

# THE TENTH COMMANDMENT

REMARKABLE achievements of Ivan Brodsky, physician, whose investigations into psychical phenomena enabled him to cure spiritual diseases and to exorcise evil spirits from the bodies of his victims.

By H. M. EGBERT

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THE one condition of Dr. Ivan Brodsky's psychical work that he found most burdensome was the constant requests that poured in upon him from innumerable people who had come to hear of him. On all sides he was beset by applications for assistance and advice in the solution of some problem which, while immensely increasing his reputation, left him little time for the prosecution of his investigations. He was forced to refuse many of these applicants, who, in return, denounced him as a charlatan. Brodsky received denunciation and praise with equal indifference.

By this time he had severed his connection with the hospital and devoted his time entirely to private practice among patients suffering from rare mental and nervous disorders. As an attached physician, he felt that the ethics of the profession excluded the use of non-recognized remedies. In private practice he felt free to make use of his knowledge of those spiritual causes which, he claimed, underlay all physical manifestations of disease.

One morning I found him in earnest conversation with a visitor—a young man of agitated aspect who, on seeing me enter, rose from his chair precipitously and prepared to take his departure.

"Don't go," said Dr. Brodsky. "Allow me to introduce you to my secretary, who is my confidential assistant in these matters."

The young man, who was introduced to me as Mr. John Sykes, sat down again. His agitation was still more manifest; he stared around him as one bewildered.

"Now, Mr. Sykes, suppose you repeat your story," said Dr. Brodsky. "Begin at the beginning and don't leave out anything, even if it seems to you to be of trivial moment."

"Well, sir," said the young man impetuously, "as I said to you at first, I am greatly in doubt whether this is a case for you or for a jury. But I wish to exhaust every possible remedy before taking the law into my own hands. Then, if I become convinced beyond all possibility of doubt that my wife is untrue to me, I shall put a bullet through my brother's head, and another afterward through my own."

"Which wouldn't help either of you in the least," replied Brodsky suavely. "You would find yourselves immediately transplanted into another not so very different world, with your enmity still at boiling point, but without the physical means of allaying it. Suppose you continue."

"My name, as I have said, is John Sykes," said the young man more calmly. "My brother Philip and I were the only children of our father and the inheritors of his Sykes estate. My father cut me out of his will

can imagine my consternation. My brother had already everything that I lacked saved only her; was I to be bereft of her through any machinations of his to draw her within the sphere of his interests? I taxed her with visiting him; she admitted it and, weeping, explained that she had gone only to intercede for me. She wanted us to be friends, and, above everything else, she wanted Philip to sell us the mansion upon favorable terms, as he proposed traveling abroad and was not bound to it by any such intense attachment such as she had conceived. Philip had almost yielded to her request. I, however, am not of a temperamental disposition. I suspected that my brother was partly instrumental in the changing of our father's will. I refused to have any kind of dealings with him. I scolded her for visiting him, explained the misconstruction that might be put upon such an act by village gossip, and she promised me never to see him again.

"A few weeks ago I learned from servants' chatter that the Sykes mansion was reputed to be haunted by the spirit of a woman. The butler had told a village crier that the figure of a woman walked through the rooms and passages at night. He had seen it, had taken it for a sleep-walker and essayed to catch it, but it had vanished before his eyes and his hands had grasped only thin air.

"I am something of a student and often sit up alone all night with my books and papers. I am at present engaged in writing a monograph upon our American bats. Sometimes my observations take me away for a day or two, so that my wife and I see not too much of one another. Indeed, of late, since the episode I referred to, we seem to have begun to drift apart. I am not a believer in the supernatural, and this foolish gossip of the butler aroused the most terrible suspicions in me. I resolved to discover for myself what truth lay in the rumor.

"Pretending to be about to set off on a two days' journey for the purpose of securing specimens, I came back at night and concealed myself in an old building, now unoccupied, but formerly used as a barn by my grandfather, adjoining the mansion. From here I was enabled to obtain a clear view of a large part of the interior, which he built in a rambling way and can in this manner be overlooked. I saw my brother lower the light in his study and a minute or two later saw the lamp flash out in his bedroom. The lower portion of the house was plunged into darkness. It was past midnight. I was about to dismiss my project as a chimera, feeling much ashamed of my suspicions, when an irresistible impulse impelled me to go to the open window of the darkened study. Actuated by the same instinct which seemed to force me onward against my will, I crept in noiselessly, traversed the room, and entered into the corridor. From the far end a veiled figure came gliding toward me. For a moment the eeriness of the situation, I confess, roused me to the spot with horror. It came nearer; and suddenly I found myself looking into what I can swear was the face of my wife. Another moment, and the figure had passed me, with the same noiseless tread, and vanished into the distance. I do not know how long I remained there. When I came to my senses I was in my cottage, fumbling with a pistol. I dashed up to my wife's room and hammered violently upon the door. Suddenly she came out and confronted me. She was robed in a dressing gown and looked up with innocent, frightened eyes, as though just awakened out of sleep. I made no answer to her terrified appeals, but rushed out of the house and came straight to you, knowing that if there could be any supernatural solution of the difficulty you would put me out of my suspense. While the period between our encounter in the mansion and that in my own cottage seems almost too short to have enabled her to return and assume the role she played, I confess that I look upon you as the last possible refuge left me before I commit some act of desperation."

