

A Dark Night's Work.

BY PAUL INGELW.

Continued from 1st page.

He had stepped on a dry twig, and its crackling had startled the girl. Rapid as a flash she turned. Quick as lightning the tramp dropped to an attitude of the most abject servility, with bent face and extended hand, assuming the pose and bearing of a professional mendicant.

The girl was startled, more frightened. She uttered a little cry of alarm, shrank back, gazed wildly about her, as if bent on speeding precipitately from the spot, and then, quivering with timidity and dread, she gasped incoherently:—

"Who are you? What do you want?"

The man whined out some unintelligible words. The girl, her hands crossed nervously over her palpitating heart, seemed to strive to regain her composure. Jera Le Britta, a spellbound spectator of the scene, saw the tramp's shadowy eyes glow from beneath the impromptu mask he wore like those of a baleful basilisk.

"Oh! it is almost midnight! I leave fair maid in a gentle, pitying tone. You look poor, hungry, tired. Here, I have not much. You are welcome to that." She drew forth a tiny, jeweled purse. Her fingers trembled as she extended the few coins that it contained.

The tramp edged nearer. His great rough hand closed over the coins and his dainty fingers as well. She shuddered and drew back, for it was evident that the man had no work of securing the money, in order to take a long, sweeping survey of her features.

"Thanks!" he grated forth, a hoarsely, "tell me, lady, though, your name?"

"My name," repeated the girl, flushing indignantly. "Why should I do that?"

"I can remember my kind benefactress."

So palpable a sneer was manifest in the accents, that the girl started with suspicious dislike and positive alarm.

With quiet dignity, however, she bestowed a cold look on her pensioner, and said:—

"My name cannot be of interest to you, and I do not care to be a trifling charity."

"Oh! I want to know!"

Of a sudden the tramp's bearing changed. He arose from his crouching attitude of mock servility.

Aggressive, insolent, threatening, he blocked her way, as she uttered a cry of alarm.

"And I will know!" he blustered. "Charity! Bah! That's your good name! scatter it to the pauper brats down at the almshouse. Keep it, and may it sink you and all about you, but you tell me what I want to know before I leave this spot, or you either, my proud lady!"

With a scornful swing of his hand, the tramp had flung the money in his grasp disdainfully on the ground, at the feet of his astounded almsman.

Now, coming nearer to her, he hissed:—

"I'd know that face from a picture I saw. I've watched you and saw you come from Hawthorne villa. You are Gladys Vernon."

The girl grew pale. Her eyes told that the man had made a correct conjecture.

"If I am," she faltered, "what is that to you?"

"You shall see. If you are Gladys Vernon, you are the niece of old Gideon Vernon. It's not you I care to know about. I can guess that you are the lucky enough to be adopted as the favorite of that crotchety old miser, but there's some questions about him I'm going to ask, and you're going to answer."

The girl's face had grown steadily whiter. Defiance, fear, played alternately across her colorless features.

Le Britta, about to spring forward and relieve her from the presence and distracting importunities of the insolent intruder, restrained himself, as some instinctive instinct told him that the man's later actions might reveal his motive in thus interrogating and affording her friends a clue to his designs.

"First," announced the man, "I want to know if old Vernon is not pretty near used up."

"My uncle is quite ill," spoke the girl, feebly.

"Good! He'd ought to die," was the heartless rejoinder. "Now then, has he altered his will lately?"

The tramp fairly hissed the words. So intense was his malignity of expression, that Miss Gladys Vernon recoiled with a cry of terror.

"I will not tell you. You are some villain seeking to learn his secrets, to do him harm. Release me! help! help!"

For the villain had seized her white, shapely wrist in his brutal grasp.

"You shall tell me!" he growled, fiercely. "Quick! Has he changed his will? Speak! I will know!"

"You scoundrel, be there!"

Smack!

The man who could paint pictures, and write poetry, and dream over sunny landscapes, could fight as well.

All the civility of his energetic nature aroused, Jera Le Britta had sprung forward.

His good right arm shot out like a piston rod.

