

### Banford's Burglar Alarm, and How It Worked.

If the red-headed outlaw who suggested in private that a tin pan hung carelessly to a bedroom door makes an excellent burglar-alarm will call at the residence of Mr Lucullus Banford he may hear of something to his disadvantage.

And probably get the top of his head shot off.

"Another Daring Burglary!" read Mrs. Banford, as she picked up the morning paper. "Lucullus," she said, turning to her husband, "this is the fourth outrage of the kind in this town within a week and if you don't procure a burglar-alarm or adopt some other means of security I shall not remain in this house another night. Some morning we'll get up and find ourselves murdered and the house robbed if we have to depend on the police for protection."

Banford assured his wife that he would have the matter attended to at once. Then he left the house and didn't return until evening. When Mrs. B., with a touch of sarcasm, asked him if he had given a second thought to the subject which she had broached in the morning he drew a newspaper from his pocket and said:

"See here, Mirandy, there's no use o' foolin' away money on one o' them new-fangled and expensive burglar-alarms. Economy is wealth. Here's a capital idea suggested in this paper—cheap, simple and effective."

And then he read the fiend's suggestion about hanging a tin pan on the chamber door.

"I tell you, Mirandy, the man who conceived the brilliant notion is a heaven-born genius—a boon to mankind: and his name should go ringing down the corridors of time with those of such brilliant intellects as Watts, Morse, Edison, and other successful scientific investigators. You see, the least jar of the door will dislodge the pan, and the noise occasioned thereby will not only awaken the occupants o' the room but will also scare the burglar half to death, and perhaps the pan will strike him on the head and fracture his skull. It is a glorious scheme, and the fact that it was not utilized years ago is the most remarkable thing about it."

"Well," assented Mrs. B., in less sanguine tones, "it may be better than nothing and won't cost anything; and as Susan has gone out to spend the night with her sick sister, and we'll be all alone, I'll hunt up the pans now."

Accordingly each inside door was crowned with a tin pan and left slightly ajar. Banford also thoughtfully placed a six-shooter under his pillow and stood a base-ball bat within easy reach.

"Now, Mirandy," he courageously observed, as they were preparing to retire, "if you are awakened



A TRUE "SNAKE" STORY.

by a noise during the night, don't scream like a Comanche Indian, and jump out of bed and act like a she-lunatic with straws in her hair. Just lie still, or some o' the bullets I fire at the burglar may go through you and kill you deader'n a kit o' salt mackerel. Let me wrestle with the intruder and I'll soon make him regret that he had not postponed being born a few centuries!"

Then they turned down the gas, crawled into bed with a feeling of increased security, and were soon asleep. About half-past midnight they were awakened by a noise that sounded like a sharp clap of thunder, followed by a wail that almost chilled the marrow in their bones.

"Good heavens," screamed Mrs. B., in a voice swollen with terror, as she dived her head under the bed clothes, "we'll be murdered in a minute. Shoot him. Lucullus! Quick—shoot him!"

Banford, after considerable nervous fumbling under the pillow, grasped his revolver with an un-

steady hand and discharged his six barrels in rapid succession, but not with very gratifying results. One bullet shattered the mirror in the bureau; another plowed a furrow along the ceiling; another splintered the bed-post; a fourth perforated a portrait of his wife's mother; and the other two left their imprint on the walls.

"D—d—don't be fuf—fuf—frightened, M—Mirandy," said Banford, encouragingly, his articulation sounding as if it had "collided" with an artie wave; "I gug—guess I've kik—kik—killed him. He'll not kik—kick—come here."

At this juncture there was a noise in an adjoining room, as if a two-ton meteorite had crashed through a boiler-foundry, and Mrs. B. uttered a series of ear-piercing shrieks that would have scared the life out of a burglar who had not become insensible to fear by living thirty years with a strong-minded wife.

"M—Mirandy," stammered the frightened and demoralized Banford, grasping the base-ball bat and swinging it around with such reckless promiscuousness that he struck his terror-stricken wife on the head, producing a lump as large as a walnut. "Mum—Mirandy, the house is fu—full of midnight mum—marauders, and we'll be bub—bub—butchered in cold bub—bub—blood! Save yourself and don't mum—mind about me!" And leaping out of bed he sprang through a window on to the roof of a back building, and accidentally rolled off into the yard, fifteen feet below, just as another burglar-alarm went off with a clamor almost as deafening and harrowing as an amateur orchestra. Mrs. B., thinking she had been hit by the burglar, emitted a fresh outburst of shrieks, while her husband lay groaning in the back yard, with a sprained ankle and a frightful gash in his head.

A policeman had now been awakened by the uproar, and boldly mounting the front stoop he pulled the door-bell out by the roots without evoking a response. Then he hesitated long enough to work up sufficient courage to enter, and dislodged one of the burglar-alarms after getting in.

"Spare my life!" he yelled to an imaginary assailant. "and I'll let you escape."

He thought he had been stabbed with a frying-pan. He rushed out of the house and secured the assistance of four of his fellow-officers and a search of the building was resumed. Mrs. Banford was found in bed unconscious. Her husband was found in the yard in nearly a similar condition; and the burglar was found under the sofa, shivering with fear and with his tail clasped tightly between his legs.

The cause of the panic was soon explained. Mrs. Banford had overlooked the presence of her pet dog in the house, and this innocent animal, in running from one room to another, had dislodged the "cheap and effective" burglar-alarm.

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