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(CONTINUED.)

"prisoner, we will hear you... you told it last night. It is my... to warn you that anything you... will be used against you on trial..."

"I hope that none of you have... how could he have been... in that horrid crime when he... in that house from soon after 8... till after midnight without... his chair?"

"You are not here to ask questions or... to help to murder Lady Dudley... while I stood..."

"I hope that none of you have... how could he have been... in that horrid crime when he... in that house from soon after 8... till after midnight without... his chair?"

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room regarded her as the more guilty of the two. Then came the defense and the reaction. Lord Dudley himself testified for her long and loyal services. He said the key of the safe happened to be in his own pocket that night and for three days and nights previously, as he had taken the necklace to a jeweler for repairs and was waiting for its return. There was no money in the safe, and indeed but little jewelry. There was no gas in the room, as her ladyship objected to it. There were marks on the ash to prove that the catch had been sprung from the outside. There was no chloroform about the house, nor could Mary have got any at the drug store without an order. The servants at once denied what they had said regarding Mary, and she was promptly discharged from custody. The police evinced their disappointment and chagrin at the outcome of the case, but were probably soled by the fact that I had no lord to testify in my behalf.

You have guessed my line of defense, and you know that I had half a dozen witnesses. It shouldn't have been a surprise to the police, but it certainly was. This was due to the bold faced lying of the villain Johnson. The story he told when put into the witness box against me made me pinch my legs to see if I was awake or dreaming, and his manner of telling it almost satisfied me that I was an accessory. Such calm, cold nerve was never seen before. He began by stating that he had met me in Liverpool a fortnight before and told me of the "job" and that I had readily agreed to join him. He claimed that I had been in Dudley three days; that he was the one who entered the castle while I kept watch outside; that as we were making our escape by boat I charged him with playing me false and struck him down before he could defend himself—all this and much more, and a man telling the solemn truth could not have assumed a more honest demeanor.

We showed, of course, that the Hindu was still at sea on the date he gave and in all other ways upset his yarn, but he was taken to jail declaring that every word he had spoken was gospel truth. No sane man could dispute my innocence, but I presently found that the public looked at me askance. I have been told that there is always a bit of feeling against the man who proves that he had nothing to do with the crime for which he was arrested, particularly if it is a heinous one and the public has made up its mind that he is guilty. They somehow can't quite forgive him for disappointing them. In my case the chief of police even had the impudence to say to me:

"Well, my man, it seems that somehow you have slipped the halter off your neck, but let me warn you that I shall have an eye upon your future movements. I presume you will leave town very soon?"

"I shall leave when I get ready to," was my blunt and perhaps impudent reply.

"No talking back, sir! I have the power to warn suspicious characters to leave town and to lock them up if they hesitate to go."

"Well, sir, go ahead on any course that suits you. I know how greatly you are disappointed, but it is all owing to your lack of sense in handling the case at the start."

He fumed and blustered; but, having burned his fingers once, he did not proceed to extreme measures. Some one spread the report that I had been twice arrested in Liverpool, and I had a pretty clear idea as to where the gossip started from. Lord Dudley, as soon as sending for the police, had offered a reward of £1,000 for the arrest and conviction of the murderer. I had certainly been the means of his arrest, and between Mary Williams and myself the prosecutor had all the evidence necessary to convict. After I had been discharged from custody his lordship sent for me. He received me very kindly, expressed his gratification that I had come out of the case with flying colors and referred to the matter of the reward. I refused to accept a penny of it, to his great astonishment, but later on I could not well refuse the gold watch, telescope, chronometer and other gifts which he sent me by his chief steward, together with his best wishes for my future welfare.

As Ben Johnson was held to the assizes, the girl and I must be detained as witnesses; so the chief of police could not have driven me away if he had set about it. We had to give bonds, and it was Lord Dudley himself who furnished them. It so happened, however, that the term was close at hand, and the case would be disposed of by the time the Hindu had been overhauled. This would let me out of a bad scrape, but nevertheless Captain Clark felt it his duty to growl at me:

"Now, Ralph, you see the consequences of a sailor man idling about on land, and I hope it will be a warning to you for the rest of your life."

"But one must see his old mother now and then," I protested.

"Aye, if she be living within stone's throw of the sea, but otherwise she must not expect it. The land, Ralph, was created for corn and trees and hedges and villains, and no true sailor who fears God and wants to live an honest life has any business outside of a seaport. I hope I shall get no wickedness through this trip up here, but I feel shaky. I wouldn't have had it happen for a £10 note."

