

# THE FATAL REQUEST OR FOUNDOUT

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

All, though still legible, were more or less injured by the fiery ordeal to which they had been in some degree subjected. The fire, which had stopped before reaching the upper part of the body, had been sufficient for this.

He ran his eye over them again. What was that? Something which cracked as he laid his hand upon one of the papers nearest to him. It was a sheet of foreign note paper, much singed, and written only upon one side.

He pushed all the other papers together in a heap. Then, with the burnt letter before him, with an elbow planted on each side, and his head supported between his hands, he bent himself to the task of deciphering what still remained.

At last, after at least an hour spent in this way, he made a gesture of despair.

"I suppose I must give it up. The task is beyond me—at least, this portion of it."

He cast his eye again over the words.

"They tell me nothing as they are. They even serve to cast some implication upon my father's honor, and—"

He broke off abruptly, and the color forsook his face. What was it the doctor had hinted at? Something discreditable in the past?

He glanced at the paper again. "But this speaks of something worse—"

He gave a hasty look round, as though he half-feared the possibility of the presence of a listener, as he whispered the words—"Something criminal!"

He took up his pen again, and once more concentrated his whole attention upon the burnt letter.

The paper before him contained a number of broken phrases—the beginnings and fragments of sentences. The upper part of the letter had been

vealing another compartment behind the first.

This at first seemed to contain nothing but a packet of old letters, tied round with a faded blue ribbon. They were his mother's letters, written before her marriage, and treasured ever since.

A bundle of old love letters. Was that all?

No, there was something else. A photograph, faded and yellow, like the letters. A photograph of a young man, in the dress, that now seemed old-fashioned and ridiculous, of twenty or thirty years ago. The features were hardly distinguishable, but on the back was written a name and a date—"James Ferrers, taken June, 1858."

## CHAPTER XV.

### The New Client.

Mr. John Sharp's offices were situated off the Strand. And at 11 o'clock one morning Mr. John Sharp was seated in his private room, expecting a visitor, or, as Mr. Sharp would have expressed it himself, a client. While waiting for the latter to put in an appearance, he whittled away the time with the morning paper.

At the particular moment to which we refer, his attention was engaged by something in the top right hand corner of the outside sheet, which seemed to afford him a considerable amount of satisfaction.

"It certainly does read well," he remarked to himself complacently. "I can't deny that, though I did draw it up myself. 'I wonder,' he continued, rapping his chin with his forefinger, 'whether the gent who's made the appointment for 11 o'clock came from the advertisement, or whether he was recommended?'"

The advertisement referred to was as follows:

"Sharp's Detective Agency. Swift,

mind that he committed the deed. What I want you to do is to trace him for me—or, rather, put me on his track and let me run him down."

"Phew!" whistled Mr. Sharp, softly, under his breath. "This is something quite out of the common, this is. Suppose," he said, addressing the young man, "that we examine the evidence. This is the bullet, you say; and this a photograph you found among the deceased gentleman's papers. Might I inquire what this is?" laying his hand upon the latter article.

"That is the letter I spoke of, which made the appointment which my father kept, and was thus, indirectly, the cause of his death. It is partly destroyed; but enough remains to show that there was—here he hesitated for the first time—"something of the nature of a secret between them."

Mr. Sharp ran his eye down the page. "Humph!" he remarked; "something vague and unsatisfactory. It certainly seems to hint at something of a suspicious nature between the two."

"Don't make any mistake," put in Ted Burritt at this point; "whatever there may be of that nature does not—cannot apply to my father."

"Probably not! Probably not! But you must allow a certain amount of ambiguity—of cutting both ways. If we could prove the knowledge of some nefarious—some—here he referred to a sentence in the copy of the letter—"some criminal proceedings concerning the writer on the part of the—er—the unfortunate gentleman who was shot—something which lay between those two alone. Why, then, we should be able to see our way. Suppose there was a strong provocation. Suppose those two to be alone in a first-class carriage. Suppose that a sudden quarrel arises between them; that the deceased, as I have just said, is provoked to utter threats as to what he may or may not do. Suppose the one threatened, who carries a revolver, makes up his mind to silence him once for all by the means of a bullet through his brain. His client nodded.

"Now," continued Mr. Sharp, "before proceeding farther, just let us come to an understanding as to what you want me to do?"

"I want you," was the answer, "to trace this other from the time that he was last seen."

"Very good," from Mr. Sharp. "And to trace his history backwards from that time?"

"And the party's name?"

