

He was approached in season and out of season, Cushman using all the ingenuity he possessed to ingratiate himself into the good will of the suspected man.

One evening after dark they were lying out on the grass looking at the stars. Cushman defely turned the conversation to bank robbers and the possibilities of dramatic handling in stories. His companion listened a long time in silence, and then arose to one elbow and said:

"The time seems ripe, Mr. Cross," the name assumed by Cushman when he entered the cow camp, "for me to make a confession. I want to say in the beginning, however, that I actually had no more to do with the robbery of the Wall City bank than yourself."

Cushman sat up suddenly.

"An explanation is necessary," went on the speaker calmly, "before I begin the recital of a story which I have no doubt you will consider untrue and most improbable. Before you reached here I knew you were coming and what you were after."

"How did you find that out?" broke in Cushman.

"There is a young lady back in the Wall City postoffice who informed me promptly."

"If you are innocent, as you say," ventured the detective, "why did you flee from your home town and why did you take a fictitious name on reaching here?"

"You will have the answer to your first question when you have heard my confession, and the second question I answer by asking you one—why did you change your name on coming here?"

"It was expedient in my case to do so," was the rather hesitating reply.

"The same answer applies in my case," said the young man under suspicion, "but to my confession, if you will be kind enough to hear it."

"Go on," said the detective, "I will hear you through without interruption."

"WELL, to begin," said the young man, weighing his words carefully as he started off, "I wrote the story which set you on the trail, and the editor thought so well of it that he sent me a hundred dollars for it. It was so realistic, I think, is why it won a place in his magazine."

"I was a bookkeeper in the hardware store across the street from the bank for many years, as you know. My desk was at a window where I could see all that went on from morning to night in the bank. Night after night I saw that poor cashier place the trays and packages of money in the safe, lock it and go home. I could see him mornings as he unlocked the vault first and then the safe and took out the money and placed it on the counters. These transactions had a sort of fascination for me, and I watched him from day to day, week to week and month to month."

"The vault and safe were both equipped with old style dial locks. The cashier appeared not to see the figures very distinctly and always turned on an electric bulb when unlocking. From my stool I could see every movement he made. One day a friend left a powerful field glass on my desk and went away without it. The next morning as I turned as usual to see the cashier open the safe it occurred to me in a flash to use the glass to see just how he did it. I was surprised to find that I could see the figures on the vault dial as distinctly as if I had stood within three feet of it. I watched with bated breath the slowly moving fingers of the cashier—one, two, three times around to the left, the indicator stopping on the figure seven; then one, two times to the right, stopping at five, and one slow, careful turn to the left, marking twelve. A quick wrench on the handle and the door swung back. I jotted all this down on the corner of a blotter."

"The cashier then entered the vault, dropped to one knee and shoved back the cuff of right wrist. The dial went around slowly to the right four times and stopped on sixteen, the reverse three times and marked nine, to the right again twice and stopped at three, then left once to twelve. Then he got to his feet and pulled the door slowly open, revealing great piles of money in the safe. Unconsciously I had jotted down the safe combination under that of the vault."

"Instantly the plot of a story, the first and only one I ever attempted, flashed into my mind, an inspiration pure and simple. I nursed, coddled, pruned and polished it for weeks. At last I sent it forward to a prominent New York magazine. It was immediately accepted and paid for at a price which astonished me. I cashed the check at the Wall City bank. As I leaned against the counter while the cashier counted out the crisp bills, I gazed into that vault. Somehow the place fascin-



"I was jerked backwards and thrown on the flat of my back."

ated me. That night I dreamed about it. It seemed to have got into my blood and the story was a part of myself. In my calmer moments I attributed this state of mind to the fact that I had thought long and earnestly about the story, but, nevertheless, the next day I found myself

looking across the street into that banking room. The story I had woven about that brain child of mine seemed so real to me that I finally concluded that it could be done. It never entered my head, however, that I was the one to do it. I seemed to myself a third party to the transaction.

