

NOW FIRST PUBLISHED.

Shadowed for Life,

A SOLDIER'S STORY,

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CHAPTER XXVII.—Continued.

In less than half an hour, a tall soldierly looking man, with a huge book under his arm was ushered in. He bowed to me, and sat down.

"This gentleman," said the Consul, "seems to have information to give us that is of a very great importance, and may lead to the capture of one of the perpetrators of the bomb outrage near St. Peter's."

"I presume," I said, "that your album contains photographs of men who are wanted."

"Yes, sir," said the official, "of many men who are wanted for one thing or another. My advice is that you seat yourself at the table yonder and try to identify the party whom you have come across."

I did as told. I must say I never saw the portraits of so many villains in one collection before. Some were repulsive in the extreme, some looked fiends in human form, he-devils and she-devils; but, on the other hand, many women in the collection were positively beautiful—all the more dangerous, no doubt, on that very account—and some of the men were both handsome and gentlemanly, men who might have adorned the drawing-rooms of the best French or London society.

I was beginning to despair of finding a portrait of Jack or Bluet. Indeed, I had come nearly to the last page of the book, and had already heaved a sigh of disappointment, when on turning another page, lo! there he was before me.

"He is here! He is here!" I cried, excitedly.

The officer sprang up.

I pointed to the photo.

"What, he? What, that man?" he cried. "Have you indeed run him to earth. Tell me, has he any mark on his face."

"Yes, yes; the cicatrix of a burn, a white spot no bigger than an English sixpenny piece, right over the left eyebrow."

"Tis he! 'Tis he! 'Tis Jacques the murderer the bomb thrower. There is a price on his head, and has been for years. If you have indeed run him to earth you will be well rewarded."

"I seek no reward," I said, "but the satisfaction of knowing that he is given up to justice."

"If you can lead my men to the house where he studies be assured we will capture him, dead or alive."

Some further discussion ensued. I gave Professor Keller's address, and it was arranged that at seven o'clock next evening the house should be surrounded and a raid made, which I prayed Heaven might be successful.

I kept my appointment, and the old Professor appeared glad to see me.

Presently Bluet, or Jacques himself entered.

"I will take one hour of study," he said, bowing to me, "then we will talk."

Professor Keller and I now entered into conversation, the theme being bacteriology. The time sped rapidly away.

"The biology of pathogenic micro-organisms," the Professor was saying—when suddenly, without warning of any kind, the room was filled with armed men.

"Surrender all here!" was the shout.

I remained in my chair.

Jacques sprang to his feet. He had been seated on a round heavy stool. This he seized, and with it he fought like veritable wild beast.

Man after man went down before him. He was fighting his way towards the door. But now there was rattle of firearms, and he seemed to change his mind in a moment. He rushed to the window. Two blows, and the frame flew in splinters. Then Jacques leapt out.

He had escaped?

Nay, the attack had been too well planned to permit of escape.

He jumped through the window only to fall bleeding and faint into the very clutches of men stationed in the garden.

Jacques was run to earth. Captured at last; bound hand and foot and conveyed to prison.

"Curse you," he cried to me as he was being borne away. "Curse you, I know you now. Fool that I was to be deceived! But tremble; for when I escape I shall, I will tear your wind-pipe from your lungs."

That, I thought to myself, would be a somewhat painful operation.

But I made no reply.

My man was captured, and I could afford to be good-natured and magnanimous.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—A MYSTERIOUS WARNING.

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

Many times and oft have these lines from Hamlet been quoted; many times before have I quoted them myself. And if I do now again, it is because what I am about to relate borders on the spiritual.

Yet I wish it to be distinctly understood that I myself am no believer in spiritualism, feeling quite certain in my own mind that nothing takes place in this world, however apparently mysterious, that may not be explained by natural laws. If, mind you, we can get these laws to apply to the case. Transient dreams, daylight dreams may account for the appearance of many an apparition. And I have proof positive

that men, and women too, under certain conditions of the brain, especially perhaps after great fatigue, may fall asleep for just a brief moment or two, even when walking through a room, or along a garden path, and during that short period of somnolency may dream that they see ghosts, ay, and be ready to swear to the truth of what they saw. We all know what nightmares are, but these are daymares, if I dare coin a word, and the terror they plunge the transient dreamer into is, for the time being, very real and very dreadful also.

But apart from all this, I should not be the one to deny that heaven may sometimes give people strange warnings, even in dreams; warnings that if acted upon may enable us to steer clear of great dangers to ourselves, or protect the life of some very dear friend.

I do not, of course, know for certain, but it seems to me that, even while in life, we at times may be permitted to place our footsteps on the threshold of another world and fearfully peer within.

