

A MYSTERY OF THE NEVA.

A STORY OF RUSSIAN INTRIGUE.

(Continued.)

"And her companion?"

"Middle-aged, prematurely grey, with a small dark moustache," Jack Durnford sighed and stroked his chin.

"Ah! Just as I thought," he exclaimed. "And they were actually here a week ago, in this port? What a bitter irony of fate!"

"I don't understand you," I said, remarking within myself the curious change that had suddenly come over him. "You are so mysterious, and yet you will tell me nothing!"

"The police, fools that they are, have allowed them to escape—and they will never be caught now. Ah! you don't know them as I do. They are the cleverest pair in all Europe. And they have the audacity to call their craft the *Lola*—the *Lola* of all names."

And, leaning upon the brass rail with his strong hands clenched, he gazed thoughtfully away upon the distant horizon.

"But as you know who and what the fellows are, you ought, I think in common justice to Hitchenson, to tell us something," I complained. "If they are adventurers, they ought to be traced."

"What can I do—a prisoner here on board?" he argued, bitterly. "How can I act?"

"Leave it all to me, I'm free to travel after them and find out the truth, if only you will tell me what you know concerning them," I said eagerly.

For some moments he was silent, until I again urged him to speak, when he answered, in a low and very solemn voice:

"Gordon, let me be frank and open with you, my dear old fellow. I would tell you everything—everything—I did. But I cannot—you understand!" And his final words seemed to choke him.

I stood before him, open-mouthed, in blank astonishment.

"You really mean—well, that you are in fear of them, eh?" I whispered.

My friend, whose countenance was blanched and whose hand trembled as he grasped the rail to steady himself, nodded slowly in the affirmative, adding: "To tell you the truth would be to bring upon myself a swift, relentless vengeance that would overwhelm and crush me. Ah! my dear fellow, you do not know—you cannot dream—what brought those desperate men into this port. I can guess—I can guess only too well, but I can only tell you that if you ever do discover the terrible truth—which I fear is unlikely—you will solve one of the strangest and most remarkable mysteries of modern times."

"What does the mystery concern?" I asked, in breathless eagerness.

"It concerns a woman."

CHAPTER V.

The House "Over the Water."

The Mediterranean Squadron, that magnificent display of naval force that is the guarantee of peace in Europe, after a week of gay festivities in Leghorn, had sailed for Gaeta while I, glad to escape from the glaring heat, found myself back once more in dear old London.

One passes one's time in the south well enough in winter, but after a year even the most ardent lover of Italy longs to return to his own people, be it for ever so brief a space. Exile for a whole year in any Continental town is exile indeed; and although I lived in Italy for choice, I, like so many other Englishmen, always managed to spend a month or two in summer in our temperate, if much maligned, climate.

London, the same dear dusty old London, perhaps more dear and more dusty than ever, was my native city, hence I always spent a few weeks in it, even though all the world might be absent in the country or at the seaside.

I had idled away a pleasant month in Buxton and from there had gone north to the Lakes, and it was one hot evening in mid-August that I found myself again in London, crossing St. James' Square from the Sports' Club, where I had dined, walking towards Pall Mall. Darkness had just fallen, and there was that stifling oppression in the air that foretold a thunderstorm. The club was not gay with life and merriment as it is in the season, for everyone was away, many of the rooms were closed for re-decoration, and most of the furniture was swathed in linen.

I was on my way to pay a visit to a lady who lived up at Hampstead, a friend of my late mother's, and I had just turned into Pall Mall when a voice at my elbow suddenly exclaimed in Italian:

"Ah! signore. Why, actually my padrone."

And looking round, I saw a thin-faced man of about thirty, dressed in neat, but rather shabby black, whom I instantly recognized as a man who had been my servant in Leghorn for two years, after which he had left to better himself.

"Why, Olinio!" I exclaimed, surprised, in broken English, smiling. "But it is so pleasant for me to see my generous padrone again. What fortune it is that I should pass here at this moment!"

"Most excellently, signore," he answered, in broken English, smiling. "But it is so pleasant for me to see my generous padrone again. What fortune it is that I should pass here at this moment!"

"Where are you working?" I inquired.

"At the restaurant Milano, in Oxford street—only a small place, but we gain discreetly, so I must not complain. I live over in Lambeth, and am on my way home."

"I heard you were married after you left me. Is that true?"

"Yes, signore. I married Armida, who was in your service when I first entered it. You remember her? Ah! Yet consumption does not keep people in bed until its final stages."

thing. I regret to say she is very ill indeed. She cannot stand our English climate. The doctor says she will die if she remains here. Yet what can I do? If we go back to Italy we shall only starve." And I saw that he was in deep distress, and that mention of his ailing wife had raised within him bitter thoughts.

Olinio Santini walked at my side in the direction of Trafalgar Square answering the questions I put to him. He had been a good, hard-working servant, and I was glad to see him again. When he left me he had gone as steward on one of the Anchor Line boats between Naples and New York, and that was the last I had heard of him until I found him there in London, a waiter at a second-rate restaurant.

