

BLIND-FOLDED

By EADLE ASHLEY WALCOTT

COPYRIGHT, 1908, BY EADLE ASHLEY WALCOTT

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 circumstances cause him to know it is one of no ordinary meaning. Wilton leaves Giles in his room, with instructions to await his return and that any one who tries to enter, outside there is heard shouts and curses and the noise of a quarrel. Henry rushes in and at his request the roommates quickly exchange clothes, and he hurries out again. Hardly has he gone than Giles is startled by a cry of "Help," and he runs out to find some one being assaulted by a half dozen men. He summons a policeman but they are unable to find any trace of a crime. Giles returns to his room and finds for some evidence that might explain his strange mission. He finds a map which he endeavors to decipher. 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 his disguise and permits himself to be known as Henry Wilton. Dudley, mistaken for Wilton, is employed by Knapp to assist in a stock brokerage deal. "Dicky," takes the supposed Wilton to Mother Horton's. Mother Horton discovers that he is not Wilton. The lights flicker out and she is free for all fight follows. Giles Dudley finds himself crouched in a room with Mother Horton who makes a confidant of him. He can hear nothing about the mysterious boy further than that it is Tim Terrell and Darby Mucker who are after him. He is told that "a man with a trapper's cap" is playing both hands in the game. Giles finds himself locked in a room. He escapes through a window. The supposed Wilton carries out his deal and friends work with Daddridge Knapp. He has his first experience as a capitalist in the Board Room of the Stock Exchange. Dudley receives a malicious note purporting to be from Knapp, the forgery of which he readily detects. Dudley gets his first knowledge of Decker, who is Knapp's enemy on the Board. The forged note mystifies Knapp. Dudley visits the home of Knapp and is attracted by the beauty of Luella, his daughter.

CHAPTER XII.—Continued.

"But I suspect Mr. Knapp makes whirlpools instead of swimming into them," I said meekly.

"Ah, Henry," she said sadly, "how often have I told you that the best plan may come to ruin in the market? It may not take much to start a boulder rolling down the mountain-side, but who is to tell it to stop when once it is set going?"

"I think," said I, smiling, "that Mr. Knapp would ride the boulder and find himself in a gold mine at the end of the journey."

"Perhaps. But you're not telling me what Mr. Knapp is doing."

"He can tell you better than I."

"No doubt," she said with a trace of sarcasm in her voice.

"And here he comes to do it, I expect," I said, as the tall figure of the King of the Street appeared in the doorway outside.

"I'm afraid I shall have to depend on the newspapers," she said. "Mr. Knapp is as much afraid of a woman's tongue as you are. Oh," she continued after a moment's pause, "I was going to make you give an account of yourself; but since you will tell nothing I must introduce you to my cousin, Mrs. Bowser." And she led me, unresisting, to a short, sharp-featured woman of sixty or thereabouts, who rustled her silks, and in a high, thin voice professed herself charmed to see me.

She might have exclaimed and held the record as the champion of the conversational ring. I had never met her equal before, nor have I met one to surpass her since.

Had I been long in the city? She had been here only a week. Came from Maine way. This was a dear, dreadful city with such nice people and such dreadful winds, wasn't it? And then she gave me a catalogue of the places she had visited, and the attractions of San Francisco, with a wealth of detail and a poverty of interest that was little less than marvelous.

Fortunately she required nothing but an occasional murmur of assent in the way of answer from me.

I looked across the room to the corner where Luella was entertaining the insignificant imman. How vivacious and intelligent she appeared! Her face and figure grew on me in attractiveness, and I felt that I was being very badly used. As I came to this point I was roused by the sound of two low voices that just behind me were plainly audible under the shrill treble of Mrs. Bowser. They were women with their heads close in gossip.

"Shocking, isn't it?" said one.

"Dreadful!" said the other. "It gives me the creeps to think of it."

"Why don't they lock him up? Such a creature shouldn't be allowed to go at large."

"Oh, you see, maybe they can't be sure about it. But I've heard it's a case of family pride."

I was recalled from this dialogue by Mrs. Bowser's fan on my arm, and her shrill voice in my ear with, "What is your idea about it, Mr. Wilton?"

"I think you are perfectly right," I said heartily, as she paused for an answer.

"Then I'll arrange it with the others at once," she said.

