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SYNOPSIS

James Montgomery, an innocent country lad, is arrested for killing a bank watchman. His finger prints are taken by the New York police.

His old mother pleads in vain for him with Detective Michael Kearney. Montgomery is placed on trial for his life, charged with murder.

Convicted of murder in the second degree, he is sent to Sing Sing as a life prisoner and enters the machine shop.

(Continued from last week)

Within this structure a cell awaited Montgomery. It would be his resting place at night after the day's work in the shops of the walled city of silence, sorrow, sweat and celibacy. Of the outside world he would see only a patch of sky squared by the steel bars. He would be as the police thought a yegg man should be—buried alive.

James Montgomery was stripped of his clothes and finally stripped of his name. Both were thrown away. He became No. 60,108.

He stood naked under the examination of the prison physician and was then placed under a shower bath and washed clean. Garments made by convicts were given him, ill fitting underwear, heavy shoes and a dull gray suit of baggy trousers and almost shapeless jacket. He was reported to the foreman of the machine shop as available material for his force.

Montgomery was struck by the quiet of the prison. There was no sound of voices. Convicts came and went or busied themselves in groups over prison tasks, but they did not converse. He was informed that the rule of silence was strictly enforced and that he might talk only at the close of work and when he was in his cell. He was of a taciturn nature, but when he thought that the rule of silence would obtain through his whole lifetime the thing became appalling. He had the privilege of a cell by himself or with a cellmate. For the sake of the human voice he would hear in the morning before work, and at night after work he asked to be allowed to share a cell.

The fifteen year man made the same request, and the old burglar and the country boy became cell companions.

They separated for the time being. No. 60,108 was sent to the machine shops and turned over to the convict foreman, who questioned him and tested him as to the value and use of many tools and who found him worthy and well qualified for a place on his staff. The burglar needed no examination of that sort. He had been through it all before. He was given the working tools of his craft and began cutting garments with other prisoners, who gave him looks of recognition and signaled greetings with their fingers in the deaf and dumb code or clicked out telegraphic messages in the Morse with their scissors.

The midday meal in the mess hall was choked down by Montgomery with a mighty effort. His interest in machinery kept him from breaking down during the afternoon. After the evening meal he was marched to his prison tier with a battalion of convicts, and a guard showed him his cell. He found the fifteen year man already there.

Every cell on the tier was a busy phonograph by this time, for the rule of silence was now suspended, and the men could talk all they pleased in the cells or from cell to cell. When the chatter became a babel of sound, a guard warned those talking loudest and the roar would die down.

"Well, what you in for and for how long?"

The country boy turned to the questioning burglar. "I was convicted of murder. I am in for life."

The burglar grunted and scanned the face of his cell mate closely.

"My name's Bill—Bill Hawkins," he said. "I'm in for burglary. You're green. I'll put you next to things."

Bill was eager to talk and paused for a moment as if considering the line of conversation or monologue he would indulge in.

"You got the white disk on your coat," he began finally. "If you keep it they'll let you have newspapers and cats and tobacco. It's the first term disk. Mine's red. This is my third trip. Second term men wear a blue disk. As soon as any one of us violates a regulation, off goes the disk, kid, and you'll never win it back. Get that?"

Montgomery nodded.

Bill explained that after a year of perfect conduct he would be given a white chevron to add to the disk, and it would entitle him to write a letter once every two weeks and that once every month he might purchase little articles for his comfort.

"But you can't slip 'em along to any of your friends," he said. "If you do and they catch you it is good night for the white disk and the chevron and all the good marks that would count for a

After four years of perfect conduct marked by the disk and four white chevrons, Bill explained, he would be allowed to receive visits from friends once a month, could write a letter once a week, could receive a box of cooked food every three months from home—if he had a home—and could take a newspaper and keep it for two days on a stretch.

For these instructions the boy thanked his cellmate simply.

"Don't call me Mr. Hawkins," protested Bill. "Call me Bill. This ain't any place for the mister business."

Bill had gradually loosed his clothes as he talked. He was now ready to retire. Montgomery saw him lift his long, powerful arms and take hold upon the edge of the upper pallet. Without touching the lower one with his feet he drew himself up and swung into bed with the agility and ease of an orang.

