

CHAMBERLIN IS STILL ALIVE AND FITTING GLASSES.

THE MYSTERY OF GRASLOV

By Ashley Towne

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CHAPTER XV.

NESLEROV KNOWS HIS PERIL.

ABOUT the time Governor Neslerov was rousing himself from a deep slumber which had not refreshed him after the bull Jansky, superintendent of police, was grinning and muttering in his own efforts to wake up. He knew he was awake, but the effect of the heavy drug was still upon him. Itzig, however, having succumbed to a lesser quantity than was taken by Jansky, was sooner awake and had been relieved by the day guard and gone to his own quarters. The first question Neslerov asked was for Princess Olga. When he learned that she was still sleeping, he went to see Jansky.

"What is the matter with you?" he asked. "You seem to be ill."

"I do feel rather ill," said Jansky. "I don't know when I felt like this."

"You were drunk; that's all. You were drunk when I left you. Did you drink any more?"

"Yes; in making the round of inspection I discovered Itzig asleep and a bottle of wine half gone. I drank the rest."

"Itzig asleep! At his post! And this danger near us?"

"Pooh! The girl suspects nothing. A girl of her age, even though she be a princess, could not dissemble so well. I tell you Olga suspects nothing."

"Then why is she here?"

"Well, she is eccentric, as you know, and it is quite possible that she would like to be the wife of the governor of Tomsk."

Neslerov laughed. "She would like to kill him, rather."

"Even so, she does not suspect."

"But this thing of Itzig being asleep at his post—we must examine into it."

"The poor devil wanted his share in the festivities, I suppose. We must not deal too severely with him. He certainly did not steal the wine. Some one must have given it to him."

"Who? I must find that out. But, since he has been asleep, you had better examine the prisoners."

"They are there all right. How could they be otherwise?"

"But you know what it means to me if they escape."

"Escape! I will stake my head they cannot escape. Why, to pass out from the dungeons they must open the iron gate and the door of the guardroom. See, here is the key to the guardroom door."

"Still," said Neslerov hesitatingly, "I wish you would make an examination."

"Oh, if your excellency wishes it, I will do so gladly. But I promise you they are there."

Jansky was still stupid from the drugged wine, but he knew what he was doing. He went to the guardroom and unlocked the door leading to the dungeons. In the passage he obtained a lantern and passed through the iron gate. He went down the stairs and through the passages, which he knew well, to the dungeon. He entered and stood horror-stricken at the empty chains hanging on the wall. With fear in his heart he crept back to the stairs, glancing nervously around him, for he knew the strength of the American. Neslerov, to whom he went, looked in surprise at the ashen face.

"Curses upon us all!" said Jansky hoarsely. "They are gone!"

Jansky looked sheepishly at the governor, and Neslerov looked at Jansky like an angry wolf.

"Gone! Both prisoners gone!" cried the governor. "Is this true?"

"Unfortunately—the thing I thought impossible is a fact."

Neslerov's face was white.

"I thought—you told me—they were both in chains!" he said, his voice strained and tense.

"I did, and it was true. With my own hands I chained them. The American was in the dungeon at the first landing and Paulpoff was down in the lower cellar. With my own hands I chained them, and I hold the key to the door. The key to the chains still hangs where I placed it. This is a miracle. The men must be devils in human form."

"The American is something like a devil," said Neslerov grimly, "but I doubt if he has supernatural powers. If those chains have been loosened, Jansky, some human agent has done it, and there is a traitor in the palace."

"Whom does your excellency suspect?"

"My cousin Olga."

"That girl! She would no more dare go down in those dungeons than she would enter a den of wild beasts. And how could she learn that they were down there?"

"It is not quite a secret. Some of the servants saw them brought in."

"Since the princess came the servants have had enough to do without talking about two prisoners of whom they know nothing. Anyway, how could Olga, who has spent but little time in Russia and none near Graslov or Perm, ever hear of the Paulpoffs?"

