

From Clue to Climax.

BY WILL N. HARBEN.

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CHAPTER X.

The next morning after the sensation at Mayor Roundtree's, Warrenton called on Whidby.

"Well," he began, cordially, as his friend motioned him to a seat in the library and stepped back to close the door, "you've read about the shooting at the mayor's. That ought to make you feel better; it is additional proof that you are not the man."

Whidby sat down by his friend and crossed his hands over his knee.

"On the contrary, I am more miserable to-day than ever."

"Why, what is the matter?"

"Annette has just left me."

"She has been here again? How very imprudent! She ought not to have come."

"Poor little girl!" sighed Whidby. "She had heard about the shooting at the mayor's, and was so happy over it that she came right in, regardless of consequences."

"Well, surely there is nothing in such a beautiful proof of her love as that."

"I mean, you know, the blood on the chair,"

to make you despondent. You ought to have been glad to see her happy, you ungrateful dog!"

"Unfortunately, she went away more miserable than she has been since the murder. I know I acted the fool. I broke my promise to you about keeping the theory of my having been hypnotized to myself. I could not help it, old man; don't scold! It is done. She expected me to be elated over the new developments, and with that bloody horror over me I simply could not be so. She worried it all out of me finally, and now she is quite undone. She turned sick and almost fainted in the library, and could hardly walk when she left the house. She went home crying at every step."

"You might have known that such a thing would horrify her."

Whidby groaned.

"Poor little darling! She begged and begged me to tell her what depressed me so. She knows very little about hypnotism, and when I tried to explain that I feared I had been made to kill my uncle with my own hands she shrieked and looked at me as if she thought I was mad."

"I am awfully sorry you told her—at least until we have had the opinion of that hypnotic doctor. He may prove to us that you were not hypnotized at all."

Whidby rose and began to pace the floor nervously.

"I shall welcome any advice or opinion he can give. I have just begun to think I did wrong in not reporting everything to Hendricks at the start. It may have been a very necessary clew. I mean, you know, the blood on the chair."

"I begin to think so myself, now that the murderer has actually shown himself in broad daylight and attempted another life. You can easily prove an alibi. You were here all day yesterday—Matthews and I can testify to that; and, besides, I am pretty sure your movements are being watched by the police. I want you to see Hendricks, but not before we have an interview with Dr. Lampkin. He is at the Hotel Imperial. He came yesterday, and at my request has registered under an assumed name. I made an appointment with him to meet me here, and expect him every minute."

"What, so soon?" and Whidby shuddered.

"Ugh! old man, I hate the subject. I am actually afraid of what he may tell me."

"Never mind; nothing can be worse than the suspense you are suffering. You will lose your reason if something is not done."

The doorbell rang. "That must be our man," said Warrenton. "Keep your seat. I told Matthews to let me answer the bell, and I will bring him in."

The next moment the colonel ushered in the visitor. He was short, thick-set, and about 45 years of age. His hair was stiff, very abundant, and dark with dashes of iron-gray. His eyes were of the round German type; were steely gray, and shot with spots of brown, which, with his lashes, gave a peculiar effect to his glance. He wore a heavy beard, which he stroked continually, in a nervous way, and a cutaway suit of ordinary gray material. His manner was very easy, and inspired confidence. On being introduced to Whidby, he held his hand tightly for a moment and looked steadily into his eyes; then he released the hand and sat down.

"I presume you have looked over the newspaper accounts. I sent you, doctor," said Warrenton. "I thought they would prepare you for the slight additional information we are going to give you."

"I had seen them all before I came," replied the hypnotist. "I had no sooner read that the dead man—pardon me, your uncle, Mr. Whidby—had been found murdered with that smile on his face than I wanted to know all about it. No other case has ever occurred that I know of, except that of Goetz, of Berlin, in '88. But tell me, gentlemen, in what way I can serve you. My time is valuable. I want to say just here that I am afraid Hendricks, the detective, has recognized me. I knew him in New York, but had no idea that he had been retained here. I tell you this so that you may dismiss me if my presence could injure your case in any way. I tried to follow your instructions as to my disguise here, but was thrown entirely off my guard by meeting him face to face."

"It does not matter now," returned the colonel. "There are only one or two points that he does not know about our side, and we have decided to place ourselves wholly in his hands after our interview with you."

