

A MAKER OF HISTORY

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(Continued from Page Three.)

this hour. Monsieur can leave his name."

"But the doors are all open," Duncombe said.

"I go presently and close them," madame answered. "The careless hussy!"

Duncombe produced a small piece of gold. Madame laid down the paper at once. She looked at it as though ready to snatch it from his hand.

"Madame would oblige me very much if she would ascend with me at once," Duncombe said. "I should like to make quite sure whether the young lady is there or not."

Madame was on her feet with remarkable celerity. She accepted the coin and carefully placed it in a purse drawn from somewhere among the folds of her voluminous skirts.

"We shall need a candle," Duncombe reminded her.

She lit a lamp, talking all the while. "Monsieur is very generous," she declared. "Mlle. Flossie is a charming young lady. No wonder she has many friends. There was one," she continued, "who came here with her this afternoon, but he left almost at once," she added hastily, aware of her indiscretion. "Ah, these stairs! They grow steeper for one so corpulent. At last!"

She pushed open the door and went sideways down the narrow passage. Directly they had entered it they had a view of the room beyond. Madame cried out, and Duncombe felt all his vague fears spring into a terrified apprehension of actual evil.

The curtain before the window had been hastily drawn, but the lamp which the portress carried was sufficient to feebly illuminate the room. The tablecloth and a broken vase lay upon the floor. A few feet off was an overturned chair. Upon the canopied bed lay a prostrate figure, the head thrown back at an unnatural angle, the eyes open but glazed. Duncombe dared do no more than cast one single horrified glance at it. Madame set down the lamp upon the table and made the little room hideous with shrieks.

"Good God," she cried, "it is the little one who is dead!"

Duncombe himself fetched in the gendarmes and waited while they took voluminous notes of the occurrence. The murder seemed to them and to madame to be one of a very common class. The assassin had left no clew whatever behind him. The poor girl's rings had been torn from her fingers; her little stock of jewelry ransacked; her purse was empty; everything of value had been taken. There was not a shred of evidence against any one. Madame, who had seen the man upon the stairs, could only say that he was short and wore a black felt hat. The officer who took down what they had to say shrugged his shoulders as he replaced the book in his pocket. The affair would pass most certainly, he feared, into the long list of undiscoverable crimes.

Duncombe left his name and address and enough money for the funeral. Then he returned to his hotel. This was the end, then, of the clew from which he had hoped so much. Spencer's warning as to what would surely happen to those whom he might succeed in bribing came back into his mind with sickening insistence. In a measure he was responsible for the girl's death. After all, what chance had he? He was fighting against powers which, moving always in the darkness, seemed able with the most ridiculous ease to frustrate his every move. He re-entered the hotel in a state of complete nervous depression. For the first time he had forebodings on his own account. What had happened to Mlle. Flossie might happen so easily to him.

A man rose quickly from the lounge in the hotel as he entered. Duncombe greeted him with a little expression of wonder.

"Spencer?" he exclaimed. "Were you waiting to see me?"

The journalist nodded. He was not in evening dress, and he, too, had the appearance of a man who has received something of a shock.

"Yes. The cafe is closed, I suppose. Let us go down into the smokeroom. I want to talk to you."

Duncombe led the way. They found two easy chairs and dispatched a waiter for whiskies and soda. Then Spencer turned to his friend.

"Have you met," he asked, "with any success?"

"None," Duncombe answered gloomily.

"I have something to tell you," Spencer continued. "No, it is not good

news," he added hastily. "It is more a personal matter. It is of something which has happened to myself."

Duncombe sighed.

"Go on," he said.

"For twenty-two and a half years," Spencer said, "I have lived in Paris as the correspondent to various English journals. I have made many friends, and it has been considered among all my fellow journalists that I have had the ear of more influential people in politics and society here than any other writer. Today I have resigned my position."

Duncombe managed to summon up enough interest to be surprised.

"I had no idea," he said, "that you were contemplating anything of the sort."

"I was not," Spencer answered grimly. "I am as much surprised myself as all my friends will be."

Duncombe was puzzled.

"I am afraid I don't quite understand," he said. "You can't mean that your people?"

"No. My people have nothing to do with it," Spencer answered. "I have had the sack, but not from them. It is Paris which will have no more of me. I live here of course on my faculties for obtaining information and my entree into political and social life. Today the minister of police has declined to receive me or at any future time, my cards of entry into the chamber and half a dozen places have been revoked, my name has been expunged from the visiting list of the president and practically of every other person of importance. All that I may see of Paris now is from the outside. And there is no appeal."

"But what is the reason of it, Spencer? What have you done? How have you offended all these people?"

Spencer hesitated.

"I don't want you to blame yourself in any way, Duncombe," he said. "You could not possibly have guessed the sort of thing you were up against. But the fact remains that my offense is in having sent my friends up to the Cafe Montmartre on your account and in being suspected of rendering you further assistance in your search for those two marvelous young English people."

"You are not joking by any chance, are you?" Duncombe asked gravely.

"The matter," Spencer replied, "does not appear to me to lend itself to anything of the sort."

