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THE MAN UNDER THE BED.

BY M. QUAD.

Copyright, 1901, by C. R. Lewis.

I had been in Paris for a couple of months, living at a family hotel and knocking about at my leisure, when I made the acquaintance of Felix Duchene, as he called himself. He was a man of about 30, and, though a Frenchman from head to heel, he spoke English fairly well. He was not a man whom I should have selected as a friend, and yet there was something about him which interested me. He had traveled extensively, met with many adventures and was a good talker. I came to know him as a man of nerve and courage, and, though I feared he would turn out to be a parasite, nothing of the sort happened. He seemed to have plenty of money of his own and never asked for the loan of a franc.

I had known Duchene for three or four weeks when we visited a dance hall on one of the outer boulevards one night. The place was a resort for tough men and bad women and promised a phase of Parisian life I had not



yet met. We found a rough crowd indeed, and the evening was not half over when a burly fellow deliberately picked a quarrel with me. I was giving him the worst of it when he drew a knife and rushed upon me. Duchene, who was standing quietly by, knocked the scoundrel senseless, and, to my surprise, we were not molested by the half dozen friends of the victim who had been urging him to finish me. I came to know later that the whole thing was a put up job, but I looked upon it then as a brave action on the part of my acquaintance and gave him my gratitude and friendship. I had never questioned him as to why he was in Paris, where or how he lived or what aim he had in life, and he had never dropped a hint. I had a secret belief that he was a gambler and a sharper, but to me he was as straightforward as could be hoped for. About two weeks after the event at the dance hall Duchene told me his story, or a part of it. He was a professional gambler, or had been up to a few months before he met me. Then his eyesight had gone back on him and he had been obliged to abandon the business. I had observed that he was nearsighted and had been obliged to favor his eyes.

A year before meeting me Duchene and a partner had "roped" a rich young fellow into a game and skinned him out of what would be about \$50,000 in American money. They were then occupying rooms in a certain house he indicated, and, fearing trouble from the victim, who had declared himself defrauded, the money had been hidden under the floor. Trouble came. Both men were arrested, and while Duchene got a year in prison, the other man died of pneumonia while waiting his trial. On leaving prison Duchene at once took steps to secure his money, but found the floor in possession of an artificial flower maker who held a lease. The place could not be entered and searched, and the \$50,000 still rested beneath the floor of the front room. It would take \$1,500 to buy the lease and oust the flower maker and another \$500 to put in a stock of something to throw the police off the scent. Duchene could not raise the money, nor had he yet met a man he dared trust. His proposition to me was that I furnish the \$2,000 and receive \$10,000 of the hidden money as my reward. Had he offered to give halves I think I should have looked upon it as a "plant" and thrown it over, but in offering me a sixth portion he seemed to show good business tact. It was a big return on the investment—big enough to satisfy any one—and I gave him a favorable answer at once. He had already sounded the flower maker as to the lease, and if my money was raised the papers could be signed three days later. I had a good bit of cash at my bankers, and on the second day after hearing Duchene's story I drew out \$2,000 in gold and placed the bag in my trunk. Next day the pa-

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FOR SALE CHEAP.—A good back and single harness for sale cheap. Inquire of Hess & Jennings, at Palace Laundry.

pers were to be signed, and a week later the door would be in our possession. That night the two of us attended the theater and afterward had supper, and I haven't the slightest doubt that my wine was drugged. While I was not made helpless, my head seemed as big as a barrel. I could hardly keep my eyes open, and if Duchene had not put me in a cab and instructed the driver I should never have found my way to the hotel. I had to be helped to my room, and I fell upon the bed, dressed as I was, and was instantly asleep. I had been asleep two hours when I awoke as keen as a fox. The effects of the drug had vanished, and as I got out of bed to undress I found my legs all right again. I was fully undressed and ready to get between the sheets when my ear caught a sound from under the bed. I at once stooped down for a look, and my eyes rested upon a man lying on the breast of his back. I had him out in a second. It seemed to me as if I had two times my ordinary strength, and, though the fellow struggled furiously and cut my arm with a knife, I grasped his throat and choked him till he lay like one dead. It was only when I had struck a light that I found the intruder to be Duchene. He had come in through the window which opened on a veranda. He had been working at the lock of my trunk when I made some noise on awakening, and he had rolled himself under the bed. He had come for that bag of gold, and he had meant to do for me if necessary.