His shrewd fist landed squarely between the eyes of the insolent boor before him. And the next moment, as the fair young girl clung frantically to the photographer's free arm for support, the trampish knave recoiled, and measured his length on the ground at her feet.

CHAPTER III.—A STARTLING RECOGNITION.

Jera Le Britta was a practical man, and had led a prosaic life. That is, only sentiment and a love for the artistic had been the main diversity in his existence from plodding, everyday routine.

The hour for action had arrived, however, and he was not found lacking. A gentleman, a friend to distress wherever found, his heart's sympathy was made to the call of help unprotected.

The tableau that ensued to his speedy interference in the scene at the wild-fine bow, was a dramatic one. His fine face aglow with indignation and resolve, he formed a fitting companion for the innocent girl, who trustingly recognized him as a valued protector, and a striking contrast to the enraged and discomfited boor at his feet.

"Leave!" he roared, uttering a second advance toward the prostrate ruffian, but Miss Vernon interposed a restraining hand.

"He has punished him enough," she faltered, tremulously. "Let him depart in peace!"

"Peace!" snorted the tramp, struggling to his feet and scowling fiercely. "I'll show you, my naughty lady. You, too, insolent interloper. I'll—"

"Go, if you are wise!" ordered Le Britta, warningly.

With a malevolent scowl, the subdued knave shrank from the spot.

"Do not tremble so, you are safe now," spoke the photographer to his companion. "He frightened me!" He hinted at such dreadful things about uncle! He has threatened even you!"

Le Britta smiled confidently.

"He will do wisely to keep out of my path in the future," he said. "And now, Miss Vernon?"

"What! You know my name?" said the girl, with surprise.

"I was a witness to your interview with that malignant scoundrel," explained the artist. "From his lips I learned your name. You reside near here?"

She pointed across the valley, to a pretentious mansion gleaming white and massive among the trees on the other slope.

"I live with my uncle," she murmured. "And I must hasten home. He will be anxious about me. I had been to the village on an errand, and was caught in the shower, and sought shelter here."

"And joined the birds in singing a bright welcome to the returning sun?" remarked Le Britta.

The young girl flushed with embarrassment.

"You heard me," she faltered.

"That's so, my lady," replied the photographer. "One moment, Miss Vernon, till I secure my traps, and I will accompany you on my way."

"Oh! I could not think of troubling you," she said.

"It will be a pleasure to me, perhaps a protection to you," responded Le Britta. "That scoundrel may seek to trouble you again."

"But he has disappeared."

"Perhaps only temporarily. I do not wish to needlessly alarm you, but that man is no tramp."

"Then?"

"He was disguised."

sympathize in your troubles. You are in a dangerously weak condition. Too much excitement may prove fatal to you. I beg of you to be calm, and to composely tell me your story, and allow me to aid you in any way I can. You surely would not think of sending your niece back into danger of being seized by that villain again."

"Trust a stranger!" mused Vernon, dubiously.

"Yes, uncle, you can trust Mr. Le Britta," spoke Gladys, so earnestly, so confidently, that her rescuer, confident glance at her rescuer.

"I will," announced Vernon, resolutely. "Mr. Le Britta, I depend solely on you to aid me in this matter. I am a poor girl who will soon be friendless, as she is an orphan."

"I shall be your uncle, do not say that," sobbed Gladys.

"It is true. I feel that I cannot long survive this last shock," proceeded the invalid. "I am a weak man, but I, Le Britta, with but one near relative, my nephew, Ralph Durand, have in knowing about it—that have you to fear from him?" queried Le Britta, wondering.

"I have no fear," answered Gladys, "but just now all regarding Gladys's future. This man is a distant relative of mine. I treated him like a son. I had depended on him for some time, and I found that I intended leaving him when I die. I made a will, Gladys, of course, with my sole heir, in that will I appointed as my guardian this man, Ralph Durand, with rare discretionary powers, until she was of age, for I followed him implicitly. His fellow-trustee was a friend of mine, Doctor Winston."

"I understand," nodded Le Britta, comprehensively.

