women,

and the men went about with bowed

heads, saying that "the sun had set in

the heavens, now only the Star (Stella) remained." Indaba-zimbi alone did not

mourn. He said that it was best that

the Inkoos should die, for what was life

worth when one lay like a log?-more

over, that it would have been well for all

On the following day we buried him

in the little graveyard near the water-

fall. It was a sad business and Stella cried very much, in spite of all I could

That night as I sat outside the but

smoking—for the weather was hot and Stella was lying down inside—old Indaba-

zimbi came up, saluted and squatted at

"What is it, Indaba-zimbi?" I said,

going to trek towards the coast?"

"This, Macumazahn. When are you

"I don't know," I answered. "The Star

"No, Macumazahn, you must not wait;

I did not know that they had gone,'

the marriage, all but one or two; now

they are back, all the baboons in the

world, I think. I saw a whole cliff

black with them."
"Is that all?" I said, for I saw that he

had something behind. "I am not afraid

babyan-frau, Hendrika, is with them."

of Hendrika since her expulsion, and

though at first she and her threats had

haunted me somewhat, by degrees she

had to a great extent passed out of my

mind, which was fully preoccupied with

Stella and my father-in-law's illness. I

started violently. "How do you know

"I know it because I saw her, Macu-

mazahn. She is disguised, she is dressed

up in baboon skins, and her face is stain-

ed dark. But though she was a long

way off I knew her by her size, and I

saw the white flesh of her arm when the

skins slipped aside. She has come back,

Macumazahn, with all the baboons in

the world, and she has come back to do

evil. Now do you understand why you

"Yes," I said, "though I don't see how

she and the baboons can harm us. I

think that it will be better to go. If nec-

essary we can camp the wagons some-

where for a while on the journey. Heark-

en, Indaba-zimbi: say nothing of this to

the Star; I will not have her frightened.

And hearken again. Speak to the head

men, and see that watchers are set all

around the buts and gardens, and kept

there night and day. To-morrow we will

get the wagons ready, and the next day

He nodded his white lock and went to

do my bidding, leaving me not a little

disturbed-unreasonably so, indeed. It

was a strange story. That this woman

had the power of conversing with ba-

boons I knew. That was not so very

wonderful, seeing that the Bushmen

claim to be able to do the same thing, and

she had been nurtured by them. But

that she had been able to muster them,

and by the strength of her human will

and intelligence muster them in order to

forward her ends of revenge, seemed to

me so incredible that after reflection my

fears grew light. Still I determined to

So I went into Stella, and without say-

ing a word to her of the baboon story,

told her I had been thinking matters

over, and had come to the conclusion

that it was our duty to follow her father's

instructions to the letter, and leave Bab-

yan Kraals at once. Into all our talk I

need not enter, but the end of it was that

she agreed with me, and declared that

Nothing happened to disturb us that

night, and on the following morning I

was up early making preparations. The

despair of the people when they learned

that we were going to leave them was

something quite pitiable. I could only

console them by declaring that we were

but on a journey, and would return the

"They had lived in the shadow of her

father, who was dead," they declared;

lived in his shadow. He had received

them when they were outcasts and wan-

derers without a mat to lie on, or a blank-

et to cover them, and they had grown

fat in his shadow. Then he had died,

and the Star, their father's daughter, had

married me, Macamazahn, and they had

believed that I should take their father's

place, and let them live in my shadow.

What should they do when there was no

one to protect them? The tribes were

kept from attacking them by fear of the

white man. If he went, they would be

eaten up," and so on. Alas! there was

'ever since they were little they had

following year.

she could quite well manage the journey.

'No, Macumazahn, it is not all. The

ing had been heard or see

of a pack of baboons."

should trek?"

we will trek."

you must go, and the Star must take her

is not fit to travel now; we must wait

if he had died sooner.

do to comfort her.

All will be well."

my feet.

Of course his condition quite pre

"Yes, yes, we know her," said a little ring of head men, who formed the primitive court of justice, and after the fashion of natives had squatted themselves in a circle on the ground in front of us. "We know her; she is the white babyan woman; she is Hendrika, the body servent of the Size." ant of the Star."

"You know her," said Mr. Carson, "but you do not know her altogether. Stand forward, Indaba-zimbi, and tell the people what came about last night in the but of Macumazhan."

Accordingly old Indaba-zimbi came forward, and, squatting down, told his moving tale with much descriptive force and many gestures, finishing up by producing the great knife from which his watchfulness had saved me.

Then I was called upon, and in a few

brief words substantiated his story; insed my face did that in the sight of all

Then Mr. Carson turned to Hendrika, who stood in sullen silence, her eyes fixed upon the ground, and asked her if she had anything to say.