When I tried to slip some silver into his hand he refused to take it, and with a merry laugh, said:

"I wonder if you would be offended, signore, if I told you of something for which I had been longing and longing?"

"Not at all."

"Well, the signore smokes our Tuscan cigars. I wonder if by chance you have one? We cannot get them in London, you know."

I felt in my pocket laughing, and discovered that I had a couple of those long, thin, penny cigars which are so dear to the Tuscan palate. These I handed him, and he took them with delight as the greatest delicacy I could have offered him. Poor fellow! As an exiled Italian he clung to every little trifle that reminded him of his beloved country.

When we halted before the National Gallery prior to parting, I made some further inquiries regarding Armida, the black-eyed, good-looking housemaid whom he had married.

"Ah, signore," he responded, in a voice choked with emotion, dropping into Italian. "It is the one great sorrow of my life. I work hard from early morning until late at night, but what is the use when I see my dear wife gradually fading away before my very eyes? The doctor says that she cannot possibly live through the winter. Ah! how delighted the poor girl would be if she could see the padrone once again!"

I felt sorry for him. Armida had been a good servant and had served me well for nearly three years. Old Rosina, my housekeeper, had often regretted that she had been compelled to leave to attend her aged mother. The latter, Olinio told me, had died and afterwards he had married Armida. There is more romance and tragedy in the lives of the poor Italians in London than London ever suspects. We are apt to regard the Italian as a blood-thirsty person given to the unlawful use of the knife, whereas, as a whole, the Italian colony in London is a hardworking, thrifty and law-abiding one, very different indeed, to those colonies of aliens from Northern Europe who are so continually bringing filth, disease and immorality into the East-end, and are a useless incubus in an already over-populated city.

He spoke so wistfully that his wife might see me once more that, having nothing very particular to do that evening and feeling a deep sympathy for the poor fellow in his trouble, I resolved to accompany him to his house and see whether I could not, in some slight manner, tender him a little help.

He thanked me profusely when I consented to go with him.

"Ah! signore padrone," he said gratefully, "she will be so delighted. It is so very good of you."

We hailed a hansom and drove across Westminster Bridge to the address he gave—a gloomy back street off the York Road, one of those narrow, grimy thoroughfares into which the sun never shines. Ah! how often do the poor Italians, those children of the sun, pine and die when shut up in our dismal, sordid streets. Dirt and squalor do not effect them; it is the damp and cold and lack of sunshine that so very soon proves fatal.

A low-looking, evil-faced fellow opened the door to us and growled acquaintance with Olinio, who, striking a match, ascended the worn, carpetless stairs before me, apologizing for passing in front, and saying in Italian:

"We live at the top, signore, because it is cheaper and the air is better."

"Quite right," I said. "Quite right. Go on." And I thought I heard my cab driving away.

It was a gloomy, forbidding, unlighted place, into which I would have hesitated to enter had not my companion been my trusted servant. I instinctively disliked the look of the fellow who had opened the door. He was one of those hulking loafers of the peculiarly Lambeth type. Yet the alien poor, I recollected, cannot choose where they shall reside.

Contrary to my expectations, the sitting room we entered on the top floor was quite comfortably furnished, clean and respectable, even though traces of poverty were apparent. A cheap lamp was burning upon the table, but the apartment was unoccupied.

Olinio, in surprise, passed into the adjoining room, returning a moment later and exclaiming:

"Armida must have gone out to get something. Or perhaps she is with the people, a compositor and his wife, who live on the floor below. They are very good to her. I'll go and find her. Accommodate yourself with a chair, signore." And he drew the best chair forward for me and dusted it with his handkerchief.

I allowed him to go and fetch her, rather surprised that she should be well enough to get about after all he had told me concerning her illness.

Yet consumption does not keep people in bed until its final stages, he added, sighing, "poor thing."

As I stood there gazing round the room, I could not well distinguish its furthest corners, for the lamp bore a shade of green pasteboard, which threw a zone of light upon the table and left the remainder of the room in darkness. When, however, my eyes grew accustomed to the dim light, I discerned that the place was dusty and somewhat disordered. The sofa was, I saw, a folding iron bedstead with greasy old cushions, while the carpet was threadbare and full of holes. When I drew the old red curtains to look out of the window, I found that the shutters were closed, which I thought unusual for a room so high up as that was.

(To be Continued.)

SPRINGFIELD STRIKE OVER.

Men Returned to Work Today After Eight Days Locking.

Springfield Mines, N. S., June 22.—The strike is over. The men started work today.

Yesterday afternoon the management sent for the committee of Pioneer Lodge, and told them that a position awaited Hyatt either at the pumping station or at the stables.

The committee called a special meeting and presented their report. Hyatt chose the position at the stables, and the lodge declared the strike off. When the strike started the sidings were full of coal, and there were no rushing orders. Today the last train load was pulled out. The Springfield tug and barges are at Parashoro, awaiting cargoes, and everything points to the next month being a busy one. The strike has made eight days lost time, but probably more than that would have been lost in idle days before August, so in the long run, business interests will not suffer. The whole town is delighted, and the men especially so.

