

eyes strayed to the face of the young man whose appearance had affected me so curiously as I boarded the train. He too was reading a copy of my evening journal, and the lights above his head—it was that dark—shone relentlessly on his commonplace features, and his ears stood out like bat's wings.

"I wonder if he sees the resemblance?" I wondered idly. "I fancy Mr. Daniel M. Bailey would not dare to travel so free of disguise as the little man sitting over the way."

Presently I put down the paper, not appearing to need its protection, and my eyes being weak I half closed them, leaning back my head so that under my lids I could see the movements of my neighbors. The dark young man began looking around him with quick, nervous glances. There was something surreptitious about his motions that affected me unpleasantly. I felt for him an instinctive dislike and distrust.

Presently I detected what appeared to be a quick and secret signal made with his hand, apparently to attract the attention of the restless woman before alluded to, who was wriggling about her seat across the aisle. If she saw the gesture and understood it, she gave no sign; but continued to look about her with furtive glances, first pulling down and then snapping up the window shade, then opening her traveling bag, looking quickly through its contents, and closing it with a hurried click. I looked at her between my half-closed eyelids, feeling that to be caught napping was my only chance of escape. She glanced over at me with a propitiating smile, rose, and began searching for something on the seat and on the floor of the car. Not finding what she sought, she crossed the aisle and touched my sleeve. Though half expecting an advance of some sort, I started violently; for I have a nervous temperament, although it does not work itself off on other people as was apparently the case with my neighbor.

"I beg your pardon," she said gently. "Do you by any chance happen to have a bottle of smelling salts with you? Mine has disappeared, and I have an insupportable headache."

I smiled deprecatingly and pointed to my swathed throat. "Pardon my voice. I have such a cold I can scarcely speak above a whisper. I am very sorry I have no salts with me. Perhaps the lady in front with the little girl—"

"Oh, it doesn't matter. I get so nervous thinking about my headache with nothing to distract me! May I talk to you a minute? The truth is I have been sent for by my husband in New York. My only child is very ill, and I am almost out of my senses with anxiety."

The woman spoke with the easy loquacity of the middle classes who enjoy sharing their most sacred experiences even with total strangers. I murmured perfunctory expressions of sympathy, and said finally:

"I am sorry that I have nothing better with which to distract your painful thoughts than the evening paper. Will you take this?" And I handed her the sheet I had just laid down.

Looking up, I saw the little brown eyes of the commonplace young man boring into me like gimlets. To my surprise and annoyance the woman not only consented to share my paper, but insisted on changing my seat as well. She created in me a curious sense of distrust and aversion, and I felt a shiver of dislike tickling my spinal column.

"Dear, dear! How dreadful this latest circulation is!" she exclaimed. "I have never seen Mr. Bailey; I have stayed a great deal in Albany. I should know him anywhere." Instinctively we both looked toward the dark young man with ears, and now seemed to have lost interest in me and had returned to his paper.

I felt surrounded by a choking atmosphere of mystery and secrecy. Did the man and woman know each other, or was I mistaken in thinking that a signal had been given from one to the other?

"Do you suppose he has killed him—my neighbor whispered intensely, touching my knee with a nervous spasm. I shook her off with a none too gentle rebuff. "I really don't know, and I don't much care." I returned coldly. "Would you mind returning to your own seat? I too have a headache, and should like to get a nap if possible before reaching New York."

imagine that the thought of my dying child might move you to compassion. I will ask only one more thing of you. Will you kindly untie my veil, which has somehow got into a hard knot and binds my forehead? Then I will return to my seat and not disturb you any further."

She bent her head to the level of my hands, and clumsily I tried to unfasten the knot with my gloved fingers. I felt so glad to get rid of her that I sought to make amends for my past rudeness by performing this last office with such alacrity as I could command.

"I'm afraid you will have to take off your gloves. Oh, how my head is aching! I shall have hysterics if you can't get the veil off pretty soon!" she said in querulous tones.

It somehow disconcerted me to see the little man smiling sardonically at my struggles, and I gave a vicious pull at the veil, including a stray lock of hair in my tug of war.