Ted handed him the photograph and showed him what was written on the back.

"Very good, sir. I think we understand each other. And you would wish me to begin my investigations—?"

"At once!"

There was a little discussion here about terms, expenses, etc., which, being satisfactorily arranged, the client rose and prepared to take his departure.

"You will leave me this"—the detective indicated the photograph—"and your copy of the letter?"

Ted Burritt assented and replaced the other articles.

"I shall make a point," said Mr. Sharp, "of going through the report of the inquest again to refresh my memory, and in case there should be any little fact that may have escaped yours. You have to prove"—checking the items off on his fingers—"First, that the man we want wrote that letter; secondly, that he was the other passenger, and, thirdly, that he fired that shot."

The answer was firm and concise: "I don't require you to prove the murder so much as to trace the man, and, when you have done so—leave him to me!"

(To be continued.)

**A Yankee Trade.**  
The old Yankee skill at driving a bargain is not being lost. A woman visitor at a fashionable resort on the Maine coast last summer went to the Universalist church in the place the first Sunday morning of her stay, and was politely shown to a seat. There was no hymn book, however, but the occupant of the pew behind her reached over and placed one in her hands. At the close of the service the visitor turned and thanked the person, saying as she was to attend that church all summer she would like to buy a hymn book. "Well," said the other woman, "I guess you can have that book if you'll give me a pair of black gloves, No. 7." Very well," said the visitor. The next day she went to Portsmouth, purchased the No. 7 black gloves for \$1.50 and duly received the use of the hymnal in exchange for them on the following Sunday.—Boston Herald.

**One Thing to Avoid.**  
"Yes," said the great man, "I am going to write a book of personal recollections. I think I am prominent enough to do that, don't you?"  
"Oh, yes, you're prominent enough, but I'd like to caution you about one thing."  
"What's that?"  
"For the purposes of publication, don't recollect anything about prominent men now living."

"But they're just the people I want to write about. Those are the kind of reminiscences that will make the book sell."  
"Oh, well, suit yourself, but remember that I warned you."  
"What's the danger?"  
"Why, just as soon as you begin to recollect things about them they will begin to recollect things about you."

"I hadn't thought of that," remarked the great man.—Cincinnati Post.

**Women Inventors.**  
The United States has granted 3,500 patents to women.

# OVER THE TEACUPS

## Stole Collarettes.

The vogue of the stole collarette is an established fact and its number and variety increase day by day. The two shown are among the best offered and afford a choice of shape and style.

Number One is made of mole skin with trimming of ermine and is shaped to form a deep round collar at the back, with stole ends that are narrow.



4609 Stole Collarettes, one size

rower at the waist line and broader at the lower edge, where they terminate in points.

Number Two is shown in Persian lamb cloth with black silk ornaments, making a finish at the front. The collar portion is square at both front and back and the stoles are wider at the ends than at the collar.

Both designs are available for all the materials used for collarettes, fur, lamb cloth, velvet and the like.

To cut either one will require 1½ yards 27 inches wide. The pattern 4609 is cut in the medium size only.

## Apple Tapioca Pudding.

Suppose you put a half cup of tapioca to soak over night. I have a white-lined granite kettle, and put the tapioca to soak in that. In the morning put a little water in; let it simmer slowly, until transparent; put a tablespoon of butter in, a little salt, nutmeg, a stick of cinnamon, sugar to taste; then pare and quarter apples and put in. Put in as many apples as you want, and cook until apples are tender. You will have something pretty nice. You can have rhubarb and tapioca, strawberries and tapioca, raspberries and tapioca. Cook on top of stove.—November First.

## Seven Gored Skirt.

The seven gored skirt that flares freely and gracefully at the lower portion retains all its vogue in spite of the many novelties introduced. This one allows of either the inverted



4615 Seven Gored Flare Skirt, 22 to 34 waist.

plaits or habit back, and is trimmed with shaped straps that add much to its style. As shown it is made of nut brown hopsacking, with straps of broadcloth piped with velvet, and is stitched with corticelli silk, but all materials used for skirts and for entire gowns are suitable.

The skirt is cut in seven gores that are shaped to widen generously below the knees and to provide the fashionable flare. The back gores are cut for inverted plaits, but can be cut off at indicated lines when the habit effect is preferred. The straps are pointed at their ends and are arranged over the gores before the skirt is seamed.

