POOR DOCUMENT

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The Man in The Basement

By BARON PALLE ROSENKRANTZ

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CHAPTER XIII—(Continued)

"No sentiment, doctor. We have a duty to perform. Jump in and let's go on."

They descended Borglum Hill.

They made slow progress; the road was heavy and sandy, and the horses heavy and slow. The carriage groaned on its wheels, and the driver was a West Jute and took his time.

"What's your plan now?" asked the doctor.

"None," was the answer; "or perhaps a reconnoitering. But look there, doctor, she'll come to grief!"

The doctor looked over the front seat of the charabanc and saw just in front of them a lady on a bicycle, who had evidently lost control of her machine. It swerved to the right and then to the left, and suddenly she was planted in the ditch. Two gentlemen, evidently of the same party, came cycling past the carriage, just where the road made a sharp turn at the foot of the hill. They stopped short.

The carriage stopped, too.

The lady was sitting at the edge of the ditch, looking pale, and in some pain; she was holding her left wrist with the other hand.

Nielsen jumped out, and the doctor also stepped cautiously down from the carriage.

They both approached the lady and her companions.

"Impossible," they heard one of the latter say; "quite impossible."

"English," said the doctor.

Nielsen raised his hat and asked if he could be of any service. He spoke in English, and saw at once that he was welcome. It was better still when the doctor revealed himself as a medical man. The lady had sprained her wrist and was hors de combat; the bicycle was twisted in the fork and useless. The result was a wet compress, made with a handkerchief dipped in a pool of water, and then the lady was given a seat in the charabanc, where the cycle was also taken across a seat.

That was the introduction, and it was a strange one.

The gentlemen introduced themselves as Mr. Weston and Mr. Throgmorton of London, the lady was Mr. Throgmorton's sister, Mrs. Weston.

Dr. Koldby took this remarkable piece of intelligence very cooly, but Nielsen turned red. m

That was, nevertheless, how it was, and not a bit otherwise.

The trio on the road were the people from Cranbourne Grove; only the murdered man was missing. He was not there.

And his name turned out to be Johnson, just as it should!

The charabanc rolled along over the old chausee by Furreby Beck, past the mission house, the church, and the school, into the sandy streets of Lokken and over the clattering boards that covered the gutters up to the market place, where it stopped in front of the hotel, with one wheel sunk in the black slimy gutter.

Now Nielsen and the doctor had arrived at their destination, and Mrs. Weston was grateful, though tormented with pain.

The local doctor was sent for—Dr. Koldby was not a man to do any quack work, or to interfer with a colleague.

Mrs. Weston was put to bed.

But Mr. Weston and Mr. Throgmorton declared that it was higher powers that had brought the two friends to Lokken.

Dr. Koldby did not contradict them, though he was in a high degree unorthodox. Nielsen, for his part, was thinking of Mrs. Weston, her delicate, pale, suffering face, and the dull helpless pain.

The two friends stood in their room at the back of the hotel, formerly a tradesman's storehouse.

"I know what you're thinking about, Nielsen," said the doctor.

Nielsen looked at him.

"She is innocent—and now Miss Derry's shares are going down. If that long, bony Englishman is Mr. Weston, things will look bad for Miss Derry. Nielsen, this is beginning well. Even the most commonplace of novel writers would have thought twice about arranging a meeting and an accident like the one that has been arranged by the powers above to-day. Let us learn from this to be indulgent to the novelists; life occasionally makes its romances very straight to the point, and, queer enough, just in the right places."

Nielsen shook his head.

"We must beware, doctor, of all preconceived opinions, you know."

"We take it in turns to tell each other that," said the doctor. "You especially ought to remember that, when suspected people turn out to be of the female sex and young and lovely. Thank your stars you've got an, elderly, disillusioned misogynist with you. But I'll tell you one thing—I only hope this lady's name is not Amy, too, if so I shall protest——"

"Pat," said Nielsen—the two Englishmen were passing the window, which looked on to the yard.

