

# THE FATAL REQUEST OR FOUND OUT

By A. L. Harris Author of "Mine Own Familiar Friend," etc.  
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## CHAPTER IV.—Continued.

"My dear James," interrupted Mr. Burritt, hastily, "you must know very well that it isn't that. But the truth of the matter is, I've a great aversion to firearms. Still, if you will assure me that the weapon isn't loaded, I'll—"

"I'll assure you of that or anything else that will add to your peace of mind," was the somewhat equivocal reply. "At any rate, it isn't loaded now; and, what is more, I will also give you my word that I will not attempt to blow out my brains during the journey—or," he added, as a sort of afterthought, "anyone else's."

When Mr. Burritt and his friend arrived at the station, the latter took a considerable amount of trouble to insure a separate compartment to themselves—in fact, Mr. Burritt rather fancied he saw him give something to the guard, who thereupon locked the door upon them, and consigned them to solitude.

The carriage in question, it may be worth remembering, was the fourth from the engine.

"I wonder," thought Mr. Burritt to himself as the train steamed out of the station, "which is the pocket he carries the revolver in?" Then his thoughts wandered away from the actual present. "I suppose I shall find them all right at home. Dear, dear, anyone would think I had been away a month. What an old fogey I'm getting. By-the-by, I wonder what James is thinking about? he looks uncommonly gloomy. I wish he'd say something instead of staring out of the window in stony silence. Somehow, one doesn't like the notion of riding alone with a man who has shed another man's blood, especially when he carries a revolver. I wonder whether he's thinking of that, or what?"

If Mr. Burritt could have read what was passing in his companion's mind, he would have been amazed to find

peeling to her son, "I suppose there's no mistake about the day? Your dear father didn't mean to-morrow?"

Her son produced the telegram, which he had about him, and repeated the contents aloud:

"Am returning to-day by the 4:30 train. Shall be home to dinner. Friend accompanies me."

"Well, I'm sure I don't know what to do about it," exclaimed the poor lady, almost wringing her hands.

"Hadn't you better go and speak to cook yourself?" said her son, making the proposal without the slightest comprehension of what it involved.

"I suppose I had," murmured his mother; "very well, Jane, you can say I'm coming," and she left the room, leaving the young people together.

"Aren't you tired of standing, May?" asked her brother, addressing the girl, who had scarcely varied her attitude an inch in the last half hour.

"Tired!" she exclaimed, half turning round. "What has that got to do with it? I want to be the first to see them." Then she added, "Tell me what you mean to say, a little while ago, when you began 'I wish,' and stopped."

"Why," he answered gloomily, "I was going to say I wish the governor had never started on this journey; though," he added, in a hurry, "of course he's all right—missed the train or else there's a block on the line, or something—only—"

He broke off without bringing his sentence to a conclusion, and asked, "Was that what you wished, too?"

"I!" she exclaimed. "I wish that and more. I wish he had never had that letter. I wish his friend, whoever he is, had never come back from where he was."

"Oh, come, now," was the would-be comforting response, "now you're going ahead too far. Of course, it's vexing and all that; but, after all, the only thing that will really suffer will be the dinner, and that won't be fit

to eat, if they don't come directly."

As if in answer to this remark, Mrs. Burritt at that moment re-entered the room. She was flushed and agitated, and, as was apparent to the most obtuse observer, on the verge of tears.

"Really, cook has been most trying," she sighed, as she sank into the nearest chair. "She almost intimated that I had done it on purpose. She says she has never been used to such ways, and that flesh and blood won't stand it, let alone legs of mutton. She says she can give us another ten minutes, but no more."

The ten minutes passed, as the previous thirty had done, and at the end of that time three very despondent people sat down to their spiced dinner.

May soon noticed that her brother, whose attention had been obviously wandering for some time past, appeared to be listening to something from without. At first her heart bounded. Could it be that they had arrived at last? Was it the click of the gate that he was straining his ear to catch? or the sound of footsteps upon the gravel drive without? So she, too, listened in her turn, hoping to be able to distinguish one or the other of these welcome but long delayed signals. But the only thing she could hear was the faint sound of a voice which seemed to be shouting something in the distance. May also perceived that the voice was drawing gradually nearer, and resolving itself into that of a peripatetic newsboy, who was vending his wares and shouting out the most sensational headings at the top of his voice. Was that all? Still, he was not yet near enough for her to distinguish the sense of the sounds which caught her ear from time to time, as she absently crumbled her bread, and thought to herself over and over again, "If only father would come home!"

