

## DO I LOVE THEE?

"Do I love thee?"  
Ask of the bee  
If it loves not the flow'rs of spring;  
Ask of the bird  
If it loves not to fly and sing;  
The answer they return to thee—  
Is mine.  
And thine.  
Marie.

"Do I love thee?"  
Ask of the sea  
If it loves not the wind's shrill hiss;  
Ask of the rose  
If it loves not the dew-drop's kiss;  
The answer they return to thee—  
Is mine.  
And thine.  
Marie.

"Do I love thee?"  
Ask not of thee.  
Look in my eyes and read love there;  
List to my heart,  
And hear it beat in sad despair;  
The answer they return to thee—  
Is mine.  
And thine.  
Marie.

A. H. ISLER.

## A STRANGE TELEGRAM.

BY CLARENCE M. BOUTELLE.

I, Roscoe Anthon, am a bookseller. My friend, Arnold Percy, is cashier in a bank. Our friendship dates back to boyhood, and will last as long as life does. We are not very old; I am thirty, and he is two years younger. We are both well-to-do in the world. There is scarcely a scheme for the material advancement of the city in which we live in which we have not a direct money interest. We each own a little—not very much—of the stock of the bank in which my friend holds a position. This is our oldest venture, and it pays well. We each own stock—more this time—in the new waterworks and pumping machinery by which the city is supplied with water. We are quiet and steady in our habits. I have the reputation of being a good business man—in books; he—in money.

But most men have some enthusiasms outside of business. We have. In fact, we have two. And they are psychology and electricity. We room in the same house, on the same floor, and on exactly opposite sides of the hall. My room is open to him at any time, and his is to me. But in the interest of electrical science we have each a telegraphic instrument of the most costly kind on our respective tables and a "line" between our rooms. Besides this we have telephonic communication. A queer freak, you say. So be it. We enjoy it, and can afford it and we have it.

Rare books, old and new, which treat of either electrical or psychological questions find their way to our tables and are read and discussed.

We amuse ourselves for hours together with our instruments. Then we will meet in the room of one or the other to read, to smoke, to talk, and to—yes, let me confess it—to write. For we are each at work on a book. Mine is not a bookseller's catalogue. It is not a guide to read or study. I will confess again; it is a book on dreams. And Arnold Percy, who will never write anything remarkable on finance, is making a very readable book on telegraphic communication.

We are too good friends to be selfish. Arnold will talk an entire evening on whatever pleases me best. He records his dreams for me, and helps explain them. That is, he does this when he has any dreams. We are both too sound sleepers to dream much. I, on the other hand, help him in every way in my power.

In the preface of my book there are two fundamental statements which I will copy here. They are as follows:

"It may help in our study of dreams to assert that they are the results of definite, even if not understood, causes, and that the study of a dream should include the study of the day before the night during which the dream occurs.

"As it is difficult to tell just when sleep (and consequently dreaming) begins and ends, we should study all events which are closely connected with a dream in the light of the science of dreams."

I will commence, then, with the morning of a certain day, and relate, in considerable detail, some of the events of that day. Arnold had told me the night before that he should rise early to write a few pages in his book. We had retired late, and had left our doors open in order to get more air during the hot night than was otherwise possible.

I opened my eyes just before daylight. In the room objects which were lighted from the window alone were in obscurity. But a flood of gaslight poured in at my open door from the room in which my friend was hard at work.

"Up with the birds, aren't you?" said I. And certainly the birds were singing in a most pleasant manner outside.

"Hold on. I want to try an experiment. Look towards the door."

"All right."

From my place in bed I could not see into Arnold's room, but as I looked the decrease in brightness showed me that he had turned his gas almost, but not quite, out. He turned it on again, then almost out, and so on; sometimes slowly, sometimes quickly, the light would be almost extinguished. I saw in a moment, although the idea was a new one to me; calling a slow cutting off of the gas a dash, and quick one a dot, my friend was saying to me: "Good-morning, my dear friend, Roscoe."

I answered him by a series of raps on the wall. He went on with his writing. I rose and dressed.