One of them said to the other in English:

"The doctor says Amy will be all right in a day or two."

The doctor—in this case Dr. Koldby—said nothing at all.

But both he and Nielsen thought of the cat.

And at last the doctor said:

"Nielsen, we ought to have packed up the animal and brought it with us to Lokken."

CHAPTER XIV.

The beach at Lokken is broad, white, and flat—of sand, nothing but fine sand; low dunes of drifting sand, stopped by the way and settled among tufts of rough grass. The dunes have not been there long; Lokken skippers remember in their childhood, when they used to sail on their fathers' ships to Norway, that Lokken was the mart of Hjorring; some of the storehouses of that time are still standing; they lay between thatched fishers' cottages, staring out over the bay. And, no doubt, that was how Lokken looked when the English in 1801 hove to out in the bay and fired heavy cannon balls into the town. The cannon balls are still there, but the sand-dunes conceal the town. The sea has sent its sand to choke it, and the Mid-Jutland Railway has cut it off from the land of the living.

A hundred fishermen—a few hundred souls in all—that is the town of Lokken in our day.

But the sands are broad and white, and in summer time Lokken is full of visitors. When the bay is smooth and bright and the sun sends its beams down over Rudbjerg cliffs, which rise abruptly from the sea to the north and shine over the long stretch of beach that runs south past Blokhus till it ends in the steep descent of Bovbjerg, then Lokken rivals the shores of the Mediterranean, blue and white, with sand-dunes yellow and green, and red roofs up to the ridge of the hills.

And that was how Lokken was looking now, warm and bathed in sunshine.

Down on the beach, just above high water mark, stood the heavy, white bathing machines belonging to the hotel; and Martin and his wife put their backs into it and shoved them right down to the water's edge. The visitors sat dozing in their beach chairs, while the children were playing and digging on the sands. Further out, the bathers, men and women together, joked and laughed in the warm, shallow water, and beyond them the fishermen busied themselves seriously with the smacks and motor boats, as though the holiday side of life had nothing to do with them. They were seamen returned from long voyages, sailors engaged in daily work at home, men of few words and mostly young, and mechanicians; not long bearded fisher folk in leather jackets, such as you see on the walls of picture galleries, but working men of the present day, voters and social democrats.

Nielsen sat in a beach chair, talking English to Mrs. Weston. She had recovered from the accident, could use her hand again, and the acquaintance was made. Mrs. Weston was handsome, slender, with brilliant black hair and black eyes. Her oval face was rather pale, but her complexion was pure and her skin smooth. She spoke little, but evidently liked having a young man to talk to her, and Nielsen talked well and readily.

The two Englishmen loafed about the beach; they would have liked to go sailing, but it was not the custom at Lokken. Now and then they went out with the fishermen, trolling for mackerel, or they would get on their bicycles and take a run along the beach before the west wind, when it was blowing.

Mrs. Weston did not talk much to them; a strangely irritable look came into her great dark eyes when her husband addressed her, and as for her brother, she seemed to dislike him altogether. It was evidently he who was in command. He made all the arrangements with the hotel proprietor, gave all the orders, and he ordered the other two about in a short and sharp tone. They seemed to obey. He was short and thickset, very unlike his sister, though he, too, was very dark. He was marked with small-pox, and had piercing gray eyes, unpleasant and unfriendly. Everybody in the place got out of his way; the hotel proprietor complained of his exactingness and impolite behavior. Mr. Weston was inoffensive, tall, thin, and tiresome. He seemed to be much taken up with his wife, in spite of the unkind way in which she treated him. They were not like a married couple, and they had separate rooms in the hotel.

Nielsen, on the other hand, seemed to please the young lady. He sat next to her at the table, she listened to him readily, and smiled in a rather melancholy way when he talked.

Dr. Koldby sat among the sand-dunes painting, and that disposed of him.

There was much talk about the English people at Lokken. Nobody knew where they came from. They themselves said nothing, and Nielsen found out nothing either. Englishmen have a way of minding their own business.