Mrs. Burritt, as though the thought had set in motion some electric current which connected the two brains, remarked at this juncture, "I suppose they are quite certain to be here some time to-night?"

Almost before the words were out of her lips, her son, who was sitting on her right, started to his feet with a cry.

"What is it? Oh, what is it?" asked his sister, as a sense of something terrible about to happen fell upon her.

He made no reply, but, with dilating eyes, stood there with every faculty absorbed in the one effort.

Then he raised one hand—the other

clutched the edge of the table. "Listen!" he gasped.

And the voice without, now close to their very gates, made itself plainly heard, as it shouted out the latest bulletin—

"Speechful hedshun! Hevenin! Standard! 'Orrible railway haccident! Over twenty killed and injured! The fourthirty from Dover wrecked by a down train carryin' petroleum barrels! The line on fire. Horful scenes! 'Artrrend in' details!"

## CHAPTER VI.

### The Search for a Father.

What happened after this no one ever knew exactly. Before Mrs. Burritt had begun to grasp the idea that something was wrong, her son had rushed from the room.

After what seemed an age of waiting, but was really a very short time, he returned. In his hand he held a copy of the newspaper which he had just bought. "Mother," he said, putting a strong restraint upon himself, "I am afraid there has been an accident on the line. You mustn't be alarmed, for though some people have been injured, there is no reason why my father should not have escaped, and very likely the affair has been greatly exaggerated."

"Ted," said his sister, in a voice almost as calm as his own, though her face had lost every particle of color, and seemed to have suddenly become years older, "Let us know what you mean to say, a little while ago, when you began 'I wish,' and stopped."

"The worst!" he answered, with a sound like a strangled sob in his voice. "Why should there be any worst? And as for the paper," crumpling it up in his hand, "you can't place the slightest dependence upon that. I'm—I'm going up to town by the next train, so as to be on the spot, and—"

"He may be hurt in some way, you know," he added, slowly, by way of preparing their minds for whatever might be the result. "He may have come off with a broken leg, or something of that sort. You can hardly expect him to have got off scot free. But whatever it is, I'm going to find him out and bring him back home. Take care of mother"—this to his sister—and he was gone.

But before he could leave the house, while his hand was yet upon the latch, he found himself confronted by the girl. "Good-bye," she said, slowly and sadly. "You will do your best—but I have no hope—none!"

He caught a train which was on the very point of starting, and leaped into the first carriage he came to. Then he took out the paper which he had kept so carefully from the sight of those others at home, and began to study more earnestly the brief but terrible announcement which it contained.

(To be continued.)

### As She Understood It.

He was telling a poker story, but she only caught this sentence: "And then, of course, I called, and—"

She interrupted him reproachfully and also with some asperity.

"I've caught you, John Henry," she exclaimed. "Here I've been trying to get you to call on the Joneses for the last three months, and you wouldn't do it—said you didn't like to make calls, then you go out and make one by yourself, or else you go calling with someone else. Yes; that must be it? What is she, John Henry? Who is this person who can get you to make calls when you won't make them with your wife?"

John Henry looked at his masculine friends and winked slyly.

"Shall I tell her?" he asked.

"Might as well," they said.

"In this case," he then told her, "three ladies induced me to call."

"Three?"

"Yes; but," he hastened to add, "if you came across them in the park you would probably call them queens."

It was a great joke—his masculine friends assured him of that—but he hasn't succeeded in explaining the matter to his wife's satisfaction yet.

—Chicago Post.

### St. Peter Remembered.

A poor son of Erin died and was lauded as a very good man by all his neighbors. Arriving at The Gate he found his way barred by Saint Peter.

"Before ye can enter," says Saint Peter, "will ye tell me ye are not guilty of any great sin?"

"I am not," said Paddy.

"Think again," said Saint Peter.

"Well," says Paddy, thinking hard, "I remember once using bad language over an old rooster we had."

"That was a great sin," said Saint Peter, "and ye can't come in."

Paddy turned sorrowfully away, but before he had gone for Saint Peter recalled him.

"I've been thinking," said Saint Peter, "and I think ye must have had great provocation, and that your language was perhaps excusable. Ye can come in. I remember, I once had trouble with the same sort of bird myself."