"I know not. But certain it is there is a traitor here. This escape, if escape it is, will cost us dear."

"If escape it is! It may not be an escape after all! The chains are old and rusty. Perhaps they have given way, and the prisoners may be wandering around the passages. I will send for Itzig."

Neslerov was terribly disturbed. He paced to and fro in the police office, and his face did not regain its color. He was playing for a high stake—the highest stake—playing for his life—and the game seemed lost.

Jansky sent for Itzig, and he came before them.

"You went to sleep last night!" thundered Jansky, whose theory was that to obtain the truth from a culprit you must terrify him at the start.

"I swear I did not, your excellency!" replied Itzig, shivering in terror.

"You lie! I went in the guardroom, and you were asleep. I found there a portion of a bottle of wine. Who gave you that?"

"I! A bottle of wine! I never tasted wine in my life. Brandy and vodka, plenty, but wine—I am too poor."

"Oh, you did not buy this wine. Some one at the fete gave it to you. Who was it?"

"I know not! I swear I know not who put the wine in my room!"

"You are lying. A tray was also there, with dishes. You had your feast and got drunk. Who brought the stuff to you?"

"I swear no one. If there was a feast, it was some one else's."

"How could any one else eat there and you not know it?"

Itzig saw he was lost.

"I may have—perhaps I slept a moment."

"A moment! You slept hours, and the prisoners you were guarding have escaped."

"Impossible!" gasped Itzig, almost sinking through the floor.

"Enough of this!" said Neslerov. "Itzig is here, and if he has permitted the men to escape he can be punished any time. We are wasting precious moments. Let us get down to the dungeons and find them."

Jansky took a pistol, and so did Neslerov. They went to the guardroom. Jansky took the lantern and opened the door and iron gate. He led the way, Neslerov and Itzig following.

"See? He has gone," said Jansky, pointing to the chains.

"Are you certain this is the room?"

"Certain? As I am alive."

"Then for the other, and keep a watch. They are not armed, but remember Paulpoff's strength, and the other is no pygmy."

Again Jansky led the way. He did not tell Neslerov he had not been to visit Vladimir. In his agitation at finding the American gone he had assumed, of course, that if one could escape both could. Reaching an obscure corner, toward which Denton had not chance to go in his search, they found another stairway leading downward. This short flight brought them to a horrible place—more horrible than the one where Denton had been chained.

This was a dungeon made cold and damp by the water that stood two inches deep on the floor, and in which blind reptiles that had never seen any brighter place crawled around in the slimy ooze. Long strings of rotten moss hung from the walls. Here, in this noisome and terrible place, was Vladimir, chained in the same manner as Denton had been.

"I thought you said he had gone too!" exclaimed Neslerov, a flood of hope and courage showing in his voice.

"I thought so. In my excitement I believed both had gone, but if one is here the other must be. We will search the dungeons."

They did not speak to Vladimir, who was suffering awful tortures, but turned and ascended to the upper floor. Here, winding and turning among the passages, they crept stealthily—three armed men searching for one man who was unarmed, yet fearing that the one might leap upon them and slay them as they walked. But they did not find the American and returned crestfallen to the office of the superintendent of police.

"That man did not set himself free," said Neslerov. "Some one who knows my secret has done this. Olga is here. Who else but Olga could do this?"

"Did the Princess Olga come to you during the hall?" Jansky suddenly asked.

"I know not. Was it the princess who gave you that wine?"

"The father of the man's face gave Jansky his answer."

"Heaven! he exclaimed. 'The wine must have been drugged! It was Olga who set him free!'"

"Then we must act with extreme caution, for if she knows this much she will ruin me. For a short time we must act as if we did not know the American had escaped. But you and Unseth must find him—find him—before he gets out of Tomsk. Then, with him again in our grasp, I will deal with Olga. Fool, to put her strength against mine, and in Tomsk!"

"What about Vladimir?" asked Jansky.

