

# THE FATAL REQUEST OR FOUND OUT

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

"I've been dreaming," he said to himself. "I thought everything had been made quite clear to me about—"

"Was he dreaming still, or was there some one in the room beside himself? Some one sitting before the writing table and bending forward as though—"

The figure had a pen in its hand, but it made no sound as it traveled over the paper! The next moment it had raised its head so that he saw the face. "It is the continuation of my dream," he said, and rubbed his eyes. He looked again. There was nothing there.

"How does that chair come to be there, in its old place? I thought I had pushed it back against the wall, and I have no recollection of moving it again. It is very strange."

He rested his hand upon the back of the chair. Oh, it was real enough. There was no mistake about it. But he could have sworn he had never moved—Ah, what in heaven's name was that? A simple enough thing, surely, to cause so much amazement and—what?—surely not fear—in the beholder. Only a pen lying upon the blotting pad, beside a sheet of paper. But the pen was wet, and there were fresh words added to those he had himself written before he fell asleep.

The sheet of paper was the one upon which he had written those vague and disconnected phrases, which had caused him so much perplexity and unprofitable speculation. They had been written irregularly, just in the same order that they had occupied on the mutilated sheet, with blank spaces between each broken sentence. Now each blank space had been filled in, and it was with perfectly indescribable sensations that he read the copy as it now stood:

"If you have not forgotten the friend of twenty years ago, you will, on receiving this letter, start at once for Dover, morning place I expect to reach to-morrow evening. There is

sisted of only a few lines, but those few lines seemed to afford him considerable satisfaction, judging by the play of his features. Indeed, to the two who were watching him, it seemed as though the expression which overspread his face were almost one of triumph.

"Doctor," he said, "will you excuse me a moment? I have to send an answer to this by the bearer."

He spoke rapidly, and still that spirit of elation was perceptible in his words and actions. He seemed quite to have cast off that air of abstraction which had characterized his demeanor previously. He quitted the room leaving his sister and friend tete-a-tete.

"Now," said the latter to himself, "Go it, Jeremiah! Now's your chance. Make yourself agreeable for once in your life. But don't forget that you were forty-four last birthday, and you look it, every bit. Ahem! I suppose you are very much attached to your brother, Miss Burritt?"

"Attached to him?" was the exclamation. "Of course I am!"

"Exactly so—and I'm sure it's very much to your credit. Your brother seems hardly to be himself. I don't remember that he was as nervous and shaky, as he appears to be now, when I first met him—though he had a lot to try him, and—"

She put her finger upon her lips and gave a nervous glance at the door before she answered, sinking her voice to a whisper.

"He has been like that ever since the funeral. He goes and shuts himself up for hours, and I know that he is always thinking of that man who killed my father, and planning how he can hunt him down and bring him to the gallows. I don't mind telling you, because I know I can trust you; but—leaning across the table toward him—"I can't help feeling sorry sometimes for—that other man!"

"My dear young lady! I agree with

11 o'clock this morning? Yours obediently,

"JOHN SHARP."

Dr. Cartwright did not return home by the first train next day. The mere mention, on his part, of such a purpose being scouted as preposterous by his entertainers.

"I thought you spoke of three days at the least as the length of your visit," said his host; "and I want to have a long talk with you to-day if you don't mind."

"Mind!" said the doctor, "it's just what I should like."

They were at breakfast when this occurred, and the morning paper had just been brought in. Ted Burritt had been glancing over its columns in a careless way, with the air of one who feels certain that they are not likely to contain anything to interest him, when, turning the sheet, his attention was accidentally caught and held by something which appeared among the advertisements. There he sat, his mouth slightly open, and a vivid spot, caused by excitement or some other feeling, on each cheek.

"Anything very remarkable in the paper this morning?" asked the doctor, with an affectation of indifference; but noticing every change in the countenance before him from behind his spectacles. This remark recalled the other to himself. He seemed annoyed that he had betrayed his feelings so openly, and crumpling up the paper, threw it on one side before answering: "Nothing whatever. There is absolutely no news worthy of the name!"