"Good night," he grunted from above.

Montgomery prepared to retire, and when he was ready to creep under his blanket he knelt and bowed his head. The cell lights had been turned out. Hearing no sound from below, Bill leaned over the edge of his pallet and peered into the checkered shadows made by the tier lights shining through their bars. He saw the boy in prayer and held his peace.

James Montgomery had started the long treadmill jaunt to the grave of a life convict. The gong awakened him in the morning, and he fell in line outside with the men of his tier, to be counted and accounted for in the morning report of his tier warden. The morning meal was dispatched in silence, as prescribed by the rules, and he started work in the machine shops.

The careful training his old mother had given him stood him in good stead. Every task that came to his hand he did cleanly and quickly. He found that the dreaded rule of silence was an advantage. He had much to learn about machinery and could apply himself to getting this knowledge without distraction of any sort. His foreman found him efficient, steady in his work and willing. He promised to become one of the most useful men who ever worked in prison garb.

The weeks passed into months and the months finally rounded out a year, and No. 60,108 had a white chevron sewed to his sleeve under the white disk.

During the first year he had been as much cut off from the outer world as if he had gone down to the bottom of the sea with the crew of a sunken submarine. Now he was given pencil and paper. He had earned the privilege of writing a letter. His heart hungered for a word from or about his mother.

Resting a pad of paper on his knee, he sat on the edge of his cot after the end of a year's work to write to her.

The task was a mighty one. The very beginning of the letter with the words "Dear mother" shook his whole nature. His hand trembled violently and his heart beat so fast that he felt weak and ill. A great sorrow enveloped him, so great that it left no room for bitterness or protest. Just the touch of her dear hand, just a glimpse of her dear, sweet face and the sound of one spoken word from her lips! Could any boon be as great?

The tears filled his eyes and fell upon the sheet of paper. He turned from the task. The stretch of hopeless, bar-

"Dear Mother," Shook His Whole Nature.

ren years for both of them was before his mind's eye. He threw himself on his cot and sobbed.

His burglar cellmate moved uneasily, presence of such distress.

"Say, kid," he said at last, "get a strangle hold on the job. Don't let it floor you. Don't be taking the count, old fellow. Gimme a chance, and I'll write the letter for you if you tell me how to spell the words right."

Montgomery felt the kindness and humanity in the offer.

"I'm all right now, Bill," said he. "Thank you. I just lost my nerve for a minute. I want to write my mother, and I didn't know what to tell her."

"Tell her?" echoed Bill. "Why, there's lots to tell her. Tell her about the white disk you still got on your arm and about the white chevron. Tell her you're the best boy in the Sunday school and always know your lesson. Tell her that every time you get a white stripe there's something doing for a big, fine record and that after awhile they will let you out for being so good."

The suggestion was a worthy one. He would tell her all of this, as the practical sense of the old burglar had advised. He would tell her also of his advance in his craft, of the new tools he had learned to use, of the machinery he was already building and repairing and of his plans for perfecting mechanical devices. He would draw a picture of inventions he had in mind and that he would have patented, of the fortune that he would make some day and of the spending of that fortune to gain his liberty and prove his innocence by finding the man who had killed the watchman.

"That's the stuff, kid!" exclaimed the delighted old burglar. "You're bound to put it over on them yet. You got brains. The warden will help you get your patent, and there's plenty of lawyers in this place to draw up the applications. Before you know it you will have money rolling in on you, and with money you can do anything in this world. You can buy political influence enough to get a pardon. Go to it, son, and make the old lady think that you'll soon be out, and be a rich man too."

In the morning Bill was ready with more suggestions.

"If I could stomach all these rules like you," he said, "I wouldn't serve half my term, believe me. Once they get to trusting you they watch you less. You come and go like a trusty, and then some day you'll see your chance for a getaway, and off you go. And if you ever get a start all you got to do is to beat it over the river to the West Shore tracks and hop a fast freight for the Hackensack meadows. You'd be as safe there as in a jungle. If the mosquitoes don't eat you alive you can take your time, and as soon as you get a coat and a pair of pants you're all right."