"The next thing I knew I found myself agreeing with myself to make a test of my theory. With that I took out the combinations of the vault and safe which I had jotted down when I first conceived the story, and studied them for a long time. They looked as simple to me as adding a short column of figures."

"That evening it so chanced that as I passed along the sidewalk by the bank I noticed that some one had carelessly left the key to the outer door sticking invitingly in the lock. Some impulse, I am unable to say just what, impelled my right hand to go stealthily to that lock as I leaned slouchly against the door and convey the key to my pocket. Still I had not the faintest thought of stealing a cent. My whole mind was intent on demonstrating to my own satisfaction the feasibility of the story I had sold so easily."

"That night I crept along in the shadows of the buildings and entered the bank, first satisfying myself that no pedestrians were abroad. I recall that I carefully drew the blinds, by crawling along the walls below the bottoms of the windows, as I had pictured the man in the story, to keep out of the light of the one electric bulb left burning in the center of the room. When all seemed safe from outside observation, I approached the vault and switched on the light there. Still I seemed only the leading character in the story. When I took from my vest pocket a slip of paper on which the combinations were written I was nothing but the fictitious character of my brain, not a flesh and blood creature liable to suffer for a crime never actually committed by my own free will."

"The vault door responded at the first trial, showing how letter perfect I was in my story plot. I recall that I gloated over it, like one finding something where he had said it was hidden."

"The safe door also swung slowly back at my seeming magic touch, and I remember as I knelt there I congratulated myself on being swifter in opening the doors to the stored treasure than the

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The World's Greatest Chimney

IF you should be asked by one of your engineering friends how large a chimney it would take to carry off 2,000,000 cubic feet of gas per minute, the question would keep you guessing.



Mammoth 506-foot structure at Great Falls, Mont.

Out at the town of Great Falls, Montana, they've got such a chimney, built in connection with a gigantic silver smelting plant. It is 506 feet high—the tallest chimney in the world, the second to it, at Glasgow, Scotland, falling short of this tremendous elevation by 52 feet. No smoke stack in this country approaches it by much more than half. The famous Washington monument surpasses the Great Falls structure by only 49 feet.

Maybe out in your town you've got one of those big water tanks, of about seventy-five feet in height. It looks pretty nearly like a tower of Babel to one driving into town over the level prairies. Well, just imagine that picked up by a terrific cyclone and laid down on its side, and you'll just about have the inside base diameter of this big chimney at Great Falls—65 feet. Or topple over the huge structure itself and four automobiles could race through side by side without any danger of the machines running into one another. Take it apart and you'll find enough bricks—13,000 tons of them—to build a good sized village. If Atlantic City wanted to replace that famous board walk with concrete, a mile or so of the material would be found right here—in the foundations alone, 5,200 barrels of cement, 2,000 cubic yards of sand, 4,000 cubic yards of slag were used.

Of course a structure of such gigantic proportions couldn't be put up by ordinary methods. Four electric elevators were installed, with speaking tubes, the latter to give orders to the workmen from below.

And to complete this great stack cost a quarter of a million and all for the purpose of conveying away poisonous waste fumes.

Standing on the crest of a hill, 300 feet above the valley, it is outlined sharply against the sky, and thus its enormous proportions are exaggerated. The beholder, especially if he be new to the sight, stops and marvels at what is indeed a most extraordinary spectacle. The old stack in front of the new structure is by comparison a dwarf, though 200 feet high. There are but four structures in the world that surpass the Great Falls chimney. These are: the Eiffel Tower, Paris, 1,000 feet high; the Metropolitan Life Insurance building, New York City, 657 feet; the Singer building, New York City, 612 feet; the Washington Monument, 555 feet.

If the gas the great tube emits were of the illuminating variety, the three cities of Chicago, Boston and St. Louis would require no more than this amount.

At the top of this chimney a circular bench could be placed around the rim, on which 125 persons could be comfortably seated.