

CLASSICS TO GO  
THE RECIPE  
FOR DIAMONDS



CHARLES JOHN CUTCLIFFE WRIGHT HYNÉ

# **The Recipe For Diamonds**

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# CHAPTER I.

## BIG GAME.

... The first shot was just a rib too far back, and though it staggered him, he didn't stop to it. Out tinkled cartridge number one and in went a second, and "*cluck*" said the breech-block. And then as he slewed round, I got the next bullet home, bang behind the shoulder. That did it. He tucked down his long Roman nose, and went heels over tip like a shot rabbit; and when a big elk that stands seventeen hands at the withers plays that trick, I tell you it shows a new hand something he hadn't much idea of before.

We ran up eagerly enough. "*Meget stor bock*," shouted Ulus, and whipped out his knife, and proceeded to do the offices, being filled with strong glee, which he imparted to the driving rain, the swishing trees, and my dripping self.

And, by Jove, his highness was a beauty too! Antlers in velvet, of course, as is the fashion with all Norwegian deer at this time of year; but there were eight points on each, and they've got the most approved "impudent" downward curve. What with no *rype* and few trout, I'd been feeling rather down on my luck all these long weeks till now; but this big elk turned the scale. Glad I came.

September nights drop down early here, and day was getting on, so we hurried up with the work, and loitered not for tempting admiration. Off came the coarse-haired pelt, pull by pull; and away dropped head and neck, after a haggle through sinew and vertebræ; and then we got heavy stones and built in the meat securely, lest the lynxes should thieve the lot. It all took time, and meanwhile the weather

worsened steadily. The rain was snorting down in heavy squalls, and often there were crashes from amongst the pines. But the *stor bock's* trophies repaid one for these things.

At last we got through the obsequies, shouldered the spoils between us, and started.

It was slow passage. On this primæval ground one is so constantly being baulked. There are so many knotted jungles of splintered rock, such frequent swamps, so much fallen timber. And, moreover, the watercourses and torrents were all new-bloated with the rain, so that we had to cast about for fords, and then to grip one another at stiff arm's length, so as not to get swept adrift whilst wading amongst the eddying boulders. And when at last we did come to the lake, we saw there in the gray dusk a thing which caused Ulu to offer up hot words in Norsk, which were not words of prayer.

To remind you again of where we were:—

Some eight miles distant in crow-flight was the salt-water fjord. From it two mountain walls sprout out towards the north. At first the valley between these is filled with land which is mostly forest. Then comes a lake, hemmed by two precipices. Then another two-mile-wide strip of forest. Then another lake, with shiny granite walls running up sheer two thousand feet, so that of the fosses which jump in cream over the brinks above, only the stouter ones reach more than half-way down.

We were on the farther side of this last sheet of water, and across it lay our only practicable way to the coast—to home, dinner, dry things, and other matters longed for. And on this lake a lake-sea was running, short, quick, and steep, which

is the wettest of all seas for small craft to tackle. The boat which had carried us up was one of those *retroussé*-nosed punts peculiar to the country, the very worst possible breed of craft for the weather. She would not face it for thirty seconds. Her turn-up snout would fall off the moment we left the shingle, she would fill and swamp, and we should be left a swim without having in any degree furthered our cause. Wherefore I also bowed to the inevitable, but like Ulus I said things. There was no chance of reaching the abodes of men by any other route. We were booked till the gale chose to ease—at any rate till morning; and for myself, I contemplated a moist bivouac under streaming Jove, with one clammy elk-skin for a joint coverlet.

But luckily Ulus was a man of the land besides being a vagrant hunter. He led back into the forest. A score of yards from the margin, in an overgrown clearing, was an abandoned *saeter* hut. It was in none of the best of repair, was seven feet square inside, and held five feet of head-room under the roof-tree. It was about half filled with dried birch-bark, piled up against the farther end. It also contained a rude wooden trough and ball for pounding up coffee, three sections of pine-stem for seats, and a rusted old stove which had not been worth carrying away.

Four words made a division of labour. Ulus set off to revisit the *stor bock*, Se going with him in case there should be any doubt about the track. It was my task to create a blaze with the dry, spluttering birch-bark, and collect a stack of solider fuel to feed it with. Afterwards I went and stopped the more obvious gaps in the roof with turf and logs, and by the time these things were done hunter and hound had returned. Then we wrung the supersaturation of wet from our clothes, and Se had a centrifugal shake; and so prepared, we went inside. Thanks to wasteful use of an absent person's store of

birch-bark, the place was warm as an oven. Such an atmosphere was grateful and comforting. Se indeed revelled in the heat too much at first, and pressing over near its source, thrust out a moist black nose, and got the full effect. There followed a hiss and a howl, and a sulky retreat to the farther angle. Then we two bipeds hacked off gobbets from the venison, and taking us sharpened sticks, roasted and charred and toasted the meat in the doorway of the stove and over the gap in its lid. And in time we made a satisfying meal, though the courses straggled, and their texture was savage. And so on to pipes, and water boiled in a pewter flask-cup with whisky added, whilst the injured Se champed over juicy rib-bones in his corner.

