

# SERIAL STORY

## BLINDFOLDED

### A Mystery Story of San Francisco

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#### SYNOPSIS.

Giles Dudley arrived in San Francisco to join his friend and distant relative Henry Wilton, whom he was to assist in an important and mysterious task, and who accompanied Dudley on the ferry boat trip into the city. The remarkable resemblance of the two men is noted and commented on by passengers on the ferry. They see a man with snake eyes, which sends a thrill through Dudley. Wilton postpones an explanation of the strange errand Dudley is to perform, but occurrences cause him to know it is one of no ordinary meaning. Wilton leaves Giles in their room, with instruction to await his return. Hardly has he gone than Giles is startled by a cry of "Help." Dudley is summoned to the morgue and there finds the dead body of his friend, Henry Wilton. And thus Wilton dies without ever explaining to Dudley the puzzling work he was to perform in San Francisco. In order to discover the secret mission his friend had entrusted to him, Dudley continues to disguise and permit himself to be known as Henry Wilton. Dudley, mistaken for Wilton, is employed by Knapp to assist in a stock brokerage deal. Giles Dudley finds himself closeted in a room with Mother Borton, who makes a confidant of him. He can learn nothing about the mysterious boy further than that it is Tim Terrill and Darby Meeker who are after him. He is told that "Dicky" Nahl is a traitor, playing both hands in the game. Dudley gets his first knowledge of Decker, who is Knapp's enemy on the Board. Dudley visits the home of Knapp and is stricken by the beauty of Luella, his daughter. He learns the note was forged. He is provided with four guards, Brown, Barkhouse, Fitzhugh and Porter. He learns there is to be no trouble about money as all expenses will be paid, the hire of the guards being paid by one "Richmond." The body of Henry Wilton is committed to the vault. Dudley responds to a note and visits Mother Borton in company with Policeman Corson. Giles Dudley again visits the Knapp home. He is fascinated by Luella and bored by Mrs. Bowser. Stumming tour through Chinatown is planned. The trip to Chinatown. Giles Dudley learns that the party is being shadowed by Terrill.

#### CHAPTER XVII—Continued.

"Oh, isn't it sweet! So charming!" cried Mrs. Bowser, as we came into full view of the scene and crossed the invisible line that carries one from modern San Francisco into the ancient oriental city, instinct with foreign life, that goes by the name of Chinatown. Sordid and foul as it appears by daylight, there was a charm and romance to it under the lantern-lights that softened the darkness. Crowds of Chinese hurried along the streets, loitered at corners, gathered about points of interest, but it seemed as though it was all one man-repeated over and over.

"Why, they're all alike!" exclaimed Mrs. Bowser. "How do they ever tell each other apart?"

"Oh, that's easy enough, ma'am," replied Corson with a twinkle in his eye. "They tie a knot in their pig-tails, and that's the way you know 'em."

"Laws! you don't say!" said Mrs. Bowser, much impressed. "I never could tell 'em that way."

"It is a strange resemblance," said Mr. Carter. "Don't you find it almost impossible to distinguish between them?"

"To tell you the truth, sor, no," said Corson. "It's a trick of the eye with you, sor. If you was to be here with 'em for a month or two you'd never think there was two of 'em alike. There's as much difference betwixt one and another as with any two white men. I was loike you at first. I says to meself that they're as like as two peas. But, now, look at those two mugs there in that door. They're no more alike than you and me, as Mr. Wilson here can tell you, sor."

The difference between the two Chinese failed to impress me, but I was mindful of my reputation as an old resident.

"Oh, yes; a very marked contrast," I said promptly, just as I would have sworn that they were twins if Corson had suggested it.

"Very remarkable!" said Mr. Carter dubiously.

In and out we wound through the ornate city—the fairy-land that stretched away, gay with lanterns and busy with strange crowds, changing at times as we came nearer to a tawdry reality, cheap, dirty, and heavy with odors. Here was a shop where ivory in delicate carvings, bronzes work that showed the patient handiwork and grotesque fancy of the oriental artist, lay side by side with porcelains, fine and coarse, decorated with the barbaric taste in form and color that rules the art of the ancient empire. Next the rich shop was a low den from whose open door poured fumes of tobacco and opium, and in whose misty depths figures of bloused little men huddled around tables and swayed hither and

thither. The click of dominoes, the rattling of sticks and counters, and the excited cries of men, rose from the throng.

"They're the biggest gamblers the Old Nick Iver had to his hand," said Corson; "there isn't one of 'em down there that wouldn't bet the coat off his back."

