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BY CELIA'S ARBOUR.

A NOVEL.

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CHAPTER XXXIX.

Meantime we had not forgotten our old friend Moses.

The "Blue Anchor" was a music-hall before that kind of entertainment was supposed to be invented. That is to say, long before the name of music was debased and song dragged in the dust before London audiences of shop-boys and flashy gents, the thing was already flourishing in our seaport towns for the benefit of soldiers and sailors. The "Anchor," as it was lovingly called, stood in a crowded street, where every second house was a beer-shop, and the house between the pawnbroker's. It had a parterre, or pit, the entrance to which was free, where Jack the Sailor, Joe the Marine, and the Boiled Lobster could sit in comfort and dignity, each man with his pipe in his mouth and his pot before him. It was a long, high, and narrow room. At the end stood a platform, where the performances took place, and under the platform, just as you may see in the present London houses, was a table where the proprietor, acting as Chairman, announced the songs and dances, called order, and superintended the comfort of his guests. A small and select band of admirers rallied round the Chairman, and were privileged, not only to call for drinks to assuage the great man's thirst, but also from time to time to take the hammer of authority. At the other end of the hall was a small gallery, where young naval officers and subalterns sometimes honoured the representations by their appearance. It was to this gallery that we repaired, Leonard and I, accompanied by a second Lieutenant of the Navy. He was a cheerful youth, of smiling demeanour, whose chief merit in my eyes was his unbounded admiration for Leonard. He met us by accident, and volunteered to join us, not knowing the nature of our quest: on being informed that there might be a row, he became the more eager to come with us. The fervent prayer of every young naval officer on every possible occasion that there may be a row is surely a healthy distinguishing characteristic of the Navy. Certainly the members of no other service or profession with which I am acquainted are so desirous of a fight on any possible occasion.

We went, therefore, into the gallery, where there were a dining not wisely, but too well. There was an interval in the performance, and a buzz of conversation going on. Now and then one of the audience would lift up his voice with a snatch of a chorus, to be taken up by his neighbours, or, if it was a favourite, by the whole audience.

We looked about the room. No Moses had arrived yet. That was quite certain. Because from our gallery we could see everybody in the hall, and there was no doubt about our recognizing Moses—so old a friend.

We sat down in the front row and looked on. Down came the hammer, with some inaudible remarks from the Chair. There was silence for a moment, and then a shout, not of applause, but of derision, as a man, dressed in sailor rig, bounded on the stage and began to dance a hornpipe.

"Where was you shipped, mate?" "When were you last paid off?" There was no denying the dance, which was faithfully executed, but, in consequence of the absence of some professional detail, probably in the dancer's get-up, the sailors with one consent refused to recognize him as a brother. The row grew tremendous as the performer went on, resolutely refusing to recognize any objection raised to his personal appearance. At last a stalwart young fellow bounded from a table in the auditorium to the platform, coolly hustled the professional with a hitch or two of his shoulder off the stage, and proceeded to execute the hornpipe himself, amid the exclamations of his comrades and brethren of the sister services. The band, consisting of two fiddles, a harp, and a cornet, went on playing steadily whatever happened in the house. It was like Wassielewski, fiddling while the sailors sung, danced, and danced—himself unregarding.

The dance over, and the applause subsided, the young fellow jumped back to his place, and down came the Chairman's knocker again. Sam Trollope, he announced, this time—without any prefix or handle to the name, as if one would say Charles Dickens, or Julius Caesar—was about to sing the Song of the Day.

The illustrious Sam, who was a popular favourite, and received the vociferous applause as something due to real merit, appeared in a suit of shore-going togs. He wore a coat all tails, with a hat all brim, and trousers of which one leg was gone, and the other going. Boots without socks, a ragged shirt, and a red kerchief tied around his neck, completed a garb, which coupled with the fellow's face of low cunning and inextinguishable drollery, made him up into as complete an habitual criminal as you are likely to meet outside of Short's Gardens. He brandished a short stick, with a short preliminary walk across the stage, and then began the following:

"Tis O! for a gay and a gallant bark,
A brisk and a lively breeze,
A bully crew and a captain too."

