

THE STANDING ALIBI OF H. STANLEIGH STORME

(By Wm. Hamilton Osborne.)

(Continued)

...were—by the way, where you are. At other times I am not a different man, but I do different things.

"You believe always that what I am here I am everywhere? Can you believe that? After all, if you can believe that, it is more than half—it is all the battle."

"I can," returned the girl. "I suppose," she added, "millions of girls have said that, too, and found out later their mistake. I want you to understand me. I don't want you to think that I am lacking in prudence, or discretion, or common sense. I am dying with curiosity to know what all this means, but I am taking you on trust, Stanleigh—yes, Stanleigh, just this once—I take you on trust, and if," she concluded, glancing at him with a smile of perfect confidence, "you are deceiving me in what you say or what you are, why—why, I am deceived, indeed."

"Some day," he returned, "you will know, and then you can better judge for yourself. As for the rest, I would count myself the happiest of men were it not for this terrible incubus that hangs over me. But we—we'll hope for the best, and as soon as I can, and in the best way I can, consistent always with honor and good faith, I shall be free to tell you everything, and to—claim you as—"

He did not finish the sentence. Instead, he stretched forth his arms. And having stretched them forth, he did not withdraw them.

Ten minutes later, with Helen Dumont at his side, he stepped into the hall and donned his long black coat and turned up his trousers.

He took from his pocket a gold hunting case watch, and, without opening the case, touched a small spring. It was a repeat, and it struck the hour.

"Half past nine," he exclaimed. "I am due now—at the club. Goodbye." He opened the door and placed upon his head an opera hat.

"What a beastly night!" he said. "Goodby, Helen."

"Goodby," returned the girl.

She watched him go and then closed the door.

"What an awful night it is!" she mused.

Then she went into the little room, and, slipping from beneath the pages of a book a photograph, sat down by the fire and gazed at it for a long while.

And there she sat and thought until her maid came down.

"Miss Dumont," she exclaimed, "haven't you retired?"

"Dear me," returned the girl, with a blush. "I forgot about it. It must be late. What is the time?"

The maid consulted a clock upon the mantel.

"It is just half past 12," she said.

CHAPTER V. The First Trial.

It was number forty-six on the over and terminer calendar—The People, etc., versus H. Stanleigh Storme.

The charge was breaking and entering and the robbery of sixty odd thousand dollars from the vaults of the private bank of C. W. Mordaunt & Co.

H. Stanleigh Storme, the defendant, was a society man, a club man, and generally a well-known and popular man about town—which is saying a good deal, for the town was a large-sized city.

The charge against him, in the eyes of society, of his clubs, and of the town, was preposterous—with a capital P.

Ever since his arrest, in fact, the newspapers had heaped abuse and calumny upon the police department and its officers.

The comic papers took it up. Everybody—H. Stanleigh Storme included—considered the affair in the light of a huge joke.

H. Stanleigh Storme was not a stranger in the place. True, he had lived there for only about three years, but he had come to town loaded with the best recommendations and letters of introduction from large eastern cities, and what is more, he had made his advent with his pockets full of money.

He was a man of leisure. Single as he was, and attractive as he made himself, he had been in great demand.

Socially he was a lion, and he was so popular with the men as he was with the women.

For perhaps a year after his arrest

what aloof—he made no attempt to force himself into any circle, the consequence being that within a short period of time he was sought by the most exclusive.

He made no display of his wealth but the banks knew that he carried large balances, which never dwindled, he even kept in the two savings banks large sums which remained untouched.

He paid his bills, and rarely asked credit—when he did so it was passed as a matter of business, and he always settled on the due date, never earlier or later.

Many a mother with marriageable daughters had courted Storme with assiduity and perseverance, but without success. But Storme avoided all tempting alliances of any kind—least, he had done so thus far.

To all men he was the same courteous gentleman.

Whatever mystery had attended his advent was dispelled as the year went on, and now it seemed Storme was a much better known man than many an old-time resident of the place.

It was small wonder, therefore, that the town peeped the chery upon which he was being tried.

The courtroom was over-crowded with the beauty and the shyness, the wealth and the aristocracy of the place.

It was a gay and interesting sight, more like an afternoon reception than a trial.

Storme sat at one of the tables in the hall, with his counsel next him. He faced the jury, but as he sat so, turned now and then, apparently to seek some familiar face in the audience.

Having found it, he simply raised his eyebrows significantly. He did not nod his head.

He felt that it was unfair to his hands to do it. He preferred to let the issue of the trial.

If at these times he sought the eye of Miss Helen Dumont he was captivated. She was not there, nor had she been for many of the very elusive inner set.

Still Storme kept his eyes roving back and forth among the crowd until the trial began.

Burke—a plain clothes man—was on the stand. He had just been sworn.

The prosecutor leaned against the railing in an easy, careless manner. Burke looked first at the jury and then at the prosecutor.

"Shall I tell my story, sir?" he asked.

"Yes, tell your story, Burke," assented the other.

The witness turned to the jury.

"It was on the twenty-third of last month," he began. "I was ordered up on special duty. It don't make no difference where I was—it was the flight of that anarchist row in the hall up there I got through at ten minutes after 11."

"It was a bad night—buckets full of rain an' a hurricane to back it up. It was fierce. An' dark as pitch, too,—half the lights were out."

