

The Czar's Spy

The Mystery of a Silent Love

By Chevalier WILLIAM LE QUEUX Author of "The Closed Book," etc.

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SYNOPSIS.

The yacht *Lola* mysteriously escapes wreck in Leghorn harbor. Gordon Greig, Consul of the British Legation, is called upon by Hornby, the *Lola's* owner, and goes aboard with him and his friend, Melton Chater. On the yacht he accidentally sees a woman full of arms and ammunition and a torn photograph of a young girl. That night the consul's safe is robbed and the *Lola* mysteriously disappears. The police find that Hornby is a friend and the *Lola's* name a false one.

CHAPTER I—Continued.

"Fortunately the telegraphic replies from England are only to hand this morning," he went on, "because just before two o'clock this morning the harbor police, whom I specially ordered to watch the vessel, saw a boat come to the wharf containing a man and woman. The pair were put ashore, and walked away into the town, the woman seeming to walk with considerable difficulty. The boat returned, and an hour after, to the complete surprise of the two detectives, steam was suddenly got up and the yacht turned and went straight out to sea."

"Leaving the man and the woman?"

"Leaving them, of course. They are probably still in the town. The police are now searching for traces of them."

"But could not you have detained the vessel?" I suggested.

"Of course, had I but known, I could have forbidden her departure. But as her owner had presented himself at the consulate, and was recognized as a respectable person, I felt that I could not interfere without some tangible information—and that, alas! has come too late. The vessel is a swift one, and has already seven hours start of us. I've asked the admiral to send out a couple of torpedo-boats after her, but, unfortunately, this is impossible, as the flotilla is sailing in an hour to attend the naval review at Spezia."

I told him how the consul's safe had been opened during the night, and he sat listening with wide-open eyes.

"You dined with them last night," he said at last. "They may have surreptitiously stolen your keys."

"They may," was my answer. "Probably they did. But with what motive?"

The captain of the port elevated his shoulders, exhibited his palms, and declared: "The whole affair from beginning to end is a complete and profound mystery."

CHAPTER II.

Why the Safe Was Opened.

That day was an active one in the consulate, or police office, of Leghorn. Detectives called, examined the safe, and sagely declared it to be burglar-proof, had not the thieves possessed the key.

Probably while I sat at dinner on board the *Lola* my keys had been stolen and passed on to the scoundrel Scotsman who had promptly gone ashore and ransacked the place while I had remained with his master smoking and unsuspecting, but as far as Francesco and I could ascertain nothing whatever had been taken. The detective on duty at the railway station distinctly recollected a thin, middle-aged man, accompanied by a lady in deep black, passing the barrier and entering the train which left at three o'clock for Colle Salivetti to join the Rome express. They were foreigners, therefore he did not take the same notice of them as though they had been Italians.

The description of the *Lola's* owner, his guest, and the captain were circulated by the police to all the Mediterranean ports, with a request that the yacht should be detained. Yet if the vessel were really one of mystery, as it seemed to be, its owner would no doubt go across to some quiet anchorage on the Algerian coast out of the track of the vessels, and calmly proceed to repaint, rename and disguise his craft so that it would not be recognized in Marseilles, Naples, Smyrna, or any of the ports where private yachts habitually call.

For purposes of their own the police kept the affair out of the papers, and when Frank Hutcheson stepped out of the sleeping car from Paris on to the platform at Pisa a few nights afterwards, I related to him the extraordinary story.

"The scoundrels wanted these, that's evident," he responded, holding up the small, strong leather hand-bag he was carrying, and which contained his jealously-guarded ciphers. "By Jove!" he laughed, "how disappointed they must have been!"

"It may be so," I said, as we entered

CREDIT THIS TO "DRUMMERS"

Knights of the Road Put Up Shrewd Scheme to Aid Widow in Dire Situation.