The hum and crackle from the stove, the grinding of the gray dog's teeth, the bumping and hissing of the gale outside, the boom of the cascades at the precipices, made up most of the sounds for that evening. Of chat there was a paucity. My knowledge of Norsk extends to few parts of speech beyond the common noun; and Ulus, ignorant person that he is, has no Sassenach: pantomime makes our usual phrase-book. Talk under these circumstances is a strain, and we were too tired for unnecessary athletics. So we smoked, and pondered over the slaying of the great deer.

In a while we discarded the stump-stools and trundled them aside. A bunk ran along the farther side of the hut where the bark had been stowed, but I had my doubts about its vacancy, and surrendered it to Ulus. His hide is tough; he had no qualms. I spread for myself a spring mattress of birch-bark upon the floor. Se annexed the clammy skin. And so we were all satisfied.

One does not wind up watches in these regions, and as time is arbitrarily marked off by the cries of the gastric juices, I cannot tell you how the hours were reckoned up that evening. I think we two humans verged into a semi-torpid condition after that barbaric meal. Repletion, heat, and fatigue were too strong a combination for complete wakefulness; and though perhaps not exactly asleep, we were, like hibernating animals, very dully conscious of passing events. Se's condition was inscrutable. His eyes were closed, but that is no criterion. He may have been asleep. But yet he possessed certain senses more keenly active than ours. As evidence of this, when the night had worn on to a tolerable age, we heard him give a growl in *crescendo*, and then a short yap.

Se in general is undemonstrative to a degree. Hence the short culminating bark, which might have been overlooked if emanating from another dog, in his case commanded attention.

I rose on an elbow, but could hear no new sound except the soft rustle of Ulus's wet clothes. He was moving too. There was a pause. Presently he whispered "*Bjorn*," and I saw in the stove's faint glow the butt of the Martini steal across to me.

You can lay your life to it I was awake enough then. What sportsman in Norway would not tingle with delight at the chance of getting a bear? Ulus had slipped a thong round Se's throat, and that wily hound was mute. He was as keen on *bjorn* as either of us, and being gray, and vastly experienced, he knew better than to bay or otherwise create a disturbance.

"*Patron?*" whispered Ulus.

I loaded cautiously, not sending the lever quite home, so as to avoid a click, and nodded. Then we slipped our knife-sheaths round to the hip—for a shot in the dark is apt to wound only and cause a red-mouthed charge—and then the door was opened.

We stooped and went outside. The rain was tumbling in sheets; the night was dark as the pit, and very noisy; we could make out nothing. Se strained forward in the leash, neck thrust out, nose on high, up wind towards the lake shore. As we neared the edge of the clearing a falling branch struck me across the face. The pine-needles stung, and I stopped, blinded for the moment. Then Ulus gripped my shoulder and I wiped the tears away, and saw dimly a dark shape coming out of the trees. The Martini swung up, and I squinted along the barrel. A mountain-ash was in the line of fire, swishing, swaying, so that it was impossible to aim; but the animal was coming along bravely—had not seen us probably—and so I determined to hold the shot till I could make sure.

The beast came nearer, dodging amongst the stems.

Suddenly, as it got into an opener space, I noted that it was erect. This surprised me, for I had heard that bears never reared on to their hind feet till wounded. Still you can bet that I intended to shoot first and inquire afterwards.

But just at that moment Ulus screamed "*Nei bjorn,*" and hitting up the rifle barrel, brought my finger sufficiently hard on the hair trigger to cause explosion. The shot went Lord knows where. I swore, and when the echoes had finished bellowing, I heard the bear swearing too. Then I began to sweat, for it dawned upon me that I had been within an ace of deliberately potting a man.



Ulus also used powerful language, and by letting drop the word "*Finne*," gave me to understand that he supposed the intruder to be a Laplander; but it seemed to me that the shape that loomed through the trees was too big for one of those dwarfish aborigines. And, moreover, although I only caught the import of the stranger's words by tone and not by literal meaning, I could have taken affidavit that none of them were Norsk.

