

he's havin' the hottest time the law allows. It'll satisfy a big, red-blooded husky like him, where keepin' him shut up in the hotel lobby would only make him nervous and ready to jump the traces the first time we weren't lookin'. Don't you see?"

"I'm wise," I said.

**P**RETTY clever of the Old Sleuth, eh? You would have thought so if you'd been around Broadway with Muggins an hour or two, like we were. Honestly, one of us had to keep an eye on him every second, he was so excited over everything. He couldn't keep his eyes off the trolley cars, or the store windows, or the people, and it just made him gasp.

"My goodness gracious!" he said, when we stood at the corner of 34th street. "But ain't this wonderful? I never heard tell of the likes of it in all my life."

"It's quite a place, my boy," I said.

"And at night! Gee! it must be awful gay!" he said. "Is 'pose you're dyin' to get a peek at it then?" put in Old Sleuth, winking at me.

"I should say I am!" said Muggins. "I should just say so!"

Old Sleuth poked me in the ribs and whispered, "See? He's got the fever bad. We've got to watch him."

We played Brooklyn that afternoon, the first of three games, and Big Jim was patched up enough to pitch, Hartigan holding the game pretty safe, even with a cramp. We won, all right; and it was a good thing, the Cubs being over in Boston for a series before coming on to battle with us for the lead, and easily winning from the Braves. Having a good lead in the seventh, we put Muggins in. And he certainly made good, the Dodgers not getting a hit off him, and being scared to death with his speed before he'd sent one of them to the bench. Hartigan was tickled to beat the band, and naturally Old Sleuth was.

"We'll pitch him a part of every game till the Cubs get here," said Hartigan, "and in the meantime you keep your eye skinned to see nobody gets to him or he doesn't break loose and make a fool of himself. The way he was watching the crowd today it kind of hit me that he's got the fever to get out and see things a little."

"You see," said Old Sleuth to me. "The Old Man's got Muggins sized up just like you and I did. We've got our job cut out. I guess we'd better start him on his mad career tonight or he'll bust over on us and spill the beans."

"All right," I said. "I was thinking of writing a few letters and going to bed early, though."

"Dey before pleasure," said Old Sleuth. "I'm not feelin' so sporty myself; but we've got to give Muggins a wind round town, just to keep him from fizin'. Let's start him with a little dinner."

"Maybe, though," I said, "the boy don't feel like smokin' out tonight."

"Maybe a duck don't feel like swimmin'?" said Old Sleuth. "Why, on the bench today he was askin' me where the Hippodrome was, and if it was true about those roof gardens where people danced the tango all night long! Also he wanted to know if fifty cents would buy him a real fancy supper at Rector's, and if I thought the suit we bought him yesterday was swell enough to be seen in on Broadway after dark! Oh, no, you couldn't coax him out where the lights shine bright!"

"Well then, let's go to it," I agreed.

**S**O I went home to my boarding house and dolled up my prettiest, and hurried over to the hotel where Old Sleuth had planted the Cranberry Wonder for a few days till he could pick him out a nice permanent place to stay. They were waiting for me, Old Sleuth not having let Muggins out of his sight a minute, for fear some of the Tenderloin bunch would get hold of him, it already being known who he was.

We started off with dinner at Rector's; the club standing for all the expense, of course, since Hartigan was naturally in on the scheme. I'd have given anything for a snapshot of Muggins while we were in there. He didn't say much, but the way he looked at the pretty women in their fine clothes, and the dudes with them, and the band, and all! And when a few couples got out on the floor among the tables and began dancing—well, I haven't got used to those things my self yet, being, as I say, brought up in the country and not so many years off the farm. The Cranberry Wonder just sat holding onto his knife and fork, and forgot to eat.

"Pretty fancy doin's, eh, my lad?" said Old Sleuth, nudging him to wake him up.

"Isn't it wonderful?" gasped the poor lad. "Honest, isn't it—er—er—"

"It's all of that and then an extra fare!" I said, helping him out.

"And this isn't a patch on what there really is to see, I suppose?" he asked.

"Shoosh, no!" said Old Sleuth. "You stick to us, and we'll show you life!"

