

THE LETTER THAT CAME

(Original.)

Poor little soul," said the surgeon, "she left it too late, you know, and we could not do anything. She'll hardly last through the night. Think. Her face seems very familiar to me."

AS SHE NEARED THE GLASS DOORS ON HER RETURN, SHE TOOK THE LETTER OUT OF HER APRON POCKET THAT THE BIG BLUE EYES, STRAINING THROUGH THEIR GATHERING WEAKNESS, MIGHT SEE THE WELCOME OBLONG.

"Sister, is that it? Let me feel it, Thank God!" The tender-hearted plotter put the letter in the cold feeble hands. "It's so dark in your corner. I'll fetch my little lamp and read it to you."

THE SCIENCE OF SCARPOLOGY.

Call's phrenological system, which had so prodigious a success sixty years ago, is well known. It was based on the hypothesis, not confirmed by experience, that the brain, constituted by parts or organs, each serving a certain affection or instinct or particular faculty, appeared to be in supposed relations with the development of each of the corresponding qualities.

A Paris for Millionaires.

If certain predictions are to come true and it looks really as if facts prove that they would a time will surely come when none but millionaires will be able to live in Paris. For some years past the price of so many things have gone up that when compared with what they were formerly, or what one imagines they should be, they have attained fabulous heights.

Measuring 10 feet and 6 inches, an octopus, while being killed at Toronto, Victoria, entwined a tenacle so firmly around the foot of one of its captors that the membrane had to be cut to free the man.

A TRAGIC HONEYMOON

(Original.)

The tragic element in the thing lay in its happening on the eve of my wedding-day.

I had called at the house of my fiancée late in the afternoon impelled by that sense of insecurity that haunts a man in the face of a great impending happiness. An unconfessed desire to make sure of my Nina took me to see her for the last time before she would be actually mine.

Though painfully personal, it is essential to explain that for years my life had lain under a blight. I had been wretchedly handicapped by nothing more or less than physical bulk. But no need for me to advertise my humiliating proportions.

Ushered into the drawing-room of the Larches, I became aware of something strangely unfamiliar about the apartment. Workmen and decorators had apparently been performing feats in anticipation of the morning, and tropical plants waved luxuriant branches, looking astonishingly at home, considering their brief term of occupation.

While I waited, I suddenly realized that I was tired. The day preceding a man's marriage is not one which, as a rule, he feels called upon to kill time. Therefore I crossed to a chair. It was an unfamiliar basket chair, but I did not notice this; also, that it was lower than I had realized—till I had taken it.

The back and seat were padded with dark velvet cushions, but, in spite of these, it creaked quite alarmingly as I lowered myself into it. To be strictly accurate, it squeaked, emitting a long-drawn crescendo sound, while the cushion beneath me gave forth audible protest, groaning after the manner of a deflated balloon.

When this had continued for fully half a minute, I rose with a vague, unexplained uneasiness. The cushion still faintly heaved. Had it been an animate thing, I should have said it palpitated. I put my hand out and touched it, and it was warm. I lifted it. It fell together in a formless mass. I was nonplussed. I had never in my life seen a well-conducted cushion behave so. I am extremely short-sighted. I screwed my eyes glass firmly into my eye, and stared at the object I held in my hand.

My sister-in-law's next letter breathed a positively vindictive yearning for revenge. "I am absolutely determined," she wrote blood-thirstily, "to run the heartless wretch to earth. I have set all sort of machinery in motion. I shivered. Eugene Aram was in it with me. That wretched animal, dead and buried even—Ethel had given it decent burial—was still to allow me no peace. Through all our honeymoon ran the refrain of "Fan—Fan!" like a wall in the minor key. It dogged our steps—the pun is unintentional, I being in a far from punning mood—it obscured Swiss mountains; it blurred Italian skies; it was waiting for us on our door-step—no, before that—on the railway platform!

"I've got a clue at last," Ethel burst out, receiving us at Charing Cross—"a clue to Fan's death! Sykes—you know Jim Sykes—the village idiot, declares he was an eyewitness of the whole affair."

"But—but Sykes, even by your own showing, is an idiot," I broke in, stammering, the beads of perspiration gathering on my brow notwithstanding that the evening was chilly. Ethel turned to me.

"But idiots are often astonishingly shrewd," she persisted. "He declares he saw a big man—a very big man—with emphasis—"come down to the river's edge, and deliberately take Fan out of his pocket, tie a string round her neck, attach a heavy stone and drop her into the river."

"A big man?" Nina echoed, in a voice of chagrin. "Oh, Ethel, that isn't much of a description! That won't convict no one."

"Jim is almost sure he could spot the wretch," she pursued. "Was I, then, to go in terror of the village 'natural' for the rest of my life? Nina shuddered, momentarily covering her eyes with her hand.

"I'm not done yet," went on Ethel, and there was a malicious ring of triumph in her tone. "I made Sykes take me to the spot, and I spent an hour there, raking round, up and down, through the grass and gravel—I always said I had the making of a detective—and I found this!"

She put something into Nina's hand. My wife looked puzzled. Her eyes involuntarily sought mine.