When I returned to England, after the capture of the notorious Jacques, I did so with a comparatively easy mind.

I somehow felt certain in my own thoughts that the danger was passed and gone. For, I reasoned, if Ella were ever so much inclined to aid her old lover in his fearful plots against the life of my friend Jocelyn, she could not now do so, Jacques having been captured before he had completed his schemes, and to send her the deadly lymph which should smite her husband with that fatal disease anthrax.

I determined to be on my guard nevertheless, and I had another midnight interview with the maid Lena.

Mrs. Lloyd, I found out had really bought underclothing for Jocelyn at the shop recommended by Jacques. He had worn these too, and with no bad results. I did not expect that there would be any. The wool from a diseased sheep even after it is dyed and made up into under-garments may possibly give anthrax to the wearers is generally believed. But it is admitted that the chances of its doing so are very remote indeed.

No; and none knew this better than Jacques himself. Why then had he recommended the purchase of such under-clothing.

This question is very easily answered. For any medical man attending a case of anthrax, would certainly feel about for the primary cause of the terrible malady. Where did the microbes come from that laid his patient low in death? And in the absence of any other clue or explanation, the very fact of his having worn that probably infected wool from South America would be eagerly seized upon as the 'causa mortis.' O, without doubt the man Jacques had played his cards well, and had meant to leave nothing undone to insure success.

And now comes the mystery, for mystery it is to me to this very day.

In telling this portion of the story I intend merely to state facts, simple facts, and to leave the reader to explain them any way he or she thinks fit, or do as I do, leave them unexplained, and take refuge in those lines from "Hamlet" I quote at the beginning of this chapter.

Lena then had promised that she would continue to live with Mrs. Lloyd as her maid for some months yet, and that she would take notice if anything at all unusual occurred, and communicate with me at once, even if she had to walk all the way to the jungle 'at the dark hour of midnight.' These last are Lena's own words. She was a brave as well as a faithful girl.

A week or two had passed away. The Raven's Nest, and there was no reason, I firmly believed, why Ella should not ultimately forget her old lover entirely and settle down as a faithful wife and helpmeet. Alas! the wish was father to the thought, and I did not even yet know the female 'terror' I had to cope with in the person of Ella Lloyd or Lee.

Ah, well, do I remember that gloomy autumn evening when I rode slowly back from the Raven's Nest with the gloaming shadows deepening around me, leaves fluttering earthwards from the lordly elms, rooks overhead flying heavily homewards to the distant woods and one little glimmering star shining sweetly in a rift of blue high above the Eastern horizon.

I remember I felt somewhat sad and low in spirits. Downcast indeed, for my friend Jocelyn had complained of not being over-well, a strange drowsiness he said almost overwhelmed him, and now and then a transient giddiness.

"I'll go to my room, Gord," he told me, with a faint smile. "I shall not dine. Sleep will pull me together. Come and see me early in the morning."

I repeated his last words to myself over and over again as I rode homewards.

"Come and see me early in the morning," "What if Joss was going to die! The good god first. Yes, many and many a proof I have had of that truth. But how lonesome my whole life would be if my friend were to die!"

"Come and see me early in the morning," "That I assuredly will," I cried aloud. "Go on, Polly; go on good mare."

And the mare broke into an easy gallop, and soon stood stock still at our own gate.

My dinner that evening, I am certain, was a mere passover. My dog had the soup the cats had the fish, and my parrot—a

flesh eater—discussed most of my modest chop.

I helped myself, however, to blanc mange, with cranberry jelly, pouring a couple of glasses of genuine port over it by way of sauce.

Then I sat in my rocker, read, and smoked.

"Come and see me early in the morning." These were the very last words I said to myself as I lay down to sleep.

A sad, uneasy slumber it was, though. Toilsome, racking dreams, which culminated at last in as ugly a nightmare as ever I can remember.

I thought I stood alone in a chamber all hung around with black cloth. The room was dimly lighted, but where the light came from I could not tell, nor cared I. For my eyes were rivetted on a fearsome sight. Against the wall of this black room stood or were placed a row of bust of human beings—all dead they were. Suddenly, to my horror, the lips of all them moved, the lower ones being slightly protruded, and from every dead mouth there spouted a long stream of crimson blood.

A nightmare like this cannot be vividly or graphically enough described on paper, but the terror of this dream was sufficient to cause me to start from my couch and even when I opened my eyes I could see those awful busts fading away till I lit my candle.

Now as to what followed I possess no scientific certainty. I only know that I did not think I was asleep or dreaming. I felt as wide awake as I do at this moment.