### The Kitchen Range.

A fine housekeeper says since painting her kitchen range she has never blackened it with stove polish. Every spring when cleaning house she buys a can of enamel from a druggist and paints her stove with it. The stove looks like new, does not rust and needs no cleaning except dusting and wiping off.

### French People in Britain.

There are 26,600 French in Great Britain and Ireland, more than three-fourths of the number being in London. The business most followed among these is cookery. As English laundresses are prized in France, so French cooks are valued in England

## DEATH FOR INDUSTRY

### DANGER INVOLVED IN INCREASED FOREIGN COMPETITION.

For Every Day's Work Brought in from Abroad There Must Be an Equivalent Day's Work Lost to the Wage Earners of the United States.

An important and enduring contribution to economic and political literature is to be found in the speech of Lafayette Young before the Folk County Republican Club in Des Moines, Oct. 20, 1902. It is a speech that will live, and if we are not mistaken, will do duty in more than one campaign. In vigor of style, in clear cut epigrammatic expression, in virility and in uncompromising stalwartism it deserves, and will have, a place among the greatest speeches of Republicanism and Protectionism. Iowa was essentially the proper place for its origin—Iowa, the home of "progressives," the breeding ground of backsliders, the culture field of the "reform" bacillus, the state where a premium is paid for the betrayal of party principle. We have long been of the opinion that Life Young was needed in that section of the country. Now we know it. The speech of Oct. 20 demonstrates the fact.

With swift strokes the editor of the Daily Capital sketches political history for the past twenty-seven years. Coming down to the time when the "reformers" and the "progressive" inside the Republican party made their first successful attack upon the policy of protection, when, as now, they were saying "The tariff is too high; it must be reformed," Mr. Young tells what happened to prosperity in 1892 and the four years following:

"But the country was started, after calm was restored, after the election of 1892, when it was discovered that the grand aggregation of disagreement and discontent had captured the government. Fear was in the land. Men who voted for Cleveland trembled and regretted it. Then followed the struggle upon the part of Cleveland and his

followers to keep the party pledges. Then ensued the long debate on the tariff question and the factories closed, banks collapsed, and the great republic was in the throes of business disaster, the like of which had not been since 1837. The American people repented and felt educated in political economy. They swore if they ever had another chance they would bury Democracy and free trade so deep that Gabriel's trumpet would never reach any of them."

And they did it in 1896, with that result that Great Britain is now on the point of discarding free trade and profiting by the example of the United States in restoring prosperity through protection. But there has been too much prosperity in the last six years, and the "reformers" are at work again, as they were in 1892. To them Mr. Young devotes attention, and though he calls nobody by name, it will be strange indeed if there be not some burning in the ears of some people in high places out there in Iowa. His chapter on "competition" is a superb specimen of logic and sarcasm. Says he:

"There never is competition when every man has more than he can do. There will not be competition until half the men have less than they can do. There is never any competition so long as a man cannot make a thing as rapidly as he can sell it. There will be competition when it takes a man two days to find a customer for the thing that he made in one day. \* \* \* Some people like to be coaxed to buy. They like to be chased by the man who has something to sell. They like to get cut rates. They have not been getting cut rates lately. There are never any cut rates in good times. \* \* \*

"They say they do not want to tear down the tariff wall; they only want to lower it a couple of inches. Usually when a dam is high enough to keep the water out, lowering it two inches would be as fatal as its entire removal."

"When the floods swept down through East Des Moines last May it

was because some 'progressive' citizen had probably insisted that the dike was a little too high and that it would do no harm to let the water run over a little. A tariff low enough to bring in 'foreign competition' to destroy so-called American monopoly would fall of its purpose if it were not low enough to bring in immense quantities of goods from abroad. If it did not increase importations it would be a failure, and if it increased importations it would close the American factory."

"Men who talk about 'competition' deal with the subject glibly, as if markets were abundant. They think that large importations would not throw any American out of a job. But I say for every day's work performed in Europe for the benefit of American some American loses a day's work, whether he is employed by a trust or some heartless individual operating singly and alone. Some men say that competition can be let in from Europe long enough to destroy the trusts and combines and then be thrown out again by the re-adoption of protection."

Easily and unanswerably Mr. Young shows that upon the high wages paid in the mills and factories which foreign competition would close depends the prosperity of Iowa farmers. When men are out of work, he says "the farmer does not sell them spring chickens and potatoes." No; and neither does the doctor, the lawyer, the clergyman, nor anybody else thrive as well—always excepting the pawnbroker.

