

The Great Impersonation

By E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM.

(Continued from yesterday.)

"In that case," the doctor replied earnestly, "the position would be exactly reversed, and it would be just as important for you not to check the affection which she might offer to you as it would be in the other case for you to accept it. The moment she realises with her present predispositions, that you really are her lawful husband, that moment will be the beginning of a new life for her."

Somewhat they both seemed to feel that the last words had been spoken. After a brief pause, the doctor helped himself to a farewell drink, filled his pipe and stood up. The car which Dominey had ordered from the garage was already standing at the door. It was curious how both of them seemed disinclined to refer again even indirectly to the subject which they had been discussing.

"Very good of you to send me back," the doctor said gruffly. "I started out all right, but it was a dear walk across the marshes."

"I am very grateful to you for coming," Dominey replied, with a slight smile. "You will come and have a look at the patient in a day or two?"

"I'll stroll across as soon as you've got rid of some of this household," the doctor promised, standing by the door. The two men parted, and curiously enough Dominey was conscious that with those few awkward words of farewell some part of the incipient antagonism between them had been buried. Left to himself, he wandered for some moments up and down the great, dimly lit hall. A strange restlessness seemed to have fastened itself upon him. He stood for some time by the dining fire, watching the grey ashes, stirred uneasily by the wind which howled down the chimney. Then he strolled to a different part of the hall, and one by one he turned on by means of the electric switches, the newly installed lights which hung above the sombre oil pictures upon the wall. He looked into the faces of some of these dead Domineys, trying to recall what he had heard of their history, and dwelling longest upon a gallant of the Stuart epoch, whose misdeeds had supplied material for every intimate chronicle of those days. When at last the slight of a sleepy manservant hovering in the background forced his steps upstairs, he still lingered for a few moments in the corridor and turned the handle of his bedroom door with almost reluctant fingers. His heart gave a great jump as he realised that there was some one there. He stood for a moment upon the threshold, then laughed shortly to himself at his foolish imagining. It was his servant who was patiently awaiting his arrival.

"You can go to bed, Dickens," he directed. "I shall not want you again tonight. We shoot in the morning."

The man silently took his leave, and Dominey commenced his preparations for bed. He was in his dressing gown, and still attended in his shirt and trousers, and he wrapped a dressing-gown around him, drew a reading lamp to his side, and threw himself on the bed. He had a book in his hand, it was gone some time before he realised that the volume was upside down, and even when he had righted it, the words had no meaning for him. All the time a procession of woman's faces was passing before his eyes—Caroline, with her half-furtive, wholly sentimental bon camarderie; Stephanie, with her voluptuous figure and passion-lit eyes; and then, blotting the others utterly out of his thoughts and memory, Rosamund, with all the sweetness of life shining out of her eager face. He saw her as she had come to him last, with that little unspoken cry upon her tremulous lips, and the haunting appeal in her soft eyes. All other memories faded away. They were as though they had never been. Those dreary years of exile in Africa, the day by day tension of his precarious life, were absolutely forgotten. His heart was calling all the time for an unknown boon. He felt himself unweaned in a world of cobwebs, of weakness more potent than all his boasted strength. Then he suddenly felt that the moon which he had begun to fear had really come. It was the thing for which he longed yet dreaded most—the faint click, the soft withdrawal of the panel, actual pushed back by a pair of white hands. Rosamund herself stood there. Her eyes shone at him, mystically, wondrously. Her lips were parted in a delightful smile, a smile in which there was a spice of girlish mischief. She turned for a moment to close the panel. Then she came towards him with her finger upraised.

"I cannot sleep," she said softly. "Do you mind my coming for a few minutes?"

"Of course not," he answered. "Come and sit down."

"She curled up in his easy chair. "Just for a moment," she murmured contentedly. "Give me your hands, dear. But how cold! You must come nearer to the radiator, which he had set on the arm of her chair, and she stroked his head with her hands. "You were not afraid, then," she asked, "when you saw me come through the panel?"

"I should never be afraid of any harm that you might bring me, dear," he assured her.

"Because all that foolishness is really gone," she continued eagerly. "I know that what happened to poor Roger, it was not you who killed him. Even if I heard his ghost calling again tonight, I should have no fear. I can't think why I ever wanted to hurt you, Eberard. I am sure that I always loved you."

