

SAFETY IN WEAKNESS.

An iron monarch rode the sea,
A nation's hope and pride;
Through storm and billows dashing free,
It feared no wind or tide;
Its banner waved in every land,
With honor hailed abroad;
Whence'er it hurried its fiery brand,
The very deep was awed.
The ocean's rage was felt at last;
Its billows set at naught;
It gathers up a cyclone's blast,
And all its terrors brought;
Tossed, like a ball from hand to hand,
A moment poised on high,
Then dashed upon the rocky strand,
And there the fragments lie;
A trim Phyllis floating near,
With iridescent sail,
Through all the dark, devoid of fear,
Had sported with the gale;
The storm that wrecked the navy's pride,
It all outwrote with glee,
And still is dancing on the tide
To beautify the sea.

Thus all who boast their native strength
Will fall on weakest strain,
And sadly find when tried at length,
That all their hopes are vain.
The soul that seeks Jehovah's care,
Secures from every wrong,
A mighty arm is then made bare,
In weakness they are strong!
—Sidney Dyer, Ph. D., in Chicago Standard.

THE CARUTHERS AFFAIR
By WILL H. HARBEN
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SYNOPSIS.

Minard Hendricks, great detective, just returned from Boston, finds awaiting him an unsigned typewritten letter directing him to apartments in Palace hotel, where he will find remain of Mr. Weldon Caruthers—currently reported for past two weeks to be out of town. Detective seems to connect letter with attempt made on his own life some time previous. Goes with friend, Dr. Lampkin, to investigate.

CHAPTER II.

"You say you know Caruthers?" he asked.
"Very slightly."
"See if you recognize him in the ballroom."

Lampkin studied the throng for several minutes, then he went nearer, and standing behind a crowd of men and a bunch of palms he studiously surveyed the ballroom. He went back to the detective.

"See anything of him?" questioned Hendricks, taking his fixed gaze from the rug at his feet.

"No."
"Then we must ask for him at the desk."

They approached one of the active clerks behind the counter. Hendricks drew out a visiting card and fingered it, his name downward.

"I'd like to see Mr. Weldon Caruthers," he said.

The clerk glanced at the key-rack behind him and shook his head.

"He hasn't returned yet," he answered. "He is still out of town."

"Where is he?" asked Hendricks.

"I cannot tell you, sir," and the clerk turned to answer a question put by a man in evening dress on his right.

"I am very anxious to see Mr. Caruthers to night," resumed Hendricks, when he could get the clerk's attention again. "It is a very important matter."

The man in evening dress had overheard; he paused, interested.

"Are you looking for Caruthers?" he asked.

"I am," replied Hendricks.

"That's odd," smiled the man. "I've seen a dozen people to-night asking about him. We were just discussing his queer conduct and wondering what was the matter with him. He has broken several important engagements without a word of explanation. His valet told me this afternoon that his master had been called by a night telegram to Philadelphia and had written him that he would be detained there for a couple of weeks. I presume it was some urgent business."

The speaker lighted a cigar and moved away to a group of men in the smoking-room. Hendricks drew the clerk aside.

"I am a detective," he said, in a low voice. "Hendricks is my name."

"Minard Hendricks?" exclaimed the clerk, in astonishment, his tone and manner suddenly apologetic. "I had no idea—"

"It is most important that I should have a look into Caruthers' apartment," broke in the detective. "Don't say a word to anyone, but get a pass key, and show my friend and myself up there right away."

The clerk nodded, a hurried expression on his face. Getting a key, he came from behind the counter and started towards the elevator.

"Not that way," objected Hendricks, detaining him. "Can't we go up the rear stairs?"

"Sure," said the clerk. "It's only one flight." And he piloted them to the stairs behind the cloakroom. "You'll find the apartments just as Mr. Caruthers left them. His valet said that his master had written him that the room must not be disturbed by anyone."

Hendricks paused on the stair.

"Did Mr. Caruthers not inform his man that he was going away?" he asked.

"No; you see Mr. Caruthers' man is married and lives on the west side. He happened to have a day off and did not know what had become of his master till he got the letter."

"I see," remarked Hendricks, and he started on again.

Reaching the door opening into Caruthers' apartments, the clerk unlocked it and led them in. The first chamber was a private sitting-room, the dainty pieces of French furniture, draperies and rugs being in perfect order.