"Leave him alone. Let him starve! He can do no harm."

Jansky went quickly to work. Unseth, upon whom he depended most, had gone to another place in the discharge of his duty. Jansky made several fruitless journeys during the day, but no trace of the American could be found.

Olga, when, late in the day, she joined the governor, noticed the studied calm and the steady glitter of his eye. She knew he had discovered the escape of Denton, but the resolute girl did not fear him. She merely nerved herself to finish the work she had set herself to do. She had frequent errands that took her near the office of the superintendent of police, and she kept her ears alert to catch the slightest whisper.

It was evening when she went for the seventh time, and loud voices came from the superintendent's office. So ex-

actly as she was about to enter, she saw the superintendent and Jansky.

"What are you doing here?" asked the superintendent.

"I am here, as usual, to see you, your excellency."

"You are here, as usual, to see me, your excellency?"

"Yes, your excellency. I am here, as usual, to see you."

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"You are here, as usual, to see me, your excellency?"

the palace guard paced his measures through the deserted corridors.

But Neslerov was not asleep. Feverish and impatient, he sat in his room, awaiting the return of his police with the American, whose liberty was a menace to the life of Neslerov. He drank deeply from time to time from a bottle that stood on his table. If he spoke, he did it with a loud voice, but no one was near. His thoughts were spoken thus, as with a man half mad with fear.

"Heaven! he said as he drank again. 'If he reaches Perm, and the truth is known, I shall—what will become of me?'"

He started as a light footstep sounded on the hard floor, and his haggard face grew paler as Princess Olga entered.

"Why are you awake?" he asked harshly. He was too excited to think of phrases.

"I could not sleep, and I knew you were not in bed," she answered. "I came to talk."

He stared at her. In his eyes she was as beautiful even as Frances Gordon, but his danger made him think her a tigress seeking to devour him. Yet he dared not show it.

"Why are you alone?" asked Olga.

"You usually have Jansky, the superintendent of police, with you?"

"Jansky is away. A noted prisoner has escaped and the superintendent has gone to retake him."

"I heard a commotion. I supposed it was something of that kind. Was it a Russian?"

"Yes—a nihilist."

"I hope they will capture him."

"They will! They must!" said Neslerov fiercely.

Olga's eyes were veiled—they did not betray her thoughts.

"There is much concerning this system that is new to me, and it will take long for me to learn it all. I am already weary with the little I have done."

"Better leave it alone. It is a business for men, not princesses," said Neslerov.

"The study has made me wakeful. Bring me some wine."

He opened a bottle.

"It has puzzled me why you do not marry," he said, trying to hide his fear of her as he poured out a glass of wine.

"Why should I?" she asked. "I have not yet found among the nobles of Russia the man I would marry."

"What sort of man must he be to please you, cousin?"

He was sparing for time. Any hour might bring Jansky back with Denton. Then he could play his part in safety. But with Denton at liberty he dared not act.

"Oh," said Olga, "to please me a man must be honorable, strong and wise. He must not be bound by custom, nor yet must he scorn it. There are ways in the world we live in there are ways—of being great without being eccentric and without following the lead of others. A man whom I love must be patient and must not use his strength against the weak."

A sarcastic smile crossed his lips.

"You must look outside of Russia," he said.

"Perhaps," she answered. "But you have not pledged me. Must I drink alone?"

His eyes snapped with the remembrance that Jansky and Itzig had been drugged. But she was so handsome, so smiling, that no sign of evil intent was in her face.

"From your hand," he answered, with a show of gallantry.

She poured him a glass of wine, and they drank. For a moment he waited, as if half expecting to fall asleep. But the wine had no ill effect, and they chatted on. But Neslerov grew more impatient as the night wore on. Why did this girl persist in staying up and talking to him? What was in her mind? Was there another plot? He paced to and fro in the room as he spoke. When his back was turned, she made a quick movement and dropped something—not into the wine bottle, but into the bottle of liquor from which Neslerov drank.