I alarmed the house, the police were sent for, and the fellow was taken away, but it was a good hour before he recovered his senses. His story was entirely false, and he had put up a job to rob me. It was my testimony that gave him five years in prison, but after it was all over and he had been sent away I was a bit sorry for him. He could tell a good story, had a laugh which made you laugh with him, and few men of his class in Paris or elsewhere could order a better dinner. He was not a grasping man withal. He had planned to rob me of \$2,000 where another would have raised the figure to \$5,000.

The Gentle Art of Letter Writing.

The classic age of letter writing, like that of chivalry, is gone, although no Burke has been found yet to utter its splendid funeral oration. Correspondence on business, hurried notes containing invitations to dinner or acceptances thereof—these are the miseries which fill the bag of the letter carrier. The love letter, we presume, still holds its sway, and, if we are to judge from the revelations of breach of promise cases, it is full of sugary sentimentalism as in the days of Lydia Langshir. But the letter as it has passed into literature, the letter whose highest claim to be treated as art is that it conceals art, the letter as written by William Cowper, or Oliver Goldsmith, or Horace Walpole, or Miss Burney—that charming epistle intended only for the affectionate perusal of friends and yet of such value to the historian of life and manners—shall we say that it has disappeared from the busy modern world, killed by the "railway and the steamship and the thoughts that shake mankind"? At least, it is now but a rare product, a fragile flower scarcely able to maintain itself in our altered social soil.

Correspondence from being a cherished art and science has in our day tended to become what is called in slang a "grind." It is "snappety," like the cheap newspapers, a sort of "bits" or "cuts," giving hints which require to be filled out, only that the receiver has hardly time for that mental process. Truth to tell, a great deal of our letter writing is boredom, the source of irritation and weariness to those who are called on to undertake it.—London Spectator.

From Fingers to Forks.

In olden times fingers served well enough to convey food to the mouth, and a divided gourd was an acceptable drinking vessel, but when fashionable aspirations seized our ancestors they scorned these implements of nature, and even the Pacific Islanders pulled their hair, of which they had a generous abundance, in their anxiety to devise more seemly methods. They finally manufactured forks that looked like skewers, and out of the bamboo they manufactured knives. The Indians, proverbially slow in adopting modern ways, still eat without knives or forks, although they have permitted the use of spoons. These were first made of shells and the rims of gourds. Later handles were inserted, and, having passed numerous stages, knives, forks and spoons have reached the present elaborately ornamented kinds now in general use.

The cup is probably the most ancient of all domestic utensils. Its earliest form was simply the half closed hand or the folded leaf. Then followed cups made of sea shells or rims of fruit cut in halves. Later appeared cups of metal, lacquer and china. For centuries the cup has been made the expression of art and luxury, and the most precious metals, combined with the artisan's most consummate skill, are now commonly employed in their manufacture.—Baltimore Sun.

The Number 4.

There are four cardinal points, four winds, four quarters of the moon, four seasons, four figures in the quadrille, four rules of arithmetic, four suits of cards, four quarters to the hour, four legs for furniture, most animals go on four legs, the dead are placed between four planks, the prisoners between four walls. We have four inches and four canine teeth, and our forks have four prongs; all animals, when butchered, are cut into four quarters; the vehicle, greatest of all string instruments, has but four strings; four of a kind is a pretty good hand at poker even if they are only fours.—Exchange.

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Ar Ogdan	5:45 a.m.	11:45 a.m.
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Ar Los Angeles	1:20 p.m.	7:00 a.m.
Ar El Paso	6:00 p.m.	9:30 p.m.
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