

CHAMBERLIN IS STILL ALIVE AND FITTING GLASSES.

THE MYSTERY OF GRASLOV

By Ashley Towne

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He finished it, and it finished him. It was not ten minutes before his own eyes closed in that terrible sleep from which he could not arouse himself until the effect of the drug had passed off.

"Come!" said Olga. Nervously and quickly she rifled the sleeping man's pockets and found a bunch of keys. Swiftly, then, these two rushed to Itzig's room and, shutting the door, barred it on the inside.

"Now we can work without molestation," said Olga.

She tried several keys in the lock of an iron door that formed part of the rear wall, but without success. Finally she found one that turned the rusty bolt, and the door swung open. This door led into a small passage, in which there were various articles—lanterns, whips, chains and weapons. Olga quickly chose a lantern which showed it had been recently used and lighted it. At the end of the passage was an iron grating forming a door, and this, too, she unlocked with Jansky's keys.

Beyond this was a flight of stone steps leading downward, and then all was darkness. Olga, holding the lantern above her head, led the way down the steps. The stones were cold and damp and slippery as she neared the bottom. The dark atmosphere sent a chill through her, but the brave girl did not falter. There came creeping after her, shivering with fear. They did not count the number of steps, but knew there were many. At last they stood on a cold stone floor.

"Now, which way?" she asked, holding the lantern to flash its light as far as possible around her. She could see that they were in a large chamber from which various passages broke away in every direction. "We must not linger—to lose time would be to lose the game," she said. "Choose this passage and follow it to the end."

She turned into the nearest passage, and the gleams of the lantern were reflected from slippery walls. As she walked she examined these walls for doors. There were arches that led to other passages and smaller ones that opened into chambers that had evidently been once used for prison cells, for chains were hanging on the walls.

The lantern in Olga's hand flashed its light into every nook and cranny until at last she reached the end of that passage. Making sure Therese was close behind, she turned her steps into another passage, running apparently at right angles with the other. This she traversed in the same way until the very brightness of the place and its silence began to awe her.

The first courage that had led her to the desperate act gradually gave way to the awful gloom and mystery of the place. But in its stead there came a determination not to relinquish the search until she had found the unfortunate victims of Neslerov's hate or proved that they were not there. She walked on, gradually increasing her pace. A door at last greeted her vision—a real door that swung on hinges.

"At last, perhaps," she said. She tried her strength against the door, and though it was not locked, yet she could not open it sufficiently to enter.

"Therese, help me," she said, setting the lantern down upon the floor.

The two placed their shoulders against the door and pushed, and it suddenly opened. Therese was precipitated headlong into the chamber. A rush of foul air almost stifled Olga. There was a peculiar sound, as if Therese had fallen upon a heap of something. She was whimpering in her terror.

Olga seized the lantern and dashed into the chamber. A cry of horror escaped her. She was in what seemed to be an old tomb. At least, there were heaps of bones scattered about, and into one of these poor Therese had pitched headlong.

Olga swung the lantern and, near to the spot where Therese lay, two skeletons hung in chains. One had lost its head, but the other, by reason of being fastened in a peculiar way, had retained its grinning top piece.

Therese was in a dead faint.

Olga was now in a terrible difficulty. She knelt by the side of Therese.

"Oh," she said, "if I had but some water! She will never recover in this place."

Setting the lantern down, she dragged the woman from the place of

horrors and laid her down on the cold floor of the passage. Then she swung the door shut.

Again she began working over Therese. Olga saw that she was suffering a severe nervous shock, and the only hope of restoration of her senses was immediate removal from the place.

Swinging her lantern upon her arm, she seized hold of Therese and began dragging her along the passage, going backward in order to exert a greater pull on the unconscious woman.

In some way—she never knew how—she lost her bearings and came suddenly against a great stone pillar which stood in the center of a sort of court, from which passages ran like the spokes of a wheel.

For a moment she stood there half unwilling to believe the truth. Then, as the horrible fact was borne in upon her, she let the shoulders of Therese lie neglected on the floor while she stared helplessly around her. She could not discover the one through which she had come.

She was lost!

CHAPTER XIV. OUT OF THE CHAINS.

THE horror of the situation was so great that Princess Olga's brain could not accept it all at once.

Not only was she lost, but there was a certainty that if she was rescued she would also be discovered in this act against the rule of Neslerov. Powerful as was her family, she was now absolutely at the mercy of the governor of Tomsk, whom she knew to be merciless. Who could ever know that Princess Olga, the rich and beautiful Neslerov, died in the dungeons under her cousin's palace?