On his trial in the higher court Ben Johnson was impudent and defiant and perfectly reckless as to consequences. He threatened my life in open court, and he made a determined effort to assault his old sweetheart with his fists. Had he been a different man, the jury would have dealt more leniently with him, no doubt. There were those who said that he would only have been punished for attempted robbery. As it was, he made every body around him realize that he was a desperate and revengeful man who ought to be put away for life, and that was his sentence—transportation to the penal colony in Australia for the term of his natural life.

"You'll never get me half way there!" he shouted when the judge pronounced sentence. "I warn you, judge, jury, lawyers, witnesses and all, that for every week I'm a prisoner I'll have a life!"

They had given him the full extent and could do no more, and everybody felt relieved when it was known that he was handcuffed and shackled and chained to the wall of his cell.

Lord Dudley's sister had come to preside at the castle, and both were perfectly willing to have Mary Williams take her old place. The girl would not go back, however. With all the gossip of the country roundabout, and with the columns of stuff printed in the newspapers, she felt disgraced for life and was anxious to get out of the country. Her parents felt the same way, and one day her father came down to Uncle John Hampton's inn to make some inquiries of me regarding Australia. I had made three voyages to that country and return and had picked up a smart bit of information. When I had told him all I could, he said:

"Mother and me might stay on and live it down, but Mary would grieve herself to death. She's proved as innocent as a babe, but she knows she'll be pointed out for years to come, and that certain people will always be flinging out, and so we'll pull up stakes and go."

When Lord Dudley heard of this resolve, he called upon Farmer Williams and paid him a fair price for his land and stock, and it's my belief that he also paid the passage of the three out to Australia besides. They had only decided on going when I returned to Liverpool and thought I had seen the last of them, though the thought upset me more than I dared admit to myself. To be honest with you, I had fallen in love with Mary Williams. Perhaps the thing would have come about just the same had I met her at church or on the highway, but maybe the circumstance of our being arrested and tried together and of our interests and dangers being the same pushed matters along at a faster pace. Be that as it may, I realized that I loved her. She was under a cloud, yet she, and one couldn't reasonably expect her to permit of any advances. Her love for Ben Johnson had turned to gall, sure enough, but that was no help to me under the circumstances. I realized that I was foolish to entertain certain hopes, and yet I could not drive them out of my mind.

CHAPTER IV. THE CONVICT SHIP. An unpleasant surprise awaited me on my arrival at Liverpool. The Hindu had been thoroughly refitted for sea, but was in the hands of a gang of carpenters and blacksmiths as she lay in her berth.

"What's the meaning of all this?" repeated Captain Clark as I found him overseeing the workmen in the hold. "Well, Ralph, to be short about it, we've got a government charter for Botany Bay."

"What! The Hindu to go out to Australia with convicts!"

"Exactly. Don't fire up about it, man, until you learn full particulars. Things are very dull just now in the carrying trade, and if we hadn't made this charter we might have been forced to lie here for weeks. We didn't jump at it, I assure you, but yet we look upon it as a lucky stroke, and there are a score of crafts in port which would be willing to pay us a premium."

"But it will give the ship a bad name," I protested.

"Not in this case, I hope, though we must take our chances. You see, the government has been in the habit of chartering any old tub which could be got hold of cheap. There's a public outcry against sending out convict ships which are so unseaworthy that a top-sail breeze is bound to do for them. There's also a great ado about crowding the men as if they were blacks from the African coast. Certain papers and public men have been raising a great row on this subject while you've been in drydock at Dudley, and the upshot of the matter is that the government is going to try an experiment."

"At the loss of our reputation. Why, sir, a craft which has ever made the trip to Botany Bay goes to her return. All shippers seem to look upon her with distrust and disgust after that."

However, I came to look upon the charter with more favor after a bit. The price paid was very high, and we had the privilege of fitting up accommodations to carry 30 passengers as well. You will understand that I am now writing of a matter really belonging to the last generation. It is a good many years since the penal colony at Botany Bay was abolished and since England ceased to send her convicts out of the country. The idea of transportation was, first, to remove bad men as far away as possible, and second, to make convicts the nucleus of new colonies. After two or three years of proper behavior a convict got a ticket of leave and could settle outside the camp. If his record continued good for two or three years more, he was discharged and could settle anywhere in Australia. It is a matter of history that three-fourths of the sheep growers and a good share of the business men of the big island today can trace their ancestry back to the convict camp at Botany Bay.