"I am sure that is wise," said Dr. Lampkin. "Hendricks is the most far-seeing man I ever knew. It would be unjust for any reason to withhold the slightest light you may be able to throw on the matter. Mr. Whidby, you need not tell me what your particular trouble is, for I think I have already guessed it from one look at your sensitive face. You fear that hypnotism was used by the criminal in some way?"

"You have guessed it," faltered Whidby.

"You think Mr. Strong was hypnotized just before his death?"

"Yes."

"That you may have been hypnotized and made the murderer's tool for performing the act?"

"Yes."

"You were led to this conclusion by the blood-stain on your hand, on the portiere, and the drop on your cuff?"

"I have other reasons, which have not been made public."

"May I ask what they are? I thought you testified to your experience in full at the inquest."

"Some things seemed to come back to me later in the day. I can't say even now that I was not dreaming, but I have an indistinct remembrance of being up that night, of walking from the portiere towards my bed, and of striking a chair and catching it with my hand to keep from falling. It seemed to me that I caused my shirt to fall from the chair to the floor, and that I picked it up and replaced it before going back to bed. I told Col. Warrenton about it the next day. He went into my room and discovered a blood-stain just where my hand had been on the chair. I think it escaped the notice of the detective."

"If it did, it is the first blood stain that ever escaped him."

"He did not mention it."

"He never mentions anything. He has been discharged from more than one case for looking like an idiot, but that's part of his method. He knows what he is doing."

There was a short silence then. Whidby and Warrenton could see that the hypnotist was deeply engaged in thought. Presently he said brusquely:

"I'll have to see you again to-morrow, or next day, Mr. Whidby. I can do nothing now. Will you come with me to my hotel, colonel? I want to consult you on a point of law before we go any further. I think it will be necessary. Mr. Whidby, for you to get a good night's rest before we do anything. Where do you sleep?"

"Last night I slept occupying my old room just across the hall," replied Whidby. "I was sleeping there when the crime was committed, and I have had an aversion to it ever since; but I was glad to find that I slept better there last night than I had upstairs in another room."

"You naturally would, and you were wise to move back. If you go to bed with the idea that you are doing even a slight thing for self-protection, the thought will haunt you in your sleep. It is one of the psychic laws. Would you mind showing me the room?"

"Not at all." The three men rose and went into Whidby's room.

"Which is the chair you spoke of, and where was it placed that night?" asked Dr. Lampkin.

Whidby drew it from behind a screen in a corner.

"You ought not to have placed it there," remarked the hypnotist. "The idea of its being pushed away out of sight will remain with your sub-consciousness longer than you dream of. Such things belong to a wonderful science that all people ought to know. Where was the chair standing that night, as near as you can remember?"

"Exactly there." And Whidby placed the chair within a few feet of the bed.

"Ah, yes," said the hypnotist. "I see where you touched it that night with your hand. Now, do as I direct you. Leave it exactly where it is, and to-night when you go to bed place your shirt on it precisely as you did before. All these things will aid you to sleep soundly, and, believe me, that is what you need above all things just now. Remember when you lie down to-night that I have told you positively, on my honor, that you will sleep better than you ever have slept before."

"You mean," Col. Warrenton interposed, "that it will be necessary for him to sleep well before—the—the?"

"A slight, almost unnoticeable, look of vexation passed over the face of the hypnotist, but it was gone when he began to speak."

"Oh, no, only that it will put him in a better humor. He is rather too despondent for his own good. I don't want to talk to him about any test now. That will be for the future. Perhaps we won't have it at all."

CHAPTER XI.

After Dr. Lampkin and Col. Warrenton had taken their leave and were on the way down town, Dr. Lampkin said:

"I must make a confession to you. What I said about wanting to talk over

a legal point was only a pretext to see you alone about another matter. Your friend must be hypnotized to-night after he falls asleep naturally. You see, I had to get the idea of the test out of his mind, for that would have made him unusually wakeful. If he was hypnotized on the night of the murder it was done when he was asleep, and of course, for our test, the conditions must be the same. I have prepared his mind so that he will sleep soundly to-night, and, if everything works well, I think that I can prove conclusively what his actions were on the night of the murder."

"I see," replied the colonel. "I place myself in your hands. Use me as you will."