"I had to walk from Manning's Hall up there 'way across town. There weren't any cars except about once an hour that time o' night, an' I had to get back to headquarters an' report."

"Well, now, Burke," interrupted the district attorney, "tell us just what happened, and talk a bit more slowly."

Burke nodded again.

"Well," continued Burke, leaning over confidentially towards the jury box, "I'd reached about Munroe an' Lafayette streets when I heard the sound of a night stick somewhere in the vicinity. I knew by the sound it wasn't a roundsman, an' I stopped to locate it."

"Then I set out on a dead run for the place. About two blocks away I run into Officer O'Connell. He wasn't rappin' then, 'cause, I suppose, he'd heard me comin'. I knew something was up, for he was long past due at that place at that time of night—"

"Is he here?" interrupted the district attorney.

"He is, sir," continued the witness.

"There he sits, sir. Well, O'Connell, he says to me—"

"The counsel for the defence sprang to his feet."

"Never mind what O'Connell said," he interposed.

"The witness snorted and began again."

"In consequence," continued he, with a triumphant smile at the prosecutor's attorney—"in consequence of a

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conversation I had with O'Connell

hat corner—

"Now, what corner?" impatiently demanded the prisoner's counsel.

"The corner of Washington and

"Monroe," returned Burke. "If

you'll give me time I'll tell you all

there is to tell. At the corner of

Washington and Monroe me an' in

consequence of that I went with him

to the next corner, Washington and

and First street. That's what I

did, sir."

"Well, what did you find there?"

asked the district attorney. "Go on."

"I found this bank there, sir, on

the southwest corner—Mordaunt's

bank, sir, an' O'Connell told me—"

The prisoner's counsel again jumped

to his feet.

"What did you do, Burke?" inquired

the district attorney. "Tell us

what you did."

"Well," replied Burke, uncertainly,

"I didn't do nothin' just then. I was

up on the stoop and looked through

the little hole in the outside door,

and I didn't see but that everything

looked all right, an' I told O'Con-

nell—"

"That is to say, sir," he continued,

hastily, "I stayed there with O'Con-

nell for a time, about ten minutes, I

should say. And here's where the

queer thing happened, gentlemen,"

and Burke warmed up now that he

had reached the interesting stage.

"Me an' O'Connell was just startin'

in to reconnoiter when we heard a

big racket at the front door—it's on

the corner, cater-cornered like. It

was the vestibule inside door he

tackled first, o' course, 'n' we heard

some bolts shook back; 'n' then all

of a sudden something snaps very

quick and loud and the big iron doors

openspout, and a fellow comes down

the front steps. He didn't come

down right away, either, 'or he saw

us there. We feazed him a bit, I

guess.

"As I said, it was dark an' rainin'

pitchforks, but we could see this

fellow come down all right, me an'

O'Connell, an' we both snapped our

It was done clever, too, an' sixty

thousand odd dollars an' some cents

was gone clean."

"Did you find anything else?" in-

quired the prosecutor.

"Not that night," responded Burke,

"but the next day we found that one

of the side windows had been entered

The bars were sawn clean apart, an'

stuck together again with some kind

of stuff. An' the window pane had

been cut an' forced, an' the piece

that he'd cut out he'd pasted on

again. That's the reason we didn't

find it that night. It was done too

clever."

"And did you recognize the man?"

queried the district attorney.

"I did, sir," answered the witness,

an' so did O'Connell. We both knew

him—"

The district attorney visibly trem-

bled with excitement.

"Who was it, Burke?" he asked.

Burke bent his gaze upon the man

at the next table.

"It was the man that sits there,

sir, at that table—H. Stanleigh

Storme."

As he said it, he pointed with his

finger. There was an audible mur-

mur in the court room, which had

been as still as death.

"The prisoner?" continued the

prosecutor.

"The prisoner, yes, sir," assented

Burke. "I knew him well by sight,

sir, an' I saw him well, sir, an' it's

the same man. It's H. Stanleigh

Storme."

(To be continued.)

Monuments in Queer Places.

There are monuments in all sorts

of out-of-the-way places, but one that

is really unique is that erected in a

river. It stands in the Parramatta

River, New South Wales, a stream

known the world over for the rowing

events that have taken place upon it.

This monument, which is in memory

of the world-famed rower, Scario, is

also unique from the fact that it has

been used as the winning-post of the

race for the world's championship,

and is still used as such for local

events.

The Emperor Gorges Himself.

The "Hoel Pao" says that an Amer-

ican doctor recently visited the

palace at Peking to examine the baby

Emperor, who, it was found, had

gorged himself with a meal of swal-

lows' nests (a sort of glutinous mat-

terial), and thus provoked a raging

thirst. The indisposition yielded easily

to the doctor's treatment. The Em-

peror sleeps in a gigantic bed, big

enough for six people! he rises at

six, at once has a meal of rice-gruel

or rice, and then goes to pay his

respects to the Dowager Lung-yu.

A sculptor recently produced the

likeness of a celebrated personage,

whose biography it was mentioned

that he regarded architecture as a

very secondary art. The son of this

personage visited the artist's studio

for the purpose of examining the

statue, but when, after considering it

with the air of a connoisseur, he in-

quired, "Could you not express more

clearly his contempt for architecture?"

The heart of a man is divided into

many compartments, mostly isolated.

Sometimes there is a door between

two of them, or some things may be

joined together, but usually each one

is complete in itself.