

THE FATAL REQUEST OR FOUNDOUT

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

Before he could reply the housemaid put in another word.

"Begging your pardon for speaking, after being told to hold my tongue, but it's something beginning with a 'B'—as I saw it myself in a prayer book I came across accidental."

"So that is how you came by your information," said her master. "Something beginning with a 'B' is it? Suppose you let me see the book?"

"Which I intended to have showed it to you at the first," she said, fumbling in her pocket and producing the well worn little volume, which she was about to hand to her master, when—

A sudden dart—a long arm stretched out, and a powerful hand wrested it from her.

"This is my property," exclaimed its owner, sternly. "The name written within may be mine or another's, but so long as I choose to keep it a secret—secret it shall remain."

"This is most extraordinary conduct!" exclaimed Mr. Ferrers, "most extraordinary! Under the circumstances, only one course is open to me. It is impossible for me to harbor under my roof one who has obtained admittance under a false name, and absolutely refuses any explanation, I must, therefore,—assuming his severest expression, while the young man seemed to hold his breath as he waited for the sentence to be pronounced upon him—"I must, therefore, discharge you at once, and with a month's wages in lieu of the ordinary notice."

It was all up.

"When—when am I to leave?" inquired Ted, with eyes fixed upon the floor and heart beating furiously.

This question seemed to take the person to whom it was addressed unawares.

"When?" he answered, "why—oh,

He struck a match, and, lighting the candle, advanced towards the door of the apartment into the lock of which he inserted his duplicate key.

He entered and closed the door behind him, without, however, completely shutting it.

He put his candle down on the writing table while he considered what was to be done next. The waste paper basket first attracted his attention as being at once the nearest and the easiest object on which to exercise his powers of investigation.

It was about a quarter full of torn fragments, which he promptly emptied out before him. A rapid and cursory examination was sufficient to prove that these were of no importance. So he swept them back into their original receptacle.

The next thing to be done must be to tackle the writing table. How was this to be accomplished? Shocking to relate, he produced from his pocket nothing less than—a bunch of skeleton keys!

To his great disappointment one after another of the drawers upon the right hand proved to be empty. He turned his attention to those on his left.

He put his hand to one and pulled out the tightly wedged contents. He spread it open; yes, it was a newspaper—some months old. What could be the reason for preserving it? A sudden thought—he looked at the date and then—Yes, there it was on the inside sheet. "Terrible Railway Accident! The 4:30 train from Dover wrecked and partially consumed!"

There was a full account of that ghastly affair, with minute details of all the horrors—a recollection of which returned to him, most vividly as he scanned the column. He replaced the first, and took down another and another.

"Further details—number of bodies

"I will try the third first," he said, and inserted one of his skeleton keys into the lock. This drawer—the third in order from the top—on being opened, showed itself, strangely enough, to contain three articles, all of a widely different character.

These were a large and bulky envelope, a revolver and a small bottle of colorless fluid. The young man could not repress an exclamation of surprise and triumph as his eye fell upon these.

The secret he had been in search of so long lay ready to his hand—the proofs of the crime were there waiting for him to grasp them. He knew it, and yet hesitated. The shock of the discovery seemed to paralyze his hand, so that for an instant he was unable to stretch forth and take possession of what he believed would make him master of a man's fate.

At last he put out his hand, which trembled as he did so, and took up the revolver. It was a six-chamber revolver, and a glance showed that one only of the chambers had been discharged.

A fierce, hungry look came over his face as he noticed this, and, laying the weapon down, he searched for something which he always carried about him—the conical shaped bullet which had been discovered in the stuffing of the fourth carriage from the engine. He dropped it into the empty chamber, which it fitted exactly.

"Proof number one!" he said, with grim joy, as he felt the dreadful thirst for blood return upon him with all its former strength. He laid the revolver down and took up the small stoppered bottle. What was this, and what bearing had its contents upon the matter?

He removed the stopper and inhaled the contents carefully. A strong and unmistakable odor of bitter almonds greeted him. Prussic acid, beyond doubt! What did this point to? There seemed to be only one answer possible—Suicide! A means of escape provided in case of the worst happening. He replaced the stopper and placed the bottle by the side of the revolver, while he took up the third and last article. This was the envelope before mentioned. It was large and thick and sealed in no less than three places. On it, in place of an address, were written the strange words: "To be burned, unopened, after my death."

To be burned, unopened, after his death!—what did that mean? Why, if it were to be burned, unopened, had he put himself to the pains of writing it? For that the envelope contained the completed copy of the "true narrative and confession of the strange tragedy" he had not the least doubt. But why had he described it as the strange tragedy? Cowardly and detestable it might well be—but why strange?

