

THE FATAL REQUEST OR FOUND OUT

By A. L. Harris Author of "Mino Own Familiar Friend," etc.
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CHAPTER XVIII.—Continued.

"Wait a bit," was the impetuous answer, "there is more to come still." He told him about the visit to the detective, and the detective's opinion of the matter. Then, with a little hesitation in his manner, he related his strange experience on the night of his return; the voice which he heard telling him where to look, and the discovery of the photograph in the very place indicated. Having reached this point in his narrative he paused to judge of the effect it had produced upon his hearer.

Dr. Cartwright said nothing, and Ted went on to tell how the imperfect copy of the letter, which he had made himself from the remains of the original, had been completed and filled up in another hand.

The doctor withdrew himself into ambush, as it were, behind his spectacles. Then he opened his mouth—"A remarkable case—"

"No, hang it all!" was the interruption; "don't let us have any more coincidences; I'm sick of the very sound of the word. Call it anything you like but that."

Dr. Cartwright shook his head. "But what else could it be? My professional opinion—in quite another tone of voice—is that the sooner you hand this room over to the housemaid the better. Meanwhile, suppose you show me the original document that was burnt?"

The young man produced it from the same secret hiding place as before, and laid it out before him without a word. There was silence for some moments, which was only broken by the sound of the doctor's voice, as he repeated the words to himself, as he succeeded in deciphering them. At the end of five minutes he gave it up.

"It's of no use puzzling my brains

time, there is an explanation possible."

"And that is?"

"That in your sleep this arrangement suggested itself to your mind so forcibly, that you were able to retain the impression on waking, and, what you thought you read with your outward eyes was, in actual fact, only visible to those of your imagination."

The young man gave an impatient sigh. "Have it your own way. Of course I can't expect you to accept my statement as the truth."

"My dear fellow!" said the doctor. Let us both agree to maintain our own without seeking to disturb the other's opinion. But, for all that, I should like, if you have no objection, to submit the origin of this discussion to two tests, and, if you have a microscope anywhere about the premises and can also procure a lamp, as there is no fire in the grate, we can proceed with the investigation at once."

Both articles were forthcoming with very little delay.

The doctor examined the blank spaces on the paper carefully through the microscope, then shook his head. "There is no sign of any writing but your own. I suppose you will stick to your original opinion in spite of this?"

"I do," was the answer, given most emphatically.

"I thought you would," answered his friend. "I suppose that now you have told me all there is to be told?" He rose from his chair.

"Keep your seat," said the young man; "I have not done with you yet. First, give me your pledge of secrecy."

The doctor, somewhat puzzled, gave his promise.

"Now," said Ted, "where is the morning paper?"

"I left it in the other room. Do

altogether hide his affection. His eyes followed Agnes about, and if she did not notice it, there was one other who did. This was Perkins, the housekeeper, who had ever been suspicious of "the young man." Not for a moment did she allow him to escape her pert scrutiny, and he was often handicapped in his task by her prying eyes. He dared not make any prolonged search, for Perkins would have had him denounced as a thief, and he should probably have been dismissed.

Then came a break in his attempt to unravel the mystery. His mother was taken seriously ill, and he hastened home, only in time to hear her dying message. When the funeral had concluded he returned to his task, leaving his sister in Dr. Cartwright's care.

CHAPTER XX.

Extracts from a Young Man's Diary.

"I find my self-imposed task harder and more torturing to my feelings than ever. Heaven knows how I am to muster strength and determination to carry it through. As it is, I am torn by conflicting feelings; my resolution varies a hundred times a day. I only returned to my situation two days ago. I had fully determined in my own mind, before doing so, that the only way in which to remain master of myself was to put myself, as far as possible, beyond the reach of temptation, by allowing myself to see as little of, and by holding no sort of communication whatever with, the enchantress, who has made havoc of my sternest and most justifiable resolutions, and taken my heart and brain captive.

"I returned to this house full of the resolution of keeping my plan and purpose constantly before me—of remembering whose son I was and whose daughter she is. And how long did I keep faith with myself? How long did I preserve this precious resolve inviolate? Only until she encountered me—quite unavoidably on my part—and, animated by some celestial sympathy and divine impulse, spoke to me of my mother, pitted my sad bereavement, wished she could have done something, and even went so far as to say that she 'could sympathize with me, because she was half-orphaned herself!'"

"Poor fellow! I heard her murmur to herself as she turned away. 'Poor fellow! What title would she bestow upon me if she knew the truth—the truth, which must out sooner or later? Villain! Spy! Betrayer!'"

