

"Purchase both. Buy all resembling it. It of the dream."

"Foolish Lucy! What would those people think? They might run up the prices to hundreds of hundreds of dollars, if seeing me urgent in bidding."

"Listen. He says: 'three, four, four-and-a-half dollars.' I may offer five."

The lady bids. The auctioneer in rapid utterance, with few pauses, runs on:

"Five, five, five; five only bid. Going five, no advance. Five-and-a-quarter, quarter, quarter, half, half, three-quarter, 're-quarter, 're-quarter, 're-quarter, six. Thanks, Squire. Get a bargain. Six, six, six, and a quarter, quarter, quarter, half, 're-quarter, 're-quarter, seven. Thanks, madam. Seven dollars only bid. Going, seven, no advance, seven-quarter, quarter, quarter, half, 're-quarter, 're-quarter, eight. Good for you, John of Ancaster. Eight dollar bid, quarter, half, 're-quarter, nine. Nine dollar bid. Going at nine, nine, nine. All done at nine? And quarter, quarter, quarter, half, thanks, madam. No advance? No advance? Nine dollar and half only bid for that handsome travelling trunk and contents. Contents unknown. Not heavy, certainly; no, sir, not heavy. But may contain precious treasure, documents of value, possibly."

"Nine and half only bid. 'Re-quarter, 're-quarter, 're-quarter, ten. Obligated, Squire; ten, ten, ten dollar bid. And quarter, half, 're-quarter, eleven."

"Right, madam, to secure this elegant travelling trunk. May contain jewels, shawls, cashmere shawls, possibly, dresses, laces, who knows? Bank bills, railway scrip, who knows? Must be sold, but not yet. If any lady, or gentleman, dreamt of fortune last night—bid for this superior repository of some rich lady's elegancies. Eleven only bid. Going at eleven, no advance. Eleven, no advance, quarter, half, 're-quarter, 're-quarter, twelve. Thanks, madam. I am bid twelve dollars. Only twelve. Done, Squire? And quarter, quarter, quarter, half, 're-quarter, thirteen. All done at thirteen? At thirteen? Going. Go-ing. Go-ing at thirteen. Go—all done? Go-o-o-o-Gone! The trunk is yours, madam. Name, please?"

"Drawing-room No. 3, Golden Hotel."

"No exact name, madam? Very well. Drawing-room No. 3, Golden Joy Hotel."

Mr. Trent Vallery, handsome and sprightly, pink of auctioneers, fine English whiskers, prompt action in selling, puts up another travelling trunk almost a duplicate of the former. A lady's man, he catches the eye of the younger stranger, as she, observing a chafed corner and scratched leather at the end, possibly recalls a dream. Quickly she looks down. Quickly up. Blushes rosily. Gracefully moves away, whispers her companion, glances again at the fascinated auctioneer, and returns to her place by the trunk.

"If that young lady," says Mr. Vallery, in mental converse with himself, "wants this article, and bids with spirit to a fair figure," his fine eye encompassing Lucy at a glance, "she shall have it, shall have it."

And she has it, after a conflict, in which cupidity of two misers inflamed by the charm of gambling, competed against speculative thought in John of Ancaster; against psychoscopic perception in De Peri, and against earnest, passionate interest in this young being of exquisite loveliness. A graceful sylph in whom vivacity of mind has enriched beauty of features.

"Who is she? who are they? who may this beautiful creature be? So richly arrayed, both of them? And to attend in this crowd and buy in person—not through a broker—two half worn lost luggage trunks?"

In that manner sharply observing bidders converse. Says John of Ancaster:

"Made a bid only to enjoy the uncertainty. Did not want the old trunks. But would like to know what is in them. Am a strange kind of being, I am. Don't know how strange I be. Fact. Deeper by far than I ever could get to the bottom of. That is I. As for De Peri, he too, is deep, dangerously deep. Under that over-coat he carries continually on his arm, as if always on the start to travel, he has a small machine concealed, only a disc of glass open to view at chance times. It winds up as a watch; and unfolds a ribbon of paper, smelling of demoniacal chemicals. In secret he reads words and images of thoughts, printed on this by electricity from the eye of one looking at the disc. So, I have discovered, and overheard, by help of his boy Dod. Did you observe his dull, grey eyes kindle on that beautiful young lady?"