"It was impossible not to be deeply impressed by the evident sincerity of the young man and by his deep distress. For my part, I was inclined to believe the worst. But a glance into Brodsky's impassive face convinced me that he did not share my suspicions. Brodsky's opinions of women were curiously fine; as I learned afterward, and hope subsequently in my cottage, and, until a few days ago, when I first doubted my wife's affection, no happier mortal existed. My wife, however, had always felt a sentimental regard for the old mansion. It would naturally have passed to us, Philip receiving an equivalent in cash. The disappointment has greatly affected her.

"Some weeks ago, my brother and I having then been estranged for several months, I surprised my wife one afternoon coming out of the mansion where he was and still is living. You

on account of my marriage. My wife is a woman whom no man could feel ashamed of; my offense was that of having married without asking his consent. He was subject to fits of temper and changed his will. Had he lived he would undoubtedly have forgiven me. But unfortunately he died almost immediately afterward, leaving the Sykes mansion and grounds to Philip, while I was forced to continue the owner of a little cottage adjacent which I bought some years ago. Naturally, this caused an estrangement between my brother and me. I, myself, am happy enough in my cottage, and, until a few days ago, when I first doubted my wife's affection, no happier mortal existed. My wife, however, had always felt a sentimental regard for the old mansion. It would naturally have passed to us, Philip receiving an equivalent in cash. The disappointment has greatly affected her.

We determined to start at once for the village, which was some 15 miles distant, situated in the heart of a sparsely settled farming country. It was my idea that, both in view of the young man's excited condition and in order to enable us to pursue our investigations freely, which conscience would not have permitted had we been

the guests of Mrs. Sykes, that we should make our headquarters at the village inn, where Sykes was expecting to meet a man who might throw light upon the problem. We arrived there late in the afternoon and found the place empty of visitors, it being late in the fall. As we were seated in the spacious, old-fashioned parlor, an elderly man of consequential demeanor came softly and furtively up the back path. Sykes rose to meet him.

"Gentlemen, this Jones, my brother's butler and an old employee of my father's," he said, rising dramatically and locking the door. "Now, Jones, repeat what you told me yesterday."

"I've more to tell you since I saw you yesterday, Mr. John," said Jones huskily. He adopted toward the young man that mixture of patronage and servility which indicates, in a man, the acceptance of some bribe in return for a dereliction of duty. "I saw her last night, sir. I thought I heard a burglar downstairs and dressed myself and went out to see. On the landing I met the master coming out of his room. He had heard the noise too. We went down softly, and suddenly we saw her, as plain as life, coming along the passage."

"Who was she?" interrupted Sykes in a voice choking with emotion.

"That I wouldn't take it upon myself to say, sir," said the butler with a smirk. "Twasn't anybody I know, leastways, so far as I could tell by the walk, because she wore a veil and was all in white, which is a powerful disguise of females, sir. So I says to myself: 'Jones, if the master chooses to have young female ghosts in his house at two in the morning, that ain't no business of yours.' So I turns to go back, and, while I was

come a byword of village gossip," he exclaimed angrily. "Evidently in her infatuation she has lost all sense of fear. As likely as not she is even now planning a return trip to the mansion. I have no criticism to make of her," he went on brokenly. "It is my brother who has first robbed me of my inheritance and then of the only woman I have loved. May they be accursed—"

"Stop!" said Brodsky, laying his hand restrainingly upon the young man's shoulder. "It will be time to accuse her when you know. At present you know nothing."

John Sykes looked at him incredulously. "Do you mean—that there can be any hope?" he whispered hoarsely. "Do you think she is innocent?"

"I believe in all women as long as I can," said Brodsky simply. Nevertheless, looking into his face, I read the struggle which he was undergoing against the weight of the evidence. And suddenly the young man collapsed into a chair and buried his face in his hands. He pulled a locket from his breast, opened it, and pressed his lips to the inside. Then he held it up to us.