I don't remember much about breakfast, but after breakfast we walked down to the new pumping works. We examined the system quite thoroughly, learned how "fire pressure"—that is, the pressure when the hydrants are used for fire purposes—could be maintained, and returned to the work of the day with an increased idea of the value of the interest we had in the waterworks.

My day was a busy one. Arnold's day was a busy one. My day was quite like other days, except in one or two particulars. I had a large quantity of books come by express, and so attended to them instead of going home to dinner. We lived far out on the edge of the city, and I could not spare the time to go.

Arnold's day was quite like other days, too, as I have learned since. He sent me a note from the bank after his return from dinner, saying that he would come to the bookstore after banking hours—that is, after three o'clock, and asking me if I could possibly leave my work in the hands of my clerks and take a drive with him into the country. I sent back word that I would go. I was glad he was coming for me, for the bank was a long distance from my store and the day was terribly hot.

At three o'clock I was ready, but Arnold did not come. At four he sent another note:

"A mistake of a few cents somewhere is giving us lots of trouble. I shall let the rest go in a little time, but I must stay until the books are all right. Go without me."

I sent one of the clerks out for a carriage, and I drove out into the country. I got away from the hot air of the city. I saw the green grass, and the pure water, and the flowers, and the blue sky. But I was too busy thinking to enjoy them much. I was running over in my mind the points which I intended to include in the next two or three chapters of my book.

I returned to the city at seven o'clock, and saw one of those unfortunate things occur which are all too frequent in large cities. A large man, with a very peculiar face, which I need not stop to describe, stood on a street corner. Another man came up. Words passed between them. The large man knocked the other man down, and ran away just as the police arrived.

A window flew up, and some one inside (a woman I judged, although the curtains hid all but the hands) stood with hands tightly clasped for a moment. Then, beating them up and down in the air in a frantic manner for a few seconds, the person disappeared with a shrill cry of "Help! Murder!"

It wasn't murder, though. The man was senseless for a few minutes, but before I drove on he was well enough to walk away.

I went home. Arnold had not arrived yet. I ate my supper, went to my room, and spent the early evening writing in my book. I remember that I wrote on the remarkable sensibility of the ear in some dreams, and on the interpretation of a series of dreams. Arnold had not returned when I retired about midnight. It is, perhaps, no wonder I dreamed. I remember looking out on the hot sultry night. I remember saying to myself that it would rain soon. I remember closing my window to guard against the coming storm. To help cool the room, I opened the watercock. I remember looking at my watch, which pointed to five minutes to twelve, and I am certain of nothing more, save the getting into bed, until I awoke again. To be sure, it seems as though I laid for a time in luxury of perfect restfulness, and then sank slowly asleep. But as my dream was of something happening in bed, I shall not attempt to say when it began.

I thought it was morning. I opened my eyes. I wondered why the birds were not singing. My door slowly opened. A flood of light poured in. It lessened and brightened, and I read from the flashes, "Help! murder!"

I awoke to find my door shut, no trace of there having been any gas lighted; and I saw that the storm was almost upon us. The thunder could not be heard yet, but the lightning was very vivid. With such flashes lighting my room at short intervals, I found no difficulty in accounting for my dream. My watch pointed to just twelve.

I left again, and I had another dream. There was a knock at my door. I opened it (in my dream) and found a note from my friend. It seemed as though I left my bed to go to the door; but once I was at the door, it was at the door of my store. It seemed to be bright as day in the store, but dark night outside. Some of the darkness of the night seemed to drift in around me as I stood in the open door and read the note which the messenger had brought me. The note was an exact copy of the one which I had really received from my friend that day when he made the appointment for the ride into the country. I said to the messenger:

"But he's being murdered! He wants help! I'll go to the bank."

I sent for a carriage and drove to the bank. The shutters were closed in front, but a light shone out of a window on the side which opened on a narrow passage between the bank and an empty building next to it. I knew this window opened from the room in which my friend would work if at the bank at night. I passed up the narrow passage, when suddenly a hand was thrust from the window. I recognized the cuff button as belonging to my friend. Up and down, up and down, now with a long sweeping motion, now quick and sharp. And again the silent message was, "Help! murder!"