"Now," thought the doctor, "Is he deliberately telling an untruth, or what? Oh, certainly! I must get to the bottom of this!" Aloud he merely observed, "There never does seem to be much in the papers nowadays. Now, when I was in the 47th, etc." Notwithstanding this last remark, he did not forget to take an early opportunity of examining the paper.

"I wish I had noticed which page it was," he said to himself, as he ran his finger down each column in succession. But I don't see anything likely to account for the boy's peculiar behavior. Oh, here you are," as the door opened. "Hullo! you devil, you know, and—Hullo! you look very much excited about something! What is it?"

"I am excited," was the answer. "And you'll be excited, too, when you have heard all I have to say."

Dr. Jeremiah stared at the young man in astonishment. Then, "All right," he said, "fire away and astonish me as much as you like."

"Not here," he answered, "I want you to come with me to the room that was my father's study, and where we shall be sure of not being disturbed, as I keep the key myself, and never allow any one to enter it."

They crossed the hall; Ted unlocked the door; they entered, and he locked it again behind them.

Dr. Cartwright looked round him with considerable interest. He noticed the dust, now lying thicker than ever upon every object, small and great. He dusted a chair with his pocket handkerchief before venturing to sit down. Then he took off his spectacles and polished them carefully. "Now," he said, as he settled himself, "I'm quite ready to be astonished."

"You asked me a moment or two back whether I had found the other man?" said Ted—"meaning, of course, the murderer. I have."

"Quite sure?" said the doctor, still preserving his equanimity.

"I will give you the whole story from the day we parted. You know all that went before."

He began with the account of the burnt letter; and the little doctor listened with an interest he found impossible to disguise. "It's a sad pity it should have been so nearly destroyed," was the first remark he made, "because, of course, it is impossible to tell now what the rest of the contents might have been."

(To be continued.)

## MISTAKEN IN THE DIAGNOSIS.

Doctor's Error Affected the Size of His Pocketbook.

Albert Levering, the black-and-white artist responsible for so many "comics," used to live in Chicago, but recently transferred his allegiance to New York. He took his hypochondriacal tendencies with him and they are still in good working order. His favorite pastime is to read of some deadly disease, preferably a new one, go to bed imagining he has it, lie awake all night, seek his doctor in the morning and get assurance that he is in perfect health, and then go back cheerfully to work.

One morning not long ago he turned up at the doctor's just as the man of medicine was getting into his carriage.

"I'm in a hurry," called the doctor, "and can't stop to see you, but it's all right—you haven't got it."

"Haven't got what?" demanded the astonished artist.

"Whatever it is you think you've got. Not a symptom of it. Good bye," and he drove away.

"Well, now," said Levering, turning to a lamp-post as the only witness of the scene, "that's the time he's mistaken. I know I have got it—ten dollars in my pocket to pay his last bill; but if he's sure I haven't I'll try to get in line with his diagnosis," and he went around to the nearest junkshop and invested the money in a pair of brass candlesticks and a copper kettle.—Philadelphia Post.

## Russian Doctors.

Russia is very short of doctors, having only eight for every 100,000 inhabitants. Great Britain has 180 for the same number.

## KANSAS CITY GIRL WHO HAS WON HIGH FAVOR IN ENGLAND



London correspondents point out an unusual honor for an American singer in the three-year contract made by the Covent Garden opera in London with Miss Elizabeth Parkinson. Miss Parkinson is the daughter of Judge John D.

Parkinson of Kansas City. She made her musical debut in Paris a little over a year ago, and a few months later appeared with success as Lakme in a grand production at the Opera Comique.

## WON CAMPAIGN WITH BULL.

How New York Assemblyman Secured His Seat.

Much surprise was evinced when the young millionaire Robert Winthrop Chanler defeated Major Francis G. Landon in the race for the New York assembly. The explanation may be found in a story which seems to indicate that Mr. Chanler either has a good idea of practical politics or is being guided by a veteran at the game. Everything was going well with Major Landon's campaign, despite his unpopular move in declaring against the acceptance of Pullman passes, when Mr. Chanler invested \$5,000 in a prize bull, which he invited all of the farmers of the district to call at his place and view. The ruralists went into raptures over the bull, and when they expressed a wish that they might own such an animal Mr. Chanler promptly presented each with a card giving him an interest. These cards were distributed without discrimination to all raisers of cattle, and the prize bull became the common property of the county. Against this sort of competition Major Landon's fight was hopeless.