The landlord of the hotel reported that they had arrived early, before the regular season had opened. The paid punctually and seemed to be well off; they did not get many letters, and they held aloof from other people. The accident that had thrown them together with Nielsen and Koldby was the first thing that had occasioned any sort of connection between the Englishmen and the rest of the visitors. As the earliest arrivals, they had their places at the top of the table, and there they sat and made themselves at home.

The other visitors—mostly tradespeople from the towns of East Jutland—looked upon them with distrust, and continued to do so. Nielsen and Koldby had been registered at the hotel as "English," and the coolness shown towards the English people who transferred to them, according to the traditional usage of the Danish seaside hotels.

This suited Nielsen very well. Without having any fixed plan, he attached himself to the young lady; he could see that she liked him. As for confidence, she showed him none and never spoke of herself, nor did Nielsen ask her any questions. He could see, though, that she longed to be back in England, and that the society of her two companions was painful to her. But he could not make out which was the more disagreeable to her: the husband, whom he seemed to despise, or the brother, whom she apparently detested. The brother had power over her, that was clear; and Nielsen connected this in his own way with the adventure of Cranbourne Grove. As for plans, he had none. As things were there was really nothing to be done; he had first to win her friendship, then perhaps her confidence, and so to build up a foundation, from chance words and expressions, for the suspicion which as yet was formless and vague. It was not a very honorable way, but as things stood it was the only method of going to work.

"Mrs. Weston," said Nielsen, "how is it that you came to choose this side of the North Sea? There are lots of English seaside places on the opposite coast, and you don't seem to care about the country or the people over here."

She shook her head.

"One is not always master of one's actions, Mr. Nielsen. We have to spend this summer by the sea for the sake of my nerves; it is cheaper here, and besides—my brother and my husband wish it. That is why I am here."

"You would prefer not to be here?" asked Nielsen.

She looked up with a tired smile.

"I have so few wishes, none at all, really. I am tired, I long for rest. I like to sit and look out over the sea, that murmurs so pleasantly here. And I like to hear you talk. You talk quietly and pleasantly; only I don't like to hear you ask questions, and there is so much else to talk about besides ourselves. You can talk about art, about music, about books."

Nielsen shurgged his shoulders. "I prefer talking about men and women, and, as you have noticed, about crime and guilt. That is my hobby, and perhaps it bores you. But, after all, men and women are what we have most interest in hearing about, and in talking to you I should like very much to know who and what you are."

"That is a pleasant form of curiosity, isn't it?" she replied. "I am nothing, I am nobody. But you are right to talk about crime and guilt, as you say; that subject interests me, too, especially when you talk about it—you, whom your friend the painter calls a Utopian. Dr. Koldby told me yesterday that you deny outright that there is such a thing as crime. Perhaps then you don't even believe in wicked people?"

Nielsen shrugged his shoulders.

"That depends on what you understand by wicked people. Everything depends on the construction one puts upon words."

"I was thinking, for instance, of a man who does not shrink from any deed, however bad, if only it will advance his own interests. A man who poisons the lives of others simply for the sake of doing evil. A man for whom evil itself is a joy."

"I deny to begin with that such beings are to be found," said Nielsen. "Wickedness is, as far as I can see, only a misunderstanding of the relation between means and object. The best actions may seem bad if this relation be not considered; but that any man should do evil without an object, I do not believe, and let me remark that the object itself must always be, at the least, an imaginary advantage to the person concerned. So that I believe in mistaken calculations, but not in conscious wickedness."

Nielsen said this with a purpose; he thought he saw what she was aiming at, and he egged her on by contradicting her.

"Then you don't believe in crimes and criminals?" she asked.

"I believe in crimes—as for criminals, my definition is somewhat different from the ordinary one. In fact, by criminals I merely understand individuals who, without having a means of livelihood, sponge upon society by preying upon the other members of society; this they do by actions which are not of the nature of labor, but which constitute an appropriation of benefits without giving an equivalent for them. This is a social evil of which much might be said, but it is rather of an epidemic than of an acute character, and the criminals who appear least dangerous, petty thieves and vagabonds, are really the most dangerous."