She looked up boldly and answered: "Macumazahn has robbed me of the love of my mistress. I would have robbed him of his life, which is a little thing compared to that which I have lost at his hands. I have failed, and I am sorry for it, for had I killed him and left no trace the Star would have forgotten him and shone on me again."

"Never," murmured Stella in my ear; but Mr. Carson turned white with

"My people," he said, "you hear the words of this woman. You hear how she pays me back, me and my daughter whom she swears she loves. She says that she could have murdered a man who has done her no evil, the man who is the husband of her mistress. We saved her from the babyans, we tamed her, we fed her, we taught her, and this ow she pays us back. Say, my people, what reward shall be given to

"Death," said the circle of indunas, inting their thumbs downwards, and pointing their thumos down the word "Death."

"Death," repeated the head induna, adding: "If you save her, my father, we will alay her with our own hands. She is a babyan woman, a devil woman; ah, yes, we have heard of such before; let her be slain before she works more evil." Then it was that Stella stepped forward and begged for Hendrika's life in

moving terms. She pleaded the savagery of the woman's nature, her long service, and the affection that she had always shown toward herself. She said that I, whose life had been attempted, forgave her, and she, my wife, who had nearly oride, forgave her; let them forgive her also, let her be sent away, not slain, let not her marriage day be stained with blood. Now her father listened readily enough,

for he had no intention of killing Hendrika-indeed, he had already promised not to do so. But the people were in a different humor, they looked upon Hendrika as a devil, and would have torn her to pieces there and then, could they have had their way. Nor were matters mended a great reputation for wisdom and magic in the place. Suddenly the old man rose and made quite an impassioned speech, urging them to kill Hendrika at once or mischief would come of it.

At last matters got very bad, for two of the indunas came forward to drag her off to execution, and it was not until Stella fairly burst into tears that the sight of her grief, backed by Mr. Carson's orders and my own remonstrances,

carried the day. All this while Hendrika had been standing quite unmoved. At last the tumult stopped, and the leading induna called to her to go, promising that if ever she showed her face near the kraals again she should be stabbed like a jackal. Then Hendrika spoke to Stella in a low voice in English:

"Better let them kill me, mistress, better for all. Without you to love I shall go mad and become a babyan again." Stella did not answer, and they loosed

her. She stepped forward and looked at the natives with a stare of hate. Then she turned and walked past me, and as she passed whispered a native phrase in my ear, that, being literally translated, ns, "Till another moon," but which has the same significance as the French "au revoir."

It frightened me, for I knew she meant that she had not done with me, and saw that our mercy was misplaced. Seeing my face change she ran swiftly from me, and as she passed Indaba-zimbi, with a sudden movement snatched her great knife from his hand. When she had gone about twenty paces she halted, looked long and earnestly on Stella, gave one loud cry as of anguish, and fled. A few minutes later we saw her far away, bounding up the face of an almost perpendicular cliff—a cliff that nobody except herself and the baboons could possibly climb.

"Look," said Indaba-zimbi in my ear, 'look, Macumazahn, there goes the babyan frau. But, Macumazahn, she will come back again. Ah, why will you not listen to my words? Have they not always been true words, Macuma zahn?" and he shrugged his shoulders

and turned away. For a while I was much disturbed, but at any rate Hendrika was gone for the present, and Stella, my dear and lovely wife, was there at my side, and in her iles I forgot my fears.

For the rest of that day, why should I write of it?-there are things too happy and too sacred to be written of. At last I had, if only for a little while,

found that rest, that perfect joy which we seek so continually and so rarely clasp.

CHAPTER XI.



WONDER if many married couples are quite as happy as we found ourselves. Cynics, a grow ing class, declare that few illusions can survive a honeymoon. Well, I do not know about it, for I only married once, and can but speak from my limited experi-

but too much foundation for their fears. I returned to the huts at mid-day to get ence. But cersome dinner. Stella said that she was ruth of which it is the shadow, did sur-rive, as to this day it survives in my going to pack during the afternoon, so I did not think it necessary to caution her about going out alone, as I did not wish to allude to the subject of Hendrika and

But complete happiness is not allowed in this world even for an hour.

Three days after our wedding Mr. Carson had a stroke. It had been long impending, now it fell. We came into the center but to dinner and found him lythe baboons unless I was obliged to. I told her, however, that I would come back to help her as soon as I could get away. Then I went down to the native kraals to sort out such cattle as had selonged to Mr. Carson from those which ing speechless. At first I thought that belonged to the Kaffirs, for I proposed to take them with us. It was a large herd, and the business took an incalculable time. At length, a little before suning speechless. At first I thought that he was dying, but this was not so. On the contrary, within four days he recovered his speech and some power of movement. But he never recovered his memory, though he still knew Stella and sometimes myself. Curiously enough he remembered little Tota best of all down, I gave it up, and leaving Indabaand rode homewards.

