

NOW FIRST PUBLISHED.

Shadowed for Life,

A SOLDIER'S STORY.

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CHAPTER XXVI.—"THREE SHADOWY FORMS FLITTING FROM TREE TO TREE."

Many a long and eventful voyage have I been to sea. Many a happy one, too; but never I ween, one so truly joyous and idyllic as this.

Mary or Molly, as we now dared to call her, shed a few hot tears at first, and for a day or two Jocelyn himself seemed sad and woe-begone. But hardly were we clear of the tossing and turmoil of the Bay of Biscay, and into the warm rays—every day growing warmer—of a more southern sun, than a change for the better came over my patient, thanks to the free air of the ozone, that was everywhere around us, to breathe, to simulate, to raise the spirits, though nevertheless to calm the fevered brow and soothe the nervous system, till one felt that only to live to exist was like a foretaste of heaven itself.

At the time we reached the beautiful, misty, but enchanting Island of Madeira, Major Jocelyn Lloyd, as he was fully named in the purser's books, was no longer a patient. He was hale, hearty, happy, and romped on the decks with his little frolicking Molly and the great ship's Newfoundland dog, as if he had been a school-boy.

Some slight accident had occurred to the machinery, which necessitated our lying for nearly three days at Madeira. This, for of Jocelyn's and Molly's sake, I certainly did not regret, for it gave us an opportunity of holding a most delightful picnic, far away and high among the wild mountain peaks.

Rover, the Newfoundland, had struck up great friendship with Molly, and on shore with us to that picnic he had determined to come, and would not be denied. We had newly native boats to land in, for on the beach the surf runs high, spuming in a rush and a roar, then seaward again in the force of a mighty cataraet sucking up with it shingle, roundest stones, and pebbles. This goes on by night and by day with a monotonous boom that can be fit for miles and miles at sea, like the muttering of distant thunder, or a semi-active line.

"Better not take Rover," said the purser, growling dog he was. "He'll get quarrelling with every mongrel he meets." I agreeable held his intelligent and beautiful case, a trifle to one side, as if he was phone was already in the gangway.

"I'm going with Molly," he seemed to say. "Mongrels or not mongrels. If there is any quarrelling it'll be bad for them. Well, if you don't take me in the boat, I guess I can swim, but then the sharks may eat me. But bow-wow-wow, whose afraid?"

"O, let him come," pleaded Molly so prettily that the purser could hold out no longer; so Rover went rattling down the gangway ladder and took his seat close to Molly in the stern sheet. And it would be difficult indeed to say who was the happier of the two, little Molly herself or her huge and snouty favourite. She was a very pretty girl, was Molly, with a deal of her father's expression and mild gentle nature. Jocelyn used to assert that she reminded him of Molly Morrison, his cousin and sweetheart of his boyish years.

Well, as Molly stooped to smooth and pat Rover's lovely head glances of affection seemed to pass between them, and the dog licked the little caressing hand.

"What a day of it we're going to have! And we?" he appeared to say.

When the boat was within thirty yards of the shore Rover jumped up and went overboard with a splash.

"O, the sharks, the sharks!" cried Molly, in wild alarm.

"There is no danger now, Mees," said a barrel-legged boatman. "Sharks are too wise. They never will come near to de land."

The same boatman carried Molly on shore, on his shoulders. "Loss and I had to scramble and tumble out the best way we could, and though we did get a little wet, the warm sunshine soon dried us again."

Standing between Rover and the sun, you could see the rainbow, his all around him as he shook quarts of water out of his splendid coat.

Summer seems to linger eternal in the Prae of Funchal. My friend Jocelyn did not say much, but I could see he was taking in and enjoying everything.

But Molly must give expression to her delight in many a childish "O, look, a dear, at the flowers!" And indeed it was flowers, flowers everywhere—roses, lilies, heliotropes, libiscuses, geraniums, and many a wild straining or climbing flower that botanist that I am supposed to be, I could not have named to save my life.

The people, too, whom we met strolling under the trees—and many were English or American—appeared to be part and parcel of the place, so quietly contented with life did they seem, while the natives themselves were as quaint and picturesque as if they had just walked out of a picture by some great Italian master.

