THE GHOST OF BAR B 8

WOLFVILLE STORY, BY ALFRED HENRY LEWIS (DAN QUIN.)

"SPECTERS? Never; I refooses 'em my beliefs utter;" and with these emphatic words the Old Cattleman tasted his liquor thoughtfully on his tongue. The experiment was not satisfactory; he dispatched his dark retainer Tom for lemons and sugar. "An' you-all might better tote along some hot water, too"; he commanded. "This yere nosepaint feels raw an' over-fervid; a leetle diluotion won't injure it none."

"But about ghosts?" I persisted.

"Ghosts?" he retorted. "I never does hear of but one; that's a apparition which enlists the attentions of Peets and Old Man Enright a whole lot. It's a specter that takes to ha'ntin' about one of the Bar-B-8 sign-camps, an' scarin' up cattle; drivin' 'em over a precipice, an' all to Enright's disaster an' loss. Nacherally, Enright don't like this spectral play; an' him an' Peets lays for that wraith with Winchesters, busts its knee some, an' Peets ampytates its laig. Then they throws it loose; allowin' that now its only got one laig, them visitations will mighty likely cease. Moreover, Enright regyards ampytation that a-way, as punishment enough. Which I should shore allow as much myse'f!

"It ain't much of a tale. It turns out like all them sperit stories; when you approaches plumb close, jumps sideways an' seizes 'em by the antlers, the soopernacheral elements sort o' bogs down.

"It's over mebby 50 miles to the southeast of Wolfville, some'ers in the fringes of the Tres Hermanas that ther's a sign-camp of Enright's brand, the Bar-B-8. Thar's a couple of Enright's riders holdin' down this angle of the Bar-B-8 game, an' one evenin' both of 'em come squanderin' in—ponies a-foam an' faces pale as paper—an' puts it up they don't return no more.

"'Because she's ha'nted,' says one; 'Jim an' me both encounters this yere banshee an' it's got fire-eyes. Also, itse'f an' pony is likewise built of bloo flames. You can gamble! I don't want no more of it in mine; an' that's whatever!'

"Any gent can see that these yoothe is plumb scared. Enright elicits their yarn only after pourin' about a quart of nose-paint into 'em.

"'It looks like on two several o'casions that a handful of cattle gets run over a steep bluff from the mesa above. The fall is some 60 feet in the cl'ar. An' when them devoted cattle lights, it's plenty easy to guess they're sech no longer, an' that thar's nothin' left of 'em but beef. These beef drives happens each time in the night; an' the cattle must have been stampeded complete to make sech a trip. Cattle, that a-away, can't be relied on to go chargin' over a high bluff onless their reason is first onhinged. No, the coyotes an' the mountain lions don't do it; they never chases cattle, holdin' em in fear an' tremblin' These yere mountain lions pounces onto colts like a mink on a settin' hen, but never calves or cattle.

"It's after the second beef killin' which this specter makes when the two riders allows they'll do some night ridin' themselves'fs an' see if they solves these yere pheenomenons that's cuttin' into the herds of the Bar-B-8.

"'An' it's mebby second drink time after midnight,' gasps the cow-puncher who's relatin' the adventures, 'an' me an' Jim is experimentin' along the alge of a mess, when of a suddent thar comes two steers, heads down, tails up, locoed absolute they be; an' flashin' about in the r'ar of 'em rides this yere flamin' cow sperit on its flamin' cayouse. Shere! he heads 'em over the cliff; I hears 'em hit the bottom of the canyon jest as I falls off my bronco in a fit. As soon as ever I comes to an' can scramble into that Texas saddle ag'in, me an' Jim simply hits the high places in the scenery, an' here we-all be! An' I don't go back to that Bar-B-8 camp. I ain't ridin' herd on no apparitions; an' whepever ghosts takes to romancin' about in the cow business, that lets me out.'

"'I reckon,' says Enright, wrinklin' up his brows, 'I'll take a look into this racket myse'f.'