To her vivid imagination already the horrors of starvation loomed up. To lie in that cold, dark place and suffer and slowly waste away, to lose her mind, to rave in madness—all these thoughts burned into her brain. Then, looking at poor Therese, the girl's heart was stirred with pity.

"I am not only a scribe, but I am a murderer as well," she said. "I should not have induced Therese to come."

Therese stirred.

"Ah, Therese! Good Therese! Speak to me, will you not?" pleaded the princess. "You should not have come. It was horrible, that den! And perhaps I brought you here to die."

"I don't want to die!" exclaimed Therese, sitting upright as though the word had acted like an electric shock.

"I do not wish to die either; but we are lost, Therese."

"Lost! How can we be lost? Are we not under the palace?"

"Yes, we are under the palace, but we are nevertheless lost. I have lost the way. See all these passages? I do not know by which one we reached this terrible place."

"We seem to be almost at the center. They cannot all lead to the stairs."

"No, certainly not. And there is little chance of telling which does lead to the stairs. I do not even know in which direction the stairs lie. We are lost, Therese, and will perhaps die here of starvation."

"You must not! You shall not!" exclaimed Therese, made stronger now by the evident need of some one to assist the princess. She did not think so much of herself as she did of Olga.

"There must be a way out and close at hand," said Olga.

The terrible silence acted upon the shaken nerves of poor Therese, and she began to scream hysterically.

"I will not die! Heaven help us both! Help! Help! Help!"

The screams of the distracted woman rang in weird echoes through the caverns.

"The echoes mock me!" she cried. "Is there no one to help?"

"Hark!" said Olga. "I think I heard a voice."

"A voice! I heard a thousand of them—and they are all my own."

"No, but this was not. It was a man's voice. Wait till I call."

The caverns were still.

"Is there any one here?" rang out Olga's clear voice. "We are lost in the passages—two women. Is there any one here?"

"Here, here, here!" came back the echoes.

"I am here—a prisoner!" came an answering cry.

"Here—prisoner—isoner!" came the echoes.

"Where are you?" called Olga.

"You—you—you!" echoed the mocking caverns.

"I must be near you—the voices sound not far—follow the sound of my whistle!" came a louder voice.

"Whistle—istle—istle!" came the troubled echoes.

Immediately there began, not far from them, the tune of "The Star Spangled Banner." Olga knew it was an American tune and instinctively realized that the person who was guiding them must be the one who had been trying to solve the mystery of Graslov and had been imprisoned by Jansky.

After a few moments she managed to distinguish between the real sound

from key suspended from a peg by a chain.

"It must be the one," she said, and she seized it and sped below.

"Remain here," she said to Therese, "and if I am lost again you can guide me back to the stairs as the American guided us to him."

She wound her way through the passages and at last reached Denton.

"You are a brave little woman," he said. "I did not think there was a woman like you in the world—except one."

"I suppose you mean Frances Gordon," said the princess.

"What! Do you know her?"

"I met her at the great fair in Moscow. She was very charitable."

While she talked she tried the key. It fitted the locks in the chains and one by one they dropped clanging against the wall, and Denton was free.

"Now, then," she said, "Vladimir Paulpoff is here. Do you know how to find him?"

"No; I do not know where they put him. I know it was not near me, for I have been calling him. I received no answer."

"We cannot remain here in safety much longer," she said. "The daylight will bring activity in the palace. Jansky, superintendent of police, is lying drunk in his office, and Itzig, the guard, is also unconscious. The superintendent will be discovered and there will be an uproar. It will spoil all if we are now discovered."

"We must make haste and find Vladimir," said Denton. "I do not feel that we can leave him. If they discover my absence, they may kill him."

"Find him if you can. If not, I must watch over his welfare till you return."

"Return! From Perm?"

"No. Perm is too far. I have worked to bring the denouement in the palace. I have sent a message to the governor general at Tobolsk. I have with me a woman whose testimony is worth millions. All we need now is what Papa Paulpoff can tell us. You must bring him."

"I will."

He tried to find some clew to the place where Vladimir was incarcerated, but there was nothing to guide him.

"I cannot find him, and I believe he is safer than you will be if Neslerov traps you here. Neither you nor I will ever get out alive. We must leave him."