"Look at it," he whispered. "Look at her face and say what you can read there."

It was the miniature of a young woman. She was strikingly beautiful, even in this land of beautiful women; but what held and fascinated the observer was the quality of innocence and purity that seemed to shine through the external features, as a light in a lamp. The artist had done his work surpassingly well. I stole a glance at Brodsky; his brow had cleared.

"I believe in her," he said again.



"Suddenly she came out and confronted me."

looking at her, she disappeared, right under my eyes."

Suddenly Sykes flew at the man like a deerhound and grasped him by the collar, shaking him furiously.

"You rascal, tell me who the woman was," he cried.

The butler's face turned purple. "Twasn't anybody I know, sir," he gasped, breaking loose and reeling back against the wall. "I'll swear it wasn't any human living being, sir. She vanished right before my very eyes—"

Sykes stood off and looked at the man contemptuously.

"Jones," he said, "you are a dirty, lying hound. You told your cronies here that it was Mrs. Sykes."

The man began to tremble.

"You know me from old times, Jones," continued the young man more coldly. "You shall have one chance to prove your statement, and if you can't I'll shoot you like a dog."

"And I think before the night has gone your fears and doubts will have been dispelled. Courage, friend. And now let us have supper, for the physical condition has a powerful reaction upon the spirits."

It was a mournful supper in the deserted inn. Brodsky was at his best. He kept us amused with countless anecdotes of his own life. I had never known how much he had undergone, what he had seen, now tramping through Europe as a penniless student, now taking a leading part in the battle for Polish freedom; anon, imprisoned in the underground dungeon of St. Peter and St. Paul, escaping in a workman's clothes and working his way to America as a sailor under the noses of the Russian marine officers. But, though once or twice our companion's face lit up and he smiled faintly, it was evident that he was almost overwhelmed by the tragedy that had come into his life.

No further reference was made to the engagement of the evening, but we sat there, smoking and talking, and listening to Brodsky, until ten o'clock rang out from the old-fashioned clock in the corner. Then, with a deep sigh, the young man rose and led the way out into the darkness of the fall evening. At the end of the street the large bulk of the mansion appeared, cutting off the view beyond with its great mansard roof and out-buildings, of which the Sykes cottage seemed to form a part. Even as we looked, a light went out suddenly in a lower window, to reappear shortly afterward immediately overhead. The master of the mansion had retired to his room. As we passed silently down the deserted street I caught the faint reflection from the light above the door of the inn as it struck upon some rounded, metallic thing which the young man was fingering. It was a pistol. On the way I contrived to snatch a fleeting word with Brodsky.

"Doctor," I said, "you are abetting a murder."

"No," he answered me, "I am saving a woman's name and her husband's happiness."

We halted at a side door and waiting. After quite an interval the butler came out and admitted us. He led the way on tiptoe, following with infinite precautions, along a corridor, up some carpeted stairs, and out upon the dimly lit circle of an old picture gallery, where generations of the Sykes family looked out gravely from their heavily gilded frames. The sight aroused the young man to a frenzy of passion. This was the inheritance of which he had been defrauded! I saw him shake as with an ague, saw his fingers tighten convulsively upon the handle of his pistol; then I saw Brodsky's restraining arm encircle his shoulders and steady him. The little drama was enacted in perfect silence.

We crouched down at the edge of the platform, below which we could see the passages of the rambling old structure radiating away on three sides as spokes of a wheel. And we waited, shivering, though none speaking, only staring our eyes upon the distant end of the corridor which led toward the wing of the mansion which Philip Sykes occupied. The butler had slipped away, but John had forgotten him.

Eleven o'clock boomed out from a deep-sounding clock; the air grew chilly. I shivered. I looked at Brodsky. He was watching every movement of his patient, his hand alert and sinuous, seemingly ready to leap forth to restrain him from any deed of rashness. But John was oblivious to both of us also; he fingered his pistol and knelt there watching, watching.

Crouching there, we three seemed to have become actors in some horrible drama that was being enacted for the benefit of those rows of silent ghosts, those family ancestors of dead and gone Sykes, looking out, starved and bewigged, from their gold frames, which were so faintly illuminated by the dull light of the low gas jets that the painted figures seemed to stand out in a stereoscope, to have the verisimilitude of living men. I must have become half hypnotized by the suspense of watching. My mind slipped away from the work that was at hand; I was living over my life again in other places, thinking of the past, of the ambitions and aspirations with which I had started out on my career, of my strange meeting with Brodsky, of a thousand things.