This was a bucket of ice-water on me. I had not the first idea of what I had committed myself.

"No, don't," I said. "Wait till we have time to discuss it again."

"Oh, we can decide on the time

whenever you like. Will some night week after next suit you?"

I had to throw myself on the mercy of the enemy.

"I'm afraid I'm getting rather absent-minded," I said humbly. "I was looking at Miss Knapp and lost the thread of the discourse for a minute."

"That's what I was talking about," she said sharply—"about taking her and the rest of us through Chinatown."

"Yes, yes, I remember," I said unblushingly. "If I can get away from business, I'm at your service at any time."

Then Mrs. Bowser wandered on with the arrangements she would find necessary to make, and I heard one of the low voices behind me:

"Now this is a profound secret, you know. I wouldn't have them know for the world that any one suspects. I just heard it this week, myself."

"Oh, I wouldn't dare breathe it to a soul," said the other. "But I'm sure I shan't sleep a wink to-night." And they moved away.

I interrupted Mrs. Bowser to explain that I must speak to Mrs. Knapp and made my escape as some one stopped to pass a word with her.

"Oh, must you go, Henry?" said Mrs. Knapp. "Well, you must come again soon. We miss you when you stay away. Don't let Mr. Knapp keep you too closely."

I professed myself happy to come whenever I could find the time, and looked about for Luella. She was nowhere to be seen. I left the room a

little disappointed, but with a swelling pride that I had passed the dreaded ordeal and had been accepted as Henry Wilton in the house in which I had most feared to meet disaster. My opinion of my own cleverness had risen, in the language of the market, "above par."

As I passed down the hall, a tall willowy figure stepped from the shadow of the stair. My heart gave a bound of delight. It was Luella Knapp. I should have the pleasure of a leave-taking in private.

"Oh, Miss Knapp!" I said. "I had despaired of having the chance to bid you good night." And held out my hand.

She ignored the hand. I could see from her heaving bosom and shortened breath that she was laboring under great agitation. Yet her face gave no evidence of the effort that it cost her to control herself.

"I was waiting for you," she said in a low voice.

I started to express my satisfaction when she interrupted me.

"Who are you?" broke from her lips almost fiercely.

I was completely taken aback, and stared at her in amazement with no word at command.

"You are not Henry Wilton," she said rapidly. "You have come here with his name and his clothes, and made up to look like him, and you try to use his voice and take his place. Who are you?"

There was a depth of scorn and anger and apprehension in that low voice of hers that struck me dumb.

"Can you not answer?" she demanded, catching her breath with excitement. "You are not Henry Wilton."

"Well?" I said half-inquiringly. It was not safe to advance or retreat.

"Well—well—well!" She repeated my answer with indignation and disdain deepening in her voice. "Is that all you have to say for yourself?"

"What should I say?" I replied quietly. "You make an assertion. Is there anything more to be said?"

"Oh, you may laugh at me if you please, because you can hoodwink the others."

I protested that laughter was the last thing I was thinking of at the moment.

Then she burst out impetuously: "Oh, if I were only a man! No; if I were a man I should be hoodwinked like the rest. But you can not deceive me. Who are you? What are you here for? What are you trying to do?"

She was blazing with wrath. Her tone had raised hardly an interval of the scale, but every word that came in that smooth, low voice was heavy with contempt and anger. It was the true daughter of the Wolf who stood before me.

"I am afraid, Miss Knapp, you are not well to-night," I said soothingly.

"What have you done with Henry Wilton?" she asked fiercely. "Don't try to speak with his voice. Drop your disguise. You are no actor. You are no more like him than—"

"Satyr or Hyperion," I quoted bitterly. "Make it strong, please."

I had thought myself in a tight place in the row at Barton's, but it was nothing to this encounter.

"Oh, where is he? What has happened?" she cried.

"Nothing has happened," I said calmly, determined at last to brazen it out. I could not tell her the truth. "My name is Henry Wilton."

She looked at me in anger a moment, and then a shadow of dread and despair settled over her face.

I was tempted beyond measure to throw myself on her mercy and tell all. The subtle sympathy that she inspired was softening my resolution. Yet, as I looked into her eyes, her face hardened and her wrath blazed forth once more.