"Then come, and may God give him his protection till we can give him justice!"

They hurried to the stairs. The door was unlocked, the iron key hung in its accustomed place and the door to the guardroom unbolted. The halls were still lighted by the brilliant lamps of the fire, though daylight was coming on. But there was no one stirring.

"Quick!" said Olga. "Let us understand each other. Therese, who is here as my attendant, is the widow of a servant of the Graslov household—loyal to the old duke. She is willing to tell the truth. Has Paulpoff spoken?"

"Yes. He told me all, and I was about to start for Perm with the portrait of Princess Alexandra when I was arrested by Jansky and brought here."

"And now you are free! Why did you take this interest in the mystery of Graslov?"

"Because," he answered after a slight pause, "Miss Gordon, whom I have known for a long time, loves Vladimir, and I think Vladimir loves her."

"Ah," she exclaimed, peering at him closely, "and for her—for her sake—you wanted to publish—the truth?"

"Yes, and for his sake also."

"Then he is not the only one who loves her, this American girl," she said. His face became flushed, but he did not answer.

"Now go," she said. "Find Paulpoff and bring him here. You know where he is."

"He is still in the hut at Tivoloffsky, if Jansky has not spirited him away."

"Then look for him there, and if he is gone the governor general will help us find him. Oh, I wish De Muloff would come!"

She sped into Jansky's room and replaced the keys in his pocket. Then, returning, she said:

"God bless you! Help me establish the truth, and the gratitude of the Neslerovs will be yours."

"You may count on me," he answered as he passed through the palace door. "I will bring old Paulpoff to tell the truth."

Bechtel Quits Railroad.

Burlington, April 6.—J. M. Bechtel, division freight agent of the Burlington lines in Iowa, in Burlington, has resigned and will retire to private life on his fruit farm in Mills county, Ia. His resignation came as a surprise to railroad officials and is generally regretted. He began working for the Burlington road thirty-three years ago as a telegraph operator at Hamburg, Ia.

PRESIDENT FEELS RESTED

Roosevelt Passes a Quiet Day at Sioux Falls.

ATTENDS THE WRONG CHURCH.

Mistake of Local Committee Sends Him to Divine Service Both Morning and Evening—Lays Down New Rule for Speaking.

Sioux Falls, S. D., April 6.—President Roosevelt was the guest of Sioux Falls until 9:10 o'clock this morning. His special train arrived here about 8 o'clock Sunday morning and he was met by a delegation headed by Mayor G. W. Burnside and State Senator A. H. Stites. Senator Kittredge also greeted him. The president was escorted to the Cataract house by detachments of the two militia companies here and enjoyed a day of comparative rest, the first he has had since the trip began. He attended church both in the morning and evening and in the afternoon went for a horseback ride, accompanied by Seth Bullock, superintendent of the Black Hills forest reserve.

The fact that President Roosevelt attended divine service twice Sunday was due to a mistake on the part of the local committee. The committee had the impression that the president was a member of the German Lutheran church, and accordingly arranged to have him attend that church. Later, when it was learned that the president worshipped at the Dutch Reform church, arrangements were made to have services held in the evening at the Livingston Reform church here.

While it is not the custom of the president to attend services on Sunday evening, he consented to make an exception to his rule when the facts were presented to him. The services in the morning were conducted by Rev. Herman Sell, president of the German English college at Welton, Ia., who came here for that purpose. The German language was used throughout. Owing to the fact that both in Milwaukee and Minneapolis the length of the program did not permit the president to reach his car until after midnight, he has been obliged to announce that hereafter he will, in the evening, not begin speaking later than 8:30 o'clock and always will be back in his car by 10 o'clock.

NO BREAK IN TEXTILE STRIKE.

Second Week of Lowell Lockout Offers No Hope of Settlement.

Lowell, Mass., April 6.—The second week of idleness for over 14,000 textile operatives in six of the mills here began today and no change in the situation is expected. Some reports were current that the Hamilton mills would open, but Agent Moulton declined to discuss the matter. Some cloth rooms are still being operated. The amount of unfinished goods on hand is not large and will furnish employment for only a few days. Officials of the Massachusetts, Tremont and Suffolk say their factories will shut down altogether during the coming week.

Made Threats Against President.