Rover walked solemnly behind Molly for about fifty yards; but this was evidently slow work. He had come on shore to enjoy himself, why should he be a mongrel-looking, snipey-jawed dog, half collie, half terrier, half pointer, half dalmatian, half anything, that was enough. In another minute Rover had opened him up apparently, and ended by tossing him into the gutter.

Rover was on the war-path now, and every cur he met that did not instantly

lower his tail between his hocks, he caught by the back and threw right over his head. This was a lesson no cur was likely to forget.

"It makes them mannerly you know," Rover explained to Molly. "They don't often see a dog like me. Besides they might bite you, and prevention is better than cure."

"Now," I said, "shall we have horses up the hill, or the bullock sleigh?"

"The bullock sleigh sounds very romantic," said Joss, "but I think my wee Molly would like a horse."

"A horse! a horse!" cried Molly, as if she had been Richard the Third.

So horses were hired, and off we set, with Rover dashing round and round us, barking, and our groom-boys hanging on to the tails of our fleet and spirited nags. (This is sarcasm.)

One horse was driven in front. He was laden with baskets of fruit and provisions. Not the slightest fear of his running away, although had he fallen behind, he would have turned tail—or the bare morsel of bell-rope that did duty as tail—and trotted back to Funchal.

We were bound for the Correl Gran. So high above the level of the sea is it, that the wind blew cold and chill up here. But the views, all the way, which we often paused to admire, surpass my powers of description.

Moreover, I must not forget that I am telling a story and not describing travels. But I must say, that he who is low in health in England from overwork or overworry, is not wise if he can afford a voyage to this lovely 'isle of the ocean,' and takes it not.

We all slept sound that night on board the Sans Pareil, as she gently rocked to and fro in the bonnie bay. It was seven bells in the morning watch before I awoke and entered the bath-room.

I was happy and hungry when I went on deck a few minutes before eight to breathe the fresh morning air. Hunger and happiness go well together, I opine; that is, when one is sure of a good meal. I have often been so situated that the latter blessing was an impossibility. Then happiness took wings unto herself and fled far away.

We spent another grand day among the hills, O, the beauty of the seascapes and the cloudscapes as the sun began to sink low towards the west; the colours, the half tints, the crimsons, opals, greys, and lilacs, and the strange haze that far away yonder unites sky and sea in a beauty that one can not define! All this has to be seen to be believed in.

As I walked towards the shingled beach with my three friends, Joss, Molly and Rover, I suddenly remembered that I had a friend in Funchal whom I had not seen for years.

I resolved to hunt him up now, and so returned alone towards the town.

I found my old friend hale and hearty, a Scotsman he was, and it is almost unnecessary to say that he gave me a Highland welcome.

As we were seated at dinner a scratching and whining was heard outside the door, which Captain Malcolm immediately opened, and in bounded Rover.

I was not a little surprised, for I had not only seen him get into the boat, but stood on the beach till that boat was half way out towards the Sans Pareil.

I afterwards discovered that he had boarded a native luggage boat in the dark of the evening, and been therewith conveyed on shore. How the poor dog had found me, or what instinct had put it into his head to come were questions I could not answer.

I can only say it was a God's mercy Rover was with me that night, as I walked in towards the beach where a boatman had promised to meet me.

Let me mention this: in foreign countries I always carry a revolver. Small enough almost is my little friend to go into my waistcoat pocket, but strong and sure enough to bring down a giant.

My friend Malcolm would have conveyed me to the beach, but I would not hear of it. He was much older than I, and somewhat delicate, so I bade him a friendly good-night, and marched along singing to myself.

The night was very far indeed from dark; the main street being flooded with the light of a big round moon. But presently I came to the avenue of trees that led downwards to the beach.

It was very still and silent here, and I noticed that once or twice Rover looked uneasily around him, and uttered a low growl.

I was being followed. I could distinctly see three shadowy forms flitting across the patches of moonlight from tree to tree.

Whoever they were they could be after no good. I pulled out my six-shooter and hurried on.

Suddenly from across the street the mysterious figures came bounding at the double. Each wore a dark cloak, each a black and wide-brimmed sombrero.