Arriving, I gave the horse to one of the stable boys, and went into the central hut. There was no sign of Stella, though the things she had been packing lay about the floor. I passed first into our sleeping hut, thence one by one into all the others, but still saw no sign of her. Then I went out, and calling to a Kaffir in the garden asked him if he had seen

He answered "yes." He had seen her carrying flowers walking towards the graveyard, holding the little white girl -my daughter-as he called ber, by the hand, when the sun stood "there," and be pointed to a spot in the horizon where t would have been about an hour and a half before. "The two dogs were with them," he added. I turned and ran towards the graveyard, which was about a quarter of a mile from the huts. Of course there was no reason to be anxious -evidently she had gone to lay the flowers on her father's grave. And yet

I was anxious. When I got near the graveyard I met one of the natives, who, by my orders, had been set round the kraals to watch the place, and noticed that he was rubbing his eyes and yawning. Clearly he had been asleep. I asked him if he had seen his mistress, and he answered that he had not, which under the circumstances was not wonderful. Without stopping to reproach him, I ordered the man to follow me, and went on to the graveyard. There, on Mr. Carson's grave, lay the drooping flowers which Stella had been carrying, and there in the fresh mold was the spoor of Tota's veldschoon, or hide slipper. But where

I ran from the graveyard and called aloud at the top of my voice, but no answer came. Meanwhile the native was more profitably engaged in tracing their spoor. He followed it for about a hunired yards till he came to a clump of mimosa bush that was situated between the stream and the ancient marble quarries just above the waterfall, and at the moutirof the ravine. Here he stopped, and I heard him give a startled cry. I rushed to the spot, passed through the trees, and saw this. The little open space in the center of the glade had been the scene of a struggle. There, in the soft earth, were the marks of three human feet-two shod, one naked-Stella's, Tota's and Hendrika's. Nor was this all. There, close by, lay the fragments of the two dogs-they were nothing more-and one baboon, not yet quite dead, which had been bitten in the throat by the dogs. All round us was the spoor of numberless baboons. The full horror of what had happened flashed into my mind,

chance. She is strong. It is nothing, My wife and Tota had been carried off "Why do you say so? Why must we by the baboons. As yet they had not been killed, for if so their remains would For this reason, Macumazahn," and have been found with those of the dogs. he looked cautiously round and spoke They had been carried off. The brutes, "The baboons have come back in acting under the direction of the womanmonkey, Hendrika, had dragged them thousands. All the mountain is full of away to some secret den, there to keep them till they died-or kill them! I said.
"Yes," he answered, "they went after

For a moment I literally staggered beneath the terror of the shock. Then I roused myself from my despair. I bade the native run and alarm the people at the kraals, telling them to come armed. and bring me guns and ammunition. He went like the wind, and I turned to follow the spoor. For a few yards it was plain enough-Stella had been dragged along. I could see where her beels had struck the ground; the child had, I presumed, been carried—at least there were no marks of her feet. At the water's edge the spoor vanished. The water was shallow, and they had gone along in it, or at least Hendrika and her victims had, in order to obliterate the trail. I could see where a moss grown stone had been freshly turned over in the water bed. I ran along the bank some way up the ravine, in the vain hope of catching a sight of them. Presently I heard a bark in the cliffs above me; it was answered by another, and then I saw that scores of baboons were hidden about among the rocks on either side, and were slowly swinging themselves down to bar the path. To go on unarmed as I was would be useless. I should only be torn to pieces as the dogs had been. So I turned and fled back toward the huts. As I drew near I could see that my messenger had roused the settlement, for natives with spears and kerries in their hands were running up towards the kraals. When I reached the hut I met old Indaba-zimbi, who were a very seri-

"So the evil has fallen, Macumazahn," he said.

"It has fallen," I answered. "Keep a good heart, Macumazahn," he said again. "She is not dead, nor is the little maid, and before they die we shall find them. Remember this, Hendrika loves her. She will not harm her or allow the babyans to harm her. She will try to hide her away from you-that is

"Pray God that we may find her," I greaned. "The light is going fast." "The moon rises in three hours," he answered. "We will search by moonlight. It is useless to start now; see, the sun sinks. Let us get the men together, eat and make things ready. Hamba gachle. Hasten slowly, Macumazahn,"

As there was no help I took his advice. I could eat no food, but I packed some up to take with us, and made ready ropes and a rough kind of litter. If we found them they would scarcely be able to walk. Ah! if we found them! How slowly the time passed! It seemed hours before the moon rose. But at last it did

Then we started. In all we were about hundred men, but we only mustered five guns between us, my elephant roer and four that had belonged to Mr. Car-

son. E gained the spot stream where Stella had been taken. The natives looked at the torn fragments of the

dogs, and at the marks of violence, and I heard them swearing to each other that whether the Star lived or died they would not rest till they had exterminated every baboon on Babyan's peak I echoed the oath, and, as shall be seen,

we kept it. lowing the spoor of the baboons as we best could. But the stream left no spoor, and the hard, rocky banks but little. wandered through the lonely moonlit valleys, startling the silence into a thousand echoes with our cries. But no answer

came to them. In vain our eyes searched the sides of precipices formed of water riven rocks fantastically piled one upon the vain we searched through another; in vain we searched through endless dells and fern clad crannies. endless dells and forn clad crannics.
There was nothing to be found. How could we expect to find two human beings hidden away in the recesses of this vast stretch of mountain ground, which no man yet had ever fully explored? They were lost, and in all human probability lost for ever.