The quantity of material required for the medium size is 9½ yards 21 inches wide, 4¼ yards 44 or 4½ yards 52 inches wide when material has figure or nap; 3½ yards 44 inches or 3¾ yards 52 inches wide when material has neither figure nor nap.

The pattern 4615 is cut in sizes for a 22, 24, 26, 28, 30 and 32 inch waist measure.

## PRETTY THINGS TO WEAR

Violet is a favorite color.

Velvet ruchings trim frocks. Jeweled clasps are much liked. Painted wood buttons are noted. The best velveteens will not wear off.

Laced effects in ribbon are still noted. Walking skirts just touch the ground.

Riveted steel arrows trim smart hats. Oranges decorate a big brown fur hat.

Lace is conspicuous on some of the new hats. Many delicate tones are beautiful with brown.

Forty-five inches is the poplar coat lengths. It's a fad to have the slipper heels match the gown.

Coat tails of lace are clever on an evening toilet. An odd panel skirt is arranged over plaited skirt.

**Latest in Linen Collars.**  
Stiff linen collars are acquiring more wonderful shapes each week, indicating a large reserve of ingenuity among their originators. Some of the latest—and also the prettiest—are designed with the idea of dispensing altogether with the supplementary bow or tie, therefore, little V-shaped extensions

in front, the fastening, of course, being effected at the back. Eminently original is one composed of alternate rows of the white linen and lattice work, the latter threaded through the velvet ribbon to match the frock or blouse, and tied in graduated bows in front, while another, embroidered with a heavy raised pattern in threadwork, boasted a triangular emplacement in front as a substitute for the tie.

## A Moonlight Dress.

One of the most charming flights fashion has taken is in the form of a "moonlight dress." This most wonderful effect can be achieved with layers of filmy chiffon gauze, and sheer glistening Liberty silk in these shades: silver, white moonlight blue, gray and other pale shades.

There have been sunset gowns in purple, rose, red gold, mauve cream and turquoise blue, and autumn gowns in the richness of color that season suggests, also winter costumes all white and cold and sparkling, but never before a moonlight effect with all its poetic fancy. Experts have proved how beautiful it can be in blending these requisite shades and materials.

## Advantages of Fur Hats.

Poverty is sometimes a safeguard. The expensive and fashionable fur hat has been found unwholesome for the hair, and one worn as constantly

## Girl's Suspender Costume.

Suspender frocks make one of the latest novelties for little girls and are exceedingly charming. This one is made with a box plaited gumpe of white lawn, while the dress itself is of rose colored cashmere, stitched with corticelli silk, and is delightful in color as well as style, but the design can be reproduced in any of the



4608 Girl's Box Plaited Suspender Costume, 6 to 12 years.

season's materials, in any shade that may be preferred. The suspenders, which make the essential characteristic, are delightfully childish in effect and also serve to keep the skirt in place.

The dress consists of the gumpe

## A DAINTY LITTLE WAIST.



Young girls are always charming when dressed in white. This pretty waist combines crepe de Chine with a bertha of cream lace and is exceedingly effective. The shirred yoke is a feature and the bertha gives the broad shoulder effect of fashion, while the sleeves are shirred to fit the arms snugly above the elbows, but form soft drooping puffs at the wrists. All

materials soft enough for shirring are appropriate and the design suits both the separate waist and the entire dress. The quantity of material required for a girl of 14 years of age is 3¼ yards 21, 3¼ yards 27 or 2 yards 44 inches wide with ¾ yards of lace. A May Manton pattern, No. 4414, sizes 12 to 16 years, will be mailed to any address on receipt of ten cents.

as any woman finds it necessary to wear a hat would soon make the wearer bald. So women who have been envying your wealthier sisters this headgear comfort yourselves, for if they have the hat you have the unimpaired head of hair.

## A Sensible Skirt.

The best material for an every-day skirt is twilled taffeta. It is firm, noiseless and soft enough to be unpretentious, and, in spite of the fad for checks and plaids and Roman stripes, a black twilled taffeta, tight-fitted and plaited at the foot, escaping the ground a full two inches, is unquestionably a modest and profitable purchase.

## Most Economical Gloves.

French kid gloves look fresh much longer than suede ones, and a kid that is soft and elastic is better than a hard one. If when wearing kid gloves your hands become hot, breathe into the gloves as soon as you take them off. This helps to prevent the kid from hardening.

## Fashions for Wee Folks.

Pale green in the soft, cool shades is very pretty for sashes, hair bows and the like, to accompany white frocks.

Frocks for very small folk are in the French form, with long waist and much abbreviated skirt, standing out crisply in one-piece princess form.