However, we did not stay in ignorance long. Before the powder smoke had been all driven away by the rain the intruder was out of the trees, and had pulled up in front of us, chuckling. Then—"Hallo! an Englishman? How we islanders do get to out-of-the-way chinks of the globe!"

He paused, and I began to apologize—to say how sorry I was, and work up a neat speech generally—when he cut me short.

"Nearly sent me to the happy hunting grounds, sir? Well, perhaps so, p'raps not. I've seen men missed at shorter rise."

I was a bit piqued at this, and said something about being pretty useful with a rifle.

He laughed again. "We won't quarrel over it, sir, anyway. I expect we're both of us satisfied as it is. My hide would have been no use to you; and for myself, I'm quite content to wear it a bit longer. It fits tolerably enough. But you've a camp somewhere hereaway, haven't you? I thought I caught the gleam of a flying spark from down by the shingle yonder. That's what brought me up."

I explained how we had got pinned in by the gale, and the quartette of us went back to the *saeter* hut. The newcomer

feasted there off elk-venison (contriving to cook it, I noticed, much more cannily than we had done, though with exactly the same appliances), and between whiles he was told of the chase of the *meget stor bock*—the tracking, the view, and the place of the bullet wounds. Afterwards, when we got to pipes and the last drainings of the grog, he explained his presence.

"I expect the wandering Englishman is about as scarce up here as the hoopoo, even when he's got a rifle or a rod in his fist; and as I've neither the one nor the other, I must be very much of a *rara avis*, and quite the sort of animal to shoot on sight. Fact is, I was round on the fjord there with my boat, and from what my eyes showed me, and from what a local *topografisk* chart told, the country on the norrard side was much as God stuck it together. I wanted to see a strip of that sort up here, so I fixed a rendezvous and slipped ashore. As it turned out, the map is a pretty bad one, and I lost time in *culs-de-sac*. Finally came this lake with the steep flanks. I couldn't see to prick out another course, and I was just casting about for a rock that held a dry lee when I saw your light. And now, as I hear you chaps yawning and as I'm about spun out, 'twouldn't be a bad notion to turn in."

## **CHAPTER II.**

### **HALCYONII DIES.**

It is a tolerably insane amusement for a foreigner to go tramping over wild fields and valleys in Northern Norway with no other guide than the thing they call an ordnance map and a bit of a pocket-compass. And to do the same without intent to slay the beasts, the birds, or the fish of the country seems, to my way of thinking, even more mad still. Perhaps I am peculiarly constituted, but that's the way it strikes me personally. So I was rather curious to know what make of man it was that did these things.

Overnight I had seen little of him that was not heavily shadowed. The stranger preferred to do his own cooking, saying that he was used to it, and had elected to heat his meat at the doorway of the stove. Through this gap little radiance escaped. The only matters illuminated were the slices of venison, the toasting-splinter, and the hands that held it alternately. These last, being the solitary things one's eyes could make out, naturally were glanced over more than once. They were slightly above the medium size for hands, and long in proportion to their breadth. The fingers were tapered like a woman's. The nails were filbert-shaped, and grimy with recent climbing. The palms were hard. The knuckle-side was very brown, and showed the tendons prominently. They were those lean, nervous sort of hands which you find out at times can grip like thumbscrews.

My couch was an uneasy one, and I awoke early. The visitor was snoring away on the log-floor, looking comfortable and contented.

He was a man of about two-and-thirty, dark, tall, and well-built. His clothes were those of the merchant seamen—that is, they smacked in no degree whatever of the sea. Indeed, the only outward things which connected him with the water were certain weather stains. He wore a moustache cropped somewhat over close, and the teeth then showing beneath it, though white, were chaotic; and, moreover, there was the purple ridge of a scar running from the corner of his mouth which might advantageously have been hidden. A beard also would have become him, for his chin verged slightly to the cut-away type, and a three-days' stubble looks merely unkempt. He would never have been a beauty, but groomed up he would have made a very passable appearance amongst other men, although the scar near his mouth, and another similar emblem of roughness over the opposite eye, would have made him a trifle remarkable.

After staring there dully for pretty nearly an hour, it began to dawn upon me that I had seen this man before somewhere, though under what circumstances I could not for the life of me remember. That his outward person was that of the ordinary deck-hand ashore went for nothing. Besides, he had spoken overnight of "my boat." That evidently meant yacht, and might stand for anything from an eight-hundred ton steamer downwards.

The more I puzzled over his identity the less hope I seemed to have of guessing it.