"You mean try to escape?"

"Sure," replied Bill. "Why not? You're in for life, and they can't add nothing to your sentence."

"But the pardon?"

"You might have to wait fifty years," said Bill, "and what's the use of getting out then? You would starve to death. When the time comes I'll lend you a hand, kid. There'll be a way of slipping you a little money and getting clothes for you."

Montgomery felt a curious little thrill of pleasure at the suggestion.

"There's lots of time, lots of time," he warned. "Don't be in any hurry. You can afford to wait five years if necessary. Just keep at your job, but all the time keep your eyes skinned for the chance. It will come some day sure."

CHAPTER V.

Planning.

No. 60,108 began to count the hours and days to the probable moment when he would receive an answer to his first letter from prison.

His home was hardly more than twelve miles away from Sing Sing, but it was across the river and well out in the country. It would depend upon the rural system for its delivery. As it traveled on its way, he let his mind follow it with many tender and yet distressing thoughts of her who would receive it.

Two days passed and the looked for letter came. It was delivered to him O. K.'d by the deputy in charge of the correspondence department. He studied the handwriting on the envelope. It was not in the old fashioned script of his mother, and his hands shook as he drew forth the letter and unfolded it.

He glanced at the signature and read the name of Margaret Wadhams, a friend and neighbor of his mother. She wrote that his mother had been very ill and that her eyesight was failing rapidly. She could not see well enough to write and had asked Miss Wadhams to do the writing for her.

"She tells me to write you only a bright letter," wrote Miss Wadhams, "but I think it is my duty to tell you that your dear mother has broken very rapidly and I believe that she has not many more days to live. Her heart was crushed by the blow that fell upon you and that was only intended for you, James. She is patient and prays constantly that some day your innocence will be established.

"Garrett, the New York lawyer who defended you, wrote to her and urged her to mortgage the house and raise enough money so that he could take an appeal to the higher courts. She was eager to do this, but I prevailed upon her to see Mr. Westervelt, the Nyack lawyer, first. Mr. Westervelt said that the lawyer was a robber of widows and the poor and that he would not let her get out of his hands until she had sold her very clothes. He took up the matter without a fee, like the kind man that he is, and said it was utterly useless to take an appeal. He said that there was no chance of offsetting the evidence the watchman was found.

"She keeps the clothes you wore when you were a little boy always near her. She has the picture taken of you at the county fair, and it is a great comfort to her."

No. 60,108 again put aside the letter and sat staring at the steel wall of his cell while he fought to master his emotion. For a moment he thought frantically of trying to break out of prison and hurrying to her. If he could get a little start he could swim the Hudson and make his way home in time to kneel beside her bed, clasp her thin hands in his and comfort her and breathe his love to her as she passed into the valley of the shadow. He glanced about him as if in the hope that God would bring some miracle to pass and that the steel walls and bars would melt and the stone crumble.

Bill had swung himself up into his bunk. Montgomery looked up and saw his little eyes watching him keenly. There was compassion illumining the countenance of this creature with prognathous jaw and sloping brow.

"Trouble at home, kid?" he asked, his harsh voice mellowing with the kindly spirit that prompted the question.

No. 60,108 nodded his head. The open letter in his hands told the tale.

"Gee, I wish you knew how to cuss, kid," sighed the burglar. "When things come hard on me I get rid of it all with a good, long, healthy swear. It does me an awful lot of good."

The boy shook his head, but the earnestness of his cell companion brought the faint flicker of a smile to his lips.

"They used to call me 'Roaring Bill 'Awkins.'" Bill went on. "Being as you don't know how to swear artistic and satisfactory, I'll just swear for you. No, don't object. I'll think 'em to myself and not say a thing out loud."

He swung down from his high pallet. There was still a half hour before the lights would be cut off, and this was the best possible time for violating prison regulations.

"You stand at the door and keep a sharp lookout, kid," he said. "I want to take a peek at this newspaper you've won by good conduct."

The discovery of this violation by a guard would have cost Montgomery his white disk and the loss of forty-five marks. He gave a sigh of relief when the lights went out and Bill could no longer imperil the disk and chevron on his sleeve.