His arm went very softly around her. She responded to his embrace without hesitation. Her cheek rested upon his shoulder, he felt the warmth of her arm through her white, fur-lined dressing-gown.

"Why do you doubt any longer then," he asked hoarsely, "that I am your husband?"

She sighed.

"Ah, but I know you are not," she answered. "It is wrong of me to feel what I do for you, I wonder? You are so like yet so unlike him. He is dead, but I died in Africa. Isn't it strange that I should know it? But I do!"

"But who am I then?" he whispered.

She looked at him pitifully.

"I do not know," she confessed. "But you are kind to me, and when I feel

you are near, I am happy. It is because I wanted to see you that I would not stay any longer at the nursing home. That must mean that I am very fond of you."

"You are not afraid," he asked, "to be here alone with me?"

She put her other arm around his neck and drew his face down.

"I am not afraid," she assured him. "I am happy—But, dear, what is the matter? A moment ago you were cold. Now your head is wet, your hands are burning. Are you not happy because I am here?"

"Helpless were seeking his. His own hands touched them for a moment. Then he kissed her on both cheeks. She made a little grimace.

"I'm afraid," she said, "that you are not really fond of me."

"Can't you believe," he asked hoarsely, "that I am really Eberard's husband? Look at me. Can't you feel that you have loved me before?"

She shook her head a little sadly.

"No, you are not Eberard," she sighed, "but," she added, her eyes lighting up, "you bring me love and happiness and life, and—"

A few seconds before, Dominey felt from his soul that he would have welcomed an earthquake, a thunderbolt, the crumbling of the floor beneath his feet to have been spared the torture of his sweet importunities. Yet nothing so horrible as this interruption which really came could ever come to him. He was alone before him. Half in his arms, with her head thrown back, listening—the, too, horrified, convulsed for a moment even with real physical fear—they heard the silence of the night broken by that one awful cry, the cry of a man's soul in torment, imprisoned in the jaws of a beast. They listened to it together until its echoes died away. Then what was, perhaps, the most astonishing thing of all, she nodded her head slowly, unperturbed, untrifled.

"You see," she said, "I must go back. He will not let me stay here. He must think that you are Eberard. It is only I who know that you are Dominey."

She slipped from the chair, kissed him, and walking quite firmly across the floor, touched the spring and passed through the panel. Even then she turned around and waved a little goodbye to him. There was no sign of fear in her face; only a little dumb disappointment. The panel glided to and shut out the vision of her. Dominey held his head like a man who fears madness.

CHAPTER XIX.

Dawn the next morning was heralded by only a thin line of red parting the masses of black-grey snow clouds which still hung low over the coast. The wind had dropped, and there was something ghostly about the still twilight as Dominey issued from the back region and made his way through the untrodden snow round to the side of the house underneath Rosamund's window. A little exclamation broke from his lips as he stood there. From the terrace walk, down the steps, and straight across the park to the corner of the Black Wood, were fresh tracks. The cry had been no fantasy. Somebody or something had passed from the Black Wood and back again to this spot in the night.

Dominey, curiously excited by his discovery, examined the footmarks eagerly, then followed them to the corner of the wood. Here and there they puzzled him. They were neither like human footsteps or the track of any known animal. At the edge of the wood they seemed to vanish into a sort of great mass of brambles, from which here and there the snow had been shaken off. There was no sign of any pathway; if ever there had been one, the neglect of years had obliterated it. Bracken, brambles, shrubs and bushes had grown up and degenerated, only to be succeeded by a ranker and more dense form of undergrowth. Many of the trees, although they were still standing, had begun to blow down and left to rot on the ground. The place was silent except for the slow drip of falling snow from the drooping leaves. He took one more cautious step forward and found himself slowly sinking. Black mud was oozing up through the snow where he had set his feet. He was just able to scramble back. Picking his way with great caution, he commenced a leisurely perambulation of the whole of the outside of the wood.

Heggs, the junior keeper, an hour or so later, went over the gun rack once more, tapped the empty cases, and turned towards Middleton, who was sitting in a chair before the fire, smoking his pipe.

"I can't find master's number two gun, Mr. Middleton," he announced. "That's missing."

"Look again, lad," the old keeper directed, moving the gun from his temporary depot. The master was shooting with that yesterday. Look amongst those loose 'uns at the far end of the rack. It must be somewhere there."

"Well, that isn't," the young man replied obstinately.