At last he woke, yawned, stretched, and sat up. Then he looked at me and whistled. Then, "Slidey Methuen, by all that's odd! Fancy stumbling across you here!"

Still I couldn't put a name to the man, and after a bit of hesitation told him so bluntly.

He laughed, and said he didn't wonder at it. It was only eight years since last we had met, but in that time he had been about the world a good deal, and, as he himself expressed it, "got most of the old landmarks ground off his face, and new ones rubbed in." He was Michael Cospatric.

I had to take his word for it. There didn't seem to be a trace left of the man I had known at Cambridge, either of manner or outward form. However, Cospatric of C—— he was, fast enough; and after the manner of 'Varsity men, we started on to "shop" there and then, and had the old days over again in review.

We had both been of the same year, and although in a small college that argues some knowledge of one another, we were by no means in the same set. In fact, up there Cospatric had been rather an anomaly: a man in no clique, a man without a nickname, a man distinguished only by the halo of his exit. He came up, one of a bunch of fifty-two undergraduates, joined all the clubs, was tubbed, rowed four at the end of his first October term in a losing junior trial eight, and was promptly shelved. He was never in evidence anywhere, but was reported to be a subscriber of Rolandi's, and to spend his time reading novels in foreign tongues. As he seldom kept either lectures or chapels, a chronic gating fostered this occupation. His second October he again navigated the Cam in a junior trial. He lugged with the arms incurably and swung like a corkscrew, but we had five trials on that term, and men were wanted to fill them. So he rowed and raced, and again helped his crew to lose, and then was shelved as hopeless. He was a man of no account. Not three men, out of his own year, knew him by name.

At the beginning of his second Easter term he began to distinguish himself. Of all places, he started to do this at the

Union—an institution few of us C— men belonged to. There was a debate upon something connected with Education. An unknown person got up and savagely attacked existing methods as being useless, impracticable, and in the interests of the teacher and not of the taught. "Of what use to society is a College fellow?" he asked, and answering, "Of none, except to reproduce his species," backed up his case with such cleverness that a majority grew out of nothing. Johnians howled; Trinity men and Hall men cheered with delight; Non-Colls hissed and made interruptions; and as the ragged-gowned crowd trooped out, a universal cry went up of, "Who the devil is he?"

We undergraduates at C— were not much moved by this exploit, because, as I have hinted, the Union was not in our line. We rowed and danced and drove tandem; never preached, except to election mobs. We quite agreed with Cospatric that Classics and Mathematics, and Natural Science as she is taught at Cambridge, are one and all of them useless burdens, not worth the gathering; but we were not prepared to say with him that we hungered after the acquisition of French, German, Spanish, Norsk, and Italian, or eke Lingua Franca or Japanese.

The higher authorities saw the matter in a different light. Master and fellows looked upon Mr. Cospatric as a dangerous heretic—much, in fact, as Urban VIII. and his cardinals regarded Galileo—and resolved to make him recant. The senior tutor was chosen as their instrument. He was an official with what were described as "little ways of his own." He hauled Cospatric. Union speech and revolutionary sentiments were not referred to. The delinquent was (amid a cacophony of "Hems") accused, on the strength of coming up Chapel with surplice unbuttoned, of being inebriated within the walls of a sacred edifice. He

was not allowed to speak a word in his own defence. He was gated for a week at eight, and coughed out of the room.

An eminently steady man, and conscious of being at the moment in question sober as an archangel, the iron of the accusation and punishment entered into his soul. For gatings as a general thing he cared not one jot. He had lived his year and a half in an atmosphere of them. Whether free or chained, he had always stayed in his rooms after hall, preferring the green-labelled books to any other evening companionship.

But to this present confinement, a piece of obviously rank injustice, he determined not to submit; and in consequence spent a dreary evening parading the streets, not arriving back till close upon twelve.

He kept in College. The porter sent up his name. He was again hauled, and again, without being allowed to say a word in his own defence, gated for the remainder of the term, and given to understand that he would be sent down for good if he cut a single gate.

The sentence was barbarous. A call at the Lodge and a patient explanation to the Master would probably have set matters right. But Cospatric was not the man such a course would occur to. Some long-slumbering demon rose within him, and he indulged heavily in College Audit in hall. Afterwards he came to my rooms, where there was a conclave of some sort going on, and made a statement. It was his first recorded appearance in any one's quarters but his own, and his first recorded look of excitement, and consequently his words were listened to. He did not stay long. He told us in forcible language that as the College authorities had seen fit to take it out of him, he intended to

do the like by them, and we might form ourselves into umpires of the proceedings. Then he departed, and next morning joined a knot of us who were gazing with admiration at the stone angels beside the clock, who, during the hours of darkness, had been helmeted with obscene earthenware. No ladder in the College could reach that decorated statuary, and as the porter did not see fit to risk *his* neck over such a ghastly climb, decorated they stayed till mid-day, and our court teemed with ribald undergraduates.