The one-piece frocks take various forms. Most of them are plaited in side or box plaits from collar band to hem, and with them is worn a belt in Russian style.

White wool frocks are effectively trimmed with bands of bright plaid silk bordered by white fiber braid.

Stitched bands of silk in plain colors trim some of the plaid frocks, and when, as is often the case, the model has a sailor collar and scarf, the model has a sailor collar and scarf, this collar may be of the taffeta, heavily stitched at the edges, and the scarf will be of the silk.



"Something I can do for you?"

burned away, and the first word which was decipherable was his father's name—"Slias."

Below this might be read, with some difficulty, the following incoherent scraps of sentences, in which, after all, there was a good deal of guess work:

"Have not forgotten . . . of twenty years . . . on receiving this letter . . . at once for Dover . . . expect to reach . . . There is that between us which . . . not allow you to deny . . . I ask . . . and many . . . you alone can . . . If you refuse I shall . . . that you . . . as the criminal . . . of your youth."

Beneath this last sentence he could make out what he took to be the letter J, which apparently stood for the initial letter of the Christian name, but the rest of the signature was burned and obliterated.

At this moment something again recalled to him the mysterious words which he had heard the night before the funeral, and he looked round for a possible interpretation of them.

His eye roamed from one object to another, and his tongue repeated the words—"The spring at the back of the recess!" What recess? Where?

He rose from his chair and took a sharp turn round the room. The recess! What was meant by the recess?

"Father," he said, as though addressing some one present. "Show me what you mean." He drew up his chair and resumed his seat; but there was that in his behavior which suggested one under the control of some mesmeric influence, or who walked in his sleep.

Immediately in front of him, his eye rested upon a small door. To his surprise, he now observed for the first time that the key was in the lock. He turned it and saw papers within, tied up in bundles and endorsed. Some were quite yellow with age, and some were more modern.

He went to work deliberately until he had quite cleared the space. It was not very large, but now that it was empty it formed a sort of—

He did not finish the word even in his own mind, but began to pass his fingers over the panel at the back, slowly backwards and forwards, an inch at a time.

At last, something seemed to catch his nail—something which projected ever so slightly.

He pressed it—the spring at the back of the recess—firmly. There was a little jarring sound, and the back of the partition fell forward, re-

sure and secret. All inquiries conducted with the greatest skill and discretion. Evidence obtained on any subject. All communications regarded as strictly private and confidential. Mr. John Sharp promises to all those who honor him by seeking his aid the experience of twenty years and the secrecy of the confessional."

Mr. John Sharp, as regarded his outward appearance, was somewhat of the weasel order. As he himself often said, "Sharp was his name and sharp was his nature."

"My new client's late," he continued, looking at his watch. He opened a door of communication and put his head through.

"Jennings!"

"Yes, sir."

"When the gentleman comes, don't forget to tell him that I'm engaged for the moment, but shall be at liberty shortly; and mind you come in when you hear me bang the door, and ask if I am disengaged and can see the gentleman now."

The faithful Jennings performed his duty to the letter. "I think," said Mr. Sharp, rising and referring to a memorandum, as the gentleman was ushered in, "that I have the pleasure of addressing Mr. Burritt? Will you be good enough to be seated."

The visitor admitted that was his name, and took the seat indicated.

"Something I can do for you?" inquired Mr. Sharp, placing the tips of his fingers together interrogatively.

The new client, who had with him a small leather bag, opened it, and produced three articles, which he placed upon the table before him. They consisted of a square, flat package, a photograph and a ball from a revolver.

"Suppose you begin from the beginning and tell me all about it. I shall not interrupt you," said Mr. Sharp, as he opened the note-book and moistened a stump of lead pencil with his tongue.

He kept his word, though he made copious notes, and for some moments there was only the monotonous sound of the one voice, as the new client recapitulated all the circumstances which had led to his seeking Mr. Sharp's assistance, and which have already been fully gone into.

When he had finished, "I thought the name seemed familiar to me," said the other. "To be sure, I remember all the circumstances connected with the sad affair. And so you think you have hit upon the guilty party?"

"I am certain of it," was the determined answer. "I believe I know his name, and have proof in my own

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Town \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_  
Pattern No. \_\_\_\_\_  
Waist Measure (if for skirt) \_\_\_\_\_  
Bust Measure (if for waist) \_\_\_\_\_  
Age (if child's or miss's pattern) \_\_\_\_\_

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