There could be no mistaking the tall form that led the van.

It was Jack himself.

"Stand and deliver!"

It needed but this to give me the excuse to fire. I did stand and deliver with a vengeance. Ring, ring, ring went my little gun thrice, and one villain dropped. It was worse for the second, for Rover seized him by the chin and brought him down with a crash.

I had to cope with the tallest of the three, with Jack himself. I fired again twice, hitting once I think, for his arm dropped and he staggered, as it about to fall.

On he came next moment. I hit out with my cudgel now wildly enough, but it snapped in two. Then I saw a knife gleam for a moment above me, and knew I was stabbed. I remember seeing the white figures of Portuguese policemen flitting around me, and hearing the clashing of their cutlasses. All else was like a dream.

"Are you better?"

It was the surgeon of the ship who spoke, and I opened my eyes in my own state-room on board the Sans Pareil.

"Where am I, and what has happened?" They told me all, and how but for Rover the dog I would undoubtedly have been murdered. As it was I had been stabbed and robbed, and the would-be assassin had escaped.

"But," added the surgeon, "you are out of danger now."

"Did all this happen last night?"

The surgeon smiled in a kindly way.

"Three days ago," he said. "We are now at sea."

Jocelyn and Molly now came in, but I was not allowed to speak much.

"Robbed! It was Jack," I thought, "and he has taken the cheque!"

I gently raised myself on my elbow, and at my request my clothes were brought me.

My purse was gone, but, O, joy, in an inside pocket of my waistcoat was my portfolio safe and sound, and in it—the cheque.

Jack was foiled then—foiled once more. I commenced this chapter by describing our voyage as wholly idyllic. Did my adventure detract from the joy thereof it might be asked? Not a great deal, I do assure the reader. I had been stunned, it is true, but my wound was insignificant; then at sea there is positive pleasure in being an invalid for a time, especially if one is as well nursed and attended as I was.

Joss and Molly did not know how kind to be to me, and Rover hardly ever left my side. But long before I reached the Cape I was well and strong once more, and able with my friends to take long drives among the geranium clad hills of one of the loveliest lands on earth.

Then came that long and lonely stretch of ocean 'twixt Cape of Good Hope and the Colonies fully 6,000 miles of water during which time we never even saw a ship nor sighted land of any kind, save one or two islands in the ocean's midst, and which sailors know by the name of New Amsterdam.

I have neither wish nor desire to describe our adventures in Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand, nor our long voyage home by Cape Horn, or rather through the wild and romantic Straits of Magellan.

But when we landed once more on Plymouth I must say there could not have been a healthier man in mind and body than my friend Major Jocelyn Lloyd.

He was happy, too, and so did Ella seem at meeting him. Once again he held his wife to his bosom, and I heard him make use of two little words I thought he had quite forgotten. He called her "dear love."

Lena was still Ella's maid, and I was naturally burning to hear what she had to report. On the third night after our arrival I dined at the Raven's Nest. Nor did I need much encouragement to make me stay all night.

I managed to slip a little note into Lena's hand, unperceived, and the result was a midnight, or rather early morning interview.

Evil be to him who evil thinks, but innocent Lena came to my room on tiptoe, at two o'clock, and was silently admitted.

She made a most energetic and splendid detective.

Yes Jack had been to the Raven's Nest several times. For six weeks after we had sailed in the Sans Pareil he had put in no appearance. Then came a registered letter. Lena now handed me a copy of it, which she had managed to secure, so there was no need for me to use my keys or creep like a buglar to Ella's boudoir.

"After this," said Lena, "the man came himself. They met in the woods, and in the dusk of the evening. I knew the trying-place, and was hidden in a bush, dressed in the clothes I bought to mourn for uncle. So you see, sir, I was all black-like."

"And you heard what they said?"

"Oh, sir, I couldn't understand half. But he did nearly all the speaking. She was quiet-like most of the time, and he was a showing her of things, sir."

"What sort of things?"

"I couldn't well see, sir. Seemed to me they were little parcels and small bottles, and he pointed to them and just spoke like a parson or a lecture man. Oh, sir, d'ye think they mean to pizen poor master?"

