

za, and I'll get you a lunch out here." The men threw down their baggage and wearily threw themselves into the rustic chairs Clara indicated, while she quickly cleared away the little table of her sewing implements, and covered it with a red cloth. She placed the dishes on it, and then said to the younger man—

"I do not happen to have any cooked meat in the house this afternoon, but there are some canned meats on a high shelf in the outside cellar, and if you will reach one can down, you can have it for lunch."

"Certainly," replied the young man, promptly rising to follow Clara. She led the way around the house. The outside door was open; they descended the steps, and she opened the door, saying—

"There, on that shelf in the farther corner, please."

The young man crossed the room to do her bidding, and Clara quickly shut and locked the door, flew up the steps, and shut and barred the outside door. After pausing to recover her breath and collect herself, she went around to the piazza.

"Well," she said, "if you will kindly hand down a jar of fruit from the closet shelf, in here, your lunch will be ready. I usually have father or Tom get things for me; it is quite inconvenient to be small," she added.

The man, without a thought of his companion, rose and followed his *petite* hostess. She opened a door leading from the dining room.

"There, please," she said, pointing to a tempting row of jars of home-canned fruit.

As he stepped in to reach the jar of peaches Clara pointed out, she hurriedly drew the door to, which fastened with a spring. As Clara hastened away, she heard her prisoner call—

"Wait a minute, Miss, I'm locked in."

"I guess you are," chuckled Clara to

herself, as she ran swiftly down the lane, to the field, arriving there breathless, but triumphant.

"Father! Quick!" she gasped. "Send Tom up to Juniper gulch; I've got—they're here; locked up. Send for the sheriff, or somebody."

Mr. Willis stopped his work, and let the water flow copiously in the wrong direction, as he leaned on his shovel and stared, in helpless bewilderment, at his pretty daughter, who, bare headed, flushed and panting, suggested an escaped lunatic, while her incomprehensible utterances confirmed the impression that "Clara had gone daft." Tom, who was working at a ditch a short distance away, was quicker of comprehension. He hurriedly placed a shovelful of dirt at the outlet, and jumped over two or three ditches, shouting—

"Do you mean the murderer, Cal?"

"Yes," she cried, "both of the men are here—came to get something to eat. I knew them in a minute, from Mr. Benton's description. One is in the cellar, and the other in the dining room closet."

"Tom," said Mr. Willis, beginning to comprehend, "saddle Firefly, and go up to camp as fast as he'll take you."

Tom threw his shovel over his shoulder and started on a run for the stable. Mr. Willis stopped to call to his man—

"Jake, get the water on that further spot there, and then come up to the house. We may need you."

Then Clara and her father walked quickly up to the house, arriving there just as Tom dashed by at break-neck speed. As they entered the house, a knock was heard on the closet door, and a voice cried—

"You've come at last: do let me out; it's stifling in here."

"It's hotter where you're going, I reckon," retorted Mr. Willis, grimly, as he sat down, prepared to watch that door until somebody came from the gulch.