

BLIND FOLDED

By EADLE ASHLEY WILCOIT

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 shiver 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 nature. Wilton leaves Giles in their room with instructions to await his return and shoot 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 hunts 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 this Wilton dies without ever explaining to Giles the puzzling work he was to perform in San Francisco. In order to discover the secret mission which had been entrusted to him, Dudley continues his disguise and permits himself to be known as Henry Wilton. He makes a mistake for Wilton, is employed by Knapp to assist in a stock brokerage deal.

CHAPTER VI.—Continued.

"We'll have to break down the door, I guess," said Dicky. "Something must have happened." And a resounding kék shook the panel.

"Hold on!" I cried. "What's wanted?"

"Oh," said Dicky sarcastically. "You've come to life again, have you?"

"Well, I'm not dead yet."

"Then strike a light and let us in. And take a look at that reminder you'll find wrapped around the rock I heaved through the transom. I thought it was open," said Dicky went off into another series of chuckles in appreciation of his mistake.

"All right," I said. I was not entirely trustful, and after I had lighted the gas-jet I picked up the stone that lay among the fragments of glass, and unwrapped the paper. The sheet bore only the words:

"At Borton's, at midnight."

Richmond."

Greek fishermen and two or three sailors.

Behind the bar sat a woman whose appearance in that place almost startled me. She might have been nearing seventy, and a hard and evil life had left its marks on her bent frame and her gaunt face. Her leathery cheeks were lined deep, and a hawk-like nose emphasized the unpleasant suggestions conveyed by her face and figure. But the most remarkable feature about her was her eyes. There was no trace of age in them. Bright and keen as the eyes of a rat, they gave me an unpleasant thrill as I felt her gaze fixed upon me when I entered the door, arm in arm with Dicky. It was as though they had pierced me through, and had laid bare something I would have concealed. It was a relief to pass beyond her into a recessed part of the room where her gaze might waste itself on the back of my head.

"Mother Borton's up late to-night,"

"Some imp put it into my brain to

try him with an unexpected bit of news.

"Oh," I said coolly, "that's all attended to. The change was made yesterday."

The effect of this announcement was extraordinary. The man started with an oath.

"The hell you say!" he exclaimed in a low, smooth voice, far different from the harsh tone he had used thus far. Then he leaped to his feet, with uncontrollable rage.

"Tricked—by God!" he shouted impulsively, and smote the table with his fist.

His outburst threw the room into confusion. Men sprang from their chairs. Glasses and bottles fell with clinking crash. Oaths and shouts arose from the crowd.

"Damn you, I'll have it out of you!" said the man with suppressed fury, his voice once again smooth and low.

"Where is the boy?"

He smote the table again; and with that stroke the false beard fell from his chin and cheek, and exposed the malignant face, disorted with rage.

A feeling of horrible repulsion came over me, and I should have struck at that serpent's head but for a startling occurrence. As he spoke, a wild scream rose upon the air, and as it echoed through the room the lights went out.

The scream was repeated, and after an instant's silence there rose a

chorus of shouts and oaths, mingled with the crash of tables and the clink of breaking glass and crockery, as the men in the room fought their way to the door.

"Oh, my God, I'm cut!" came in a shriek out of the darkness and clamor; and there followed the flash of a pistol and a report that boomed like a cannon in that confined place.

My eyes had not been idle after the warning of Mother Borton, and in an instant I had decided what to do. I had figured out what I conceived to be the plan of the house, and thought I knew a way of escape. There were two doors at the rear of the room, facing me. One led, as I knew, to the kitchen; the other opened, I reasoned, on a stair to the lodging-room above.

Before the scream that accompanied the extinction of the lights had died away, I had made a dive beneath the table, and, lifting with all my might, had sent it crashing over with my enemy under it. With one leap I cleared the remaining table that lay between me and the door. And with the clamor behind me, I turned the knob and bounded up the stairs, three steps at a time.

CHAPTER VII.
Mother Borton.

The noise of the struggle below continued. Yells and curses rose from the maddened men. Three shots were fired in quick succession, and a cry of "Oh, my Lord!" penetrated through the closed door with the sound of one sorely hurt.

I lingered for a little, listening to the tumult. I was in a strange and dangerous position. Enemies were behind me. There were friends, too, but I knew no way to tell one from the other, and my ignorance had nearly brought me to my death. I hesitated to move, but I could not remain in the open hall; and as the sounds of disturbance from below subsided, I felt my way along the wall and moved cautiously forward.

I had progressed perhaps twenty steps when a door, against which my hand pressed, yielded at the touch and swung slowly open. I strove to stop it, for the first opening showed a dim light within. But the panel gave no hold for my fingers, and my efforts to close the door only swung it open the faster. I drew back a little into the shadow, for I hesitated to dash past the sight of any who might occupy the room.

"Come in!" called a harsh voice.

I hesitated. Behind the door led to the eating-room with its known dangers. A dash along the hall for the front door meant the raising of an alarm, and probably a bullet as a discourager of burglary. Should I escape this, I could be certain of a warm reception from the enemies on watch outside. Prudence lay in facing the one rather than risking the many. I accepted the invitation and walked into the room.

"I was expecting you," said the harsh voice composedly. "Good evening."

"Good evening," I returned gravely, swallowing my amazement as best I could.

By the table before me sat Mother Borton, contemplating me as calmly as though this meeting were the most commonplace thing in the world. A candle furnished a dim, flickering light that gave to her hard wicked countenance a diabolic leer that struck a chill to my blood.

"Excuse me," I said, "I have lost my way, I fear."

"Not at all," said Mother Borton. "You are in the right place."

"I was afraid I had intruded," I said apologetically.

"I expected you," she repeated. "Shut the door."

I glanced about the room. There was no sign of another person to be seen, and no other door. I obeyed her.

"You might as well sit down," she said with some perturbation. "There's nothing up here to hurt you." There was so much meaning in her tone of the things that would hurt me on the floor below that I hastened to show my confidence in her, and drew up a chair to the table.

"At your service," I said, leaning before her with as much an appearance of jaunty self-possession as I could muster.

"Who are you, and what are you doing here?" she asked grimly.

What should I answer? Could I tell her the truth?

"Who are you?" she repeated impatiently, gazing on me. "You are not Wilton. Tell me. Who are you?"

The face, hard as it was, seemed with the record of a rough and evil life as it appeared, had yet a kindly look as it was turned on me.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

seats opposite. I commingled my face to give no sign of suspicion, but the warning put me on the alert. I had come on the supposition that I was to meet the band to which Henry Wilton belonged. Instead of being among friends, however, it seemed now that I was among enemies.

"It's all right," said Dicky carelessly. "He's been sent."

"That's lucky," said I with equal unconcern. "We may need an extra hand before morning."

The new-comer could not repress a triumphant flash in the serpent eyes. "I'm the one for your job," he said hoarsely, his face as impassive as a stone wall.

"What do you know about the job?" I asked suspiciously.

"Only what I've been told," he answered. "And that is—"

"That it's a job for silence, secrecy, and—"

"Spoudulicks," said Dicky with a laugh, as the other hesitated for the word.

"Just so," said the man.

"And what else?" I continued, pressing him firmly.

"Well, he admitted hoarsely. "I learned as how there was to be a change of place to-night, and I might be needed."

I looked at him inquiringly. Perhaps I was on the threshold of knowledge of this cursed business from the mouth of the enemy.

"I heard as how the boy was to be put in a safer place," he said, wagging his head with affected gravity.

Some imp put it into my brain to

try him with an unexpected bit of news. "Oh," I said coolly, "that's all attended to. The change was made yesterday." The effect of this announcement was extraordinary. The man started with an oath. "The hell you say!" he exclaimed in a low, smooth voice, far different from the harsh tone he had used thus far. Then he leaped to his feet, with uncontrollable rage. "Tricked—by God!" he shouted impulsively, and smote the table with his fist. His outburst threw the room into confusion. Men sprang from their chairs. Glasses and bottles fell with clinking crash. Oaths and shouts arose from the crowd. "Damn you, I'll have it out of you!" said the man with suppressed fury, his voice once again smooth and low. "Where is the boy?" He smote the table again; and with that stroke the false beard fell from his chin and cheek, and exposed the malignant face, disorted with rage. A feeling of horrible repulsion came over me, and I should have struck at that serpent's head but for a startling occurrence. As he spoke, a wild scream rose upon the air, and as it echoed through the room the lights went out. The scream was repeated, and after an instant's silence there rose a chorus of shouts and oaths, mingled with the crash of tables and the clink of breaking glass and crockery, as the men in the room fought their way to the door. "Oh, my God, I'm cut!" came in a shriek out of the darkness and clamor; and there followed the flash of a pistol and a report that boomed like a cannon in that confined place. My eyes had not been idle after the warning of Mother Borton, and in an instant I had decided what to do. I had figured out what I conceived to be the plan of the house, and thought I knew a way of escape. There were two doors at the rear of the room, facing me. One led, as I knew, to the kitchen; the other opened, I reasoned, on a stair to the lodging-room above. Before the scream that accompanied the extinction of the lights had died away, I had made a dive beneath the table, and, lifting with all my might, had sent it crashing over with my enemy under it. With one leap I cleared the remaining table that lay between me and the door. And with the clamor behind me, I turned the knob and bounded up the stairs, three steps at a time.

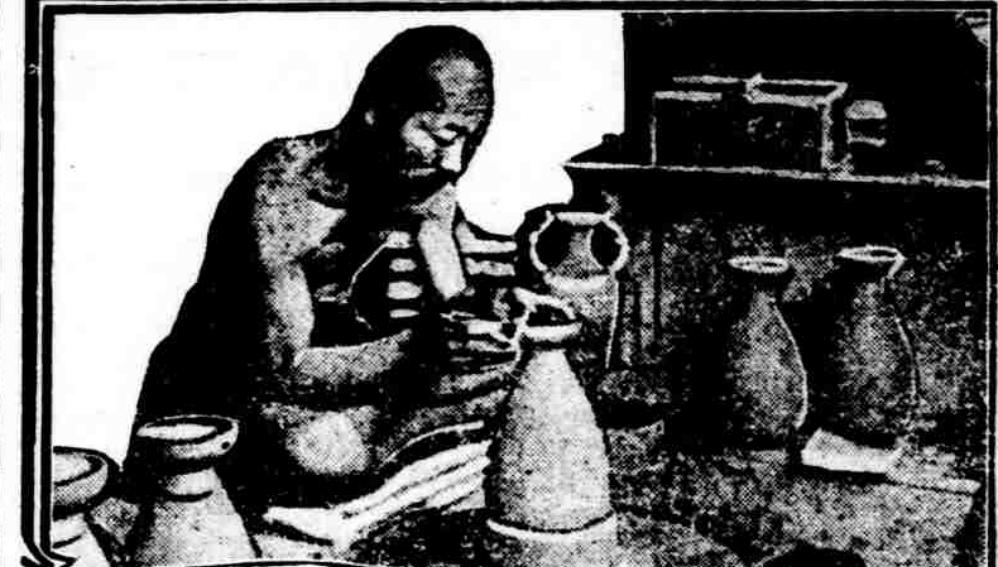
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The noise of the struggle below continued. Yells and curses rose from the maddened men. Three shots were fired in quick succession, and a cry of "Oh, my Lord!" penetrated through the closed door with the sound of one sorely hurt. I lingered for a little, listening to the tumult. I was in a strange and dangerous position. Enemies were behind me. There were friends, too, but I knew no way to tell one from the other, and my ignorance had nearly brought me to my death. I hesitated to move, but I could not remain in the open hall; and as the sounds of disturbance from below subsided, I felt my way along the wall and moved cautiously forward. I had progressed perhaps twenty steps when a door, against which my hand pressed, yielded at the touch and swung slowly open. I strove to stop it, for the first opening showed a dim light within. But the panel gave no hold for my fingers, and my efforts to close the door only swung it open the faster. I drew back a little into the shadow, for I hesitated to dash past the sight of any who might occupy the room. "Come in!" called a harsh voice. I hesitated. Behind the door led to the eating-room with its known dangers. A dash along the hall for the front door meant the raising of an alarm, and probably a bullet as a discourager of burglary. Should I escape this, I could be certain of a warm reception from the enemies on watch outside. Prudence lay in facing the one rather than risking the many. I accepted the invitation and walked into the room. "I was expecting you," said the harsh voice composedly. "Good evening." "Good evening," I returned gravely, swallowing my amazement as best I could. By the table before me sat Mother Borton, contemplating me as calmly as though this meeting were the most commonplace thing in the world. A candle furnished a dim, flickering light that gave to her hard wicked countenance a diabolic leer that struck a chill to my blood. "Excuse me," I said, "I have lost my way, I fear." "Not at all," said Mother Borton. "You are in the right place." "I was afraid I had intruded," I said apologetically. "I expected you," she repeated. "Shut the door." I glanced about the room. There was no sign of another person to be seen, and no other door. I obeyed her. "You might as well sit down," she said with some perturbation. "There's nothing up here to hurt you." There was so much meaning in her tone of the things that would hurt me on the floor below that I hastened to show my confidence in her, and drew up a chair to the table. "At your service," I said, leaning before her with as much an appearance of jaunty self-possession as I could muster. "Who are you, and what are you doing here?" she asked grimly. What should I answer? Could I tell her the truth? "Who are you?" she repeated impatiently, gazing on me. "You are not Wilton. Tell me. Who are you?" The face, hard as it was, seemed with the record of a rough and evil life as it appeared, had yet a kindly look as it was turned on me. (TO BE CONTINUED.)

JAP WORK AND WORKERS

NO TASKS SEEM IRKSOME TO SONS OF JAPAN.



A PORCELAIN PAINTER



THE POTTER AT HIS WHEEL



AN IVORY-CARVER

he puts into his fingers! Plodding elephants, trumpeting elephants, elephants seeking for food or teasing a companion, each gives a different phase of the creature's habits and temper. As the tiny child travels over the precious surface, held in the right hand, but chiefly guided by the thumb of the left, the carver smiles at his own merry conceits, and forgets the days of toil wasted on a piece which in the end proved faulty, and had to be cast aside. He knows that Japan cannot do without him, for the skilled carvers are few, and their tasks very lengthy ones. The profession belongs to the Arts, and is not reckoned in the commercial output of the country, like ceramics and lacquer work. In almost all the other callings a whole family can be employed at the same time, even the little children helping in the primary processes; but the carver works alone, and probably requires much domestic waiting on from his family, since he dare not spoil his delicate touch by any rougher labor.

Far at the other end of the artistic social scale sits the potter bent over his work with a face of mournful intentness, his left hand mechanically spinning his jar in its rounded socket while the right shapes the form to a smooth edge. Here is monotonous indeed, for the white or red or black earthenware is very friable before the last laking and only lends itself to the simplest forms. The pure white is devoted exclusively to funeral and religious uses, and has perhaps been adopted because such vessels must be of the most severe shapes and quite without ornament. The red or black clay is used for everything else—the red for holding water and grain, the black for cooking utensils. The deep rich glaze of the black and the soft earthiness of the red accord well with the brown house porch where so much of the work of life is done and where on bright days the few humble plants are brought out to grow in the sun. The potter always seems to be something of a philosopher; he will be tough to the end of his days, for though everyone needs his wages, the extreme care with which they are used makes them last for many years—I never have seen a shop devoted solely to them. Yet he is content to work on till his back is bent with long stooping and he comes to resemble one of those squat figures which the Japanese love to twist into vases or clear mugs, the back of the neck being scooped out to provide the needed hollow. Between him and the painter of delicate china a great gulf lies. It is, I think, only of late years, since the opening of so many industrial schools, that women have been employed on this work, which seems so appropriate for them, though delicacy of touch comes naturally to all classes of Japanese, the long wrist training required for their calligraphy proving of immense value in painting.

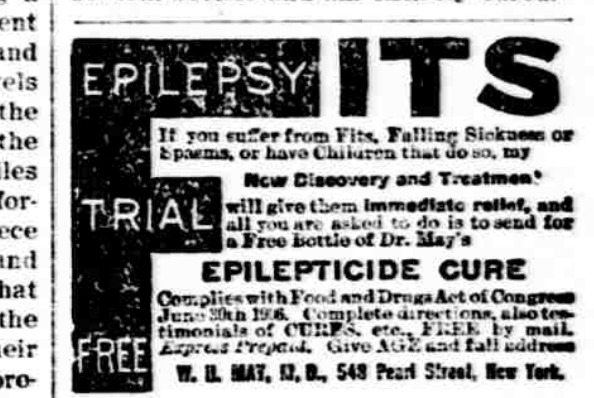
MRS. HUGH FRASER.

QUEEN OF ACTRESSES PRAISES PERUNA



MISS JULIA MARLOWE.
"I am glad to write my endorsement of the great remedy, Peruna. I do so most heartily."
Any remedy that benefits digestion strengthens the nerves. The nerve centers require nutrition. If the digestion is impaired, the nerve centers become anemic, and nervous debility is the result.
Peruna is not a nerve nor a stimulant. It benefits the nerves by benefiting digestion.
Peruna frees the stomach of catarrhal congestions and normal digestion is the result.
In other words, Peruna goes to the bottom of the whole difficulty, when the disagreeable symptoms disappear. Mrs. J. C. Jamison, Wallace, Cal., writes:

"I was troubled with my stomach for six years. Was treated by three doctors. They said that I had nervous dyspepsia. I was put on a liquid diet for three months. "I improved under the treatment, but as soon as I stopped taking the medicine, I got bad again. "I saw a testimonial of a man whose case was similar to mine being cured by Peruna, so I thought I would give it a trial. "I procured a bottle at once and commenced taking it. I have taken several bottles and am entirely cured."



THE VILLAIN'S ESCAPE.

In an amateur play a fugitive from justice was supposed to have escaped from his pursuers by concealing himself under the table. The table was small and the terrified fugitive somewhat lengthy. The commander of the pursuing party rushed on the stage and fell over the legs of the man he was searching for. Picking himself up and ludicrously rubbing his shins, he convulsed his audience by exclaiming in true dramatic style: "Ha! Ha! The dastardly villain has eluded us again."

INTUITION.



Fortune Teller—You will shortly meet with an accident. Victim—How did you know I owned an automobile?

For Any Disease or Injury to the eyes, throat, and the face, the most effective remedy is... All druggists or Howard Bros., Buffalo, N. Y.

A cranky bachelor says that heaven is probably so called because there are no marriages there.

Life is learning, suffering, loving; and the greatest of these is loving.—Elien Key.

You always get full value in Lewis' Single Binder straight razor. Your dealer or Lewis' Factory, Peoria, Ill.

Many a patent leather shoe covers a big hole in its stocking.

Mrs. Winslow's Sooking Syrup. For children resting, soothe the sore, reduce inflammation, bring pain, cure wind colic. 25c a bottle.

A dumb waiter out of order is an unspeakable nuisance.

Ruses of Autograph Sharks.

Ingenious Methods Used to Elicit Letters from Noted Men.

No one is better posted in ruses to which collectors resort in order to secure autographs from living celebrities than a certain London dealer. There is not enough profit in their sale to encourage any number of people in this country to secure autographs for the purpose of disposing of them to the dealer, but writing to celebrities and selling their replies to the dealer in question is a means of livelihood to no small number.

No one perhaps has outwitted in cleverness the methods of Gen. Cist, whose collection, sold after his death, brought one of the highest prices of any sale in the world. Cist was a skillful penman and a born letter writer. He wrote in such a way that he rarely failed to elicit lengthy and interesting replies. He would write to a statesman saying that a party had applied to him for employment and given the statesman as reference.

"Was so-and-so ever in your employ as private secretary?" he would write. Cist was a recluse, a hermit. He was estranged from his family. His last days were passed in America in a

room littered with books and papers of rarest value, secured through the most ingenious ruses.

The cleverest modern autograph collector whose methods became known to dealers was the late Benjamin Austin, a resident of the United States. He organized a literary society in his imagination, to which he elected as honorary members all the distinguished men and women of Europe and America. When notified of their election they naturally replied, thanking him for the honor conferred. In this way he secured much excellent material. Doubtless he made the collection with a view to its subsequent monetary value. After his death his widow sold it, but values had decreased and it did not bring anything near the price that might reasonably have been expected.

She Told Him.
"About the greatest man who ever lived in this community was Dug Skinner; broad minded, big hearted, and brilliant; and yet he died with all his talent and goodness unsuspected.

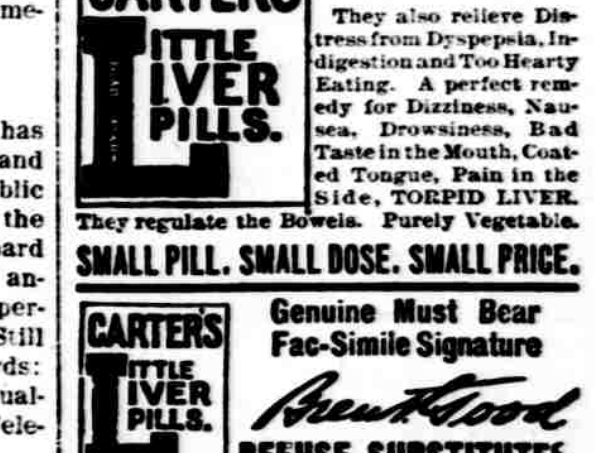
"How did you come to find out about it?"

"I married his widow."—Houston Post.



SICK HEADACHE

Positively cured by these Little Pills.



Genuine Must Bear Fac-Simile Signature. REFUSE SUBSTITUTES.

CARTER'S LITTLE LIVER PILLS.