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THE LADY WITH THE SMILE.

Shall woman come to drive man from his place,
And tell where he is laboring to-day?
Shall he at length retire in disgrace,
To scrub and cook and clear the plates
away?
Ah, whatever the result at last may be,
There is one who is in power all the while
Who will never cease from ruling you and me—
The charming little woman with the smile.
The woman may be noble and her mind
May be a mine of lore withal who ne'er
Lets the man who gazes at her visage find
The shadow of a slumber lurking there;
But, however good or gracious she may be,
There's another to eclipse her all the while,
And the one who comes to over you and me
Is the foolish one who has the winning smile.
O the diplomats may bring us lasting peace,
They may stop the cruel wars on land
and sea;
The bloodshed and the tyranny may cease,
They may set the last benighted vassal
free;
But in spite of all diplomacy may do,
And in spite of man's world wisdom and his guile,
He will never cease from paying tribute to
The captivating lady with the smile.
—Chicago Times-Herald.

THE TRANSVAAL DISPATCH.

BY R. E. YOUNG

THANK Heaven, it is all over! I can breathe freely—can vaguely grasp how that one fatal slip of mine, at a moment when the scales in the Transvaal were balancing so breathlessly, might have come near to spelling a national disaster. Looking back, it all seems dreamlike—credible. My hard-earned holiday—I had worked in the Cape government office nearly three years without one—was not due for six months more. Five minutes before the chief of my department called me in and handed me the locked leather case I had not the faintest idea that I was to be let off those six months and, moreover, to carry a dispatch invested, in the light of possible events, with an importance beyond words.

"There it is. You thoroughly understand? Straight to the colonial office, and don't lose sight of it for a moment. It may mean war; it may mean nothing. Whether or no, a dozen newspapers in London would pay any price to be able to publish it before it is read in the house of commons—if ever it is. And if that happened—! Your berth has been booked in the Cape Castle, and you start to-morrow morning."

That was it. I know I went in a quiver of indescribable suspense all the voyage, partly for fear anyone might discover what it was I guarded so jealously in that corner of my cabin, and partly because I was free—free to marry Lottie, whose last quivering words had been: "Go, if you must, Brian—if it means advancement; but I never expect to see you again!" And here was Southampton in sight, and in my pocket the superb blue diamond she was to wear on our wedding day. What an exquisite surprise! She would know nothing until the moment when I handed in my card.

The one person in the world I had dared to trust was her brother, Jack Hamlyn, the oldest and best friend I had. I had telegraphed to his rooms from Madeira, just hinting that my luggage was valuable and telling him to meet the vessel at Southampton; and even in that I had taken the precaution to use a crude code that we had concocted in the old romantic days, at school. His would be safe company until the dispatch was delivered, and then—but the rest was too intoxicating to bear thinking upon.

At last! The Cape Castle had kept her time almost to the hour. Feeling just a trifle sick and strange after the long suspense, I had passed the customs and stood staring round for a sight of Jack Hamlyn. The telegram had surely reached him—he would understand it—he would be here well in time? Yes! A few minutes of uncertainty and then: "Brian, old fellow—yes, it is you!" struck on my strained ear.

"Jack!" I spun round almost convulsively. Himself—and yet somehow, the first thrill over, I felt something like a chill of disappointment. Was it that my old chum's hand had scarcely the old bear-like grip? In the lamplight, too, he looked curiously haggard and aged. I stood, with a sort of prescience.

"Overcome, Brian? I hardly wonder—all this time! Oh, aye; I forgot—I've given up my beard since you went." And we both laughed. "This way; I'm simply dying to hear all about it." He had my arm in the old impetuous fashion now. "Been waiting hours! No, not a soul dreams of your having arrived—trust me! Lottie? Er—yes, she's right enough, I believe."

"Believe?" I stopped dead. His voice had trailed off strangely. "Jack," I whispered, huskily, "you look—you've something to tell me! Isn't she—just she just the same? Her last letter—"

"Why, of course!" He laughed so boisterously at my whitened face that the weight slipped off my mind at once. Nothing had happened! "Do you think I'd deceive you, Brian?" he was saying. "The ideal! Another 12 hours or so, and you'll have the joy of seeing the old Bush slance into her cheeks. But what was it you meant in the cable about—?"