"Not in any ordinary way, Lena. We will try to prevent mischief from being done. But wait one moment till I scan the letter."

Here is an extract from the mysterious note: I need but give one.

"When he comes home you will love him more than ever. You will also be more concerned about his health and welfare. He must specially guard against cold. You must insist upon him wearing under-clothing of wool. This is to be bought at — here follows the address of a London house—their garments come direct from South America. But you are not to trust to that, you are to do all I told you. I will send you all you need and all instructions from Paris."

After poor Lena left me I lit a cigar, and sat smoking till three o'clock.

Everything was plain enough to me now. My friend Jocelyn was to be sacrificed. He was to die a natural death. That chosen, doubtless after much thought and study, was wool-sorter's disease—in other words, the deadly and fatal disorder anthrax.

It is said to be communicable by the

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wearing of garments made from the wool of sheep from South America, and Jack would no doubt be well aware of the fact. But Ella was not to trust to this. She was to make sure.

How terrible! Next morning, after breakfast, I hurried back to the Jungle, and that very evening I was crossing the silvery streak that divides our land from France.

I felt certain now in my own mind that I could speedily lay the would-be murderer by the heels, and I prayed to God that night in my bedroom that I might not be too late to prevent the commission of the awful deed this man and Ella meditated.

CHAPTER XXXII.—CAPTURED AT LAST.

I know Paris well, having gone to school there in my early days. At that time I had thoughts of being an actor, and had often appeared on the boards subversively. And now my first visit, on arriving at the city was of an old acquaintance—a theatrical costumier.

After we had talked for nearly half an hour over the days of auld lang syne, I told him my errand.

"I want you," I said, "to disguise me so that my own mother wouldn't know me."

"I will make you anything," he answered, "from a 'balayeur des rues' to a priest of Rome."

"The priest will do. No, stop! I will be an English medical missionary, grey in beard and hair, benign in aspect, and sixty years of age."

It is a fact that when the costumier was done with me, and I looked in the glass, so reverend, old, and respectable did I appear, that I mechanically lifted my hat and bowed to myself.

My next visit was to Professor Keller's establishment for the study of bacteriology. I wanted to make certain that my man was there before taking steps to secure his arrest.

I was shown into the savant's somewhat gloomy and mysterious drawing-room. It resembled a museum as much as anything else, for on every available shelf or bracket stood strange looking instruments, tubes, retorts, and bottles containing specimens, some of which looked diabolical enough in all conscience.

Instead of pictures there hung upon the walls plates and drawings of bacilli of every imaginable shape, spiral, oval, tortuous, round, some smooth, some tangle-tangled, and others like long twisted locks of ladies' hair.

A strange and sickly odour pervaded the apartment, and on tables round the room many a curiously shaped glass instrument was simmering over jets of white or blueish flame.

All this my medical eye took in at a glance, but what attracted my attention most was the figure of a tall dark-haired man seated by the window, bending over a microscope.

He hardly noticed my entrance, so quietly had I come in. But when he looked up at last and saw my ancient clerical figure standing by the door—he bowed politely and pointed to a chair.

"Professor Keller will not be long, he said, adding, 'you will pardon me if I continue my studies?'"

"Pardon him! Yes." And my heart gave a great throb of joy, for he who sat there at the microscope was the notorious would-be murderer Jack.

Nor, thanks to my theatrical costumier, had he the slightest notion that his greatest enemy on earth was within a few yards of him.

Presently the Professor himself entered; a short, red-faced, white-haired man. He bowed stiffly, but politely, and glared at me from under his bushy eyebrows, like a toad from under a stone.

"You wonder," I began—

"Wonder!" he interrupted, "I wonder at nothing. I sum you up in a moment. You are an English clergyman of an enquiring turn of mind, who desire to be informed on the wonderful science of bacteriology? Yes, I know, and perhaps you have already received a smattering of medical knowledge."

"I am a medical missionary."

"I got this in edge-ways."

"Here," he cried, positively catching me by my black coat. "Bluet yonder is studying a hard subject. Let us go into my private room."

He pulled me off no less volens; but it was all volens with me.