"'An' if you-all don't mind none, Enright,' says Peets, 'I'll get my chips in with yours. Thar's been no one shot for a month in Red Dog an' Wolfville, an' I'm plumb free of patients. An' now, if the boys'll promise to hold themse'fs an' their guns steady for a week or so, an' not go to constructin' no need for my present abrupt, I figgers that a few days' ridin' about the ranges, an' mebby a riot or two roundin' up this cow demon, will expand me a heap an' do me good.'

"'You're lookin' for trouble, Doc,' says Colonel Sterett, kind o' laughin' at Peets. 'You reminds me of a onhappy sport I encounters long ago in Looeyville.'

"'An' wherein does this yere Bloo Grass party resemble me?' asks Peets.

"'It's one evenin',' says Colonel Sterett, 'an' a passel of us is settin' about a table in the Galt House bar, toyin' with our beverages. Thar's a smooth, good-lookin' stranger who's camped at a table near. Final, he yawns like he's shore weary of life, an' looks at us sharp an' cur'ous. Then he speaks up sort o' gen'ral, as though he's addressin' the air. "This is a mighty dull town!" he says. "Which I've been yere a fortnight an' I ain't had a fight yet." An' he continues to look us over some mournful.

"'"You-all needn't gaze on us that a-way," says a gent named Granger; "you can put down a stack on it, you ain't goin' to pull on no war with none of us."

"'"Shore, no!" says the onhappy stranger. Then he goes on apol'getic: "Gents, I'm enfortunately constitooted. Onless I has trouble at least once a month, it preys on me. I've been yere in your town two weeks, an' ain't seen the sign of a riot. Gents, it's beginnin' to tell on me, an' if any of you-all could direct me where I might get action, it would be kindly took."

"'"If you're honin' for a muss," says Granger, "all you has to do is to go a couple of blocks to the east, an' then five to the no'th, an' thar on the corner you'll note a mighty prosperous 'sloon. You enper in by the side door; it says 'Family Entrance' over this yere portal. Sa'nter up to the bar, call for licker, drink it; an' then you-all remark to the barkeep, casool like, that you're thar to maintain that any outcast who'll sell sech whisky ain't fit to drink with a nigger or eat with a dog. That's all; that barkeep'll relieve you of this load that's been burdenin' your nerves in about 30 seconds. You'll be the happiest sport in Looeyville when he gets through."

"'"But can't you come an' p'int out the place," coaxes the onhappy stranger of Granger. He's all wropped up in what Granger tells him. "As I states, I don't know my way about good, an' from your descriptions I shorely wouldn't miss visitin' that resort for gold an' precious stones. Come an' show me, pard; I'll take you thar in a keerriage."

"'At that Granger consents to guide the onhappy stranger. They drives over an' Granger stops the outfit, mebby she's 50 yards from the door. He p'ints it out to the onhappy stranger sport.

"'"Come in with me," says the onhappy stranger as he gets outen the keerriage. "Come on; you'all don't have to fight none. I jest wants you to watch me. Which I'm the dandiest warrior for the whole length of the Ohio!"

"'"But Granger is firm that he won't. He's He's not inquisitive, he says, an' will stay planted right thar on the r'ar seat an' await deevelopments a whole lot. With that, the onhappy stranger sport goes mournfully for'ard alone, an' gets into the gin mill by the said Family Entrance. Granger sets thar with his head out, lookin' an' listenin'.'

"'Everything's plenty quiet for a minute. Then slam! bang! bing! crash! the most flagrant riot breaks forth! It sounds like that store's comin' down. The racket rages an' grows worse. Thar's a smashin' of glass. The lights goes out, while customers comes boundin' an' skippin' forth from that Family Entrance like antelopes. At last them uproars dies down; final, they subsides complete.

"'Granger is beginnin' to upbraid himse'f for not gettin' the onhappy stranger's address so's he could ship home the remainder. In the midst of Granger's se'f-accosations, that a-way, the lights in the gin mill begins to burn ag'in, one by one. After awhile, she's re-illoominated an' ablaze with old-time glory. It's then the door of the Family Entrance opens an' the onhappy stranger sport emerges onto the sidewalk. He's in his shirtsleeves, an' a angelic smiles wreathes his face. He shore looks plumb content!

"'Get out the keerriage an' come in, pard," he shouts down to Granger. "Come on in a whole lot! I'd journey down thar an' get you, but I can't leave; I'm tendin' bar!"'