"Observe? Yes. Glowing, lowing eyes turned on her full ablaze like the electric light. Terrible man De Peri. Tom Begbie says he is 'no canny.' What say you, Mrs. Meston?"

"He keeps what he learns to himself; therefore knows more than you."

A carriage awaits the ladies and they drive to the Golden Joy. Soon they open the trunks, laughing and weeping by turns. They have found traces of Lady Lillymere's marriage. The heir is alive is legitimate.

To be continued.

Sang Prussien is the last hideous colour invented for ladies' dresses.

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HOW I WAS GUILLOTINED.

BY K.

Continued.

The brandy was either very weak, or I was very cold. One glass seemed nothing, and I drank another.

Then we drove on, the bullet-headed man shouting "*Bonne chance!*" a salutation usually given to prisoners who have very little probability of a good chance.

We stopped again at a large gate, before which two sentries were walking. The bell was rung, and answered by a turnkey. The guichet, or wicket-gate, was unlocked, and I was handed in. I at once divined that this was one of the five prisons of Paris. We were ushered into a little uninviting room, where sat a stern visaged man in blue uniform. He demanded my name, age, birthplace, occupation, residence, and wrote the answer in a large book. My height was then taken, and the handcuffs being removed, I was asked to write my name. This ended another official exclaimed "*alles!*" and I was taken into an adjoining room. Here I was stripped to the skin, and my clothes taken from me. A coarse suit of grey check in the prison cut was given me instead, and a yellow earthenware basin and wooden spoon. As we issued again into the outer office, I essayed to learn the meaning of all this. None spoke, though they all smiled sarcastically.

"I tell you," said I indignantly, "this is an outrage on an innocent man, and the British Government will soon demand satisfaction. Tell me of what I am accused?"

In answer to which a turnkey opened a small door, and rudely pushed me out. We traversed a large court yard with trees planted in it, and ascended several flights of stairs into a gloomy corridor, with rooms opening on either hand. One of these he unlocked, and I found myself in a small room containing a bed, a chair, a table, and a stove. He sat down on the chair and put his lantern on the table while I undressed and got into bed. My taciturn guide would answer no questions, and seeing I was prepared to sleep, he rose and carefully whispered:

"You are to be *au secret!*"

Then he locked the room and barred it on the outside. I resolved to postpone reflection until daylight, although sorely puzzled by this last communication. The habit of rigid mental control has enabled me to lay by in the store house of memory any given subject for future consideration. This present one evidently needed a more collected brain than I then possessed, and I therefore yielded gladly to sleep.

I had not slept long, so it seemed, ere I was awoke by a large bell. The whole establishment at once seemed alive. The doors in the corridor were unlocked, but when mine was reached he passed on and left it locked. Accordingly I continued in bed, until the various voices compelled me to rise. There was no water, so I could not wash. A small iron-barred window looked on to the courtyard we had traversed through before. Four rows of trees planted in a square relieved the gloominess of the prospect. In this space four or five hundred men of all ages and aspects, from fourteen to eighty, were passing up and down. Some endeavoured to perform their ablutions at the pump, wiping on pocket-handkerchiefs, or the towels of one another. A comb seemed a rare convenience, for one was passed round through twenty or more hands. Another bell rang, and the whole crowd dispersed into their workshops. In such a monotonous place work must be a boon. Having been accustomed to confinement in my own study, I did not feel so gloomy as I might otherwise have done. I tried the window and found it would open. This was fortunate. To inhale the fresh morning breeze was something, and my hot head felt comforted. But I vainly endeavoured to shape out some meaning for the strange events that had occurred. It was by no means satisfactory to know that I was associated with the Republican party, nicknamed *Reds*, objects of special aversion to the Government. Or, to recall the many instances in which persons had been confined by an arbitrary will, without having committed any crimes, save in the imagination of the oppressors. It is mere folly to talk of the *mens conscia recti* supporting a man under such circumstances. That I was guiltless only added to the poignancy of my sufferings.

The door opened, and a stout good-looking priest entered. I was delighted. His bearing was courteous. But he had his instructions, and was reticent on the one point upon which I desired information. But he would do all he could to alleviate my captivity. I wrote a note in his pocket-book to a dear friend, acquainting him of my disaster, which the *Aumonier* promised to take.

