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Ned Bromley's Assurance

He Got Into His Own Trap, but Got Out of It

By ESTHER VANDEVEER.

Ned Bromley was sitting in a trolley car beguiling a long ride by looking up at the signs opposite. Ned was a good natured, devil-may-care sort of fellow, always ready to crack a joke or put himself out to do any one a favor. Lowering his eyes, he saw an elderly gentleman sitting opposite him looking at him, Ned thought, rather disapprovingly. As Ned read his thoughts they were something like this:

"The young man opposite, judging by the fashionable cut of his clothes, is passing that age when his tailor is his most intimate friend. He looks as if he would swear at the least provocation and probably gambles."

Of course, Ned made this up, but the fact remains that disapprobation was plainly marked on the gentleman's countenance. Ned, who was full of Old Nick, was minded to shock the man. Leaning forward, he said confidentially:

"I know a place where there's a small game going on. I wouldn't mind taking you around if you like."

The man gave him a withering look, turned, showing as much of his back as possible and made no reply. Ned took the rebuff good naturedly and was thinking how to follow up his shocking process without running the risk of being turned over to the police when the gentleman pushed the button, the car stopped, and he got out. When Ned next turned his glance to where the gentleman had been sitting he saw a fat wallet lying on the seat.

"That comes of no button on the hip picket," said Ned, who had once lost a pocketbook from that cause; and, taking up the wallet, he left the car and ran after the owner. Unfortunately, the man was not to be seen. The next thing to be done was to examine the contents to learn if there was any address within. Ned came upon a singular bit of information. He found a card on which was written: "This is the body of Archibald Crane, president of the —th National bank. In case of accident, illness or death telephone the bank, also my house, No. 742 Lincoln street."

"How easy it is," mused Ned, "to read character from the appearance. Any one would know that was just the kind of man to put such a notice in his pocketbook. But what's this?"

From another division of the wallet he took some bank bills folded together. There were five of them—three twenties, a fifty and a ten, in all $120. There was another roll of ones and twos, making up it more.

"I reckon I'll give the old gentleman a chance to worry a bit," mused Ned. "I'll telephone tomorrow at his home after he's gone to the bank or to the bank after he's gone home. Perhaps I'll get some fun out of the old crank after all."

So he pocketed his find and thought no more about it till the next morning, when he fancied the man he wanted was not at home; then after looking in a telephone directory he called up Mr. Crane's residence. A very soft feminine voice asked, "What is it?"

"Is Mr. Crane at home?"

"No; he's gone to the bank."

"Perhaps you had better call up the bank and ask if he is there."

After some questioning as to the cause of this suggestion the lady concluded to do as advised, after which she called the telephone number that Ned had given her. He was waiting and said:

"I didn't wish to scare any one, so I asked you to call up Mr. Crane to assure yourself that he is all right. I've found his body."

"Found his body! My goodness gracious!"

"Oh, you know he's all right."

"Yes."

"Well, what shall I do with his body?"

"What does all this mean? Who are you?"

"I'm Edward Bromley."

There was a pause when the voice asked where Mr. Bromley was, and he replied that he was at the University club and asked whom he had the honor of speaking with and received the information that he was speaking with Miss Hester Crane, Mr. Archibald Crane's daughter.

"Well," continued Ned, "I've found a pocketbook with about $120 and a card giving instructions what to do with Mr. Crane's body if found dead or something."

"You don't mean it?"

"I certainly do."

"I know papa is a bit peculiar, but I didn't think he would put anything like that in his pocketbook."

"I'm in a quandary about the return of the money."

"How so?"

"Well, I saw Mr. Crane sitting opposite me in a trolley car looking at me rather severely. My neck scarf didn't seem to please him or a [illegible] ring I wore on my little finger. I thought I'd shock him and asked him if he'd like to go where a small game was going on."

A ripple of laughter came over the phone at this, then the reply, "You couldn't have done anything more calculated to turn papa against you."