"But I must not allow myself to think of this, for, if I do, I am lost. Let me employ my pen on some other and less distracting subject."

"I have made a discovery since my return—or, rather, it has been made for me. One of the first items of information worthy of notice, which I received from cook, who was apparently bursting with that and a sense of her own added importance, in having played such a prominent part in the affair, was 'Lor' now, whatever do you think, young man? Master's been and made 'is will, which I was the chief witness.'"

"This was a piece of news worth having. Why has he suddenly taken this step? What does he anticipate? Does he begin to fear man's vengeance or God's? Is he menaced by some mortal illness, the chances of which I have before contemplated, or does he mean to commit suicide and thus elude the just punishment which might await the discovery of his crime?"

(To be continued.)

Wonderful Human Hand.

The human hand is so beautifully formed, it has so fine a sensibility, that sensibility governs its motion so correctly, every effort of the will is answered so instantly, as if the hand itself were the seat of that will; its actions are so free, so powerful, and yet so delicate, that it seems to possess a quality instinct in itself, and we use it as we draw our breath each moment, unconsciously, and have lost all recollection of the feeble and ill-directed efforts of its first exercise, by which it has been perfected. In the hand are twenty-nine bones, from the mechanism of which result strength, mobility and elasticity. On the length, strength, motion and mobility of the thumb depends the power of the hand. Without the fleshy ball of the thumb, the power of the fingers would avail nothing, and, accordingly, the large ball formed by the muscles of the thumb is the distinguishing character of the human hand.

Italy's King as a Sportsman.

The King of Italy is devoted to all outdoor sports, more especially tennis, shooting, yachting, motoring and fishing. There is a story that once on returning from a very bad day's fishing, the King met a poor man who had been very much successful. The King stopped the man and asked for a light. The man noticed that the fish the King was carrying were few in number and small, and, not recognizing the King, chaffed him on his bad luck. "You might be the King," said the man, "with that little lot." "Why?" asked the King, slightly embarrassed. "Well," said the man, "everyone knows that he's all right as a King, but he's no sportsman."

Spain Is Waking Up.

A recent report from Bilbao states that there is a very strong possibility of the import trade in nitrate of soda and sulphate of ammonia for agricultural purposes being considerably increased, owing to the efforts to improve the methods of cultivation in Spain. About 4,000 tons of nitrate are used every year at Bilbao in the production of acids and chemical manure.

JUST LIKE OTHER MEN

It is not often that Mr. Fletcher buys a new hat two days in succession. He wouldn't have had to buy them this time if he had not been such a coward. At any rate, Mrs. Fletcher claims that was the reason, although Fletcher holds that he was guiltless of cowardice and that nine out of ten self-respecting men would have behaved just as he did.

It all came about as a result of Fletcher's New Year's resolution. The resolution was not really his, but his wife's. She cut it out of a magazine and gave it to him to paste in his hat. Fletcher had just bought a new derby hat that day, and he objected to defacing its crown.

"But you can paste it on the inside," argued Mrs. Fletcher.

"Yes," said Fletcher. "That's where I think it will go if I paste it in at all. It would be rather conspicuous on the outside. But I don't want it anywhere. It won't do me any good to make a resolution. I'll break it right away. I always do."

"But you really ought to try to keep this," she urged. "Just read it and see what it is about."

Fletcher took up the clipping she had laid on the table and read it aloud:

"Resolved, That I will do all in my power the coming year to please my wife."

Mrs. Fletcher nodded encouragingly.

"Well," said her husband presently, "I don't see why you want to label me with that. It isn't in the least appropriate. I always try to please you, and, besides, I'd feel beastly uncomfortable going around with a copy book quotation of that kind stuck in my hat. Supposing my hat should blow off some time and give the fellows a chance to see the clipping?"

In the end, however, Fletcher's arguments proved unavailing, and the resolution to promote domestic felicity was pasted in the crown of his new derby hat. The day after his capitulation was a bad one for hats. Mr. Fletcher's derby came in for its share of buffeting. Twice it was lifted from his head and blown into the faces of passersby, who caught it and returned

it with uncomplimentary remarks. The third time it was less fortunate. Fletcher was standing on the rear platform of a Broadway car when a howling blast of wind made straight at him and sent his own hat, in company with two others, careening down the street. A small boy gave chase to the fugitive headgear. Two of the hats got the start of him and were sent whirling into the chaotic depths of a vacant lot; the third lodged in an angle of a board fence. The boy picked it up and ran after the car. A man who stood jammed against the railing reached out and took the hat. He hauled it in bottom side up, and in so doing read the New Year's resolution.