The succeeding morning there was another raree-show. The College skeleton—framework of a long-passed don, so tradition stated—had been, by help of a screwdriver and patience, untombed from its dusty resting-place at the top of the Hall staircase. It had been dressed in some flashy Scotch tweeds well known as belonging to the junior tutor, and perched astride of the weather-cock. Again the position was impregnable, and again the trophy drew delighted crowds till long past mid-day.

And so one puerile outrage succeeded another, scarcely a day passing without some new triumph of the kind to report. Cospatric leaped at one bound into a public character. Of course every soul in the place knew that he was at the bottom of it all—the dons getting the news through the gyps—but no one in authority was smart enough to bring anything home to him. He even took to keeping lectures and chapels, which piece of pharisaism put, to our mind then, the finishing touch of this comedy of revenge.

It all seems a great piece of foolery when one looks back, but at the time we thought it high-minded and justifiable rebellion. We assembled in the court, and cheered after the senior tutor had been three parts smothered in his bed by a



red-pepper squib dropped down the chimney; and on the morning after the Master's laundry was raided, and the linen (belonging to both sexes) distributed amongst the crows' nests in the avenue, I think special trains must have been running into Cambridge, so thick was the throng of sight-seers.

There is no doubt about it that Cospatric came to be a young man of much renown in those days.

Had he been a popular person beforehand, far-seeing friends would have advised him to retire on his laurels after, say, the first half-dozen exploits. But as it was, there was no one amongst the newly-formed acquaintances sufficiently interested in the hero of the moment to forgo his own personal anticipations of enjoyment. The man was egged on unthinkingly, although a moment's thought must have pointed to a certain deluge ahead.

And that deluge came, as usual, from an unlooked-for quarter.

Cospatric, in all his sober senses, was helping an overcome roisterer across the court late at night. The junior tutor arrived, and ordered Cospatric to his rooms. Cospatric went obediently, waited in the shadow of an archway, and returned to the overcome one. Enter once more the junior tutor; nothing said to the roisterer; Cospatric to pay an official call at twelve-thirty on the morrow. There is no use giving detail. They had a College meeting next day, and sent him down for an offence that was absolutely trivial; and every soul in the College, the culprit included, saw the justice of the injustice.

He came down the steps from the Combination room in triumph, and we chaired him round the court in a bath,

some hundred and twenty men forming in procession behind, and singing an idiotic march-song from a current burlesque. Then we went to his rooms, and he sat on two tables, one above the other, with a tea-cosy on his head, and held an auction of his effects, which those of us who happened to possess any ready cash bought up at long figures. He had no plans for the future, so we stuck a false moustache on him, corked his eyebrows, and thus disguised kept him smuggled in our rooms for ten days, during which time Bacchus created Babel. And then we had him photographed in various attitudes—singly, and surrounded by groups of admirers—and then we went out with him to the station, saw him in a train for Liverpool Street, and—that's all. He was never viewed or heard of again. His period of brilliance up there was very comet-like.

## **CHAPTER III.**

### **VAGABOND.**

"Hysterical madness" was the definition Cospatric clapped on to that culminating episode of his Cambridge life; "but," he added, with a chuckle, "I did enjoy myself whilst the fun lasted. That's just typical of the particular fool I am. Nature intended me for clown in a third-rate travelling circus. The father made up his mind I was to be a big thing in the lawyering way. The two clashed, and the present state of affairs is the result. If some far-seeing guardian could only have averaged matters, I might have turned out very differently. I'd have made a good courier, for instance, if such an animal had been in demand nowadays; or a continental drummer, if the commercial part of the work could have been left out; or even a passable navy officer. As it is, I'm nothing; I'm no mortal good to anybody: and I have a very tolerable time of it. Look, that's my boat."

We had worked our way down past the intervening barriers of water and wood, and were walking on the fjord shore. Rounding a bluff, we had suddenly opened out a small cutter of some six-and-twenty or thirty tons, riding to her anchor in the mouth of the river. One concluded that she was a yacht, as she was flush-decked, and had a skylight instead of a cargo-hatch amidships; but her lines were a good deal of the dray-horse type, and as for smartness, she did not know the meaning of the word. I expect traces of this opinion showed in my face, for Cospatric saw fit to explain.