

# STORY OF THE SECOND STEWARD

## By GEORGE BARTON

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**T**HE chief inspector of customs lay back in a great big easy chair in his bachelor apartments overlooking Washington square and tearfully discoursed upon the philosophy of crime. His friend, the chemist, who had dropped in to pay a pop call, forgot the movements of the hands of the clock and sat there absorbed in the flow of wit and wisdom that came unintermittently from the lips of the veteran of the government service. Barnes was about to clinch one of his favorite propositions when he was interrupted by a gentle tap on the door.

"Come in!" he cried in freighting official tones.

The door opened and Cornelius Clancy entered. Clancy was popularly known as the shadow of the chief, but he was physically substantial, and if his twinkling eyes and the always present smile counted, a very merry shadow. Anyhow, Barnes regarded him as vitally essential to his business, and the aggressive little fellow had shared in the capture of many celebrated smugglers. He burst into the room now with the air of a man full of information, but when he perceived a stranger he stopped short and stood in a meditative fashion.

"Go on, Con," said the chief encouragingly; "don't mind Mr. Forward."

"It's not much," responded the young man, taking his breath. "The Vulture passed breakwater this afternoon and is anchored in midstream. The night inspectors are up in the air and say you'll have to look her over."

Barnes sighed deeply and ran his hand through his luxuriant snow white hair. He turned to Forward:

"I hate to stop this argument," he called his monologue an argument—"just when I'm getting warm. But the human body does not inherit disease, but it does inherit tendencies. Now I carry this to its logical conclusion and say that we inherit mental as well as physical tendencies. Hence the crime in some families is hereditary."

Forward burst into a laugh and threw up both hands.

"I surrender, Barnes. You can quit happy."

A smile of satisfaction spread over the old man's face, and the smile dropped ten years from his age. He tossed off his slippers and began pulling on his gaiters. He looked at his visitor:

"Maybe you'd like to go down to the wharf with us. Three wouldn't be a crowd—not in this case."

"Delighted," responded Forward, with alacrity. "But if I'm in the way you must not hesitate to say so."

"Oh, you're not in the way," replied Barnes. "Besides," with a tentative look, "we might take up this argument where we left off—"

"Didn't I tell you I surrendered?" interjected the other.

"Yes," grumbled the chief, "you did." Then, bolting into another room, "You gave in too quickly. There's no sport in that sort of a victory."

While Barnes prepared for his hurry call Forward had an opportunity of studying the room. It was plainly furnished, the most conspicuous article in the room being the bookcases. They filled every available inch of the wall space. A closer inspection revealed the fact that they were all works of reference. Fiction seemed to be rigidly tabooed. One shelf filled with long thin volumes, in plain bindings, contained the annual reports read at the meetings of the American Prison Association. The other volumes had such titles as "Crimes and Criminals," "Criminology," "National Crimes," "The Philosophy of Kleptomania," "The Criminal Insane," "Juvenile Offenders" and "Remarkable Trials."

Presently Forward turned to Clancy with a half yawn:

"The old man's a long while."

Clancy smiled so broadly that both rows of teeth glistened beneath the rays of the electric light. He answered with an air of a man who is revealing secrets of state:

"He's shaving."

"Shaving?"

"Yes; he's a perfect crank on it. Has to have his shave twice a day, or he's miserable. You came in tonight and interfered with it. But he won't go out without his shave."

"Well, I'll be darned," murmured Forward.

"That's not all," exclaimed Clancy, proudly.

"Not all?"

"No, there's something else; just you wait and see."

Barnes emerged ready for the street. He went into the corner of the room and pulled out a small table, containing a spirit lamp and a small urn. He struck a match, lighted the lamp and the water began to bubble. In a few moments the room was filled with the aroma of coffee. Several large cups were on the table. Barnes filled one. He approached the chemist.

"Have a dish of coffee?"

"Not on your life," was the quick response. "If I drank that I'd see snakes all night."

Barnes looked at him with an indulgent smile. He swallowed the coffee at a gulp; then he took a second cup.

"I couldn't live without it," he said.

Five minutes later they left the room, and, taking a short cut through the square, walked hurriedly in the direction of the river front. The streets were deserted. The hands on a big clock pointed to a few minutes of midnight. A death-like stillness hung over the city. The three men were silent, but the sound of their footsteps echoed through the air with military precision. As they neared the wharf Barnes suggested that Forward and Clancy fall in the rear, while he quietly slipped ahead to take a survey of the river.

The chief moved with catlike agility. His step was swift and springy, and all of his senses were on the alert. Barnes was a tall, thin, angular man, with the look of a farmer dressed in his Sunday clothes. His smooth face was irregular, but singularly attractive. There were deep furrows over the bushy eyebrows, dark circles beneath the contemplative black eyes and a set of tiny wrinkles on each side of the rather large and prominent nose. A simple in the chin and a pair of full lips modified the austere look which his face habitually wore in repose. His energy belied the indolent suggestiveness of the big nose and loose jointed body. Occasionally he bit the nail of his left thumb, and at such times the severity of his face was intensified.



THE MAN DANGLING IN MID-AIR WAS PICTURED IN A HALL OF BRIGHT LIGHT

Barnes added to the fascination. Who would dream that this old, white-haired man, who shaved twice a day, drank coffee by the quart and talked of criminology and jurisprudence like a judge on the bench would be capable of frustrating the sordid devices of vulgar smugglers?

The chief made his survey quickly and beckoned to the others to join him. A deep-throated bell was striking 12. The old man pulled out an open-faced silver watch, the back of which was perfectly smooth from constant wear. A piece of cord that resembled a shoestring served the purposes of a watchguard. Barnes scanned the face of his timepiece and then gave a whimsical smile as if to say that the big clock was right.

The fog was thick on the river, and at long intervals the silence was broken by the shrill piping of some vessel as it plowed its dangerous way up or down the stream. Through the dense veil that hung over the waters could be seen a dirty yellow blur. Clancy pointed in that direction.

"That's the lantern hanging on the bow of the Vulture."

The chief meditated for a moment. There was a silent chewing of the thumb nail. Presently he spoke:

"This is not a waiting game, Clancy. It's a case for speedy action. Is the launch ready?"

Clancy's answer was a low prolonged whistle. Soon a faint puff, puff was heard and a ricksh looking little boat pulled out of the fog from nowhere and was at their service.

They climbed in. The engineer and two uniformed night inspectors awaited them. Barnes whispered something to the man in charge of the steering apparatus. His step was swift and springy, and all of his senses were on the alert. Barnes was a tall, thin, angular man, with the look of a farmer dressed in his Sunday clothes. His smooth face was irregular, but singularly attractive. There were deep furrows over the bushy eyebrows, dark circles beneath the contemplative black eyes and a set of tiny wrinkles on each side of the rather large and prominent nose. A simple in the chin and a pair of full lips modified the austere look which his face habitually wore in repose. His energy belied the indolent suggestiveness of the big nose and loose jointed body. Occasionally he bit the nail of his left thumb, and at such times the severity of his face was intensified.

that a boat had been lowered and that a man was climbing down the rope ladder. "Clancy," said Barnes, softly, "you take charge of this."

The nimble assistant picked up a dark lantern and pointed it in the direction of the rowboat. When it was properly focused he pushed back the slide, and the man dangling in mid-air was pictured in a halo of bright light. He let out a foul oath.

"What's the matter?" he cried, with a Cockney accent.

"Nothing," replied Clancy softly, "except that Uncle Sam's on guard."

The fellow was busy and had a red face and light curly hair. He wore a cap, a flannel shirt and velvet trousers. He was about to hurl back a defiance when it occurred to him that it would be bad policy to quarrel with the customs officer.

"Well, what is it you want?" he asked finally, in surly tones.

"Your name, your business and the object of this midnight excursion," was the terse rejoinder.

This official formula did not sweeten the man's temper. He mumbled something unpleasant, in which the words, "impertinent," "damn" and "frankness" could be imperfectly distinguished. After that he raised his voice and said civilly enough: "My name is Ben Tallman. I'm the second steward on the Vulture, just in from Calcutta, and I'm going ashore to spend the night with some relatives."

"Thank you," replied Clancy, "that's quite comprehensive. Now, merely as a matter of form we'll have to take a look at your boat, and you'll have to help us search the Vulture."

During this dialogue Barnes and Forward remained in the background, overshadowed by the friendly fog. The chief kept his eyes and ears open and did not miss a single word or a movement on the part of the second steward of the Vulture. Clancy's demand annoyed the man exceedingly, but he finally agreed to it, and the alert assistant and the two night inspectors quickly got down to work. They found nothing contraband in the rowboat, and the steward's person was innocent of anything contrary to law. The search of the Vulture took longer and was more complicated. Clancy and his two assistants went through the steward's quarters with the tenacity of fine tooth combs. They paid special attention to the coal bunkers—favorite spots for the concealment of smuggled goods—and even went so far as to examine the linen chests and the pantry. The second steward gave them the keys to the various closets, and once when he volunteered to lift out some of the packages Clancy waved him aside in melodramatic style, exclaiming: "Too many cooks spoil the broth."

An hour had elapsed when they reentered the launch. Tallman got into the rowboat and started toward shore, a look of malignant satisfaction on his broad face. Clancy and the two night inspectors remained in the launch in silence. The chagrin on the face of Clancy

was pitiful. Barnes realized that the search had been fruitless, but he could not resist the desire to tease his assistant.

"Well," he said, with frigidity of manner, "what did you find?"

"Nothing," was the rejoinder.

"Oh!" exclaimed Clancy, peevishly, "there were two or three bottles of rum and some cigars, but not a thing worth monkeying about."

"Back to the wharf," tersely ordered the chief.

The engineer turned the wheel, the spark caught and the little launch started chugging. Clancy sat in the bow of the boat, his head down and his shoulders hunched, as Barnes afterward declared, like Napoleon on the retreat from Moscow. As soon as they tied up at the wharf the chief grabbed his assistant by the arm.

"Dismiss the night inspectors and join me. There's work to be done yet."

Clancy instantly came out of his stupor. Barnes' words aroused all of the hopefulness in his optimistic nature. He did as he was bid, and when he had finished found the chief and his friend concealed behind a pillar on the pier.

"The second steward is just landing," whispered Barnes. "As soon as he leaves the wharf I'll follow him. You stay here with Forward until I return."

In a few minutes Tallman climbed up on the wharf, puffing from the exertion of rowing in midstream. He hurried out of the wharf and started up the main street. Barnes followed. Once or twice the steward paused and looked behind him. Then he resumed his journey and did not stop until he reached the Snug Harbor Inn. Although it was two o'clock in the morning the harbor was brilliantly lighted. The Snug Harbor Inn prided itself on being open "at all hours of the day and night."

The second steward started for the desk but, apparently changing his mind, directed his steps to the little booth where a telegraph operator sat unattended. He picked up a pen, and, taking one of the blanks, quickly wrote a message. He turned it upside down on a blotter that lay on the ledge of the booth and assuring himself that the fresh ink had been dried, read it over carefully. It appeared to satisfy him, and he handed it to the operator, who counted the words and informed Tallman what it would cost. He paid the toll and a district messenger boy grabbed the message and hurried out of the room.

For a moment Barnes was in a dilemma. He bit the nail of his thumb vigorously. But almost while he thought his decision was made, he would let the boy go and follow the second steward. That person he assumed to be and presently went into the barroom. Instantly the chief rushed up to the telegraph operator:

"The gentleman who just left handed you a telegram?"

"Yes," was the reply in a tone of surprise.

"Can I see it a moment?"

"No," was the blunt response.

"I am afraid the gentleman made a mistake," ventured the inspector.

"Then the gentleman will have to correct it himself," was the businesslike reply.

This was so reasonable that Barnes was nonplussed. The moments were rushing by. He must see the telegram and see it quickly. The first thought to reveal the identity and trust to his official character as a means of getting at the coveted document. But he remembered that telegrams were treated as confidential communications, not to be lightly shown even to inquisitive government officials. At that moment he looked down and his eyes lighted on the little square blotter on which the second steward had tried his message. Fortunately it had been a fresh one, and the imprint of each word had been copied upon the porous surface. Without any further parleying he slipped the innocent blotter into his pocket. It required but a few moments to get into an adjoining washroom. By what seemed a miracle of chance no one else was in the apartment.

He hurried in front of a large mirror and employed a time honored device to discover the writing on the blotter. As he wrote it could only be read backward, but by holding it in front of the mirror the writing was reversed and appeared as it was originally inscribed on the telegram. It was somewhat blurred. The address was blotted out altogether. Some of the words could not be deciphered, but Barnes discovered enough to set his brain in a whirl. What he read was as follows:

"—ship Company. — Be careful. 'Am watched. Will be late. — TALLMAN."

He thrust the letter into his pocket and started for the door, but he could not resist a feeling of exultation, a desire to shout for joy. To him this imperfect copy of the telegram furnished a clue that might lead to big things. Tallman realized that he was suspected and had made all preparations for fleeing the city.

The waiting room of the hotel was fairly crowded; but in spite of that fact the chief inspector immediately located the second steward. He was near the side door leading to the barroom, engaged in conversa-

tion with a shabbily dressed man who looked like a sailor. Tallman took a bank note out of his pocket and thrust it into the fellow's hand. The man smiled and bowed his thanks.

Barnes pulled out his watch and looked at it. It was five minutes of three. He pushed his way over toward the telegraph booth with the intention of sending a message to Clancy. The operators were busy, and several men were standing writing messages. While the chief stood there irresolute, wondering what he should do, a stranger tapped him on the arm.

"Is this Chief Barnes?"

"That's my name."

"Well, a man on the sidewalk wishes to speak to you."

"Who is it?"

"I can't say, but you will know him by the fact that he is dressed in a long storm coat and is wearing a high silk hat."

"What does he want?"

"I don't know, but he says that it is a matter that vitally concerns you."

Barnes was about to make some further remark when his informant suddenly left him and slipped away in the crowd. The inspector was perplexed. His impulse was to ignore the message, but on second thought he felt that it might have some important bearing on the case he had on hand. So he made his way through the main door of the hotel and out into the street. At first he could not see anything of the individual who had been so briefly described to him. He was about to abandon the idea of meeting this strange person, when his eye lit on a tall man wearing a high silk hat and wrapped in a heavy storm coat. This must be the person who wished to speak to him. The man lounged about in an attitude of expectancy, as if he were awaiting the arrival of some one. Without hesitation Barnes rushed up and tapped the stranger on the arm. The man looked down at him with surprise.

"I am Barnes," said the inspector confidently.

"Are you?" retorted the other, haughtily. "I am."

The tall man, with impudent nonchalance, puffed away at the cigar he held in his mouth.

"Yes," persisted Barnes, "and if you have anything to say to me you will have to say it very quickly, for I am in a hurry."

The man stared at him. A look of annoyance overspread his face.

"Easiest your impudence!" he exclaimed. "Why should I say anything to you?"

"Didn't you send for me?" asked the puzzled inspector.

"Certainly not."

"Why, I was told—"

"Well, you were told wrong," interrupted the other, moving off; "and if you annoy me any further I'll call the police."

Suddenly it flashed on Barnes that the person who had sent him on this fool's errand was the shabbily dressed man he had seen in conversation with Tallman. He hurried into the hotel and looked in the barroom and in the washroom.

quired the chief, wrapping himself in his official manner.

"He runs a little joint up on Water street," replied Clancy; "wells second hand anchors, buoys, life preservers, oars, spars and any old thing used on a ship. The joke of it is he picks up half of his stuff in the river. He's a sort of scavenger about the docks."

While they were talking Mr. Jimmy Slack was rowing out to where the white life preserver was bouncing up and down like an animated Punch and Judy. As he neared it the man poked out one of his ears, hooked the object in the center and pulled it into his boat. He looked about him leisurely for a moment, and then, dipping the oars into the water, rowed slowly back to the wharf. He fastened the boat to a bit of moss covered piling. Going ashore, he threw the life preserver over his head, so that one part of it rested on his left shoulder and the other under his right arm, and marched gayly up the street.

During all of this the chief was pulling away at a Pittsburgh stogie. He puffed and puffed until the weed was burned half way down. Clancy gazed at him furtively from under half closed eyelids. Suddenly the chief plucked the stogie from his mouth and tossed it into the water. He turned to his assistant:

"Take me to Slack's shop—in a hurry, I want to take a look at it."

Clancy, the inquisitor, asked no questions. He arose quickly and started along the wharf. They tramped after him until Water street was reached. All three turned into the narrow thoroughfare, lined on each side with great brick buildings, giving it at that unearthly hour the appearance of a great canyon. There and there some low shanty of a storeroom squatted in abject squalor between its imposing neighbors. They walked for five blocks and halted before a small wooden structure. Streaks of light shone from between the cracks in the door.

"Here it is," said Clancy.

Barnes made no response, but, doubling up his right fist, pounded vigorously on the door. Subdued sounds as of voices came from within. The chief knocked a second time. While the sound of his blows was still echoing on the crisp early morning air the door was cautiously opened a few inches and a scared face looked out.

"What do you want?" piped a shrill voice.

Barnes never replied, but pushed his way roughly into the room, followed by Clancy and Forward. A gasoline lamp fastened to the wall spread a ghastly light over the narrow apartment. Coils of rope lay about the floor and ship's lanterns hung from the ceiling.

"Mr. Jimmy Slack fronted the chief, fear and anger alternating in his light blue eyes.

"Now that you've broken into my place," he cried, "I'd like to know what you want."

"You're not very civil to customers," replied Barnes, irreverently.

"Customers," replied the river scavenger, "yes, customers." He replied the old man in his smoothest tones. "I'm here to make a purchase."

"A fine hour for that," rejoined Slack, surlily.

"Oh, but this is an emergency—and I believe you are an emergency man."

"What do you want?" suspiciously.

"A life preserver," blandly.

"I haven't any," said the river man, doggedly.

"What's this?" cried the chief and making a quick movement, he pulled a piece of canvas from a bulky pile of stuff in the corner of the room. All eyes turned in that direction.

There, in all of its symmetrical beauty, lay the circular life preserver.

"That's not for sale," cried the water man. There was fear in his eyes and his lips turned white.

"But I'll take it just the same," and Barnes, stooping down, picked up the round white object.

Slack gave a snarl like a wild animal and grabbed the other side of the life preserver. There was a ripping sound; the rotten covering gave way and the chief was exclaiming floor out first and then he sodden plank floating of the shack was covered with a glittering heap of precious pearls and cut rubies. Transfixed with horror, the waterman stood there unable to move. A fearful oath came from the rear of the room. A heavy door in the back of the place was thrown open and the second steward of the Vulture stood on the threshold.

Barnes, his eyes glittering, but perfectly self-possessed, bowed low.

"My dear Mr. Tallman, we greet you. Our lines seem to cross tonight. We've got no further. The second steward made a movement for his hip pocket. A glittering barrel shone in the dim lamp light. Simultaneously Clancy jumped forward and struck at the shining object. There was a quick sharp report. When the smoke cleared away the chief was standing there, erect and unharmed. Directly behind him an ugly bullet was imbedded in the wall. The second steward was on his back on the floor with Clancy clutching viciously at his throat.

By the time the second steward and his accomplice were put behind the bars and the room was cleared from the rear of the customs house the sun had risen and the city was awake. Half an hour later the chief and his two companions were in the rooms overlooking Washington square.

"You had a close call," ventured Forward.

"I never had a closer one," admitted Barnes. "That bullet whispered in might ear."

Clancy was silent. The chief, looking at him, suddenly jumped up, with a gasp of surprise. The next minute he had his water and was pouring it over the chief's standing there, erect and unharmed. Directly behind him an ugly bullet was imbedded in the wall. The second steward was on his back on the floor with Clancy clutching viciously at his throat.

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Queens of England

Katherine of Arragon was born in Spain December 15, 1485. She was the youngest child of King Ferdinand of Arragon and Isabel, Queen of Castile. Her early years were passed amidst the storms of battle and siege, for her mother, Isabel of Castile, with her young family, lodged in the magnificent camp with which her armies for years beleaguered Granada.

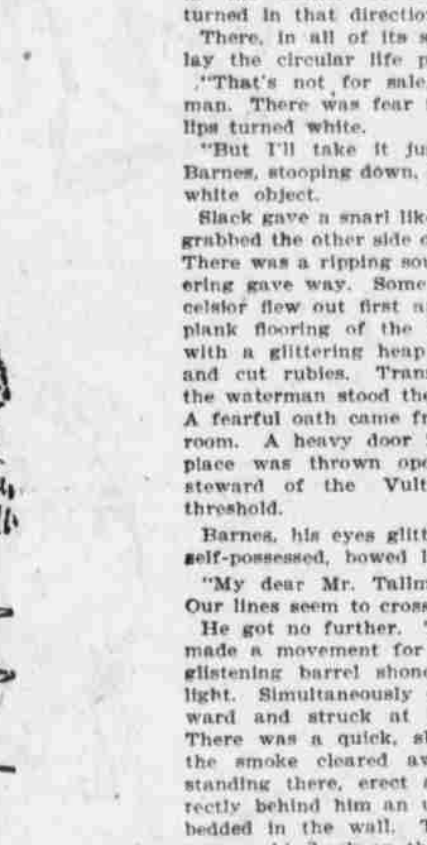
Once while living in the army camp the queen's tent was set on fire by the besieged Moors, and it was with difficulty that the little prince and princess were rescued from the flames without injury.

Katherine and her brother and sisters were thoroughly educated for those times, their most intelligent and intellectual mother giving her personal attention to their instruction. While yet a little girl under her hands Katherine could read and write Latin fluently, languages she continued to study during her life.

Princess Katherine was married to Prince Arthur November 14, and six months later she was left a widow, Prince Arthur dying of the plague, which at that time was prevailing throughout England.

On June 15, 1509, Katherine was married to Arthur's brother, Henry VIII., then newly made king of England, having succeeded his father, Henry VII. It was necessary to get the pope's sanction to this union, the bride and groom being sister and brother-in-law, a relationship which prohibited marriage. Katherine was almost six years her second husband's senior, being just 18 at the time of their marriage.

Katherine's life, after becoming the wife of Henry VIII. is familiar to all, and many historians hold that Henry—through the influence of Anne Boleyn—had the poor discarded wife poisoned, that the favorite usurper of Katherine's rightful place on the throne might not have her peace of mind disturbed by the presence of Katherine in England.



KATHERINE OF ARRAGON