

superiors from the Assistant-Commissioner downwards, worked with an iron sense of the red-taped duty for which he received his salary.

"I'm sorry," said Tennant, looking at the young man; "but all these denials will not, I fear, help you in the least. As I warned you, they are being taken down in writing, and may be used in evidence against you," and he indicated a clerk writing shorthand at a side table.

Jack Sainsbury grew furious.

"I don't care a brass button what evidence you can give against me," he cried. "I only know that my conscience is perfectly clear. I have tried, since the war, to help my friend Dr. Jerome Jerrold of Wimpole Street, to inquire into spies and espionage. We acted together, and Jerrold reported much that was unknown to Whitehall. He—"

"Doctor Jerrold is the gentleman who committed suicide—if my memory serves me correctly," interrupted the police official, speaking very quietly.

"Perhaps he did. I say perhaps—remember," exclaimed the young man under arrest. "But I don't agree with the finding of the Coroner's jury."

"People often disagree with a Coroner's jury," was the dry reply of the hide-bound official, seated at the table. "But now, let us get along," he added persuasively. "You admit that you are John James Sainsbury; that you were, until lately, clerk in the employ of the Ochrida Copper Corporation, in Gracechurch Street, from the service of which you were

recently discharged. Is that so?"

"Most certainly. I have nothing to deny."

"Good. Then let us advance a step further. You were, I believe, an intimate friend of Dr. Jerome Jerrold, who lived in Wimpole Street, and who, for no apparent reason, committed suicide."

"Yes."

"You do not know, I presume, that Dr. Jerrold was suspected of a very grave offence under the Defence of the Realm Act, and that, rather than face arrest and prosecution by court-martial as a spy—he took his own life!"

"It's a lie—an infernal lie!" shouted young Sainsbury. "Who alleges such an outrageous lie as that?"

THE fair-haired detective smiled, and in that suave manner he usually adopted towards prisoners, with clasped hands he said:

"I fear I cannot tell you that."

"But it's a confounded lie! Jerome Jerrold was no spy. He and I were the firmest friends, and I know how he devoted his time and his money to investigating the doings of the enemy in our midst. Did you not read the words of the Lord Chancellor the other day?"

"I'm afraid I didn't."

"Well, speaking in the House of Lords, he admitted that we have not only to fight a foe in the open field, but that their spies are in every land and that the webs of their intrigue enmesh and entangle every Government. It was in order to assist the

authorities—your own department indeed—that Dr. Jerome, two friends of his, and myself devoted our time to watching at nights, and investigating."

The official's lips curled slightly.

"I know that, full well. But how do you explain away the fact that your friend, the doctor, committed suicide rather than face a prosecution?"

"He had nothing to fear. Of that I am quite confident. No braver, more loyal, or more patriotic man ever existed than he, poor fellow."

"I'm afraid the facts hardly bear out your contention."

"But what are the facts?" demanded the young man fiercely.

"As I have already said, it is not within my province to tell you."

"But I've been arrested to-night upon a false charge—a charge trumped up against me perhaps by certain officials who may be jealous of what I have done, and what I have learnt. I am discredited in the eyes of my friends at the house where I was arrested. Surely I should be told the truth!"

"I, of course, do not know what truths may be forthcoming at your trial. But at present I am not allowed to explain anything to you, save that the charge against you is that you have attempted to communicate with the enemy."

"What!" shouted Jack, astounded: "am I actually charged, then, with being a German spy?"

"I'm afraid that is so."

"But I have no knowledge of any other of the enemy's agents, save those which were discovered by Jerrold and reported to Whitehall by him."

"Ah! the evidence, I think, goes a little further—documentary evidence which has recently been placed in the hands of the War Office."

"By whom, pray?"

"You surely don't think it possible for me to reveal the name of the informant in such a case?" was the cold reply.

JACK SAINSBURY stood aghast and silent at the grave charge which had been preferred against him. It meant, he knew, a trial in camera. He saw how entirely he must be discredited in the eyes of the world, who could never know the truth, or even the nature of his defence.

He thought of Elise. What would she think? What did she think when Littlewood told her—as he had told her, no doubt—of how he had been mysteriously hustled into a taxi, and driven off?

For the first time a recollection of that strange anonymous warning which his well-beloved had received crossed his memory. Who had sent that letter? Certainly some friend who had wished his, or her, name to remain unknown.

"The whole thing is a hideous farce," he cried savagely, at last. "Nobody can prove that I am not what I here allege myself to be—an honest, loyal and patriotic Englishman."

"You will have full opportunity of proving that, and of disproving the documentary evidence which is in the hands of the Director of Public Prosecutions."

"Public Prosecutions! Mine will be in camera," laughed Jack grimly. "I suppose I shall be tried by a kind of military inquisition. I hope they won't wear black robes, with slits for the

eyes, as they did in the old days in Spain!" he laughed.

"I fail to see much humour in your present position, Mr. Sainsbury," replied Tennant rather frigidly.

"I see a lot—even though I'm annoyed that your men should have called at Fitzjohn's Avenue, instead of going to my place in Heath Street. If you know so much about me, you surely knew my address."

"The warrant was issued for immediate arrest, sir," exclaimed one of the detectives to his superior. "Therefore we went to Fitzjohn's Avenue."

"I suppose I shall have an opportunity of knowing the name of my enemy—of the person who laid this false information against me—and also that I can see my counsel?"

"The latter will certainly be allowed to-morrow."

"May I write to Miss Shearman—my fiancée?"

"No. But if you wish to give her any message—say by telephone—I will see that it is sent to her, if you care to write it down."

A pencil was handed to him, whereupon he bent and scribbled a couple of lines.

"To Miss Elise Shearman, from the prisoner, John Sainsbury.—Please tell Miss Shearman that I have been arrested as a spy, and am at Bow Street Police Station. Tell her not to worry. I have nothing to fear, and will be at liberty very soon. Some grave official error has evidently been made."

Then, handing the slip to the Detective Inspector he said—

"If they will kindly ring up Mr. Shearman's in Hampstead"—and he gave the number—"and give that message, I shall be greatly obliged."

"It shall be done," replied the police official. "Have you anything else to say?"

"Only one thing, and of this statement I hope you will make a careful note: namely, that on the night when Dr. Jerome Jerrold died so mysteriously, I was on my way to give him some most important information that I had gathered in the City only a few hours before—information which, when I reveal it, will startle the Kingdom—but he died before I could tell him. He died in my arms, as a matter of fact."

INSPECTOR TENNANT was silent for a few moments. Then he asked—

"Did you ever reveal this important information to anyone else?"

"No. I did not. Only Jerrold would have understood its true gravity."

"Then it concerned him—eh?"

"No. It concerned somebody else. I was on my way to consult him—to ask his opinion as to how I should act, when I found I could not get into his room. His man helped me to break in, and we found him dying. In fact, he spoke to me—he said he'd been shot—just before he expired."

"Yes, I know," remarked Tennant reflectively. "I happened to be present in court when the inquest was held. I heard your evidence, and I also heard the evidence of Sir Houston Bird, who testified as to suicide."

"Jerrold did not take his life!" Jack protested.

"Can you put your opinion before that of such a man as Sir Houston?" asked Tennant dubiously.

"He had no motive in committing suicide."

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