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Second Episode of "THE MASTER KEY"

Many a man writes down on paper the things he can not articulate. James Gallon, dreaming of two women, taciturn and silent as he was, wrote down the thoughts which he could not express in speech. His diary, well thumbed, held the history of many a lonely night; but all of these nights there was one that stood out in his mind:

It was the darkness enclosing a woman upon a bed. He still heard her whispered cry: "You speak of God, Tom; but I have no religion but motherhood." Before his closed eyes came the vision of a lamp lit—then the apparition—the face of his daughter. One life had fled, possibly appalled by the horrors of a world that reeks not of pure humanity. Yet there was in the dead woman's arms a child grotesquely asleep, as if awakened to the sorrows this mother had not known.

"Ruth," he cried. There was no answer from the still woman in the darkness—but thus he had christened his only child.

And Gallon knew he was getting old. The problem before him was no longer dim and vague—as it had been in the days of his prime—but absolutely distinct and clear: What was to become of Ruth when he died. Ho-

sternly put out of his mind the thought of his former partner—the man—was he dead? If he had not died that night in the gulch—if he were still alive, knowing the secret of the Master Key, who would save Ruth from his vengeance?

Then there arose before Gallon's mind the straight, strong, almost austere figure of his mining engineer, John Dore. Youthful, of course, but he had proved himself almost wholly competent in every task that had been given him.

And as though Fate desired to give further proof of Dore's manliness, she arranged for him shortly after this, a fearful undertaking. Ruth, while exploring the tunnels, is thrown into an ore car by a terrific explosion. This explosion sends the car on its downward flight out of the tunnel and over the trestle. She is in danger of a tragic death if the car goes over the dump at the end. Dore, superintending the operations of a traveling bucket, sees her predicament. He orders the bucket swung loose by its cable and, hanging down on his legs, he swings over the girl and pulls her in and up to him, the car rushing on and smashing over the ore heap.

But what of Gallon? Those whom we most want to forget reappear at strange times. James Gallon saw the ghost of his partner, whom he had murdered on

the crest of the hill above the mine they had discovered years ago together.

Yes, Wilkerson, the partner, was alive. He had continually searched for Gallon. In some vague way, Gallon had realized this, and his fears had been summarized by the words written down in the diary:

Wilkerson still alive tonight. When will he come into the day? He shall never have the key that will unlock my girl's happiness. I will trust John Dore."

But it was no apparition that Gallon had seen, first on the crest of the hill and then in the window; it was really Wilkerson who, after one satisfied glance rode swiftly away toward Valley Vista.

It was midnight when he rapped on the door of the railroad station and called the sleepy agent waiting for the express. This is the telegram he sent:

Valle Vista, Cal.

"Jean Darnell, Astor House, N. Y. Have found Gallon at last. Address Master Key Mine tomorrow. 'Wilkerson'"

Who was Jean Darnell? Well she had a mission of vengeance, too. Incidentally she welcomed money. Wilkerson had to have it if he ever expected to possess her. When Ruth came to make her fight with the help of her sweetheart, John Dore, she had two crafty persons to contend with.

AN AERONAUT

By FRED L. YOUNG

When the steamer Orinoko, on her way from Naples to New York, stopped at Gibraltar a man came aboard with a number of boxes, which were marked "Machinery." He was a pleasant spoken, half-fellow-well-met sort of person, who made acquaintance rapidly with the other passengers. He bet freely on the daily run of the ship and if he won opened wine to celebrate his good luck and if he lost opened wine to celebrate the winner's luck. In either case he opened wine. Billy Mickleton, the gentleman referred to, soon became known as the best fellow on the ship.

"What's in all those boxes, Mickleton, you brought aboard with you?" asked a passenger.

"When we approach the Atlantic coast you'll all know. I'm going to make an experiment that will attract the attention of the world."

"Why not tell us now?"

"I'm under contract with a New York newspaper to keep the secret till the last moment. The paper is to have the exclusive rights of publication." Nothing so absorbs people as curiosity, and the Orinoko had not long passed Madeira before everybody was talking about Mickleton and the experiment he was going to make. Some believed it to be a trial trip of a new kind of boat, whose parts were packed in the boxes. Others guessed that he had invented a light submarine to be manned by one person. He would put it in the water when the ship was off Sandy Hook and, moving under water, beat her to her dock. A third crowd guessed that Mickleton intended to be shot out of a mortar from the ship's deck and come down with a patent parachute.

When the ship was 500 miles from port Mickleton secured the permission of the captain to remove the contents of the boxes to the upper deck. When they had been unpacked and carried to the deck Mickleton set to work and put together an aeroplane. The passengers gathered about him to watch, some who knew something about aeroplanes curious to see the machinery put in. But Mickleton waited till they all turned in for the night to do this work, and when they came on deck in the morning they found the aeroplane concealed under a canvas cover.