"At any rate, so far from its being burned, unopened," he said, aloud, "I will now myself—"

He held the letter in one hand and, with the other he was about to break the seals, when a voice cried:

"Stop!"

(To be continued.)

Doctors knew a Good Thing.

Congressman John Sharp Williams tells of a man in Mississippi who is a hypochondriac of the first order. This individual's failing is a source of never-ending amusement to his fellow townsmen. It was of this man that some one humorously remarked, in answer to a question as to how the sick man was getting on, that "he complained that he was feeling somewhat better."

Mr. Williams says that the hypochondriac was one day telling a friend of his efforts to regain his old-time health. He ran over the list of doctors whom he had consulted. Whereupon the friend remarked:

"Well, old man, I must say that you appear to have lots of faith in doctors."

"Certainly I have," replied the sick man. "Don't you think the doctors would be foolish to let a good customer like me die?" — Colorado Springs Gazette.

Long Lines of Kings.

Though Japan be the latest country to enter the circle of world powers, her emperor surpasses all sovereigns in the length of his pedigree, according to the London Chronicle. He is the one hundred and twenty-second member in direct, unbroken descent of his family who has sat on the throne of Japan. The founder of his house was, in Japanese legend, a goddess of the sun, and contemporary with Nebuchadnezzar, 666 years before the Christian era. On the other hand, the Romanoffs have been royal only since 1601, when they succeeded to the sovereignty of the then extinct house of Rurik. As for other European rulers, King Edward can go back to Cerdic, 395 A. D., the Hapsburgs to 952 A. D., and the Hohenzollerns to the eighth century, but as kings only to 1701.

Why It Wasn't Legal.

In the New York Law School at a recent lecture on the making of wills the case of a woman in one of Rider Haggard's books was cited. This woman had a man's will inscribed in ink on her back. And the will was held regular and legal because it had been made in writing.

After giving this practical illustration, the professor called on John Smith, saying:

"Is a will so inscribed regular and legal in your opinion?"

"No," answered Smith.

"Why not?" asked the professor.

"Because it's a skin game," replied Smith.

The professor felt angry enough to order Smith out of the room, but the class laughed so much that he decided to overlook the student's fling.

HEARTH & BOUDOIR

Nightgown.

No matter what the demand for fancy nightgowns may be every woman wants a few of the comfortable sort that can be worn when occasion demands. This one is modeled on simple lines, but is tasteful at the same time and includes wide sleeves

that are both comfortable and fashionable, and are finished with deep becoming frills. The model is made from cambric with trimming of embroidery, but all material in use for underwear, cottons, flannel, wash flannel and the like are appropriate.

The gown is made with full length fronts and a back which is gathered and attached to the yoke. At the neck is a simple roll over collar and the right hem laps over the left to form the closing. The sleeves are fuller below the elbows than above and are gathered into narrow bands to the lower edge of which the frills are attached.

The quantity of material required for the medium size is 8 1/4 yards 27 inches wide or 6 yards 36 inches wide, with 3 1/2 yards of embroidery to trim as illustrated.

The pattern 4649 is cut in sizes for a 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 44 and 46 inch bust measure.

"Buster Brown" suit.

"Buster Brown" has become far too familiar a figure to need introduction. His admirers are many and it is safe to assume that interest in his costume is as general as its amusement over his doings. The model shown will be recognized at a glance and is made of dark blue serge stitched with corticelli silk and worn with linen collar and cuffs and silk tie, but as all the materials used for boys' suits of the sort are appropriate there is ample range of choice. The blouse is drawn on over the head, which makes

the essential characteristic, is eminently becoming to small boys as well as simple to make and the trousers are full and baggy at the knees.

The suit consists of blouse and trousers. The blouse is shaped by means of shoulder and under-arm seams and includes full sleeves with roll-over cuffs and a belt that is passed under straps attached at the under-arm seams. At the front is cut a short opening that is concealed by the tie. The trousers are in knickerbocker style, drawn up under the knees and allowed to droop.

The quantity of material required for the medium size (4 years) is 3 1/2 yards 27 inches wide, 3 1/2 yards 32 inches wide or 2 1/2 yards 44 inches wide.

The pattern 4646 is cut in sizes for boys of 2, 4 and 6 years of age.

Jeweled Hose.

Smart women are always looking for something new, and their latest fancy is jeweled stockings. Turquoises sewn on bronze-colored silk hose, with bronze kid shoes to match, are the favorites.

Pink and green stones on any colored grounds, with shoes of the same shade, and iridescent lizards, beetles and reptiles embroidered on black are worn with black satin shoes.