"I think I will retire," said the princess. "It is late, and perhaps I can sleep now."

"I hope you will find rest," he said. She went out. Neslerov watched her with a dark, saturnine face. What did she mean? He poured out a liberal dose of liquor. The wine was too weak for him. He needed something to steady his shaken nerves. He drank it. In five minutes he was staring blankly at himself in a glass.

"What is this—this feeling?" he muttered. "That she devil! I am poisoned! What trick is this? Help! Guard! Lieutenant of the guard!"

The young officer heard, and ran to him.

"Your excellency called," he said.

"Yes—quick—I am poisoned—I am drowsy—bring Princess Olga—quick!"

PITTSBURG IS FLOODED

Miniature Rivers Flow Through Streets of City.

PEOPLE FLEE TO UPPER STORIES

Street Car Tracks Lost Under Two Feet of Water—Easter Wreckers Stunned in Church—Two Indiana People Are Swept Away.

Pittsburg, April 13.—With terrifying swiftness the thunder storm which came out of the west last evening crashed over Pittsburg, pouring miniature rivers through streets, flooding cellars and inflicting damage that will reach thousands of dollars. One man was killed by lightning and many buildings were struck. Irvin T. Wilson, while walking from one building to another at the Dixmont insane asylum, was killed by a bolt. The congregation of Christ M. E. church, in Center avenue, was stormbound. The street for blocks was flooded. Street car traffic was almost entirely suspended in the eastern portions of the city. In Wilkinsburg the cloudburst poured through the valley. The loss to property in the Thirty-seventh ward was great. A house in Coal street was almost swept from its foundation. Street car tracks were lost under two feet of water.

Imperial, Pa., April 13.—Rain began falling in torrents last evening and continued one hour, accompanied by one of the most severe electrical storms of the season. In a short time the Montour valley was a foaming mass of water and timber from nearby lumber yards filled and obstructed it. The tracks of the Montour railroad were carried away in many places. The passenger train, which was reported lost, has been found at Montour Junction. When the track was washed away the trainmen decided not to attempt the return trip. All of the passengers are safe. The flood came so rapidly that there were several narrow escapes, but it is not known that any lives were lost. Farmers in the valley will suffer great loss, as many fields were almost ready for planting. The village of Imperial was just recovering from the fire, which, a few days ago, destroyed the business portion.

FATAL TORNADO IN ILLINOIS.

Storm Sweeps Over Three Counties. One Killed and a Score Injured.

Springfield, Ill., April 13.—One death, a fatal injury, and a score or more of injuries resulted from a tornado that swept over Logan, DeWitt and Platt counties. The fatality occurred in the Halsadarzer settlement, a little farming community three miles from Atwood, Platt county. The home of Clifford Halsadarzer was demolished and after the storm Halsadarzer's infant son was found dead, 300 feet from the place where the house stood. The baby was lying in bed when the wind struck the house. Mrs. Halsadarzer was hurled across the village street and fatally injured. Mrs. J. B. Martin's home was destroyed and several guests were painfully injured.

Lincoln, Ill., April 13.—Three farm residences were destroyed, several persons were injured and grain and machinery were blown away by a tornado which swept over the country four miles east of Lincoln. The storm followed Deer creek and passed from the southwest to the northeast. The homes of Samuel V. Baldwin, Adam Schanauer and Gustave Knecht were wrecked and the families and visitors escaped by rushing to the cellars on hearing the roar of the approaching storm. The wind is reported to have struck the town of Waynesville.

Cloudburst in Indiana.

Henryville, Ind., April 13.—A cloudburst at noon flooded this part of Clark county and did great damage. The heavy fall of water has extended north as far as Sellersburg and Seymour. County Commissioner Raymond and wife were drowned while crossing Blue Lick creek. The waters had risen so rapidly that the buggy was swept away.

Stricken While at Prayer.