"Twelve hours! I'm going on by the first train—now, at once. I must! Instructions—straight to colonial office, you know."

"Really?" It was Jack's turn to stare now. "There, now; and I've taken the trouble to get rooms at the hotel close here and a good meal all ready for you, thinking you'd start home first thing in the morning. Why, I doubt whether there's any train to-night—all the passengers are stopping. Besides, you couldn't see Lottie till to-morrow, anyhow, could you?"

"No, of course not. Only—" I stood a minute, turning it over. One night could make no difference—the authorities would not be in attendance till morning. I had landed safely, and Jack was here—dear old Jack Hamlyn. "Come along, then; you take the big box. I'm glad I wired now."

Fifteen minutes later we were sitting in a private room at the hotel. The dispatch was safe in my small trunk. If only Lottie could see us at that minute—how her brown eyes would widen! If only the London editors, eagerly competing for information, had guessed at the contents of that little leather case!

"Just imagine!" Jack repeated, craning himself over the red coals. I had just told him; there was no secret in the world I should have dreamed of withholding from Jack. "Er? I'm looking awfully queer? Pooh, it is you who have taken in a fresh stock of vitality out yonder. Dad and the others?—yes, all going well and strong."

"All?" I dropped my voice—I was touching on the family skeleton here. "Er—you don't include Wilfred, do you?" "No change or hope in that direction, I suppose? I've never heard a word of him."

"And you won't, Brian!" Jack whispered that with a hand to his eyes—he had been the last to taboo that scapegrace brother of his. I knew. "He doesn't count—a hopeless outsider—we don't mention his name, if we can help it. Living? No one knows; at least, it's some days since he last came trying to squeeze more money by lies from me, and—and you know what I've done for him in times past. But drop that now. You wrote home about some diamonds—do show me!"

"Turned them all into cash at a profit," I laughed; "all except one, that I've had set in a brooch for—you can guess who. It's in the big trunk; you can see it when we go up to bed."

So we chatted on, till an irresistible drowsiness crept over me. I was dozing as Jack talked; and soon after nine o'clock I caught up the small trunk and declared for bed and a clear head in the morning. The morning—the significant morning! I should be thanked by the colonial secretary himself!

Up we went. Oh! my buzzing brain! Try as I would, tired as I felt, I could not quite succeed in losing consciousness. Had I done wrong in staying here? Might the delay of even those few hours mean danger? Was I quite sure I had locked that door? Most provoking! Once or twice I whispered to Jack in the bed opposite, but only a prolonged "ch-r-r-h!" answered me. Finally I gave up trying, and lay framing Lottie's oval face in that wavering reflection of the gaslight overhead. Heaven alone knew what it had meant to leave the woman one longed for, and now—

Oh, what was that? A clock downstairs had just struck 11 times, and at the last stroke Jack had swayed silently up in his bed and sat staring across in my direction. A query was on my lips, but I could not seem to sound it. Perhaps my eyes were nearly closed, but I could see enough to make me lie perfectly still, while a kind of mysterious misgiving crept through me. Why, I hardly knew—I must have been inspired by sheer instinct. But Jack over there, he had lifted himself out of bed with a queer stealth; he had taken a step and still he stared across in that unnerving way. I wanted to spring up and gasp an end to the spell, but there seemed a mesmeric numbness in my limbs. Why, on that craned face of his—almost chalk-white it looked in the low glimmer of the gaslight between us—was there an indescribable expression of mixed dread and evil? Merciful heavens! did it mean that Jack, my oldest and dearest chum, who had chased butterflies with me in the meadows 20 years ago—

One more stealthy step, as if to make quite sure of—yes—of my sublime unconsciousness. Now he was hesitating, like a man weighing all the odds for and against some design; now he was slipping on his clothes. * * * Futly dressed—hat, boots and all! He took something from his pocket, stole across quietly and dropped it ever so lightly across my face—a silk handkerchief. * * * The thing seemed too paralyzing for sanity. I remember I counted just 60—a minute of nameless horror for me; and not till afterwards did I know why I made no sound or sign. Then my teeth closed on a fold of the silk, and drew it down a little; I could just see. * * * If ever a man's heart

stood all but still through sick amazement, mine did then. The Transvaal's dispatch! He meant to steal it—to sell its signed contents at a price—to set England ringing with news that might hurry on an awful crisis! The key in my trousers pocket; he had found it, opened the small trunk—was half way to the door with the precious leather case. He was gone—no—he hesitated again, tip-toed back and was on his knees beside the big box. Jack Hamlyn, the brother of the woman whose love had been my guardian angel—he alone knew of my return; he meant to rob me of my honor and of my valuables besides.

