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SECRET SERVICE

BEING THE HAPPENINGS OF A NIGHT
IN RICHMOND IN THE SPRING OF 1865
THE PLAY BY

WILLIAM GILLETTE;
BY CYRUS TOWNSEND BRADY

ILLUSTRATIONS BY EDGAR BERT SMITH
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A further search, however, revealed nothing. Arrelsford had scarcely completed the reading of the brief note when the corporal reported:

"That is all he has, sir."

Arrelsford nodded. The men had released Jonas, but stood by his side, and the secret service agent now approached him.

"Who was this for?" he asked sharply and tensely.

The negro stared at him stolidly and silently, his face ashen with fright.

"Look here," continued the other, "if you don't tell me it is going to make it pretty bad for you."

The words apparently made no further impression upon the servant. Arrelsford tried another tack. He turned to Mrs. Varney, who was completely dismayed at this breach of trust by one who had been attached to the family fortunes for so many years.

"I am right sorry, ma'am," he said very distinctly, "but it looks like we have got to shoot him."

"Oh!" cried Mrs. Varney at that "Jonas, speak!"

But even to that appeal he remained silent. Arrelsford waited a moment, and then:

"Corporal," he said; "take him out side and get it out of him. Strain him up until he talks. But don't let him yell or give any alarm; gag him until he's ready to tell. You understand?"

The corporal nodded and turned to ward the hall door.

"Not that way," said Arrelsford; "take him to the back of the house and keep him quiet, whatever you do. Nobody must know about this, not a soul."

"Very good, sir," said the corporal, saluting. He gave an order to the men, and they marched Jonas off, swiftly and silently. Nothing that had been said or done had disturbed the women across the hall. Mrs. Varney glanced up at the unfolded piece of paper in Mr. Arrelsford's hand. He was smiling triumphantly.

"Was there anything in that?" she asked.

"Yes, there was. We know the trick they meant to play."

"But not the man who was to play it?"

"I didn't say that, ma'am."

"Does it give you a clue to it?"

"It does."

"Will it answer?"

"It will."

"Then you know—"

"As plain as if we had his name."

"Thank God for that," exclaimed the woman. "May I see it?"

Arrelsford hesitated.

"I see no reason why you should not."

He extended his hand toward her, and she glanced at the paper.

"Attack tonight. Plan 3. Use telegraph!" she read. She looked up.

"What does it mean?" she asked tremulously.

"They are to attack tonight, and the place where they are to strike is indicated by Plan 3."

"Plan 3?" questioned the woman.

"Yes; the man this is sent to will know what is meant by that. It has been arranged beforehand, and—"

"But the last words," said Mrs. Varney. "Use telegraph?"

"That is plain, too. He is to use our war department telegraph and send some false order to weaken that position, the one they indicate by 'Plan 3,' so that when they assault it, they will find it feebly defended or not at all, and break through and come down on the city and swamp us."

"But," exclaimed Mrs. Varney in deepest indignation and excitement, "the man who was to do this? Who is he? There is nothing about him that I can see."

"But I can see something."

"What? Where?"

"In the words, 'Use telegraph.' We know every man on the telegraph service, and every one of them is true. There is some one who will try to get into that service if the game is carried out, and—"

"Then he will be the man," said Mrs. Varney.

"Yes; there aren't so many men in Richmond that can do that. It isn't every man that's expert enough—Mrs. Varney, Jonas brought this paper to your house, and—"

"To my house?" exclaimed the woman in great astonishment, and then she stopped, appalled by a sudden thought which came to her.

"At the same time," said Arrelsford, "your daughter has been trying to get an appointment for some one on the telegraph service. Perhaps she could give us some idea, and—"

Mrs. Varney rose and stood as if rooted to the spot.

"You mean—"

"Captain Thorne," said Arrelsford impressively.

CHAPTER VI.

The Confidence of Edith, Varney. Mrs. Varney had, of course, divined

toward whom Arrelsford's suspicion pointed. She had been entirely certain before he had mentioned the name that the alleged spy or traitor could be none other than her daughter's friend; indeed, it would not be stretching the truth to say that Thorne was her friend as well as her daughter's, and her keen mother's wit was not without suspicion that if he were left to himself, or if he were permitted to follow his own inclinations, the relation between himself and the two women might have been a nearer one still and a dearer one, yet, nevertheless, the shocking announcement came to her with sudden, sharp surprise.