Louisville, Ky., April 13.—Rev. Michael Bouchet, vicar general of the Roman Catholic diocese of Louisville, died at the rectory of the Cathedral of the Assumption. He was stricken with apoplexy while on his knees in prayer and passed away after only four hours' illness. Although he was seventy-six years old, he had been a man of good health, was hale in body and mind and so far as is known the fatal attack came on without any premonition.

FOUR DIE IN TRAIN WRECK

Disastrous Collision on a Nova Scotia Road.

TWO OTHERS FATALY INJURED.

Engineer of Freight Train Falls to Take Siding and Brings About a Fatal Smashup Near Halifax. Brakeman is Missing.

Halifax, April 13.—Four persons dead, two fatally hurt, at least one missing and several others slightly injured is the record of a head-on collision on the intercolonial railway, which occurred at midnight near Windsor Junction, twelve miles from Halifax. The telegraph poles were wrecked and this city was cut off from communication with the outside world for four hours.

The trains in collision were the Canadian Pacific express from Montreal and Boston for Halifax, and a fast freight from Halifax for Montreal.

The conductor and driver of the freight had orders to take the siding at Windsor Junction and let the express cross, but for some unknown reason Driver Copeland of the freight ran past the junction on the main line and met the express two miles beyond. It is thought Copeland may have lost control of his train. The freight was running twenty-five miles an hour and the express, which was two hours late, traveling about forty-five miles an hour.

The dead are Engineer William Wall, Fireman Michael Oakley, Fireman Hill, Brakeman Thorpe.

Fatally hurt: Engineer Copeland, tramp named McCready.

The trains crashed together on a level piece of road skirting a lake. Driver Wall of the express was caught in the mass of twisted iron and was scalded to death by escaping steam. Fireman Oakley was thrown from the cab and was drowned in the lake, where his body was found in six feet of water. Fireman Hill was burned to death and Brakeman Thorpe was killed outright. Another brakeman of the freight train is missing, and the lake is being dragged for his body.

FIRE COSTS TWO LIVES.

Five Others Are Burned by Blaze at Indianapolis.

Indianapolis, April 13.—Nathan Morris, an attorney, and Frank Haas, the twelve-year-old son of Dr. Joseph Haas, were burned to death and Mrs. Joseph Haas, Miss Belle Haas, Miss Rose Haas, Louis Haas and Grace Lemon, a governess, were injured by fire that almost destroyed the house of Dr. Joseph Haas. The fire started from the furnace. The family was asleep on the second floor. Mr. Morris was a brother of Mrs. Haas. From the position of his charred body when found it was evident he was endeavoring to get the family out of the rooms when overcome by smoke and flames. The body of Frank Haas and the governess were found on the back stairs. Louis Haas broke his leg by jumping from a second story window.

Dutch Strike Collapses.

Amsterdam, April 13.—The strike has collapsed. The aged socialist leader, Domela Nieuwenhuis, who emerged from his retirement in order to run the strike agitation, was present at a stormy meeting of the labor organization, which sat during the whole of the night. He proposed to terminate the agitation since the cause of labor had been betrayed. The meeting acquiesced in this view and decided not to elect a new strike committee. A similar decision was reached at a local meeting of strikers at Rotterdam.

Burning Mine Is Flooded.

Sydney, N. S., April 13.—Through a sluice cut from a dam made on the shore of the Atlantic ocean and opening into the old working, water is now pouring into the burning colliery of the Dominion Coal company at the rate of nearly three and a half million gallons an hour. The pit is flooded up to the seventh level and there are four more levels to be flooded before the fire is reached. It will take five more days to flood the mine to such an extent that the entire fire area is submerged.

Manufacturers to Meet.

New Orleans, April 13.—The annual convention of the National Association of Manufacturers, which opens here tomorrow, promises to be well attended. Many of the members are accompanied by their ladies and New Orleans is prepared to give the visitors a royal welcome. The convention will adjourn Thursday.