I sprang down the passage to the front of the bank to call the driver, and when I looked up to speak to him I saw the face of the man who had struck down the one at the street corner that afternoon. And when he saw me he lashed his horses into a run and went down the street with a rush over the pavement that made a noise like thunder.

Yes, a noise like thunder. For I awoke then, and awoke with the noise of real thunder from the storm outside sounding in my ears.

I lighted my gas, went to the watercock at my washstand and took a drink of water. I was not frightened. I was not more than startled. I studied my dream for a minute; certainly not more than two. Anxiety for my friend—needless, though natural; the blow I had seen given; the hands I had seen at the window; the situation of things at the bank; it was certainly an easy dream to explain.

I looked out toward the bank, a good three miles from where I stood, and sent out a wish for the safety of my loved friend.

The storm was coming. Great gusts of wind roared around the house. The darkness was intense. I took another drink, thought of my stock in the waterworks, thought that there might not be another watercock open in the whole great city at that time, and that the great pumps might be working for me alone in the silence of the night. I did not shut off the water, but looked at my watch, which indicated ten minutes past twelve, and then got into bed again without turning out the gas.

I remember thinking of some of the many incidents with which I meant to fortify my position and arguments with reference to the increased acuteness of the sense of hearing during some dreams. Then I slept, and dreamed again. I dreamed I stood in the pumping works and watched the ponderous machinery move. Only there was no regularity now, as there had been in the daytime. The great piston which I watched would make now a long sweeping stroke, and again a stroke like a flash of light. And the long and short strokes, translated into dashes and dots, said over and over, and over again, "Help! Murder! Help! Murder! Help! Murder!"

I could see the movement as I had seen the flashes of light, and as I had seen Arnold's hand, but this time I could hear it, too. A murmur or pulse, not unlike the noise made by a steam-engine running almost silently, now long, now short, saying to the ear what the graceful movements of the piston said to the eye: "Help! Murder!"

I started wide awake in a moment. I hope no one will be cruel enough to joke when I say that I seemed to be all ears. It was certainly no joking matter.

The storm had come at last, and was dashing in fury against the window and wall. I put the real dash of the rain for the movement of the piston I had heard in my dream.

But I heard a dozen mice in the wainscot in different parts of the house. I had not heard them before, and the noise of the storm seemed deafening. Over in the next street I heard a man walking. I could not have heard him on a quiet day. Despite the thick walls between, I heard something fall in the next house. And above the noise of the storm—no, above it would be wrong—but in spite of the noise of the awful tempest there was a sound like a breath—a sob—or the thought of a sob—intangible almost, dreamlike almost, but real for all that. Now like a memory of a long-drawn breath, now like a breath caught quickly, it pulsed on and on. I was never wider awake in my life. My mind was never keener. But I could hear, with my waking ears this time, the pulses and puffs which spelled "Help! Murder!"

For one terrible moment my heart seemed to stand still. After that I never failed in courage and sense during the whole of that terrible night.

I sprang from bed and dressed with a rapidity of which I should not have thought myself capable, and that terrible message was repeating itself in my ears all the time. I dropped my revolver into my pocket, took my heavy cane, put on my water-proof coat, shut off the water from the watercock, and the sounds stopped. I opened it, and the message began again: "Help! Murder! Help! Murder!"

I bent over and looked at the water as it fell into the basin. I half fancied that the stream was not steady, that it diminished a little, and then increased again. I could not tell positively anything about it. I could not say that the splash it made lessened and strengthened, nor could I say it did not. I found by several trials that the message came while the cock was open and stopped while it was closed. That was all I found out then, and it is all I know now.

I passed down stairs, noticed that the clock in the hall pointed to twenty minutes past twelve and stepped out. It was a terrible night. The wind was a gale. The rain was a torrent. The lightning was over, and the sky was blackness.

A livery-stable was within two blocks; a police-station a block beyond that. It was a terrible walk to the stable, but I got there at last. The owner knew me, but said I could not have a team on such a night; no driver would go on such an occasion. I was desperate, and I asked him to name some price, any price, for which he would furnish me a team and driver for the rest of the night. I had no theory, no definite thought; I only knew that I must and would know why Arnold Percy was not home yet. I gave twenty-five dollars the moment it was demanded, and I put a ten-dollar into the hand of

the driver when I ordered him to the police-station.

