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## A Midnight Peril

[Copyright, 1905, by T. C. McClure.]  
I had been going to the zoological gardens in a professional capacity for three years when I met Blinks. He was a young man of eighteen or twenty and a half wit. He had neither home nor friends, and no one knew where he came from, but he was allowed to hang around the place and assist the keepers for his board. He had been there about a month when I saw him. He was a butt of ridicule, and some of the keepers were treating him harshly. He had been severely cuffed by one of them just before being sent to me and was crying over it like a girl. I sympathized with him and brooded him up by giving him the first coin he had had in a year, and we two soon got on good terms.

About six weeks after my first meeting with Blinks I was sent for to preserve the carcass of a buffalo, and the lad was ordered to assist me. It was in winter time and the weather very cold. The buffalo had been ailing for a week or two and had died at night in a shed and his body froze as hard as iron. Blinks and I had to thaw it out before we could start at the real work, and so it occurred that we worked until a late evening hour before I was ready to go. It was after 10 o'clock when I began to wash up, and I looked around to find the boy curled up on some blankets and evidently asleep. As it was a room heated with steam pipes, I decided not to disturb him.

There was a door of communication between the dissecting room and the animal house, but it was never closed. I had briefly examined it on two or three occasions to find it locked. In the animal house the keepers made their rounds every three hours, beginning at 8 o'clock. Between 9 and 10 o'clock I had worked mostly alone, while Blinks was in and out of the place four or five times. I had no recollection of seeing him near the locked door, however. He was seemingly asleep, as I said, and I was washing my hands preparatory to taking my departure when a low growl behind me made my hair stand up. I turned to find a male Bengal tiger on the far side of the carcass of the buffalo and between me and the animal house door. The door, as I afterward found out, was a swing door and opened without noise after being unlocked and shut itself with a spring. No one but Blinks could have unlocked it.

The tiger was looking me full in the eyes as I turned, and it seemed as if I turned to stone. I must have breathed, but I was not conscious of it. The beast had somehow escaped from its cage in the animal house, and the scent of blood had drawn him to my room. He did not have the reputation of being particularly ferocious, but one hasn't got to be connected with a zoo to know that the tiger is always a dangerous animal, particularly when he has the scent of blood under his nose. The beast growled menacingly and switched his tail as I stood there looking at him, and when the blood began to run in my veins again I knew that the chances against me were ten to one—aye, a hundred! There was a fresh carcass under his nose to tempt him, but a wild beast does not sink down and begin to feed off a carcass when there is a living man twenty feet beyond.

I had read, as everybody else has, that one should look a dangerous beast in the eye. No one ever gave more foolish advice. The tiger not only stared me out of confidence, but the fact that I was staring at him seemed to anger him. I believe the result would be the same in any case. His tail continued to switch, his eyes to flatten, and his lip dropped down to show his horrible fangs. I realized that in another minute he would spring on me, but to save my life I could not move a foot. The idea of fighting him never occurred to me. If it had I should have had to abandon it the next instant, as there was no weapon at hand. I had forgotten the presence of Blinks when a low, menacing growl from the tiger awoke the boy.

"I—I thought it was morning," said the half wit, as he got to his feet and rubbed his eyes.

Then he noticed me staring fixedly at the tiger and turned his face in that direction.

"Hello, Nero! I knew you would come!" he cried to the beast, and, leaping over the carcass of the buffalo, he put his arms around the neck of the king of the jungle. The beast whined and licked his face.

"We are great friends, you know," explained Blinks as he turned to me. "I have been in his cage night after night when nobody knew anything about it. I unlocked that door and the door of his cage and told him if he would come in after you were gone we would have a romp. Stop your growling. That gentleman has been very good to me. Come over and pat him on the head, Mr. Hastings. Nero won't hurt anybody unless I tell him to."

I was thoroughly frightened, and how I carried things off as well as I did has always been a puzzle to me. All the money in the world could not have induced me to approach the beast. He was quiet now, and his eyes no longer blazed out, but what I wanted was to get out of that as soon as possible.

"Blinks, I am in a hurry tonight and can't stop," I replied. "I wish you would kneel down in front of Nero and put your arms around his neck. I don't want him to see me when I go."

"Of course I will, but next time you come you must have a romp with us. You have no idea how high Nero can jump, and you ought to see him show his teeth sometimes when I pull his tail too hard."

While the boy shielded me from

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# Hostetter's Stomach Bitters.

tiger's gaze I slipped out of the yard door and locked it behind me.

M. QUAD.

## THE DOG'S COLD NOSE.

Its Origin, According to the Log Book of Noah's Ark.

"The true story of the dog's cold nose has been handed down to us sailors from the log book of the ark," says a sailor in the New York Times. "Mrs. Noah went down one morning to the potato bin in the lower hold for the vegetables required for the noonday meal. Her favorite collie dog, Nip, followed her, as was his daily custom. While Mrs. Noah was sorting out the tubers the ark collided with a small snag, which punctured a small hole in her side close to where the lady stood. Seeing that immediate action was necessary, she took off her woolen petticoat and apron and stuffed them into the hole, but the pressure of the water forced the things out, and so she put them back again and sat on them, calling loudly for assistance. But no one seemed to hear her, as the animals were making such a noise. In her position she leaned back so that the backs of her arms were pressed up against the cold sides of the vessel; hence the backs of women's arms are always cold. The water was coming in fast, and she began to fear for the safety of the ark, so she jumped up and, grabbing Nip, put his nose into the hole and bade him stay there until she went to the fore hatch and shouted for help. A carpenter's mate heard her and came down into the hold with a soft pine plug, released poor Nip and stopped the leak. The water outside was very cold, and Nip got a cold nose, and hence all healthy dogs have a cold nose."