"The gas is burning," observed Hen-

dricks, looking up at the cut-glass globes.
"As I said, no one has been in the rooms since Mr. Caruthers went away." "Not even his valet?" asked the detective.

"It looks so, or surely he would have extinguished the gas. It seems to be burning in the next room too."

This chamber was a large luxurious bedroom, and as they entered it Lampkin's imagination prepared itself for a horrible spectacle. To his great relief, however, everything here was also in perfect order. The white lace coverlet lay as smoothly as newly fallen snow, and the sheets and pillows looked as if they had never been used. The clerk now with a look of growing curiosity, if not of incipient horror, stooped down and looked under the bed.

"Nothing there," he said. Then his attitude grew more serious, as he went to the large closets one by one and opened the doors. "There is the bathroom yet," he remarked, with a shudder, his mind perhaps busy with a bit of French history or some recent American horror. "It's getting mighty common nowadays to commit bloody crimes in bathrooms. Do you suspect foul play, sir?"

"You are going entirely too fast," said Hendricks, in a curt tone. "Every matter I choose to investigate need not necessarily be a bloody one." He smiled and added to Lampkin: "My reputation among the people is as red as cranberry sauce."

The clerk bore the reproof with becoming humility. He made no reply and hung back till the detective had opened the door leading to the bathroom. Here the gas was burning also, and the small chamber, with its polished tiled floor and glistening porcelain walls, revealed no hint of bloodshed.

The face of the clerk fell; his appetite for sensation was not to be fed on this occasion.

"What time did Mr. Caruthers leave the hotel the night he left?" Hendricks asked him.

"I really don't know, sir," said the clerk. "I am pretty sure he did not mention it at the office, and that is customary among our guests. That is why I thought there might have been some underhand—"

"Leave your pass key with me," interrupted the detective, coldly. "My friend and I want to have a little private talk. When you go down, don't mention our being here."

The clerk reluctantly laid the key on a table.

"I'll not give it away, sir." He moved slowly towards the door. "If you want anything, ring. I'll be on the lookout, and will run up myself."

"Good," said Hendricks, "you are very kind."

The detective followed him to the outer door and closed it after him. Then he came back into the bedroom.

"I hope this is only a hoax, after all," observed the doctor. "What are you going to do next?"

Hendricks shrugged his broad shoulders; it amounted to a shudder.

"We are going to look through those trunks—for a trunk and the rest."

"Is it really so bad as that?"

"My blasted premonition—which faculty in my make-up has always been a mystery to me—has hold of me with its four claws," said Hendricks. "I can't explain it, doctor, but the minute I entered that door and saw the gas burning so brightly I felt murder in the air. Sometimes on a day like this—at a crisis like this—I imagine that the spirit of the murdered man lingers round the spot where he lost his life to try to give me a clue."

Lampkin shuddered as the detective laid hold of the nearest steamer-trunk and began to unstrap it. It was empty save for some clothing in the bottom.

The next trunk was a large square one, and its lock for several minutes resisted the efforts of the detective to unfasten it. Finally, however, aided by a key of his own, and no little experience in such matters, Hendricks released the brass hasp and it fell down with a sharp click.

This trunk, also, contained nothing of a suspicious nature, and the same results were produced by a careful examination of two other trunks stored in the bathroom and a dress-suit case of heavy leather which was found in one of the closets.

"Ah, I certainly feel better," cried Lampkin, a triumphant ring in his voice.

"I don't," ejaculated Hendricks, with one of his massive frowns, which always made his great brow resemble a miniature jutting crag.

"And why?"

"Because my anonymous correspondent says I shall find the remains of Weldon Caruthers in these apartments, and I believe on my soul he meant what he said."

"But that man downstairs said Caruthers' valet has received a communication from his master in Philadelphia."

"I'll bet my life it was forged."

Lampkin started, and then he gazed into the detective's eyes steadily.

"I can't follow you, and I won't try. Your mind darts out after things I never would dream of. Do you think you may find a trace of the missing man here?"

"If my thinker would operate smoothly." This with a forced grin. "My trip to Boston has fagged me out. I am not normal. But it will not surprise me to find out that the same man wrote to the valet that wrote to me."

"If so you have a deep villain to deal with."

"As deep as the crucible of hell can turn out."