"'You're shore right, Colonel,' says Peets when Colonel Sterett ends the anecdate, 'the feelin' of that onhappy stranger sport is absolootely parallel to mine. Ghosts is new to me; an' I'm goin' pirootin' off with Enright on this demon hunt an' see if I can't fetch up in the midst of a trifle of nerve-coolin' trouble.'

"The ghost tales of the stampeded cow-punchers excites Dan Boggs a heap. After Enright an' Peets has organized an' done p'inted out for the ha'nted Bar-B-8 sign-camp to investigate the spook, Dan can't talk of nothin' else.

"'Them's mighty dead game gents, Enright and Doc Peets is!' says Dan. 'Which I wouldn't go searchin' for no sperits more'n I'd fondle rattlesnakes! I draws the line at intimacies with fiends.'

"'But mebby this yeer is a angel,' says Faro Nell, from her stool alongside of Cherokee Hall.

"'Not criticisin' you none, Nell,' says Dan, 'Cherokee himse'f will tell you sech surmises is reedic'lous. No angel is goin' to visit Arizona for obvious reasons. An' ag'in, no angel's doo to go skallhootin' about after steers an' stampedin' 'em over brinks. It's plumb ag'in reason; you bet! That blazin' wraith, that a-way, is shore-enough demon! An' as for me, personal, I wouldn't cut his trail for a bunch of ponies!'

"'Be you-all scared of ghosts, Dan?' asks Faro Nell.

"'Be I scared of ghosts?' says Dan. 'I don't want to brag none, Nellie, but I'll gamble four for one, an' go as far as you likes, that if you was to up an' show me a ghost right now, I wouldn't stop runnin' for a plumb month. But what appals me partic'lar,' goes on Dan, 'about Peets an' Enright, is they takes their guns. Now, a ghost waxes onusual indignant if you takes to shootin' him up a lot with guns. No, it don't hurt him; but he regyards sech demonstrations as insults. It's like my old pap says that time about the Yankees. My old pap is a Colonel with Gen'ral Price, an' on this yere evenin' is engaged in leadin' one of the most intrepid retreats of the war. As he's prancin' along at the head of his men, where a great commander belongs, he's shore scandalized by hearin' his r'ar-gyard firin' on the Yanks. So he rides back, my old pap does, an' he says: "Yere you'all eedlots! Whatever do you mean by shootin' at them Yankees? Don't you know it only makes 'em madder?" An' that,' concloods Dan, 'is how I feels about specters. I wouldn't go slammin' loose at 'em with no guns; it only makes 'em madder.'

"'It's the next day, an' Peets an' Enright is organized in the ha'nted sign-camp of the Bar-B-8. Also, they've been lookin' round. By ridin' along onder the face of this yere precipice they comes, one after t'other, on what little is left of the dead steers. What strikes 'em as a heap peccoliar is, thar's no bones nor horns. Two or three of the hoofs is kickin' about, an' Enright picks up one of the coyotes overlooks. It shows it's been cut off at the fetlock j'int by a knife.

"'This yere specter,' says Enright, passin' the hoof to Peets, 'packs a bowie; an' he likewise butchers his prey. Also, undoubted, he freights the meat off some'ers to his camp, which is why we don't notice no big bones layin' 'round loose.' Then Enright scans the grass mighty scroopulous; an' shore enough! thar's plenty of pony tracks dented into the soil. 'That don't look so soopernacheral neither,' says Enright, p'intin' to the hoof prints.

"'Them's shorely made by a flesh an' blood pony,' says Peets. 'An' from their going some deep into the ground, I dedooces that said cayouse is loaded down with what weight of beef an' man it can stagger onder.'

"'That evenin' over their grub, Enright an' Peets discusses the business. Thar's a Jim-Crow Mexican plaza not three miles off in the hills. Both of 'em is awar' of this yere hamlet, an' Peets, partic'lar, is well acquainted with a old Mexican sharp who lives thar—he's a kind o' schoolmaster among 'em—who's mighty cunnin' an' learned. His name is Jose Miguel.