The daintiest of all are the white silk stockings worn in England. They are netted all over with lace or trellised with embroidery, and fit for a fairy princess.

Raffia Baskets Are the Fashion.

Some of the prettiest baskets shown in the stores this season are made of raffia. Among the most useful ones are the hanging baskets made of reeds, interwoven with raffia of the most beautiful colors. Japanese ginger jars and pottery of all sorts also make effective receptacles for plants.

Readers of this paper can secure any May Manton pattern illustrated above by filling out all blanks in coupon, and mailing, with 10 cents, to E. E. Harrison & Co., 65 Plymouth Place, Chicago. Pattern will be mailed promptly.

Name _____
Town _____
State _____
Pattern No. _____
Waist Measure (if for skirt) _____
Bust Measure (if for waist) _____
Age (if child's or miss's pattern) _____

Write plainly. Fill out all blanks. Enclose 10c. Mail to E. E. Harrison & Co., 65 Plymouth Place, Chicago.

A SMART BLOUSE COAT.



Blouse coats with shoulder capes are the smartest of all smart things and suit young girls exceedingly well. This one is made of tan colored broadcloth and is trimmed with fancy braid, but all suiting and cloaking materials are equally appropriate. When desired the capes can be omitted, but they add largely to the effect and are much to be desired. Both blouse and skirt are tucked at front

and back and are joined at the waist line beneath the belt. The sleeves are large and ample with shaped cuffs that are eminently stylish. To make the coat for a girl of 14 years of age will be required 6 yards of material 27, 3 1/2 yards 44 or 2 3/4 yards 52 inches wide. A May Manton pattern, No. 4634, sizes 12 to 16 years, will be mailed to any address on receipt of ten cents.

Pearls Produced to Order.

In his scientific pearl farming Prof. Dubois has transplanted a colony of pearl oysters from the coast of Tunis to a point near Toulon. Of these oysters one in 1,200 yielded a pearl. Acting on the theory that the pearl disease of the shell is due to the accretion of mother of pearl under the action of a parasite, the experimenter has tried to transmit the disease to other oysters and has succeeded in producing one or more pearls from every ten oysters.

Walking Skirt With Kilt.

Since walking skirts have become established facts smart women are ever on the outlook for novel effects. The skirt illustrated is quite new and is in every way admirable, as it provides the smooth fit over the hips, that means perfect outline, combined with generous flare below the knees.

The model is made of mixed gray cheviot stitched with corticelli silk, but all suiting and skirt materials are appropriate.

The skirt is made with circular front and sides, full length back gore and flounce. The back gore and the flounce are laid in deep kilt plaits and are joined to the upper portion, which is made circular and fitted by means of short hip darts.

The quantity of material required for the medium size is 8 yards 27 inches wide, 5 1/2 yards 44 inches wide 4 1/2 yards 52 inches wide.

The pattern 4648 is cut in sizes for a 22, 24, 26, 28 and 30 inch waist measure.

Corsage Sachet.

The heart-shaped corsage sachet of white satin is to wear around the neck beneath the lingerie. The ribbon edge and bow make a pretty finish and it is suspended by a ribbon.

Another corsage sachet on this order consists of two pads about two inches square, with a small bow in the center of each. They are fastened to the ends of a strip of baby ribbon.

For the Japanese sachet, made of Japanese silk, a bag two and one-half by three inches, and in the top seam fasten a Japanese doll's head. Around its neck a ribbon is tied, stock fashion.

The most popular sachet odors at present are sandal wood, orris and the Japanese perfumes.

The Walking Skirt.

The short skirt can be quite becoming and smart, provided it is full. Heavy winter skirts this year are being made without linings, and are worn with a very smart silk petticoat of sufficient substance to keep them well out at the feet.

Fancy Waist.

All broad shoulder effects are in vogue and, as a consequence, berthas of all sorts are worn. This smart and effective waist combines pine green Korean crepe with chiffon velvet in a deeper shade and cream colored lace, and exemplifies a berthas of the newest sort together with sleeves that can be full or elbow length as desired. The lace yoke over the under one of velvet is singularly handsome as well as novel and the use of both heavy and fine lace on the same waist is a feature of the latest designs.

The wrist is made over a fitted lining which is faced to form the yoke and on which the full front and backs and the circular folds, which give a berthas effect, are arranged. The sleeves are made plain above the folds but full and soft below, forming full puffs, which are finished with frills when elbow length is used, and below which deep cuffs are added to give full length. At the waist is a shaped bodice that is softly draped.

