MC2398

POOR DOCUMENT

Mrs. Smith of Longmains.

By RHODA BROUGHTON.

[CONTINUED.]

What an hour at which to call, with a a twelve mile drive home afterward! If a white headed seneschal—obviously the confidential family servant of whom I had heard—appeared in answer to my ring, I would thrust in my card, and return whence I came, without asking to be admitted. I waited breathlessly. It was some time before any one appeared. Who, indeed, would be expected to arrive at such an hour? At length there was a sound of steps, and of a turning handle. The door opened, and in the aperture appeared a man. Was he an old or young one? I craned my head out feverishly to ascertain. Young, obviously young. But perhaps he was a footman. Again I stared feverishly out. No, he was not in livery. He was a butler, and he was a young man.

SCENE III.

Mrs. Smith's was not a face upon which I imagine, as a rule, any emotion painted itself with much vividness. It was a dull, flat, mask like face; but there was one feeling that upon my entry it showed itself at all events fully capable of portraying, and that was astonishment. I shall never forget the way in which her eyes and mouth opened as I sheepishly followed my own name into her drawing room. She rose from a work table at which she was sitting and advanced to meet me civilly enough; but all over her face was written such an obvious expectation of hearing from my lips some immediate explanation of this surprising visit, that not all the shock of the discovery that, in its first particular—that of the changed butler—my dream was fulfilled—could prevent my feeling covered with confusion at my own apparent intrusiveness.

"I am afraid this is rather a late hour at which to call," said I constrainedly—she tried to put in a faint disclaimer—"but the fact is I met with an accident on my way. My carriage broke down in Salcote—something went wrong with the axle tree."

"Indeed! I am very sorry," perfectly politely, but still with that undisguishable look of astonishment and expected explanation. It must be remembered that she had been living twelve years in the neighborhood and that I had made no slightest attempt to visit her before.

"And so I had to wait till a fly could be got ready, which threw me later still," continued I boldly.

She again repeated: "Indeed!" and that she was very sorry, adding that the Salcote flies were very bad ones; but I saw the puzzled look grow acuter, and I could follow the chain of thought that was running through her mind as plainly as if it had been written on a piece of paper before me. That my carriage should have broken down, and that yet I should have been so determinedly resolved to visit her as to push on in the teeth of circumstances in a moldy fly at 6 o'clock at night, and on such a night, was the problem, her total inability to solve which she was perfectly unable to disguise, nor could I help her.

It was utterly impossible that I could tell her what motive had brought me. Had she been another kind of woman I might possibly have confessed myself to her; but being such as she was I felt that I had sooner be torn in pieces by wild horses. As we were toilsomely trying to keep up a conversation rendered almost impossible by our relative positions, the butler entered, bringing tea. As he set down the tray on the tea table I could not help stealing a sideloog glance at his face. It told me nothing. I had never, to my knowledge, seen it before, nor was it one that I should ever have noticed. But then neither had I seen the dream face. It had been unaccountably hidden from me. As soon as he had left the room I said abruptly, "So you have lost your old butler."

A fresh access of surprise overtook her, as I saw. How did I know that they had an old butler?

"Yes," she answered slowly, "we kept him as long as we could, poor man, because we were so fond of him, but he grew so infirm at last he had to go."

"And your present one?"

"Our present one?" repeating my words with a puzzled air.

"Yes; do you like him? Had you a very good character with him?"

Her eyes opened wid at my extraordinary curiosity.

"Well, I am afraid that we were a little imprudent in his case. I am, sure it is very good of you to take an interest in the matter."—"For good read impertinent," commented I, internally.—"But the fact is, there seems to be a little mystery about the reason why he left his last place. However, Mr. Smith took a fancy to his appearance and so we engaged him. But I do not know," formally, "why I should trouble you with our domestic affairs."

I did not answer for a moment. I was thinking with a sort of stupefaction. They have taken him without a character! Who knows what his antecedents were? When I did speak it was with an apparently brusque change of subject; I myself knew the link that bound the two topics together in my mind.

"Mr. Smith is well, I hope; at home?"

"He was quite well when he left home this morning, thanks."

"Left home?" interrupted I, breathlessly; "he has left home?"

"He was summoned away unexpectedly," answered she, tranquilly; "but I expect him back to-morrow, or the day after, at latest."

"But not to-night?" hurriedly.

"No, not to-night, certainly," with her usual phlegm.

At that moment the butler again entered, bringing coals, apparently—Longmains did not boast a footman—and knelt down before the fire to put them on.