To and fro we wandered hopelessly, till at last dawn found us footsore a weary nearly at the spot whence we had started. We sat down waiting for the sun to rise, and the men ate of such food as they had brought with them, and

sent to the kraals for more.

I sat upon a stone with a breaking heart. I cannot describe my feelings.

Let the reader put himself in my position and perhaps he may get some idea of them. Near me was old Indaba-zimbi, who sat stacing straight before him as though he were looking into space, and taking note of what went on there. An idea struck me. This man had some occult power. Several times during our adventures he had prophe sied, and in every case his prophecies had proved true. He it was who, when we escaped from the Zulu Impi, had told me to steer north, because there we should find the place of a white man who lived under the shadow of a great peak that was full of baboons. Perhaps ne could help in this extremity—at any rate it was worth trying.
"Indaba-zimbi," I said, "you say that

you can send your spirit through the doors of space and see what we cannot see. At the least I know that you can do strange things, Can you not help me now? If you can, and will save her, I will give you half the cattle that we have bere.

"I never said anything of the sort, Macumazahn," he answered, "I do things, I do not talk about them. Neither do I seek reward for what I do like a common witch doctor. It is well that you have asked me to use my wisdom, cumazahn, for I should not have used it again without being asked—no, not even for the sake of the Star and yourself, whom I love, for if so my spirit would have been angry. In the other matters I had a part, for my life was concerned as well as yours; but in this matter I have no part, and therefore I might not use my wisdom unless you thought well to call upon my spirit. However, it would have been no good to ask me before, for I have only just found the herb I want," and he produced a handful of leaves of a plant that was unfamiliar to me. It had prickly leaves, shaped very much

like those of the common English nettle. "Now, Macumazahn," he went on, "bid the men leave us alone, and then follow me presently to the little glade down there by the water."

I did so. When I reached the glade I found Indaba-zimbi kindling a small fire under the shadow of a tree by the edge of

"Sit there, Macumazahn," he said, pointing to a stone near the fire, "and do not be surprised or frightened at anything you see. If you move or call out we shall learn nothing."

I sat down and watched. When the fire was alight and burning brightly, the old fellow stripped himself stark naked, and, going to the foot of the pool, dipped himself in the water. Then he came back shivering with the cold, and, leaning over the little fire, thrust leaves of the plant I have mentioned into his mouth and began to chew them, muttering as he chewed. Most of the remaining leaves he threw onto the fire. A dense smoke rose from them, but he held his head in this smoke and drew it down into his lungs till I saw that he was exhibiting every sign of suffocation. The veins in his throat and chest swelled, he gasped loudly, and his eyes, from which tears were streaming, seemed as though they ng to start from his head. Presently he fell over on his side, and lay senseless. I was terribly alarmed, and my first impulse was to run to his assistance, but fortunately I remembered his

caution and sat quiet. Indaba-zimbi lay on the ground like a person quite dead. His limbs had all the utter relaxation of death. But as 1 watched I saw them begin to stiffen, exactly as though rigor mortis had set in Then, to my astonishment, I perceived them once more relax, and this time there appeared upon his chest the stain of decomposition. It spread and spread; in three minutes the man, to all appearance, was a livid corpse.

I sat amazed watching this uncanny sight, and wondering if any further natural process was about to be enacted. Perhaps Indaba-zimbi was going to fall to dust before my eyes. As I watched I observed that the discoloration was beginning to fade. First it vanished from the extremities, then from the larger limbs, and lastly from the trunk. Then in turn came the third stage of relaxation, the second stage of stiffness or rigor, and the first stage of after-death collapse. When all these had rapidly succeeded each other, Indaba-zimbi quietly woke

I was too astonished to speak; I simply looked at him with my mouth open. "Well, Macumazahn," he said, putting his head on one side like a bird and nodding his white lock in a comical fashion 'it is all right; I have seen her." "Seen who?" I said.

"The Star, your wife, and the little maid. They are much frightened, but unharmed. The babyan-frau watches them. She is mad, but the baboons obey her and do not hurt them. The Star was sleeping from weariness, so I whispered in her ear and told her not to be frightened, for you would soon rescue her, and that meanwhile she must seem to be pleased to have Hendrika near her."

