

A DOCTOR'S VISIT. HOW HE RECOVERED FROM A WIFE. Dr Paul Ventnor sat alone in his office, his hands clasped on his knees, his eyes fixed upon vacancy. Someone pulled the bell. He opened the door and a lady entered. She was closely veiled.

'I wish you to call upon my father,' she said. 'What is his malady?' asked the doctor. 'He has a strange halitination concerning his food,' she slowly replied. 'For days at a time nothing liquid passes his lips. He fancies the water to be filled with the finest of poisons.'

'Give me your address,' 'I'll call to-morrow.' She handed him a card upon which was printed G. B. Branson. He said, 'It may be for me not to call a Physician. Could I not come upon some pretended business of a kind in which he takes an interest?'

'He has houses to rent on Brandywine street,' she said, after a pause - 'to rent and to sell.' 'Very good,' rejoined the doctor, 'that will serve me. Now, Miss Branson, you must not be surprised if I cut up some queer antics.' He laughed as he said that. 'Watch me closely for a clue to what I would have you do or say.'

'I think I understand,' she simply said. 'Good evening, sir.' The next morning Doctor Paul Ventnor took from a drawer a strong horse shoe magnet. He rubbed steadily upon the blades of his pocket-knife with one of the poles of the magnet, thoroughly electrifying it. He purchased a paper of very fine needles at an adjoining store, then set out for the residence of his patient.

He found the latter to be a man well advanced in life, intelligent and genial - in fact, that the doctor wondered at there being so much of the successful in his nature. The doctor at once opened a conversation about the house on Brandywine street, in which Mr. Branson earnestly joined, and vividly explained points in the speculation.

'Sit, could I trouble you for a drink of water?' the doctor suddenly asked. 'Certainly,' replied the other, 'Kate please bring me...'

'Ventnor,' supplied the doctor. 'A glass of water,' completed Mr. Branson. He was addressing his daughter, who had called upon the doctor the evening before, and she was seated in one of the bay windows. She put aside her book, left the room, and returned with a glass of water, which the doctor accepted with a bow.

He raised the glass to his lips, and then a well-feigned look of astonishment crossed his face. He ejected some of the water, plucked at his moustache, then strode to the window, where he seemed absorbed in an examination of the contents of the glass.

'What is the matter?' asked Mr. Branson. 'Matter?' sharply repeated the doctor, as he turned from the window, there are needles in the water! Hundreds of them, sir. How did they get in? Why did she bring me such stuff as this?'

'He took out his knife, thrust into the magnetized blade, and when he withdrew it a number of needles were adhering to it, for he had actually dropped them into the water. 'Who filled this glass?' he asked. 'Richard,' replied Miss Branson. 'Who is Richard?' asked the doctor. 'A domestic.'

'Send him here at once,' peremptorily ordered the doctor. The servant came into the room, preceded by Miss Branson. 'Did you fill this glass with water, the doctor sharply asked. 'Yes, sir,' answered the mulatto, a harmless looking fellow, with high cheek bones and waxy eyes. 'Did you drop any needles into it?' asked the doctor. 'Golly, no!' exclaimed the man. 'Dar's no needles in it. It's an old corker notion of Mr. Branson's. He keeps 'em all on edge about it.'

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