"Why, Gerald," she said slowly, "I don't understand. What does it all mean? It's the pen-knife I gave you on your last birthday!"

LOOKS LIKE THE DUKKEST THING IMAGINABLE, IN A BIG WHITE UTIN BOW WE'VE GOT FOR HER FOR TOMORROW.

"I—I daraway," I rejoined feebly. Dusk was falling—kindly, mercifully, as I walked away from Nina's door. Tomorrow at this time—But no, that train of thought got itself somehow swept out of sight. There was still to-day to be lived through.

I walked briskly till I reached the fringe of the village, where the houses dwindled and scattered. Then the river came in sight, with its shelving gravelly sides. I chose a secluded spot, sheltered by a clump of trees. Surreptitiously I extracted the canine corpse from my pocket, selected a trusty stone, knotted a piece of string about it, attached it to Fan's lifeless body, and dropped it into a deep, dark pool.

The silent watery circles spread and spread above it with a weird noiselessness that made me feel a criminal indeed.

But the deed once done, I walked away, breathing more freely. Let me put the incident out of my mind. Was not the morrow my wedding day, with a hundred and one pressing demands?

"If only Fan had not been lost!" sighed my new-made wife, nestling up to me in the railway carriage. "And on my wedding-day, too!"

"And on my wedding-day, too!" I said quite a gloom over things. But surely—surely, Ger, shall turn up."

"She always was a 'cute little beggar,'" I prevaricated. Next day a strange, foreign-looking telegram was handed to me at our first halting-place.

"Oh, Gerald, about Fan!" exclaimed my wife, clasping both hands round my arm, and raising eager, beseeching eyes to mine. "Oh, do—do say it's to say that Fan's found!"

I disentangled myself gently. "I am afraid," I said apologetically, opening the telegram, "it's all about the key of my portmanteau."

"I sometimes think one of those horrid, horrid workmen stole my poor Fan," she muttered pitiously. "You know the fourth was the last day she was seen."

"I hardly think so, darling," I said. "She wasn't quite the sort of pet a workman would fancy, and you know her breed wasn't sufficiently pure to make her really valuable."

"Then something has happened to her," she said with mournful conviction. "She may turn up yet, I suggested."

"Ethel has promised me she'll leave no stone unturned to find her," she said another day in disconsolate accents.

But, judging "from my sister-in-law's next letter, her promised intervention had been superfluous. The stone had turned itself.

"Poor dear Fan!" the letter ran. "The mystery is solved at last. The body was found a couple of miles down stream with a bit of string still round its neck, once weighted by a cruel stone."

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LOVE AND ADVERTISING

By Charles H. Day.

A girl with physical charms and mental endowments is certain to have more than one admirer and in the course of human events a single person is elected to perpetual favor, barring the chances of fate, a divorce and remarriage, then another chap takes second or third place "and so on to the end of the chapter."

While A Girl is a Miss, the race for her favor and hand is a grand free for all with Cupid at the wire as the contestants come down the home stretch. During the run it may be everybody's race, although some fall out before the call of "Go!" wearied with ineffectual scoring. Some who, at the start, had apparent prospects of winning, only reach the distance pole to find themselves flagged out.

A Girl in Urban had for her two most ardent admirers, The Editor and The Storekeeper. They were first and second choice, with a local difference of opinion as to which swain was the real it. The many other eligibles were not considered and A Girl apparently was in doubt.

As was Cupid, who was a good deal puzzled with all his experience in matters of the heart. The wise men and the wiser women of Urban were equally divided as to the outcome and awaited the final result with intense interest. A Girl was possessed of literary ability and that it was argued, was in favor of The Editor, who published her poems and essays on the front page of the Banner, but that was no guarantee that he might not find himself "Respectfully declined with thanks" and consigned to the waste basket of blasted hopes as "not up to the standard."

The young ladies of Urban were free to prophesy that A Girl or any girl—should not hesitate to select The Storekeeper who kept almost everything a woman's heart could desire on his capacious shelves and could afford to keep a wife in style—at cost prices. Thus does finance figure in affairs tending toward the altar. At the same time, the fair one conceded that A Girl would find in the Editor a life companion quite as well to do and of similar tastes.

Elderly persons of both sexes who estimate matrimonial alliances on a mercenary basis agreed that from a money point of view The Storekeeper, with his larger earthly possessions, "had the inside track."

Young men of sporting proclivities who kept tabs on all the events of the season and at time risked a deposit on their opinions, said that it was "even money" as to the result, and if they were going to invest, they would "flip a cent before putting up a dollar."

"With honors even," both the contestants were confident, unlike Cupid and A Girl was granting "a fair field and no favor."

A former coquette, passe and retired, judging from her own sad experience, sighed and observed to herself: "What a pity if A Girl throws away both great chances, by not extending extra encouragement to one or the other and landing him and deciding her fate while the opportunity of youth and beauty presents itself."

The antique relic of conquests that failed of final victory at the altar, could have given expert advice to A Girl who, not being a coquette was unawares letting the future take care of itself.