"You whispered in her car?" I said. "How could you whisper in her car?" "Bah! Macumazahn. How could seem to die and go rotten before your eyes? You don't know, do you? Well I will tell you one thing. I had to die to pass the doors of space, as you call them I had to draw all the healthy strength and life from my body in order to gather power to speak with the Star. It was a dangerous business, Macumazahn, for if I had let things go a little further they must have stopped so, and there would have been an end of Indaba-zimbi. Ah, you white men, you know so much that you think you know everything. But you don't! You are always staring at the clouds and can't see the things that lie at your feet. You hardly believe me now, do you, Macumazahn? Well, I will show you. Have you anything on you that the Star has touched or worn?

I thought for a moment, and said that I had a lock of her hair in my pocketbook. He told me to give it to him. I did so. Going to the fire, he lit the lock of hair in the flame, and let it burn to ashes, which he caught in his left band. These ashes he mixed up in a paste with the juice of one of the leaves of the plant I have spoken of.

"Now, Macumazahn, shut your eyes," he said. I did so, and he rubbed his paste on my eyelids. At first it burnt me, then my head swam strangely. Presently this offect passed off, and my brain was per-

the ground with my feet. Indaba-zimbi led me to the side of the stream. Beneath us was a pool of beautifully clear water. "Look into the pool, Macumazahn," said Indaba-zimbi, and his voice sounded

feetly clear again, but I could not feel

nonow and rar away in my cars.

I looked. The water grew dark; it cleared, and in it was a picture. I saw a cave with a fire burning in it. Against the wall of the cave rested Stella. Her dress was torn almost off her, she looked dreadfully pale and weary, and her eyelids were red as though with weeping.
But she slept, and I could almost think
that I saw her lips shape my name in
her sleep. Close to her, her head upon
Stella's breast, was little Tota; she had a night cold. The child was awake, and appeared to be moaning with fear. By the fire, and in such a position that the light fell full upon her face, and engaged in cooking something in a rough pot shaped from wood, sat the baboon woman, Hendrika. She was clothed in baboon skins, and her face had been rubbed with some dark stain, which was,

however, wearing off.
In the intervals of her cooking she would turn on Stella her wild eyes, in which glared visible madness, with an expression of tenderness that amounted to worship. Then she would stare at the poor child and gnash her teeth as though with hate. Clearly she was jeal-ous of it. Round the entrance arch of the cave peeped and peered the heads of many baboons. Presently Hendrika made a sign to one of them; apparently she did not speak, or rather grunt, in order not to wake Stella. The brute hopped forward, and she gave it a second rude wooden pot which was lying by her. It took it and went. The last thing that I saw, as the vision slowly vanished from the pool, was the dim shadow of the baboon returning with the pot full of water.

Presently everything had gone. I ceased to feel strange. There beneath me was the pool, and at my side stood Indaba-zimbi, smiling.

"You have seen things," he said. "I have," I answered, and made no further remark on the matter. What was there to say? "Do you know the path to the cave?" I added. He nodded his head. "I did not follow

it all just now, because it winds," he said. "But I know it. We shall want the ropes.' "Then let us be starting; the men have

He nodded his head again, and, going to the men, I told them to make ready. adding that Indaba-zimbi knew the way. They said that was all right; if Indabe zimbi had "smelt her out" they should soon find the Star. So we started cheerfully enough, and my spirits were so much improved that I was able to eat a boiled mealie cob or two as we walked.

We went up the valley, following the course of the stream for about a mile then Indaba-zimbi made a sudden turn to the right along another kloof, of which there were countless numbers in the base of the great hill.

On we went through kloof after kloof. Indaba-zimbi, who led us, was never at a loss; he turned up gulleys and struck across necks of hills with the certainty of a hound on a hot scent. At length, after about three hours' march, we came to a big silent valley on the northerfi slope of the great peak. On one side of this valley was a series of stony koppies, on the other rose a sheer wall of rock. We marched along the wall for a distance of some two miles. Then suddenly Indaba-zimbi halted.

"There is the place," he said, pointing to an opening in the cliff. This opening was about forty feet from the ground and ellipse shaped. It cannot have been more than twenty feet high by ten wide, and was partially hidden by ferns and bushes that grew about it in the surface of the cliff. Keen as my eyes were, I doubt if I should ever have noticed it. for there were many such cracks and crannies in the rocky face of the great

We drew near and looked carefully at the place. The first thing I noticed was that the rock, which was not pendicular, had been worn by the continual passage of baboons; the second, that something white was hanging on a bush near the top of the ascent.