Suddenly I felt Brodsky's fingers tighten upon my sleeve. I glanced along the distant corridor. My heart bounded in my breast and seemed to stand still. For there, emerging from out the gloom, clothed in a misty garment, her head covered with a filmy veil, was a woman that glided toward us as no human, waking being moves, the eyes fixed and trance-like. For all the dimness and the distance I knew her. It was the woman of the miniature. Brodsky recognized her too, and the young man.

I saw his figure stiffen; every muscle in his body became as taut as steel. He crouched there, watching her, upon his face an aspect of horror and hatred terrible to witness. The figure approached us; now it was directly under us and had not seemed to notice us. Suddenly his hand shot out; I saw the gleam of the pistol. Then, still more quickly, I saw Brodsky's arm dart forward, and an instant later the heavy report of the discharge went echoing through the half-empty house, arousing a thousand echoes among the rafters.

I was upon my feet and Brodsky was pulling at my sleeve. "Follow me," he cried. "To the cottage!"

He dragged me after him, and the young man followed us. I moved as though in a dream, under Brodsky's compulsion; but, though we ran like the wind, John Sykes easily outstripped us. I knew what passion winged his speed. Overhead we heard noises and movement. Shouts were borne after us.

The name Apache was applied first to a tribe of the North American Indians owing their origin to the Athapascans. It is a tribal name that harks back far into the dim past of the red man.

A good many years ago the police department of Paris found itself in daily conflict with certain semi-organized bands of youthful vagabonds and ruffians who gave no end of trouble by their thieving depredations. They have their counterparts in large cities by way of the tough gangs of boys and young men who revel in endless warfare with law and order as represented by the police.

These Parisian bands soon came to call themselves the "Apaches," and from all accounts they are worthy of the name. They belong to the underground world of Paris, where every vice and crime is bred and nurtured.

Ban on Use of Wireless. Great Britain has forbidden all vessels, British as well as of other nationalities, from using their wireless apparatus in the harbor of Gibraltar except by permission of the governor.

Strictly Nautical. Mrs. Hoyle.—My husband is a man of queer tastes. Mrs. Doyle.—How so? Mrs. Hoyle.—A schooner looks better to him than a whole naval parade.

Women Talk in Wireless. Quite abreast of the times is the Principia, a co-educational college in St. Louis, where wireless telegraphy is included in its curriculum.

The instructors claim (entirely without intimating that women are especially clever at methods of expressing their thoughts) that the girls show unusual facility in mastering the code. They are being taught the use and the reason for the use of each instrument. Their wireless station is complete in every detail and messages can be sent from St. Louis 250 miles—nearly to Kansas City. This is probably the only school in this section of the country which boasts a course of wireless telegraphy.

# A FILLIP IN FUTURES

This is not to prove that Lyndon is eccentric. He isn't. Concentric might hit the mark, for—but we'll drop that. There's no telling where a long-handled word will lead one.

He was out of money on a certain date—almost as penniless as a beggar; and he fell back on his wits to make good, which he did. Straight fellow in Selridge college, Lyndon was; there's no disputing that.

Lyndon's remaining two months in college he locked forward to with real pleasure, but the string of bills attached to the finish made the corners of his mouth drop to an angle of 45 degrees. That facial expression, however, fled from his countenance like frost before a summer sun when the idea lodged in his brain. It took ten minutes to put it in printable shape. It read like this:

"Wanted—Philanthropic person to drop a fat pocket book on the streets of Forrester and permit me to find it and claim reward. I need it. Worth Young Man, Box 92, Herald."

The thing done, he hurried it off to the Herald office, took supper at a cheap restaurant, returned to his room and pored over his books till midnight, then rolled into bed and slept like a log.

Of course, box 92 wasn't neglected for a day or two. Lyndon had hoped for an early reply, and was inclined to be disappointed after three days had elapsed without a response. The fourth day proved a lucky one. He opened his letter eagerly, but the only happy thing about it was that no one was present to see the chagrin that spread over his face. The stogie paragraph ran as follows:

"Would gladly accommodate you, but I dropped my purse some time ago, and it made such a noise that it opened the eyes of a blind beggar, who seized it and ran off with it. He hasn't returned it."

This was a sample of a half dozen that found their way into box 92 in the next forty-eight hours. Lyndon was settling down to the conclusion that the plan was doomed to failure, when a tastefully addressed envelope found its way to his table. With a new courage he made out these words:

"Dear Sir—In accordance with your request, I will drop my purse at the corner of Castle avenue and Third street, Wednesday, the 2d inst., at 4:15 p. m. Fifty dollars reward if safely returned to 11 Ashelot avenue before 7:30 p. m. Failure on your part will be serious. Miss McK—"

For Lyndon, the remainder of that Wednesday was full of interest—an interest that grew in proportion as the interval to the appointed hour diminished.