"That will I deposited with my city lawyer. In his safe it has since lain. A short time after I made it, Durand was unaccountably absent. Shortly after I grew to believe, and, finally, investigated the dark rumors that reached my ears about his habits. I learned that he was a profligate, a gambler, a dissolute, a kind, that he openly scoffed at me as a 'golden goose' he was plucking to his evil-minded companions in vice. I found that he had systematically robbed me in matters of my estate. I summoned him to my presence, and he did not come. I ordered him from my door."

"That night he managed to get a forged check for a large amount on my banker's cashed, and on a second day he obtained a box containing some private papers of mine. Among them was a document, and Vernon faltered and paled visibly. 'I reserved the fact,' secret that I wished to guard at all hazards. I sent detectives on his track, but it was of no avail. Every day dreadfully that he had been seen in distant places he would begin to menace me with giving publicity to the secret, I shuddered and feared. Finally, one day, in a newspaper, I read that Ralph Durand had been killed in a drunken brawl in a far western mining town. I was only haunted after that by the fear that some secret enemy, accidentally find the document he had stolen, and attempt to blackmail me or publish the same. Now, I am told that his eyes expressed a deep anxiety, 'he reappears suddenly, mysteriously, he was not dead at all. He has returned to wreck his baleful and evil designs on the only relative I have in the wide world.'"

Le Britta was intensely interested in the strange, graphic recital, but he said, sternly:—

"And Mr. Vernon, what is to prevent you from sending word to the nearest police official to arrest this knave who robbed and disgraced you?"

"No! no!" uttered Vernon, quickly. "I dare not do that. Too well Ralph Durand had understood me. He would wield it without mercy. He probably has the compromising document I refer to, and he knows I would rather pay a fortune than have it published."

"And that document?" inquired Le Britta, curiously.

"I dare not tell you, Gladys, too, must never know. Leave all that to me. I will find a means of securing and destroying it. If I live, I will, later, negotiate with this villain for his surrender for a money consideration, but just now there is a far more vital point that agonizes me and demands attention."

"And that is?" queried Le Britta, forebodingly.

"The will," ejaculated Vernon, "the one you made."

"Yes," answered Gladys. "It has never been changed. It lies at the lawyer's, just as I left it."

"What?" exclaimed Le Britta, indignantly. "Surely, Mr. Vernon, we do not mean that you allowed that important document to remain as it was with that villain Ralph Durand as guardian to Miss Vernon?"

"Yes, I know it was reprehensible, but let me explain. For a time I was so worried over Durand's conduct, my thought of the will. Then Gladys came from boarding-school to brighten my life, and it again escaped my mind. One day I thought of it, and arranged to go and get it, destroy it, and make a new will, appointing a new guardian. But very day I read of Ralph Durand's death. That relieved me of all dread. If he was dead, the mention of his guardianship was invalid. Naturally, Durand, a trusted friend, would become successor in the trust. The will was made extra strong and with care, and blind that I was to the future, I never worried about it."

"But now," began Le Britta, and paused.

"Now, to be plain, if I should die tonight," Oh! uncle," murmured Gladys, with a shudder, nestling closer to her beloved relative.

"If I should die tonight," pursued Vernon, steadily, that man Durand would appear here to-morrow with all his insolence and villainy, your legally-appointed guardian—the guardian of my pure innocent Gladys. Oh! it is terrible to contemplate. Worse than that, if I die, my thought of it, in him I gave him the right of control of everything without bond or legal accountability. Not! no! I must take care. For a day, for a single hour, we must, indeed, act, or all is lost!"

"Then, why not send to your lawyer for the will?" suggested Le Britta.

"It is in the city. A day's journey there, a day's journey back."

"Telegraph to have it destroyed."

"In an important step like that, they might hesitate. No, I have a plan that obviates it all."

"Bring him to me, and I will see what it is?" queried the photographer.

"Yes, a new will."

"Ah!"

"I will send at once for the village lawyer, Mr. Munson. You will go for me, Mr. Le Britta?"

"Certainly."

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer will see to it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will. Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verily believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood—his rude questioning of Gladys proves that."

Le Britta, comforting. "Your lawyer headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go—what is the name of the village lawyer?"

"Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta hesitated, adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kindness to me, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?"

"Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new