"'An' I'm beginnin' to figger,' says Peets, 'that this yere ghostly rider is the foxy little Jose Miguel. Which I've frequent talked with him; and he savvys enough about drugs an' chemicals, that a-way, to paint up phosphorus an' go surgin' about, stampedin' them cattle over the bluffs. It's a mighty good idee from his standp'int. He can argue that the cattle kills themse'fs—sort o' commits soolcide inadvertent—an' if we-all tracks up on him afterwards with the beef, he insists on his innocence; an' puts 't up that his cuttin' in on the play after them cattle done slays themse'fs, injures nobody but coyotes.'

"'Doc,' coincides Enright after roominatin' a lot in silence, 'Doc, the longer I ponders the more them theeries seems shore sagacious. That enterprisin' Greaser is jest about killin' my beef, an' sellin' it to the entire plaza. Not only does this yere ghost play operate to stampede the cattle an' set' em runnin' cimmaron an' locoed so they'll chase over the cliffs to their ends, but likewise it serves to scare my cowpunchers off the range, which last, ondoubted, this Miguel looks on as a desideratum. However, it's goin' to be good an' dark tonight, an' if we-all has half luck I figgers we fixes him.'

"'It's full two hours after midnight, an' while thar's stars overhead, thar's no moon; an' along the top of the mesa it's as dark as the inside of a cow. Peets an' Enright is Injunnin' about on the prowl for the ghost. They don't much reckon it'll be abroad, as most likely the plaza has beef enough.

"'However, by tomorry night,' says Enright in a whisper, 'or at the worst by the night after, we're shore to meet up with this yere marauder.'

"'Hesh!' whispers Peets, at the same time stoppin' Enright with his hand, 'he's out tonight!'

"'An' thar for shore is something like a dim bloo light movin' about over across the plains, mebby it's half a mile. Now an' then, two brighter lights shows in spots like the flames of candles; them's the fire eyes the locoed cowboys tells of. Whatever it is, whether spook or Greaser, it's quarterin' the plains like one of these yere huntin' dogs. Its gait, that-a-way, is mebby a slow canter.

"'He's on the scout,' says Enright, tryin' to start a steer or two in the dark. But he ain't located none yet.'

"Enright and Peets slides to the ground an' hobbles their broncos. They don't aim to have them go pirootin' over no bluffs in any blindness of a first ghostly surprise. When the ponies is safe they bends plumb low an' begins makin' up towards the ground on which this yere bloo-shimmerin' shadow is ha'ntin' about. Things comes their way; they has luck. They ain't erope forty rods when the ghost sort o' heads for 'em. They can easy tell he's comin', for the fire eyes shows all the time, an' not by fits and starts, as former. As the bloo shimmer draws nearer they makes out the vague shadows of a man on a hoss. Son, she's shore plenty ghostly as a vision, an' Enright allows later it's no marvel them punchers vamosee sech harrowin' scenes.

"'How about it?' whispers Peets. 'Shall I do the shootin'?'

"'Which your eyes is younger,' says Enright. 'You cut loose; an' I'll stand by to back the play. Only, aim plenty low. You can't he'p overshootin' in the dark. Hold as low as his stirrup.'

"Peets pulls himse'f up straight as a raplin' an' runs his left hand along the bar'l as far as his arm'll reach. An' he hangs long on the aim, as shootin' in the dark ain't no cinch. If this yere ghost is a bright ghost, it would be easy. But he ain't; he's bloo an' dim, like washed-out moonlight, or when it's jest gettin' to be dawn. Enright's twenty yards to one side so as to free himse'f of Peets' smoke in case he has to make the second play.

"But Peets calls the turn. With the crack of his Winchester the ghost sets up sech a screech that it proves he ain't white; an' also that he'll live through the evenin's events. As this yere specter yelps the bloo cayuse goes over on its head an' neck an' then falls dead on its side. The lead, which only smashes the specter's knee to splinters, goes plumb through the pony's heart.

