

A DEEP PURPLE FINISH

WHEREIN THE PROMOTER AND THE BARBER BOTH LAUGH

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WHEN SULLIVAN first greeted the Statue of Liberty, his name was Guerero Salvatore; and he had already bestowed the latter on Maria Guseppi, thereby electing her his partner in his attack on America. They set up their new home in Grand street, rather high up and far back from the street, to be sure; but their two dingy rooms were illumined by a hope that transformed them into a Fifth avenue suite.

The Salvatores expected much from America. To them the Statue of Liberty symbolized Dame Fortune holding aloft a cornucopia filled with the good things of the earth, and they had but to stand under. Five years later, they realized that they had worked hard, and had acquired only a small knowledge of English and five children.

Life, however, assumed a more rosy hue when Guerero got a job in a Third avenue barber shop. It was there that Flanagan found him. The owner of the shop was an Italian politician, who was something of a small king among his people. To Salvatore and the others he was a superior man, standing for all that the Italian might accomplish in America.

But greatness is only comparative, and the seowling Cupeli who held his own people in awe-stricken servitude, became, in turn, most smiling and reverential in the presence of Flanagan — a good-natured Hercules who had risen from Bowery bartender to leader of the ward. Flanagan's jokes, verbal and practical, were the delight of the lower East Side. On entering Cupeli's shop the day after Salvatore's installation, he espied the new face.

"What are you doing in an Eytalian barber shop?" he asked, severely.

"I worka here; I come yesterday."

"What is your name?"

"Salvatore."

"Sullivan, eh?" Flanagan queried, in very loud tones. "And what's your first name?"



"I can fixa da hair," Sullivan announced

By this time the other barbers were ineffectually trying to hide their giggles; but Salvatore continued bravely:

"Guerero, Guerero Salvatore."

"Jerry Sullivan," affirmed Flanagan. "Well, well, well! And tell me, Jerry why are you hangin' out with these wops?"

Wops! It was the one word that made Salvatore forget his awe of Americans. With a shriek, he bore the unsuspecting Flanagan against the wall, beating and kicking at him wildly. Flanagan emerged from the hair-trigger assault not much hurt, but considerably amazed. The spectators trembled for Salvatore's finish, as they watched the giant straighten out his apparel. But the big man was generous.

"Holy snakes! you are an Irishman, after all!" he

exclaimed. "No dago ever fought that way. Jerry Sullivan, I'm glad to know ye. I never saw a harp quite so dark as you are; but no matter what any one tells you, even if it's your own mother, take it from me you're Irish; and your name is Sullivan from today on. Shake!"

After Flanagan's departure, the barbers swarmed about Salvatore. The graveness of the situation was made clear to him — Flanagan's importance, Flanagan's jokes, and all the rest. The story was the talk of Little Italy that night, Salvatore emerging famous and a Sullivan, to the delight of every one but Maria, who had no high regard for Irish people or Irish names.

SALVATORE did not know whether to regard his new name as a blessing or a joke; but when, a few weeks later, he opened his own shop in Nassau street with money furnished by Flanagan, he knew that if there had been a joke it was not on him, and he had inscribed on both windows:

J. SULLIVAN,
SCIENTIFIC BARBER

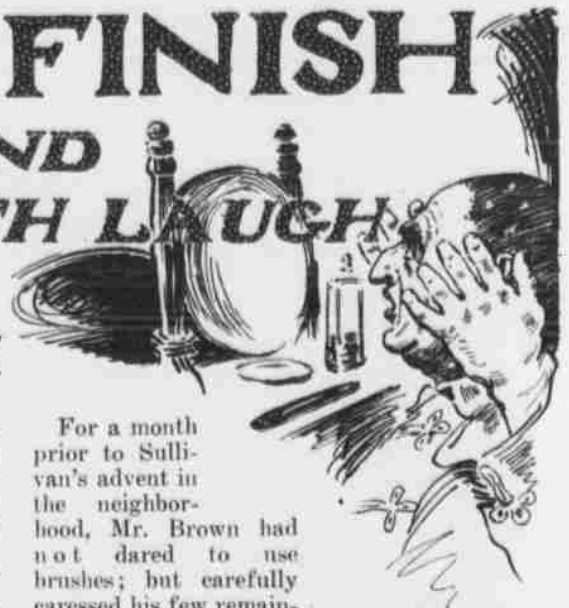
"You see, Sullivan, me boy," Flanagan had explained, "in America you must not let other people put a label on you; for if ye do, they'll never give ye a very fancy rating. You must make out your own label, and then let some one else go to the trouble of provin' you a liar. If you say you are a scientific barber, a whole lot of folks that don't know you will think you're a few pegs higher than a common tonsorial artist or a plain hair-cutter. To them, the word scientific means brains; and even though they could n't tell you what a barber would do with brains if he had 'em, they feel that the brainy barber must be better, so they go to him. In order to complete the deception, you must never talk to the customers."

Sullivan followed instructions with blind faith, as he would have done if Flanagan had told him to advertise himself a "skin-scraiper and hair-destroyer." His veiled claims were at least well suited to the neighborhood, for on every hand were smooth individuals conducting various money-separating devices of a questionable nature, under the guise of solid and substantial business enterprises. Not the least of these was Mr. J. Montgomery Brown, whose spacious offices a few blocks away were glitteringly labeled:

J. MONTGOMERY BROWN & CO.,
BANKERS AND BROKERS

Mr. Brown, securely entrenched in the private section of his offices, presented two promontories to view — a nose and an abdomen. The former, long, thin and pointed, would have been classified by a physiognomist as a nose indicating continuity — its possessor would relentlessly pursue the object of his desires. Mr. Brown craved for wealth, and as he lacked originality, he made use of the ancient, much exposed, but ever-effective dollar-trap, popularly known as a bucket-shop. He was in no sense a local disease. He had elaborate offices in various large cities. Among those who looked at life as he did, he was considered a successful and fortunate man.

Yet Mr. Brown was not happy. He had reached the stage of mental dissolution, so common to prosperous men who have fed their minds badly, where he worried over trifles. For years he had worried about money. Now that he had placed himself beyond all reasonable fear of poverty, petty fears annoyed him; and the chief of these was baldness.



For a month prior to Sullivan's advent in the neighborhood, Mr. Brown had not dared to use brushes; but carefully caressed his few remaining blond locks with a damp towel. Seeking a cause for the loss of hirsute vigor, he finally came to the conclusion that his barber was to blame, and thereafter could not have been induced to enter that individual's shop, even by a promise of perpetual immunity from Government interference with his business. When his head began to look untidy, however, he realized that he would have to succumb to a barber. Whom should the latter be?

He was walking up Nassau street, asking himself the disquieting question, when his eye discovered:

J. SULLIVAN,
SCIENTIFIC BARBER

Mr. Brown's heart gave a bound. His few weak hairs made a feeble attempt to bristle. Breathless, he entered the dazzling white shop. It was as hygienic as an operating room. Approaching Sullivan, who had already acquired a proprietary appearance, he asked:

"What do you mean by 'scientific barber'?"

"I giva da sinetificat hair-cut," answered Sullivan; "I sava da hair; I cura da baldy-head; I —"

The carefully rehearsed speech was cut short by the now thoroughly agitated Mr. Brown.

"I want you to look at my hair. If you think you can save it, I will let you begin treatment at once."

The barber, assuming a thoughtful attitude, worked the tight, yellow scalp loose with his fingers; inspected the infrequent hairs carefully; and after some deliberation, during which the patient almost ceased breathing, he faced around.

"I can fixa da hair," Sullivan announced. Mr. Brown's face lighted up with a joyful smile that had not been there for years.

"Well, you're my man," he said decisively, "and if you make good with this thing, I'll do something

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Bore the unsuspecting Flanagan against the wall



Maria gazed upon Sullivan . . . with an expression of great respect