She looked up. "But what about murderers?"

"Murderers are people who stand in a doubtful position. It may very well be a crime to kill a man, but it need not be so. In war the greatest manslayer is the greatest hero, and we are brought up to honor the names that are connected with the most brilliant wholesale manslaughter. To kill is an action like all other actions—it may be justified, and it may be unjustified. It all depends on the motives."

She sat drawing figures with her parasol in the sand.

"The Scripture tells us——"

"Mrs. Weston," said Nielsen, "let us leave the Scriptures on one side. It has been too much misused to be applied in our case. My contention is, breifly, that we have no right to deprive another person of life except in the case of its being necessary in order to preserve one's own or that of some other person whose life has a value for us. But because it is thus unlawful to deprive another of his life, it is not necessarily a crime; it only becomes so when the action can be included in the category of parasitical actions that I was talking of just now."

Mrs. Weston looked up with a slight smile.

"Then you mean to say that only vagabonds and poor people who don't work can commit murder as a crime?"

"Yes," said Nielsen. "I should be glad to have that settled as a principle. But I must add at once that the designation crime can also be used for all cases where the deed comes under the head of social transactions of which the normal condition is that he who benefits must give an equivalent. A millionaire can commit a murder of this criminal kind. Well, perhaps you don't understand that. I mean, simply, that it is the motive that determines this, and the motive must be of a social crime to make it a crime."

"Otherwise it is permitted to kill," she said. "That is what you mean, isn't it?"

"I didn't say that. You must remember, we are talking of criminals, of wicked people. I say that there are criminals, there are crimes, there are, in fact, actions which must be judged and explained by their motives. If we could find a new name for them, it would be the first step. We must judge the motives to judge the actions, and at present the opposite is what is done. But of course I can't explain all this to you in a conversation on these sunny sands. I only wanted to show you the line to follow. For you seem to take an interest in murder and murderers."

"I?" she said in alarm. "No, to tell you the truth, it is only newspapers and detective stories that have set me thinking of murders. Thank God, most of us pass our lives without coming personally in contact with anything of that sort. But it interests me. You know, it interests everybody."

Nielsen had risen.

"Of course, it interests everybody. I personally have come in contact with a very remarkable murder case—well, I won't tell you about it to-day, but some other time. I can assure you it is interesting, and it will illustrate my fundamental view—which, of course, is best illustrated by examples."

Mrs. Weston smiled.

"You are right there. For with all respect for your eloquence your theories about murder and murderers are not altogether clear."

"I hope to make them so," said Nielsen. "It is my hobby, and I shall do my best to show you what I mean."

"Why me?" she asked.

"Because you interest me deeply, Mrs. Weston."

"It's just lunch time," she said, getting up.

They walked together through the sand-dunes, where a lane had been dug between banks and fenced.

On the beach, by this lane, ran the town drain, stinking and stagnant in the heat of the sun.

"I suppose that is Danish," said Mrs. Weston; "to poison the beautiful fresh air with a swamp like that."

"It is poverty," said Nielsen. "The town cannot afford to build a proper drain, so the gutters of Lokken have to smell and the beach must be poisoned by this swamp."

"In England it would not be allowed," she said.

"In England there is lots of money. But Denmark, as the poet sings, is a poor little land, and Lokken, with all its beauty, is a poor little town. But you, Mrs. Weston, who are quite right in praising the undoubted advantages of your own country—why are you living out of that country, where alone you seem to feel at home?"

Mrs. Weston stopped and looked at him seriously.

"Mr. Nielsen," she said. "You have been a good companion to me during the last tedious days. I feel as if it refreshed me to talk to you. But you must do me a favor—ask no questions. I am here against my will, but even if you were the dearest friend of my childhood, I could not tell you why I am here. Now that you know it is a secret, you won't ask me any more."