The captain kindly ordered the ship's carpenter to make a passage for the machine by taking down the stern rails and otherwise render a start possible. When all these things were done and the passengers had nothing to do but wait they crowded around the aeroplane and piled him with questions. "Is it a new power you're going to test?" "Are you going in ahead of the ship or going to make a transatlantic flight?" "Is it to break a record for speed or for height or for distance?"

Mickleton said that it pleased him not to be able to satisfy them, but that he was dependent on the newspaper with which he had made his contract

for funds to carry out his experiment and if he let out anything he would forfeit a small fortune. When a man became too persistent Billy opened a bottle of wine.

Fire Island was sighted at 6 o'clock in the morning. At 10 Mickleton was ready for his flight. The last article he put on his machine was a small box. He opened it and showed provisions. From the size of the box it might contain food and drink to last a week. It was evident from this that the flight was to be a long one, and it was the opinion of most of the passengers that Mickleton was intending to make straight across the Atlantic back to Gibraltar. If necessary he would have stopping points at the Azores and Madeira.

Just before starting Mickleton went to the wireless office and sent a message in cipher to a New York news paper. If any one had any doubts as to the truthfulness of the aeronaut's excuses for not telling his intention this removed them. Leaving the wireless office, he returned to his aeroplane, went under the canvas, made a final inspection of the parts, then, removing the cover, got aboard. Sailors on a run pushed him along the deck; he caught the air, hardly striking the water surface, then rose gradually.

The ship was steaming westward along the Long Island coast. The aeroplane, rising, turned toward the land, passed over the eastern end of the island and gradually passed out of sight. The Orinoko reached Sandy Hook about noon, but, being delayed at quarantine, was not docked till the next morning. Every passenger was on deck and eager to read the account of the aeroplane flight, the start of which he had witnessed. "Not a single newspaper mentioned it."

Mr. Mickleton passed out of the minds of the passengers of the Orinoko as he had passed out of their sight over Montauk Point and was forgotten. But the time came when they read the newspaper account, which was a very different one from what they had been told about. It reported how the slickest smuggler working between Europe and America, who had long evaded customs officers, had been caught red handed. Among his smuggling devices the article gave an account of his getting a million dollars' worth of diamonds in free of duty by means of an aeroplane from the deck of a liner.

Public Sentiment.



"Do you pay much attention to public sentiment?" "No, I always took the other way when I see a young couple holding hands in the park."—Exchange

The Dread Alternative.

The long suffering wife of a habitual drinker in a Mississippi town, served notice on the local dramshop keepers—this was in the old days before prohibition—that she would prosecute any one selling her husband intoxicants. So when the gentleman in question slightly wavered on his pins but dignified and scholarly as always, dropped into his favorite saloon that evening and called for a toddy the barkeeper only shook his head.

"Can't do it, colonel," he said. "Sorry, but you know how it is."

"But sir," said the colonel, "I want



That might have happened to ME.

WE never know when to look for it. Well and happy today—sick, disabled or dead tomorrow. Wonder if that poor chap left anything.

Well—if my time ever comes, I'll know that the wife and babies are provided for. At least \$5,000 if I'm killed, and from \$25 to \$50 a week if I'm disabled. My AETNA ACCUMULATIVE ACCIDENT POLICY will take care of us all. Pays for a surgical operation or hospital expense, too.

Man on a salary certainly ought to couple up with this AETNA proposition. Those chaps who put it off-until-tomorrow don't realize what a pitiful fix a penniless, fatherless family is in. Be wise—

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atfirst. I famish for a cooling draft!" "All right then," said the barkeeper, "have a glass of water on the house!" And he produced a cold, brimming glassful.

For a moment the colonel contemplated the offering sourly. Then he raised it to his lips and in a resigned tone of voice said:

"If the great philosopher Socrates could drink hemlock without a shudder I suppose I can swallow this!"—Saturday Evening Post.

Not For Sale.

Henry A. Franck, the author, telling of a trip down the spine of South America from Bogota to Buenos Aires, said:

"Eggs are plentiful, though in the Andes, when you enter a shop with four bushel baskets of them sitting around in various corners, the invariable reply is 'They are not for sale.' The proper and in a mode answer to this is to say in your most fluent and regal Quecha: 'Of course I know very well they are not for sale. No Andine lady who considers herself a lady would think of selling eggs'—meanwhile you are filling your basket or sacks with the fruit in question—but I have taken three dozen. How much do I owe you?"

"The answer is sure to be a meek 'Dos reales, señor.'"

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