It was a pocket-handkerchief. Now there was no more doubt about the matter. With a beating heart I began the ascent. For the first twenty feet it was comparatively easy, for the rock shelved; the next ten feet was very difficult, but still possible to an active man, and I achieved it, followed by Indabazimbi. But the last twelve or fifteen feet could only be scaled by throwing a rope over the trunk of a stunted tree, which grew at the bottom of the This we accomplished with opening. some trouble, and the rest was easy. A foot or two bove my head the handkerchief fluttered in the wind. Hanging to the rope, I grasped it. It was my wife's. As I did so I noticed the face of a baboon peering at me over the edge of the cleft, the first baboon we had seen that morning. The brute gave a bark and vanished. Thrusting the handkerchief into my breast, I set my feet against the cliff and scrambled up as hard as I could go I knew that we had no time to lose, for the baboon would quickly alarm the others. I gained the cleft. It was a mere arched passage cut by water, ending in a gulley, which led to a wide open space of some sort. I looked through the passage and saw that the gulley was black with baboons. On they came by the hundred. I unslung my elephant gun from my shoulders, and waited, calling to the men below to come up with all possible speed. The brutes streamed on down the gloomy gulf towards me, barking, grunting and showing their huge teeth. I waited till they were within fifteen yards. Then I fired the elephant gun, which was loaded with slugs, right into the thick of them. In that narrow place the report echoed like a cannon shot, but its sound was quickly swallowed in the volley of piercing human sounding groans and screams that followed. The charge of heavy slugs had plowed through the number of the baboons, of which at least a dozen lay dead or dying in the passage. For a mo ment they hesitated, then they came on again with a hideous clamor. Fortunateby this time Indaba-zimbi, who also had a gun, was standing by my side, otherwise I should have been torn to pieces before I could reload. He fired both barrels into them, and again checked the But they came on again, and notwithstanding the appearance of two na tives with guns, which they let off with more or less success, we should have been overwhelmed by the great and ferocious apes had I not by this time succeeded in reloading the elephant gun. When they

were right on to us I fired, with ever

more deadly effect than before, for at

that distance every slug told on their

long line. The howls and screams of rage

and fury were now something inconceiv

able. One might have thought that we

were doing battle with a host of de

mons; indeed in that light-for the

overlanging arch of rock made it

very dark-the gnashing snouts and

somber glowing eyes of the apes looked

like those of devils as they are repre-

sented by monkish fancy. But the last

shot was too much for them; they with-

drew, dragging some of their wounded

with them, and thus gave us time to get

our men up the cliff. In a few minutes

all were there, and we advanced down

the passage, which presently opened into

a rocky gulley with shelving sides. This

gulley had a water way at the bottom of

it; it was about a hundred yards long,

and the slopes on either side were topped

oy precipisous cuits. a sooren at thees slopes; they literally swarmed with baboons, grunting, barking, screaming, and beating their breasts with their long arms in fury. I looked up the water way; along it, accompanied by a mob, or, as it were, a guard of baboons, came Hendrika, her long hair flying, madness writ-ten on her face, and in her arms was the senseless form of little Tota.

She saw us, and a foam of rage burst from her lips. She screamed aloud. To me the sound was a mere inarticulate cry, but the baboons clearly understood it, for they began to roll rocks down on to us. One bowlder leaped past me and struck down a Kaffir behind; another fell from the roof of the arch on to a lifted his gun to shoot Hendrika; I knocked it up so that the shot went over her, crying that he would kill the child

her, crying that he would kill the child. Then I shouted to the men to open out and form a line from side to side of the shelving gulley. Furious at the loss of their two comrades, they obeyed me, and keeping in the water way myself, together with Indaba-zimbi and the other guns, I gave the word to charge.

Then the real battle began. It is difficult to say who fought the more flercely, the natives or the baboons. The Kaffirs charged along the slopes, and as they came, encouraged by the screams of Hendrika, who rushed to and fro holding the wretched Toto before her as a shield, the apes bounded at them in fury. Scores were killed by the assegais and many more fell beneath our gun shots, but still they came on. Nor did we go many more fell beneath our gun shots, but still they came on. Nor did we go scathless. Occasionally a man would slip, or be pulled over in the grip of a baboon. Then the others would fling themselves upon him like dogs on a rat, and worry him to death. We lost five men in this way, and I myself received a bite through the fleshy part of the left arm, but fortunately a native near me assegaied the animal before I was pulled

At length, and all of a sudden, the baboons gave up. A panic seemed to seize them. Notwithstanding the cries of Hendrika they thought no more of fight, but only of escape; some even did not attempt to get away from the asse-gais of the Kaffirs, they simply hid their horrible faces in their paws, and, moan-ing piteously, waited to be slain. Hendrika saw that the battle was lost.