"That the drummer is the right sort of chap was demonstrated to me today," said a Pittsburg. "Coming in on the train was a widow woman with three kids. From the amount of her drapery she had on I guess her husband had just died and left her a sum of money. You could tell she had seen good, easy times, but maybe there was some neglect about insurance. What with the kids and other reasons you could see she was nervous about this traveling. Anyhow, we hadn't gone far before the conductor found out that she was on the wrong train. Then she broke down, but she was as proud as a well-bred woman could be. It didn't take the drummers—there were six of them—long to find out that she was so badly fixed that she had spent her last dollar on tickets and was like to be stranded with the kids in a place where she didn't want to land. The drummers wanted to help her, but they

the midnight train for Leghorn. "But my own theory is that they were searching for some paper or other that you possess."

"What can my papers concern them?" exclaimed the jovial, round-faced consul. "I don't keep bank notes in that safe; you know. We fellows in the service don't roll in gold as our public at home appears to think."

"No. But you may have something in there which might be of value to them. You're often the keeper of valuable documents belonging to Englishmen abroad, you know."

"Certainly. But there's nothing in there just now. No, my dear Gordon, depend upon it that the yacht running ashore was all a blind. They did it so as to be able to get the run of the consulate, secure the ciphers, and sail merrily away with them."

"But the man and the woman who left the yacht an hour before she sailed, and who slipped away into the country somewhere! I wonder who they were? Hornby distinctly told me that he and Chater were alone, and yet there was evidently a lady and a gentleman on board. I guessed there was a woman there, from the way the boudoir and ladies' saloon were arranged, and certainly no man's hand decorated a dinner table as that was decorated."

"Yes. That's decidedly funny," remarked the consul thoughtfully. "They showed a lot of ingenuity."

"Ingenuity! I should think so! The whole affair was most cleverly planned."

"You said something about an armory."

"Yes, there were Maxims stowed away in one of the cabins. They aroused my suspicions."

"They would not have aroused mine," replied my friend. "Yachts carry arms for protection in many cases, especially if they are going to cruise along uncivilized coasts where they must land for water or provisions."

I told him of the torn photograph, which caused him some deep reflection.

"I wonder why the picture had been torn up. Had there been a row on board—a quarrel or something?"

"It had been destroyed surreptitiously, I think."

"Pity you didn't pocket the fragments. We could perhaps have discovered from the photographer the identity of the original."

"Ah!" I sighed regretfully. "I never thought of that. I recollect the name of the firm, however."

"I shall have to report to London the whole occurrence, as British subjects are under suspicion," Hutcheson

said. "I go as soon as you've sailed. I only stayed because I promised to act for Frank," I said. "And by Jove! a funny thing occurred while I was in charge—a real first-class mystery."

"A mystery—tell me," he exclaimed, suddenly interested.

"Well, a yacht—a pirate yacht, I believe it was—called here."

"A pirate! What do you mean?"

"Well, she was English. Listen, and I'll tell you the whole affair. It'll be something fresh to tell at mess, for I know how you chaps get played out of conversation."

"By Jove, yes! Things slum when we get no mail. But go on—I'm listening," he added, as an orderly came up, saluted, and handed him a paper.

"Well, I said, 'let's cross to the other side. I don't want the sentry to overhear.'"

"As you like—but why such mystery?" he asked, as we walked together to the other side of the spit-and-span quarterdeck of the gigantic battleship.

"You'll understand when I tell you the story." And then, standing together beneath the awning, I related to my friend the whole of the curious circumstances.

"Confoundedly funny!" he remarked with his dark eyes fixed upon mine. "A mystery, by Jove, it is! What name did the yacht bear?"

"The *Lola*."

"What!" he gasped, suddenly turning pale. "The *Lola*? Are you quite sure it was the *Lola*—L-o-l-a?"

"Absolutely certain," I replied. "But why do you ask? Do you happen to know anything about the craft?"

"He paused a moment, and I could see what a strenuous effort he was making to avoid betraying knowledge.

"It's well—he said hesitatingly, with a rather sickly smile. 'It's a girl's name—a girl I once knew. The name brings back to me certain memories.'"

"Pleasant ones—I hope."

"No. Bitter ones—very bitter ones."

GOT HOLD OF WRONG HOSE

Colored Man Intended to Make Paste, But Instead He Landed in the Police Court.