## THE INFERNAL REGIONS.

How They Are Depicted in Buddhism and Islamism.

The infernal regions of Buddhism are horrible. They comprise a great hell and 136 lesser hells. In these hells, according to the sculptures of the Buddhist temples, men are ground to powder and their dust turned into ants and fleas and spiders. They are pestled in a mortar. The hungry eat red-hot iron balls. The thirsty drink molten iron.

Islamism says of the infernal regions: "They who believe not shall have garments of fire fitted for them. Boiling water shall be poured on their heads and on their skins, and they shall be beaten with maces of iron."

In the Scandinavian mythology, the mythology of Odin and Thor, we are told that "in Nastrand there is a vast and dreadful structure, with doors that face the north. It is formed entirely of the backs of serpents, wadded together like wickerwork. But the serpents' heads are turned toward the inside of the hall, and they continually send forth floods of venom, in which wade all those who commit murder or forswear themselves."

In the past Christian clergymen loved to describe hell. The present tendency, however, is to avoid discussion of this place—to dwell upon the gentler and more lovely side of Christianity.—Exchange.

### Do Not Boil Coffee Too Long.

There is only one mistake that can be made in making coffee, and that is to cook it too much. When subjected to a momentary boiling and then removed from the fire it is a drink for the gods, but if it is kept at a high degree of heat for thirty minutes its character is entirely changed, and it becomes almost poisonous. Of the people who overcook coffee in this way some do it through ignorance, but the greater part of them through greed in order to make it go further and produce a larger profit. What we need is a law making it a capital offense to boil coffee more than three minutes.—Chicago Chronicle.

### Child Pension in France.

At all times it has been an object with French parents to teach a child to be provident and economical. A child of three can become a member of the Mutualite by giving only 2 cents a week. One cent will entitle it to getting 10 cents a day when it is ill, and the other goes toward getting a pension when it is at a certain age. No one knows how long a child can live, but what does the contribution amount to? There is hardly a child in the world who does not spend that for candy. Now, a boy of eighteen giving 34 cents a month to the society will when he is sixty have a pension of \$72 a year.

### Designs Upon Him.

Gladys—He tells me you have designs upon him. Ethel—Did the wretch say that? Gladys—Yes. He said your image was engraved upon his heart.—Judge.

It often happens that the man who pays the piper has nothing left for his creditors.—Puck.

# CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING.

RATES:  
First Insertion, One Cent a Word.  
One Week, Each Line, 30c.  
Two Weeks, Each Line, 45c.  
One Month, Each Line, 75c.

## Astorian Free Want Ads.

Anyone Desiring a Situation can Insert an Advertisement in this Column of Three Lines Two Times Free of Charge.

### PROPOSALS INVITED.

PROPOSALS FOR BEEF AND MUTTON—Office chief commissary, Vancouver Barracks, Wash., March 15, 1905. Sealed proposals for furnishing and delivering fresh beef and mutton for six months beginning July 1, 1905, will be received here and at offices of commissaries at Fort Stevens, Ore.; Boise Barracks, Idaho; Forts Casey, Columbia, Flagler, Lawton, Walla Walla, Ward, Worden Wright and Vancouver Barracks, Wash., until 10 a. m. April 15, 1905, and then opened. Envelopes containing proposals should be indorsed "Proposals for fresh beef and mutton to be opened April 15, 1905," and addressed to Commissary of Post to be supplied, or to Maj. George E. Davis, Chief Com'y.

NOTICE FOR BIDS—BIDS WILL be received for the foundation and basement of the New St. Mary's Hospital; plans and specifications may be seen at the office of the architect at St. Mary's Hospital; all bids to be in on or before the 25th of this month; right reserved to reject any or all bids. March 6, 1905.

SEALED PROPOSALS WILL BE RECEIVED at the office of the Light-House Engineer, Portland, Oregon, until 12 o'clock, M., April 16, 1905, and then opened, for furnishing and delivering fuel and provisions for light-house tender Columbine, during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1906, in accordance with specifications, copies of which, with blank proposals and other information, may be had upon application to Major W. C. Langfitt, Corps of Engineers, U. S. A., Engineer.

### FOR SALE—MISCELLANEOUS.

FOR SALE—SECOND-HAND FURNITURE. Inquire at room 2 over Peterson & Brown's store.

NCUBATOR FOR SALE—400 EGGS capacity; also three 100 capacity brooders; first-class condition. Address A. Astorian Office.

FOR SALE—SHEPHERD PONEY, cart and harness. Apply to A. E. Allen, Clatsop, Ore.

160 ACRES OF FIRST CLASS TIMBER land for sale, in Pacific county, near Columbia river. Address Box 699 Astoria, Ore.

FOR SALE—LOT 1, BLOCK 14, Adair's Astoria; for particulars write to J. P. Miller, Onieda, Wash.

FOR SALE—STEAM TUG IN FIRST-class condition; terms reasonable; suitable for selling purposes. For particulars apply at this office.

SCOW FOR SALE AT M'GREGOR'S mill, 22x64; would make a good fish scow. Inquire of Dan Gambel at mill.

### HELP WANTED.

WANTED—MEN TO LEARN BARBER trade; 8 weeks completes; positions guaranteed; tuition earned while learning. Write for terms. Moler's Barber College, 644 Clay St., San Francisco.

Wanted.—A school girl to do light work at Mrs. E. C. Holden's on Duane street.

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Fishermen and Cannery Supplies

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