The door of the room was suddenly opened, and Dominey entered with the missing gun under his arm. Middleton rose to his feet at once and laid down his pipe. Surprise kept him temporarily dumb.

"I want you to come this way with me for a moment," his master ordered.

The keeper took up his hat and stick and followed Dominey led him to the gravel outside Rosamund's window and pointed across to the Black Wood.

"What do you make of those?" he enquired.

"I did not hesitate. He shook his head gravely.

"Was anything heard last night?"

"There was an infernal yell underneath this window."

"That was the spirit of Roger Unthank, for sure," Middleton pronounced, with a little shudder. "When he do come out of that wood, he do call."

"Spirit," his master pointed out, "do not leave tracks like that behind."

Middleton considered the matter.

"They do say hereabout," he confessed, "that the spirit of Roger Unthank had been taken possession of by some sort of great animal, and that

it do come here now and then to be fed."

"By whom?" Dominey enquired patiently.

"Why, by Mrs. Unthank."

"Mrs. Unthank has not been in this house for many months. From the day this ghost, or beast, or whatever it is, she left until last night, so far as I can gather, nothing has been heard of it."

"That do seem queer, surely," Middleton admitted.

Dominey followed the tracks with his eyes to the wood and back again. "There's a very short time I am going to learn something about spirits. It seems that they not only make tracks, but they require feeding. Perhaps if that is so they can feel a charge of shot inside them."

The old man seemed for a moment to stiffen with slow horror.

"You wouldn't shoot at it, Squire?" he gasped.

"I should have done so this morning if I had had a chance," Dominey replied. "When the weather is a little drier, I am going to make my way into that wood, Middleton, with a rifle under my arm."

"Then as Squire?" was the solemn reply.

"We will see," Dominey muttered. "I have hacked my way through some queer country in Africa."

"There's a man like this wood in the world, sir," the old man asserted doggedly. "The bottom's rotten from end to end and the top's all poisonous. The birds die there on the trees. It's chockful of reptiles and unclean things, with green and purple fungi, two feet high, with poison in the very snuff of them. The man who enters that wood goes to his grave."

"Nevertheless," Dominey said firmly, "within a very short time I am going to solve the mystery of this nocturnal visitor."

They returned to the house, side by side. Just before they entered, Dominey turned to his companion.

"Middleton," he said, "you keep up the good old customs, I suppose, and spend half an hour at the 'Dominey Arms' now and then?"

"Most every night of my life, sir," the old man replied, "from eight till nine, on a matter of regular habits, and that do seem right to me that with the work done right and proper a man should have his relaxation."

"That is right, John," Dominey assented. "Next time you are there, don't forget to mention that I am going to have that wood looked through. I should like it to get about, you understand?"

"That'll fair rumour the folk," was the old man's reply. "But I'll let 'em know, Squire. There'll be a rare bit of talk, I can promise you that."

Dominey handed over his gun, went to his room, washed and changed, and descended for breakfast. There was a sudden hush as he entered, which he very well understood. Every one began to talk about the prospect of the day's sport. Dominey helped himself from the sideboard and took his place at the table.

"I hope," he said, "that our very latest thing in ghosts did not disturb anybody."

"We all seem to have heard the same thing," the cabinet minister observed, with interest, "a most appalling and unearthly cry. I have lately joined every society connected with spooks and find them a fascinating study."

"If you want to investigate," Dominey observed, as he helped himself to coffee, "you can bring out a revolver and prow about with me one night. From the time when I was a kid, before I went to Eton, up till when I left here for Africa, we had a series of highly respectable and well-behaved ghosts, who were a credit to the family and of whom we were somewhat proud. This latest spook, however, is something quite outside the pale."

"Has he a history?" Mr. Watson asked with interest.

"I am informed," Dominey replied, "that he is the spirit of a schoolmaster who once lived here, and for whose departure from the world I am supposed to be responsible. Such a spook is neither a credit nor a comfort to the family."

These words spoke with such an absolute absence of emotion that every one was conscious of a curious reluctance to abandon a subject full of such fascinating possibilities. Terrihoff was the only one, however, who made a suggestion.

"We might have a battle in the wood," he proposed.

"I am not sure," Dominey told him, "that the character of the wood is not more interesting than the ghost who enters it. For generations it has been held unclean. It is certainly most unsafe. I went in over my knees on the outskirts of it this morning—shall we say half-past ten in the gun-room?"