Covered with white from head to foot, the prisoner looked like a snow man.

"With what is this man charged?" asked the court.

"I saw a white cloud," replied Officer 666, "and I thought he was trying to blow up a building."

ulate in the piazza. In the night the British Mediterranean fleet, cruising down from Malta, had come into the roadstead, and at the signal from the flag-ship had maneuvered and dropped anchor, forming a long line of gigantic battleships, swift cruisers, torpedo-boat destroyers, torpedo-boats, dispatch-boats, and other craft extending for several miles along the coast. Lying still on those calm waters was a force which one day might cause nations to totter, the overwhelming force which upheld Britain's right in that oft-disputed sea.

"I had taken a boat out to the Bulwark, the great battleship flying the admiral's flag, and was sitting on deck with my old friend Capt. Jack Durnford of the Royal Marines. Each year when the fleet put into Leghorn we were inseparable, for in long years past, at Portsmouth, we had been close friends, and now he was able to pay me annual visits at my Italian home."

"He was on duty that morning, therefore could not get ashore till after luncheon."

"I'll dine with you, of course, tonight, old chap," he said. "And you must tell me all the news. We're in here for six days, and I was half a mind to run home."

"Your time's soon up, isn't it?" I remarked, as I lolled back in the easy deck-chair, and gazed away at the white port and its background of purple Apennines."

The dark, good-looking fellow, in his smart summer uniform leaned over the bulwark, and said, with a slight sigh, I thought: "Yes. This is my last trip to Leghorn, I think. I go back in November, and I really shan't be sorry. Three years is a long time to be away from home. You go next week, you say? Lucky devil to be your own master! I only wish I were. Year after year on this deck grows confoundingly wearisome, I can tell you, my dear fellow."

Durnford was a man who had written much on naval affairs, and was accepted as an expert on several branches of the service. The admiralty do not encourage officers to write, but in Durnford's case it was recognized that of naval topics he possessed a knowledge that was of use, and, therefore, he was allowed to write books and to contribute critical articles to the service magazines. He had studied the relative strengths of foreign navies, and by keeping his eyes always open he had, on many occasions, been able to give valuable information to our naval attaches at the embassies.

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"Pleasant ones—I hope."

"No. Bitter ones—very bitter ones."

"What have you to say for yourself?"

For answer the prisoner puffed out a little white cloud and coughed up enough flour to make a batch of biscuits.

"Can't you speak?"

A negative shake of the man's head sent flour into the atmosphere like hair from a woolly dog.

"Are you a baker?"

"This time the man managed to mumble a half-smothered 'No.'"

"Then what on earth are you?"

"After several false starts the prisoner finally burst:

"'Bill poster.'"

"Did you fall into a flour bin?"

Rubbing his face until a dusky skin began to show through its white coating, the prisoner explained:

"No, sah. When I run out ob paste dis mawin', I filled a bucket wif flour an' went across de street, where I saw a big horse by de side ob a building. I put de nozzle ob de hose into de bucket, but at first de handle wouldn't turn. I gabe one big twist, an—'an' den it happened!"

"What happened?"

he said in a hard tone, striding across the deck and back again, and I saw in his eyes a strange look, half of anger, half of deep regret.

Was he telling the truth, I wondered? Some tragic romance or other concerning a woman had, I knew, overshadowed his life in the years before we had become acquainted. But the real facts he had never revealed to me. Outwardly he was as merry as the other fellows who officered that huge floating fortress; on board he was a typical smart marine, and on shore he danced and played tennis and flirted just as vigorously as did the others. But a heavy heart beat beneath his uniform.

When he returned to where I stood I saw that his face had changed; it had become drawn and haggard. He wore the appearance of a man who had been struck a blow that had staggered him, crushing out all life and hope.

"What's the matter, Jack?" I asked. "Come! Tell me—what ails you?"

"Nothing, my dear old chap," he answered hoarsely. "Really nothing—only a touch of the blues just for a moment," he added, trying hard to smile. "I'll pass."

"What I've just told you about that yacht has upset you. You can't deny it."