From there we took him for a walk down Broadway, where the lights were thick; but I don't believe he knew where he was or what was happening, any more than you would if they plumped you down in the middle of Fairyland sometime. You couldn't even say he enjoyed it; it was too much for him. But when we took him up to Hammerstein's Roof afterward, and let him

see a bit of that, he began to get used to it, and you could notice he was commencing to find himself. He could focus his eyes now on what hit him, instead of just looking blank; but he couldn't talk.

"He's enjoyin' it," Old Sleuth whispered to me. "He thinks he's havin' the dickens of a wild time, and it's satisfyin' the cravin', all right. We've picked out the right lay."

"Hadn't we better get him home pretty soon, though?" I said, being a little tired myself.

"We'll leave at eleven," said Old Sleuth. "That'll be late enough for his first night, anyhow. How are you enjoyin' your evenin', Muggins?" he asked the Cranberry Wonder.

"I—I can't tell you!" gasped Muggins.

He didn't need to. We could see.

We went home with him at eleven sharp; but when we left the roof we had to shake him a couple of times to bring him back to us. Honestly, he was so hypnotized by it all he acted as if he was asleep!

**T**HAT was some time last night!" I said to him next morning, up at the field.

"I—I hope I didn't act countrified or anything," he said, blushing. "You see I'm not used to it, and I didn't know."

"You're getting on all right," I said. "A couple more nights and you'll know the town like a book."

"Are we going out tonight?" he asked, as if he couldn't believe such good news.

"Surest thing you know!" I said.

He couldn't even thank me, but just looked.

They brought Slipaway Jones back from the grave for the game, and he held the Dodgers even up to the seventh, when he looked like cracking; so Hartigan put in the Cranberry Wonder. They couldn't touch him, while we landed on Rucker for three hits in the eighth and pulled the game away. More good luck, because the Cubs won out in the ninth over in Boston too.

"The Cranberry Wonder deserves a little extra fling tonight," said Old Sleuth to me. "He's itchin' for it too. Asked me if there'd be any objection to him slippin' away by himself tonight, and said he didn't want to bother you an' me to tote him round town every night."

"Fine chance he'll have to sport round on his own hook," I said. "I'm as keen to take care of him as you were at the start, after the way he saved today's game—if it kills me for want of sleep. What's tonight's scandalous program?"

"Oh, we'll rush him to a show, and then maybe to one of the tango places—only not to keep him up very late."

So that was what we did, and Muggins took to it even better than the night before; only when we came to get him at his hotel he tried a little trick on us that didn't work.

"Honestly," he said, "if you gentlemen don't feel like taking me out this evening, you don't need to. I thought I'd just slip out an' take a little walk down the street after supper by myself."

"Just our plan exactly," said Old Sleuth, tipping me the wink. "We always take a little walk after supper, and then go straight to bed."

"Oh, then, if I'm not going to keep you up—" said Muggins, putting on his hat.

"You won't keep us up," I said.

"We've got to watch this fellow tonight," Old Sleuth said to me. "He's achin' to get away from us, and if we ain't careful he'll give us the slip."

So we hung to him like a pair of leeches, and landed him home a little after eleven-thirty as safe as when we took him out.

Next day Hartigan didn't put the boy in at all, pitching Nelson the whole game after we'd piled up five runs in the first two innings.

"I want to save him for tomorrow with the Cubs," he said. "It's an experiment; but I've got to do it. Our only chance is to have him hold them the first few innings and try to bat out a few for ourselves. If they get onto him, I can put in Big Jim and maybe save the day. By Thursday Harrison ought to be in shape. How's he actin'?"

"Fretful, Boss," said Old Sleuth. "Me an' Charley took him out for a stroll round the gay town last night, and if we hadn't kept our eyes on him he'd have given us the slip sure, and gone Lord knows where!"

"Slattery's been tipping the boy off about how to enjoy himself!" growled Hartigan. "The big ice wagon! He can keep it up all night and never turn a hair, and he thinks a poor country kid like this one can too. If I catch him once—"

"He'll not get hold of the boy, Boss," said Old Sleuth. "We'll be there with the handcuffs."

"I'll give him an earful too," said Hartigan. "I'll tell him to stick to you fellows tonight if he never did. There's another reason too. O'Day's over here, having heard about Muggins, and if he got a chance to get the boy out and spoil him for tomorrow's game I wouldn't put it past the sly fox!"

"He'll do it over our dead bodies, then!" said I.

**W**E never left Muggins out of our sight after the game, going downtown with him, and sticking to him like brothers. I was for going over to my room and

changing my clothes; but Old Sleuth wouldn't have it.