"Go!" she said. "I hope I may never

aided that there were better ways to get down town than were offered by Pine street.

To the south the cross-street stretched to Market with an unbroken array of lights, and as my unwary watchers had disappeared in the darkness, I hastened down the incline with so little regard for dignity that I found myself running for a Sutter street car—and caught it, too. As I swung on the platform I looked back; but I saw no sign of skulking figures before the car swept past the corner and blotted the street from sight.

The incident gave me a distaste for the idea of going back to Henry Wilton's room at this time of the night. So at Montgomery street I stepped into the Lick house, where I felt reasonably sure that I might get at least one night's sleep, from from the haunting fear of the assassin.

But, once more safe, the charms of Luella Knapp again claimed the major part of my thoughts, and when I went to sleep it was with her scornful words ringing in my ears. I slept soundly until the morning sun peeped into the room with the cheerful announcement that a new day was born.

In the fresh morning air and the bright morning light, I felt that I might have been unduly suspicious and had fled from harmless citizens; and I was ashamed that I had lacked courage to return to Henry's room as I made my way thither for a change of clothes. I thought better of my decision, however, as I stepped within the gloomy walls of the house of mystery and my footfalls echoed through the chilling silence of the halls. And I lost all regret over my night's lack of courage when I reached my door. It was swung an inch ajar, and as I approached I thought I saw it move.

"I'm certain I locked it," was my inward comment.

I stopped short and hunted my revolver from my overcoat pocket. I was nervous for a moment, and angry at the inattention that might have cost me my life.

"Who's there?" I demanded.

No reply.

I gave a knock on the door at long reach.

There was no sound and I gave it a push that sent it open while I prudently kept behind the fortification of the casing. As no developments followed this move, I peeped through the door in cautious investigation. The room was quite empty, and I walked in.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

She Meant a Mantle.

Thomas A. Edison was discussing at Atlantic City the various devices for increasing the brilliance and diminishing the cost of a gas jet.

"Many of these devices have for base a mantle," he said. "You know what a mantle looks like? Then you'll appreciate a remark I overheard in a hardware dealer's."

"A young woman entered the shop and said: 'Have you got those things for improving a gas light?'

"Yes, madam," said the dealer. 'Here is a complete set, fittings, chimney and mantle, all for—'

"Oh, I don't want the set," said the young woman. 'I've got the metal part and the chimney, but the little white shirt is busted. It's only one of them I want.'"

Woman Lost \$230,000.

New York.—Mrs. Arthur P. Mason of Larchmont is the woman who lost a tin box containing 196 \$1,000 bills and jewelry valued at \$40,000, while journeying to New York on the local New York, New Haven and Hartford train from her home. Mrs. Mason made this admission despite the advice of her lawyer, Benjamin F. Norris, who has tried to keep secret the name of his client. Mrs. Mason refused to go into details of the trip.

She placed the box on the seat beside her, while the suit case rested at her feet. It is hardly supposed Mrs. Mason forgot the existence of the box when she left the train at the Grand Central station. It is possible however, she was followed from her home by some crook who knew that the box contained a fortune.

Where Howe Led.

Discussing Washington and his birthday, John Kendrick Bangs said: "I have made a study of ghosts, as my 'Houseboat on the Styx' and other stories show. And I once dreamed, or saw in a vision, the ghost of Washington and the ghost of Gen. Howe conversing."

"The two ghosts seemed on excellent terms. Howe insisted that Washington was taking on weight—joked him about it—and finally said: 'George, I'll run you a mile for a shilling.'"

"Washington gave Howe a mocking smile.

"No, thank you," he said. 'I was always behind you when it came to running.'"

Air Navigation Engines.

Ten or 15 years ago authorities writing on the subject stated that if it were possible to make engines light as to weight but ten pounds horsepower, there would be no difficulty in constructing a flying machine. A few years after, petrol engines were made of such weight. Today they are made and on the market, weighing no more than two one-half pounds a horsepower.—Technical Literature.

Chinese Crowding Vladivostok.

An increase of 40,000 in one year to the Chinese population of Vladivostok alone, coming entirely from the province of Shantung, shows that there must be some particularly attractive business there to interest the exceedingly keen business men of that territory.