There were no steamers running to Australia in those days. Aside from the regular packet ships, there were craft fitted out to carry emigrants, a thousand at a time, but there was a class of people which preferred to go by convict ship. The fare was about half what the packets charged, and yet higher than by an emigrant craft, but only a few were taken, and the accommodations were very good. The Hindu had only a main hold, which had a depth of about nine feet. Our contract called for the carrying of 60 male convicts. To keep these men secure the hold of the ship was converted into three cages, as it were, each cage to hold 20 men. The entrance to them was by way of

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the hatches. The cages were of iron, of course, and made as strong as in a prison. There were bunks for the prisoners, and portholes gave them light and ventilation. In the rear of the third cage was fitted up what is known as a "brig," or dark cell, for the confinement of refractory prisoners. The remainder of the hold was taken up by storage rooms, staterooms and cabins.

In the days of which I write a convict ship sometimes carried out as many as 350 men and women. The law laid its hand heavily upon every wrongdoer. Offenders who would not get more than three months in jail today were then sent away for five or ten years. The embezzler and the murderer were treated alike until they arrived at the Bay. Then some little difference was made in the favor of the former, though the place was a hell on earth for all, according to every man's testimony. Where a big batch was taken, the government sent along from 8 to 12 marines and an officer to take entire charge of the prisoners. In our case the contract only bound the government to furnish a doctor. We must ship hands enough to guard the convicts and land them safely at Botany Bay, and the ship must provide its own outfit of firearms.

We went about these things in good faith and with an eye as to what might happen on the voyage unless we were fully prepared for trouble. There were hundreds of men looking for an opportunity to work their passage out. We bargained with seven very decent looking fellows to pay their way by acting as guards. The odd man had been a sergeant of infantry and was to command the guard. We bought a dozen muskets and plenty of ammunition, and one day, when almost ready to receive the prisoners aboard, the captain said to me:

"Ralph, there's no knowing what may happen to us with 60 desperate villains aboard. I understand that all our prisoners are long termers and over half of them are going for life. I am going to arrange the main cabin so that we can turn it into a fort if necessary."

Presuming that you have never been aboard of a sailing craft, I make bold to tell you that our quarters comprised a main cabin, a dining room and three staterooms. Forward of it and reached by the same entrance or companionway were the quarters fitted up for the passengers. The roof of the cabin was elevated about two feet above the deck and was lighted in part by a skylight in the center. Each stateroom had a small window looking out on deck, and the dining room had three or four. The entrance to the cabin was in front.

Well, what we did was to secure iron shutters for all the windows looking out forward, each shutter having a porthole for musketry firing and likewise iron plates which could be clamped on beneath the skylight if the emergency arose. Then the bulkhead between cage No. 3 and the passengers' quarters was provided with portholes and made bullet proof as well. For the cabin defense we bought four double barreled shot-guns and two rifles. This would give us, in case of a row, six good arms, to say nothing of the officers' pistols and what firearms the passengers might bring. You will observe that I have left the seven guards entirely out in my figuring.

When the Hindu was ready to receive the convicts, a government inspector came aboard to see that everything relating to the prisoners was shipshape. There was nothing to find fault with, and he named the date when the gang would be sent aboard. Our passengers came first—exactly 20 of them. Whom do you suppose the first three were? When I first clapped eyes on them, I was so taken aback that I stood open mouthed and could not utter a word. They were Mr. and Mrs. Williams and the daughter, Mary. It had been six weeks since I left Dudley, and I had received no news of them whatever, though I was every day trying to pluck up the courage to write direct to Mary herself.

"Well, Ralph, it's this way," said the father as I expressed my astonishment. "Everybody knows the gal is innocent as a babe, but she can't abide notoriety. We'll go out to Australia and have a look around, and if things don't suit we can return after a couple of years. I'd forgotten the name of your craft, and it's pleased I am to find that we are to sail with you."

I can't say that Mary seemed over-pleased to find me there. Indeed, she acted as if considerably put out about it. While I may not have been distasteful to her personally, yet the sight of me kept all the past in mind, and she had taken her troubles very much to heart. She shook hands and made an effort to be friendly, however, and that was all I could expect. Of the other 17 passengers there were four married couples, two young women servants, one single man and six children. They were all middle class people, tidy and respectable, and we could not have asked for a better lot.