"I shall come and see you often," he said, "for I regret to say you are *au secret!* that is, no one may see you, nor may you write to any one. I am exceeding my duty in taking this message."

I thanked him heartily, and he departed, promising that I should have other clothing,

books and food. A few hours later, which seemed an age, one of my own trunks came, with a plentiful supply of linen, clothes, and, most valuable of all, my writing-case, and a few books. My meals came regularly, of good food and wine. Some kind friend was watching over me. Was it the priest? He came often, and I felt inclined to trust him. But I had heard that the Jesuits often act as amateur detectives, gaining the confidence of their victims only to betray. He brought me books and a Breviary and book of Meditations. The latter was the well-known "*Reflections on Death*, by S. Alphonsus Liguori." He commended it warmly to me, especially Meditation II. After he had gone, I turned and looked at it, when I discovered a slip of paper on which was written:

"Thoughts very profitable for one who has only ten days to live."

I gazed at it awestruck! The Abbé had evidently intended to give me a warning of approaching doom. Not to commit him I burned the paper. What a revelation! *Ten days to live!* And I was not yet thirty, with scarce any plan in life realized, and, my heart said, with many a sin unrepented of.

Ten days only to live, and unconscious of any crime meriting death. No deliverance, no means of communicating with a friend. I sank down on my knees in an agony of prayer to the All-Powerful for pity and aid! I arose, resolved to go to confession next day, and learn there the real nature of my fate, if possible.

I sat late that night, meditating and reading until near eleven. I heard footsteps coming along the corridor, then my door opened, and two men entered. They commanded me to put on my cloak and hat and follow. We proceeded through a great many corridors and passages, until we emerged into a large hall. There sat a magistrate in his robes, with four or five advocates in forensic costume. It was evidently a court of justice. A sense of relief came over me, for now I should know my accusation and fate. If guilty the stern faces of the court forbade the least hope of mercy. I was asked my name. Then a consultation took place in a low tone among the members of the court. Again they turned to me: had I written such and such articles, and made such and such statements? Yes. Again a whispered consultation in which some seemed to disagree. Finally, the judge turned to me and said:

"Prisoner, your sentence is death. You cannot appeal. I exhort you to prepare at once for Eternity."

I was going to reply, but the attendant tapped me on the shoulder, and motioned me to follow him. We did not return to my old room, but to another large and lofty. There were two beds in it. The guard entered with me.

"The court has allowed you to remain unchained," he said, "but you are not to be left alone till the last. If you attempt suicide you will be pinioned."

The society of a coarse jailor was a severe infliction, and next day I asked the *Aumonier* to have another appointed, who was a whit more cultivated. Accordingly a younger man came, in whom I found many of the qualifications of a gentleman. He told me he had read my writings, and I entered freely into conversation with him on the conduct of the prison. For the first time I learnt its name, the *Maison des Madelonnettes*. Formerly a convent for penitent women, it had been made into a prison for lesser offenders. Seldom were grave criminals confined there although many political offenders were. Pointing out of the window he gave me the history of several of the lesser officials among the prisoners. These rejoiced in the name of *Mouchards*, and were spies on their fellows. One wretch had committed numerous murders in consort with a girl of ravishing beauty named Gillette. She had enticed rich young men to her chamber, and there killed them in their sleep with chloroform, by the aid of her confederate who was always on hand. The latter then carried the body to the Seine in a sack, and threw it in, being careful to fish it up subsequently, and to claim the reward of fifty francs offered by the Government for the recovery of drowned persons. Having a large acquaintance among all the criminal classes of Paris, he was found useful in hunting up malefactors. His sentence was therefore suspended, and if he detected any extraordinary criminal, he would get a commutation and subsist into a respectable detective.

