

weakly put forth, and that the gallant Purvis was metaphorically shaking hands with himself that such was the case.

"He's not going either," I thought, as I watched his face with a grim smile and inward chuckle. "There will be three of us away from the ball."

"So far, so good. That very morning I had received a letter from a friend, the contents of which suggested the little scheme re the Captain.

It seems that a short time before (I had not heard of it till then) Purvis had been concerned in a little affair in Brussels over a game of cards which resulted in a duel. A. M. Eugene Lemaitre was his antagonist. Terryberry did his best to avoid a meeting, and left suddenly for England, "having been sent for on account of the death of a near relation," as he lamely put it; but Lemaitre was not to be denied. He followed him and forced the gallant Captain to take his place one cloudy morning, on the outskirts of a little Cornish village. It was a toss-up which was the worse shot, and I am positive that Terryberry would close both eyes when he pulled the trigger, aim possibly at the ethereal canopy, and if somebody should shy a stone at him, and hit him anywhere, he would drop in a dead swoon, and imagine himself mortally hurt.

Terryberry shot young Lemaitre through the right shoulder. It was a terrible accident. Lemaitre was, even at this time, in a precarious condition, owing to the wound having broken out afresh; but, as I said before, I had that very morning received a letter from a friend detailing the whole business, and ending with the news. "Lemaitre is now considered out of danger. By-the-by, do you know where Terryberry has hidden himself?"

"Of course I did not inform my friend where he was, and that night everyone went to the ball except Mabel and the captain, who, at the last moment discovered a telegram calling him to London on very important business. I thought to myself as I listened to this excuse, that I would be willing to wager a cool hundred that the captain would not take that train to London, and also that he hadn't the slightest intention of taking it at the present time.

All but these two started for the ball—even myself as far as the water's edge, when, discovering that I had forgotten my handkerchief, and telling the others not to wait, I would go over in the next boat, I made my way back to the hotel by an unfrequented way, and searched out the hostler, an Irishman of intelligence, who, by the judicious use of a little coin of the realm, promised to obey my instructions to the letter.

I sent him to a hair store in the town (to whom the dealer sold his wares, nobody knows. It might have been to the sirens of the mighty deep). At all events I told old Brian Lynch to procure me a wig—a good large one—grey preferred, and also a pair of blue spectacles.

He was off in the chirp of a chipmunk (what magic there is in a piece of money) and soon returned with the necessary articles.

We were in Brian's cosy room over the stables, and with his aid I invested myself in a pair of old pantaloons, and without removing my dress coat put on an immense great coat, and with a few artistic touches before a piece of broken mirror which served as the hostler's hand-glass, affixed the wig and adjusted the spectacles to my liking, and, with an old slouch hat over my eyes, stood before my assistant for his approval.

"Be th' powers Mister Avis, yer not Mister Avis now at all, at all. Faith I sure an' the loikness-ship that ye be to Tim McFinnerty, th' owld bay pilot—rest his soul—could not be bate for bein' twins."

I felt highly flattered, dabbling in private theatricals now stood me in good stead, so, smiling through my heavy gray beard, I gave him my final instructions. "Remember, Brian, I'm a detective from Scotland Yard. When I give the word you are to knock at the drawing-room door and cautiously whisper to Captain Terryberry that Inspector Bird is below, and in drinking a little more than is good for him, he had let drop a few sentences that made you, Brian Lynch, seek out the Captain and warn him. The Captain had shot a man—the man had died the day before. Acting on a telegram, etc., etc.

Brian slowly winked one eye impressively, and followed me across the court to the hotel. I told him to wait for me on the piazza, while I proceeded to reconnoitre the parlor windows, which were open, the lace curtains being drawn—the night was warm, but very dark. I could stand there unobserved and watch and hear those within without myself being seen.

There, sure enough, sat Mabel in an easy chair drawn up to the table on which stood a large reading-lamp, the light from which was shaded from her eyes by the intervention of a vase of flowers—her poor head, you know.

In spite of her face being thrown into the shade I fancied I saw a smile of anticipation lingering in her eyes and around the corners of her mouth.

"Mabel," I called softly. "She started, and getting up, quietly came to the window and threw back the curtains. 'How is your head, dear?'"

"Oh, Herbert, you naughty man!" she replied with a laugh. "If he does not come soon I do not believe my headache will last. It is becoming very rapidly, and will be entirely gone in a few minutes."

"A few minutes will do, I guess," said I. "Ah, there he is now."

There was a knock at the door. Mabel flew back to her chair, and in a weak voice said, "Come in."

The door opened and Captain Terryberry looked in, but started back with well-feigned surprise.

"Pardon me Miss Vernon, I was unaware you were here. I will not intrude," with a feigned retreat.

(To be Continued.)

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