

A Woman's Blandishments.

Kept on the keen edge of hourly expectation, weeks and months may yet pass without any summons from the Foreign Office...

The duty is one of great and pressing moment, that official explained. 'We thought it well not to use the telegraph, as we have reason for believing that our cipher code is not the safe guard it once was.'

The hansom was still waiting for me in the quadrangle, and, jumping in, I whisked off to Charing Cross with all the speed a patriotic London hack could be made to exert on behalf of a bearer of weighty secrets of State.

Almost the first sight that met my gaze, when I stepped on board the Calais boat, was the tall, shapely figure of Miss Great-Eyes, as, in ignorance of her real name, I had irreverently dubbed her.

Yet, strangely enough, I was ultimately brought to bless the unstable feet of that child. In the course of his peregrinations round the saloon skylight, he stumbled over the leg of a deck chair and woman have shot head-foremost down the companion way had I not cast aside my just rancour and sprung to his aid.

My solicitude for the injured forehead of my lovely fellow passenger paved the way to our informal introduction. She was not English—that much I had at once gathered from her slight accent.

So fascinated was I with her guileless prattle, with the coquettish naivete which exhibited no suspicion of art, that Calais was reached all too soon for my liking.

Owing to Madlle. Balard's lack of impediments, and to my immunity, as Queen's messenger, from the usual Customs-house examination, we suffered no delay at examination, we suffered no delay at examination, we suffered no delay at examination.

Calais—dark and chill. But I gave no heed to the oncoming of night: I had eyes, ears, thoughts, only for the bewitching girl before me.

We were close on English now; after that, Hal would be the next stoppage. Hal—and good-bye!

'You are not smoking, Cecile said, in an interval of our chat. 'Do not let me deprive you of that.'

Thanking her for the permission, I pleaded a disinclination for tobacco just then.

'But I shall think that you deny yourself on my account,' she went on. 'I like the smell of cigar smoke. You travelled from Charing Cross to Dover in a smoking-compartment, was it not? And you were smoking on board the boat till I—till then.'

So she has observed me more narrowly than I had imagined. The discovery was pleasant.

'Well, if you insist upon it, I replied, 'I submit.'

I took out my cigar-case. It was empty I showed it to her, open.

'In looking after my comfort you have neglected your own,' she said smiling. 'And most men, however they may feel, have an air of loneliness and misery if they are not smoking.'

'I could not stand that. I over-rate my self-forgetfulness.'

I hastened to say: 'I omitted to fill my case, but I've plenty of cigars in my bag the portmanteau, rummaging in it for the box of Havanas which I had brought with me.'

The better to get at it, I was compelled to disembogue some of the contents and lay them on the seat. With the rest I took out the Foreign Office despatches.

'What a strange package!' Cecile exclaimed quickly. 'Something to do with your business, monsieur—with the business of the company whose agent you are?'

'Yes—yes,' I replied, hastily shovelling the cigars into my case.

The misapprehension under which she laboured stood me in a good stead. I never said I was a company's agent; yet in a certain sense, it was the fact. A company is an aggregate of individuals working together for the welfare of each and all; the English nation is I trust, such an aggregate; ergo I, as an emissary of England, was the servant of a company.

Thus as the train slowed into English, I soothed my conscience. While putting my bag to rights again, I mentally prayed that Cecile would not resume the topic.

My bubble of hope burst as soon as the engine's snort announced our departure.

'Are they what you call samples?' she asked quickly.

'Oh! yes, those papers! Yes, they're what we deal in—samples.'

'I should so like to see them,' Cecile added in soft tones. 'May I?'

'Impossible!' I exclaimed. 'They are strictly private—a sort of patents, you know. I have to deliver them intact. It would mean ruin to me if I broke the seals.'

'So leaved over and let her hand drop lightly on mine. A stray coil of fluff hair brushed my brow, her breath fanned my cheek like a warm perfume, her mouth came temptingly close to mine.

'Need it be known?' she whispered. Look!

In her right hand she held out a duplicate of the Foreign Office seal.

For a moment I wavered. Then my reason came back with a great brain throb. The murder was out! Instinctively my hand went to the revolver in the pocket of my coat. What—against a woman?!

I let the weapon rest where it lay. Catching up the precious papers, I tossed them hurriedly into the bag and snapped the catch.

'I will see what it is in them!'

'You cannot, mademoiselle! I answered firmly.

The mobile, Madonna-like face turned hard and rigid as marble—her lips tightened in bloodless pressure.

'My life! her voice rose shrilly, 'my life, the life of one who is the light of mine depend on it. You shall not cross me!'

Swift as sight, she flashed a silver-bitted poniard from under her wraps, and sprang upon me. Throwing up my hand to ward off the blow, I received the blade in the fleshy part of my arm. I gripped tight hold of her upturned wrist. She dropped the weapon, and with the deftness of a juggler caught it again with her other hand on its descent through the air.

A sudden twinge—no acute pain—shot across my shoulders. I reeled, and fell back unconscious.

It was dawn-break when I opened my eyes again. I lay on a broad four-poster in the station master's house, whither I had been carried, well-nigh dead from loss of blood, when the train entered Hal. The station master's wife and the doctor who had attended to my wounds stood at the side of the bed.

'Mademoiselle—my bag!' I murmured, as soon as I could piece together my senses. 'Have you got my bag?'

'They did not understand. No, there was neither bag nor woman in the carriage. I had been discovered there alone. Oh, the shame and disgrace of it! I suppose I must have laid myself out at this junction, for I recollect nothing more until the moonday sun chequered the floor with gold. The stationmaster was in the room. 'They have both been found on the line,' he said: 'four miles this side of Eoghien. The woman is dead.'

more than the child in age—had doubtless followed me from the Foreign Office. How she came to know that I was the bearer of despatches to St. Petersburg I cannot for the life of me hazard the wild-goose guess.