Think of it! Perhaps a minute passed—and he had not found the blue diamond. Of course! Another minute, and he would remember that, after making it flash before his eyes, I had placed it in the belt pocket round my waist, along with a roll of bank notes. To come at that he would need to rouse me—to kill me!

And he would do it. Of a sudden he got to his feet—had recollected. And now—did I live a hundred years longer, I could never forget how the cold sweat crawled out upon me at that moment—his hands were plucking back the bed clothes. * * *

"Thief!" The one choking word burst from my lips as I panted up. Thank heaven! That contact had broken the unaccountable lethargy and for the next moment I knew nothing except that I really had him by the throat in an insane grip, forgetting all but the one monstrous fact that he had attempted the most despicable part that a man could play upon another. What next? Why, there was a brief, blind struggle, deadly shock and balked design on his part, and incredulous passion on mine. And then—then I had sent him reeling back to the floor in a spasm of loathing. Just the one dull bump—there he lay, quite still.

Dead? I did not pause to know. Dazed, trembling with the reaction, I had only a wild longing to be out of the place before he stirred. How I dressed I shall never know; but in a minute or so I was at the door, the dispatch safe in my pocket. Down the staircase I went, and, perhaps luckily, there happened to be no one at the hotel entrance to intercept me, or worse might have happened. Now I was out in the sweet night air, hurrying I had no idea where. Only to leave the place and that prone scoundrel behind! Heavens! that struggle was shuddering upon me still. The precious dispatch—the colonial office—

"Brian! Brian—it's Brian! Quick—here!"

W—what was that? The wild cry, from a woman's lips, pulled me up and partially back to sense before, as it seemed, I had gone a hundred yards. "Brian!" rang through my confused brain. Was that—was that Lottie's own dear voice?—had the world come to its end? It was wholly too much for my strained nerves; there came a sort of blank. They told me afterwards that I caught at a railing and slid down beside it helplessly. Why, yes, think of it!

A sob, a broken "Thank God! Oh, thank God for this!"—and my eyes opened. What a dream! My Lottie herself, white and sweet, holding both my hands. Quite enough! After that I know what the touch of firm ground to the feet of a drowning man must be.

"Got it, dear—the diamond—for the wedding!" I recollect whispering up, in quite a childish ecstasy. "Shines so beautiful!"

"Better, sir?" asked a policeman. "Aye, better now, old man?" echoed another deep voice, that startled me to my senses as nothing else could have done. Why, the man who had been supporting me in his arms—

"J—Jack!" I gasped, staring wildly. "Yes, yes, we know all—or we guess. Never mind, so long as we're here in time. 'Sh, not a word now, for his own sake, if not ours!" He whispered it in my ear—and I knew it was indeed my Jack Hamlyn, if only by the touch of his beard. "Tell us all afterwards, I've blundered; and a scoundrel has taken advantage of it to try on the dirtiest trick of his contemptible life, Wilfred!"

Here, constable, it's all right; show us to a decent hotel!"

In less than an hour I had come out of darkness into sunshine indeed, and was able to see to the end of what had seemed such an appalling mystery. My fatal slip—my cablegram in code! Jack, it appeared, who rented bachelor apartments near the city, had received the message from Madeira in due course. Mystified at first, he had at length managed to translate the words into sense, and made arrangements to be at Southampton to meet the vessel. On the all-important day while at breakfast he recollected some vital business affair and hurried off to catch his business partner, leaving the message and its solution beside his plate, and in that unlucky interval something happened.