"As Peets foresees, the ghost ain't none other than the wise little Jose Miguel, schoolmaster, who's up on drugs an' chemicals. The bloo glimmer is phosphorus; an' them fire eyes is two of these yere little lamps like miners packs in their caps. Enright an' Peets strolls up; this Miguel is groanin' an' mournin' an' cryin' 'Marie, Madre de Dios!' When he sees who downs hip, he drags himse'f to Enright an' begs a heap abject for his life. With that Enright silently lets down the hammer of his rifle.

"Peets, when the sun comes up, enjoys himse'f speshul with that operation. Peets is fond of ampytations that a-way, an' he hacks off said limb with zest and gusto.

"'Which I shore deplores it, Jose,' says Peets, 'to go shortenin' up a fellow-scientist like this. But thar's no he'pin' it; fate has so decreed. Also, as some comfort to your soul, I'll say that I explains to Sam Enright as to how you won't ride no more when I gets you fairly trimmed. Leastwise, when I'm done prunin' you thar won't be nuthin' but one of these yer women's saddles that you'll fit, an' no gent, be he white or be he Greaser, can work cattle from a side saddle.' An' with that Peets, hummin' a blithe roundelay, cuts merrily away at that wounded member."

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THE MAN WHO DARED TO LOVE

BY JAMES L. FORD, AUTHOR OF "THE LITERARY SHIP," ETC.

HALF-TRUE TALE OF HOW A REPUTABLE PHYSICIAN'S TESTIMONY WRECKED A MAN'S LIFE.

IN a state asylum for the insane, situated not far from New York, is a young man of fine appearance, winning manners and great intelligence, who is perfectly sane on all subjects but one, but who is nevertheless doomed to spend the rest of his life within the stone walls of the madhouse. He has a great many luxuries in the way of books, clothing and table delicacies, which are paid for by the man at whose instance he was sentenced to life imprisonment among the deranged, and who happens to be one of the most distinguished of New York's public citizens. The story of what brought this young man to the cell which he now occupies is as follows:

One bright Winter's morning about three years ago the distinguished citizen already referred to—and whom we will call Mr. Majoribanks, as his real name is known to every one who reads this page—opened the hall door of his house, situated on a side street close to upper Fifth avenue, just as a rather shabbily dressed man rang the bell. As the door swung open and he crossed the threshhold the shabby stranger seemed to recognize him, for he sprang forward with an oath on his lips, pointed a pistol at him and snapped the trigger. The cartridge did not explode, and the next moment the distinguished New Yorker had torn it from the grasp of his would-be murderer and the stranger was running up the street.

The whole thing had passed within the space of a very few seconds, and as the gentleman stood on his own doorstep with the revolver in his hand he looked carefully up and down the street and at the windows over the way to see if there had been any witnesses to the occurrence. Apparently there had been none, for the street is situated in a quiet residential quarter of the town and the citizen—Mr. Marjoribanks—turned back into his home, took off his hat and overcoat and then went into his library and called up one of his most intimate friends in the city, asking him to stop on his way down town, as he desired to consult him on a matter of great importance. The friend did as he was desired, and found the man of renown seated at his library table calmly reading the morning newspaper. On the table before him stood the revolver and a small package of letters.

Having briefly recounted to his visitor the morning's happening, he continued: "Now I am absolutely sure that the man who tried to shoot me this morning was none other than the writer of these letters, which have been coming to my daughter and to me from time to time during the past two years. I am sure, moreover, that it is a case of homicidal mania, and I want your advice as to the best means of getting hold of this man and preventing him from doing any serious mischief. First of all, glance at the letters and see if you do not agree with me."

The letters were addressed to Mr. Marjoribanks' daughter, now one of the most popular young matrons in society and at that time a debutante of remarkable beauty, whose portrait was constantly appearing in the public prints. Although couched in respectful terms they were love letters of the most ardent description and written by one who took it for granted that his love was returned and that nothing stood between them but her obdurate and cruel father. In several of them he spoke of having been betrothed to her in early childhood, and while he was still living in Germany, while in others he declared that if he could not win her hand, he would revenge himself on the man who kept them apart. The handwriting was unquestionably that of a foreigner.