The boy was half asleep when Bill leaned over the edge of his resting place and whispered: "Kid, I've got a scheme that's a wonder. You know what I told you about getting a suit of clothes for the getaway?"

"Yes."

"I got it all doped out."

"How will you manage it?"

"Never mind." He chuckled under his breath. "And as for a hat! Say, kid, I can get any kind of a hat you want to wear. But I'll tell you about it in the morning."

No. 60,108 and Bill Hawkins were out of their bunks next morning before the clanging of the bell. Bill grinned very knowingly as they pulled into their baggy gray suits. He crooked his right index finger and held it before the boy.

"See that?" he asked.

"Yes," replied Montgomery, wondering.

"It is exactly one inch, that second joint. I'm going to measure you for your suit. Turn around."

Montgomery turned, facing the door, and Bill stepped behind him. He felt the finger joint pressing against his shoulders as Bill took the dimensions for the piece of the coat he was to fashion surreptitiously. As he worked he explained his scheme in a whisper.

"The color of the cloth is all right," he said, "but it is the baggy shape of the coat and pants that gets an escaped convict in Dutch. I'll remember these measurements and swipe the stuff and cut it in the shop. I'll do one piece at a time. In the cutting room there's Isaacs, 'The Butcher,' on my right and 'Idaho Shorty' on my left. They'll be blind. They won't say a thing to anybody, and they won't see a thing. I'll smuggle in the suit piece by piece and swipe the basting stuff, needles and thread." He finished the three dimensions of the first piece of the coat he was to make and was satisfied.

"One piece at a time," he said to himself. "When I get 'em all done I'll sew 'em together by hand right here in this handsome little one room flat. When the suit is ready you're to put it on under your prison clothes. Then when you get on the outside you can peel off, stick a hat on your head and beat it." He laughed softly to himself.

"And as for hats," he whispered, "I'll get one swiped, an old castoff kelly from one of the prison offices."

The boy wondered at the goodness and kindness that lay hidden in the heart of this old offender against society, who looked almost a monstrosity and yet was as gentle as a child.

"Just keep your young noodle clear," advised Bill. "Don't be in any hurry. Whenever you see a chance that promises tell me about it, and we'll talk it over. All the time I'll be working on on this suit, and I'm going to make a swell job of it. See?"

"And suppose I do get out, Bill," suggested Montgomery, "and I patent my inventions and make a fortune, how am I ever going to repay you?"

"Well, I'm fifty years years old, now," replied the burglar. "When I get out I'll be sixty-five and still a burglar, perhaps. Mebbe I'll be able to run in on you somewhere and you can help me keep straight, give me a job, lock me up at night and treat me like a human being in the daytime. I ain't been treated like a human being [illegible] forgot how it feels."

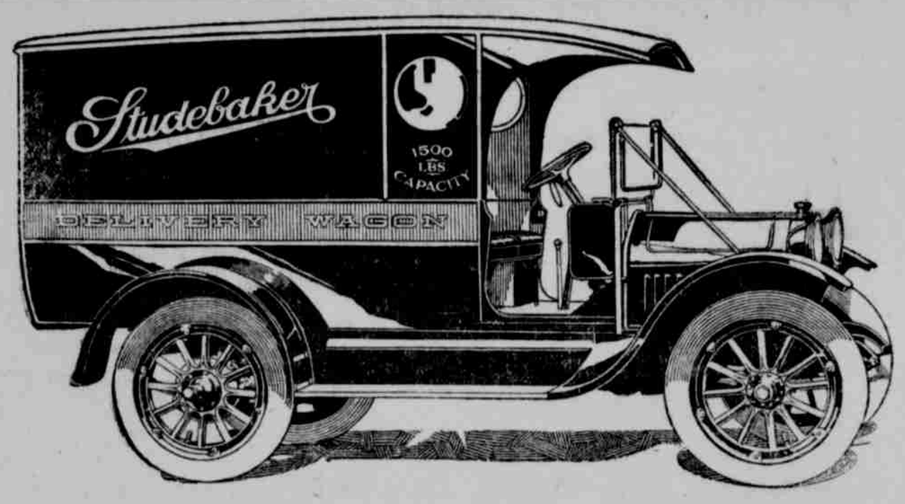
The old burglar's face clouded for a moment, and his heavy jaw clamped tighter.