"That's just it. Now, supposing he knows that I have his portmonnaie, 10 to 1 he'll think I picked his pocket."

"How can he assume that if you return everything just as you found it?"

"Oh, he wouldn't remember just how much there was in it, and he'll be sure to think he had more than he did have. You see, I wouldn't like to take any risk. To be arrested as a pickpocket would be awful, even as one whose conscience led him to deliver up the goods he had stolen."

"It is complicated. At least it appears to be so. I can readily understand your timidity in the matter."

Now, Mr. Bromley's timidity was all balderdash. He was figuring to hear that sweet voice near by and see if the face and figure were as attractive as he pictured it.

"I might give the pocketbook and its contents to you," he said, "without meeting your father; then he wouldn't recognise me for the man who sat opposite him and asked him to go to a gambling house. Do you see?"

"Yes. That would be a very good way out of it. You might send it to me."

This broke into Mr. Bromley's calculations. It occurred to him that he might as well send his find to Mr. Crane direct. But Ned's wits were sharp enough for the occasion.

"I wouldn't like," he said, "to surrender the property to any one without being sure of what I was doing. You see, I stand in a delicate position. If I knew I was delivering the goods to the owner's daughter I would feel all right about it. I wouldn't even ask a receipt."

"But you don't know me."

The matter was now getting where Ned wanted it. He availed himself of the opportunity without hesitation.

"I would trust any woman with so sweet a voice with untold wealth."

A pleased "Te-he!" came from the other end of the wire and immediately the reply, "Well, you may bring it if you like."

"When?"

"I suppose you prefer to come when papa is not at home?"

"Certainly. I wouldn't meet him for anything."

"Papa goes to the bank a little before 9 in the morning and comes home about 2:30."

"In that case I would better make the return tomorrow morning, say about 11 o'clock."

"Very well, I will be happy to—I mean I will receive it at that time. But what am I to do about the reward?"

"Oh, the reward is in permitting me, a stranger, to return the pocketbook to you in person. I am very anxious to see if your face is as charming as your voice."

"There you will certainly be disappointed. I mean—rather, I don't mean—that my voice is charming—there, you've got me all mixed up."

"Never mind; I shall have the inestimable happiness of seeing for myself."

There was more of this before the receivers were hung up, but so much in the same vein that it would become tiresome through repetition. The next morning at 11 o'clock Mr. Bromley rang the bell of 742 Lincoln street, a handsome stone front residence, and sent up his card. When the young lady came into the room he stood mute with admiration. But his eyes were anything but mute. Indeed, his gaze was such as to make the young lady lower her eyes, but it was nevertheless gratifying.

It is necessary to pass over a few months in the thread of this story, when, Mr. Bromley and Miss Crane having become avowed lovers, found it necessary to let the lady's father into the secret that she desired to marry a man whom he was likely to recognize as one who had offered to show him a small game. They put their heads together in an attempt, among other things, to discover a device to prevent the old gentleman's recognition of his would be son-in-law. The effort was a failure.

"There's only one way to meet the case," said Ned at last.

"What's that?"

"Cheek."

"What do you mean?"

"I'll declare I never met your father before in my life."

Since there was no other way out of the matter Ned arranged to call when the "body of Mr. Crane" was at home, which Ned had not done before. He carved out a new pair of whiskers, had his hair curled and put on a pair of eyeglasses. Moreover he wore as different a suit of clothes from those he had on when he first met Mr. Crane as possible. When introduced to the old gentleman the latter, looking at him scrutinisingly, said:

"Your face is familiar to me, sir."

"I hope you haven't met that fellow who looks so much like me and is always getting me into trouble," Ned broke out. "He's a stool pigeon for a gambling house."

"That's the man," replied the other. "He had the impudence to ask me to go with him to his villainous place."

"What shall I do about it? If the thing goes on much longer I won't have a shred of character left."

