

"That's true enough, Gus Jackson," said Isaacs, "I had a friend, a most industrious young man, who insured his goods for five hundred pounds, and although he placed little heaps of shavings lighted all over the floors, and poured gallons of turpentine down the walls, the firemen put his blaze out in ten minutes."

"No good trying that," repeated Jackson. "I think I had better keep that room where she lies locked up, give a notice in the saloon that in consequence of the tables wanting re-covering and cushioning, we shan't open for a day or two; go down to Milton and get Macfarlane's money, and get off to America as fast as I can go."

And so this plan was agreed upon, and the Jews departed.

In a few hours the saloon was filled with visitors. Jackson was rallied again and again by his patrons on his seediness. Every now and then he went to listen at the door where the corpse lay, eagerly hoping to hear the faintest movement inside. Had a thousand pounds depended upon the effort, he dared not have entered the chamber. At every fresh entrance into the billiard room his craven heart sunk deeper into despair. At last a wild delirium of panic-fright seized him, and as soon as he could prevail upon all to go away, he collected some little valuables, locked up the house, called a cab, and drove to the Euston station. Depositing in the cloak-room his luggage, he proceeded to the West-end, where in wild dissipation he endeavoured to drown the terrible phantom that drove him to a frenzied madness.

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Harold on the eventful day was mournfully prepared to receive his visitors.

He was not alone this time, for he had in his hour of bitterness confided the whole of his terrible secret to his friend, Mr. Loder, who sat with him anxiously awaiting the catastrophe.

It came at last.

Jackson and the Jews were somewhat confounded to find a second person present to receive them. The former then, with an air of consummate impudence, held out his hand to Harold, and jauntingly hoped he was well. Harold, indignantly, motioned them to seats, and this being accomplished, he bade them instantly state their business.

"Is the reverend party confidential?" asked Jackson, in no way abashed by the coldness of his reception.

"He is my friend, and perfectly aware of all the incidents of this sad affair. To save you the trouble of recapitulation I will then myself proceed to business."

"Very good. Be quiet, Gus," said Abrahams.

"You see, sir," said Jackson, turning to Mr. Loder, "my friend, Mr. Abrahams was applied to by Mr. Macfarlane, in his father's lifetime, for a loan on a deed of assignment on some houses, and not being able to advance the money himself, he persuaded his friend, the gentleman sitting there, to oblige him. He agreed, and now he has made the discovery that the signatures of the deed were forgeries."

"And what have you got to do with this?" demanded the clergyman.