He started. His mouth was, I saw, hard set. He knew something concerning that mysterious craft, but would not tell me.

"Why are you silent?" I asked slowly, my eyes fixed upon my friend the officer. "I have told you what I know, and I want to discover the motive of the visit of those men, and the reason they opened Hutcheson's safe."

"I admit that I have certain grave suspicions," he said at last, standing

astride with his hands behind his back, his sword trailing on the white deck. "You say that the yacht was called the *Lola*—painted gray with a black funnel?"

"No, dead white, with a yellow funnel."

"Ah! Of course," he remarked, as though to himself. "They would repaint and alter her appearance. But the dining saloon. Was there a long carved oak buffet with a big, heavy cornice with three gilt dolphins in the center—and were there not dolphins in gilt on the backs of the chairs—an armorial device?"

"Yes," I cried. "You are right. I remember them! You've surely been on board her!"

"The captain, who gave his name to you as Mackintosh, is an undersized American of a rather low-down type?"

"I took him for a Scotsman."

"Because he put on a Scotch accent," he laughed. "He's a man who can speak a dozen languages brokenly, and pass for an Italian, a German, a Frenchman, as he wishes."

"And the—the man who gave his name as Philip Hornby?"

Durnford's mouth closed with a snap. He drew a long breath, his eyes grew fierce, and he bit his lip.

"Ah! I see he is not exactly your friend," I said meaningly.

"You are right, Gordon—he is not my friend," was his slow, meaning response.

"Then why not be outspoken and tell me all you know concerning him? Frank Hutcheson is anxious to clear up the mystery."

"Well, to tell you the truth, I'm mystified myself. I can't yet discern their motive."

"But at any rate you know the men," I argued. "You can at least tell us who they really are."

He shook his head, still disinclined, for some hidden reason, to reveal the truth to me.

"Dat hose wasn't foah fillin' pails at all; it was foah fillin' automobile tians!"—Judge.

Candy From the Fields.

One of the latest promises from modern discoveries is that the candy of the future may be grown in the fields. Alfalfa is the medium. A man who owns food mills in Idaho and Montana announces that he can make at least seventy-five different kinds of candy from alfalfa. There is also a mill in California that makes meal from alfalfa, which is for the raw material of the candy maker. A rich grade of sirup may also be made from alfalfa. The discoverer is so enthusiastic over the results of his alfalfa research that he is planning for the manufacture of alfalfa flour, which he asserts will be superior to all other flours for baking. This mill will probably be ready in six months. He has a mill in Idaho that has been making a balanced food for live stock out of alfalfa. If the candy experiment turns out to be a reality, there may be expected a large increase in the acreage of the planting.

Child's Allowance.

Should boys and girls have their own allowance, in proportion to the means of the parents, as soon as they are old enough to know the value of money? This is what many a parent has said in substance:

"Certainly. An allowance is the best safeguard against the habit of extravagance, if the child is taught to spend the money judiciously and to keep a strict account of all expenditures. It is absurd to think that a boy is not capable of buying his own neckties or a girl her handkerchiefs. What if they do make mistakes? They can be taught to profit by them and they must learn to rely upon themselves sooner or later. Children like to be trusted and will seldom betray confidence."

A Bargain.

"She intended to refuse him, but she is such a lover of bargains that she could not."

"How was that?"

"He looked so cheap when she turned him down that she snapped him up."

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THE JOYOUS FOURTH

By William Gerard Chapman

Gee, don't I wish the Fourth wuz here!
It seems like I can't wait
Until the days jest catch up with
That blame' red-figger date.
I got a lot o' fire-works,
Oh, morn'n you could think,
A bully cannon, too, of brass,
So shiny makes you blink.

The minute when I get awake,
'Bout four o'clock or so,
You bet I'll hustle in my clothes
An' grab my box an' go
A-kittin' out behin' the barn
An' light my punk — an', say!
You won't hear nothing much but noise
The rest o' that whole day.