Syrup of Figs and Elixir of Senna

Cleanses the System Effectually. Disperses Colds and Headaches due to Constipation; Acts naturally, acts truly as a Laxative. Best for Men, Women and Children—Young and Old. To get its Beneficial Effects Always buy the Genuine which has the full name of the Company

CALIFORNIA FIG SYRUP CO. by whom it is manufactured, printed on the front of every package. SOLD BY ALL LEADING DRUGGISTS, one size only, regular price 50¢ per bottle.

The Universal is a steady employé and doesn't get tired. It works every day in the year and never asks to go to the ball game. Its work lightens the cares of every office wherever it is employed. You can't afford to be without it. Write for particulars about a demonstration on your work in your office at our expense.

Universal Adding Machine Co., 620 Paxton Building, Omaha, Neb., 3877 La Cede Avenue, St. Louis

SICK HEADACHE

CARTER'S LITTLE LIVER PILLS. Positively cured by these Little Pills. They also relieve Distress from Dyspepsia, Indigestion and Too Hearty Eating. A perfect remedy for Bile, Nervousness, Headache, Dizziness, Bad Taste in the Mouth, Coated Tongue, Pain in the Side, TORPID LIVER. They regulate the Bowels. Purely Vegetable.

SMALL PILL. SMALL DOSE. SMALL PRICE.

CARTER'S LITTLE LIVER PILLS. Genuine Must Bear Fac-Simile Signature. REFUSE SUBSTITUTES.

LIVE STOCK AND MISCELLANEOUS ELECTROTYPES. In great variety for sale at the lowest prices by A. N. KELLOGG NEWSPAPER CO., 18 W. Adams St., Chicago

DEFIANCE STARCH—16 ounces in the package—other starches only 12 ounces—same price and "DEFIANCE" IS SUPERIOR QUALITY.

USE THE BEST FAULTLESS STARCH FOR LAUNDRY WORK FOR SHIRTS COLLARS CUFFS AND FINE LINEN

Nothing pleases the eye so much as a well made, dainty Shirt Waist Suit if properly laundered. To get the best results it is necessary to use the best laundry starch. Defiance Starch gives that finish to the clothes that all ladies desire and should obtain. It is the delight of the experienced laundress. Once tried they will use no other. It is pure and is guaranteed not to injure the most delicate fabric. It is sold by the best grocers at 10¢ a package. Each package contains 16 ounces. Other starches, not nearly so good, sell at the same price per package, but they contain only 12 ounces of starch. Consult your own interests. Ask for DEFIANCE STARCH, get it, and we know you will never use any other.

Defiance Starch Company, Omaha, Neb.

COLORADO No trip can surpass in pleasure and health a vacation spent in the Rockies. Low rates in effect every day to September 30, 1908. \$17.50 For the round-trip from Omaha to Denver--Colorado Springs--Pueblo VIA UNION PACIFIC New and Scenic Route to Yellowstone Park Inquire of E. L. LOMAX, G. P. A., Omaha, Nebr.

Paxtine TOILET ANTISEPTIC Keeps the breath, teeth, mouth and body antiseptically clean and free from unhealthy germ-life and disagreeable odors, which water, soap and tooth preparations alone cannot do. A germicidal, disinfecting and deodorizing toilet requisite of exceptional excellence and economy. Invaluable for inflamed eyes, throat and nasal and uterine catarrh. At drug and toilet stores, 50 cents, or by mail postpaid. Large Trial Sample WITH "HEALTH AND BEAUTY" BOOK SENT FREE THE PAXTON TOILET CO., Boston, Mass.

Readers of this paper desiring to buy anything advertised in its columns should insist upon having what they ask for, refusing all substitutes or imitations.

A DAISY FLY KILLER LASTS THE ENTIRE SEASON. It leads, every thing for destroying flies. Is most efficient and economical. Sold by all dealers or sent by mail postpaid for 10 cents to Frank Bowers, 149 E. 12th St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

ASTHMA and HAY FEVER POSITIVELY CURED BY KINMONTH'S ASTHMA CURE. Over 200 testimonials during the past 3 years. A 50 cent trial bottle sent to any address on receipt of 25 cts. DR. H. S. KINMONTH, Astbury Park N. J.

WIDOWS' under new LAW obtained by JOHN W. MORRIS, Washington, D. C. W. N. U., OMAHA, NO. 29, 1908.