The quantity of material required for the medium size is 5 yards 21 inches wide, 4 yards 27 inches wide, or 2 3/4 yards 44 inches wide, with 1 yard of all-over lace, 1 1/2 yards of velvet and 3 yards of lace for frills to make as illustrated.

The pattern 4647 is cut in sizes for a 32, 34, 36, 38 and 40-inch bust measure.

An old steel pen if kept in your inkpot to absorb the acid, will make the pens in daily use wear better.

Carron oil, which should always be kept ready to use in cases of burns, is made of equal parts of linseed oil and lime water.

White fur can be cleaned by rubbing with sawdust moistened with benzoline; but the benzoline must not be used near a light or fire.

When cleaning plate mix the whitening occasionally with a little gin or whisky and water, and you will get a far better polish than if water alone is used.

Hot water cans should always be turned upside down after use. It is the tiny drop of water left standing in the bottom that causes rust, and holes soon follow.

Clean white corsets by scrubbing with a lather of soap, ammonia and warm water, afterwards thoroughly rinsing. Steel should be removed first, or iron molds will result.



"This is my property!"

as soon as you can; or—with a slightly more lenient tone, as he reflected that, after all, as the fellow himself had said, there might be reasons, not necessarily bad, for the concealment—"you can remain until tomorrow, if you like."

Victory! Another night, which was all he required.

He could scarcely prevent himself from showing some signs of exultation. Ah! perhaps by this time to-morrow the situation might be changed. He might be the judge, and another—

"Stay one moment," Mr. Ferrers continued.

This time he addressed the woman Perkins, who had reached the door.

"As I have also a strong objection to persons who pry into other people's concerns and interfere with their private property, you may as well take a month's notice at the same time. That will do; you can go."

The bitter was bit. She had not a word to say for herself. She had succeeded in wreaking her spite upon him who had despised her attractions and repulsed her overtures, but she had done it at the expense of a good situation. Moreover, the man whose disgrace she had labored to secure laughed in her face as he passed her.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The Envelope With Three Seals.

It was twelve o'clock on Friday night. The clock in the hall below had struck the hour. Another half hour ticked slowly by, and at the end of that time a door in the upper part of the house was opened softly and by imperceptible degrees.

The room within was in darkness and the figure of the man who cautiously emerged was barely visible in the general gloom.

He crept lightly on his stockinged feet past the doors of the rooms on the upper floor, and began to descend the staircase.

It was much in his favor, the stairs being so well and so massively constructed, that there was no startling and treacherous creak to betray the feet which trod them secretly in the dead of night. And so he made his way slowly and safely to the floor on which he was minded to penetrate.

After careful and noiseless search, he succeeded in laying his hand upon a candle and a box of matches, which, earlier in the evening, he had secreted in a convenient, but out-of-the-way corner.

found—distressing scenes—the inquiry—the verdict—mysterious discovery with regard to a first class passenger—foul play suspected! Verdict of Wilful Murder! And so on and so on he retraced his way through the whole of that dark tragedy—wasting what he felt to be precious time, but unable to tear his attention away from these records of the past.

At last he ramméd the paper back into its pigeon hole and turned his attention again to the drawer beneath. When it at last yielded to his efforts, he was rewarded by the sight of a flatly folded packet of parchment, tied with tape—the identical last will and testament which he had heard spoken of so often by the cook. But this, though of interest in one way, was not that of which he was in search, and he began to feel a qualm of fear lest, after all, his quest should prove useless.

His eye, roaming restlessly about, was caught by the gleam of brass in a dark corner. The candle, which was sufficient to light him at his task, still left the greater part of the room in semi-darkness, and there was something over there, in that corner, which he had not taken into account.

It was an old fashioned piece of furniture—the only shabby and evidently second hand article in the room. It was an upright article and was divided into two portions, the lower containing drawers and the upper being shut in with doors, which were fitted with a brass lock and fastening.

It was old and much scratched, and had apparently seen considerable use; but must have been a good article originally. He took the candle in his hand and, crossing the room, inspected it closely. "There is a look about it"—holding the candle up higher—"as though it might have a history attached to it. It looks"—with a sudden impulse—"as though it might be trusted to keep a secret." He put the candle upon the mantelpiece close by and again resumed his burglarious operations. "I shall soon be able to pass muster as an experienced housebreaker, at this rate," he remarked to himself, with grim irony, as the lock turned traitor, and the door, swinging open, revealed a number of drawers within, each garnished with a lock and brass handle. Which should he attack first? Much time had already been wasted, and at that moment, as though in answer, the clock on the mantelpiece chimed three, while the clock in the hall without repeated the hour after it.