

"Turn to the Right."

"You know the Rue St. Denis, M. de Marce? Well, go down it, keeping the 'Bleeding Heart' on your left. Take the second turning on the same side after passing the inn. The third house from the corner, on the left again, consists of a gateway leading to the Hospital of the Holy Cross. Above the gateway are two windows in the lower story, and above them two more. The knot lay below the first window you come to. Do you understand?"

"Perfectly," I said. "It is something to be a clerk, Simon."

He looked at me thoughtfully, but added nothing; and I was busy tightening my sword-hilt, and disposing my cloak about the lower part of my face. When I had arranged this to my satisfaction, I took out and counted over the sum of 35 crowns, which I gave to him, impressing on him the necessity of staying beside my mother should I not return; for though I proposed to reconnoitre only, and learn if possible whether mademoiselle was still in Blois, the future was uncertain, and whereas I was known to my enemies, they were strangers to me.

Having enjoined this duty upon him, I bade my mother a silent farewell, and leaving the room, went slowly down the stairs, the picture of her worn and patient face going with me, and seeming, I remember, to hallow the purpose I had in my mind.

The clocks were striking the hour before noon as I stepped from the doorway, and, standing a moment in the lane, looked this way and that for any sign of espionage. I could detect none, however. The lane was deserted; and feeling assured that any attempt to mislead my opponents, who probably knew Blois better than I did, must fail, I made none, but deliberately took my way towards the "Bleeding Heart," in the Rue St. Denis. The streets presented the same appearance of gloomy suspense which I had noticed on the previous day. The same groups stood about in the same corners, the same suspicious glances met me in common with all other strangers who showed themselves; the same listless inaction characterized the townsfolk, the same anxious hurry those who came and went with news. I saw that even here, under the walls of the palace, the bonds of law and order were strained almost to bursting, and judged that if there ever was a time in France when right counted for little, and the strong hand for much, it was this. Such a state of things was not unfavorable to my present design, and caring little for suspicious looks, I went resolutely on my way.

I had no difficulty in finding the gateway of which Simon had spoken, or in identifying the window beneath which he had picked up the velvet knot. An alley opening a most opposite, I took advantage of this to examine the house at my leisure, and remarked at once that whereas the lower window was guarded only by strong shutters, now open, that in the story above was heavily barred. Naturally I concentrated my attention on the latter. The house, as the building of stone, seemed sufficiently reputable, nor could I discern anything about it which would have aroused my distrust had the knot been found elsewhere. It bore the arms of a religious brotherhood, and had probably at one time formed the principal entrance to the hospital, which still stood behind it, but it had now come, as I judged, to be used as a dwelling of the better class. Whether the two floors were separately inhabited or not I failed to decide.

After watching it for some time without seeing anyone pass in or out, or anything occurring to enlighten me one way or the other, I resolved to venture in, the street being quiet and the house giving no sign of being strongly garrisoned. The entrance lay under the archway, through a door on the right side. I judged from what I saw that the porter was probably absent, busying himself with his gossip in matters of state.

And this proved to be the case, for when I had made the passage of the street with success, and slipped quietly through the half-open door, I found only his staff and charcoal pan there to represent him. A single look satisfied me on that point; forthwith, without hesitation, I turned to the stairs and began to mount, assured that if I would effect anything single-handed, rather than trust to audacity and surprise rather than to caution or forethought.

The staircase was poorly lighted by loop-holes looking towards the rear, but it was clean and well-kept. Silence, broken only by the sound of my footsteps, prevailed throughout the house, and all seemed so regular and decent and orderly that the higher I rose the lower fell my hopes of success. Still I held resolutely on until I reached the second floor and stood before a closed door. The moment had come to put all to the touch. I listened for a few seconds, but hearing nothing, cautiously lifted the latch, somewhat to my surprise the door yielded to my hand, and I entered.

A high settle stood inside, interrupting my view of the room, which seemed to be spacious and full of rich stuffs and furniture, but low in the roof, and somewhat dimly lighted by two windows rather wide than high. The warm glow of a fire on the woodwork of the ceiling, and as I softly closed the door a log on the hearth gave way, with a crackling of sparks, which presently broke the luxurious silence. The next moment a low, sweet voice asked, "Alphonse, is that you?"

I walked round the settle and came face to face with a beautiful woman reclining on a sofa. On hearing the door open she had raised herself on her elbow. Now seeing a stranger before her, she sprang up with a low cry, and stood gazing at me, her face expressing both astonishment and anger. She was of middling height, her features regular though somewhat childlike, her complexion singularly fair. A profusion of golden hair hung in disorder about her neck, and matched the deep blue of her eyes, wherein it seemed to me, there lurked more spirit and fire than the general cast of her features led one to expect.

After a moment's silence, during which she scanned me from head to foot with great haughtiness—and her with curiosity and wonder—she spoke. "Sir," she said slowly, "to what am I to attribute this visit?"

For the moment I was so taken aback by her appearance and extraordinary beauty, as well as by the absence of any sign of those I sought, that I could not gather my thoughts to reply, but stood looking vaguely at her. I had expected, when I entered the room, something so different from this!