To carry me o'er the seas,
To carry me o'er the seas, my boys,
To my own true love so gay,
For she's talking of a trip
In a Government ship,
Ten thousand miles away.
Then blow, ye winds, heigho!
For a roving we will go,
I'll stay no more on England's shore,
Then let the music play,
For I'm off by the morning train
Across the raging main,
I'm on the rove to my own true love,
Ten thousand miles away.

My true love she was beautiful,
My true love she was fair,
Her eyes were blue as the violets true,
And crimson was her hair,
And crimson was her hair, my boys,
But while I sing this lay
She's doing of the grand
In a distant land,
Ten thousand miles away.

The sun may shine through a London fog,
The Thames run bright and clear,
The ocean brine may turn to wine,
Ere I forget my dear,
Ere I forget my dear, my boys,
The Landlord his quarter day,
For I never can forget
My own dear pet,
Ten thousand miles away.

Oh! dark and dismal was the day
When last I saw my Meg,
She'd a Government band around each hand,
Another one round each leg,
Another one round each leg, my boys,
Dressed all in a suit of grey,
"My love," said she,
"Remember me,"
Ten thousand miles away."

Oh! would I were a boy in tight,
Or even a bombardier;
I'd hurry about in an open boat,
And to my true love steer,
And to my true love steer, my boys,
Where the dancing dolphins play,
And the shrimps and the sharks
Are a having of their larks,
Ten thousand miles away.
Then blow, ye winds, heigho!
For a roving we will go,
I'll stay no more on England's shore,
Then let the music play,
For I'm off by the morning train
Across the raging main,
I'm on the rove to my own true love,
Ten thousand miles away.

This ditty, which the singer gave with a rich rollicking baritone, and in a rolling tune, was accompanied by a chorus from a couple of hundred throats, which made the windows rattle and the glasses vibrate. Such a chorus, all bawling in unison, I never heard before. When the last bars, affectionately clung to by voices loth to let them go, died away, the illustrious Sam had disappeared, only to emerge again in a new disguise and sing another song. But, as the hammer fell to announce his return, Leonard touched my arm, and I saw our old friend Moses walking grandly among the chairs in the direction of the President.

I had not seen him for more than twelve years, but there was no mistaking his identity. It was the same dear old Moses. There was no real change in him; only a development of the well-known boyish graces. The blotches upon his fat and bloated face; the swagger with which he swung along the room; the hat cocked on the side of his head; the short stick carried half in the side pocket of his coat; the flashy rings upon his fingers; the gaudy necktie; and the loud pattern of his trousers;—all seemed part and parcel of the original Moses. He was only the infant Moses grown up; Mrs. Jeram's Moses expanded, according to the immutable laws of Nature, which allow of no sudden break, but only a wavy line of continuity. Selfish, greedy, and unscrupulous he had been as a child, just such he appeared now. Was it education alone, I thought, which made the difference between him and Leonard? It could hardly be that, because there was Jem Hex, as good a fellow as ever piped all hands, to set on the other side. Leonard! In a moment he stood irresolute, his hands clenched, just as he used to look in the days of old before he "went for" Moses. He waited till he saw his enemy seated by the chairman. Then he touched my arm, and strode across the benches of the gallery to the door. I followed, and so did our friend the Navy man. We got down stairs and followed Leonard closely as he marched, head erect and with flashing eyes, straight up the hall.

There was a little commotion among the soldiers at sight of him. "Gentleman Jack," the men whispered to each other. Leonard took no notice. One or two of them stood up to salute him. "Three cheers for Gentleman Jack and the Rifle-pit," shouted an enthusiastic private of his regiment. Everybody knew about the Rifle-pit, and the cheering was taken up with a will. Leonard stopped for a moment and looked round. When the cheers ceased he held up his hand and nodded. Three times three. The music, meantime, went on, and the singer made no pause. It was the illustrious Sam again—this time in the disguise of a soldier—supposed to be in liquor, and suffering from the melancholy of a love disappointment, as appeared from the only two lines of the song which I heard:

There I see the faithless one
A cooking outages for her."