Miss Crane went to the window, making a great effort to repress her laughter, while her lover discussed with her father the question as to whether the law could be made available to protect the former against a man of bad character who resembled him.

Notwithstanding the success of this daring stratagem Ned afterward occasionally caught the old gentleman looking at him with an expression indicating that he wasn't quite certain but that he was the man he had met in a street car. However, Ned married Miss Crane, and there was one thing his father-in-law never suspected—that Ned was the person who had returned his lost pocketbook.

The Thing He Remembered.

A young girl of romantic disposition sat at dinner next to a man who had once rowed on one of Cornell's greatest crews. She tried to draw him out on the subject of racing and of the particular contest in which he had captained the crew in his senior year. "I suppose," she said, "that your most vivid recollection of that race is of the cheers of the crowd as you came across the finish line?" He shook his head. "Maybe it was the start which burned itself on your memory; the recollection of the tenseness of the wait before you heard the starter's pistol?" Again he shook his head. "What is the thing in connection with the race that you remember most distinctly?" "Well," said the oarsman slowly, "when any one talks about that race it always brings one recollection, one picture, a very vivid one, to my mind right away." "What is that?" asked the girl eagerly. "The man who rowed No. 4, who sat just in front of me, had a mole exactly midway between his shoulder blades."—New York Tribune.

What You Eat in Apples.

Do you know what you are eating when you eat an apple? No, not the sorts and varieties of worms, for there will be no worms if you have bought your fruit from an orchardist who sprays his trees. You are eating malic acid, the property that makes buttermilk so healthful. You are eating gallic acid, one of the most necessary elements in human economy. You are eating sugar in the most assimilable form, combined carbon, hydrogen and oxygen caught and imprisoned from the sunshine. You are eating albumen in its most available state. You are eating a gum allied to the "fragrant medicinal gums of Araby." You are eating phosphorus in the only form in which it is available as a source of all brain and nerve energy. In addition to all these, you are drinking the purest water and eating the most healthful and desirable fiber for the required "roughness" in food elements.—National Horticulturist.

The Apparently Drowned.

The frequent occurrence of drowning accidents serves to emphasise the need of a thorough understanding of the principles underlying resuscitation and particularly the fact that success ultimately depends on preventing permanent injury from lack of blood to the brain. "Efforts at resuscitation should be used for at least two hours after apparent death," says Dr. F. W. Hitchings of Cleveland in the Journal of the American Medical Association. The heart may continue to beat for as long a time as five minutes after cessation of respiration, although it usually stops in two or three minutes. Add to a possible five minutes the seven minutes during which the brain may be completely resuscitated after total cessation of the heart beat, a possible maximum of twelve minutes of relative death may be undergone with recovery."

Respected His Scruples.

In the mathematics class one day at Williams college Professor S., who was rarely made the subject of college jests, was excessively annoyed by some man "squeaking" a small rubber bladder. The noise seemed to come from near a certain Jack Hollis, and after querying [illegible] of his neighbors and receiving a negative answer Professor S. said sternly:

"Hollis, do you know who is making that unbearable noise?"

Hollis, who had been the guilty person all along, assumed an air of stoical bravery and said calmly, "I know, sir, but I prefer not to tell."

Professor S.'s angry face grew calmer, and with evident pleasure he replied: "I respect your scruples, Hollis. They do you credit and should shame the guilty man, sir."

Palaces of Thebes.

The palaces of old Thebes, in Egypt, were probably the largest and most wonderful ever erected by the hand of man. One of them was the container of a central hall 80 feet in height, 385 feet in length and 170 feet in breadth, the roof of which was supported by 134 columns 11 feet in diameter and 70 feet in height. The cornices were of the finest marble, inlaid with ivory work and sheathed with beaten gold. From the point of view of artistic beauty, the Parthenon, of course, still holds the palm and is likely always to hold it.—New York American.

Ancient Mussels.