"Of course not," said Nielsen.

But now he had found out that Mrs. Weston was here against her will; that there were men around her who did evil for its own sake, and that she was interested in murders.

He could have told himself that in advance—but still he thought it was something.

"Not much, though," thought Dr. Koldby—rightly. After lunch he and Nielsen took a turn on the sands towards Nybaek, which appears, flat and waterless in summer, among the sand-dunes about a mile south of Lokken.

The doctor chaffed Nielsen about the English lady.

"The whole hotel is talking about you two," he said. "At first I left you alone. I thought of course that you were out after discoveries, in you character of avenger of society. But now the fat cloth merchant from Randers and his old woman have dinned my ears so full of spiteful things about you that I begin to be suspicious. Nielsen, my boy, you begin as an original avenger of justice in tragedy style, and you will end as a ladykiller in operretta style, with love and all the rest of it, just like the singer who carries his beloved in his arms into the water every morning, to the scandal of the whole congregation at bathing time."

"You're jocular, doctor." said Nielsen. "And you are so far right, in that the murder itself, as we stand here far from the scene of it and among the living people concerned in it, disappears into the background, becomes something psychologically different from what it was at Cranbourne Grove."

'In which form do you prefer it?" asked the doctor.

"In this form, certainly," was the answer.

"But what will you do?"

Nielsen stretched and turned to the sea, which lay before him, glancing in the sun. "I shall do just what the situation demands, doctor. Let everything come about of itself, and observe—observe until I can see clearly."

"And then?"

Nielsen turned round and laid his hand on the doctor's shoulder.

"Then perhaps I shall shut my eyes and not see any more."

"That is to say, you will give Mr. Armstrong notice and send for Madam Sivertsen without the cat, as I proposed last Thursday. Very well, Nielsen, you know that whatever you do will be well done, as long as you are honest in your motives and don't sail under false colors. But here you must be good enough to remember that whereas, so long as we are dealing with Miss Derry, there was always one way out which I generally take into consideration when it's a question of unattached young men and good looking girls—namely the chance that the masculine may take the feminine and run off with it. Here, on the other hand, we find the feminine partly already provided with a lawful spouse, which makes the case a good deal more complicated. What?"

"I haven't the slightest intention of explaining myself," said Nielsen; "not before we know a great deal more than we do now."

"There may be something in that," said the doctor. "Especially as we know absolutely nothing at present."

"Quite so, my dear doctor; then we are agreed."

"We always are," said the doctor.

And he added:

"Always when your ideas are reasonable."

"So this is the state of affairs," said the doctor: "The family assembled here, with which Providence has brought us in contact in its unfathomable way—leading in this case across Borglum Hill—is our trio from Cranbourne Grove. Mr. Weston is married to Mrs. Weston. He is tall, gaunt, and looks alike a fool, but we can scarcely call him a lunatic. At the worst, he's of rather weak intellect. As to her, I reserve my opinion until she is quite well again. But the brother, Mr. Throgmorton, is just cut out to be an object of suspicion. None of the outward signs are wanting. Scowling eyes, eyebrows that meet, ears flat against the head. In short, he has such a suspicious look that I begin by dismissing the idea of suspecting him.

"The party has been here four weeks. So they arrived here just when they should, and just as the London season began. 'Poste restante, Hjorring,' simply meant that they knew this part, but had not decided on Lonstrup or Lokken or Hirtshals. They have been to Lonstrop before—that is, Mrs. Weston has been there—as Miss Throgmorton, with an elder lady.

"They chose Lokken, were none of them had been before. Note that as a suspicious circumstance, though it really doesn't matter a straw, and then tell me what you are thinking about."

"I'm thinking about Miss Amy Derry," said Nielsen.

"Oh, you're making comparisons. Which of the two comes out best?"

"This one—decidedly," said Nielsen; "she's lovely."