"You must take him for a short drive this evening at about seven," continued the doctor. "While you are out I shall come in and secrete myself somewhere upstairs. Then you must make some excuse for wanting to spend the night in his house. I would have you occupy the bed of the murdered man, but I am afraid Whidby would be surprised at your choice, so stay wherever he puts you, but manage to send that manservant away for the night. We shall want the house entirely to ourselves. About two o'clock in the morning I shall come to your room and arouse you. Whidby won't awake; I shall see to that."

"You can rely on me," the colonel promised; "but I should like to ask one question, if I may."

"As many as you like."

"From your observations so far, would you think the blood on the portiere, the spot on the chair, and the drop on the cuff would have come from Whidby's hand after simply touching the bloody sheet?"

"To be frank, I am going to work on the supposition that they could not," answered the hypnotist, and he left the colonel deeply perplexed.

A few moments after two o'clock the next morning Warrenton, who had been put by Whidby into the large guest-chamber over Strong's old room, heard a light step on the stairs. He rose from a chair near the window and opened the door. It was the doctor.

"Why," said the visitor in surprise, "not asleep? I thought I should make you furious by rousing you from sweet dreams."

"Couldn't sleep to save my life," said the colonel, sheepishly. "I tried for four solid hours, but it was impossible. It was the thought of the whole uncanny business, I suppose."

"It is always impossible when one tries hard to sleep," said the hypnotist. He closed the door softly, and sat down on the side of the bed. "The idea is to forget all about it, and nature will do all the rest. An effort to sleep keeps the mind active, and activity of thought prevents sleep."

"Where have you been?" asked the colonel.

"Slumbering sweetly on a lounge in the library ever since Whidby turned in. If I had known that you were restless, I could have put you to sleep without even seeing you."

"I shouldn't care to have you do it," said the colonel, with a smile.

"It's absolutely harmless. The fact is, you often hypnotize yourself when you go to sleep. But we are losing time. Before we go down to Whidby's room, I want to say that I have some hopes of demonstrating that he was not an instrument in the hands of the murderer; but, no matter what may be the result of our investigations, it is clearly our duty to confer with Minard Hendricks."

"I fully agree with you," replied Warrenton. "and so will my friend."

The doctor rose. "Whidby will be unconscious of all that takes place to-night, and if it should happen to be very unpleasant we need not tell him the particulars."

"Certainly; a good idea, indeed," Warrenton looked down at the feet of the hypnotist. "But you need slippers. Had I not better get you a pair?"

"No; the soles of my shoes are thin, and I can tread like a cat when I wish. Follow me."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

SOME FRENCH DUELS.

Girardin Killed Armand Carrel, a Popular Idol.

The most prosaic, the most bourgeois of all eminent French statesmen and historians, the late M. Adolphe Thiers, fought a duel when a young man with the irate father of a pretty girl whom Thiers, while anxious to marry, did not wed, because he was too poor to support her, says the Cornhill Magazine. Shots were exchanged without results and the combatants embraced. The famous journalist and litterateur, M. Emile de Girardin, editor of La Presse, fought four duels in 1834 with the editors of other Parisian journals because, the annual subscription of French daily newspapers being at that time 80 francs, he had reduced the price of La Presse by one-half, with the result that the circulation of his paper was enormously increased. In the last of these duels he had the misfortune to kill Armand Carrel, a man of talent and a popular idol. Girardin, who was shot in the hip, had lingered between life and death for weeks before he recovered from his wound, and never, in spite of repeated provocations, could be induced to fight another duel. "Duelling," he said, "is a fault of our education against which our intelligence protests." But in France you must have killed your man to be able to say that.

Cheap Labor in India.

Labor is cheapest in India, where the wages of the laboring classes average something like a three-halfpence a day. A fairly skilled journeyman can earn about 12 shillings a month, and a good mechanic about 18, or twice the pay of a native soldier.

Poisoned by a Thermometer.

A thermometer was left near a stove in a sleeping-room at Dusseldorf, Germany, recently, and the fumes from the mercury poisoned two children so that their lives were saved with difficulty.

SINCE SISTER'S GOT A BEAU.

There's quite a change around at home, and all is now serene. Who once was a war-raged and troubled I had seen. The once dark eyes are bright about you I mean to show.

It's all because a man comes here, and he is sister's beau.

I don't know how she captured him, but for fear that he will stay away I will not give his name.

But only hope he'll always come; I really love him so. For everything is now so nice since sister's got a beau.