"Well, sir," she said again, speaking sharply, and tapping her foot on the floor. "This visit, madame?" I stammered.

"Call it intrusion, sir, if you please!" she cried imperiously. "Only explain it, or begone."

"I crave leave to do both, madame," I answered, collecting myself by an effort. "I ascended these stairs and opened your door in error—that is the simple fact—hoping to find a friend of mine here. I was mistaken, it seems, and it only remains for me to withdraw, offering at the same time the

humblest apologies." And as I spoke I bowed low and prepared to retire.

"One moment, sir!" she said quickly, and in an altered tone. "You are, perhaps, a friend of M. de Brühl—of my husband. In that case, if you desire to leave any message I will—I shall be glad to deliver it."

She looked so charming that, despite the tumult of my feelings, I could not but regard her with admiration. "Alas! madame, I cannot plead that excuse," I answered. "I regret that I have not the honor of his acquaintance."

She eyed me with some surprise. "Yet still, sir," she answered, smiling a little, and toying with a gold brooch which clasped her habit, "you must have had some ground, some reason, for supposing you would find a friend here?"

"True, madame," I answered, "but I was mistaken."

I saw her color suddenly. With a smile and a faint twinkle of the eye she said, "It is not possible, sir, I suppose—you have not come here, I mean, out of any reason connected with—a knot of velvet, for instance?"

I started, and involuntarily advanced a step towards her.

"A knot of velvet!" I exclaimed, with emotion. "Mon Dieu! Then I was not mistaken! I have come to the right house, and you—do you know some of this? Madame, I continued impulsively, 'that knot of velvet? Tell me what it means, I implore you!'"

She seemed alarmed by my violence, retreating a step or two, and looking at me haughtily, yet with a kind of shamefacedness. "Believe me, it means nothing," she said hurriedly. "I beg you to understand that, sir. It was a foolish jest."

"A jest!" I said. "It fell from this window."

(To be Continued.)

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KIDNAPPED IN ELGIN.

A Clearville Rev Captured by Unknown Men—The Lad Escapes.

CLEARVILLE, Elgin County, Ont., March 28.—A young man, 17 years of age, named John Ferguson, son of Colin Ferguson, went to the lake, half a mile east of Clearville, on Sunday afternoon at about 2 p.m., and the banks being high he went down the ravine up Milton's Creek. As he reached the shore he was seized by two men, supposed to be colored, lashed in a boat with his face down and taken about sixteen miles east to Dunwich, below Conn's dock. On the way down his pockets were rifled and all his valuables taken. He was released and was notified to leave them at his peril. A place was selected to build a fire in the woods near the dock to remain over night, and he was ordered to assist in getting wood. Through strategy he escaped, but was chased by them, and he hid some time under the root of a tree. He succeeded in getting out of the woods, and found a house, pretty well exhausted through fatigue and fright, and was brought home on Monday by a friend. The alarm was given when the boy reached the house in Dunwich. Several parties went where the kidnappers intended camping, but the villains had fled.

The boy's parents believed him drowned, and their grief at his disappearance was as great as their joy when he returned.

The boy is an intelligent young man and well educated, and his story is verified by other parties seeing the boat on the lake going east, and describing it as he does, as quite a large skiff painted green. Warrants have been issued for the kidnappers' arrest.

HE WAS 101 YEARS OLD.

But Had to be Locked Up on a Charge of Drunkenness.

New York, March 28.—The oldest prisoner ever seen in Jefferson Market Court was arraigned before Justice Ryan on Monday. He was Ulrick Freel, who was arrested Sunday evening for being intoxicated. When the usual question as to his age was put Freel astonished the court by replying, "101 years, your honor."

Freel's story was that he was born in 1733 in county Donegal, Ireland. He came to America 80 years ago, and went to the Southern States, where he made a living as a peddler.

When the war broke out he was in a southern city. He refused to take up arms against the Union, and was imprisoned with a friend named Bradford Jones. Jones was shot for alleged treason, but Freel escaped. He then came north and purchased a farm near Rondout, on which he now lives. His grand-nephew, Manassas Freel, lives at No. 25 New Chambers street. He came to town to visit him Saturday, but could not find him. He was chilled through, and took a drink of brandy, which went to his head. He told the justice he never drank or mistook. He was fined \$1, which was paid by sympathizers in court, as the centenarian had lost his money before he was arrested. Freel is a well-preserved man, and looks more like 60 than 100 years old.

Life's often lost from little ills Which might be saved by little pills. That is to say, if you suffer from biliousness, constipation, dyspepsia or torpid liver use Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets.

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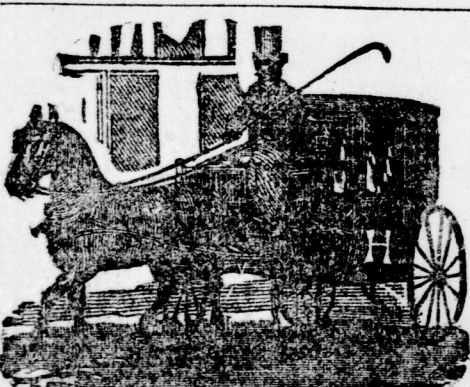
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