Much more so, indeed, when suddenly the knocker on the hall door sounded loud and long.

I sprang out of bed at once.

"It is Lena," I said to myself, "and poor Joss is taken worse."

I looked at my watch; it was just two o'clock and a few minutes more.

Once again the knocking commenced; louder now it was, and impatient.

I snatched up the candle, and hurried downstairs and along the hall.

I threw open the door, and the rays of my candle fell upon and struggled with the darkness without.

But a feeling of dread—a dread that is indefinable—took possession of me when from that outer darkness, and into the light, there glided the face and form of Jocelyn Lloyd himself.

"Oh, Joss," I cried, "how you startled me! Come in, come in. Don't stand out in the cold."

The very sound of my own voice was hollow and unearthly.

Jocelyn never moved.

He only gazed at me with those gentle pleading eyes of his.

Then his image faded away.

I made a spring as it to seize him. All in vain. But far away—in what direction I could not tell—a voice, his voice, fell distinctly on my ears.

"Come and see me early in the morning."

My honest mare looked about with some surprise when just ten minutes after this I entered the stable, lantern in hand, dressed and ready for the road. But she nuzzled me a welcome, and shortly after this we were tearing along the road through the darkness and the gloom, at a rate that, had the mare not been well acquainted with the path would have endangered both her neck and mine.

I slackened speed as I neared the Raven's Nest.

There was a bright light in Jocelyn's room just above the verandah.

And in that room, I doubted not, foul murder was being committed, if the deed were not already done.

CHAPTER XXIX.—THE DOOM OF THE WOULD-BE MURDERER.

While still seventy yards from the house, I entered a field and left my mare to graze. I must approach the verandah with caution, though as speedily as I could.

Down by the summer-house lay a light ladder, as I passed through the garden I took it with me.

My footsteps could not be heard, so silently did I tread.

And now I am close beneath the window.

To the left of this was Jocelyn's dressing-room, with a door opening through into his bedroom. Both windows were of the old-fashioned casement kind, with tiny panes like those we see in churches.

I softly lean the ladder against the verandah and up I swam like a cat or a sailor, till my head is on a level with the light.

Many and many a ghastly horror have I witnessed in my time, but nothing in life I believe has ever affected me more than the terrible scene in this drama of life and death now being acted before me.

For a few moments I can hardly realise it, and find myself wondering whether I am not the dupe of some horrible dream. The perspiration stands in cold beads upon my brow, and my limbs tremble so that my footing on the ladder is insecure indeed.

It is calm deliberation the stoical coolness and fiendish courage of Ella Lloyd that almost petrifies me with fear. My friend Jocelyn is lying there on his back in bed, one hand and arm resting on the coverlet. His lips are parted, his face is very pale, almost ghastly.

He had been drugged. A child could perceive this much.

But standing by the chest of drawers is the figure of Ella herself in her night-dress—intent on murder.

On the top of that chest of drawers are phials and tubes, a siphon, and a little retort simmering over the tiniest of pale blue flames, just sufficient to keep the contents at blood heat. In her hand she holds a lancet, and this she is trying the edge on her thumb nail. As it satisfied with its sharpness, she turns towards the bed and places it handy. Then she commences to fill a tiny glass syringe such as medical men use for giving instantaneous injections of morphia solutions.

I watch her narrowly. I watch her as if spell-bound, and I notice that her hand neither trembles nor shakes, as she bends over the retort containing the fatal lymph.



"Come and see me early in the morning."

Once more I seem to hear that voice, and the words suddenly break the spell that binds me. I am a man again, full of life and action. I leap with ease on to the top of the balcony, and make my way swiftly to the casement window of the dressing-room.

This Joss, acting on my advice, always leaves open.

I am through and inside in two seconds. I dash open the intervening door and clutch the woman by the shoulder just as she is bending over my friend's couch to administer the deadly dose.

Often times in real life there is an element of the comic mixed up with the deeds most tragic. It was not wanting in this case. It may sound strange, but it is not after all surprising that, having been so long at sea, I should address this would-be murderer in sailor language instead of plainer English. But I had not time to study my words or phrases.

"Avast heaving," I shout, and I snake her as a cat may shake a rat. "Avast heaving, you murdering devil and fiend!"

Was it terror alone, or was it madness, that now contorted her pale and ghastly face. I knew not, neither did I care.

She had fallen on the floor, or I had thrown her there.

Her arms were extended, her fists were clenched, her black eyes rolled upwards till they almost disappeared beneath her brows. Then with a groan she sank upon the floor convulsed.