But the attention of the audience was at this point wholly distracted from the singer. The Chairman and the band alone paid attention to him: these were of course professionally engrossed in admiration of the performance. For two circumstances, besides the cheering of Leonard, and both of an agreeable and pleasing character, happened at this juncture to call away the thoughts of men from imaginary sorrows. The first was that the middies in the gallery, having succeeded in hooking up a soldier's cap by means of a string and a pin, were now hauling away at their line, while the owner vainly imprecated wrath below. To join common cause with a comrade is the first duty of a soldier. A dozen men instantly jumped upon the tables, and a brief parley, in which strong words were answered with gentle chaff, was followed by a storm of pewter pots, whose battered sides indicated that they had before this hurtled through the air on a similar occasion. The middies instantly ducked, and the shower of projectiles passed as harmlessly over their heads as a cannonade at a modern siege. The storm having ceased one mid-dy, cautiously peeping over the gallery, seized the moment of comparative calm and hurled a pewter back. Instantly another and a fiercer hail of pint pots. These having ceased, the middies swiftly crept over the seats and skeddaddled, heaving over a spare half-dozen ere they reach the portals and fly down the stairs. When the brave redecoats have swarmed up the eight feet pillars and stormed the gallery, they find it like another Malakoff—empty. Then they shout. Who can withstand the bravery of the British soldier? All this takes time and attracts attention. Meantime, another scene is enacted at our end of the hall.

Leonard stalking up the room, the red-jackets all shouting for "Gentleman Jack," the curiosity of those who do not know him, draw upon us the eyes of our old enemy, Moses. He knows us instantly, and with a hasty gesture to the Chairman, whose glass he had just filled, he rises—to effect a retreat by way of the orchestra and under the stage-door. Not so fast, friend Moses, Leonard makes for him; there is a cry, and the pretender to the name of Copleston is dragged back to the table by the coat collar. "Now—you—whatever you call yourself," cries Leonard, "what do you mean by taking my name?"

"Let me go," Moses wriggles under the grasp which held him by the coat collar like a vice, and drags him backward upon the table among the glasses, where he lies like a turned turtle, feet up and hands sprawling, a very pitiable spectacle.

"Let me go, I say."
"Presently. Tell me your name."
"Moses Copleston," he replied, with an attempt at defiance.
"Liar!"

"Moses Copleston, oh! Won't any one help a fellow?"

"Liar, again!"
"Let me get up, then."

Leonard let him rise, his friend the Lieutenant being on the other side of the table, and a few of his own men having gathered round, so that there was no chance of the man's escape.

"What have I done to you now?" whined Moses. "What have I done to you, I should like to know?" See here, Mr. Chairman of this respectable Free-and-Easy Harmonic Meeting, what did I say to him? What did I do to him? Here's a pretty good for a peaceable man to be set upon for nothing."

"Why have you dared to take my name," cried Leonard—"to drag into police-courts and prisons?"

"Your name? O, Lord! His name! What a thing to take! Which he was born in Victory Row, and his mother—"

Here a straight one from the left floored Moses and he fell supine among the chairs, not daring to arise.

The Lieutenant picked him up, and placed him—because he declined to stand; and indeed, the claret was flowing freely—in the President's arm-chair.

"Yar—yar!" he moaned. "Hit a man when he is down. Hit your own brother. Yar!—Cain—Cain—Cain and Abel! Hit your own twin brother."

"Liar, again," said Leonard, calmly. "Do you see any likeness, Grif?"—Grif was the *soubriquet* of the young sailor—"between me and this—this cur and cad?"

"Can't say I do, old man."

"He has taken my name; he has traded on it; by representing himself to be—my mother's son—he has obtained from some one, money to spend in drink. I do not know who that person is. But I mean to know."

"Ho! ho!" laughed Moses, mopping up the blood. "Can't hit a man when he's down. Yar! Shant get up. Wouldn't he like to know, then? Ho! Ho!"

"Get policeman," said Grif. "Follow him up and down."

"Beg pardon, sir," said one of the men, saluting Leonard, "best search his pockets."

Moses turned pale and buttoned up his coat.

"That seems sound advice, Leonard," I said. "Sit down, and let the men do it for you."

Well—it was a strange performance in a Harmonic meeting, but it attracted considerable attention, much more than the ditty which it interrupted; as much as the flight of pewters backwards and forwards in the lower end of the gallery.