A wide margin before the time arrived he was sauntering resolutely past the specified corner, his eyes never omitting a movement of the pedestrians that hurried past the place. There was a ladies' wallet directly under his face and eyes, but how it got there was a mystery he didn't wait to solve. Quickly seizing the purse, he went down the street, too much dazed to voluntarily direct his steps.

Collecting his scattered wits, he found his way to his room, and threw the thing on the table and himself on a chair. His curiosity soon got the better of his inertness when he recalled that he had neglected to open the find.

Pulling it open, he brought to light a fragment of embroidered work, and a diminutive scrap of paper on which was pencilled: "Remember the hour—7:30." Nothing more.

It was enough—sufficient. Quickly responsive to his ring, a smiling young lady opened the door.

"You are the worthy young man?" she declared, before he had time to speak. "You are so prompt. It would have helped me out finely if my plans hadn't gone wrong."

"Your plans?"

"Yes," she admitted, a twinkle in her eye. "You see, we were going to have a curiosity party, and I was going to introduce you as my offering. Of course, it's all too ridiculous for anything; but your ad. struck me as so odd I simply couldn't resist. But the party has fallen through at the last moment. Wait a moment and I'll get your reward."

"Wait!" broke out Lyndon. "It's a poor conundrum that hasn't two solutions. Listen to mine. 'I don't need the reward—' 'Then why your advertisement in the Herald?' 'Well, what I really wanted was an excuse, and—' 'An excuse!' echoed the girl. 'I don't understand. I'm afraid I'm compromising myself by listening to this.' 'Not at all,' answered Lyndon. 'I've a few weeks more in college, and I promised the old man I wouldn't send for any more funds to carry me through. I've tried my best, but it won't hold out. That ad. was just a diversion. Now as to the excuse; I've missed your party; why not you take in mine?' 'Your party? I know of no such event.' 'It's like this,' Lyndon went on briskly: 'The old folks live at Legdum—six miles beyond the car line. I'll phone to Tenny to run down with the auto and I'll take you out to dine with mother and myself. That will be a working excuse. I'll get the money. Shall I phone at once?' The party of the second part ruminated a moment.

"Yes," she decided.

A Proof of Genius. "The author of genius," said William Dean Howells, at a dinner in New York, "expresses the thoughts of his time. He speaks out those things that his generation has all along been thinking—but thinking silently and, perhaps, a little mistily. 'An author of transcendent genius speaks the thought of all time. For example—one summer at Sunapee I loaned a volume of Plato to a lean, shrewd farmer. When the volume was returned I said: 'Well, how did you like Plato?' 'Just rated,' the farmer answered. 'I see he's got some of my ideas.'"

# MARTYR TO PRINCIPLE

Men have died for a principle. There is one woman in New York who can sympathize with them. She has not died exactly, but she has done something that required grit. The experience began in a familiar way—no opera tickets under \$3 at the box office but sheaves of them in the hands of speculators who were offering them at an advance of \$1 on the regular price. "Give you a good seat," said the speculator who grabbed her first.

"No," said she defiantly, "if you were selling at half price I wouldn't buy from a speculator."

The night of the opera came. It was a snowy, blowy night, but the woman was out and for some reason she passed the opera house. That same speculator was still plying his trade.

"Good seat for to-night, lady," he said. "Only 50 cents."

She looked at the ticket, she looked at the clock. The hour was early, it was her favorite opera, the best numbers were yet to come and here was a ticket cheap. She opened her purse, then principle triumphed.

"No," she shouted, "I will not buy from a speculator—on—any—terms," and march on. That's heroism.

The Snake and the Eggs. A gentleman living in Rhodesia tells a wonderful story of some eggs that were hatched after having been swal-

lowed by a large snake. The reptile—a fine specimen of the banded cobra—somehow got into a henhouse, where an old hen was sitting on a number of eggs. The hen, with much cackling and bustle, flew in terror, and the snake proceeded to devour the whole of the eggs. The owner of the hen-house, hearing the bird's cries, came up and shot the reptile as it was resting after its meal; and when the creature was cut open, immediately after, it was found that nine of the eggs, having been swallowed whole,

still remained unbroken. They were taken out, rinsed with warm water, and put back in the nest. The hen at once began to sit again as if nothing had happened, and in a short time the eggs were hatched, the chickens proving quite healthy and unharmed by the strange experience of their early homes.

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