"By George!" he said, "one of you fellows must be kept in leading strings all right. Which one of you is it that is so ground down that you have to paste the badge of submission in your hat?"

The three bare-headed men exchanged glances.

"Not guilty," said the heavyweight blonde. "I am not married."

Fletcher and the third man were left to settle it between them. The third man was shabby. He eyed the new derby longingly. Fletcher reddened and shuffled uneasily. The shabby man noticed the signs of confusion and embraced his opportunity variably.

"It's mine," he said. The shabby man left the car at the next crossing. Fletcher watched him go with a kind of despair. He had paid \$5 for the hat and its loss under such humiliating circumstances afflicted him sorely. Still, he had denied it once, thus making reclamation impossible.

Fletcher bought a second derby exactly like the first. He hoped thereby to deceive his wife and prevent her discovering the exchange, but she noticed the absence of the resolution, and by degrees wormed the whole story out of him. Then was when she called him a coward, but Fletcher maintains that there was no other way out of the difficulty with honor to himself and his sex.—New York Times.

Tin Ore in the Transvaal.

It is reported from Johannesburg that a new and unexpected source of wealth has been discovered in the territory of the late Boer republic. Near the eastern border of the Transvaal, on the ledge of the lofty South African plateau, three valuable lodes of tin ore have been found, and the deposits are apparently so extensive that predictions are heard that the new colony may prove to be as rich in tin and copper as it is already known to be in gold.

No chromes or cheap premiums, but a better quality and one-third more of DeLancey Starch for the same price of other starches.

American Apples in Germany.

Last year witnessed a great increase in the imports of American apples into Germany. For the first eight months of 1903 the imports were 3,696 metric tons of 2,294 pounds each, against 214 tons and 543 tons during the same months in 1902 and 1901. Of American dried fruit, baked and simply preserved, the German imports for the same period were 25,251 tons, against 11,981 and 12,060 tons, respectively, in 1902 and 1901.

PUTNAM FADELESS DYES color Silk, Wool and Cotton at one boiling.

Fatal British Climate and Cooking.

The climate of England kills half the population, according to London Truth, the cooking kills the rest. Throughout the world, wherever there is the sun or a spring, there are English men and women endeavoring to repair their constitutions. The medicine bill of the English people—together with its accompanying expenses—is sufficiently large to support a second-rate power and does mainly support many large and small towns on the Continent and elsewhere.

The Wonderful Cream Separator.

Does its work in thirty minutes and leaves less than 1 per cent butter fat. The price is ridiculously low, according to size, \$2.75 to \$6.00 each, and when you have one you would not part therewith for fifty times its cost.

JUST SEND THIS NOTICE

with 5c stamps for postage to the John A. Salzer Seed Co., La Crosse, Wis., and get their big catalog, fully describing this remarkable Cream Separator, and hundreds of other tools and farm seeds used by the farmer. (W. N. U.)

The easiest way to outwit a liar is to tell the truth.

Story of a Missionary.

A capital story has been told by an American missionary who has just arrived in London from Korea. The difficulty in learning the language of that country is increased enormously owing to the large number of words which, with a slight inflection of the voice, are used over and over again with an entirely different meaning. The missionary in question was preaching to some natives, and assuring them that unless they repented they would go to a place of punishment. Amazement rather than terror was written on the faces of his oriental listeners. Why on earth, if they rejected, his advice and refused to repent, should they be dispatched—to the local postoffice! On another occasion a lecture was delivered, in the course of which a beautiful moral was being drawn from the gay career of the tiny butterfly which was suddenly cut short in the clutches of the spider. The smile, however, fell somewhat short of its intended meaning, and it was not until the laughter had subsided that the lecturer became aware that the victim which had been floundering amid the dainty silken threads of the web was a donkey, which in the Korean language, it appears, is synonymous with butterfly.

Even the silk-covered umbrella has its ups and downs.

DIDN'T BELIEVE

That Coffee Was the Real Trouble. Some people flounder around and take everything that's recommended to them but finally find out that coffee is the real cause of their troubles. An Oregon man says:

"For 25 years I was troubled with my stomach. I was a steady coffee drinker but didn't suspect that as the cause. I doctored with good doctors and got no help, then I took almost anything which someone else had been cured with but to no good. I was very bad last summer and could not work at times. "On December 2, 1902, I was taken so bad the Doctor said I could not live over twenty-four hours at the most and I made all preparations to die. I could hardly eat anything, everything distressed me and I was weak and sick all over. When in that condition coffee was abandoned and I was put on Postum, the change in my feelings came quickly after the drink that was poisoning me was removed. "The pain and sickness fell away from me and I began to get well day by day so I stuck to it until now I am well and strong again, can eat heartily with no headache, heart trouble or the awful sickness of the old coffee days. I drink all I wish of Postum without any harm and enjoy it immensely. "This seems like a wonderfully strong story but I would refer you to the First National Bank, The Trust Banking Co., or any merchant of Grant's Pass, Ore., in regard to my standing and I will send a sworn statement of this if you wish. You can also use my name." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

Still there are many who persistently fool themselves by saying "Coffee don't hurt me," a ten days' trial of Postum in its place will tell the truth and many times save life. "There's a reason."