"Dear me, how dreadful!" said Mrs. Bowser. "And do we have to go down into that horrible hole, and how can we ever get out with our lives?"

"We're not going down there, ma'am," interrupted Corson shortly.

"And where next?" asked Luella. The question was addressed to the policeman, not to me. Except for a formal greeting when he had met, Luella had spoken no word to me during the evening.

"Here's the biggest joss-house in town," said Corson. "We might as well see it now as any time."

"Oh, do let us see those delightfully horrible idols," cried Mrs. Bowser.

The policeman led the way into the dimly-lighted building that served as a temple.

I lingered a moment by the door to see that all my party passed in.

"There's Wainwright," whispered Porter, who closed the procession.

"Where?" I asked, a dim remembrance of the mission on which I had sent him in pursuit of the snake-eyed man giving the information a sinister twist.

Porter gave a chirrup and Wainwright halted at the door.

"He's just passed up the alley here," said Wainwright in a low voice.

"Who? Terrill?" I asked.

"Yes," said Wainwright. "I've kept him in sight all the evening."

"Hasn't he seen you?" asked Porter.

"I spied you as soon as you turned the corner."

"Don't know," said Wainwright; "but something's up. There he goes now. I mustn't miss him." And Wainwright was off.

The presence of Terrill gave me some tremors of anxiety, for I knew that his unscrupulous ferocity would stop at nothing. Then I reflected that the presence of Doddridge Knapp's daughter was a protection against an attack from Doddridge Knapp's agents, and I followed the party into the heathen temple without further apprehensions.

The temple was small, and the dim, religious light gave an air of mystery to the ugly figure of the god and the trappings of the place.

"That's one of the richest carvings ever brought into this country," said Corson, pointing to a part of the altar mounting. "Ten thousand dollars wouldn't touch one side of it."

"You don't say!" cried Mrs. Bowser, while the rest murmured in the effort to admire the work of art. "And is that stuff burning for a disinfectant?"

She pointed to numerous pieces of punk, such as serve the small boy on the Fourth of July, that were consuming slowly before the ugly joss.

"No, ma'am—not but they needs it all right enough," said Corson, "but that's the haythen way of sayin' your prayers."

This information was so astonishing that Corson was allowed to finish his explanation without further remarks from Mrs. Bowser.

"I'll show you the theater next," said he, as he led the way of the temple with Mrs. Bowser giving her views of the picturesque heathen in questions that Corson found no break in the conversation long enough to answer. As I lingered for a moment in some depression of spirit, waiting for the others to file out, a voice that thrilled me spoke in my ear.

"Our guide is enjoying a great favor." It was Luella, noticing me for the first time since the expedition had started.

"He has every reason to be delighted," I returned, brightening at the favor I was enjoying.

"Foreign travel is said to be of great value in education," said Luella, taking my arm, "but it's certainly stupid at times."

I suspected that Mr. Carter had not been entirely successful in meeting Miss Knapp's ideas of what an escort should be.

"I didn't suppose you could find anything stupid," I said.

"I am intensely interested," she retorted, "but unfortunately the list of subjects has come to an end."

"You might have begun at the beginning again."

"He did," she whispered, "so I thought it time he tried the guide or Aunt Julia."

"Thank you," I said.

"Thank him, you mean," she said gaily. Now don't be stupid yourself, so please change the subject. Do you know," she continued without giving me time to speak, "that the only way I can be reconciled to this place and the sights we have seen is to imagine I am in Canton or Peking, thousands of miles from home? Seen there, it is interesting, instructive, natural—a part of the people. As a part of San Francisco it is only vile."

"Come this way," said Corson, halting with the party at one of the doors. "I'll show you through some of the opium dens, and that will bring us to the stage door of the theater."

"How close and heavy the air is!" said Luella, as we followed the wind-

ing passage in the dim illumination that came from an occasional gas jet or oil lamp.

"The yellow man is a firm believer in the motto, 'Ventilation is the root of all evil,'" I admitted.

The fumes of tobacco and opium were heavy on the air, and a moment later we came on a cluster of small rooms or dens, fitted with couches and bunks. It needed no description to make the purpose plain. The whole process of intoxication by opium was before me, from the heating of the metal pipe to the final stupor that is the gift and end of the Black Smoke. Here, was a coolie mixing the drug; here, just beyond him, was another, drawing whiffs from the bubbling narcotic through the bamboo handle of his pipe; there, still beyond, was another, lying back unconscious, half-clad, repulsive, a very sorry reality indeed to the gorgeous dreams that are reputed to follow in the train of the seductive pipe.