For a moment my eye fell on him; then I turned suddenly sick. Surely that was the very back, the very kneeling figure altogether that I had seen in my dreams! I suppose I looked very odd, pale and faint, for I found Mrs. Smith's white eyes fixed upon me, and her voice asking me, "Did I feel the fire too much?" I stammered out a negative and for some moments could do no more. At last, the object that had excited my emotion being no longer in the room, I rose, driven by some inward power stronger than myself, and went toward Mrs. Smith. She, thinking that I meant to take leave, rose, too.

"I do not know whether your fly is at the door," said she, "you had better let me ring and ask."

Her hand was on its way to the bell, but I arrested it. She had misunderstood my action in rising. I had not meant to go yet. But now she was virtually dismissing me. I must leave her. What pretext had I for further intrusion? I had come twelve miles in the teeth of circumstances; I had seen and spoken with her, and now I was to leave her. What object had I then served by my wild freak? I had not warned her; I had given her no slightest hint of the peril that to my excited imagination seemed to hang imminently over her. I had been of no least service to her, and now I was leaving her—leaving her to her fate.

It was impossible! It was equally impossible that I should expose myself to her more than probable ridicule by telling her what had brought me! I embraced a desperate resolution. I still held her hand, which I had seized to prevent her ringing the bell. I was so agitated that I was hardly aware that it was in my clasp, until her face of profound astonishment, almost alarm, betrayed the fact to me.

"I do not know what you will think of me," said I, in a shaking voice, "but I'm going to make what I am afraid you will think a very extraordinary request to you."

"Indeed!" said she, with a perceptible accent of distrust and a decided drawing away of the hand so convulsively clasped by me.

"Yes," said I, going on with a feverish haste, now that the ice was once broken, "you see it has happened so unfortunately, the distance was greater than I expected, and then the axle tree breaking and the poor fly horse is so done that I am sure he could not crawl another mile; in short, I am afraid I must throw myself upon your hospitality and ask you to give me shelter, to let me stay here for the night."

Out it had come and now it only remained to be seen how she would take my proposition! At first she was too dumfounded to utter. I saw at once that the idea of my being deranged crossed her mind; for she looked hard at and at the same time backed away from me. Then her civility revived.

"Of course" she said, "of course! I shall be only too delighted!" and then she stopped again.

I saw that, having gained my point, my next task was to convince her of my sanity. I, therefore, with profuse thanks and apologies, and as composed a voice as I could master, asked leave to send my orders by the flyman back to my coachman at Salcote. I took care that she should hear me give them myself to the man, so that she might know that the broken axle tree and disabled brougham were not figments of my own diseased imagination. But I do not think that this measure had much effect in removing the suspicion of my sanity from my hostess' mind. I had gone out to the hall door to speak to the flyman, whence we both returned to the drawing room to begin our sixteen or eighteen hours' tete-a-tete.

I think that both our hearts sunk to our boots at the prospect. I am sure that mine did. In order, perhaps, to abridge it as much as possible, Mrs. Smith soon left me with some murmured sentence about seeing that my room was comfortable, which it certainly was not. It was, on the contrary, as I found on being led to it, as uncomfortable as a hastily got ready bedroom, with a just lit fire and a sensation of not having been occupied for some indefinite time past would naturally be on a biting January night.

Having taken off my bonnet and made myself as tidy as I could, with the aid of Mrs. Smith's brush and comb, and told myself repeatedly that the world had never seen such a fool as me, and that neither the girls nor my husband would ever forgive me, I went down stairs and we presently betook ourselves to dinner. There we sat opposite to each other in tete-a-tete. I had faintly hoped that some female friend, old governess or cousin might crop up to make a third with us. But, no; there we were—we two! We were waited on by the butler, and by him alone.

By questions, whose impertinence Mrs. Smith must have thought only palliated by the unsound state of my mind, I ascertained that the Smith establishment in its normal state consisted of butler and footman, but that the footman had two days ago been suddenly taken ill and sent home. The butler was therefore now, in his master's absence, the only man in the house. I also ascertained during one of his absences from the room that the stables were at an inconveniently long distance from the house, and that there was no cottage nearer than a quarter of a mile off. Altogether as lonely a spot as you would wish to see. My eyes traveled uncomfortably and furtively after the man on his return into the room, but I could see nothing in his appearance to justify my terrors. His face had no specially sinister cast. It was almost as insignificant as his mistress'. And his figure! Could it be possible that the startling resemblance I had traced in it to my dream figure was only the figment of my horrified fancy?