There are gigantic mussels whose age is assumed to be comparable only with that of the Cape Verde baobab tree and the big trees of California, which live for 5,000 years. Indeed, there appears no particular reason why mussels should ever die, though it is also true that, considering the sort of life a mussel leads, there seems no particular reason why it should ever have lived.—London Express.

All His Fault.

Mr. Binks (with an invalid wife)—Look here, now! This paper says nothing will improve a woman's health like sweeping, baking, bedmaking, dishwashing and polishing the silver. Mrs. Binks—Huh! You know very well you never gave me any silver to polish. No wonder I'm ill!—London Mail.

A Model of Politeness.

"Mrs. X. is as polite as an echo."

"As an echo! What do you mean by that?"

"She never fails to return one's call."—Boston Transcript.

When we read, we fancy we could be martyrs; when we come to act we cannot bear a provoking word.—Hannah More.

His Last Stake

A Story of Monte Carlo

By EDITH V. ROSS

Peter Orloff was a young Russian who inherited an estate and 200,000 rubles, into the possession of which he entered when he was twenty-one years old. He concluded before settling down on the estate to take 5,000 rubles and visit Rome, Berlin, Paris and other continental cities. So as soon as he had arranged his affairs for his absence he started for Berlin, from whence he went to Rome, then Naples, where he sailed for Genoa, and a short time after his arrival at that port was in the attractive winter resort, Nice.

He had left behind him a fiancee, Sonia, the daughter of a neighbor, and long before the time set for his return he felt inclined to go home. But his betrothed was spending some time in St. Petersburg, and if he went home he would find her absent. He felt that it would be better to remain away for the appointed term, at the end of which the wedding was to take place. Therefore, tiring of Nice, he concluded to run down to Monte Carlo.

On the evening of his arrival he dined, then sauntered over to the pavilion where gambling was going on. At that hour but few persons were playing, and there was little to interest him. He felt bored. He had a mind to go back to Russia. He would find Sonia at St. Petersburg and might enjoy himself there with her far better than spending his time alone in foreign lands. He came to a resolution to start on his return trip the next morning. This would give him but one evening to get away with.

He asked one of the croupiers at the gambling table at what hour the play would be in full swing and was told it would not be for another hour. To pass the interval he concluded to bet a few francs. He covered several of the numbers and won on two and lost on one. He repeated the bets and again won more than he lost. When he had gained on his third bet he began to be interested.

At 10 o'clock he had quite a pile of winnings before him. He looked up from it to the faces about him and saw that while he had been playing the throng had been gathering. So intent had he been on the game that he had not noticed their coming. [illegible] his winnings and found [illegible] enough to pay his expenses to St. P[illegible] and keep him there till [illegible] would be time to return to his h[illegible].

Then it [illegible] occurred to him that it would be [illegible] to win enough more to buy a present to take with him for Sonia. He would go by way of Paris and doubtless see many pretty things there from which he might select something to please his betrothed. He laid 10 francs on the table and won. Then he lost. After that he won quite a good deal, when he struck bad luck and lost nearly every bet he made. At 2 o'clock in the morning he had lost all the ready money he had with him.

The next morning instead of starting for home he drew 1,000 francs on his letter of credit and went to the gambling pavilion to recoup. He played all day and when evening came had won back his losses to within 20 francs. Then another streak of bad luck struck him, and by midnight he had lost the 1,000 francs he had drawn in the morning.

Within a few days Orloff had sent what remained of the 5,000 rubles he had put aside for his journey and had [illegible] at home for [illegible] more. With this accession he won and lost considerable, for he played high. Week after week passed while he was seen constantly at the gaming table.

Meanwhile the time for his return and his wedding came round, and he did not appear to claim his bride. He wrote her that he would be unavoidably detained. Not having the heart to give the real reason, he said that he was ill and that his doctor had advised his remaining in the genial climate of the Riviera till spring had appeared in Russia. In order that his sweetheart might not know that he was at Monte Carlo and suspect the true cause of his lingering abroad, he sent his letters to Nice for mailing.