The detective sat down in a chair near the bed and, taking from his pocket the anonymous letter, he studied it in silence. After a minute he said, reflectively:

"You will observe he does not say I shall find the body of Caruthers here,

but the remains, and he has underscored the word heavily. Furthermore, he boasts of the skill with which the crime has been accomplished; that, old man, means something."

"But it seems to me that you have looked into every possible nook and cranny," said the doctor.

As if under a sudden inspiration Hendricks sprang up, and going to the bed he pushed aside the silken curtains of the canopy, turned down the sheets and doubled up the mattress. Then he drew himself up and began to examine the bric-a-brac about the room. He thumped with his knuckles a marble statue of Venus de Milo in a corner, and then stood still in the center of the room and stared at the articles of ornament on the mantelpiece. He walked slowly backward to the doctor and laid a hand on his shoulder, and pointed to a large covered Japanese vase, shaped like an ancient urn.

"Doctor," he said, "the man who selected all the bric-a-brac in this room did not select that vase."

"It does seem a little out of harmony," admitted Lampkin. "Rather cheaper than the rest, don't you think?"

"It is a disgrace to such a collection," returned the detective, "besides it has been crowded in between those beautiful bronze pieces. Old man, I have an idea."

Lampkin said nothing as he watched his friend place a chair near the mantel-piece and mount it. The chair raised the detective so high that the cover of the vase was on a level with his chin. Hendricks removed the cover and looked into the vessel.

Lampkin saw him pick up something inside the vase, examine it and lay it back. For a moment the detective stood, his back to the doctor, a hand on either side of the vessel. Then he lifted it, cautiously stepped down to the floor, and placed it on the table.

"Prepare to be horrified, old man," he said, grimly. "It is here."

Lampkin started. "You don't mean—"

"You needn't look unless you want to," frowned the detective. "But our arch fiend has actually cremated the body of Caruthers, leaving only the jeweled hand of his victim to prevent there being any doubt as to the identity of the ashes. It was cremation; I know bone ashes when I see them."

Lampkin got up and peered into the jar, turning the ghastly object over on the bed of ashes beneath.

"There is no odor," he said, trying to speak in a matter-of-fact tone. "That is strange."

"Embalanced," said Hendricks. "I saw indications of it in the punctures of the flesh."

"You are right," agreed the doctor. "Let me see a moment," with these words the detective sprang to the vase,

and, picking up the grewsome object, examined it minutely.

"I have only one isolated clue," he said, putting the severed hand back on the ashes.

"What is that?"

"In his effort to cut and wrench this hand from the joint at the wrist, the murderer allowed his sharp nails to sink into the flesh. The marks did not show at the time, but the process of decomposition has brought them out distinctly. Doctor, the fellow who did the job maniaures his finger-nails to sharp points, as is the vogue among society men of a certain class."

Lampkin made an examination.

"You are certainly right," he said, returning the hand to the vase.

"Shrewd and cautious as the perpetrator evidently was that did not occur to him."

"God has never yet made it possible for a human mind to be full of a hellish deed and at the same time master details that will completely overcome detection," was Hendricks' reply.

"You do not think that the body could have been reduced to ashes in these apartments," said Lampkin, tentatively.

Hendricks shook his head, and pointed to the open fireplace where lay the ashes of a wood fire.

"No, this is the only fireplace and it has not been used for a fortnight."

"Are you sure?" incredulously.

"Quite sure. This chimney seems to come straight down from the roof, and raindrops have fallen and left their imprints here. It rained two weeks ago and has been clear ever since."

"I would never have thought of that."

"It is my business to think of everything."

Lampkin's face betrayed the birth of an important idea.

"Surely," he said, "the body could not easily have been removed for the purpose of cremation elsewhere without being dismembered. Perhaps if you made a careful examination you might find traces of its having been cut up."

"Thanks for the suggestion," said Hendricks. Lampkin watched him as he went into the bathroom and closely

examined the porcelain tub and white-tiled floor.

"No," he said, coming back. "I think he managed to remove the body in its entirety."

"You think that?" remarked the doctor, not convinced.

"Yes; it would be an easy thing to do. As Caruthers was supposed to be leaving, it would be natural for him to take a trunk, and his luggage going out would not attract much attention."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed the doctor. "In his own trunk!"

At this juncture the door leading into the corridor swung open and the clerk who had shown them upstairs entered suddenly, his eyes alighting on the severed hand which lay across the somewhat narrow mouth of the vase.