## "THE HEALTH OF THE SICK."

Witty Toast Proposed by New York State Senator.

Senator Sullivan of New York was recently the guest at a banquet of homeopathic physicians. During the banquet the usual toasts were drunk. To the health of "the ladies," of "the president," of "Hahnemann, the father of homeopathy," and of a dozen other persons and subjects glasses were drained duly, and then, all of a sudden, the toastmaster remarked that the witty Senator Sullivan had not yet responded to a toast. "Senator Sullivan," he said, rising, "has not yet been heard from. Senator Sullivan will now propose a health." The Senator arose and beamed upon the assemblage of physicians. "I propose," he said, "the health of the sick."

## CHARITIES TO BE KEPT UP.

Forecast of John D. Rockefeller's Last Testament.

It leaked out the other day through the statement of a prominent business man of New York city, whose acquaintance with John D. Rockefeller is a close one, that the terms of the Rockefeller will are so drawn that the numerous charities to which he now contributes regularly will receive the same benefits yearly as they do now. It isn't known whether this will include the University of Chicago or not, but it does include scores and scores of institutions and private charities which are kept alive largely by the generosity of Mr. Rockefeller, and of which the world at large knows but little.

## Left Personal of Unknown Value.

The personal property of the late George M. Wakefield, mining operator and speculator of Milwaukee, is worth \$123,699.40, according to the report of the appraisers made to the county court. How much the real estate is worth is not known, as the appraisers were unable to determine the values, there being 4,186 acres of mining land in Michigan and thirty acres in Marquette county.

## Would Change Term of Office.

Assemblyman Newcomb has introduced in the New York legislature a bill providing that after the close of McClellan's term the mayor of New York shall remain in office four years instead of two. Mr. Newcomb at present contents himself with saying that if municipal and national politics are to be divorced in New York it is evident that majority elections the year before the presidential contest must be abandoned.

## PROUD SHIP WAITED.

WHILE LONGSHOREMEN SHOWED RESPECT FOR COMRADE.

Story of How a Great Ocean Liner Strained at Her Dock While Workmen Attended Funeral of One of Their Brotherhood.

Once upon a time an ocean liner had to wait five hours for a man. The man was only a dock hand. His name was Jim.

The story amazed me. It was repeated by several men before I could believe it. For of all things under heaven there is nothing more symbolic of power and wealth and the rising surge of a whole world's commerce than an ocean liner.

The ship must sail! Men strained day and nights on the docks—often thirty hours without sleep—to load late rush cargoes of freight.

Men toil in a turmoil of tumbling crates and barrels, of huge loads swung by derricks. Men slip and are maimed; some are killed and forgotten. The ship goes on! The ship must sail.

In this case it had to wait, and for a dock hand.

It happened two years back. The B— was unloading. Jim was far down in the bottom of the hold. Every few seconds the daylight was almost blotted out by a great mass of cargo dragged twisting and turning up sixty feet to the deck above.

Presently a massive mahogany log, weighing seven tons, was to be raised, and Jim helped fasten the rope. A comrade signaled by the wave of his arm to the men far above. The great derrick strained. The rope tightened. Jim gave a short, startled cry. The signal had been given too soon. He was wedged in between the huge log and the steel side of the hold, and was crushed to death in an instant.

The legal term for this is "contributory negligence." On the docks each year brings scores of deaths and hundreds of accidents. Most of them are legally due to "negligence," and the man gets no damages.

Still even a "negligent" man must be allowed to live. His wife and his little children must not starve. And so on pay day you will find at most docks a box by the pay window, into which the big hearted longshoremen drop part of their pay for the sake of a comrade maimed in the week's irregular surge of commerce.

So Jim's funeral expenses were paid by the men. Fortunately he had no family. Jim was young, in his early twenties, with a kind heart and a cheery wit that had already been felt and loved by his three hundred companions.

