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A JOB THAT FAILED

By SARAH BAXTER

I'm a lady's maid.

When Mrs. Peabody went away for two weeks she said to me: "Mary, I haven't time to put my jewels in the bank, and I'm going to leave them in your care. Keep them in the closet in the room where the telephone instrument is and sleep there, in case a burglar comes into the house you can call the police. But you needn't fear his breaking down the door of your room. Burglars never do that."

"Mrs. Peabody," I said, "you're very good to trust me with such valuable property. I'll have your jewels for you when you come back."

"But remember, Mary," she said, "I am trusting you only, not the other servants. There's no need of that."

"Yes, ma'am," says I.

I didn't tell the others, but the day after Mrs. Peabody left James, the butler, came into the room for something and saw me lock the door of the closet.

"What are you locking up so carefully?" he asked me.

"It's none of your business," says I.

"Yes, it is. Mr. Peabody put the house in my care while the family is away, and if there's valuables any where I'd ought to know it."

Fearing he'd talk about it before the other servants, I thought I'd best tell him that mistress' jewels were in the closet.

Thursday before the family came home was my day out. I thought at first that I wouldn't go on account of the jewels, but they were locked in the closet and I would take the key with me. So I went. When I came back I went in at the servants' door and up to my room, where I took on my coat and hat and put on my black and white uniform. Then I went out into the hall.

There is a long mirror in the hall, and usually when I passed it I gave a glance at myself in it. But this time I was in a hurry, so I didn't.

But at the end of the hall, where there was no mirror, I saw myself coming toward myself. I stopped, wondering what was the matter. The mirror hadn't been moved, and I couldn't understand seeing myself. Then the figure came toward me, and I saw that it was a real woman, and what broke me up was that she was not me. I caught at the banister to keep from falling; then I gasped:

"Who are you?"

"I'm Mary Murphy," says she, looking astonished.

"No; you're not. I'm Mary Murphy myself."

"You Mary Murphy? Then, who am I?"

"Something has gone wrong with me," I moaned, rubbing my eyes. "I'm Mary Murphy, and you're Mary Murphy too."

"You look just like me for all the world," says she, looking frightened. "I'm afraid something's going to happen; seeing myself this way—I'm going away from you."

James came up the stairs, and see-

ing the two of us looking just as we looked queer.

"James," I cried, "what does this mean? Am I Mary Murphy, and is that my other self, or is she Mary Murphy, and I—I don't know what."

James stared at us both for some time, as if he didn't know which was which; then he pointed to my other self and said:

"That's Mary."

"Anyway," says the other maid, "I'm going away from here. I can't stand it to see you there looking just like me."

Cook, hearing the talking, came up, and when she saw the two of us looking just alike, she raised her hands astonished.

"Cook," I said, "who is this woman who is just like me?"

"I don't know," says cook. "She came in a little while ago, and I supposed she was you. She went upstairs and that's all I know."

"Is she me or am I me?"

Cook looked at us both, then said to the other one, "Say something." But the other one wouldn't speak. Then I thought that she wouldn't because cook would tell the difference in our voices.

Somehow at that moment I thought of the jewels. Wasn't this some way of getting them? I wondered if this woman hadn't dressed herself in maid's uniform to make believe she was me, came in when I was out and taken them. But how was it that she looked just like me? The thought made me furious. I ran to her and grabbed her. She struggled to get away, and in the process I heard something strike the floor, and there were the jewels scattered all over it.

"James," I cried, "go to the telephone and call the police."

James didn't stir. He looked frightened. Then I told cook to go, and she did. The woman I held struggled, and I asked James to help me, but he didn't. He looked kind of duff.

The police were not long coming. It turned out that James, who was bad, knew a woman who looked just like me. He put up a job with her to get the jewels. He took a wax impression of the lock of the closet and made a key to fit it. Then he telephoned the woman when I went out, and she came right around dressed in maid's uniform. James expected her to get the jewels away without any one knowing he had put her up to it.

When Mrs. Peabody learned what had happened she put a thousand dollars for me in the bank. James and the woman who did the job were sent up for five years.

Why London Rises Late.

London's modern business hours came in with the invention of telegraphy. Before cables and wireless London kept its own time. Now its policy is to be in communication with the greatest possible part of the world for the longest possible time. The American continent is only waking when London begins to think of lunch, while the far east is closing down for the day. By setting up too early London makes the best of the day in both halves of the world.—London Chronicle.

Eliminating Soup.

Gen't—Is there any soup on the bill? Waiter—There was, sir, but I wiped it off.—California Pelican.

The Dark Continent.

In the light of history it seems strange to call Africa a dark continent. When northern Europe was a howling wilderness and America utterly unknown to the civilized world Africa was a famous place for great cities. Egypt was the seat of riches and learning, and all the countries bordering on the Mediterranean figure largely in the pages of sacred and profane history. But a blight fell upon Africa, and all the work of the past has had to be done over again. Indeed, it is only within the past quarter century that we have known anything about this wonderful country except a narrow strip around the coast. Yet Africa contains over 5,000,000 miles in area and has more than 200,000,000 inhabitants.—St. Louis Republic.

An investigation of the cost of postage may prove interesting, but it does not change the price tag.

Astronomers observe that the remains of Mars have assumed a darker hue. Has the entire solar system gone mad?

