

thing good. You are not after me, but after the bank."

"Right," returned Van Twiller. "I want to get a shot at the safe wrecked by the gang last night. Great, wasn't it?"

"Great," answered the president, "to the tune of fifty thousand. Yes. But the thing has got to stop. The police say this chap—it's one man, not a gang—is a professional of the very slickest kind. But, by George! they can't lay their hands on him. He certainly is slick."

Van Twiller nodded. "I'm hot to get a picture of that safe," he said. "When I get it, it will be the only one of its kind I have. Can I have it?"

The president laughed good-naturedly. "I believe, Van Twiller," he responded, as he pushed open the inside door, "that you'd crack a safe yourself just to get a photo of it, if you could."

On Friday night Van Twiller left the Standish home earlier than usual, and he was swinging impatiently at his desk when his own bell rang. It was his man—the card sent in bore the name of Mr. John Smith.

"Show him in," said Van Twiller. Smith—if that be his name—entered the room. He had a smile of triumph on his face, which still looked devilish in that green light.

Van Twiller lit a cigar. "Sit down, Mr. Smith," he said. Smith sat down. Van Twiller puffed away.

"Well," he finally drawled, "did you sell that picture to the paper?" His tone nettled the fellow.

"I am waiting for you," returned Smith sharply.

Van Twiller swung around. "Now, see here, Smith," he said, "I'm not going to beat the devil about the stump. You want me to buy this picture. Is that it?"

Smith, without opening his mouth, and looking about the room to make sure that no listener was present, nodded to signify his assent.

"You want me to pay fifteen hundred dollars for it. Is that right?"

Again Smith nodded. Van Twiller smiled, and drew out a banknote.

"I'll give you," he said, "just five dollars for it, and not a cent more. Understand?"

Smith rose. He frowned. "The price," he exclaimed, "is now two thousand."

"I'll pay you just five dollars," reiterated Van Twiller; "it's worth that as a curiosity. I want it because it's very clever work. Otherwise, it's not worth a cent to me. Let me see it."

Smith handed it over. Van Twiller looked at it. "Suppose," he said in-
anely, "suppose I should destroy it?"

"I have the negative," returned the blackmailer. "Destroy it if you will."

Van Twiller rose. "It's clever work," he remarked again; "mighty clever." He drew out another square. "But I can assure you, Mr. Smith, that it is not a marker to that one. Look at that." He tossed it over.

Smith looked at it. Van Twiller smiled. He knew that Smith was turning pale, although the green light could not show it.

"What in thunder's this?" gasped Smith.

Van Twiller once more sat down. His cigar had gone out. He lit it afresh. "Mr. Smith," he said, "two nights ago the County National Bank, of this city, was cracked and robbed of fifty thousand dollars. It was a clever job, and the thief has not yet been caught. He will be, though; for very fortunately a private watchman of the bank snapped that same thief just after the explosion. See? No, don't look at me. Look at the picture."

Smith looked at the picture. It was a picture startling in its clearness. It represented a huge bank safe, with its door blown out, and lying on the floor, some of the wreckage strewn about. That was simple enough. But the wonderful thing about it was that, just inside the safe, leaning forward in a half-crouching position, was a man apparently about to place his hand upon his booty. That man was none other than the man who now looked upon the picture—the man of the name of John Smith. That man gasped again.

"What—what does it mean?" asked this man Smith.

Van Twiller puffed away. He shrugged his shoulders.

"I don't know what it means," he answered, "except that it was a clever piece of work—"

"The—photograph?" asked Smith. "No, no," said the millionaire; "the robbery."

Suddenly the face of John Smith brightened. "But, by George!" he exclaimed, "I don't care how cleverly this thing has been done. I wasn't anywhere near that—that bank. I could show the police that—"

"Who," asked Mr. Van Twiller, "said anything about the police? I certainly did not."

"If" went on Mr. Smith, "anybody saw this picture, and thought it was me, I certainly could prove an alibi. I haven't been downtown at night for a year."

"You might have been downtown that night, you know," went on Van Twiller in his turn. He leaned forward. "Are you quite sure, Mr. Smith, that you were not downtown at eleven o'clock on Wednesday night? That is the night and hour that the robbery took place."

"Eleven o'clock on Wednesday night," mused Smith, still looking at the photograph. "Why, why!" he exclaimed, "of course I was not downtown. I was here, right in this room, with you. What's more, you know it, too."

Van Twiller had smoked out his first cigar. Slowly, and with elaborate care, he lit a fresh one.

"Mr. Smith," he drawled, with great deliberation, "did you—did you expect to prove that alibi by me?"

Van Twiller frowned. "In ten minutes," he said, ringing a bell, "that photograph goes into the hands of the police around the corner, and with it goes the information that your movements that night cannot be accounted for."

Smith drew a deep breath. He rose. He bowed to Van Twiller. "You're a deep one," he said to the millionaire; "a devilish deep one. I succumb."

"Will you send around the negative of that—that newspaper picture—in the morning?" asked Van Twiller.

Smith nodded. "I'll tell the paper," he said smiling, "that you refuse your permission. Is that right?"

"That," returned Van Twiller, "is right—dead right." He handed out a cigar. "You may as well keep that bank photograph," he added; "it will help you to remind yourself of—of me."

The servant opened the door. "Did you ring, sir?" he inquired.

"Preston," said Van Twiller, "will you kindly escort Mr. John Smith to the—outer air! Good-night!"

He Saw What He Wanted.

An American immigrant, Clancy by name, was proceeding in search of work in company with an immigrant agent. The prospective employer was a building contractor. He was found on an eminence overlooking a wide, vacant lot, newly become a scene of bustling activity. Clancy gazed at the unwanted spectacle with curious eyes.

"What can the man do?" demanded the contractor.

"Anything in the line of unskilled labor," replied the agent. "And he is quick to learn."

The contractor turned to the applicant and half jokingly inquired:

"Which one of those jobs would you like to have?"

The immigrant swept the field with a contemplative eye.

"What's that man doing?" he demanded, pointing with one hand. "I mean the man sitting down—not the man with the sledge?"

"He is holding the drill."

"Is that all he does?"

"Yes."

"Is he on the pay roll?"

"Yes."

Clancy drew a long breath of satisfaction and said:

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Socks, 6 pairs \$3.00. Pure thread-
silk socks, three pairs (guaranteed
three months), \$2.00. Medium
worsted merino in black, tan, pearl,
navy and natural, 6 pairs \$2.00.
Same in finer grade, 6 pairs \$3.00.

WOMEN'S. Sizes 8½ to 11.
Colors: black, light tan, dark tan,
pearl, and black with white feet.
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Hose, 6 pairs \$3.00. Light weights
in black, tan and gun metal, 6 pairs
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Lustré Hose, 6 pairs \$3.00. Same in
pure thread-silk, \$3.00 for three
pairs (guaranteed three months).
Out-sizes in black, medium weight,
6 pairs \$2.00, and in extra light
weight *Lustré* Hose, 6 pairs \$3.00.

CHILDREN'S. Sizes 5½ to 10½
for boys, 5 to 9½ for girls. Colors
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INFANT'S SOCKS. Colors: tan,
baby blue, white and pink. Sizes 4
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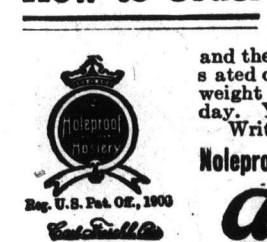
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