I can spin my top in the parlor and generally have my way. Yesterday a boy cut loose my kite, and she bought one today.

She also gave me marbles and took me to a show. I feel so happy now to say that sister's got a beau.

The roosters and the chickens all seem to be so proud. And the cats upon the back yard fence at night sing extra loud.

The birds up in the tree tops their happiness all show. And this has all been brought about since sister's got a beau.

I hope some one will make him come; I only wish I could. Yes, there's two in a week I get for keeping him in wood.

I'll give this money to this man—his calls because I'm having too good a time for his loss that bean.

—A. C. Phelps in New Orleans Picayune.

POWER FROM OYSTER SOUP.

How an Ingenious Locomotive Engineer Saved His Train and Passengers.

He was more than an ordinarily accomplished liar for an amateur, and they all knew it when they asked him for a story.

"I can tell you how I once ran an engine and saved a trainload of people with an oyster stew if you want to know, but I don't think of anything more exciting than that," he said apologetically.

"That's good enough," they all declared. "Give us that."

"All right, then, here goes," he said as he settled back in his chair. "I was once engineer on a road that ran for a long distance through the forests of northern Wisconsin, and we were frequently bothered by forest fires. They were particularly bad at the time I speak of. One day I had run through a big blaze, only to find that there was a bigger one ahead. The worst of it was we were low on water, and there was no chance to fill the tank without lashing through the fire ahead of us. I sent the fireman out to see if we had enough to make the run, but he came back and told me the boiler was almost dry."

"I was puzzled for awhile. It was death to all of us I knew to stay there, but how to get out was the question. Suddenly a happy thought struck me. There was a milk car just behind the first baggage, and I made for it. 'How much milk have you got?' I says to the fellow in charge. 'About 40 cans, I guess,' he answered. 'Why do you ask?' Never mind," says I. 'What's that a those cans in the corner?' 'Oysters,' he answered. 'But why do you want to know?' 'Never you mind,' I told him, and then I ordered the other train hands who had come up to see why we had stopped to tote that milk and those oysters up to the engine."

"They did it in spite of the kicking of the milkman, and when they had brought them up I ordered them all chucked into the tank. The conductor came up, too, and declared it was a funny notion to be making oyster stew in an engine boiler, when we were in danger of being burned alive, but I soon convinced him that it was necessary if we did not want to stay there and roast."

"Well, we finally dumped in all the milk and all the oysters and started ahead. You ought to have smelled the steam that came back into that engine cab. It would have made you think of an old church chimney. 'Whew! How that soup did smell!' It made the engine jump, though, and that was all we wanted. We got up a great head of steam in no time, and the way we plunged through that next fire belt was a caution. As we pulled up at the station just beyond I opened up and began to whistle. A great cloud of oyster soup or vapor shot into the sky, of course, and didn't come down till we were far out of sight. Then it settled like a thick fog—oysters, soup and all. Everybody noticed it, of course, and there was a country scientist in the town who was sure it was the greatest phenomenon of the age. It was raining oyster soup up there he was sure, and the next issue of the weekly papers were full of it—not the soup, but the news of it. After the residents up that way had swallowed it—not the soup, but the steam, they all told about it, and that was the silliest looking scientist I ever saw."—Chicago Times-Herald.

Free Medical Advice.

A good story has been told by a family doctor regarding a little ruse adopted by one of his patients who wished to save the expense of consulting him.

The patient was a woman of good means, but of frugal disposition. One day she began to feel some alarm regarding her health, and, wishing to avoid a costly procedure, made an application to a life insurance company for a policy of large amount—so large, indeed, that they delegated three medical men to make an exhaustive examination of her before they could accept her as a risk.

In due time she was informed that her life had been accepted. She was thus in a position to assume that she was quite well, whereupon she replied to the company that she had changed her mind, and did not intend to take out a policy just then.—Pearson's Weekly.

Clever Wife.

"What in the name of Jupiter did you sew up all the pockets in my overcoat for this morning?"

"Dearest, that letter I gave you to post was very important, and I intended to make sure you carried it in your hand."—Strand Magazine.

NAVAL MISHAPS.

We Make Too Much Fuss and Sensation Over Trifles.