The friend examined each one with the greatest care, and Mr. Marjoribanks continued: "My daughter has only seen the first of these, which came here about two months after her first appearance in society. She showed it to me, laughing, but as soon as I read it I felt certain that it was written by some crank who had seen her pictures in the paper, and fancied himself in love with her. Then I told the butler to deliver all letters addressed in that hand to me, and I presume that by this time she has forgotten all about the first one."

One of the letters—the most recent in date—was written on a letter blank from which the printed heading had been hastily torn off so as to leave only the date line and above it the letters 'ital' followed by a period.

"Those letters are the end of some word," said the visitor, "and that word might be "hospital." In all probability these letters are the work of some insane patient, and the best thing I can do is to make the rounds of the hospitals until I find one that uses such a letter blank as this."

"Try the drug store on the corner," suggested Mr. Marjoribanks, "and remember two things. There is no time to be lost and we cannot afford to have any publicity in the matter. I'll wait here till you come back."

The druggist could not recognize the letter blank, but suggested a visit to a certain manufacturer of surgical instruments who had dealings with all the hospitals, and the latter, by comparison of the torn sheet with the letters in his file soon recognized it as having come from a certain private hospital in the upper part of the city. To this establishment he at once made his way, after consultation with his friend, and learned that the man he was looking for had been employed there for nearly two years as a nurse, and was regarded by the physician in charge as one of the most reliable, conscientious and efficient men in his employ. He was a German named Knaackfuss, well born and well educated, and had been an officer in the Bavarian Life Guards. Since coming to America he had lost his patrimony in unfortunate speculations and, after many vicissitudes, had found himself compelled to earn his livelihood in the almost menial capacity of hospital nurse.

Armed with this information, the gentleman returned to the Marjoribanks house and, after a long consultation, a course of action was determined upon.

The problem that lay before them was not one easy of solution. It was necessary to arrest the young German and place him at once under restraint, so that it would be impossible for him to carry out his murderous designs, and it was necessary also to do this without the slightest publicity.

Very few persons know anything about the personal danger which dogs the heels of publicity. No sooner do men and women come prominently before the public in the newspapers than they attract the attention of the vast army of cranks and semi-insane people who proceed to make their lives burdensome with begging letters, threats and requests for everything, from autographs to automobiles. And there is no sort of fame which takes such a strong hold on the fancy of the average crank as that which spring from wealth, beauty or social station. In this case, the father dreaded publicity, because he knew that if the matter once found its way into print it would be taken up by the papers from one end of the country to the other, with the result that his daughter would be literally driven out of the country by the persistent attentions of the cranks.

Late in the afternoon the friend called again upon the physician at the private hospital and this time he brought with him the package of letters as evidence of the truth of his story. To say that the physician was thunderstruck does not fairly indicate his real state of mind when he learned that his most trusted employe, the man who was at that moment in attendance upon a wealthy and slightly deranged patient, was himself insane on at least one subject, and, worst of all, insane with a homicidal tendency. He, too, saw the necessity for getting him quietly out of the way. It might ruin his hospital to have it known that a lunatic had found employment there for nearly two years. It was an easy matter, therefore, to induce him to play his part in the scheme which had been devised, and to which he gave his approval, for getting the young German behind the bars without publicity of any sort. When the friend left, it was with the understanding that the physician should have the young German ready to meet him at 8 o'clock that evening. At the appointed hour he returned in company with a noted alienist and a powerfully built man, who was, and still is, one of the most efficient officers in the detective service. The last-named was placed behind a screen in the parlor, while the physician and his two visitors seated themselves about a table and sent word for the nurse to come to them. He came promptly and proved to be a well-built, fair-haired young man with a fine, sensitive face, erect military carriage and good manners.

"Sit down, Knaackfuss," said the hospital physician, pleasantly. "These gentlemen have asked me to recommend some one for a very responsible position, and although I do not wish to have you leave me, I cannot stand in the way of your advancement, so I have given them your name and told them that I considered you thoroughly competent."

The young man's face flushed with pleasure at the kind words of his superior.

"I thank you most heartily," he said. "May I ask you what the position is?"

"To take charge of an elderly gentleman who is in delicate health and desires some one who will be a companion rather than a nurse, but who will be competent to do anything for him should the occasion arise. This gentleman is wealthy, highly educated, and anxious to travel. He will pay $100 a month, with board and all expenses, and the position is really very easy and pleasant. Do you care for it?"