You can also serve humanity, you know, by not spreading your case of grip round among your friends and acquaintances.

May It Last!

"Is their married life happy?"

"Nothing else. She thinks he is the wisest person on earth and he thinks she is the most beautiful. Perfect, eh?"—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Difference of Attachment.

Romantic Ruth—Love wants all or nothing. Practical Pete—Then love's not like our sheriff, for he'll take anything he can get.—Baltimore American.

A Clench.

Dubbins—Do you know where I can find a lot facing south? Stubbins—Why not try around the north pole? That's a very likely place.

While shammy keeps its watch, virtue how is Europe going to encourage its morning cups of molasses?

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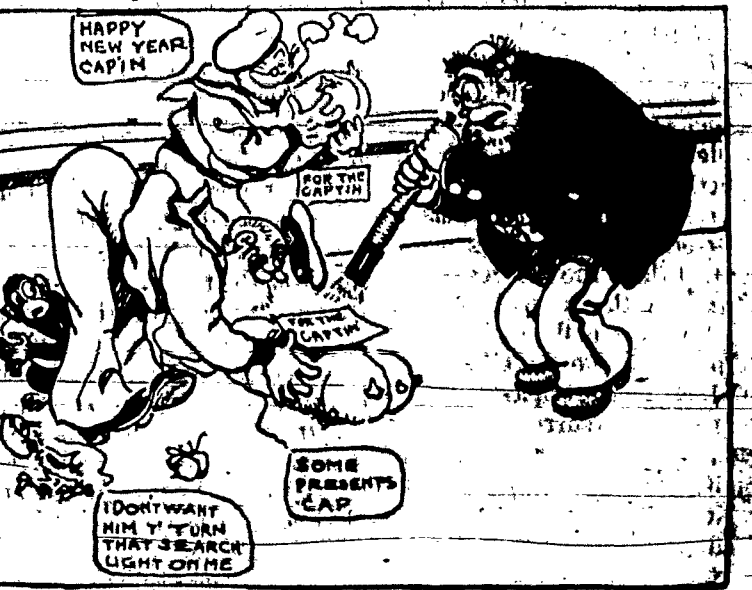
BINNACLE JIM AND THE CAPTAIN'S NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS.



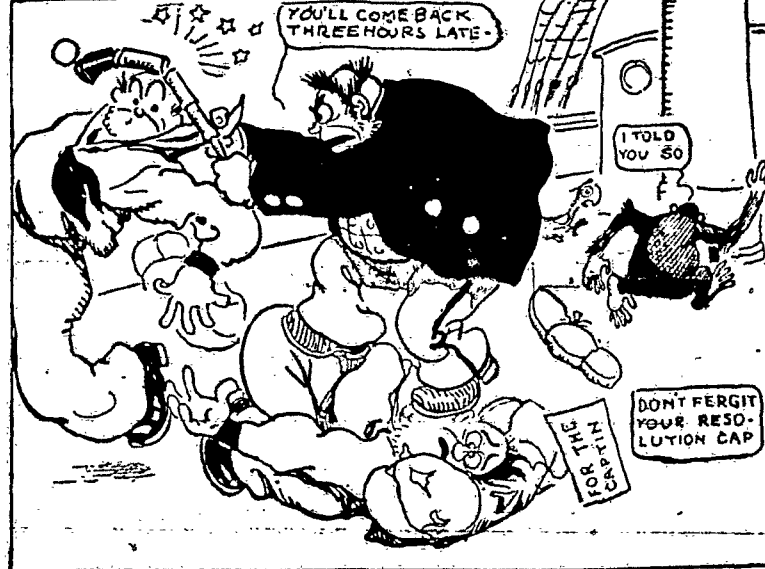
1. "Speakin' o' swearin' off brings me back to Capt'n Soakum an' the good ship 'Dancin' Sally.' You see we ended our voyage on New Year's Day, an' owin' to th' shameful treatment o' th' skipper, Bill an' me had decided 't' shoot. But wot do you 'spose that same old cap'n do'de but invite us into th' cabin—his own cabin, mind you—an' show us a resolution he'd writ up."



2. "Sink us for a pair o' fools 'f we didn't take him at his word an' sign papers there an' then for another cruise. Me an' Bill felt so good an' the next day bein' New Year's an' in port, wot does we do but get 'shore leave and come back 'ith a cargo o' handsome presents for th' skipper."



3. "You'd a thought same as me an' Bill that them presents 'ud a touched his heart, but some men 'at go to sea haven't got any, an' us 'bin' a short spell over 'em made matters worse when th' skipper fixed his glass on us an' see th' packages, I never see a man get so vexed."



4. "Bill an' me 'us so upset an' taken aback 'at we didn't stand th' ghost o' a show, besides th' skipper 'us a powerful man when riled up an' th' way he misused us an', hauled us about th' dock 'us sompin' shameful an' terrific."



5. "Bill an' me both tried 't' remind him o' his resolution, but that warn't no chance to get a word in edge-ways with the cap'n, an' we felt actually relieved when he kicked us into th' hold an' clapped down th' hatch."



6. "In all my experience, boy an' man, afore th' meet; I don't recollect any harsher treatment on shipboard than wot we got in them same three months, an' as Bill says, an' so do I, never take no stock in these New Year's resolutions, an' you can lay 'em that, my lad." International Cartoon Co. No. 7 340