Seaman followed his host out of the room.

"My friend," he said, "you must not allow these local circumstances to occupy too large a share of your thoughts. It is true that these are the days of your relaxation. Still, there is the Princess for you to think of. After all, she has us in her power. The nearest whisper in Downing Street, and behold, catastrophe!"

Dominey took his friend's arm.

"Look here, Seaman," he rejoined, "it's easy enough to say there is the Princess to be considered, but will you kindly tell me what on earth more I can do to make her see the position? Necessity demands that I should be on the best of terms with Lady Doniney and that I should not make myself in any way conspicuous with the Princess."

(Continued tomorrow.)

MARINE NEWS

PORT OF ST. JOHN, N. B.
Friday, August 13, 1920.
Arrived Thursday.

Coastwise—Gas sch Cora Gerlie, 30, Thurber, Freeport, N. S.; str Francoise Boullier, 41, Teed, Weymouth, N. S.; sch Claremont, 11, Thompson, Cranee Harbor; str Bear River, 70, Moore, Parrsboro, N. S.; sch Viola Pearl, 23, Wadlin, Wilson's Beach.

Cleared Thursday.

Sch Mabel Gate, 619, Eden, Havana, Cuba.

Coastwise—Gas sch Cora Gerlie, 30, Thurber, Freeport, N. S.; str Francoise Boullier, 41, Teed, Weymouth, N. S.; sch Claremont, 11, Thompson, Cranee Harbor; str Bear River, 70, Moore, Parrsboro, N. S.; sch Viola Pearl, 23, Wadlin, Wilson's Beach; str Bear River, 70, Moore, Digby, N. S.

Canadian Ports.

Quebec, Aug 11—Ard, str yacht Dixie, from Great Lakes; cld 10th, str Pelton, for sea.

Old 11th, str Empress of France, for Liverpool; Bally Gally Head, for Belfast.

British Ports.

Liverpool, Aug 11—Ard, str Canadian Ranger, Montreal; Penelope, Altona, N.S.

Manchester, Aug 9—Ard, str

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Manchester Line
From Manchester to Philadelphia and Manchester
July 16—S. S. Man. Exchange Aug. 5

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DAYLIGHT TIME.
Commencing June 1st steamer leaves Grand Manan Mondays, 7.30 a. m., for St. John via Campbell and Eastport, returning leaves St. John Tuesdays, 10 a. m., for Grand Manan, via the same ports.

NEW THROUGH SERVICE BETWEEN EASTERN AND WESTERN CANADA
OPTIONAL ROUTES VIA
Canadian National Railways
MARITIME PROVINCES TO WINNIPEG VIA QUEBEC.

Lv Sydney	7.00 a.m.	A.T.	Sa.	M.	Tu.	W.	Th.	Fr.
Lv Halifax	2.10 p.m.	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
Lv Charlottetown	10.10 p.m.	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
Lv St. John	7.10 a.m.	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
Lv Moncton	1.35 p.m.	E.T.	Sa.	M.	Tu.	W.	Th.	Fr.
Lv Cochrane	2.30 p.m.	C.T.	Sa.	M.	Tu.	W.	Th.	Fr.
Lv Winnipeg	6.00 p.m.	E.T.	Sa.	M.	Tu.	W.	Th.	Fr.

Canadian National-Grand Trunk
THE MARITIME PROVINCES.—PACIFIC COAST.
VIA MONTREAL, TORONTO, NORTH BAY, COCHRANE.

Lv Sydney	8.30 p.m.	A.T.	Sa.	M.	Tu.	W.	Th.	Fr.
Lv Halifax	3.10 a.m.	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
Lv Charlottetown	7.00 a.m.	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
Lv St. John	1.25 p.m.	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
Lv Moncton	10.30 p.m.	E.T.	Sa.	M.	Tu.	W.	Th.	Fr.
Lv Cochrane	11.00 a.m.	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
Lv Winnipeg	7.50 a.m.	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
Lv Cochrane	6.00 p.m.	C.T.	Sa.	M.	Tu.	W.	Th.	Fr.
Lv Vancouver	9.00 a.m.	E.T.	Sa.	M.	Tu.	W.	Th.	Fr.

THE MARITIME PROVINCES.—PACIFIC COAST.
VIA MONTREAL, OTTAWA, PORT ARTHUR, FORT WILLIAM.

