

Shimoleski, Murphy & Co.

(Continued from page 8.)

little feller like me, yes?"

Becky, highly pleased, tossed her head. "You don't say so? Well, you don't gets it a chanct to rubber at me long up here, because I'm leaving my place next Saturday night. I don't like it. The landlady's that mean. You just ain't got the idea what a meanness some womens has got. I can't stan' her no more. Gee! but I'd like to git even wit' her before I goes," she added vindictively.

"Finer as silk," thought Jakie. He assumed the tragic expression which goes for heartfelt sympathy in the Ghetto, and sighed deeply. Suddenly he appeared to be seized with a brilliant idea.

"You know Silverstein's jewelry store by Hester street?"

"Yes."

"You know that Car—mine bracelet what you was so stuck on?"

"Yes."

"Well, Becky, I'll gif you that if you will do me a small, little, teeny favor."

"Vat?" said the damsel, suspiciously.

"I'll buy you that bracelet and give it to you for keeps without no come-backs nor no strings to it, if you will do me this here favor."

"It had it a card on it what says eight dollairs," said Becky in an awed tone.

"Mocks nix ous, eight dollars, ten dollars, fifteen dollars ain't nothin' to me," said Jakie grandly.

Becky looked into his guileless face, and Eve-like, began to bargain with the serpent. "What's it like, the favor?"

Jakie plunged into a long, persuasive explanation and at last, fired with a desire to be even with a harsh mistress by getting her boarder into trouble and so bringing disgrace upon the house through the medium of the police department, and burning to possess the bracelet, Becky consented. She gave Jakie a few explicit directions and then vanished into the basement entrance of number 99.

Next day, Rachael got the surprise of her life by being put into the stable at one o'clock.

During the morning Jakie had been kept busy and had not had a word with Murphy. Now, as he shouldered an old bag, he decided that it was just as well. "What's the use of tellin' him now? Mebbe it's only such a false alarm. First, I gotta see. Plenty time yet, to shoots it off my mouth."

Twenty minutes later found him cautiously knocking at the basement door of Number 99.

Becky answered instantly and admitted him.

"Steigen!" she whispered. "Such a time what I had it to get rid of the cook. For ten bracelets I don't do this again. I'm so nervois!"

She hurriedly conducted him up the back stairs to the second floor, and pointed to a door. "That's his room. An' he's in now. He says he expects it a gentlemens calls on him this afternoon and I should be sure to let him in."

"All right, Becky."

She opened a door and motioned him to enter. The house was an old-fashioned one and each chamber had an adjoining dressing-room.

Mr. Vincent had not cared to use or pay for, the one belonging to his room, and it was used as a trunk-room. The connecting door was an ill-fitting one, the key-hole was worn large and Jakie could hear the creak of a board as Vincent paced up and down. He noticed that there was a bolt on his side and, whispering to Becky that he was satisfied, he sat noiselessly down to wait.

"Jakie, even if the house ketches fire, stay here till I comes for you. Promise me that."

"All right. But I gotta leave here right away after the man what's coming does; I gotta get back to the office."

He had made her believe that he was working for a detective, and Becky, brought up in the fear of the police department, rather than that of the Lord, promised to see that he did. Just then the door-bell rang and, after

carefully locking Jakie in, she sped away to answer.

He bet himself a package of cigarettes that it was the banker, and a few moments later heard him coming up the stairs, and Becky's voice directing him to Mr. Vincent's door. He was admitted at once, and Jakie excitedly chewing away at a piece of gum, fell on his knees, applied his eye to the key-hole and prepared to be the silent member of the conference.

"Hello, Pasqualli. You look pretty sick to-day," were Vincent's first words. The banker grunted and took a seat directly in line with Jakie's eye.

"You sure we ain't heard?" he asked, nervously glancing around. Vincent tried the door behind which Jakie was holding his breath, and looked into the hall. "Landlady's gone to a funeral in Weehawken and the servants are killing time downstairs. We're all right. Did you bring the money?"

"I gotta no mon for you. I gotta none for myself," said Pasqualli sullenly.

Vincent, who had evidently been imbibing freely from the flask on his dresser, swore and brought his fist down on the table at which he sat with a bang.

"Shss!" admonished the banker apprehensively. Vincent dropped his voice, but it lost none of its anger. "Look here! You garlic-eating fakir, you can't monkey with me! You hear? I got you where I want you and don't you think I haven't."

"You told me enough when you were drunk night before last to hang yourself twice over. I know what your little game is. I know what ship you are figuring on getting out on. I know where you are going, and I know that to-morrow night there won't be less than fifty thousand dollars in your precious private bank, and that you and your black bag will be missing from here just about the time the cops come inquiring around for you about that Muretti heir, and when the bank opens and the cashier finds there isn't so much as the price of a postage stamp left for a remembrance—won't there be hell to pay?"

JAKIE felt sorry for Pasqualli. At the name Muretti, his face turned yellow with fright and he was hardly able to gurgle—"You knowa that! How?"

Vincent laughed. A nasty gloating laugh. "You yourself told me enough to give me a hint. Now leave the rest to me. Say, it isn't for nothing that I work in a broker's office. Why, you fool! you never had a chance in the world to win. The market is fixed just to catch such suckers as you. Serves you right, monkeying with a bucket-shop. Besides, why didn't you come to me direct? I'd have put you on right, but you are too darn close. Afraid I'd get a little of your money? Well, I'm going to now, you can gamble on that."

"Papa Muretti picked out a fine one, I must say, when he made you executor of his will and sole trustee of that hundred and twenty-five thousand he left his son. Now that the kid is just turning twenty-one and wants an accounting, and there is not a cent left, you have got to beat it. And you think you will take along what's in your bank to make the going good—hey?"

"No, no! Santa Maria! I gotta not da nerve. I stay an' faca da musick."

"Like fun you will! You know Muretti's friends would cut you to pieces. I bet they keep their knives sharp for just such fellows as you. It will take twenty-five thousand in cold cash to shut me up. Now get busy, and you can fade away as soon as you like, or it's me to the police before you get half a chance."

Jakie noticed that Vincent did not take his eye off his visitor for an instant, and he commended his good sense, for a more evil-looking customer than the sullen, low-browed Italian driven to bay he had never beheld.

They sat staring at each other for

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