Sonia was naturally very much troubled. Had she any one to attend her she would have gone at once to Nice. It would not be considered proper for her to go alone to join her lover, so for awhile she waited, hoping that his health would improve and his doctor would consent to his return to Russia.

Then one day she heard that Peter had been making heavy drafts on his funds at home and had mortgaged his estate. She delayed no longer, but started at once for the Riviera. These drafts had caused her to suspect that her lover had been caught in the maelstrom of Monte Carlo, and she determined at starting that if she did not find him at Nice she would go at once to the gambling resort.

One night Orloff staggered into the pavilion with 50 francs ($10) in his pocket, the last of all he possessed in the world. He had drawn and lost all the money he had inherited and had mortgaged his estate for all it was worth. He was really at these dens' [illegible] and despair, if from no other cause. After playing a couple of hours, in which he had won and lost [illegible]

[illegible] with which he had [illegible] beginning of the evening [illegible] them on a number which [illegible] would bring him [illegible] then, placing his elbows on the table and shading his face with his hands, he waited the loss of his last stake.

He won. Without changing his position he left his winnings [illegible] on the same place and won again [illegible] third time he won and a fourth [illegible] showed no excitement [illegible] still, his hands covering his face so that it was not [illegible] When he had [illegible] and his winnings on the [illegible] and won every time the fact attracted the attention of every one at the table. At the fifth winning all [illegible] off betting [illegible] When he had won [illegible] the [illegible] to take up his [illegible] would not accept the [illegible] time.

At this juncture a lady [illegible] the main entrance [illegible] and hurried to the table [illegible] the opposite side to which Orloff was sitting and, hurrying around, laid a hand on his shoulder.

"Peter!"

No reply.

"Peter!"

The gambler sat [illegible] The game was stopped [illegible] turned to [illegible] over him [illegible] hands [illegible]

"He is dead!" [illegible] those standing about the table.

The girl gave a [illegible] have fallen to the floor had [illegible] been caught in the arms of a lady beside her.

"A doctor! A doctor!"

A gentleman who had been watching the game advanced [illegible] out in his [illegible] the [illegible] his heart.

"It beats faintly," he said.

Meanwhile the girl, who had fainted, revived and, seeing the [illegible] figure before her [illegible] the lady who held her said to her [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] Orloff was [illegible] walking [illegible]

[illegible]

"Return to Russia," he [illegible] wedding can never take place. I have lost all I possess."

"Oh, Peter, but you live!"

"Yes, I live. It would be better had I died."

There was a long silence between them. They knew that a marriage under the circumstances could not be in Russia in the circle of landed gentry among whom they had lived [illegible] before [illegible]

Then came a knock at the door, and the landlord entered.

"[illegible]," he asked, [illegible]

"Yes," was Orloff's reply. "You [illegible] to your bill, I suppose. You must [illegible]"

"Not at all. Last night I [illegible] for 781,250 francs [illegible] count. I [illegible] night and would be [illegible] would have [illegible]"

"What do you mean?" asked Orloff, staring at the man.

"What does Monsieur mean? It is known to all at Monte Carlo that he won six times at 5 to 1, the amount of his winnings being as I have stated."

"Why do you mock me?" cried Orloff, starting up.

"It may be that monsieur became unconscious after placing his stake on the table [illegible] not aware of this remarkable run of luck that followed. Had he won once more his winnings would have been between three and four million francs. [illegible] was wise not to permit another [illegible]"

"Great heavens! Is this true?"

"Monsieur may [illegible] himself."

"Surely I will [illegible] Peter [illegible]

[illegible]

"Take it," said [illegible] not care to [illegible] money. A [illegible] it."

A fortnight later [illegible] had removed the [illegible] put upon his estate, and [illegible] wedding [illegible]

[illegible]