Dropping the child from her arms, she rushed straight at us, a very picture of horrible insanity. I lifted my gun, but could not bear to shoot. After all she was but a mad thing, half ape, half woman. So I sprang to one side, and she landed full on Indaba-zimbi, knocking him down. But she did not stay to do any more. Walling terribly she do any more. Wailing terribly, she rushed down the gulley and through the arch, followed by many of the surviving baboons, and vanished from our sight.

CHAPTER XIII.



tokens whereby he might remember what a baboon's teeth and claws are like. How many of the brutes we killed I never knew.

had lost

seven men

killed, and

more were

severely

bitten.

while but few

because we did not count, but it was a vast number. I should think that the stock must have been low about Babyan's peak for many years afterwards. From that day to this, however, I have always avoided baboons, feeling more afraid of them than any beast that lives. The path was clear, and we rushed for-

ward up the water-course. But first we picked up little Tota. The child was not in a swoon, as I had thought, but paralyzed by terror, so that she could scarcely speak. Otherwise she was unhurt, though it took her many a week to recover her perve. Had she been older. and had she not remembered Hendrika, I doubt if she would have recovered it. She knew me again, and flung her little arms about my neck, clinging to me so closely that I did not dare to give her to any one else to carry lest I should add to her terrors. So I went on with her in my arms. The fears that pierced my heart may well be imagined. Should I find Stella alive or dead? Should I find her at ail? Well, we should soon know now. We stumbled on up the stony water-course; notwithstanding the weight of Tota, I led the way, for suspense lent me wings. Now we were through, and an extraordinary scene lay before us. We were in a great natural amphitheatre, only it was three times the size of any amphitheatre ever shaped by man, and the walls were formed of precipitous cliffs, ranging from one to two hundred feet in height. For the rest, the space thus inclosed was level, studded with park-like trees, brilliant with flowers, and having a stream running through the center of it that, as I afterwards discovered, welled up from the ground at the head of the open space.

We spread ourselves out in a line searching everywhere, for Tota was too overcome to be able to tell us where Stella was hidden away. For nearly half an hour we searched and searched, scanning the walls of rock for any possible opening to a cave. In vain could find none. I applied to old Indabazimbi, but his foresight was at fault here. All he could say was that this was the place, and that the "Star" was hidden somewhere in a cave, but where the cave was he could not tell. At last we came to the top of the amphitheatre. There before us was a wall of rock, of which the lower parts were here and there clothed in grasses, lichens and creepers. I walked along it, calling at the top of my voice.

Presently my heart stood still, for I thought I heard a faint answer. I drew nearer to the place from which the sound seemed to come, and again called. Yes, there was an answer in my wife's voice. It seemed to come from the rock. 1 went up to it and searched among the creepers, but still could find no opening. "Move the stone," cried Stella's voice,

'the cave is shut with a stone." I took a spear and prodded at the cliff whence the sound came. Suddenly the spear sank in through a mass of lichen. I swept the lichen aside, revealing a bowlder that had been rolled into the mouth of an opening in the rock, which it fitted so accurately that, covered as it was by the overlanging lichen, it might well have escaped the keenest eye. We dragged the bowlder out; it was two men's work to do it. Beyond was a narrow, water worn passage, which I followed with a beating heart. Pres ently the passage opened into a small cave, shaped like a pickle bottle, and coming to a neck at the top end. passed through and found ourselves in a second, much larger cave, that I at once recognized as the one of which Indaba zimbi had shown me a vision in the water. Light reached it from abovehow I know not-and by it I could see a form half sitting, half lying on some skins at the top end of the cave. I rushed to it. It was Stella! Stella bound with strips of hide, bruised, torn, but still Stella, and alive.

She saw me, she gave one cry, then as I caught her in my arms she fainted. It was happy indeed that she did not faint

of her voice I do not believe we should ever have found that ounningly hidden cave, unless, indeed, Indaba-nimbt's mag-ic (on which be blessings) had come to

our assistance.

We bore her to the open air, laid her beneath the shade of a tree, and cut the bonds loose from her ankles. As we went I glanced at the cave. It was exactly as I had seen it in the vision. There burnt the fire, there were the rude wooden vessels, one of them still half full of the water which I had seen the baboon bring. I felt awed as I looked, and marveled at the power wielded by a savage who could not even read and write.

write.

Now I could see Stella clearly. Her face was scratched, and haggard with fear and weeping. Her clothes were almost torn off her, and her beautiful hair was loose and tangled. I sent for water, and we sprinkled her face. Then I forced a little of the brandy which we distilled from scales at the krank het was her. from peaches at the kraals between her lips, and she opened her eyes, and throw-ing her arms about me clung to me as little Tota had done, sobbing, "Thank God! thank God!"

After a while she grew quieter, and I made her and Tota eat a little food from the store that we had brought with us. I too ate and was thankful, for with the exception of the mealie cobs I had tasted nothing for nearly four-and-twentyhours. Then she washed her face and hands, and tidied her rags of dress as well as she was able. As she did so, by degrees I drew her story from her.