"This is depressing," said Luella, with a touch on my arm. "Let's go on."

"Turn to the right there," Corson called out, as we led the way while he was explaining to Mr. Carter the method of smoking.

"Let us get where there is some air," said Luella. "This odor is sickening."

We hastened on, and, turning to the right, soon came on two passages. One led up a stair, hidden by a turn after half a dozen steps. The other stretched 50 or 75 feet before us, and an oil lamp on a bracket at the farther end gave a smoky light to the passage and to a mean little court on which it appeared to open.

"We had better wait for the rest," said Luella cautiously.

As she spoke, one of the doors toward the farther end of the passage swung back and a tall, heavy figure came out. My heart gave a great bound, and I felt without realizing it at the moment that Luella clutched my arm fiercely.

In the dim light the figure was the figure of the Wolf, the head was the head of the Wolf and though no light shone upon it, the face was the face



BY THE DIM LIGHT, THE FIGURE TOOK THE FORM OF THE WOLF

of the Wolf, livid, distorted with anger, fear and brutal passions.

"Doddridge Knapp!" I exclaimed, and gave a step forward.

It flashed on me that one mystery was explained. I had found out why the Doddridge Knapp of plot and counterplot, and the Doddridge Knapp who was the generous and confidential employer, could dwell in the same body. The King of the Street was a slave of the Black Smoke, and, like many another, went mad under the influence of the subtle drug.

As I moved forward, Luella clung to me and gave a low cry. The Wolf figure threw one malignant look at us and was gone.

"Take me home, oh, take me home!" cried Luella in low suppressed tones, trembling and half-falling. I put my arm about her to support her.

"What is it?" I asked.

She leaned upon me for one moment, and the black walls and gloomy passage became a palace filled with flowers. Then her strength and resolution returned and she shook herself free.

"Come; let us go back to the others," she said a little unsteadily. "We should not have left them."

"Certainly," I replied. "They ought to be here by this time."

But as we turned a sudden cry sounded as of an order given. There was a bang of wood and a click of metal, and as we looked we saw that unseen hands had closed the way to our return. A barred and iron-bound door was locked in our faces.

#### CHAPTER XVIII.

##### The Battle in the Maze.

For an instant I was overwhelmed with terror and self-reproach. The bolted door before me gave notice of danger as plainly as though the word had been painted upon its front. The dark and lowering walls of the passage in which the Wolf figure of Doddridge Knapp had appeared and disappeared whispered threats. And I, in my folly and carelessness, had brought Luella Knapp into this place

and exposed her to the dangers that encircled me. It was this thought that for the moment unnerved me.

"What does this mean?" asked Luella in a matter-of-fact tone.

"It is a poor practical joke, I fear," said I lightly. I took occasion to shift a revolver to my overcoat pocket.

"Well, aren't you going to get me out of here?" she asked with a little suggestion of impatience.

"That is my present intention," I replied, beating a tattoo on the door.

"You'll hurt your fists," she said. "You must find some way besides beating it down."

"I'm trying to bring our friends here," said I. "They should have been with us before now."

"Isn't there another way out?" asked Luella.

"I suspect there are a good many ways out," I replied, "but, unfortunately, I don't know them." And I gave a few resounding kicks on the door.

"Where does this stairway go, I wonder?" said Luella. "It can't be the way out. Isn't there another?"

"We might try the passage."

She gave a shudder and shrank toward me.

"No, no," she cried in a low voice. "Try the door again. Somebody must hear you, and it may be opened."

I followed her suggestion with a rain of kicks, emphasized with a shout that made the echoes ring gloomily in the passage.

I heard in reply a sound of voices, and then an answering shout, and the steps of men running.

"Are you there, Mr. Wilton?" cried the voice of Corson through the door.

"Yes, all safe, I answered.

"Well, just hold on a bit and we'll—"

The rest of his sentence was lost in a suppressed scream from Luella. I turned and darted before her, just in time to face three Chinese ruffians who were hastening down the passage. The nearest of the trio, a tall dark savage with a deep scar across his cheek, was just reaching out his hand to seize Luella when I sprang forward and planted a blow square upon his chin. He fell back heavily, lifted almost off his feet by my impact, and lay like a log on the floor.

The other two ruffians halted irresolute for an instant, and I drew my revolver. Their wish seemed to be to take me alive if possible. After a moment of hesitation there was a muttered exclamation and one of the desperadoes drew his hand from his blouse.

"Oh!" cried Luella. "He's got a knife!"

Before he could make another movement I fired once, twice, three times. There was a scramble and scuffle in the passageway, and the smoke rolled thick in front, blotting out the scene that had stood in silhouette before us.