But no, no, a hundred times no! As I watched the butler, in precisely the same furtively apprehensive way I was conscious that Mrs. Smith was watching me. Her slow brain had adopted and clung fast to the belief that I was mad; nor, indeed, was that conviction devoid of a good deal of justification. I think that she would not have been at all surprised if I had at any moment risen and playfully buried the carving knife in her breast. I have often thought since what a pleasant dinner she must have had. It was over at last. It had seemed enormously long, and yet on our return to the drawing room it proved to have been disastrously short, short as women's dinnerss always are. We had dined at 8 and it was now only five-and-twenty minutes to 9. Three hours and five-and-twenty minutes until the period indicated in my dream.

We sat down dejectedly on each side of the fire. I noticed almost with a smile that Mrs. Smith took care not to place herself too near me. We had long exhausted our few poor topics of common talk. I had not even any more impertinent questions to ask. It is true that after having run, as we both thought, quite dry already, we had had the good fortune to happen upon a common acquaintance. Very slightly as she was known to either of us, with what tenacity did we cleave to that poor woman! How we dissected her character, anatomized her clothes, criticised her actions, enumerated her vices, speculated on her motives, about none or all of which we either of us knew or cared a button.

But at last she was picked to the bone, and bare naked silence stared us in the face. What a dreadful evening it was! Saved, to me at least, from the simplicity of bottomless tedium by alternate rushes of burning shame and icy apprehension. At 10 o'clock Mrs. Smith could bear it no longer. She rose and rang for candles.

"I dare say that you will not be sorry to go to bed," she said, a sort of relief coming into her tone.

I believe she nourished a secret intention of locking me into my room when once she had got me there.

"After your long drive you will be glad of rest."

"And will you, too?" asked I stupidly, for she had no long drive. "I mean, are you also going to bed?" She hesitated.

"It would not be much use my going to bed so early. I am a bad sleeper."

"You are not going to bed then?"

"Not just yet."

"You are going to stay here—in this room, I mean?"

"No, I am going to my boudoir."

A cold shiver ran down me. Her boudoir! That was the room we were sitting in in my dream. There was a moment's pause.

"I wonder," said I, with a nervous laugh, and in a voice whose agitation I could but partially control, "whether you would let me come with you. I—I—am not at all sleepy after all; it—it is so very early, is not it? I—I—should like to see your boudoir. May I?"

Polite woman as Mrs. Smith was, and had proved herself to be to-night, she could not prevent a flash of acute annoyance, mixed, as I saw, with fear, from crossing her face.

"It really is not at all worth seeing," replied she stiffly, "and I cannot help thinking that you look tired."

"But I am not at all," rejoined I, obstinately. "I should like to come with you, if you would let me."

"Of course, if you wish it," said she grudgingly.

Before finally succumbing she made one or two more efforts to shake me off. In vain! I was quite immovable. I heard her give an irrepressible sigh of impatience and apprehension at my unaccountable and offensive pertinacity as she preceded me up stairs. We reached her boudoir. It was a commonplace room, commonplacely arranged. I had seen hundreds like it, but never to my knowledge, either in waking or sleeping, had my eyes made acquaintance with it before. I looked at once upon entering to see whether the relative position of door and fireplace were the same as those seen in my dream, and also whether there was a clock on the chimney piece. In both particulars my vision had told told me correctly. But after all there was nothing very remarkable in this. Most rooms boast a clock, and in many the door is on the left hand of the fireplace. But to me it seemed confirmation strong as Holy Writ.

"I told you that there was nothing to see here," said my hostess, noting my eyes wandering round, and speaking in a tone out of which she could not keep all the resentment she felt.

"But it—it is very—very comfortable!" rejoined I, hastily, fearing that this was the prelude to a curt dismissal of me. "I should like to stay here a bit with you, if I might."

She made some sort of murmured sound, which might mean acquiescence, and we sat down. This time we did not even attempt any conversation. She occupied herself with some work that apparently required a great deal of counting; and I—I had no other occupation but my thoughts. I could not well have had a worse one. As I sat there in silence, listening with ears continually strained to catch some sound that was not swallowed up in the shutter shaking of the storm wind, with eyes perpetually traveling to the clock face, I asked myself over and over again what purpose I hoped to serve by this apparently so insane persistence of mine?

