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GLIB MR.
JACKSON

By Donald Murray

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A week after I had advertised my
house for sale I had a prospective cus-
tomer in the person of Mr. R. A. Jack-
son.

Mr. Jackson's business card con-
veyed the information that he was in
the life insurance business, and he
gave me to understand that he intend-
ed to establish a branch agency at
Glenville. He was a man of middle
age, had a prosperous look and was a
very glib talker. I realized that the
glibness was a part of his business,
and as to his general appearance I was
prepossessed in his favor. I named
my price, and he thought it reason-
able. He paid me \$100 in cash to hold
the offer for a week.

I had paid great attention to details
in building the house. I had the best
of burglar alarms, something new in
the way of window fasteners, and the
place was connected with a police sta-
tion and a fire engine house. I needed
to be secure. I had a collection of
coins and stamps worth \$15,000, and
any burglar who once got in could
have taken the whole away in a com-
mon grip sack. The newspapers were
always speaking of the collection, and
I realized that sooner or later some en-
terprising man would seek to lay
hands on it without the formality of a
sale.

Mr. Jackson had told me that he was
going to Chicago the day after he in-
spected the house, but he didn't go.
He came back to measure some of the
rooms and take a closer look, so that
he might satisfy his wife's curiosity
when he did go. He paid particular at-
tention to the electric wiring on this
occasion, and his words of praise made
me feel rather proud.

My battery room, as I called it, was
a closet between the dining room and
the library, and in here led the tele-
phone wires from the roof. The batter-
ies for the burglar alarm and the vari-
ous bells about the house rested on
shelves in the closet, and I thus had
the whole system under my thumb.
There was an outside window to this



HE WHIPPED OUT A GUN AND SENT A
BULLET CLOSE TO MY EAR.

closet, and I showed Mr. Jackson that
my alarm was so attuned that he had
only to touch a hand to the sash to set
the bells jingling.
After a thorough inspection we
emerged, and when there had been
some further investigations he left the
house. This was in the forenoon.
There was no need of my entering the
closet more than once a month unless
something got out of order, but while
I was eating dinner at 6 o'clock a feel-
ing of uneasiness came over me, and I
rose suddenly and proceeded to the
room. Everything appeared all right
at first glance; but, looking more close-
ly, I soon discovered that Mr. Jackson
had piled his nippers while I was talk-
ing. He had cut the alarm wire for
that window. That I should discover
something wrong and trace it out when
I went to set the alarm at 10 o'clock
he very well knew. He must have fig-
ured, then, on entering the window at
an earlier hour.

My collection of coins and stamps
was in a room by itself next to this
closet, and the door was never locked
till bedtime. With the family all in
the sitting room the treasure room was
almost unguarded. The window by
which Mr. Jackson would enter looked
out upon a side yard. He could skulk
along by the shrubbery and escape be-
ing seen. It was a high window, and
I therefore carried an empty barrel
around for his convenience. Then the
cook was ordered to hurry up her work
of clearing away, and before 8 o'clock
the family occupied the living room,
and there was piano playing and sing-
ing.

Of course I did not mean that Mr.
Jackson should go out as he came in,
and I also wanted to capture him with-
out the aid of the police. I therefore
procured a bear trap at a hardware
store, and this was set under the win-
dow in the battery room. He couldn't
enter without stepping into it, and the
great jaws were certain to give him
the warmest kind of greeting.
There was no tedious delay to keep

my nerves on edge. It was a dark,
rainy night, but at a quarter to 9 Mr.
Jackson showed up. I had stretched a
string for him to hit with his foot, and
when I got the signal we redoubled our
noise in the sitting room.

I gave the man fifteen minutes more
to break his way in and then proceed-
ed to the treasure room and opened
wide the door. Mr. Jackson was all
there, and that bear trap had him fast
by the leg. I had only got a glimpse of
him when he whipped out a gun and
sent a bullet so close to my ear that it
sizzled, and naturally I lost no time
getting out of range. He then fired
several bullets into the door, but it
was of oak, and they did not come
through.

I had captured him, but at the same
time he had captured the house. He
seemed to have a full box of cartridges
with him, and in shooting around pro-
miscuously in the darkness he smashed
all the batteries, destroyed all the
switches and left the house in dark-
ness. Then I had to get the police, but
none of the four who came cared to
face his bullets. They talked to him
through the open door and the closed
window, but he was an obstinate man.
He wouldn't come out, and he swore
no one should come in. The police and
the shooting drew a crowd, and for
two hours people were tramping my
lawn and uprooting flowers and shrub-
bery. I would have overlooked Mr.
Jackson's lapse from morality had he
been reasonable, but he positively re-
fused to argue the case. As a last re-
sort the police sent for a fire engine
and led a line of hose from the nearest
hydrant. The nozzle was directed into
the window, and the water came, and
after the liquid had found its way into
every room on that floor and stood
four feet deep in the cellar Mr. Jack-
son said he had had enough to last him
the rest of his life. The trap had
pinched him, the cold water had chilled
and half drowned him, and he had
fired away his fifty cartridges.

The police took his gun and a score
of skeleton keys, and after a few days
he was convicted of burglary and got
a sentence of seven years. I was rather
sorry about it. Before leaving for
prison he informed me that he broke
into the house for the sole purpose of
stealing a clock a hundred years old
and that as for my collection he
wouldn't have given me 15 cents for
the whole outfit.