The Storekeeper was the best patron of The Editor; the most enterprising merchant in Urban and although he was the most prosperous and his position a living evidence of success, his competitors were not awake to the profits pertaining to newspaper publicity. The Editor had time and again sounded several of the larger firms on the advisability of using generous space in the columns of the Banner, but they were not to be converted. In fact, they looked upon what advertising they did do as a sort of charitable contribution to the maintenance of a local newspaper. In a patronizing way they said one and all to the same effect:

"Of course we are glad to have a newspaper in Urban and are willing to encourage you. We run our cards in the Banner just to help you out." Fudge, the senior trader in town went further in saying quite offensively: "It is just giving you the money, advertising is no good. I got rich before you came here, without it."

The Editor retorted: "I am not passing the hat. What you did is one thing and what you are doing is another. You got rich before I came, but you have not made much money since. The Storekeeper is getting the best of the business and you are getting beautifully left."

"The same as you are," snapped Fudge, not hesitating to touch The Editor on a sore spot, the tenderest portion of his anatomy, the heart. "It's dollars to doughnuts The Storekeeper wins A Girl."

The Editor's retort "was more naughty than nice as he passed out in a huff. The remark of Fudge aroused a spirit of jealousy in the mind of The Editor which was increased as he was passed on the way to his office by his rival. The Storekeeper and A Girl chatting and laughing in a happy mood; they saluted him graciously, but in return he yanked his head in a surly manner and looked at his rival and remarked "As if he had been eating nails."

Arriving at the office of the Banner he found the copy for The Storekeeper's weekly change of advertisement; there was nothing strange in that. It was on time as usual, but for the first time it was in the handwriting of A Girl instead of the familiar dirigraph of the merchant. He dropped the copy on the floor and almost fell into the editorial chair so overpowered was the shock. Recovering from his overwhelming surprise, he regained the copy and sat with it clutched in his hand, dazed and irresolute, tempted as he pondered and gathered his scattered faculties by the impelling of the Green-eyed Monster that in the struggle conquered his better judgment and possessed him body and soul. To the demon that directs to destroy, he made a complete and abject surrender. Just as he had capitulated the foreman entered and asked for The Storekeeper's copy. At a glance he recognized the handwriting and he laughed as if greatly amused and volunteered a comment: "I thought so."

It was fortunate that the superintendent of the mechanical department passed out quickly and shut the door behind him. Fortunate for The Editor who jumped to his feet in a terrible rage and executed a waltz with awful verbal accompaniments worthy of a lunatic Sioux savage. The verbal and terpsichorean pyrotechnics made such a rumpus that the satanic imp of the establishment remarked to the tramp comp at the case: "Gee! I wonder what's broke loose in the intercollegiate bureau. The boss is either throwing a fit or kicking a man who's cum in to thrash the feller that writ that—" "Better peek in," suggested the tramp comp. "Not on your life," objected his satanic majesty. "I did that once on the boss knocked us both through the partition. If youse any ways anxious, youse can investigate."

During the fandango in the editorial room and the conversation detailed, the foreman was chuckling over the copy of The Storekeeper, shaking his head and grinning with an extension of the mouth that threatened to push back his ears.

After his unseemly display of temper, The Editor plumed himself back in the chair editorial, as soon as he recovered his breath, his first impulse was to do something desperate. The Green-eyed Monster suggested that he rush to the bar of the hotel and fill up. The proportions of the Evil One was declined as beneath the editorial dignity and against the stomach of the bad advisor, there was no murder in his heart, although he felt very much like exploding from a high pressure of mental excitement. As reason began to attain sway, he rebuked himself for unseemly thought and action with the self advice: "Don't make a fool of yourself."

The Editor set out to follow his own advice by attempting to calm down and assume his normal condition. Just as he was approaching the state of safe and sane, the door opened and in walked A Girl all smiles and as serene as youth, beauty and contented complacency could make her. How fortunate that she did not arrive a few moments earlier and witness the crazy exhibition of a mad lover wrought to desperation by jealousy. The young lady remarked as she seated herself without waiting to be invited: "I have brought in my latest, 'The Man of the Hour.' I hope you will like it."

"And who is the man of the hour?" asked The Editor almost savagely, quite forgetting himself. "That depends," returned A Girl sweetly with mischief in her dancing eyes. "Is it me, or The Storekeeper?" asked The Editor, surprised at his audacity.

A Girl was the most composed of the pair, but she blushed furiously as she returned: "I have never had the opportunity of declining either."

"Would you refuse me," pursued The Editor. "You have never asked," responded A Girl with her eyes directed to the floor. "Will you?" he asked. "I will," she answered before he could complete the inquiry.

An instant later the printer's devil opened the door on the sly and noisily peeked into the sanctum. What he saw he at once reported to the employees of the mechanical department.

"Get out an extra, the boss is hugging and kissing the star contributor." The foreman was so upset by the authentic news that he so far forgot himself as to emit an ejaculation that would not look pretty in print.

When the engagement was announced the first person to congratulate The Editor was The Storekeeper: "I thought I would bring you to it. Such are the sweet uses of advertising."

Glass bathtubs are coming into general use in Germany.

The Emperor of Japan has 30 physicians and 60 priests.