We have a good navy, and we do not appreciate it. As a matter of fact, casualties to our new armorclads and cruisers have not been particularly frequent when their size and their number are considered. In this country every trivial mishap is caught up and exploited by the sensational newspapers, but nothing is said of similar accidents in foreign navies. Barring the destruction of Admiral Kimberly's fleet by the Samoan hurricane in 1889, which no skill or foresight could have prevented, our naval service for many years has been remarkably free from really serious disasters.

There is nothing in our records to compare with the capsizing of the British frigate Captain with half a thousand men in 1870, or the fatal collision of the British ironclads Vanguard and Iron Duke in 1875, or that of the German ironclad Kaiser Wilhelm and Grosser Kurfurst the year following, when 800 men perished, or the loss of the British training ships Eurydice and Atlanta in 1878 and 1880 with 600 officers, sailors and apprentice boys, or the sinking of the British flagship Victoria, with Admiral Tryon, 22 officers and 380 sailors, by collision with the Campredone, or the wreck of the Spanish cruiser Reina Regente, on March 10, 1895, with 420 officers and seamen.

The list of minor accidents to foreign naval vessels in the past few years would be too long to enumerate. But the stranding of the British ironclads Howe and Anson, the flagship Amphion and the cruiser Sultan were far more grave affairs than any such accidents which have occurred to any of our own heavy vessels within this period. We have had our fair share of troubles, perhaps, but no more than that.—Boston Journal.

SHE OBEYED ORDERS.

Couldn't Be Blamed if Some of the Callers Refused to Give Their Names.

They had been discussing that everlasting servant problem, which can always be depended upon to furnish a topic for conversation when three or four women are gathered together. Each had told of her experience with her "help," when one of them said:

"My new housemaid is the greenest girl you ever saw in your life. Her ignorance is a perpetual source of wonder to me. The day after I got her I went out shopping and told her if any one called during my absence to say I was out and ask his name. These seemed simple instructions, but I thought she would need them."

"When I returned, I asked if anybody had called. 'Yes, mum; they did,' she replied. 'Who were they?'

"They wouldn't tell their names," she answered.

"Wouldn't tell their names!" I exclaimed in surprise.

"Yes, mum; but I think one of them said 'bananas' and the other 'rags.'"

"I demanded further particulars. 'I tried to tell them your name was out and ask their names. You hadn't been gone very long when one of them came. It was the man who called 'bananas.' I went and asked him what he wanted, and I went after him and told him you was out. He asked me if I wanted any bananas, and I told him no; that you was out, and asked what was his name. But he wouldn't tell me. It was the same with the other person who called. He called 'rags' and only laughed at me when I ran after him."—Chicago Times-Herald.

Teach Spelling From the Blackboard.

A revival of the old-fashioned spelling school has been tried in some localities, but only to prove that it does not, as a rule, reach the poor spellers. They stay away from it—they are not wanted in a spelling match. The spelling school was for the glorification of the good spellers. It did something, no doubt, for depraved brain cells before such mysteries were ever heard of in connection with spelling books—before physical inertia could be charged to weak valvular heart action, and ugly tempers to microbes, and all the rest. The spelling school belongs to a past dispensation, says my friend, but it suggests what might do much for orthography, if the blackboard were made a conspicuous feature and the attention concentrated upon the reading and writing of sentences, of which the following might be an example: "Mr. Wright, the wheelwright, does not write right, right, with help-ful stories occasionally like that of the teacher who wrote upon the board the three words, 'Boys, bees, bear,' asking the children to construct and write a sentence in which these words were used intelligently, one boy giving at once, 'Boys bees bear when they go in swimming.'—Jane Marsh Parker in North American Review.

Argentine Railroads.

In the Argentine Republic the service of trains is appallingly irregular, chiefly owing to the bad state of the permanent way, which, when once laid, is left to take care of itself. The permanent way in some parts of the line is in such a dilapidated condition that almost every train is thrown off the rails. This astounding fact is contained in a recent report of the railway concerned. The rate of traveling, too, is astonishing. At one spot, on a go as you please local line, no train ever travels faster than 2 1/2 miles per hour. One may vary the monotony of the journey by getting out and taking a quiet stroll along the line, or stopping to pick up pretty flowers. There is no fear that the train will catch you up.—Harper's Round Table.

Noticed Before.

"I see that the scientists have discovered that solid metal actually evaporates."

"Gee! I bet that is what comes of all my money."—Indianapolis Journal.

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