Wilfred, his scapegrace brother, had called there—for money, doubtless, as he often did—saw the message, and, quick-brained as he was unscrupulous, had instantly conceived some idea of meeting me in the character of Jack and making off with the valuables. I had hinted at. How? There was Jack's coffee on the stove—the landlady said Mr. Hamlyn would be back inside half an hour—the schemer saw his likeliest

chance in a flash. The half hour had sufficed. Without knowing why or how, Jack had come out of a deadly stupor late in the afternoon, to find that the locked door had been forced, and Lottie and a doctor, sent for by his landlady, bending over him.

Drugged!—probably with the bulk of the very opiate which had been put into my own glass at the hotel hours later. Only recollecting that Wilfred had been, and had seen the cablegram, Jack instantly went off to catch the evening express to Southampton—and, needless to say, nothing in the world would prevent the woman I loved from accompanying him. An anxious tramp with the policeman through Southampton streets, making inquiries everywhere—and then I had rushed by them like a ghost.

Yes, it was a clever plot, conceived so swiftly and carried out with a staggering success—only that my overwrought brain had resisted the drug and turned the scale just in the nick of time. And not the least strange part of the affair was that, making inquiry late that eventful night, we found that Wilfred Hamlyn had contrived to come to his senses and slip out of the hotel unnoticed—with only my small tin trunk and its few contents to compensate him for his cunning and risk.

"He is welcome to that!" says Lottie, with tears in her eyes.

And, all things considered, I agree. For, as it turned out, the contents of that dispatch were never divulged to the public. In the light of subsequent events I can only tremble at thought of what might have happened had they seen the light of day in the columns of an enterprising news sheet!—Tit-Bits.

PIGEON CARRIER SERVICE.

Homing Birds Owned in Duluth Utilized with Great Success by Business Men.

Homing pigeons are brought into practical use in navigating Lake Superior this season by the Booth Packing company, owners of the steamer Dixon, which makes triweekly trips between this city and Grand Marais, a town 110 miles up the north shore of the lake. Last fall during the regular fall storms, on the same date that three vessels, the Arthur Orr, Tampa and Harlem, were wrecked at different spots on the north shore, the Dixon, a steamer much smaller than any of these, was out with passengers. There is no telegraph line between here and Grand Marais, but in some unknown manner a rumor got about on the night of the storm that wrecked the three vessels that the Dixon was wrecked. She had many passengers on board and there was great anxiety in Duluth for several days until the steamer returned, safe and not even injured by her experience with the storm.

It would have saved lots of worry at that time if there had been some connection, by telegraph or otherwise, between Duluth and Grand Marais. As there would not be business enough to warrant a telegraph line, however, the Dixon's owners, in order to avoid a repetition of the trouble of last fall, hit upon a scheme that does away with the use of the wires without requiring the perfection of wireless telegraphy. Frerker Brothers, a firm of Duluth contractors, use homing pigeons in their work, and a number of them have been purchased by the owners of the Dixon. At Grand Marais a message is attached to a pigeon, and it rises to a considerable height, heads for Duluth, and two hours later its message is delivered. The bird thus covers the 110 miles at a rate of nearly a mile a minute. This has been done several times, and the birds are gaining in speed as they learn their route more perfectly, and it is expected that by the time the fall storms begin they will be able to make better time than they do at present. Thus if there is an accident to the Dixon at any time the Duluth agents will learn of it soon after it happens, and in most cases soon enough to send relief. The system beats the telegraph in that it will not be necessary to look up a telegraph office to send a message. The birds can be dispatched from anywhere on the lakes and they will find their way back to Duluth.

The owners of the pigeons, Frerker Brothers, are doing some stone work on the harbor at Old Superior, about eight miles from their office in Duluth, and their quarries are 40 miles up the north shore of the lake. The pigeons are used continually for communication between these different points and always with great success. This led to their adoption on the Dixon. Their success in this capacity may lead to their use in other places on the great lakes.—Chicago Times-Herald.

Reasonable. The reasons for orthography are among the things which pass man's understanding. Some explanations, however, have a plausible sound.