Duncombe buried his head in his hands for several moments.

"Great heavens!" he murmured. "Let me think. I can't tell you how sorry I am, old chap. Can't the thing be explained? As a matter of fact, you were discretion itself."

"I don't want it explained," Spencer said, "even if it would do any good,

traces of this boy and girl. Their spies of course are everywhere and their organization perfect. The first one of their creatures who tries to break away is Mile. Flossie. The poor little fool lived for only a few hours afterward. Your bribe was high, but she ought to have known better."

"You mean?"

"Why, of course! The theft of her poor little jewels was only a blind. It was to deceive the public, for as a matter of fact her murderer would have been perfectly safe if he had strolled into the nearest police station and made his report. She was killed because she was going to give you certain information."

Duncombe shuddered.

"Great heaven!" he exclaimed. "Tell me, Spencer, who or what can be at the back of all this? Guy Poynton was simply a healthy minded, not over intelligent young Saxon, unambitious and passionately fond of his home and his country life. He had no friends over here, no interests, no ties of any sort. He was abroad for the first time of his life. He regarded foreign countries and people simply with the tolerant curiosity of the untraveled Britisher. He appears in Paris for one night and disappears, and forthwith all the genius of French espionage seems to have combined to cover up his traces. It is the same with his sister, only as she came afterward it was evidently on his account that she also is drawn into the mystery. What can be the meaning of it, Spencer?"

"My young friend," Spencer said, "I will be frank with you. I have not the least idea. I only know that somehow or other you're up against a big thing. In a week, perhaps a day, I may know more. Meanwhile I want you to go on your way precisely as though you and I had not discussed this matter."

"We may not work together, then?" Duncombe asked.

"Certainly not. You are a marked man everywhere. Every door is closed to you. I shall nominally stick to my post. You must be content to be the actual looker on, though you had better not abandon your inquiries altogether. I will put you up at the Cercle Anglais. It will serve to pass the time, and you may gain information at the most unlikely places. And now goodby."

The liftman thrust a penciled note into his hand as he ascended to his room.

"From I do not know whom, monsieur," he announced. "It was left here by some one. Whom I cannot say."

Duncombe opened it in his dressing room. There was only one sentence:

"Monsieur would be well advised to leave Paris tonight."

CHAPTER XI.

"IN the most unlikely places," Duncombe murmured to himself as he bowed to the Frenchman whose name his friend had mentioned. "I am very glad to meet you again, M. le Baron," he said aloud.

They were in the covered garden at the Ritz. Duncombe had accepted the pressing invitation of an old college friend whom he had met on the boulevards to drop in and be introduced to his wife. And the third at the table was M. Louis, known in society apparently as M. le Baron de Suers.

Lady Hadley, his friend's wife, smiled languidly upon them both. She was a frail pink and white little woman, with the reputation of a beauty to sustain, wherein lay her life's work.

"You two know each other, of course," she remarked. "Paris is no larger than London, after all."

"Sir George and I have met once at least," the baron said, smiling. "I am glad that he does me the honor of remembering the occasion."

Duncombe felt himself no match for his companion with the foils. He let the conversation drift and waited for his opportunity. Presently some more guests arrived, and Duncombe drew his host on one side.

"Hadley," he said, "how long have you known the baron?"

"Met him at Dorset House about two years ago, I think," Hadley answered. "He was doing a round of country houses. I'm not sure that he didn't stay at Sandringham. One of the real old French families, you know, the De Suers."

Duncombe nodded. There did not seem to be much that he could say. He mingled with the other guests and observed his social duties. But he watched the baron, and he took care that they left together.

"Are you going my way, baron?" he asked as they stepped into the Place Vendome.

"I was going to the Cercle Anglais," the baron answered. "Do you belong?"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Then There Was a Row.

"Now, sir," she commanded, "look me in the face and deny, if you dare, that you married me for money!" He raised his eyes until they were directed to her countenance and faltered: "Well, I think I earned the cash, don't you, dear?"—London Mail.

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Lincoln, June 17.—Anticipating the action of the railroads of Nebraska, Attorney General W. T. Thompson filed an injunction suit in the supreme court of the state asking that the Union Pacific, Burlington, Missouri Pacific and Rock Island railroads be enjoined from violating the 2-cent fare law, the commodity rate law, the anti-free pass law and from defying or ignoring orders of the state railroad commission. It is believed the suit was instituted for the purpose of getting the laws mentioned before the state courts before the railroads seek to test them in the federal courts. Attorneys say the court that first gets jurisdiction will, in all probability, hold jurisdiction. If this holds good, instead of the laws of the last legislature being set aside by injunction in the federal court at the request of the railroads, the principal railroads in the state will find themselves enjoined from interfering with the enforcement of railroad legislation expect in the state courts. The filing of the suit gives the supreme court of Nebraska jurisdiction over the subject matter.

The 2-cent fare law is now in force. The maximum rate law goes into effect July 5. The attorney general will be able to go into court at any time, under the application made, and ask for either a temporary or permanent injunction.

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