"The very word I used the first time we saw her. Poor Miss Derry! You'll see now, she'll turn out to be the murderess, and these people here had nothing to do with the business, in spite of Mr. Throgmorton's decidedly criminal appearance."

CHAPTER XV.

The days passed, the sea remained calm and friendly, the sun continued to shed it warmth over the scene. Visitors went and visitors came, Dr. Koldby painted and Nielsen idled on the sands, generally with Mrs. Weston. The two Englishmen were rather annoyed at this, but they sought distraction in sport. The other visitors looked askance. Nielsen made no progress.

And the doctor chaffed him.

Miss Derry did not write, and Madam Sivertsen's reports were brief. She could not understand why the two gentlemen kept on the expensive house in London, but they paid, and she got along. The cat was getting fat and sleek. Perhaps it was for the cat's sake they kept the house? She liked the animal; they had become good friends.

The doctor, too, thought it was getting a rather expensive amusement, and Nielsen admitted that it was an unproductive investment; but, good heavens, this was a case, and before three months were past they would have it straightened out. Anyhow, they had the house, and they could always use it.

But the worst of it all was, they had made no progress. They seemed to have stuck. So the doctor decided to lend a hand and make up to the Englishmen, but it did not come to much. He went in for sailing, and hired as mack from an old fisherman, Silius Hansen by name. The Englishmen went out with him once, and then they found a fisherman at the north end of the town, hired his smack, and went out alone.

Late one evening the doctor unburdened his heart to Nielsen, over their last cigar.

"Look here, Nielsen," he said, "we have now reached the point where a general forces a decisive action. I don't think you have yet succeeded in warming Mrs. Weston up to a boiling point. Make haste and do so. She is sick to death of her husband and she is gone on you, I can see that in her. So far, so good; make sure of your ally, and then go forward. I assume, of course, that she is white as snow."

Nielsen shook his head.

"I'd rather not go to work in that way. No, let us make our attack where the fortress seems the strongest, that's the heroic way."

"Oho!" laughed the doctor. "You're a hero."

"Yes, or a knight," said Nielsen, laughing. "These two gentlemen are unpleasant, but we'll make them lay down their arms, I'm hanged if we won't. I'll entice them a long way out to sea, in Bolle Jens' Betty, after lobsters on the great banks, and then I'll open fire on them where they can't get away. They won't be able to break off the discussion out there. A twelve hours' working day at sea is a good thing. What do you think?"

"There's something in that," said the doctor, "but you ought to take them one at a time. Let me hang on to Throgmorton while you go out in Bolle Jens' Betty, taking only Weston with you. I don't suppose you are so quixotically chivalrous as not to admit the advisability of attacking the weakest of the men first?"

"No, in dealing with men the tactics are different," said Nielsen. "You are right. You take charge of Throgmorton, while I sail out with Weston and do the needful."

"What? Tell him all?"

"Yes."

"H'm! Is that wise? Then we shall have to call in the police to keep the fellows in check."

"That wasn't my intention," said Nielsen; "but now I had better give you my whole plan."

"Let's hear it," said the doctor.

"Well, when we're out to sea, I shall say to Mr. Weston that if I have approached his wife and tried to entertain her, he musn't think for a moment that I had any idea of interfering with his rights. You see, the fellow is fearfully jealous, isn't he?"

"Somewhat," assented the doctor.

"Good, again. Then—I had no intention of slighting him, but his wife interested me. A friend of mine, whom he probably knows, as she undoubtedly knows him, a Miss Derry——"

"Ah——" interrupted the doctor.

"Yes, now I play out Miss Derry. Miss Derry has told me that her fiance, Major Johnson, had lost his heart to Mrs. Weston and broken his engagement with her. That of course will only excite him a little——"

"Supposing it to be true," put in the doctor.

"Whether it is true or not, I will go a step further. I will say that Miss Derry will not give up her major, and that I have come to Lokken to find him. That of course will have a disagreeable effect on Mr. Weston."

