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down just then and made a draft." "And where was Professor Harrington all this time? Come and show us." Tucker emerged from the history alcove, and walked a few feet up the aisle, on the side of the tables toward the law-book alcove, where he halted, facing toward the front door.

"Was the professor in that position?" demanded Mr. Almy.

"Yes, sir." "With his back to the law-book alcove?"

"Yes, sir; he was glancing over books on this table."

"How did you see him from that place where you were standing, inside that history alcove?"

"I didn't stay right there all the time," said Tucker.

"Come forward, eh, and looked around the shelves?"

"Looked through 'em; across the tops of those little books," answered Tucker, pointing toward one of the shelves in the history alcove. "Some one would have seen me if I'd come out far enough to look around the shelves."

"Now, tell me: did the professor do

Creases bordered Ernesto's eyes and nose and lips.

"You think I get married?" he queried coquettishly. "Not me! But other people, maybe . . . notta?" He glanced up the stair well and reproduced his classic wink, this time softened by regard. "I go burn a candle for them this morning, anyway!"

"Oh!" I breathed, clutching the banister. "You don't mean . . . has something . . . something nice happened?"

"You don't know-ow?" cried Ernesto, crescendo. "My God! You go upstairs!"

I did, somehow. Perhaps they had heard our voices, for as I walked down the hall, the door of the Grosvenor apartment sprang open, and I heard—laughter! Not loud, not merry; a happy ripple of content. But it grew merry when I entered, I was so dazed to see Julia sitting on a blue sofa, and beside her, holding her hand, Professor Harrington. Near by sat Peter. Standing, hat in hand, was Mr. