

What Would You Do?

What would you do if a burglar should call unannounced between midnight and early morn?

It all depends upon circumstances, many will say. Of course, but the method of procedure naturally simmers down to one of two things—to do something or nothing. It might be the best plan to try a little of both.

Should a cracksman appear at the window ledge, slowly crawling in, and you have a revolver, first make sure it is a robber and then plug him. Aim for a vital spot and let the prowler have all the lead you can possibly give him.

Should the job be neat and scientific you will suffer no inconvenience except a half day spent in consultation with the coroner's jury.

But the burglar will come when you are not looking and when the gun isn't loaded. In such a case keep cool, collected and take notes. Try to get a personal description and when the gentleman leaves, call up the police and tell all you know. All the professional crooks and robbers are photographed accurately and well upon the retinas of the police and it is just a question of getting next to your man and telling what you see. With a good description, the burglar can, in most cases, be readily located. Murders are often scheduled as a result of an excited and foolhardy attempt to resist a burglar. Generally the visitor will not do anything desperate unless it is a case of kill or capture, but lots of times the miscreants are cowards at heart and will not hesitate in their cravenness to take the life of an unarmed but courageous man in order to get away. In most cases the stake at issue is not worth resistance and it is better to trust to the officers of the law for capture.

Chloroform, drugs and sedatives are rarely used by burglars except in the realm of fiction. In most cases they plan their visits when the members or the family are either absent or asleep. Daring robberies even have taken place when a party or reception has been in full blast. The robbers dress up, mingle with the guests and escape undetected. Then the loss is discovered and the robbery credited to a latter date.

Unknown agents, vendors and mendicants are often the forerunners of the burglars. The latter usually know what is to be had from a raid before they incur the risk and their information comes in every instance from "pikers."

The Man at the Throttle

Tons of literature have been ground out eulogizing the brave and impassive knight behind the throttle, holding the lives of hundreds in their hands. Like every other form of imaginative laudation it is greatly overdone at times, for many engineers admit that there are moments in their lives when they are completely and thoroughly scared.

And generally it is some little thing, something unusual looming into sight at an unexpected moment. The long course of training to which an engineer is subjected makes him peculiarly insensate to ordinary events on an engine, such as the jolting and jarring or the high rate of speed, which so unfavorably affect the novice and make him "scary."

Moonlight nights always give creepy impressions but their frequency soon dispels all alarm and, in some cases, inspire the men with a feeling of recklessness.

"About the worst scare I ever got happened in broad daylight not long ago," said a veteran engineer to a representative of the Courier. "We were sailing along a smooth, level track about 3 o'clock in the afternoon. The

sun shone along the rails, making them smooth and glistening.

"Suddenly my eye became riveted on a yawning gap in the off rail about a quarter of a mile ahead. A portion of the track was undoubtedly missing. We were running at forty miles an hour with six coaches.

"I should have reached for the throttle like they always do in the story books, but I didn't. Instead I just sat there like a fool. I couldn't think, I couldn't cry out, I couldn't move.

"Meanwhile the train dashed along the rails towards the gap. In about half a minute after I got rattled we were almost upon the break. A spar-row darted from the rails and disappeared. Then the yawning gap vanished also just as the engine rushed upon it. The bird had thrown a shadow on the rail. Scared! I didn't get over that for a couple of days."

Another engineer was almost frightened into fits by the sudden appearance of a beam of light. He was expecting to pass a freight train at the next town and was humming along at the best passenger speed. Directly ahead shone the gleam of light, then

it was swallowed up in the darkness. Stupefied and bewildered the engineer made a frantic grab among the levers, the train rushing on.

When he finally succeeded in slowing down, his engine was gliding around one of the most abrupt curves on the line of track. The light was in a farm house directly in the path where the railroad would have been had the officials not taken the notion to swerve it to the north.

Occasionally something happens that makes the souls of the superstitious seek frantically for an explanation.

One night an engineer was guiding a fast eastbound passenger train. The window leading to the running board was open. The knight of the throttle was leaning out of the side window. A broad expanse of the front of his blue overalls were turned toward the opening. Suddenly he was doubled up with a stunning blow immediately beneath the belt. In the gloom of the cab there was nothing to inflict such punishment and he tried in a dazed way to figure out the cause of the trouble.

The fireman seized the throttle and guided the train into the next station,

which happened to be the division point. The engineer was taken home to recuperate and the engine was taken in charge by the hostler. The latter found a dead hawk on the floor of the cab.

The finding of the bird solved the mystery. The hawk was flying in a direction opposite to the engine and, dazed by the headlight, flopped in at the open window, dealing the engineer a knockout blow.

Six hours of rest enabled the knight of the throttle to get perfect control of his breathing apparatus and he recovered entirely from the effects of the experience.

* * *

There are moments so bitter that tears are a sacrilege.

The Woman being obdurate, Love resorted to the usual artifice and took away the man's appetite.

"It must be a snap cooking for him," reflected the Woman, observing this, and being of a practical turn of mind, she married the man forthwith.

Of course when she discovered the deception that had been practiced on her she would not permit Love to come into the house at all.

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