I did not tell anything at the station more than that Mr. Percy had not returned, and that I wanted to go to the bank and find out why. I could not relate a series of dreams as a reason for sending a police-officer three miles in a terrible storm, and as for the message, I knew I had heard, who would believe it? And where did it come from?

I expected to make little or no impression on the officer in charge. I was disappointed. I asked for a policeman to go with me to the bank, and I got four, including the officer in charge of the station.

"Mr. Percy has not come home. There are suspicious characters in the city. We will take every chance."

I told the driver that if he got us to the bank within a certain time which I named he should have ten dollars more. He got us there in less than the time I had mentioned.

The front of the bank was closed and dark. The officer in charge smiled as he thanked me for the trouble I had taken and the interest I had shown.

"Your friend has doubtless gone elsewhere to sleep," he said, "and we have come here for nothing. I don't mind that. The way for a man to rise is to always do his duty. The policeman who does not hesitate to go on the merest chance is the one who will find battled crime and personal promotion at the end of his road some day. I thank you again."

"Will you bear with me one minute more?" I asked. "I want to look at a side window."

We went together, and in another moment we knew we had not come for nothing. The window next the empty building was wide open!

"Watch here," he said, and was gone. He was back in a half minute with all the men but one, that one having been stationed at the front door of the bank.

"We must be ready and follow one another as closely as possible. Have your revolvers ready. Don't allow a man to escape, but kill no man unless it is absolutely necessary. All ready. One moment first," and he turned to me. "Do you suspect Mr. Percy?" he asked.

"No, sir. A better man never lived!"

"I think so, too," he said; "but there is this to remember: we are going to find something wrong in here. Keep your head whatever happens."

"I will," said I; "go ahead."

"All ready! Be quick and quiet. This window does not open at once into the main banking-room. We must enter that together if circumstances allow. Remember, no one must escape. Follow me," and he sprang through the window.

In a minute we were all in and standing where we could see the door to the vault and a little of the floor in front of it.

Four men, surrounded by a splendid outfit of tools, were at work on the door which held the wealth of the bank from them.

"Ready," in a whisper, "one—two—three," and we were upon them.

There were heavy revolvers on the counters and desks, but fortunately for all concerned, not one was within reach of the burglars.

"We surrender," said a sullen voice, and I turned to look for my friend, leaving the officers to attend to the men they had captured.

He was fastened into his office-chair by a rope passed around his waist. His hands were fastened behind him with a cord slack enough to allow them some freedom of motion. He was backed up against the watercock which served to supply the officers of the bank with drinking-water. The whole arrangement was quite low; the catch basin was small; the water was let on by pressing down on a piece of metal which came back to its place when pressure was removed. Arnold was not gagged, but he did not speak. I saw why in a moment. He was under the influence of chloroform. I stopped just before I reached his side. This is what I saw:

Arnold Percy's hand was on the metal piece which I have mentioned, and he was using it much as he would have used the key on a telegraphic instrument. And while I watched him he was telegraphing over and over again, "Help! Murder! Help! Murder!"

Arnold Percy fell asleep late that evening with the window open and his head on the sill. He knew no more until we had him free from the influence of the chloroform which had been given him while he slept, and again from time to time, as the robbers feared he would regain consciousness.

The burglars have more than ten years to serve yet before they will break open another bank. In answer to questions which I asked them, they said that my friend "kept up an infernal racket with the watercock the whole time."

Your humble servant, Roscoe Anthon, my dear reader, has his theory of this whole matter. He will not insult your penetration and intelligence by stating it at greater length than the story itself has done. Nor will he offend you by a solution which might differ from your own.

Two of the burglars were the two men who quarreled at the street corner. To all the questions which may arise because of that fact, I can only answer, *Coincidence*.

TICKETS for the entertainment to Mr. Irving will be limited to five hundred. There will be two hundred and thirty stewards.