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more dangerous prisoners were. He explained, as we descended, that Madden had been insane for two days, and had only just recovered his reason.

It was very dark below; a single arc-light for an entire floor, and that in the center of the corridor. When the turnkey swung open Madden's cell door, I could see only a splotch of blankets against the gloom.

"The electric connection's broken in that cell," said the turnkey. "Here's your priest, Madden."

"Well, I won't talk to him till you two git away from the door," came fiercely from within. "I'll be as silent's the grave s'long's you're here. I wanta speak t' him alone, and you needn't listen at th' gratin', 'cause I'm goin' t' whisper everythin' I say."

"Better git a move on, father. Is that big copper gone?"

"You'd better lay low with that talk, Madden," threatened my cicerone, as the turnkey swung the door inward.

"I did lay low with my talk," jeered the prisoner. "I beat you at that game, you bullyin' hound. Your third degree didn't work with one subject, did it?"

HE burst into a cackling laugh, grating and unpleasant, which turned to a fit of coughing so raucous that one had little difficulty in surmising the malady that was bringing his life to a close. As he quieted down, he groped for my hand in the darkness and drew me to my knees.

"Got a match?" he whispered hoarsely. "Yes? Then strike it!"

Over the flaming sulphur we regarded each other. My jaw dropped in horror. Out of a discolored mass of flesh two wild-animal eyes stared into mine.

"You look like you're on the square," croaked the man on the cot. "I gotta trust somebody, and I'm goin' to trust you."

His hand struck the match down, and we were in darkness again.

"I oughta been dead an hour ago, but I wasn't goin' to die till I'd seen you. They had me tied up to the board for two days, my hands outside, me on tiptoes, my whole weight restin' on my wrists. Still, it's funny I'm dyin', huh? Then they kept me awake three days and three nights runnin', askin' me questions all the time. Still, it's funny so many people die in jail, ain't it? Then they turned the

fire-hose on me every half hour for a day—until I got this pneumonia that's goin' to finish me in a few minutes. Ain't it odd I got such a delicate constitution? See my face? That's from sittin' round in a row, with five big coppers askin' me questions and hittin' me every time I refused to say what they wanted me to say. That's the law a man gets who ain't got any friends!"

He groped for me again, and caught my wrist, sinking his nails into it.

"THIS money crooked? Don't make me laugh! I had Claim 53 staked with Yensen. I found the gold; he put up the money for improvements. Like a fool, I let him register the claim, thinkin' he'd do it in both our names. He don't. He does it in his own, and kicks me off my own property. I ain't got a shadder of a right by law—not a lawyer 'ud take my case. So I waited until he panned out enough dust to make the touch worth while, and then I grabbed it. D'you think that's crooked money?"

He did not give me time to answer: his voice was so low now that it was only by putting my ear close to his mouth that I heard him at all.

"Luck's always been ag'in' me. Didn't seem a chance for a tumble! I'd sent the wife and the kids off to her sister in Great Falls, and I'd 'a' had the money there too in another day. But they got me! She thinks I blame her, 'cause I won't see her. Seems kinda hard, too, after her comin' all the way back. But if I told her where the dust was, they'd take her out of this cell into another one; and how long would she last with the fire-hose? Ten minutes—and then she and the kids 'ud be charity! That's why I won't see her. That's why I sent for you. I wanta tell you where the dust is, so's you can send it to her. But I wanta know first: is the money crooked or not? I'm not askin' what the law says: I'm askin' what God 'ud say?"

"You've told me the truth?" I gasped. "I ain't goin' to face purgatory with a lie on my mouth. May I burn in hell fire till judgment day if I ain't talking square as gospel. Now, quick—listen!"

Panic-stricken lest his lips be sealed before he had told me his secret, his remaining strength went into pulling my head down close to him while he jerked out the words that would make his wife and children independent of the world's charity.

He had not been wrong about the brief space allotted him.

The Chief of Police was at my side as I walked out of the jail. Trembling with impotent rage as I was, I dared not incur this man's enmity until I had safely sent the woman back to her children and arranged to ship her the dust that had cost her husband's life.

But I saw immediately, when he climbed into the trap beside me, that he still believed I would be a party to his infamous scheme. It was in my heart to denounce him as a murderer, and, had I no one else to consider, he would surely have heard the truth from the lips of one he could not harm. But, as it was, I knew I must temporize.

There was no policeman behind this time, and he spoke freely and as one who settles a prearranged matter.

"I've got a check for ten thousand all written out and in my pocket," he said, smacking his lips. "Pretty good business for one night, eh, father? I'll hand it to you before we get back to your church."

"I am sorry," I replied slowly, "but Madden didn't tell me what you want to know."

He almost dropped the reins. "Didn't—tell you?"

