

DOCTOR JACK.

By St. George Rathborne.

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Jack is left in even a more disturbed frame of mind than before. He does not know what to do. The spirit that moves her may be for good or evil. She has said she will simply leave him to his fate, but who can guess what a woman of her electric nature, once made in love, may not attempt?

He can hardly understand what it is that has caused her to leave him. He is tempted to think that she is flattered by the love of such a royally beautiful woman, and yet Jack has been able to resist the subtle charms of the tall, slender, and has saved him?

Almost unconsciously he puts his hand into his pocket and draws something out, upon which he gazes long and earnestly. It is the portrait of Avis Morton, and since he has met the original, Jack finds a new charm in the picture.

"Yes, it was Avis who kept me from yielding myself a captive to her. I like her, I like her, I like her," he says, and then he looks at the picture of Avis Morton. "I want one who will be the same yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow, such a girl as Avis Morton. I can convince her of that same thing after we have done our level best to save her. I shall not let her go until I am worth old noddad that I am."

Thus he mutters to himself, and presses the counterfeit resemblance of Avis Morton to his cheek. He is a man of many moods. Had Mercedes witnessed the action she would have been possessed with a mad desire to tear the magic lights of his eyes out of his head, and perhaps scratch his eyes out in the bargain, for who can account for the vagaries of a woman who has stooped to conquer and been repulsed?

Sleep is not to be thought of—the plot thickens, and morning is near at hand—the time of action, when they shall make a move, and upon the enemy's masked battery if they have one.

As Doctor Jack walks to the window and glances out, he sees a faint light in the east that tells him the night is spent and dawn at hand. He watches it grow broader slowly but surely, while the magic lights of the carousing city become pale under the influence of the coming day. The cohorts of darkness seem to gather for a last effort to keep the city in the great buildings which are in a line with Jack's vision, but steadily advance the battalions of the sun, the stars are already entering the city, and before their invincible onset the last remnant of the king of darkness are sent flying in rout.

So the day opens, and the sun begins to make his appearance—masks vanish from the streets, and something of business begins, although little unnecessary work will be done in Madrid during the festive time.

Jack thinks himself of breakfast, and goes down to see about it. He has the value of a man's real judiciously placed, and thus avoids much of the friction that most travelers meet with in a Spanish fondle. Hence his meal, simple as it is, consisting of eggs, toast, and tea, is soon ready, and he does it justice.

All the while his thoughts are flying to the scenes he has witnessed. He has carried out his instructions to the letter, and if the ladies are ready to depart. Much depends on the scheme being carried out thoroughly, and there are so many chances of something happening to throw a wheel out of gear, that the American is not a little vexed.

His anxiety causes him to finally leave the table. Consulting his time-piece he finds it a quarter to eight. Then he goes out, and is lucky enough to engage a vehicle. From the man he learns all about distances, then has his portmanteau brought down.

"To the Fonda Peninsular in hot haste," he says to the driver, and the latter, having already been heavily fed, with the prospect of more ahead, does not let his animals sleep on the way.

Many heads are thrust out of windows—the good people of Madrid believe every fresh rush or bustle on the street nowadays announces the coming of some new spectacle, and they are determined to keep well posted.

So the hotel is soon reached—there is beginning to be a show of life around it, as the American leaps from his carriage and enters. Another moment and he has cornered the proper functionary who serves as a clerk, and of whom he asks whether Miss Morton has gone.

The other leisurely surveys him, and begins to talk in a rambling way about finding out; but Jack knows that the man is an interminable wait—precious minutes lost, and nothing gained when the servant finally returns. Time is too valuable to be allowed to slip so easily. He knows that this party is like the rest, and the fling of a few real will make him awake. Speedily they pass from his own hand into the itching palm of the clerk, and the effect on that party is quite surprising. He becomes aroused at once like a man who must now think of his own part in a grand, heroic effort, and then glows with triumph, just as the excited pullet cackles after laying her first egg.

Jack thinks.

"Well, senior, the lady has gone. I assisted her into a carriage, and in minutes ago, and the trunk, too. Por Dios, it was heavy," he rattles on, for he has learned to speak very fair Spanish, and he is anxious to make a good impression on the hotel.

This is good news to Jack—he does not regret the investment of the few reales.

"The lady was not alone?" he asks.

"Vaya! no, her aunt accompanied her."

"No gentleman?"

"Only the pasha," he carelessly.

"What?" almost howls Doctor Jack, who comes very near scolding the clerk out of a year's salary.

"The Turkish pasha—he was very attentive to Senorita Morton, and always asking whether she was in or not."

"Think again, man—did the pasha accompany the ladies, or was it Miss Morton's cousin, the strange dandy, Kennedy?" he asks, and Jack fairly holds his breath in surprise.

"Caramba! what am I thinking about? My thoughts are wool-gathered. It was the little man who ordered the vehicle. We thought they were going sight-seeing, but at the last dawn came the trunk, the account was settled, and they were off. Quite a sudden flitting, I trust, but they did not leave you in the lurch?"

Jack pays no attention to the question, but pounds away at his subject.

"Why did you say at the first pasha accompanied them—what put it into your mind?"

"I will tell you—it was easy enough to get them mixed, senior. Just after they had gone, the Turkish general comes to me and asks about the ladies—he unconsciously drew more reales in his pocket, which Jack readily understands have passed into his possession from the hand of the Turk."

"And when I inquired of the Turk's departure with the trunk he is greatly excited, settles his account, engages a vehicle without regard to its cost, and is off carissima, like a house on fire."

"I see. Well, I cannot let all my friends leave me in the lurch this way, so I will follow suit."

Jack puts the words into practice, and in another minute is once more seated in his vehicle en route for the railway station. There is just good time to reach it easily, and he is not at all worried, but leaning back, smokes his cigar in contentment.

When about half way there he suddenly sits up straight and looks out of the window. There has been an accident—a crowd has gathered. He sees that a coach has broken down—something has happened. He has allowed the coach to pass, and the vehicle lies there on one side, canting downward, the bare axle touching the ground.

The accident is not an uncommon one in the streets of Madrid, where the holes in the roadway wrench a vehicle badly, but Jack's attention is directed toward a certain little man who

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