The papers themselves had been taken charge of by the British Minister at Brussels; by him, on receipt of instructions from home, they were forwarded to their destination before I could set foot on ground.

Yes, I lost my berth. I deserved to do so, I know. I was blind, infuriated fool; but let the term be applied to me only by him, who has never felt the power of a pretty woman's blandishments.

Furthermore, I must cry guilty to the folly of ransacking on premises largely conjectural. It is no longer a secret that the papers I carried with me had no reference to Nihilism at all, but dealt with a matter at that time sorely exercising the public mind—the Russo-Aighan question.

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MARRIED.

- Sydney Mines, May 10, John T. McLean to Catherine McDonald. Fenwick, by Rev. J. A. Robertson, William S. Best to Susan Dunbar. St. John, May 16, by Rev. G. O. Galt, James Brickley to Clara Johnson. Halifax, May 17, by Rev. Geo. E. Ross, John Kidston to Bertha J. Geizer. Newport, May 10, by Rev. W. W. Rees, Arthur Gooden to Maggie L. Eizer. Deer Island, May 3, by Rev. A. D. Paul, George E. Ford to Edna M. Lambert. Sussex, May 17, by Rev. H. H. Nobles, William A. Watson to Corrie M. Jenner. Moncton, May 11, by Rev. R. P. Crisp, B. Frank McKinnon to Annie May Tucker. Princeton, May 6, by Rev. C. E. McElhiney, Samuel A. Wood to Clara McLoughlin. Young's Cove, May 14, by Rev. J. N. Parker, Charles A. Wilton to L. M. Fanjoy. Lawrenceton, May 10, by Rev. T. Anthony, Emma A. Stevenson to Wallace E. Halsey. New York, May 16, by Rev. Francis Edgar Mason, Yvonne Louise Montgomery to Annie B. McLaughlin. Oromocto, Sanbury Co., May 8, by Rev. N. McLaughlin Parker, A. McLean to Annie McKinnon. Chatham, May 13, by Rev. Geo. G. M. Campbell, Frederick Gibson Jones to Emma Amelia Best.

DEAD.

- St. John, Christiana Street, 74. Windsor, May 16, Gilbert Foster 65. Fairville, May 16, Jas. Griffith 74. Windsor, May 17, D. P. Allison 74. St. John, May 17, John Hardie 64. Digby, May 9, Mrs. Jane Craig 68. Pausaid, May 9, Mrs. L. Davis 64. April 26, Mrs. J. H. Stewart 67. Berwick, May 21, Daniel Morris 48. St. George, May 15, James Maxwell 80.

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Intercolonial Railway and after Monday, the 29th October 1899 the trains of this Railway will run daily, Sunday excepted, as follows: TRAINS WILL LEAVE ST. JOHN Express for Campbellton, Peggush, Platts and Halifax, New Glasgow, and Pictou, 11:00 a.m. Express for Halifax, New Glasgow, and Pictou, 11:30 a.m. Express for Quebec, Montreal, 12:00 p.m. Express for Lunenburg, 12:30 p.m. Accommodation from Moncton, Truro, Halifax and Sydney, 12:30 p.m. A sleeping car will be attached to the train leaving St. John at 11:30 o'clock for Quebec and Montreal. A sleeping car will be attached to the train leaving St. John at 12:30 for Truro. Dining and Buffet cars on Quebec and Montreal express. TRAINS WILL ARRIVE AT ST. JOHN Express from Campbellton, Peggush, Platts and Halifax, 10:00 a.m. Express from Halifax, New Glasgow, and Pictou, 10:30 a.m. Accommodation from Moncton, Truro, Halifax and Sydney, 10:30 a.m. All trains are run by Eastern Standard time. CITY TICKET OFFICE, 11 Prince Wm. Street, St. John, N. B.

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Dominion Atlantic Ry. On and after Monday, Jan. 2nd, 1899, the Steamship and Train service of this railway will be as follows: Royal Mail S. S. Prince Edward. Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday. Lvs. St. John at 1:15 a. m., arr. Digby 10:30 a. m. Lvs. Digby at 1:00 p. m., arr. St. John, 2:45 p. m. EXPRESS TRAINS Daily (Sunday excepted). Lvs. Halifax 6:30 a. m., arr. in Digby 12:30 p. m. Lvs. Digby 1:00 p. m., arr. Yarmouth 3:30 p. m. Lvs. Yarmouth 5:00 a. m., arr. Digby 11:30 a. m. Lvs. Digby 11:30 a. m., arr. Halifax 2:45 p. m. Lvs. Annapolis 7:30 a. m., Monday, Thursday and Saturday. Lvs. Digby 8:30 p. m., Monday, Thursday and Saturday. S. S. Prince George. By far the finest and fastest steamer plying out of Boston. Leaves Yarmouth, N. B., every Monday and Thursday, immediately on arrival of the Express train arriving in Boston early next morning. Returning leaves Long Wharf, Boston, every Sunday and Wednesday at 4:00 p. m. Unusually quick cuisine on Dominion Atlantic Railway Steamship and Palace Car Express Trains. Steamships can be obtained on application to City Agent. For close connections with trains at Digby, tickets on sale at City Office, 114 Prince William Street, at the wharf office, 1 from the Furber or steamer, from whom name-tickets and all information can be obtained. P. GIFFKINS, superintendent, Kentville, N. B.

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