I nodded. "You're bluffin'," he said roughly. "Come across with that info, or—"

I tried to keep cool. "I think you forget yourself, Captain. It would be a very serious thing for you if you jailed a priest without being able to substantiate criminal charges against him. In fact," I continued meditatively, "I'm not sure you wouldn't have a riot on your hands. My church is poor, perhaps, but a large proportion of your population belong to it. And, strange to say, they would be likely to object to an insult offered their priest."

He saw the force of my argument, and tried the only method he knew of shaking a man's convictions.

"I'll change that check to fifteen thousand in two minutes."

"Captain," I answered levelly, "are you proposing to make a gift to the Church?" Seeing that it was fruitless to try to placate him, I took the offensive language that he hurled at me as an excuse to catch the reins and stop the horse.

"There are certain epithets a priest can not listen to, Captain," I said as I got out of the trap.

"I'll run you outa town for this!" he yelled, shaking his whip at me as I walked away. "I'll make people afraid to go to your tin-pot church! And, what's more, I'll have a man tallin' you for every move you make. You'll never get that dust away from here, and I'll make this town too hot to hold you!"

I WILL not dwell on the first part of my interview with Mrs. Madden; but, as soon as she was calm enough, I told her what the Chief of Police threatened, and impressed upon her the necessity for getting back to her children at Great Falls before he found some excuse to detain her. There was a train that stopped at Gosport, a place about ten miles away, at two o'clock that morning. I told her she must take it, and sent her into my bedroom to wash up while I made her some strengthening beef-tea and put out a decanter of port. I thought it best to omit from my narrative the account of how her husband had been treated. It was difficult enough to persuade her to go away without seeing him buried, and I succeeded only by insisting on her children's need for her.

"Now," I said, after forcing her to gulp down two glasses of the wine—"now I am going to tell you where your husband hid that gold dust. I may die or lose my reason before I am able to send it to you, especially in view of what that policeman has threatened. So you'd better know."

I SHOULD have waited until we reached Gosport and she had one foot on the trainstep—I know that now: but it was her secret, and I was nervous in the thought that an accident might befall me, and she would never know. So I brought her ear close to my mouth and whispered the location of the treasure.

"Here," I added, "are five twenty-dollar gold pieces. If you need more, you must let me know. Are you ready?"

Stilling her promises of what she would do for me and my church, I opened the door. Immediately there was outlined in the lighted space the shadow of a man.

"Who's there?" I called sternly. A policeman stepped into view—Michael O'Grady, one of my parishioners.

"Well, Michael," I said, trying to retain the sternness in my voice, although I am afraid unsuccessfully, "what can you want at such an hour? Is the wife ill, or the babies?"

"No, thankin' God and your riv'rence," he replied; "but I've orders from the Captain, who's off yonder, and the same orders is not to permit th' lady t' lave th' house—beggin' your riv'rence's pardon, and for which I hope there'll be no blame laid ag'in' me."

"The Captain? Over yonder?" I said weakly, stepping backward.

"Ye'd better see him, father," urged O'Grady in much uneasiness. "I've got me orders: I can't do a thing."

Meanwhile I had pushed Mrs. Madden back into the house and was facing Captain Grattan.

"If you have anything to say to me," I remarked coldly, "you had better come into the house."

And he followed me in. "I've got nothin' to say to you," were his words, as he closed the door. "This woman is an accomplice of the late William Madden, and she is to be taken to headquarters and questioned. I see she's all ready to go somewhere."

He turned suddenly to her. "Where were you goin'?" he demanded threateningly.

"To—to Gosport, sir," she replied, sitting down, all in a tremble.

HE stood frowning at her. I closed the door behind him, locked it, and put the key into his pocket. He was wearing a loose rain-coat over his uniform, and did not notice what I had done. I acknowledge it was all part of a prearranged scheme, which I was determined to carry out if he insisted on doing what he planned to do.

"Oh!" he sneered. "And so you were goin' to make your getaway—aided and abetted by this kind priest—who don't know where Madden hid that gold dust. Oh, no! Of course not!"

He put his arm on Mrs. Madden's shoulder.

"Come along with me!" he said. "I guess by this time the holy father has passed out the info about where the gold dust is. If he has, we'll soon have it out of you."

"Yes," I said, trying to keep my voice low. "Captain Grattan has many little persuading ways. He can lock you to a cell and play a fire-hose on you for a couple of hours, for one thing. He can tie you up by your wrists to a cell door, for another. Or he can keep you awake for several nights running. He is a very powerful persuader."

Crossing to where he stood, I removed his hand from Mrs. Madden's shoulder.

"Captain Grattan," I said, "I should advise you to let this woman alone. You killed her husband, and if she is brought into this every one shall know how he died. I advise you to go. Alone!"

"Oh, so that's the game, is it?" he asked, turning a dangerously smiling face to me. "What about Madden resistin' arrest and tryin' to kill an officer