But, gosh! that ain't a circumstance
To what'll happen when
It gets right dark. You jest be there,
You'll see some doin's, then!
We'll break in St. the blacksmith's, shop
An' get his anvils out
An' shoot them all around the town;
Then there'll be noise, don't doubt!

Afore each house we'll set one down
An' pour the powder in,
An' set the other top of it —
Then jest you hear the din!
Some folk's'll come a-runnin' out
An' raise an awful row,
But most'll laugh like fun an' shout
"Jest get along, boys, now."

Oh, gee, I wish the Fourth wuz here!
But Ma sez, "Mercy me!
Why you're so set on gettin' burns
An' blisters, I can't see."
But shucks! who cares for things like that?
A boy's Ma never learns
As how he has jest loads o' fun
A-gettin' of those burns.

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WASHINGTON PORTRAITS

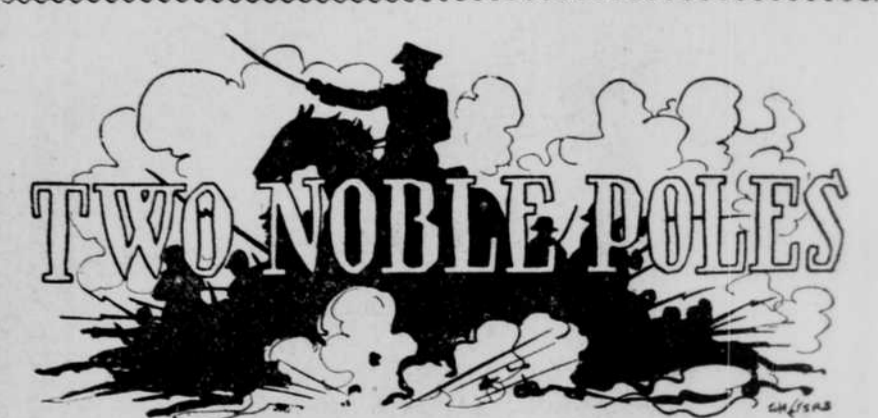
The last sitting given by Washington was for Sharpless, who made a mathematically correct profile which furnishes the authority for the proportions of the subject's features. Of all painters, none achieved more than Gilbert Stuart, who, it is generally agreed, has given to the world the best likeness of the man. Stuart's success was probably due to the fact that he kept his subject from self-consciousness by entertaining him. In the two originals of this artist, and in the twenty-six copies which he made, he left noble personification of wisdom and serenity to the American people in the person of the first president of the nation.

In color and finish, as well as in lifelike resemblance of features, no Washington artist has approached him. At the time of the Stuart sitting Washington's mouth appeared rather unnatural on account of two new seahorse ivory front teeth which substituted for the general's own. The failure of the first portrait, which was destroyed, was probably traceable to this fact.

The Stuart picture of Washington standing with a sword in his left hand was made expressly for the Marquis of Lansdowne, who was so delighted with the canvas that he declared it was only his advanced years which prevented his crossing the ocean to thank Washington for allowing this picture to be taken.

Although several copies of this painting were made by Stuart, the painting in the White House, so long considered his, was not done by that master. It is the work of an obscure artist, who substituted his own copy for an original which the government purchased for \$800.

Another interesting fact about this picture is that during the time when the British were in Washington in 1814 it stood out in inclement weather for several days. This was because



TWO NOBLE POLES

him round and, Poland having no further attraction for him at that time, he came to aid the struggling colonists in America.

Through Franklin's aid he was given a place on Washington's staff, and afterward made colonel of engineers, a position for which he was eminently fitted by a careful military training in the best schools of Europe. He was with Gates at Saratoga, with Greene in the Carolinas, and again in charge of the fortification of West Point on the Hudson.

When he had finished at West Point that place was considered the strongest fortress in America, and Washington took pains to pay tribute to Kosciuszko's genius. At the end of the war he was a major general in the Continental army.

Then he went back to Poland to fight for his own people. His efforts were unsuccessful, and, after a checked attempt to elope,

The couple were overtaken and Kosciuszko was left all but dead, his body gotten kerchief on his breast. But his youth and iron constitution brought