The passengers came aboard in the morning. At 2 o'clock in the afternoon our prisoners came alongside under a heavy guard, and I received another shock, and a far more disagreeable one. The first convict to step aboard was Ben Johnson, the villain who was to blame for what I had gone through. We were face to face before we recognized each other. He was handcuffed and also had on leg chains, for he had become so desperate that everybody

feared him. His face was full of curiosity as he stepped on deck, but the instant his eyes lighted on me he raised his manacled hands to strike and shouted at the top of his voice:

"You here, Ralph Tompkins! Ah, you cowardly cur, but I could ask for no better luck! When we take the ship, it will be my pleasure to flay you alive."

I knew, of course, that he had been sentenced to transportation for life, but it had never occurred to me that he might be among the gang of 60. The guards seized him and were hustling him along when he caught sight of Mary and her parents. He realized in an instant that they were passengers, and there was a look of devilish ferocity on his face as he cried out:

"What! And Mary too! Why, satan himself seems bound to play into my hands on this trip. Three cheers for Ben Johnson's luck!"

The girl and her people were as badly knocked out as I was, and had we not been all ready to weigh anchor they would have quit the brig and forfeited their passage money. Mary had to be led below, while the father declared to me that nothing on earth could have induced him to go with the Hindu had he known that Ben Johnson was to be one of the gang. The situation was a bad one for all four of us, but the only way left us was to put on a bold face and make the best of it. Ben Johnson was perhaps the most desperate man in the lot, but the gang as a whole was one of the worst ever embarked. When they had been divided and caged, the officer of the guard felt it his duty to say:

"I have handled at least 50 gangs of convicts in my time, and I tell you that no ship ever had a worse one under hatches. There are plenty of men afloat and shore who are willing to bet two to one that you never get as far as the



"You here, Ralph Tompkins!"

cape of Good Hope. You must watch these fellows day and night. If you get careless for a day, they'll capture the ship and cut the throats of officers, passengers and crew at the first rush."

We had a sailing crew of 14 men. Each had signed for the round trip and knew what the cargo would be, and yet when they saw what a villainous gang had come aboard at least half the sailors would have deserted if there had been opportunity. If there was one single person above decks who was satisfied with the situation, he must have kept his thoughts to himself. We were off, however, and it was useless to growl or lament. Just as the towboat had got our cable a wherry dropped alongside, and a letter was handed up for the captain. It was badly written and spelled, and its contents were another dose for us. It read:

"I think it my duty as an honest man to tell you that at least one of your guards is a friend of Ben Johnson's and will stop at nothing to help him take the ship. Be on your guard."

CHAPTER V. THE SHIP'S DOCTOR. In every ship sent out with convicts the prisoners were under the charge of the doctor sent along at government expense. His authority was supreme. He represented the government. We of the Hindu did not catch sight of our doctor until the last moment before sailing, and the sight of him gave us a surprise.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

A Costly Cow. Ex-Senator Philletus Sawyer of Wisconsin told the following story: "When we were living on my farm at Rosendale, it became necessary to sell a cow. The buyer wanted a certain cow or none at all. It happened to be the cow I had given to my wife. I went into the house and told my wife. She, the good soul, said, 'Sell her, but I want the money.' I sold the cow, and gave my wife a couple of dollars and said, 'Call on me when you want more.' When she wanted to buy a dress, bonnet or wedding present, she would ask for some of that cow money. I had paid back several thousand dollars of the cow money, and was wondering when the demand would cease. A house was built. It had to be furnished. We figured up what the furnishing would cost. It amounted to several thousand dollars. I said, 'Wife, I'll pay you the balance of that cow money, and you can pay for furnishing the house with it.' It was a bargain, and the cow deal was over. The \$20 cow cost her the senator not far from \$20,000, but he never complained of the price."

A Story of Zach Taylor. Dan Beard, the artist, told the following story of his father: "While painting Zachary Taylor father said to him, 'Well, general, I suppose you are to be our next president.' 'I hope not,' granted the bluff old hero. 'No military man has any business in the presidential chair, but if they offer it to me I suppose I'll be fool enough to accept it.' And he was."

When the cat washes her face, look out for a rain.



I refused to accept a penny of it. more especially a magnificent diamond necklace, was in the safe that night. The cold blooded villain went still farther. He declared that she had left a gas jet lighted for his convenience, and that she had suggested chloroforming Lady Dudley to give him full swing. He even declared that she commanded him to kill the woman when she arose from her bed and discovered them. Those who heard Ben Johnson's testimony said that he looked the judge straight in the eye and never hesitated or blundered. When he was through, nine-tenths of the people in the court-