"Do you think so," said the doctor—he had a wicked look in the corner of his eye; it tickled him to see Nielsen going off on a wrong scent—and this scent was wrong.

"May I be allowed an observation?" he went on.

"Ten," said Nielsen.

"We start with the assumption that the Weston syndicate have murdered Major Johnson. Your companion will therefore be perfectly well aware that the major you and Miss Derry are looking looking for is lying safely in the cellar at Cranbourne Grove, and so is easy to find. Outwardly he will pretend not to understand a word of it, and inwardly he will laugh at you."

A superior smile came over Nielsen's face.

"Thank Heaven I'm not such an idiot as you take me for, my dear doctor," he said. "Be quiet now and listen, and then believe, O thou of little faith. It is quite possible to underestimate the intelligence of an ordinary person."

"Go ahead," said the doctor, pouring out a big glass of whisky for Nielsen. The doctor himself drank soda water.

Nielsen continued.

"We are out in the boat on the big bank, and, as you so pertinently remarked, the Englishman sits inwardly grinning at me. Then I say: 'Mr. Weston—it's no use your trying to play with me. Miss Derry is in earnest. We have taken your house, No. 48 Cranbourne Grove, you understand, and——'"

The doctor could not resist an interruption. "Down in the cellar we found——"

"May I call you an idiot without making you angry, my dear doctor?"

"You may call me a fool, if you like; for I can't be more stupid than you are."

"Then I'll say idiot. Do you really think I will tell Weston that? Good Lord! hasn't our long acquaintanceship given you a higher opinion of me? I'm sorry for you, for I'm hanged if the fault is on my side."

"Nielsen," said the doctor, "it's only a step from too much cleverness to idiocy, and now, upon my word, you're too clever."

"Can you be quiet, doctor, for a couple of minutes?"

The doctor was quiet.

"I shall say to my Englishman, out there on the blue water, that if he won't make a clean breast of it, I shall go back to London, and if I have to tear up the floor in every single room at 48 Cranbourne Grove, I'll do it, for I will have the major, dead or alive. Now what do you say?"

The doctor bowed deeply—and drank in silence.

"Nielsen," said he, "that's what you have to do. It's good."

(To be continued.)

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In order that everyone may have an equal opportunity to earn the cash prizes, we give below an example of Limerick verse:

There was a sick young man named Dent,
Whose money was nearly all spent;
Oh, Doctor, come quick,
For I am so sick,
But the Doctor, to him, our pills sent.

N.B.—Please note that the last line should rhyme with the first two lines.

Below will be found the Limerick WITH A MISSING LINE, which line we expect our competitors to supply:

There was a young girl who took chills,
She was told to use Red Cross Pills;
Said the Druggist who knew her:
"I know they are pure

(Fill in the line above). As a last WORD for the missing line, we would suggest the use of any one of the following words: 'ILLS,' 'BILLS,' 'PILLS,' 'THRILLS,' 'WILLS,' 'MILLS,' 'KILLS.' They all rhyme with the endings of the first two lines in the verse.

CONDITIONS

To the person who supplies the best and most appropriate last line, we will give the sum of $50.00 in cash; to the second best, we will give $25.00 in cash; to the third best, we will give $20.00 in cash; to the fourth best, we will give $10.00 in cash; to the fifth best, we will give $15.00 in cash; and to the sixth best, we will give $10.00 in cash; to the seventh, who supply the next best seven answers, we will give seven prizes of $5.00 each. We will also give watches, bracelets, rings, pins, etc., in order of merit.

There is another simple condition attached to this contest about which we will write you as soon as we have received your answer to the above. THIS CONDITION DOES NOT INVOLVE THE SPENDING OF ANY OF YOUR MONEY.

The judging of the Limericks will be in the hands of a committee of three gentlemen of undoubted integrity who have no connection with this office. No employee of ours or any of their relatives will be allowed to compete, and the committee's judgment must be accepted as final.

I agree to abide by the decision of the committee of three appointed by the Sawyer Medicine Co. and enter this competition on that distinct understanding.