Look for the little book "The Road to Wellville" in each package.

The Man-Eating Clam

Sailors are proverbially fine romancers. One who recently returned from a voyage in the South Pacific tells this story of a narrow escape from death when caught in a living trap on one of the little islands there.

"The ship," he said, "had stopped at the island for water, and I was walking along the beach at low tide, looking for shells and other sea curiosities. I reached a rock which at high tide was under water and started to climb around it, without thought of danger and without paying much attention to the surroundings. As I turned the corner of the rock I felt my foot slip on something soft; there was a snap, and the next instant I discovered that I had carelessly walked into one of the great mollusks or sea clams, which are to be found at low tide along the coasts of those islands.

"These clams are over three feet in diameter, and the muscles which hold their great shells together are like steel springs. When I stepped into the open clam the two shells shut up with a snap, imprisoning me as in a vise. The edges of the shell caught me above the knees, and at first I thought I would faint from the pain. Then I tried to push the shells open. I might as well have tried to pry open

the doors of a locked iron safe with my bare hands.

"I had a clasp knife, and, drawing this out, I attempted to cut the muscle which held the shells together. But I couldn't quite reach it, and every time I made a stab the shells would close tighter than ever. I have sailed the seas a good many years and been in bad places before but never one where things looked so hopeless as they did then. There was no use in calling for help, although of course, I did, for I had wandered up the beach nearly a mile from where the rest were.

"But what at first looked like my greatest peril proved my salvation in the end. The tide was coming in, and unless I could escape from this living trap I would be drowned, I thought. So I redoubled my efforts with the knife. They were useless. The tide kept creeping up. Then it finally reached the part of the giant clam where was the muscle which contracts and expands the two shells. To my surprise and joy, when the water reached this muscle it relaxed, only a little, to be sure, but enough so that I could manage to pull out my leg. It was the tightest squeeze I was ever in, you may believe."

We all know the clam-eating man, but this is the first heard of a man-eating clam.—New York Press.

The Rose Jar's Scent

Just a subtle breath of roses, just the faintest whiff of rose leaves.

In the mistiness of twilight stealing softly through the room From the jar of olden china that has held for years the sweetness Of a dead and vanished summer and its delicate perfume.

Oh, the wings of fancy flutter and the thoughts go traveling backward With a mingled pain and pleasure to the days of long ago. When the rosery was tended by a maiden fair and holy. Whom you served, as Jacob Laban, for a flaming Jaquemint.

You remember her first token was a pale rose and a white one. And you bowed as to some seraph as you took it from her grace. Truth the rose was cold, though lovely, but its frost was some atoned for. By the warmth of all the blush in the half-averted face.

Her next token was a pink rose—some-thing more than you had hoped for. Something less than Love demanded for his goblet's shining brim— Then you kissed the lady's fingers and you vowed yourself to patience. As you kissed the lady's fingers that were very white and slim.

The Four Leaved Shamrock.

The New York Tribune thus remarks: "A shamrock is a trefoil. How can there be a Shamrock IV?"

Here in this country where a gentle maiden plucks a "four leaved clover" she tucks it into her shoe and devoutly believes that the first man she walks with will be her future husband. Some men will never pass one of these specimens, because they believe they are "lucky." It is barely possible that the shamrock, which is closely allied

to the clover family, has this same tendency to put forth an extra leaf occasionally. That is for the botanists to answer. But it will certainly be no breach of scientific etiquette for Sir Thomas Lipton to send over a boat which will suggest the four-leaved clover, even though he may be going counter to the tradition of the Irish plant. He is certainly entitled to all the good luck running, and no one will blame him for stretching a point of fact just a trifle if he decides to build a new Shamrock.

Then the best of all, the red one—oh, the flaming, velvet red one!— That she gave with such a trembling, such a quivering little smile, But the eyes were straight and steadfast and you knew through all the playing.

That 'twas more than rose she gave you for your keeping all the while. Oh, the rose of velvet petals! Oh, the lovely, flaming June rose! Oh, the rose of ruby color, that is like a human heart!