"I'm afraid to be left alone with the boy," he said. "He's actin' nervous, can't you see? He's tryin' to think up some scheme for shakin' us, an' if there's only one to watch him he might do it. You look good enough. Stick around and spell me watchin' him: I'm so sleepy I'm liable to doze off."

We went up to Muggins' room and brushed up, and then I suggested having supper at some place down Broadway.

"Well, if you say so," said Muggins. "But honestly I'd just as soon have it here and then maybe hang around a little and turn in."

"All right," I said, glad to get the chance to lay off for an evening.

But Old Sleuth wouldn't listen to it. "Oh, pshaw!" he said, winking at me. "Let's be sports, if only just to have a good supper somewheres. Then if we feel like callin' it a day, all right. I'm a little tired myself."

"Then don't let me bother you gentlemen at all," said Muggins. "I mean it. I'd be just as satisfied not to go out."

I couldn't see why Old Sleuth was so set on dragging the boy away from the hotel till we got downstairs, and there in the lobby who should we see but Hank O'Day himself, as large as life.

"Look at him!" whispered Old Sleuth, as we sneaked out the side door. "He didn't see us; but you can guess what he's doin' here. It mightn't be a bad idea not to bring Muggins back here at all tonight."

"What!" I said. "Keep him up till morning?"

"No," said Old Sleuth. "I'd die in my tracks. But you could take him home with you, maybe."

"I'll see about that," I said. "The main thing now is to get him away from here before O'Day sees him. Lucky the kid don't know Hank. He won't be suspicious as to why we're dragging him out when he wants to stay in."

"I ain't so sure he don't know O'Day," said Old Sleuth. "He's a pretty foxy kid, all right; so don't take your eyes off him a minute tonight."

As we went out I turned round, and though I wouldn't have sworn to it I was pretty sure I saw the Cubs' sly old manager throw a swift glance over his shoulder at us from where he stood by the desk, and then look the other way. I made up my mind that if Muggins didn't know O'Day was in town, O'Day knew Muggins was, and was laying for him.

**T**HE Cranberry Wonder was mighty quiet during dinner; which wasn't anything to be suspicious of, for he never had a lot to say. But tonight he hardly opened his mouth except for eating, and then not so often, his appetite seeming to fail him. Two or three times Old Sleuth and I tried to make him cheer up a bit; but he just sat there looking around at the folks. You could see he was thinking, and I wondered what about.

We didn't linger very long over our dinner, it being nearly time for the show to begin. When Old Sleuth paid the check and suggested going, Muggins waked up the first time, and said, yawning:

"Going back now?"

"Back where?" asked Old Sleuth.

"The hotel. I thought maybe, seein' Mr. Hartigan said something about me bein' on hand with a chance to pitch tomorrow's game, it'd be a good idee—"

"The best idee I know of," snapped Old Sleuth. "Is a good show. It gets your mind off your troubles, and you don't have to be thinkin' about anybody hangin' round your hotel waitin' for a word with you, or anything like that."

"I don't understand," said Muggins. "Who's waitin' round to see me anywhere?"

"He's just kidding you," I said. "He means he thinks you've got a date or something—that being why you want to get away from us."

"I don't," said Muggins; "only it's late—"

"It's just the right time," said Old Sleuth, shoving the two of us into the theater and following.

I went ahead and found my seat, with Old Sleuth next to me. The theater was dark when we sat down, and he commenced whispering to me.

"Say," he said, "I wish I knew if there's anything in this O'Day business. You don't suppose the kid's tryin' to shake us and keep an appointment with him?"

"I don't suppose he knows anything about Hank being in town," I said.

"But he's sure doin' everything he can to get away!"

"That's a cinch. I think maybe he's got it planned to meet some of the other boys somewheres—I know Slattery and a couple were coming downtown to a billiard match tonight—or maybe go it alone. Anyhow, it's up to us to—"

**W**OW! Old Sleuth let out a yowl that made the people around us jump, and grabbed me by the sleeve, pulling me to my feet. "He's gone!" he choked. "Muggins—he's given us the slip! Quick!"

We beat it up the aisle like Ty Cobb sliding to third, and were out on the sidewalk in a second; but fast as we were, when we got there we didn't see a sign of the Cranberry Wonder.

"Where's he gone?" gasped Old Sleuth, shaking me