Johnnie's Discourse on Water.

Water is found most everywhere,
especially when it rains, as it did the
other day till our cellar was half full.
Jane had to wear father's rubber boots
to get the onions for dinner. Onions
make your eyes water, and so does
horseradish when you eat too much.
There is a good many kinds of water
in the world—rain water, soda water,
well water, boiling water and brine.
There is a girl in our school named
Waterman.

All the boys say, "Waterman you
are," and then she gets mad. I don't
think girls look good when they are
mad. Water is used for a good many
things. Sailors use it to go to sea on.
If there wasn't any ocean their ships
couldn't float and they would have to
stay ashore. Water is a good thing to
make dams in and to swim in and to
fire at boys with a squirt gun and to
catch fishes in. My father caught a
big one the other day, and when he
hauled it up it was an eel. Nobody
could be saved from drowning if there
wasn't any water to pull them out of.
Water is first rate to put fires out
with. I love to go to fires and see the
men work at the engines. This is all
I can think about water—except the
food.

Joke Lost on Him.

An officer on one of the transatlantic
liners told a story last week which
serves as another illustration of the
Englishman's inability to grasp a joke.
The officer while in London after his
last outgoing trip dropped into a cheap
chophouse in Soho. He took a seat
near a table around which were gath-
ered a number of cockneys. One of the
number, according to the conversation,
had been recently to New York, where
he acted as valet. The cockney criti-
cized the city in scathing terms and
suddenly poured out a string of invective
on the New York policemen. "We
ave a bad lot 'ere," he said, "but
they're not a circumstance to the
mokes of bobbies they 'ave over in
New York. I was sharpening a bit of
a pencil one day in Fourth avenue and
Twenty-third street. The blade slipped,
and I halmost bled to death. I ran up
to a red falcid bobby—'ang 'is bloom-
in' 'ide—and asked him in a way as be-
comes a gentleman which was the
quickest way to a 'ospital. 'E laughed
loike a foolish one, and sez 'e, 'Go
across Broadway by the Flatiron build-
ing three times at noon.' And O'm
blowed yet if I don't think the moke
was drunk."—New York Tribune.

Noise and the Nerves.

It was Schopenhauer who said that
"insensibility to noise was the surest
indication of a low and undeveloped
nervous organization, on which assump-
tion it is certain that we as a nation
can hardly be reckoned very far ad-
vanced. Certain it is that we are
more tolerant under this head than any
other nation professing to call itself
civilized, though I fancy the Ameri-
cans run us pretty close in this respect.
Sir Arthur Sullivan was wont to com-
pose in the middle of the night because
he could never obtain quiet at any oth-
er time, and without expecting the im-
possible or looking for legislation on a
subject which is merely of concern to
the community at large, irrespective of
party issues, surely it is not too much
to ask that the local authorities shall
put their heads together on this matter
and exercise the powers which they

possess. Mr. Bernard Shaw once ex-
pressed the opinion that it was the
"state aided noises," as he called them,
which were the worst offenders—as,
for example, the church bells and the
military bands.—London Truth.

Harrison's Rejoinder.

Every schoolboy is familiar with the
saying of Benjamin Franklin as the
group of anxious faced yet loyal men
stood around to sign the immortal De-
claration of Independence. "Now we
must all hang together or we'll all
hang separately." But the rejoinder of
the signer, Benjamin Harrison, to the
above witticism is not so well known.
Harrison, a portly man, looking down
over his ample proportions, replied,
"Yes, but when they drop us off at a
rope's end some of you lightweights
will be kicking and suffering long
after I'm done for."

Duty of a Cheerful Face.

To wear a cheerful face when the
heart is aching is not deceit. When
a good housekeeper cleans the front
steps and porch before she sets the
house to rights she does not mean to
deceive passersby. She merely shows
some pride in her house and some con-
sideration for her neighbors. We con-
quer our heartaches more quickly
when we begin by considering the
friends who are near us.

Lucky to Be Alive.

Patient—Great Scott, doctor, that's an
awful bill for one week's treatment!
Physician—My dear fellow, if you
knew what an interesting case yours
was and how strongly I was tempted
to let it go to a postmortem you
wouldn't grumble at a bill three times
as big as this.—Chicago Tribune.

Not Unexpected.

"O'Rafferty is dead. He wuz struch
by lightning."
"O!s not surprised at all. The lasht
tome O! saw him he wuz lookin'
mighty bad."

A Definition.

Little Clarence—Pa, what is an opti-
mist? Mr. Callipers—An optimist, my
son, is a person who doesn't care what
happens if it doesn't happen to him.—
Puck.

Whoever dreads punishment suffers
it, and whoever deserves it dreads it.—
Colton.

A Father's Jest.

Softleigh—When I—aw—awaked her
for her hand in marriage her bwntal
father threatened to—aw—bwain me,
forcher know. Miss Cutting—That's
just like her father. He always wa.
fond of a joke.—Chicago News.

A Close Student.

"He's fond of literature."
"Is he a close student?"
"I should say so. He never spends a
penny he doesn't have to."—Cleveland
Plain Dealer.

What a tangled web we weave when
first we practice to deceive!—Scott.

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