As to the proposition that the tariff be revised by the "friends of protection," Life Young does not like it. He is of the opinion that when an industry has been killed by tariff reduction it is none the less dead because Republicans brought about the reduction:

"I say to-night, that if the American Congress, in Republican hands, in the year 1904 or the year 1905, undertakes a general reform of the tariff, ripping it here and there, and enters upon a general debate and discussion of this great subject, so vitally connected with our commerce, every industry will be killed just as dead as if the Democratic party were in power

and the investigation were being made by the Democrats."

With truth and force Mr. Young urges that when McKinley made his famous Buffalo speech in 1901 he had in mind the reciprocity of Blaine, and only that, and "never contemplated adjusting a reciprocity treaty to kill one industry which we had promised to protect to build up another already protected." Mr. McKinley did not believe in reciprocity in competitive products, in reciprocity that "would take from a single American worker his job," he was a worker in a factory or on a farm. He did not believe that the cheapest products of any foreign country should be permitted to enter into competition with the products of the Americans who grow sugar cane in Louisiana and Texas, who grow sugar beets in Colorado and California, who grow tobacco in Connecticut and Wisconsin, who grow fruits and vegetables in Florida, who grow wool in Ohio and Montana, who grow grain in all the Northern states. He would never have urged such a policy upon Congress. Much less would he have called an extra session as a means of forcing it through.

In one of the concluding paragraphs of Mr. Young's speech the situation is thus summed up:

"If any of these schemes of tariff ripping are to be seriously considered the best thing any man can do is to convert his present property into money and then wait until the crash comes and buy other people's property at 25 cents on the dollar. It seems strange that Republicans have been found giving ear to doctrines so recently denounced. Not so strange, possibly, when we remember that Republican farmers and Republican workmen in 1892 elected Grover Cleveland, and with him a tariff ripping Congress."

And unless this craze among Republicans for tariff ripping is checked by Republicans we shall be found traveling the same road as in 1892, with another tariff ripping Democratic president in the White House and another tariff ripping Congress at the other end of Pennsylvania avenue.

## A WEIRD TALE FROM JAPAN.

### "Sanguinary Battle Between Hostile Forces of Winged Creatures."

The Hochi of Tokio prints the following wonderful tale: "On the 23d ult., at 4 p. m., that part of airy space that over-canopies a slope commonly called Notoyazaka, which forms part of Ubagamimachi in Yesashi, Hokkaido, became the scene of a sanguinary battle between hostile forces of winged creatures. The combatants were 100 swallows on the one side and millions of dragon flies on the other. If inferior in number, the swallows were certainly superior in intellectual and physical powers to their opponents on the occasion in question, as one would believe, and everybody had but one opinion as to the end of the mid-air combat.

"But the unexpected happened, and after charges and counter-charges, and other aeronautic movements, ending in 'at close quarters' fighting of some duration, the swallows beat a hasty retreat, or, rather, disgraced themselves by the most confused flight ever indulged in by a vanquished enemy. Then the victorious dragon flies flew about that particular portion of the sky with the unmistakable air of noble conquerors, performing all sorts of 'assertive' antics, which included airy carooling, evolutions, soaring, plunging, etc., all sufficiently significant and all tending to proclaim the fact of their undisputed occupation of the atmospheric superficies over the Notoyazaka."—New York Times.

### Sea Devouring England.

By experiences such as have fallen to the lot of the town of Dunwich the attention is drawn from time to time to the fact that the sea is making serious encroachments upon England's shores. But, beyond inspiring a vague consciousness that they are submitting to an unwarrantable invasion, the question so far has aroused little more than local interest. The British Association, however, has had the subject in hand, and five years ago appointed a committee to make full investigation. With the assistance of the coast guard the inquiry has now been completed, and its results were communicated in a very instructive paper which was read before the association at their concluding meeting.

The report gives details of the distribution of the sea's attack, and of the average rate at which its advance is made, and it is evident that encroachment presents a very grave problem to dwellers upon coasts so seriously menaced. It is curious to note that though it is a part of the West coast which suffers most, generally speaking, the eastern shores are wasting most rapidly. Nature has provided the western coastline with rugged cliffs, which successively defy the onslaughts of the Atlantic. Even in Ireland the chief losers are found in the eastern counties of Down and Dublin. In many places there is a slight compensating gain. But the gist of the report is the importance which it attaches to artificial structures and sea walls, which has been proved by inquiry and comparison to be a most valuable protection.

