

THE UNDOING OF A DOUBLE
BY HUGO ST FINSTERRE, M.D.
AUTHOR OF "WHO'S WHO" ETC.

Continued from first page.

CHAPTER II.

I smiled as I read this letter, so characteristic of President Heermann's fragility of mind. Although most of the stolen funds had been recovered, he was worrying over the comparatively slight expense to which I was subjecting the bank by this trip into the interior of Mississippi.

The anonymous letter referred to had been forwarded from New York to Aldine, whence it was mailed to Mr. Heermann. He was so pleased over the prospect of securing Castleton, the defaulter, without their help that after my departure he showed Inspector Byrnes the letter. That sagacious man instantly suspected the truth. The letter was a blind, and, though the hand was disguised, he soon convinced the president that it was written by Castleton himself. With this clue the criminal was soon located and arrested in New York. This side issue of my narrative may be dismissed with the statement that the miscreant received his just deserts and is now doing a long term in Sing Sing.

"I see no reason for hastening my return," I thought as I placed the letter in my pocket. "I have had no vacation this year and am entitled to two weeks away. One thing is certain—New York will see nothing of me until the time is up, and I shall surprise myself if I am delayed somewhat longer."

The afternoon was drawing to a close when the landlord returned from the tumble down stable and sat down on the front porch with me, beside his crony, who was slowly smoking his corncob. "Waal, Hank, how 's things been with you?" he asked heartily as he proceeded to refill and light his pipe.

It was evident that he had mistaken me for some one else, and I was in that frame of mind that I humored the mistake. "I've never felt better. How is it with you?"

"Tollyble, tollyble; I can't complain. The old woman is troubled with the rheumatism, but otherwise she's as well as ever."

"And your boys and girls?"

"My boys and girls!" he repeated, turning his bewildered face toward me with an expression of astonishment. "Have you forgot that Tom and Mag Bullfinch buried their last chick during wartime?"

"I beg pardon; I ought to have known better."

side, there were cases, the scuffling of feet, and then it seemed as if a dozen men swarmed into the barroom. Amid the babel I could hear Landlord Bullfinch ordering them to keep back and not invade his house against his will. But the savage mob would not be denied, and the oaths grew louder and fiercer.



"And how 's Esther?"

countenance grow white, as if under the impulse of a great fear.

"What's the meaning of all that hubbub?" I asked, with a suspicion that it could have any reference to me.

"I'm afraid, Hank"—

At that instant the door of the dining room was dashed inward with a violence that almost carried it off its hinges and Landlord Bullfinch bounded in, his shaggy face the picture of terror.

"My God, Hank, they're after you!" he gasped. "Run up stairs and jump out the window. Maybe you can get your horse out of the barn."

"They're after me, you say. What do they want of me?"

"They're going to lynch you, Hank! I tried to hold 'em back till you got a chance, but it's too late."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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