Even in my excitement there was one thing I could not help observing—The glass lymph-laden syringe had been broken to atoms in her clenched fists and the blood from her palm was trickling down her arm.

My first thought was for Jocelyn. I eagerly bent over him, and listened to his breathing.

It was quiet and regular with the slightest degree of stertor.

I opened my eyelid. The pupil was fixed and contracted.

But the pulse was firm and by no means intermittent.

That he had been drugged was evident, but at present there was no danger to life, and I did not apprehend any. I dipped a handkerchief in water, however, and placed it over his brow, patted his poor white hand and left the room.

I went upstairs quietly and tapped at Lena's door.

The girl was up and dressed.

"Oh, sir," she said, as well as her chattering teeth would permit; is it you? How did you get in? I've had a dreadful dream and was going for you. O, sir, is master dead?"

"No, Lena, no. Thank God I have come in time to save his life."

Then I told her all.

Between us we carried Mrs. Lloyd to her room and put her to bed. She was quiet enough now. I dressed the wound on her hand, applying antiseptics, and doing all I knew to prevent the poison, with which, in crushing the glass syringe she had inoculated herself from circulating in her blood.

But of her case I had positively no hopes, from the first.

The very death she would have meted out to her husband, Fate had decreed should be her own.

It was late next day before Jocelyn awoke. I had telegraphed for one of the best physicians in London.

Unreservedly I told him the terrible history of the whole case, and he agreed with me that the danger was extreme. A man like Jacques, Savant and Anarchist, was likely to do his work all too well.

Nevertheless everything that could be done in the way of prevention we did; nor did my confrere leave for days.

All in vain.

Ella Lloyd was doomed.

I would only needlessly horrify the reader were I to give, from the commencement to the end, the pathological history of this case; from the oncoming of the first vesicle and carbuncle through all the stages of inflammation, of fever, of high delirium, of mortification, muttering delirium, protraction and death.

Suffice it to say that in nine days' time from the first appearance of this plague Ella Lloyd was no more.

My London medical friend came down again, and both he and I agreed that we had never before witnessed a case in this country that went so steadily and swiftly on a fatal termination.

Meanwhile we consulted together on another question. Should Jocelyn Lloyd, whose grief, by-the-way, was terrible to behold, be told of the danger he had himself come through?

"Cui bono? Cui bono?" said Dr. R— again and again. He was fond of Latin quotations. Cui bono, my dear sir. It can do no harm but harm. Let the poor Major live and die in this opinion that for all her cruelty towards him his wife loved him at heart."

And so I consented to keep the matter hidden from my friend.

Lena, too was bound to secrecy, and I know she has kept her word and vow.

As for the "would-be murderer herself, she met her death in a fearful fashion, and her sufferings were unparalleled. God grant, I pray, they may have ended in this world, for no man can set bounds or limits to His mercy.

(to be continued)

The New Year

How You May Feel Happier and Better than in the Past.

Paine's Celery Compound Will Enable You to Thoroughly Enjoy Life.

Act Promptly and Your Fondest Desires will be Realized.

Many of our readers can truthfully confess that the year just gone by was to them a period of pain, suffering, anxiety, disappointment and wretchedness. Some were laid on beds of sickness, weak and helpless; others, ailing and almost broken down, were just able to move about to imperfectly attend to daily duty and work. The sick and ailing ones met with many failures and disappointments in their efforts to regain health. Doctors failed to cure them, and the very ordinary medicines of our times failed to bring back the blush of health to the pale and wan face.

Those of our readers who were unhappy last year may this year throw off their burdens and shackles, if they use that marvelous source of health-giving—Paine's Celery Compound—that contributed to the happiness of so many thousands in past years.

There is no necessity here to enlarge on what Paine's Celery Compound has done or is doing at the present time. Every day it is making well rheumatic, neuralgia, dyspeptic and sleepless mortals, and giving a new life to those afflicted with kidney, liver and blood diseases.

All classes unite in praising and recommending Paine's Celery Compound as the most effective medicine. The more physicians know it, the more do they earnestly recommend it for the sick. If you would be well, happy and vigorous all this year, begin at once with nature's healer and life-giver.

Another Question.

"Pop," said Willie, "why is it called a gymnasium?"

"Why? Why, because that's its name—ah—"

"Yes, I know that," said Willie, "but why didn't they call it a Tommasium or a bob-nasium, eh?"—Harper's Round Table.

It is always fashionable to have nice white teeth and sweet breath. The use morning and evening, of "Odorama," the perfect tooth powder, assures this, and leaves the mouth in a delightful state of freshness. "Odorama," is used by refined people everywhere. Druggists—25 cents.