Were the dream to prove a fallacy I had made as great a fool of myself as the world—fertile in that product—had ever seen. If, on the other hand, the dream, hitherto proved curiously true in some slight particulars, were to be carried out in its terrible main features, of what avail could I suppose my presence to be in averting the catastrophe with which it concluded? All I had done was to involve myself in Mrs. Smith's fate, which she could be no doubt about my sharing. Again that cold shudder ran over me. I could not help breaking the silence to ask my companion whether she never felt it a little eerie sitting up here all alone so late at night.

She answered briefly: "I am not nervous."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

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Do not drink ice cold water, but pure cool water; a little lemon juice will improve the effective ness. Plain soda water with a little acid is also excellent. If from drinking too much ice water you have stomach cramps, or are "water-logged," so it is called, or undoubtedly afflicted with Cholera Morbus, Summer Complaint, Diarrhœa, or Dysentery, do not resort to alcoholic stimulating drinks, which irritate rather than soothe and allay the inflammation which has caused the trouble; but adopt the practice of taking daily just before retiring, during July and August, one teaspoonful of Johnson's Anodyne Liniment in a little sweetened water, which will prevent all such attacks and ill effects from ice water. In fact a little pamphlet sent free to anyone, by J. S. Johnson & Co., Boston, Mass, contains a vast amount of information about treating those Summer troubles.

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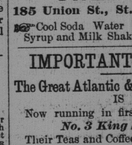
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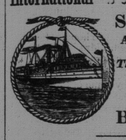
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No. 2 Nelson street.

RAILROADS.

INTERCOLONIAL RAILWAY.
1889 SUMMER ARRANGEMENT. 1889.
ON and after **MONDAY, 10th June, 1889,** the trains of this Railway will run daily (Sunday excepted) as follows:—

TRAINS WILL LEAVE ST. JOHN

Day Express for H'f'x and Campbellton	7.00
Accomodation for Point du Chene	11.10
Fast Express for Halifax	14.30
Express for Sussex	16.35
Fast Express for Quebec and Montreal	16.35

A Parlor Car runs each way daily on Express trains leaving Halifax at 8.30 o'clock and St. John at 7.00 o'clock. Passengers from St. John for Quebec and Montreal leave St. John 16.35 and take Sleeping Car at Moncton.

TRAINS WILL ARRIVE AT ST. JOHN.

Express from Sussex	8.30
Fast Express from Montreal and Quebec	10.50
Fast Express from Halifax	14.50
Day Express from H'f'x and Campbellton	20.10
Day Express from Hfx, Pictou	Mulgrave 22.35

The trains of the Intercolonial Railway to and from Montreal are lighted by electricity and heated by steam from the locomotive.
All trains are run by Eastern Standard Time.
D. POTTINGER,
Chief Superintendent.
RAILWAY OFFICE,
Moncton, N. B., June 8th, 1889.

New Brunswick Railway Co'y.
ALL RAIL LINE TO BOSTON &C.
"The Short Line" to Montreal &c.
ARRANGEMENT OF TRAINS; in effect July 8th, 1889. Leaves St. John Intercolonial Station—Eastern Standard Time.
6.40 a. m.—Fast Express for Bangor, Portland Boston, &c.; Fredericton, St. Stephen, St. Andrews, Houlton, Woodstock and points north. Pullman Buffet Parlor Car for Boston.
8.45 a. m—Accommodation for Bangor, Portland, Boston, &c.; Fredericton, St. Andrews, St. Stephen, Houlton, Woodstock.
3.00 p. m.—Fast Express, "via Short Line," for Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto and points west; St. Andrews, St. Stephen, Houlton and Woodstock.
Canadian Pacific Sleeping Car for Montreal.
4.45 p.m—For Fredericton and intermediate points.
8.30 p. m—(Except Saturday night)—Express for Bangor, Portland, Boston, Montreal, West St. Stephen, Houlton, Woodstock. Presque Isle &c.
Pullman Sleeping Car for Bangor.
RETURNING TO ST. JOHN.
FROM BANGOR, 6.00 a. m.; 3.35 p. m.; Parlor Car attached; 7.30 p. m., Sleeping Car attached.
MONTREAL, "the Short Line," 8.30 p. m. daily, except Saturday.
Canadian Pacific Sleeping Car attached.
VANCEBORO 9 1.15, 10.55 a. m. 7.10 p. m.;
WOODSTOCK 7.50, 10.30 a. m., 8.20 p. m.;
HOULTON 7.40, 10.30 a. m., 8.30 p. m.;
ST. STEPHEN 9.00, 11.40 a. m., 3.15 10.20 p. m;
ST. ANDREWS 7.55 a. m.; 3.25 p. m.
FREDERICTON 6.00, 11.20 a. m., 3.20 p. m.;
ARRIVE AT ST. JOHN 9 5.45, 8.20 a. m., 2.10, 7.10, 10.30, p. m.
LEAVE CARLETON.
7.55 a.m—For Fairville, and points west.
4.40 p.m—For Fairville, Fredericton. and intermediate points.
ARRIVE AT CARLETON.
8.45 a. m—From Fairville, Fredericton &c.
5.10 p.m—From Fairville and points west.
A. J. HEATH, Gen. Pass. and Ticket Agent. F. W. CRAM, Gen. Manager.