His private room was darker than the drawing-room. I wasn't sorry for this, because the old man's grey eyes pierced like gimlets.

"Wonderful man, Bluet!" he said, as he sat down. "Made to sway empires!"

"Made to swing at the end of a rope," I said to myself.

"Indeed, sir?" I said, aloud.

"Yes, indeed."

"Well, sir, empires might well be better ruled than they are at present. I dare say," I added, "I can talk with freedom. Your walls have no ears?"

"Nothing spoken here ever gets farther, reverend sir."

"Well you belong to the closet," I continued. "I may be said to belong to the closet; and yet I have dared to study history, the history of nations, and to criticise the acts of Kings and Queens."

"And your opinions?"

"Selfish in the extreme. Rotten to the core. Kings and Queens are no longer the Lord's anointed. Sacre! I'd depose the tyrants one and all and welcome even anarchy to give the people a chance."

The old man grasped my hand.

"You are a friend to the noble cause," he cried. "Your heart is rightly placed."

"Pray don't misunderstand me, Professor. I am no Anarchist. To be so would not accord with my sacred calling. But you know, as we say in English verse:—

"God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform, He plants His footsteps on the sea And rides upon the storm."

That noble soldier Gordon, who was done to death at Khartoum, used to say that heaven permitted even massacres as a step towards advancement. And I would welcome universal anarchy as a change from a depraved and devil-ridden monarchy. But Anarchy itself would need reform."

I had wound up the Professor anyhow, and now he went walking up and the floor, and his tirade against monarchy was delivered so fast that I scarce could follow the fluency of his French.

Then he stopped all at once, and sat down.

Next minute, and for the next half hour, we were deep in the mysteries of bacteriology. He did not hesitate, either, to tell me candidly, that there was a great future before this science, and that it would be a weapon of warfare in the hands of those who knew how to make use of it far more powerful than any gun or cannon ever trained in fort or field. To speak the truth I was horrified—and it takes a good deal to horrify a medical man—at some of his proposals for the use of deadly microbes, wholesale, against armies in the field or in trenches, and against beleaguered towns.

Had I not pretended that I myself was deeply imbued with Anarchist principles, he never would have gone so far. But my acting was good, and I had taken the bushy-browed Professor quite by storm.

"You shall know Bluet," he said. "He will teach you much. His whole heart and soul are in the grand science, and at sterilisation, staining, incubation, and bacteriological analysis I have never seen his equal."

"I'm delighted," I said, "but he may not be long here."

"For a fortnight yet. He is now completing investigation of a remarkable character on the bacillus anterae. Wonderful! Wonderful! Wonderful! And the possibilities, sir, of this easily cultivated bacillus are hardly yet known to savants in general."

"I have heard," I said, "that the anterae bacillus can be spread and carried even by a common earth worm, and that even if frozen it will again recover and undergo further development."

"All that is old," cried the Professor. "Old, sir, old, old. Come to-morrow, and we will teach you the new. Ha, ha, ha. Good afternoon. Good afternoon."

"One moment, Professor Keller," I asked. "At what hour shall I be here."

"At six. Be punctual. Au revoir."

"Au revoir," I said also, and off I went, chuckling inwardly.

I soon found a close flacre, and in half a hour's time I was closeted with the Italian Consul.

I found him a calm, quiet, intelligent man. I did not take long to explain my errand. I told him I was in disguise and the reason thereof, namely, that I wished to run a notorious scoundrel to earth, who was mediating the murder of my dearest friend by means of inoculation with anthrax microbes. I told him where the man was studying, and all about my interview with Professor Keller. Then I informed him that Bluet, the name he was pleased to be known by, was an Indian, an Anarchist, and a runaway from his own country, having been intimately mixed up in a bomb outrage.

The Consul arose.

"Just a minute," he said, going to the telephone.

He was speedily in communication with some one.

"Tell Tagalini," I heard him say, "to come here at once, and bring his album. He will know what you mean."

(To be concluded.)

Calling a flacre.

"It seems to me," said the gobbler, "that while the world is discussing the heartless slaughter of the Armenians, they might give some attention to us Turks who are suffering a similar fate."—Philadelphia North American.

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