

MIRAMICHI ADVANCE

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Miramichi Advance.

A CONVICT'S YARN.

Jack Tovey, an ingenious youngster who had often done good work for us in days gone by. He showed himself an apt pupil at the mummy business, and when I had rehearsed the attaching of the butter cloths to Herring's figure, as an example of the manner in which it should be done, he expressed himself as being quite able to do the same office for me when the time came.

It was a dangerous game, and only too well did I know it, but I determined to hope for the best and trust to the luck which always seemed to belong to me. I determined to lose no time in carrying out the scheme because, although delays are dangerous everywhere, they are especially so in our profession. I therefore arranged that I should be conveyed to Mr. Pontifex's house in Moore lane arrayed as the mummy in his order on the following afternoon, Friday.

Fortunately the weather was very gloomy at the time and King Fog was over all things. We engaged a spring cart to convey the coffin containing me to Moore lane, and at 4 o'clock on Friday afternoon we set out, my two chums and I. In speaking of myself I should perhaps use the word "it," for never did any live man present so dead an appearance as I on that occasion. If it had not been for fear of bursting some of the butter cloths, I honestly think I should have broken out into hearty laughter, for the whole affair seemed to me one of the finest comedies on record.

At length the coffin was duly deposited in the room, and then I heard Pontifex tell the car men to withdraw the lid. This they did, and then I could feel that the jeweler was gazing at me fixedly, and I knew that if detection were to come it would come now. Thank heaven it did not come! On the contrary, the worthy dealer in precious stones seemed greatly impressed with his purchase and insisted on delivering a short homily to the car men on the subject.

"See here, my good men," he said in an unctuous, satisfied voice; "I have, and admit the work which the ancient Egyptians know so well how to perform. Think of the ages which have rolled by since Ptolemy II lived and ruled! Think of the millions who have since then turned into dust, and yet here am I able to look tonight on the intact body of that very king! Ah, a marvelous science, the science of embalming! Marvelous indeed!"

"The hours went by with a slowness that tortured me. My face was white with perspiration, and though I could breathe through some small holes we had made in the butter cloths, my whole position was so exceedingly painful that I do not think I would go through such an ordeal again even for twice the temptation. I heard the church clock in Cheapside strike the hours, and the interval between each hour seemed like a week. At length midnight struck, and then I knew that my awful rest was near its end. I could hear the servants looking up for the night.

I could hear Pontifex bidding them good night as he passed up stairs to bed, and half an hour later the house was as silent as the tomb. "The time has come," I thought, "for Ptolemy to come to life. Here goes!"

I had provided myself with a ring to which a small blade was attached, and working away with the same I was able after much toil to free my arms, and afterward, of course, the work was comparatively easy, but for ten minutes or so I could not free my limbs being too cramped to allow of me doing so. At the end of that time I pulled myself together, and making a mighty effort I leaped out. Seizing my lantern I lit it, and then put on the overcoat and other clothing which I had concealed in the deep receptacle.

Having put on my india rubber shoes and collected my professional instruments, I went down stairs silently, and soon found my way into the shop toward the treasures of which we had so long turned our eyes and which treasures now lay within my reach. I made a deliberate selection, filling my pockets with the precious stones in generous profusion.

A low whistle outside told me that my faithful pal, Herring, was watching to see that the coast was clear for my exit. I therefore took my way out into the passage, and using my best efforts to make no noise I slid back the great bolts and unlocked the key of the massive house door. Everything went perfectly. The lane was deserted, and I walked rapidly in the direction of the Mansion House, where I was joined by Herring, who burst into a loud peal of laughter when he saw me.

"Ow are yer," Mr. Tollymore said. "Giv us yer'nd. Blow me if yer ain't the coolest bloke wot I ever set eyes on." Then he said no more, and he walked on silently till we reached our den in St. Luke's. Next morning a train from Charing Cross conveyed us to Folkestone, whence we journeyed to Paris, and from there to Brussels, where the swag was duly sold and split up into shares.

My companions, Herring and Tovey, decided that as I had had the lion's share of the work I should also have the same share of the proceeds, and the result was that I was richer by the night's transactions to the tune of some-

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