SIGNATURE _____

ADDRESS _____

State whether we are to address you as Mr., Mrs. or Miss _____

Please write very plainly. Cut out this adv. and send it to us after filing in the blank line. The filling in of the missing line may take a little thought and time, but it is time and energy well spent. We guarantee that if you send in ANY KIND of an answer you will receive one of the above prizes, provided you comply with the simple condition about which we will write you. DO NOT SEND ANY MONEY.

THE SAWYER MEDICINE CO. DEPT. 3 MONTREAL

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

[The opinions of correspondents are not necessarily those of The Telegraph. This newspaper does not undertake to publish all or any of the letters received. Unsigned communications will not be noticed. Write on one side of the paper only. Communications must be plainly written; otherwise they will be rejected. Stamps should be enclosed if return of manuscript is desired in case it is not used. The name and address of the writer should be sent with every letter as evidence of good faith.—Ed. Telegraph.]

The Milk Situation.

To the Editor of The Telegraph:

Sir,—Having just noticed an article in the Times of tonight dealing with the milk question, I hasten to write you to correct an impression they seem to have regarding the Kings County Milk Producers' Association. They say it had its inception at Bloomfield, and that it is confined entirely to that district. As one of the original members, I may tell you that it had its inception at Norton some three years ago. At its original meeting the entire milk-supplying district was represented—that is from Penobsquis to Jubilee—and it still retains its representation from those places.

I might say that this association has urged upon the dealers in the past few weeks to pay them enough to make both ends meet. We have asked them for thirty-five cents a can of eight quarts, or about four and a half cents a quart. Last winter we received thirty cents a can, and when it was advanced to that price the dealer promptly advanced his city customers to seven cents a quart. That is, he advanced one cent a quart when he had only to pay a little more than half a cent more, and I notice one dealer is quoted this morning as not wanting to advance to eight cents now and talks of forty cents a can.

All we ask is thirty-five cents a can and as he already advanced a half cent more last year than we asked him, why should he advance another half cent more than we ask and talk about eight cents a quart?

I might say that at the last meeting of the association, every one was in favor of taking every means possible to protect the customers' interest in the city that none should suffer, and it was voted to send a representative to the city on Tuesday as a last resort and if the dealers still refuse to pay us enough to enable us to meet our bills, our representative is to try to arrange some way to see that enough milk is sent down to supply all necessary cases, such as infants, etc.

We can only add that it is absolutely impossible to make milk at less than thirty-five cents a can at present cost of feed, etc., and pay our bills. We have already been obliged to pay extra prices on almost all wares we get from the city, and we can hardly think that the general opinion will bear out the remarks in the Times tonight.

I feel sure you will insert this letter for us, so that we will get fair treatment by all who will take the trouble to look into our side of the business.

Thanking you, I remain,

A MEMBER OF PRODUCERS' ASSOCIATION.

Nov. 12, 1907.

BRIDES OF A FEW WEEKS TIRE OF YOKE

Two Ontario Girls Seek Their Freedom on the Ground That They Were Minors.

Toronto, Nov. 14—The newly amended marriage act in which provision is made for the annulment of alleged marriages between minors was twice invoked this morning in the filing of writs of summons against William Anderson, of Toronto Junction, and William Fagan, of Toronto.

Anderson's young wife was formerly Miss Margaret Knight and Miss Edna Patterson is the present Mrs. Fagan. Both ladies have changed their minds in a few weeks and want to be free of the matrimonial knot.

Sunday School Association.

A communication just received from the president of the Charlotte County Sunday School Association, W. H. Farnham, conveys the intelligence that they are extending an invitation to the New Brunswick S. S. Association to meet with them in anual convention next year. This is extended on behalf of the Presbyterian, Methodist and Baptist Sunday schools of St. Stephen and Milltown.

There is every probability that the invitation will be accepted by the executive committee at their next regular session.

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C. H. R. CROCKER, South Farmington, Nova Scotia.