Though it is the popular idea that public libraries are of modern origin, there is proof that the Anglo-Saxon kings of England were disposed to erect them, and works were brought from Ireland, where sciences had been much earlier cultivated than in Great Britain. But the invasion of the Normans stopped the spread of libraries, and the first in England after the conquest was established at Oxford, in Durham (now Trinity) College, in the thirteenth century by Richard de Bury, who purchased from thirty to forty volumes of the Abbot of St. Alban's for fifty pounds' weight of silver. Before that time books were kept in chests and not in a room styled a library. At the end of the seventeenth century there were only six public libraries in Great Britain. The first circulating library was founded by Allan Ramsay, in 1725, whence he diffused plays and works of fiction among the people of Edinburgh. So successful were Ramsay's efforts that it is said that within seventy years nearly every town and large village possessed a library. The first in London was started by Botho, a bookseller, in 1740. Birmingham obtained its first circulating library in 1751. The next step was the free library, Manchester possessing the first, in 1850, being quickly followed by Liverpool, Birmingham, and other large towns.—Chicago News.

Exercise For Aged Persons.

Good Health says that in old age both the aptitude for exercise and the ability to execute muscular movements are very considerably diminished. The capacity and activity of the heart and lungs are lessened, also the ability to recuperate from exhaustion. There is, moreover, a marked tendency to consecutive or secondary fatigue, a form of exhaustion which is not experienced at the time of exercise, but is felt to a marked degree a day or two subsequently. An old person feels the fatigue of an effort more than twenty-four or forty-eight hours afterward than he does at the time; consequently he is likely to go beyond the proper limit in the expenditure of muscular energy before he is aware of the fact that he has done so. Elderly persons should always bear this in mind when engaging in physical exercise, especially those who have not all their lives been used to active muscular pursuits.

Very Superstitious.

Captain Pat. King is very superstitious. In his engine he always carries a rabbit's foot and a horseshoe, and it is a matter of record that he once refused to take his engine out for a trip because a black cat crossed the track in front of the locomotive.—Charlotte N. C. Observer.



Started to his feet with a cry.

chat, instead of dwelling upon the past, he was merely repeating over and over to himself the words which the former had spoken only a few hours before—"The secret lies between us two! The secret lies between us two!"

## CHAPTER V.

### The 4:30 Train.

Dinner at Magnolia Lodge had been ordered for a quarter to eight, in order to suit the convenience of the travelers, who were expected to arrive at about that hour.

As the time drew on, Mrs. Burritt suddenly became troubled again in her mind concerning the soap dish.

"I do wish, after all, I had ordered the best spare bedroom to be got ready, though I've generally considered the second best good enough for a single gentleman, and I suppose he is a single gentleman. But for all that—"

"Here they are!" suddenly cried her daughter May, who was watching from the window.

"Well, it's too late to make any change now," sighed her parent, half relieved at having the matter summarily settled; "and perhaps he won't notice the crack. I do hope my cap is on straight!"

The said cap was, as usual, considerably out of the perpendicular; but as it happened, its lack of rectitude was, in this instance, of no particular consequence, for the alarm proved false, and the cab, which had at first appeared as though about to draw up before the house, resumed its snail-like crawl and gradually disappeared.

Then came another spell of waiting.

"They must have missed their train at London Bridge," said Ted Burritt. "Perhaps the other one was late. I've looked in 'Bradshaw,' and see that it's due in town at seven o'clock. If so, they ought to be here by this time."

The next half-hour slowly ticked itself away without bringing any change in the position of affairs. They were all vacantly conscious of an increasing sense of anxiety and depression within. Why did they not come? Surely, if they had missed one train, there had been plenty of time to catch the next? Then the clock chimed the half-hour, and, at the same moment, an interruption took place. The message ran:

"If you please, 'm, cook wants to know what she is to do about dinner!"

Mrs. Burritt started nervously. "I'm sure, I don't know, Jane." Then, ap-



followers to keep the party pledges. Then ensued the long debate on the tariff question and the factories closed, banks collapsed, and the great republic was in the throes of business disaster, the like of which had not been since 1837. The American people repented and felt educated in political economy. They swore if they ever had another chance they would bury Democracy and free trade so deep that Gabriel's trumpet would never reach any of them."

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