It is better to be a little too courteous than to be a trifle too rude.

Every man's success is within himself and must come out of himself.

Two Bad Moments.

There is only one thing that is said to be worse than being called upon unexpectedly to make an after dinner speech. That is to prepare an after dinner speech and not be asked to deliver it.

Coaling the Sun.

Coaling the sun is an expression used by physicists to indicate the necessity of renewing the stock of motive power, exactly analogous to coaling a vessel for an ocean journey. Many maintain that this is done by the incessant showers of meteorites which rain in upon it from celestial space. Thus it is that the sun's energy is continually kept up and its fires are fed. Atom after atom in the continuous collisions of matter is changed into vapor and adds its quota of energy to the great central storehouse—in fact, "coals the sun."

Climbing Parnassus.

In mythology Parnassus, a mountain in central Greece, was sacred to the muses. The Delphian sanctuary of Apollo was on its slope and from between its twin summit peaks flowed the fountain Castalia, the waters of which were reputed to impart the virtue of poetic inspiration. The highest peak, 8,068 feet, was held sacred to Bacchus and the rest to Apollo and the muses—whence the saying of young poets "climbing Parnassus."

Subtle Scheme.

"Do you like Wagner's music?" asked the caller.

"No," said the young woman at the piano. "I hate it."

"Why do you play it, then?"

"Because this instrument is dreadful out of tune, and if I played any other kind of music you'd notice it."

Easily Remedied.

A shoemaker was fitting a customer with a pair of boots when the buyer observed that he had but one objection to them, which was that the soles were too thick. "If that is all," replied Crispin, "put on the boots, and the objection will gradually wear away."

Watches Given Away



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Beginning with SATURDAY, April 1st, LUCY & CO. will give away with every cash purchase of a Man's or Boy's Suit of Clothes, a good Stem Wind Watch, guaranteed for one year.

Don't fail to examine their stock of Men's and Boys' Clothing, Boots and Shoes, Trunks, Grips, etc., etc., etc.

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ARRANGEMENT OF TRAINS

In Effect, June 4th, 1905

Atlantic Time. Trains daily except Sunday unless otherwise stated.

LEAVE FREDERICTON

6.25 a. m.—Express from St. John, St. Stephen, St. Andrews, Houlton, Woodstock, and points north; Edmundston, Riviere du Loup and Quebec, Bangor, Portland, Boston, etc. Pullman Parlor Car, Fredericton Jet, to Boston.

7.20 a. m.—Mixed, via Gibson Branch, for Woodstock, Presque Isle, Edmundston, Riviere du Loup and Quebec. Leaves St. Mary's 8.15 a. m.

9.20 a. m.—Express for Fredericton Junction, connecting with Atlantic Express for St. John and points East. Atlantic Express will run, also between Fredericton Junction and Fairville.

5.30 p. m.—Mixed for Fredericton Jet, connecting with Short Line Express for Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto and with Imperial Limited and Pacific Express from Montreal for the West, Northwest and Pacific Coast. Also connects for Vancouver, Bangor, Portland, Boston, etc. (St. Andrews after July 1st, Houlton and Woodstock.)

Palace Sleeper, Fredericton Jet, to Montreal. Pullman Sleeper Fredericton Jet, to Boston. C. P. R. Dining Car F'ton Jet, to Matamoras.

9.00 p. m.—For St. John and East.

ARRIVE AT FREDERICTON

9.00 a. m.—From St. John and points east.

11.30 a. m.—From Boston, Montreal, St. Stephen, (St. Andrews after July 1st), Woodstock and Houlton.

8.35 p. m.—From St. John and east.

9.05 p. m.—From Woodstock and all points north via Gibson Branch. Arrives at St. Mary's 8.37 p. m.

10.40 p. m.—From Boston, Portland, Bangor, St. Stephen, St. Andrews, Woodstock and Houlton.

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INTERCOLONIAL RAILWAY

On and after Sunday, June 4th, 1905 trains will run daily (Sundays excepted), as follows:

TRAINS WILL LEAVE FREDERICTON

No. 303 Mixed for Chatham, Loggieville, Campbellton, St. John and Halifax 5.00

No. 304 Mixed for Chatham Junction, Chatham and Loggieville 16.28

No. 317 Suburban for Marysville 6.15

" 319 Suburban for Marysville 10.00

" 321 Suburban for Marysville 11.15

" 323 Suburban for Marysville 15.00

" 325 Suburban for Marysville 17.10

" 327 Suburban for Marysville 18.25

" 329 Suburban for Marysville 21.00

TRAINS WILL ARRIVE AT FREDERICTON.

No. 302 Express from Montreal, Quebec, Chatham and Loggieville 12.05

No. 304 Mixed from Chatham Junction, Chatham and Loggieville 16.28

No. 318 Suburban from Marysville 11.00

" 320 Suburban from Marysville 12.25

" 322 Suburban from Marysville 13.40

" 324 Suburban from Marysville 15.50

" 326 Suburban from Marysville 18.00

" 328 Sub