San Bernardino, Cal., April 6.—R. P. Brown of Redlands, who was arrested just before the last visit of President McKinley, under instructions from Governor Gage, alleging that he made threats against the president, is in the county jail, having been taken in custody on a similar charge, he having been overheard making threatening allusions to President Roosevelt. It is stated that ever since the president announced his intention of visiting the coast, Brown has been closely watched, and his arrest was decided upon as a measure of precaution. He is charged with vagrancy.

City Elections in Kansas.

Kansas City, April 6.—The elections to be held tomorrow for city officers in all the Kansas cities of the first class will, as a rule, settle matters of local interest. The liquor question cuts a smaller figure than in some previous years, but is the vital issue in Topeka. In Kansas City, Kan., straight Democratic and Republican tickets are in the field, and the victory of either will be hailed as a party triumph, but in most of the other cities party lines are not closely drawn, and the result will give no indication of the trend of political sentiment.

Consumptive Chooses Fiery Death.

Los Angeles, April 6.—Louis Witsmeir, a consumptive from Buffalo, committed suicide in a horrible manner. He poured three gallons of kerosene over his body and set fire to his clothing. He was burned to death in a few minutes.

CRISIS NEAR IN BALKANS

Sultan Accused of Goading Albania to Revolt.

AUSTRIA MOBILIZES TROOPS.

Furk Promises Ambassadors to Send Soldiers into Disturbed Districts if Russian Does Not Soon Subside. Russian Consul at Death's Door.

London, April 6.—There is little further development in the Balkan crisis since Saturday. The rumor of the death of M. St. Cherbina, the Russian consul at Mitrovitza, who was shot by an Albanian sentry, proves to have been premature, but the consul's condition is serious and symptoms of peritonitis have appeared. It is reported that the Albanian soldier who shot him has been sentenced to fifteen years' hard labor.

The sultan is accused of fomenting the recent revolt in Albania. A series of massacres are believed to be near. Russia and Austria are expected to intervene.

According to a dispatch from Constantinople the Austrian, Russian and British ambassadors have had audiences with the sultan, on whom they impressed the necessity of suppressing the Albanian agitation. The sultan informed them that in the event of the failure of the mission that he dispatched to Albania, he would take measures for the military occupation of the disturbed region.

The Daily Mail's correspondent at Vienna asserts that Austria has mobilized her Agrar, Sarajevo and Temesvar army corps in readiness to occupy Mitrovitza should such a measure become necessary. The correspondent further affirms that a dangerous agitation exists among the Mohammedan population of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is secretly arming itself in spite of all official precautions with the intention it is feared, of emigrating into old Serbia to swell the ranks of the insurgent Albanians.

A telegram from Belgrade reports that rioting has taken place there as the outcome of a demonstration against an objectionable police regulation and many persons were wounded in the course of the disorders.

Sofia, April 6.—The Macedonians here held a requiem mass at the cathedral for the repose of the souls of the revolutionary Bulgarians who were killed at Karbitzi, where a band of twenty-four insurgents, under two Bulgarian officers, were slaughtered by Turkish regulars. The portraits of the leaders of the band, bound with crapes, were placed in the cathedral and the officiating priest pronounced a sermon in which he held up the glorifying example of the victims. The edifice was crowded.

HOSTILITIES IN SANTO DOMINGO.

Government Troops Again Repulsed by the Revolutionists.

Washington, April 6.—A report to the navy department from Commander Turner of the cruiser Atlanta at Santo Domingo City shows another repulse to the government troops, who made an attempt to take the city from the revolutionists, and that Commander Turner was again compelled to land bluejackets to protect the United States consulate. He reports that large government forces, commanded by President Vasquez, are approaching the town and attack is momentarily expected. The rebels are apparently determined to resist. The government gunboat Presidente again bombarded the town, firing three shots without injury. All places of business are closed and the situation is extremely critical.

No Verdict in Oleomargarine Case.

Des Moines, April 6.—The jury in the case of the state against the Armour Packing company failed to reach a conclusion. The jury, after being out some time, came back into the court and asked for additional instructions in regard to the color question, which is the only question in the case. The jury could not agree as to whether the oleomargarine sold in Iowa is of a yellow color or white.

Two Expect to Be Mayor.

Chicago, April 6.—With the most hotly contested mayoralty campaign in Chicago's history practically ended, both sides claim victory and neutral men forbear their prophesy. Graeme Stewart, the Republican nominee, expressed the opinion that there will be a Republican landslide. Chairman Carey of the Democratic county central committee declares that Mayor Harrison will have more votes to spare than two years ago.