He was killed on Saturday. His funeral was to come Tuesday morning. On Tuesday morning the great ship must sail. It must be loaded.

Suddenly there occurred to some one a startling, unheard of idea. "The ship can wait!" Once started, this heresy was hotly discussed. It spread with lightning speed. It met with amazing success. Not a man could be found on the dock Tuesday morning.

The great ocean liner was delayed five hours, simply by the death of one "negligent" longshoreman, whose 300 mates loved him well enough to attend the funeral, even though it should have cost them their jobs.—Ernest Poole in Chicago American.

## WHAT THE STARS ARE.

Chemical Matter Is the Same in All the Twinkling Lights.

In concluding a valuable series of articles on the "Chemistry of the Stars," A. Fowler writes as follows: "Notwithstanding the divergence of opinion on some points, there is a general acquiescence in the view that the matter composing the stars is essentially the same as that with which we are acquainted on the earth."

"This leading idea is admirably expressed by Sir William and Lady Huggins in the following passage in their 'Atlas of Representative Stellar Spectra': 'As the conclusion of the whole matter, though there may be no reason to assume that the proportions of the different kinds of chemical matter are strictly the same in all stars, or that the roll of chemical elements is equally complete in every star, the evidence appears to be strong that the principal types of star spectra should not be interpreted as produced by great original differences of chemical constitution, but rather as successive stages of an evolutionary progress, bringing about such altered conditions of density, temperature and mingling of stellar gases as are sufficient presumably to account for the spectral differences observed, even though with our present knowledge a complete explanation may not be forthcoming.'

"Investigations are still in progress in many lands, and it is not too much to expect that sooner or later the story of celestial evolution will be completely elucidated."—Knowledge.

## The Wheat Song.

"Brothers, brothers, 'tis dark down here—  
Brothers, brothers, O feel the sun,  
Whispers the wheat beneath our feet,  
In the glow of life begun."

"Brothers, brothers, the light is good—  
Brothers, brothers, my sap runs strong—  
Murmurs each blade by the warm wind swayed,  
In an endless whispering song."

"Brothers, brothers I'm fair and strong—  
Brothers, brothers, I'm crowned with gold,  
Whispers the wheat with its task complete,  
And the tale of its labors told."

"Brothers, brothers, the earth was dark—  
Brothers, brothers, the world is fair—  
But we struggled on and we gained a crown  
Which each of us may wear."  
—Elmer B. Mason in The Reader.



The figure had a pen in its hand.

that between us which I think will not allow you to deny this favor which I ask. I have much to say to you, and many questions to put which you alone can answer to my satisfaction. If you refuse I shall think, rightly or wrongly, that you still regard me more as the criminal than what I once was, the friend of your youth."

The young man read this through. He had written it? Whose hand had completed the broken sentences, and given them the meaning which they had heretofore lacked? Could he have done it himself, while in a state of somnambulism? No; for the handwriting was not his! At a glance, he could distinguish the words which he had written himself. The words over which he had labored and perplexed his soul. The words which had seemed to cast a slur upon the memory of his dead father—which was now removed.

He turned the sheet over. There, on the other side, were those words, the last probably his father ever wrote: "My dear— together with date, 'April 23rd.'"

He looked again at those mysterious sentences, upon which the ink still glistened. They were written in the same hand!

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### The Advertisement.

Next morning a party of three were assembled at breakfast.

"You don't seem to have much of an appetite this morning," remarked Dr. Cartwright, addressing his host, who appeared rather distraught, with a tendency to start when spoken to. "How's that?"

The young man replied, as he fidgeted with his knife and fork, "That he didn't seem to care to eat anything, somehow."

At this moment there was an interruption. A maid presented herself with a letter which had just come by hand, and gave it to her young master, stating at the same time, that the bearer was waiting for an answer!

A letter! and come by hand! He started again as though he had been shot, and the doctor noticed that his hand went up to the breast pocket of his coat, as though there were something there he—The doctor shook his head as he made this observation.

Ted Burritt took the letter held out to him, glanced at the superscription and tore it open. It apparently con-