Fearful of a rush from the Chinese, I threw one arm about Luella, and, keeping my body between her and possible attack, guided her to the stair that led upward at nearly right angles from the passage. She was trembling and her breath came short, but her spirit had not quailed. She shook herself free as I placed her on the first step.

"Have you killed them?" she asked quietly.

"I hope so," I replied, looking cautiously around the corner to see the results of my fusillade. The smoke had spread into a thin haze through the passage.

#### (TO BE CONTINUED.)

##### Lost a Good Thing.

Formerly a telephone had stood on the bracket in the corner. The bracket had been made expressly for the 'phone. It had been so exceedingly convenient to call up her friends that the woman immediately noticed the change; for on the bracket in place of the telephone stood a statuette that she didn't much care for. "What have you done with it?" she asked of them. "The company tried to collect the bill," they said. "I am sorry," the woman sighed, because at that moment she thought of about a dozen to whom she would have liked to telephone. "So are all our friends," said they pointedly.

##### Simplicity in Furnishing.

The reign of bric-a-brac is ending. That confusion of our rooms, as it were, externalizing the confusion of middle class minds, has felt the attack of the revived idea of simplicity. In many houses you are refreshed by unnumbered walls, merely decorated by quiet, plain papers, without pictures or fans or plates. A few necessary chairs, a table meant for use, fewer things everywhere, and those things better chosen—that is the new ideal in furnishing.

##### Time Lost Means Slavery.

The time wasted in delaying and postponing and procrastinating and putting off, if rightly utilized, would be sufficient to accomplish the most important of tasks, which when thus shunned for the present because of some little unpleasantness or difficulty are liable to never be performed. The road of "By-and-by" leads to the town of "Never."

Norwegian wrapping paper is the best.

## Is Pe-ru-na Useful for Catarrh?

Should a list of the ingredients of Pe-ru-na be submitted to any medical expert, of whatever school or nationality, he would be obliged to admit without reserve that the medicinal herbs composing Pe-ru-na are of two kinds. First, standard and well-tried catarrh remedies. Second, well-known and generally acknowledged tonic remedies. That in one or the other of these uses they have stood the test of many years' experience by physicians of different schools. There can be no dispute about this, whatever. Pe-ru-na is composed of some of the most efficacious and universally used herbal remedies for catarrhal diseases, and for such conditions of the human system as require a tonic. Each one of the principal ingredients of Pe-ru-na has a reputation of its own in the cure of some phase of catarrh or as a tonic medicine.

The fact is, chronic catarrh is a disease which is very prevalent. Many thousand people know they have chronic catarrh. They have visited doctors over and over again, and been told that their case is one of chronic catarrh. It may be of the nose, throat, lungs, stomach or some other internal organ. There is no doubt as to the nature of the disease. The only trouble is the remedy. This doctor has tried to cure them. That doctor has tried to prescribe for them.

No other household remedy so universally advertised carries upon the label the principal active constituents, showing that Pe-ru-na invites the full inspection of the critics.

#### The Old-Time Boy.

The boy of to-day who complains of anything should be made to read the rules and regulations laid down for boys in old colonial days. He had to stand up at the table. He must go to bed at candlelight. He must not sit down in the presence of a visitor. He must not shout. He must not run without cause. He must not throw stones at animals or birds. He must not idle on the street, and if he had been found trying to stand on his head he would have gone to jail for a week.

With a smooth iron and Defiance Starch, you can launder your shirt-waist just as well at home as the steam laundry can; it will have the proper stiffness and finish, there will be less wear and tear of the goods, and it will be a positive pleasure to use a Starch that does not stick to the iron.

Contentment is said to be better than riches, but it is only a matter of hearsay with most people.

Smokers appreciate the quality value of Lewis' Single Binder cigar. Your dealer or Lewis' Factory, Peoria, Ill.

Goodness thinks no ill where no ill seems.—Milton.



## Peerless Dried Beef

Unlike the ordinary dried beef—that sold in bulk—Libby's Peerless Dried Beef comes in a sealed glass jar in which it is packed the moment it is sliced into those delicious thin wafers.

None of the rich natural flavor or goodness escapes or dries out. It reaches you fresh and with all the nutriment retained.

Libby's Peerless Dried Beef is only one of a Great number of high-grade, ready to serve, pure food products that are prepared in Libby's Great White Kitchen.

Just try a package of any of these, such as Ox Tongue, Vienna Sausage, Pic'nies, Olives, etc., and see how delightfully different they are from others you have eaten.



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