A minister was recently called upon to marry a couple in private, and had occasion to ask how the name of one of the witnesses was spelled. "M-e-l-l-u-g-h," replied the man. "Haven't you a sister Margaret?" inquired the clergyman. "Yes, sir." "Well," said the minister, "she spells her name: 'M-e-c-u-e.'" "That," said the witness, "is because my sister and me, we went to different schools."—Youth's Companion.

SOUTH AFRICAN CLIMATE.

Some Facts About Temperature and Rains in the Transvaal and Orange Republics.

Recent dispatches stated that the Boers were waiting for a couple of days' rain before taking the field—a circumstance significant of the climatic conditions of the Transvaal and of South Africa in general. In most countries a heavy rain would be an obstacle to military operations. There it is necessary to them, so that the horses may have food and both the horses and men may have drink. The Boers have no commissariat system for their horses, but literally make them live on the country. When the army halts for the night the horses are turned loose to forage for themselves, each having one front foot tightly strapped up to prevent his running away. In early spring the plain or veldt is almost barren. There has been little rain during the winter. The grass is dead and the watercourses are dry. But in that marvelous climate and on that responsive soil a few days of rain would fill the streams and cover the land with lush herbage.

The winter is there the dry season and the summer the rainy season, though excepting near the coast the rainfall of the whole year is rather scanty. Throughout most of the Transvaal the midwinter months of July and August are practically rainless, the fall amounting to only a small fraction of an inch. September, too, is usually dry. But with the advance of spring, in October and November, the rainfall rapidly increases, and when, after Christmas, summer sets in, there is a copious supply of from four to six inches a month. In the whole year about one day in six is rainy. There are, of course, some regions which are practically arid. But on the whole the country is as well off for water as, let us say, our own states between the Mississippi and the Rocky mountains. What it needs badly is a comprehensive system of water storage and irrigation.

The temperature of the Transvaal and Orange State is moderate and agreeable. The climate is classed as sub-tropical, though part of the Transvaal lies within the torrid zone. It corresponds in latitude with the central part of Australia, the northern part of Argentina, Florida, Texas and Mexico. Owing, probably, to the elevation above the sea, however, the temperature is more equable and presents less marked extremes than that of other countries in the southern hemisphere. The burning heat of Australia is unknown in the Transvaal. January is the hottest month, and its average temperature is 74 degrees Fahrenheit in the shade, which is only half a degree warmer than the July temperature of New York. July is the coolest month, with an average of 59 degrees, or about 4 degrees warmer than January in New Orleans. The thermometer seldom rises above 90 degrees at any time or falls below 25 degrees.—N. Y. Tribune.

CHOCKOPELONUS' CASE.

The Wheels of Justice Become Clogged with a Jaw-Breaking But Classical Name.

"Call the next case," said Justice Prindiville in the Harrison street police court, addressing the prosecutor for the city. The justice appeared grave and dignified, as became his exalted station, but there was a suspicious twinkle in his eye.

Attorney Scully glanced complacently at his docket and rose to comply with the request. Then he hesitated and looked perplexed. The magistrate repressed a quiver about his mouth and turned what seemed to be the beginning of a giggle into a deep frown, as he repented, sharply.

"Call the next case, Mr. Prosecutor. The court cannot waste all day waiting for you to call your cases."

Attorney Scully was still gazing in a bewildered manner at the docket. Presently he seemed to rally and said:

"Your honor, I would be glad to call the next case, but it is a physical impossibility to state it in words. Now, if your honor would allow me to play it on a flute or grind it out of a music box I would be happy to comply. If this is not allowable under the rules I must ask permission to state it on my fingers in the language of the deaf mutes or else take it back to my office and get it written on a typewriter and hand it up to the court to read. Or I might shoot it out of a gun. Now, if the court would condescend to read the case from the docket all might yet be well."

"One more such suggestion like that will result in your commitment for contempt of court," replied the justice, sternly. "I am no luzz say. However, we will proceed with the case without calling it."

An expression of great relief broke over the countenance of the attorney and the case was begun, but the handicap was so serious that the prisoner could not be convicted owing to the fact that nobody could testify against him intelligibly.

His name was Chloepas Chockopelous and he was charged with littering the street with banana skins. Somebody had littered the street with banana skins, but no witness could pronounce the name of the man who did it.—Chicago Inter Ocean.