Lv Montreal	6.10 p.m.	E.T.	Sa.	M.	Tu.	W.	Th.	Fr.
Lv Ottawa	9.30 p.m.	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
Lv Port Arthur	7.05 a.m.	C.T.	Sa.	M.	Tu.	W.	Th.	Fr.
Lv Fort William	9.45 p.m.	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
Lv Winnipeg	9.00 a.m.	P.T.	Sa.	M.	Tu.	W.	Th.	Fr.
Lv Victoria	3.00 p.m.	"	"	"	"	"	"	"

TRAIN EQUIPMENT—Standard sleeping and dining cars between Halifax, Sydney and Montreal—Toronto and Winnipeg—Winnipeg and Vancouver. Tourist sleeper between Montreal and Winnipeg. Consist cars between Cochrane and Winnipeg.

TRAIN EQUIPMENT—Standard sleeping and dining cars between Sydney, Halifax, Moncton and Montreal—Montreal and Winnipeg—Winnipeg and Vancouver. Tourist sleeper between Toronto and Winnipeg. Consist cars between Winnipeg and Vancouver. Consignment Observation car between Edmonton and Vancouver.

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MARINE NEWS

MANCHESTER SHIPPER, PHILADELPHIA AND HALIFAX.

Greenock, Aug 10—Ard, str Waldenburg, Montreal.

Glasgow, Aug 10—Ard, str Columbia, New York.

Southampton, Aug 10—Ard, str Grumpan, Montreal.

Gibraltar, Aug 3—Sd, str Admiral Cochran, Sydney.

Auckland, Aug 9—Ard, str Niagara, Vancouver.

Foreign Ports.

Philadelphia, Aug 11—Ard, str Olive, Montreal.

New York, Aug 11—Ard, str Panonic, Trieste and Naples; Caroline, Bordeaux; Buford, Orizabal and San Juan.

Cherbourg, Aug 11—Ard, str Olympic, New York.

Singapore, Aug 7—Ard, str Metvan, Hong Kong for Vancouver.

Frederickshaven, Aug 7—Ard, str Jan Van Nussau, Philadelphia and Port Hastings, N. S.

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For Painting Part of Exhibition Buildings.

SEALED TENDERS, addressed to H. E. Wardrop, Common Clerk, City Hall, for painting part of the Exterior of Exhibition Buildings, St. John, N. B., will be received up till 12 o'clock noon of Monday, August 16th. Each Tender must be accompanied with cash or certified cheque for 5 per cent of the tender price; all tenders must be submitted on forms supplied by the City.
Plans and Specifications may be seen and forms of Tender obtained at the Office of the Commissioner of Public Safety, Prince William St.
The lowest or any Tender not necessarily accepted.
JOHN THORNTON,
Commissioner of Public Safety,
A. P. MACINTYRE,
Comptroller,
St. John, N. B., August 9th, 1920.

TIME TABLE

The Maritime Steamship Co. Limited
Commencing June 7th, 1920, a steamer of this line leaves St. John Tuesday at 7.30 a.m. for Black's Harbour, calling at Dipper Harbor and Beaver Harbor.
Leaves Black's Harbour Wednesday, two hours of high water for St. Andrews, calling at Lord's Cove, Richardson, Back Bay and L'Etete.
Leaves St. Andrews Thursday, calling at St. George, L'Etete, or Back Bay and Black's Harbour.
Leaves Black's Harbor Friday for Dipper Harbor, calling at Beaver Harbor.
Leaves Dipper Harbor at 8 a.m. on Saturday for St. John. Freight received Mondays 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.; St. George freight up till 12 noon.
Agents, the Thorns Wharf and Warehousing Co. Ltd.
LEWIS CONNORS, Manager.
Phone Main 2581.

FOR SALE

FOR SALE—All the standing hay on Samuel Creighton's farm, Silver Falls, is offered for sale and prospective buyers can make application to Herbert E. Creighton, Silver Falls.

FOR SALE

FOR SALE—Teacher (Female) Second Class License. School District No. 5, Parish of Hamptden. Apply staling salary expected to T. W. Machum, Jerusalem, Queens Co., N. B.

FOR SALE

FOR SALE—First or Second Class Teacher for School District No. 7, Lower Ridge, Kings Co. Apply staling salary to