They told off four, under a corporal, and then they seized the unhappy Moses. First the Chairman said he would turn down the lights, but was persuaded by Grif, not without a little gen-

tle violence, to sit down comfortably, and so fair play. Then the orchestra left off playin' to see this novelty in rows, a thing they hadn' done, except in the daytime and on Sundays for twenty years. Then the illustrious Baritone Sam, himself came down from the stage to witness the scene. And, but for the kicks, the struggles, the many unrighteous words used by the victim, one might have thought that it was the unrolling by a group of *secours* of an Egyptian mummy.

First they took off his coat. It contained, in his pockets, the following articles:

1. A "twopenny smoke," so described by the Corporal.
2. A pipe constructed of sham meerschaum.
3. A box of fuses.
4. The portrait of a young lady (daguerreotype) in *diapage* costume.
5. A penknife.
6. Three pawnbrokers' tickets.
7. A small instrument which, the Corporal suggested, was probably designed to pick locks with.
8. Another "twopenny smoke."
9. A sixpenny song book, containing one hundred sprightly ballads.

There was nothing else in the coat, but I was certain something would follow, because I had noticed the man's sudden pallor when the operation was suggested.

They next removed his waistcoat.

In the pockets were:

1. A pipe pocket.
2. A quantity of loose tobacco.
3. Another "twopenny smoke," a little broken in the back.
4. Another box of fuses.
5. More pawnbrokers' tickets.
6. The sum of six shillings and twopence.

That was all, but on my taking the garment, I felt something rustle.

There was an inside pocket in the waistcoat. And in this—Moses made a frantic plunge—I found two letters. One, in a lady's handwriting, was addressed to Mr. Copleston, Post Office, to be called for; the other in what may be best described as not a lady's hand, addressed to Miss Rutherford, Fencham. Now, Fencham is a small town at the upper end of the harbour. These letters I handed to Leonard. He read the address and put them in his pocket.

"Miss Rutherford," he repeated, with a strange light in his eyes.

Moses had recourse to violent language.

"Beg your pardon, sir," said the Corporal.

"What to do next?"

"Let him go," said Leonard. "Or, stay—"

put him outside the place—but gently."

"Ah! Yah!" Moses bellowed, bursting into what seemed a real fit of weeping. "This is the way that a twin brother behaves—this is getting up in the world."

"He is no brother of mine," said Leonard.

"Come Laddy—come, Grif."

The soldiers, when the weeping Moses had resumed his coat and waistcoat, ran him down the hall in quick and soldier-like fashion. As he was being run out, the orchestra played half-a-dozen bars of the *Requies March*, which was, under the circumstances, really a kindness, as it confirmed the minds of any possible waverers as to the iniquity of the culprit.

All was quiet again; the pewter pots were being collected by a barman in the gallery; the noisy middies were gone; the soldiers were sitting down again, and Moses received undivided attention as he was escorted to the door.

Down went the Chairman's hammer.

"Gentlemen! Sam Trollope will again oblige."

Twang, fiddle; blow, horn; strike up, harp.

We went away as the orchestra played the opening to the accompaniment, and as the illustrious Sam began a ballad of which we only heard the first two lines:

As I sat by the side of the bubbling water
Toasting a herring red for tea.

CHAPTER XL.

MORE UNPLEASANTNESS FOR PERKIN WARRICK.

Grip, greatly marvelling, went his own way, and Leonard, seizing my arm, hurried me home.

The Captain was gone to bed; we lit the lamp in the little parlour, and Leonard tore open the two letters with impatience.

That from Moses, ill-spelt, ill-conditioned, in a tone half bullying, half crawling, asked, as might be expected, for money. It was evidently not the first of such letters. It referred to his previous communications and interviews, appealed to his correspondent's close relationship, and went on to threaten, in case the money was not forthcoming, to do something vague but dreadful, which would bring him within the power of the law, in which case, he hinted, he should, from his commanding position in a dock, let all the world know that he had been given to perpetrate the desperate deed by the obdurate and unrelenting heart of his own mother's sister, who rolled in gold and would give him none of it.

"There's a pretty villain for you," said Leonard, reading the last words with a clenched fist.

"I wish to go Strate," wrote Moses, in conclusion, "as I have always agonized Strate. If I am drove to go kraked there shant be no one as shant know it was Misery and your knuelty as done it. I must have a tanner to-morrow or the Day after if you've got to pawn your best black silk dress. Take and pawn it. Isn't that your Dooty? You in silk and me in rags and tatters. Why, it makes a cove sick to think of it. There."