Shore Line Railway.
ST. STEPHEN & ST. JOHN
Eastern Standard Time.
ON and after MONDAY, June 24, Trains will run daily, Sundays excepted, as follows:
LEAVE St. John at 7.00 a. m., and Carleton at 7.30 a. m., for St. George, St. Stephen and intermediate points, arriving in St. George at 9.56 a. m.; St. Stephen 11.05 a. m.
LEAVE St. Stephen at 8.00 a.m., St. George 10.00 a. m.; arriving in Carleton at 12.30 p. m.; St. John at 12.40 p. m.
Freight up to 500 or 600 lbs—not large in bulk—will be received by J. S. MULLSON, 40 Water street, up to 5 p. m.; all larger weights and bulky freight must be delivered at the warehouse, Carleton, before 6 p. m.
Baggage will be received and delivered at MULLSON'S, Water street, where a truckman will be in attendance.
W. A. LAMB, Manager.
St. John, N. B., June 17, 1888.
sun, tel.

Buctouche and Moncton Ry.
ON and after MONDAY, June 10th, trains will run as follows:

No. 1.			No. 2.		
Lv. Buctouche		7.30	Lv. Moncton		16.45
Little River	7.48		Lewisville	16.49	
St. Anthony	8.24		Humphreys	16.53	
Cocaigne	8.26		Irishtown	17.15	
Norte Dame	8.30		Cape Breton	17.25	
McDonald's	8.38		Scotch Settl	17.33	
Scotch Settl	8.50		McDougall's	17.40	
Cape Breton	8.56		Notre Dame	18.01	
Irishtown	9.06		Cocaigne	18.03	
Humphreys	9.24		St. Anthony	18.19	
Lewisville	9.34		Little River	18.35	
Ar. Moncton	9.38		Ar. Buctouche	18.53	

Trains will connect at Moncton with I. C. R trains Nos. 6 and 2 to St. John and Halifax. At Buctouche Steamboat Landings pass this Hotel every five minutes.
C. P. HANINGTON, Manager.
Moncton, June 9, 1889.

THE CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY.
Short Line Trains
Leave St. John daily at 3 p. m. (Except Sunday) for Montreal without
Connections are made at Montreal with trains for Ottawa, Toronto, Detroit, Chicago and the West.
ALSO "SOO LINE" TRAIN TO
Saint Paul and Minneapolis,
—AND—
PACIFIC COAST TRAIN,
for Port Arthur, Winnipeg, Vancouver, Victoria and the Pacific Coast.
For sleeping car berths and all information apply to
H. CHUBB & CO., Agents,
Chubb's Corner, St. John, N. B.

Removal Notice.
JAMES S. MAY & SON,
Merchant Tailors,
HAVE REMOVED TO THE
Domville Building, Prince Wm. St,
premises formerly occupied by the Bank of Montreal, and are now ready for business.
Stock Complete for Summer Trade
and will be added to from time to time with the Latest Incoming Novelties.

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BRANCH,
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St. John, N. B.
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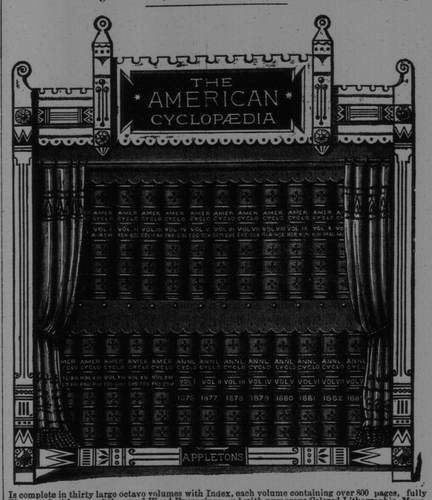

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**A. F. deFO