The prison was carried on very singularly. Each sentenced prisoner had to do some kind of work, and received a part of his earnings, the remainder going to toward his support. The making of tooth-picks, quill pens, feather dusters, picking of beans and lentils, brick-making, engine-making, tailoring, shoe-making, and the stamping of the pretty laced pictures sold in Catholic book-stores, occupied every one, young and old. The unsentenced, called *prevenu*, were not allowed to work. The day began at half past five, then all worked from six till eight, at which time breakfast was served out, consisting of a pint of *soup maigre*, composed of vegetables only. The cook stood at the door of each workshop, and each one as he passed out received his allowance. Half-an-hour later, the bell rang

for work, which lasted until noon, when dinner was served in the same manner as the breakfast. It consisted of three ounces of meat on two days in the week, on the other days of boiled haricot beans. There was a *cantine*, at which wine and meats might be purchased. Indeed those who had money could live tolerably. In addition to the food described, two pounds of black sour bread was allowed per diem. The majority of the prisoners were half starved. But the promiscuous intercourse of the men, young and old, made a most successful school of crime. My guard remarked:

"We bring boys here for picking pockets, and after six months' association with older criminals they go away finished burglars and garrotters."

The older men took a fiendish delight in initiating the unsophisticated, exacting a portion of their prospective earnings as their instruction. At Mazas, the cellular system is adopted, which seems a great terror to evil-doers. The *solitude* is more painful than any other punishment. It would seem, therefore, to be the most effectual. At this *Maison des Madelonnettes*, the only repressive punishment is the *cachet*, a dark hole, inflicted equally for all offences. From the statements of my guard, it seemed as if more crimes were committed in the prison than out of it.

My companion was very entertaining, talking when I had only just energy enough to listen, and readily responding to all my questions. So wore away five precious days. *Half of my allotted span of life!*

The curé came regularly, but seemed to avoid confession. When I put the question point blank to him he replied:

"You had better postpone it till the last." I could not help expressing my bitterness at the treatment I received. Once, when my revilings against the authorities were loudest, my guard courteously said:

"What you say to me is sacred, but if any one else hears you speak thus of the Emperor, you will be flogged and gagged."

After this I wisely refrained. By degrees a feeling took possession of me that this man could, if he would, tell me all I desired to know. I resolved to approach him cautiously, on the side upon which a Frenchman is most accessible. That night he was especially agreeable. We had had some excellent wine sent us, and a box of Havannah's. Stretched on our beds, we smoked and talked. Now, thought I, I will try him.

"Victor," said I, "you have lightened my captivity, and I feel grateful. You know I am going to die in five days, will you tell me if there is any way by which I can express my acknowledgements for your courtesy?"

"Monsieur is very good," he replied, "and I will answer frankly. I have a child, a dear little girl, that I wish to provide a good school for."

"Enough, Victor, I will see to it to-morrow. What is your little girl's address?"

"Adèle Victor,
10 Rue des Martyrs."

he replied. I made a note of it on the spot.

"You need not thank me, for you don't know what I shall do. Let me say, however, your wish about the school shall be fulfilled."

"Is there nothing that I, a poor guardian, can do for Monsieur before that sorrowful time?"

"Yes," I answered, almost in a whisper, "pity me!"

"I do."

"Look at me, young as yourself, torn from hope and life, and for what? Doubtless you are like all the rest here, and think that every man that is arrested is guilty. But, believe my solemn oath, I am entirely ignorant of the cause of my arrest. You have a dear little girl, let her plead for me. I see you know what I am accused of. Tell it me. It is the last and only favour of a dying man."

"O Monsieur, they have bound me by a solemn oath not to speak. I cannot break it. But they did not say that others might not do it. Monsieur remembers my little Adèle. I will relieve his mind. To-morrow it is my turn to be off duty, and I go home for half-a-day. When I come at night, Monsieur shall be satisfied."

I thanked him cordially, for I felt as though a great load had been lifted from my mind. Next morning early, I wrote a letter to a friend, directing him to invest three hundred francs a year for four years in safe securities, for the benefit of Adèle Victor, the same to defray the expenses of her education at the Pensionnat du Sacré Cœur, adding that the child should always be taught to pray for the repose of my soul. This document I gave to Victor, who received it gratefully. I had exceeded his utmost expectations.

The time was very slow, while I had to put up with the society of the other guard, who was surly and ill-natured. At length the evening came, and with it Victor. He brought my supper, and I invited him to a glass of wine. After the meal, we lit our cigars, and he told me the news of the outside world. It seemed as if I had been incarcerated for years, instead of a few days. As the hours wore on, my anxiety caused me to relapse into silence, and I waited impatiently for Victor to speak on the subject, although I said nothing. He