It seemed that on the previous afternoon, being wearied with packing, she went out to visit her father's grave, taking Tota with her, and was followed there by the two dogs. She wished to lay some flowers on the grave and take farewell of the dust it covered, for as we had expected to trek early on the morrow she did not know if she would find a later opportunity. They passed up the garden, and, gathering some owers from the orange trees and elsewhere, went on to the little graveyard. Here she laid them on the grave as we had found thers, and then sitting down, fell into a deep and sad reverie, such as the occasion would naturally induce. While she sat thus, Tota, who was a lively child and active as a kitten. strayed away without Stella observing it. With her went the dogs, who had also grown tired of inaction; a while passed, and suddenly she heard the dogs barking furiously about 150 yards away. Then she heard Tota scream. and the dogs also yelling with fear and pain. She rose and ran as swiftly as she could towards the spot whence the sound came. Presently she was there, Before her in the glade, holding the screaming Tota in her arms, was a figure in which, notwithstanding the rough disguise of baboon skins and coloring matter, she had no difficulty in recognizing Hendrika, and all about her were numbers of baboons, rolling over and over in two hideous heaps, of which the centers were the two unfortunate dogs now in process of being rent to fragments.

"Hendrika," Stella cried, "what does this mean? What are you doing with Tota and those brutes?"

The woman heard her and looked up. Then she saw that she was mad: madness stared from her eyes. She dropped the child, which instantly flew to Stella for protection. Stella clasped it, only to herself clasped by Hendrika. She struggled fiercely, but it was of no use— the babyan-frau had the strength of ten. She lifted her and Tota as though they were nothing, and ran off with them, following the bed of the stream in order to avoid leaving a spoor. Only the baboons who came with her, minus the one the dogs had killed, would not take to the water, but kept pace with them on the bank.

Stella said that the night which followed was more like a hideous night mare than a reality. She was never able to tell me all that occurred in it. She had a vague recollection of being borne over rocks and along kloofs, while around her echoed the horrible grunts and clicks of the baboons. She spoke to Hendrika in English and Kaffir, imploring her to let them go; but the woman, if I may call her so, seemed in her madness to have entirely forgotten these tongues. When Stella spoke she would kiss her and stroke her hair, but she did not seem to understand what it was she said. the other hand, she could and did talk to the baboons, that seemed to obey her implicitly. Moreover, she would not allow them to touch either Stella or the child in her arms. Once one of them tried to do so, and she seized a dead stick and struck it so heavily on the head that it fell senseless. Thrice Stella made an attempt to escape, for sometimes even Hendrika's giant strength waned and she had to set them down. But on each occasion she caught them, and it was in these struggles that Stella's clothes were

At length before daylight they reached the cliff, and with the first break of light the ascent began. Hendrika dragged them up the first stages, but when they came to the precipitous place she tied the strips of hide, of which she had a supply wound round her waist, beneath Stella's arms. Steep as the place was the baboons ascended it easily enough, springing from a knob of rock to the runk of the tree that grew on the edge of the crevasse. Hendrika followed them, holding the end of the hide rein in her teeth, one of the baboons hanging down from the tree to assist her ascent. It was while she was ascending that Stella bethought her of letting fall her handkerchief in the faint hope that some searcher might see it.

By this time Hendrika was on a tree, and grunting out orders to the baboons which clustered about Stella below. Suddenly these seized her and little Tota. who was in her arms, and lifted her from the ground. Then Hendrika above, aid ed by other baboons, put out all her great strength and pulled the two of them up the rock. Twice Stella swung heavily against the cliff. After the second blow she felt her senses going, and was consumed with terror lest she should drop Tota. But she managed to cling to her, and together they reached the cliff.

"From that time," Stella went on, "I remember no more till I woke to find myself in a gloomy cave resting on a bed of skins. My legs were bound, and Hendrika sat near me watching me, while round the edge of the cave peered the heads of those horrible baboons. Tota was still in my arms, and half dead from terror; her moans were pitiful to hear. I spoke to Hendrika, imploring her to release us; but either she had lost all understanding of human speech, or she pretended to have done so. All she would do was to caress me, and even kiss my hands and dress with extravagant signs of affection. As she did so, Tota shrunk away closer to me. This Hendrika saw and glared so savagely at the child that I feared lest she was going to kill her. I diverted her attention by making signs that I wanted water, and this she gave me in a wooden bowl. As you saw, the cave was evidently Hendrika's dwelling place. There are stores of fruit in it and some strips of dried flesh. She gave me some of the fruit and Tota a little, and I made Tota eat some. You can never know what I went through, Allan. I saw now that Hendrika was quite mad, and but little removed from the brutes to which she is akin, and over