"Say, kid," he said huskily, "never breathe it, will you? I had a boy of my own once. He'd be just your age if he'd lived. I wanted him to live and that's why I'm here. I needed more money than I could make to send him to the mountains to be cured of the white bugs—the T. B. I just had to get the money and so I went in on a house breaking job. Well, the boy didn't get to the mountains; he died of consumption. The cops got me and I came to this place for my first bit. One of the gang hollered and the bulls got all the loot. When I got out after my bit the boy was dead and his mother was—well, she was worse than dead, they told me. It ain't the man who goes to prison that does all the suffering. It's his wife and babies that take the punishment."

(To be continued)

The Seville and Sumner Farmer's club will meet at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Handley, Thursday, February 4. The program of the meeting will be as follows:

Called to order by president.
Music.
Reading of minutes of last meeting.
Dinner.
Music.
Roll call—Answered by Washington or Lincoln quotation.
Invocation.
Committemen, reports of Committees.
Reading—Mrs. E. A. Potter.
Paper—Mrs. Walter Mallory.
Recitation—Glenna Handley.
Discussion—"Orchards, Their Care and Value."—A. B. Fisher, and W. C. Mallory.
Question box.



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THIS busy, progressive nation is today at the dawn of a new era of commercial and social development. The means by which the human voice, with its slightest inflections and indications of personality, can be carried across the continent instantly, have been provided. Talking by telephone from New York to San Francisco is now an accomplished fact.

The celebration of this latest and greatest triumph in the art of telephony has just taken place. Within a short time the public will have, ready for its use, the product of American brains, American initiative and American scientific and technical skill, a transcontinental telephone service, the equal of which is not even approached in all the other nations of the world.

It is a splendid scientific achievement of the very highest character. The power that sends the human voice out over the telephone is scarcely greater than that of a breath, yet the means have been provided by which this tiny, almost imaginary impulse, made up of as many as 2,000 separate vibrations a second, can be picked up by a delicate instrument, conserved over a distance of 3,400 miles, and reproduced perfectly and instantly across the continent. The human voice has been made to travel as fast as light, faster than sound unaided by technical apparatus; indeed, it rivals THOUGHT even, in the swiftness of its flight.

The imagination can but feebly grasp, much less attempt to measure, the far-reaching significance of such a tremendous accomplishment. One hundred million people will have for their daily use a system of communication that knows no East, no West, no North, no South. Dialects, provincialisms, sectional prejudices, must eventually yield to the closer union, the better understanding, the more intimate comradeship that the human voice establishes. The neighborliness of a whole nation is advanced by the brushing away of the physical restraints of centuries.

This contribution to the future happiness and prosperity of a more closely united people has not been brought about, however, by the overcoming of a few isolated, concrete difficulties. Its success has depended upon the exercise of the highest engineering and technical skill and the solution was found only in the cumulative effect of improvements great and small, in telephone, transmitter, line, cable, switchboard, and every other piece of apparatus or plant required in the transmission of speech.

In this work the experimental and research department of the Bell System of which this Company is a part, has been engaged ever since the telephone became a commercial possibility, less than 40 years ago. With no traditions to follow and no experience to guide, this department, which is now directed by a staff of over 550 engineers and scientists, including former professors, post graduate students, scientific investigators—the graduates of 140 universities—has created an entirely new art—the art of telephony, and has given to the people of this country a telephone service that has no equal.

It has required vast expenditures of money and immense concentration of effort, but these have been justified by results of immeasurable benefit to the public. The transcontinental telephone line, 3,400 miles long, joining the Atlantic and Pacific, is part of the Bell System of 21,000,000 miles of wire connecting 9,000,000 telephone stations, located everywhere throughout the United States. Composing this system are the American Telephone and Telegraph Company and Associated Companies and connecting companies, giving universal service to 100,000,000 people.

Truly, This is The Triumph of Science

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