"My Lord!" he exclaimed, his eyes bulging from their sockets, "has—has he been murdered, Mr. Hendricks?"

An expression of deep annoyance settled on the face of the detective.

"Yes," he said. "But leave us alone for a few minutes, and please don't say anything about this down in the office just yet. We would be interrupted by sight-seers."

The clerk thrust his white, horrified face forward and peered into the vase.

"Surely not—not cremated, Mr. Hendricks!" he gasped.

"That's about the size of it," retorted the detective. He went to the door and held it open. The clerk took the hint and backed out of the room.

"Don't lay it to me if this gets out sooner than you wish," he said. "A member of the detective force was down there in citizen's clothes and recognized you when you first came in. He had heard of the remarks going round about Mr. Caruthers' absence, and seeing you on hand made him more curious. He has Mr. Caruthers' man down there now, asking him questions. It seems nothing has been seen of Mr. Caruthers since he had the row with Mr. Arthur Gielow at the club."

Hendricks leaned against the door-folding.

"They had a row, eh?"

"That's the general report, sir."

"Did you hear what it was about?"

"Some dispute over a woman, I think."

"Who was the woman?"

"Miss Dorothy Huntington was the name I heard mentioned."

"Ah," broke in Lampkin, coming forward. "I remember—"

But Hendricks was bowing to the clerk and smiling, as if to denote that the conversation were at an end.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

FOLLOWING THE SCENT.

The Strange Story of a Wild Young Man and His Sharp-Nosed Bloodhound.

We were back from one of the prettiest rides in all California and after supper sat under the trees with our genial host, rich and owner of a model fruit farm, says a clever story teller. Some one spoke in the severest terms of a heavy defaulter then prominent in the public eye, and the man who was entertaining us astonished every one by breaking in abruptly: "Gentlemen, I do not believe in passing judgment upon a man until you understand all the circumstances of his case. To assume that every man who goes wrong has the instincts and the impulses of a common criminal is preposterous. You have to know influences, temptations and motives before you can pass intelligently upon results in such cases."

"O, you're too tender hearted and charitable," declared the first speaker. "A rogue's a rogue, and you can't paint him an honest man."

"Nice break you made," said another, as the host left us with a flushed face and passed into the house. "Don't you know his story? But, of course not, for it's almost forgotten, even here. He was a wild youngster and ran heavily into debt. His father was thought to be wealthy, but was really worse off than nothing when he died. The young man went to work with a will, though with all his opportunities he had never fitted himself for anything better than a day laborer. He was engaged to one of the sweetest girls in the whole state, but her family would not hear to a marriage until he was able to support his wife in something like the way she had always lived. Out of all the vast estate the young fellow took nothing but the old bloodhound, famous for his sagacity and courage. To insure the services of the brute his master was made a deputy sheriff. One night the bank in the county seat was robbed of an immense sum. Before daylight the man who had just left us and his bloodhound took the trail of the robber. Since then the former deputy sheriff has never known what it was to want." "What's the explanation?" "The hound went straight to the fine suburban residence of the bank president. The facts never came out until the latter had a fatal brain fever a few years ago."—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Another Purist at Large.

"What is your objection to women's clubs, professor? Haven't they as good a right to organize themselves into clubs for good fellowship, mutual entertainment or instruction as men have?"

"Oh, yes, madam. I don't question their right to do anything they please. My objection to women's clubs, if I have any, is that nearly all the club women I happen to be acquainted with pronounce it program."—Chicago Tribune.

One.

Tom—I will venture to say that there isn't one great city in this country or Europe on whose streets the bicycle is not a familiar sight.

Dick—There is one.

"What?"

"Venice."—Up-to-Date.

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"Evil Dispositions Are Early Shown."

Just so evil in the blood comes out in shape of scrofula, pimples, etc., in children and young people. Taken in time it can be eradicated by using Hood's Sarsaparilla. In older people, the aftermath of irregular living shows itself in bilious conditions, a heavy head, a foul mouth, a general bad feeling.

It is the blood, the impure blood, friends, which is the real cause. Purify that with Hood's Sarsaparilla and happiness will reign in your family.

Blood Poison.—I lived in a bed of fire for years owing to blood poisoning that followed small pox. It broke out all over my body, itching intensely. Tried doctors and hospitals in vain. I tried Hood's Sars