Then you plucked the scarlet blossom of her lips, that love had opened. Oh, the double-petaled flower that her love had blown apart!

Oh, the fragrance of the rose jar, with its dead and buried treasure! How it floats upon the stillness of the twilight of the room. Till you seem to touch her fingers—till you almost seem to see her. Coming toward you from the mystery, the silence and the gloom!

Oh, the joys that, like the roses, blossomed brightly, blossomed bravely. White and pink and flame of scarlet, but whose beauty bright is fled! Only now and then to greet you, with a message tender, coming Like the fragrant breath of perfume from the roses that are dead. —Waterbury American.



"No sign of any writing but your own."

and injuring my eyesight over this any longer. Let me see your copy of the letter—that mysterious copy which the ghostly hand filled in for you, I suppose you have kept it under lock and key ever since?"

"I have done better than that," was the answer. "I have carried it about my person ever since."

"I suppose you have some specimens of your late father's handwriting that I may compare it with?"

His friend put his hand to his breast pocket and produced an envelope.

"This is it," he said. "As to comparing it with any other writing, it happens that, without noticing it, I made the copy upon the back of a sheet of paper upon which my father had written the first words of a letter—a letter, which, for some reason or another, was never finished."

The doctor took the envelope which was fastened down, opened it and drew out the inclosure. As he held it, the other man could see on the outer page the date, "April 23d," and the words, "My dear—". He watched the doctor's face. He saw its expression change from interest to bewilderment, and felt that he was triumphing over the scepticism which had possessed his friend at the outset. "You notice the difference in the two handwritings in which the copy is made?" he asked. "You observe that part of a sentence is written in one and the rest in another?"

"Well, I can't quite say that I do," was the unexpected reply.

"What do you mean?"

"Why, it's plain enough. Look here!" The doctor held the sheet of paper out toward him.

He saw the broken, incoherent sentences which he had himself written. He saw and recognized his own handwriting. The other had disappeared.

CHAPTER XIX.

Dr. Jeremiah Is Astonished.

For a moment there was a dead silence. Then the young man, still holding the sheet of paper in his hand, dropped into the nearest chair, and the same words fell from his lips which he had uttered before under somewhat similar circumstances—"Am I going mad?"

"Not at all," was the cheerful response. "Don't you see?" he went on, clapping him on the back. "You dreamt it; that was all."

The other raised a haggard face toward him. "But how about the writing which I saw, and of which, even though it has now mysteriously disappeared, I can recall every word."

"It certainly is very strange," said Dr. Cartwright. "But, at the same

you want it?"

"Yes, I'll get it," he replied, and quitted the room.

"Read that advertisement, doctor," he said, when he returned, and he handed the paper to the physician.

Dr. Cartwright read blindly through a small announcement among the "Situations Vacant," and then looked wonderingly up at the young man.

"I'm going to apply," said Ted.

"What!" gasped the doctor. "You mean to say that you're going to trick yourself out as a servant on the off-chance of locating your father's murderer. Why, you're mad, sir, mad. Here, let me read the thing again: 'Man-servant wanted at once. Apply personally, J. Ferrers, Belmont House, Hampstead.'"

"Ferrers," broke in Ted, impulsively. "That name of all names. There can be no mistake. I tell you I'm going to apply for that situation, and so get a chance to study the man."

"Very well," said Dr. Cartwright, after a pause. "Go ahead with your plan, and I'll help you all I can. I'll explain that business has made it necessary for you to leave home for a time."

With Ted, to think was to act, and he wasted no time in shaving off his mustache and repairing to Belmont House. He created such a favorable impression that he was at once installed in his new position under the assumed name of Edwards. He was not able to discover anything for many days. Mr. Ferrers kept his room for the most part, and was careful to lock the door when he left for even the shortest time. With great difficulty, Ted—or Edwards, as we must now call him—got an impression of the lock and had a key made, but could yet find no opportunity to use it.

But one tremendous discovery "Edwards," the man-servant, made, and one which he had not anticipated. When his eyes fell on Agnes Ferrers, the pretty daughter of the man he was tracking down, his heart was no longer in his keeping. He had first seen pretty Agnes Ferrers in the Royal Academy, and the smile she had then given him for returning a dropped program had set his pulses throbbing and stamped her image on his soul. Now, by a strange caprice of fate, he was brought into touch with her again, but they were not on equal footing now. She was mistress, he was a servant—may, more, a spy."

Besides, had he not sworn to avenge his father's murder. The situation was torture.

"It cannot be," he groaned. "I may not—I must not love her. I have my mission."

But, try as he would, he could not