

if all in his life worth having was fading away from him.

"Is there no compensation?" she sobbed, full of womanly pity and love.

"When you have gone away—

none," he answered simply.

She lifted her face. Her eyes met his own.

"I shall not go away," she said, and buried her face upon his shoulder.

ADVENTURING WITH A SOLDIER OF FORTUNE

(This is the third of a series of narratives related to Fred L. Boalt, our special correspondent, by Aleck McNab, a soldier of fortune, now living in Seattle, Wash.)

BY FRED L. BOALT

Seattle, Wash., April 1.—"I saw a fight last night (said Aleck McNab). The victor strode away beating his chest with a hairy fist. He reminded me of my friend, the Missing Link.

"I doubt if you have ever seen a gorilla.

"I shot a gorilla once, in self-defense. He stood 6 feet 4 and weighed 450 pounds.

"Many's the time I've met them in the forest, striding man-fashion on their hind legs, with their wife bringing up the rear. Maybe there will be a baby or two. Oh, the man-gorilla is the lord of his family. A moral chap, he takes one wife and keeps her a lifetime.

"And under his left arm is tucked a stout cudgel when attack is feared. At other times he gives the stick to the wife to carry. And if she loiters on the way, or is inattentive to her babies, he will turn on her and box her ears. You know married men who are like that.

"But I was going to tell you about a fight. I was with Maj. Powell-Cotton's research expedition in Central Africa in 1907. We were seeking specimens for the Kensington museum, London. We had come to the Zambesi river.

"I was sitting by the bank with my back to the bole of a tree, resting. Looking across the river, I saw, opposite and sitting exactly as I was, a gorilla, his cudgel across his knees.

"I threw up my rifle to take a shot, but Maj. Powell-Cotton said:

"Don't shoot! Watch."

"We watched. The gorilla seemed half asleep, but his half-shut eyes were on the river. The surface of the water rippled. We saw the nose of an alligator. The jungle is cruel, my friend, and only the fit survive.

"The alligator was hungry, though no such motive inspired that excellent actor, the Missing Link, who lives on berries, as he watched the enemy through half-shut eyes.

"When the alligator was close to the shore, the cudgel slipped from the gorilla's knees and he leaped.

"Twisting in mid-air, he came down in shallow water astride the alligator's back. With hind legs gripping the 'gator as a jockey grips his mount, the gorilla—mark you, he was bigger than Jack Johnson and many times more muscular—leaned forward above those awful jaws, caught them in his hands and wrenched them wide apart. We could hear the snapping of bones across the river.

"The gorilla dragged the 'gator, hors de combat, but not dead, to the bank, seized his cudgel, and belabored that tough and armored head until life was extinct.

"When the alligator was dead, the gorilla called his wife and baby, who had been hiding in the bush, spoke to them, tucked his cudgel under his arm, and with his family at his heels, strode off through the forest.

"As he walked, he beat his great chest with hairy paws. The booming blows reached us, more and more faintly, long after the Missing Link was lost to view in the forest gloom."