We may be perfectly certain, absolutely sure, of a coming event, but when it does occur its shock is felt in spite of previous assurance. We may watch the dying and pray for death to end anguish, and know that it is coming, but when the last low breath has gone, it is as much of a shock to us as if it had not been expected, or even dreamed of.

The announcement of the name was shattering to her composure. She knew very well why Arrelsford would rejoice to find Thorne guilty of any thing, and she would have discounted



"Attack Tonight. Plan 3. Use Telegraph," She Read.

any ordinary accusation that I brought against him, but the train of the circumstances was so complete in this case and the coincidences so unexplainable upon any other theory, the evidence so convincing, that she was forced to admit that Arrelsford was fully justified in his suspicion, and that without regard to the fact that he was a rejected suitor of her daughter's.

Surprise, horror and conviction lodged in her soul, and were mirrored in her face. Arrelsford saw and divined what was passing in her mind and, eager to strike while the iron was hot, bent forward open-mouthed to continue his line of reasoning and denunciation, but Mrs. Varney checked him. She laid her finger upon her lip and pointed with the other hand to the front of the house.

"What!" exclaimed the Confederate secret service agent; "is he there?"

Mrs. Varney nodded.

"He may be. He went out to the summer-house some time ago to wait for Edith; they were going over to Caroline Mitford's later on. I saw him go down the walk."

"Do you suppose my men could have alarmed him?" asked Arrelsford greatly perturbed at this unexpected development.

"I don't know. They were all at the back windows. They didn't seem to make much noise, I suppose not. You have a description of the man to whom the letter was intended?"

"Yes, at the office; but I remember it perfectly."

"Does it fit this—the Captain Thorne?"

"You might as well know sooner or later, Mrs. Varney, that there is a Captain Thorne. This is an assumed name, and the man you have in your house is Lewis Dumont."

"Do you mean he came here to—"

"He came to this town, to this house," said Arrelsford vindictively; his voice still subdued but full of fury. "Knowing your position, the influence of your name, your husband's rank and service, for the sole purpose of getting recognized as a reputable person, so that he would be less likely to be suspected. He has corrupted your servants—you saw old Jonas—and he has contrived to enlist the powerful support of your daughter. His aim is the war department telegraph office. He is friendly with the men at that office. What else he hasn't done or what he has, the Lord only knows. But Washington is not the only place where they have a secret service; we have one at Richmond. Whatever game he plays, it is one that two can play, and now it is my play."

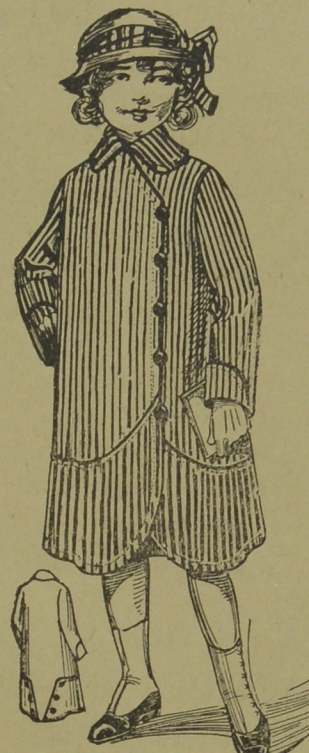
(To Be Continued.)

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Then Mrs. Jones, one afternoon, dropped in, at time most opportune. An optimist, she knew the wiles of household work—its sighs and smiles. She told of how she polished floors and woodwork and the endless doors, until when Hubby saw them, too, reflections said: "Why, howdy-do!"

"The Gold Dust Twins," said she, "I find, help leave the woes of dust behind. Each mark of sticky hands on doors, each tread of muddy feet on floors, all fade before the slightest touch of Gold Dust, and the work is such that, when the woodwork has been done, I find said work was only fun." This line of reasoning must show that those who've tried it OUGHT to know. If you, in one day's duties, find that there's a Grouch in every Grind, invite the Gold Dust Twins to share such tasks as tire and fret and wear.

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