The quick tears came into the young man's eyes as he answered impulsively: "I cannot tell you how happy I am at the mere prospect of taking such a place as that. It is not," he continued with a polite bow to his employer, "that I am not well treated here, because I have every reason to feel deeply grateful to the gentleman who has so kindly recommended me to you. But to live always among the sick and the insane and the dying—ah, to one of my temperament, it is terrible beyond all words. When you spoke just now I seemed to see the door to heaven standing wide open before me."

"I am glad to hear that," said the physician pleasantly, "and I see no reason why the place should not be yours, provided the old gentleman is pleased with your appearance. His carriage will be here soon to take you up to his house, and I have no doubt that he will engage you on the spot and ask you to begin tomorrow morning. You can do that, I suppose?"

"Most assuredly," replied the German "provided I do not put you to any inconvenience by leaving so suddenly. If the carriage is here I am ready to go now."

"Stop one moment, if you please," interposed Mr. Majorbanks' friend. "The doctor gives you a recommendation which is perfectly satisfactory, but there are a few questions that I should like to ask you—questions of a personal nature, for your future employer is a very close friend of mine and I should not care to send you to him before informing myself about your antecedents. You were born in Germany, I believe?"

"Yes, sir. In Munich, 28 years ago, on the 3d of June last. I was educated in the army and served for five years; then I resigned and came to this country. I had some money that I had inherited from my father; I invested it in a land speculation in Texas and—well, it proved so profitable that I am now employed here as hospital nurse."

He smiled with perfect good temper as he said this and then his questioner continued: "I suppose you have no relatives in this country?"

"No, none at all. My father and mother have been dead for several years and I have one sister living. She is in Berlin, married to an army officer and they are as poor as rats. But, poor as she is, she would send me money if she ever knew the sort of work I have found myself compelled to do here in order to gain my bread."

"You're not a married man, are you?"

"No, sir."

"And have you no friends in this country. Surely you must have some affiliations with some persons here?"

Up to this point there had been absolutely nothing in the young German's voice and manner that suggested the faintest tinge of mental alienation. He had answered the questions put to him in a frank, straightforward manner and had looked his questioner straight in the eye while talking to him. But now, something like a cloud seemed to come into his face and there was a note of hesitation in his voice as he said, "No, sir. I cannot say that I have any affiliations with any one in this country."

"But surely there must be some one who knows you—some one to whom you could refer; and it is hardly likely that a good-looking young fellow like you should live here as long as you have without having some sort of a love affair."

"No," said the German, shaking his head and casting his eyes on the floor, "I have had no love affair—that is to say, none that I care to speak of."

"Pardon me," said the other decisively, "but I must ask you to speak plainly about yourself. We all feel very friendly to you, but in justice to my friend, I could not possibly recommend you without making the fullest inquiries in regard to your personal history. You need not be afraid to speak out. What you say will go no further than the walls of this room. Have you ever had any love affairs of a serious nature?"

"Yes, one very serious one. But I beg that you will not make me speak of it—it is too painful. It began in Germany when I was a mere child."

"Well, there is nothing to your discredit in having a love affair, but really, Mr. Knaackfuss, I must ask you to tell me about it before I can place you in a position as responsible as the one that I have to offer you."

The German's face flushed with emotion. He half rose from his chair as if meditating sudden flight. Then he seated himself again, and began:

"Very well, since I must, I must. Listen then and you shall hear. When I was a very little boy I was betrothed by my mother to a young American child who was then in her cradle. She has grown up since and is today the most beautiful, the most virtuous, the most charming young girl in all this country—even as I am the most unhappy of men—and she loves me as truly and as passionately as I love her."

He paused to wipe the perspiration from his brow. He was trembling with excitement, the tears were falling from his eyes, and it was fully a minute before he could regain sufficient control of himself to go on with his story. The alienist and the physician exchanged significant glances.