"Oh, please take off your gloves and don't hurt me so!" wailed the victim of my clumsiness in tones too loud to be agreeable to a modest person like myself, who hated publicity of any kind. To get rid of the half-crazy creature I tore off my gloves, and in a moment the veil was untied. She looked down at it very attentively as I handed it to her, and then into my face with strange, mocking eyes.

"I thank you, madam," she said in a tone of perfect poise. "I am exceedingly sorry to have disturbed you. I can only assure you that my pertinacity was more necessary than it seemed."

She slipped quietly back to her seat; but as she went I detected a slight inclination of the head, aimed apparently at the dark man, who was once more watching her, but with no outward sign of recognition.

OUR train was an express, and it gobbled up the miles with the greed of a monster. I leaned back in my corner and tried to sleep. Failing in that, I pretended to look out the window into the blackness of the night; but instead I watched the reflection of the woman opposite. She was smiling into the dark, and her expression was not that of a mother hastening to the bedside of her sick child. Still watching the living pictures in the glass, like the Lady of Shallot, I saw the man deliberately leave his seat, walk slowly down the aisle, looking with his strange intensity of expression at each of the dozing or reading occupants of the car, and finally plant himself next my neighbor, with whom till now he had had no intercourse save with secret signals.

My heart seemed to stop beating—you will soon know why. He had a few words of whispered conversation with her; then I looked up, and he was standing by my side. His expression was not one that a woman likes to see on a man's face when he looks at her, yet I moved nearer to the window that he might share my seat, and stared at him with fascinated eyes.

"I have come to have a little talk with you. Don't let us raise our voices," he said very quietly.

I could not have raised mine even to a whisper. I merely felt as if a hundred years had passed since the last minute, and a curious sense of relief enveloped me,—the relief of one who has lived in dread of hell and suddenly finds himself strangely calm in being face to face with the King of Terrors.

"It's no use. The game's up," he said very softly. "I know you are Daniel M. Bailey. You've made a good fight for freedom; but you'll have to serve your full term before you get it!" and he grinned.

"I felt sure you were a detective the minute I put my foot on the train," I said calmly.

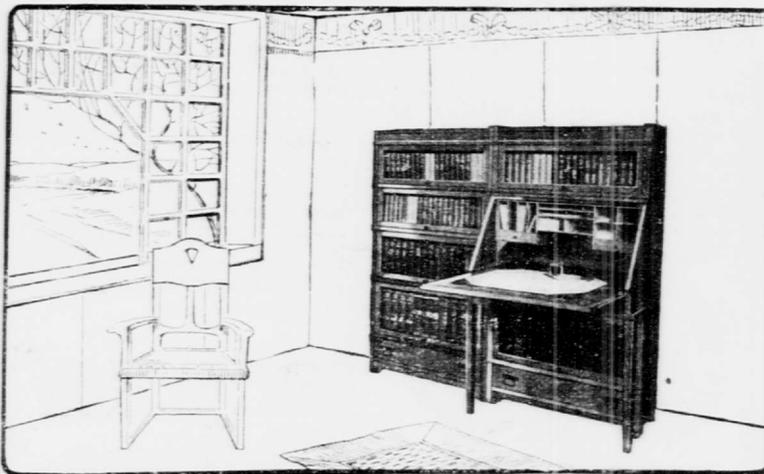
"—Of your skirt?" he asked. "The way you got tangled up in your dress was the one thing that would have given you away even if I hadn't been morally certain of your identity before. Then my friend across the aisle made the opportunity to look at your bare hand. That finished you."

"Yes, that finished me," I acquiesced.

"I suppose I needn't ask you, Mr. Bailey," the detective spoke in a considerate undertone, "whether you will come quietly with me when we reach New York, or whether I must use handcuffs?"

"You certainly need not ask," I replied with dignity, adjusting my wrap and my veil by a few feminine touches; "you are dealing with a gentleman."

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My new acquaintance looked at me with a cold, strange smile. "You do not seem to be a very sympathetic person," she said slowly. "One would