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ly. "We'll be at the junction in half a minute."

"Let us have our little joke, Abram," Isaac said, winking slyly. "Well, now, I'd guess as your name was something very like Bill Smith."

"My name is William Smith," I owned. "I am gratified to find that I am so well known—but—"

"Well known!" interrupted Abraham. "Why, that beak of yours 'ud give you away anywhere!" He alluded, I imagined, to my nasal organ.

"I'd make another guess," said Isaac, "as you were changing at Sittingbourne Junction for Sheerness."

I confessed that Sheerness was my destination.

"Just a short visit?" he suggested. I admitted that I merely contemplated a temporary sojourn.

"Expecting to meet a chap by the name of—It's say Bill Bailey?"

"The accuracy of your information astonishes me," I said. "I may, however, mention that Mr. Bailey's Christian name is Josiah."

Always understood his proper name was Alfred, Abraham objected.

"Oh, no!" I told him. "Josiah, I assure you."

"I expect he isn't looking forward to meeting you?"

"No," I agreed. "I imagine not." So far as I was aware Mr. Bailey had received no intimation of my visit.

"You're hoping to be a little richer for meeting him?" Isaac inquired.

"I confess," I said, "that my journey is influenced to some extent by pecuniary considerations. Possibly you are aware that the Curate's Augmentation Fund—the fund for paying the curate's salaries, I mean—is somewhat low, and—"

"And you're the curate?" Abraham suggested. "Eh?"

"I am," I agreed.

They looked at one another and laughed in an unroarious and uncalled-for manner.

"Eggs-ackly," Isaac said. He leaned forward and wagged his forefinger at me. "Now, look here, Bill. You're a sensible chap. You know as well as me that jobs like you're going on are uncertain—blooming uncertain."

"There is," I admitted, "an element of uncertainty in my errand; but I have no serious doubt as to the result."

"Still," he persisted, "you can never tell, now can you?"

I agreed that in this, as in other terrestrial affairs, certainty was unattainable.

"Now, suppose," he went on, "for sake of argument, that you do pull it off. What do you get? It wouldn't be a pony now, would it?"

"Certainly not," I said. I could not refrain from smiling at the idea of Mr. Bailey's donation taking such a form.

"And there's the risk. Whereas Abram and me would give you fifty pounds—good hard yellow sovereigns"—he jingled a bag in his pocket—"just to forget to change at Sittingbourne and go on to Dover."

I stared at him in amazement. "I promised my friends," I began but he held up his hand.

"You would come back by the next train," he said, "and explain it was an oversight—what might happen to anybody. And you could meet Bill Bailey another time, the meeting this afternoon being off in his favor. We'd like to do him a good turn, you see, that's where it is." He winked at Abraham, and Abraham winked at him. "What do you say?"

"Do I rightly understand," I inquired, "that, on consideration of my acting in the—er—very curious manner which you suggest, you are prepared to subscribe fifty pounds to—er—"

"To the Curate's Fund!" Abraham said. He gave a regular squeal of laughter, and Isaac joined in with a gruff roar. They evidently possessed the cheerfulness of disposition which is the reward of benevolence.

"Understanding, of course, that you'll keep it dark," Isaac added.

"Trust him for that," said Abraham.

"Indeed, gentlemen," I assured them, "you may trust me to respect your confidence. I think I can guess the motives which impel you to this generous action, but—"

"I've no doubt you can," Isaac agreed.

"I feel sure I can," I said warmly. It was evident to me that, while they appreciated my charitable labors in the parish, they wished to avoid offence to the prejudices of their co-religionists, some of whom would probably meet them at Sheerness. "They are, I am certain, worthy of you. I have much pleasure in accepting your handsome offer."

"Done!" said Isaac.

He pulled out a linen bag, untied it, poured out a heap of sovereigns on the seat, and counted out fifty so cheerfully that I was reminded of the merits of the "cheerful giver!"

I had barely secured the money when the train ran into the junction. At the request of my benefactors I kept at the far end of the compartment. They skipped out with surprising agility before the train was at a standstill, evidently wishing to secure corner seats in the Sheerness train before they were all appropriated by some very rough individuals who were apparently proceeding to Sheerness.

I arrived at Dover in due course, and after waiting for some hours obtained a slow train, retracing my journey. When I alighted at the station I found that a huge crowd had assembled to witness the departure of a certain "Conkey Bill" who had won a brutal prize-fight. Among the crowd I saw my Judaic friends, looking very disheveled and unhappy. I regret to state also that they appeared to be under the influence of liquor. When they saw me they caught hold of one another's arms and gesticulated most violently. Then they pushed through the crowd in my direction.

Their utterances were somewhat incoherent: but I gathered that they repented of their sober benevolence, and desired the return of the donation which they had made through me. I explained that I had no authority to make any disbursements from the fund, and that their application should be addressed to the vicar, as chairman of the committee. This did not satisfy them, and they abused me with opprobrious epithets. A number of roughs gathered round, and as some of them began to jostle me most rudely, I offered to state the whole circumstances of the transaction. Thereupon the consciences of the Judaic men seemed to trouble them, and after whispering to one another, they said they had made a mistake, and I need not say anything. So I disengaged myself from the crowd and departed.

The man named Isaac wished to follow me, but his companion pulled him back.

"He's too fly for you, Ikey," he said. "Best keep away from him, or he'll have your watch and chain!"

I was returning with the view of remonstrating with him upon his entire misconception of my character, but a porter dissuaded me.

"They're as drunk as lords, sir," he said, "and don't know what they're saying. Why, they've been trying to make out t' 'Conkey Bill' wasn't hisself at all but somebody else in disguise, an' they'd seen him go off to Dover in a train!"

It was somewhat annoying that they should, even in their intoxicated condition, have regretted the contribution, which the vicar was most delighted to receive. I have been ever grateful for their unsolicited contribution to the fund.

When He Comes.

If the Lord should come in the morning
As I went about my work,
The little things and the quiet things,
That a servant cannot shirk,
Though nobody ever sees them,
And only the dear Lord cares
That they always are done in the light
Of the sun,
Would He take me unawares?

Why do I ask and question?
He is ever coming to me,
Morning and noon and evening,
If I have but eyes to see,
And the daily load grows lighter,
The daily cares grow sweet,
For the Master is near, the Master is here,
I have only to sit at His feet.