"The name of this young lady is Miss Ruth Majoribanks, and if it were not for the machinations of her wicked and evil-minded father, she would have been my wife a year ago. But she sends no replies to the letters that I write. Don't you suppose I know why that is? It is because her letters to me are destroyed by her father. Ah, gentlemen, one of these days I shall go mad with myself. Yesterday I heard that her parents were going to force her into a marriage that must be distasteful to her. Oh, it is awful, awful, awful." He bowed his head on the table and gave way to his grief, while the alienist looked inquiringly at the house physician and then began to fill in a printed blank which he took from a table drawer and which both physicians signed, while the unfortunate German was still sobbing out his grief.

"Don't distress yourself, my poor friend," said the gentleman who had forced this confession from him. "Your story is a sad one, but not in any way to your discredit. "Here," he continued as the detective officer stepped from behind the screen, "is the gentleman who is to take you away in the carriage, and when I call on my friend tomorrow I hope to find you installed there."

Half an hour later the young German was speeding rapidly away. Beside him in the carriage sat the detective officer with the commitment paper, signed, as the law directs, by two reputable physicians, in his pocket.

(Copyright, 1902.)

Emancipation of the Grandmother.

Time was when no household was complete without a grandmother. She nursed the sick, trotted the babies, darned the stockings, and did all of those necessary but disagreeable things that others should have done, but complacently left to her upon the plea that she was used to it, and didn't mind. She stayed at home with the children while others went a-frolicking. But this kind of a grandmother is now almost as extinct as the dodo. A few years later she will be studied as a myth.

She has slipped the yoke of bondage. No chimney-corner old dame is she! She has changed her granny cap for that of liberty. The hairs of her head have thickened and darkened in a single night. The renaissance of her teeth is a modern miracle. She is warring against the flesh according to the rules of Banting. The Woman's Column advises her to try somersaults to reduce heaviness of hips. So in secret and in sorrow, with groans and creaking bones she turns somersaults. Martyrdom is hers, but the American woman will attempt anything. The local exponent of Delsarte dilates upon the ease with which age may become flexible, supple and willowy, if the aged she will but let herself "go." How better than to roll down a long flight of stairs half a dozen times a day? The demonstrator, curled up like a caterpillar, gives personal illustration. So while her forgotten grandson is stealthily sliding down the balluster, grandma, also on the sly rolls down like a croquet ball. She is off in odd corners waggling one foot or wiggling one wrist. The Zeit-Geist having put her foot down on the lined faces, Mr. Time and his wrinkle pot are given the conge. "Go to!" says Granny, "I do not feel old—therefore I am not old." . . . But coercion of the body is not all, she has grappled with her mind. She goes deep into mental culture. What time in the days of servitude she spent in darns and doughnuts, is now given to Darwin and the Duties of Man. As a member of the Omniscient Club, she must know a little about everything. How can she make pies and preserves when she is president of two clubs, whose aim is to reform everything from Man down to the Feeding of Babies? . . . And Grandmother's chair in the inglenook remains empty.

Mrs. Croly's Views.

The late Mrs. Jennie June Croly, whatever her views may have been as to what woman could and should do in clubs, was very conservative in her sentiments concerning suffrage for women; in fact, it was her opinion that they were better off without it. She said:

"The best way for women to approach politics is to let them entirely alone. In all the 50 years that in one way or another I have worked, I have never identified myself with suffrage nor politics, because I do not think women are ready for either. Women need education and training in so many ways, and they are not yet equipped for politics. Politics, to them, is the individual. Instead, it should be the art of government, and of that, historically, politically and socially, they know nothing. The best way is for them to let politics entirely alone. Let them study. They need education. I would have them study government, historically, socially, politically—study the people. Government, properly studied, is all-embracing. Women who have studied it, and have a foundation and thorough knowledge, can then teach their children. There is the beginning of fine politics. Politics is the art of government, not puttting some one man into office—but the latter is woman's idea of it at present. I would have clubs formed to study the governments of the world, for it is the best and most educational training a woman can have. When women begin to do serious work in that way they will be taken seriously, and not until then. Women have such enormous possibilities of influence for good that it is sad to see it juggled with. They can do much; everything that is not open to them already is opening, where it is fit for them; but they need education of the broader kind more than anything else. When they have that they will see politics as it is. In the meantime, I think they are far better off out of it."

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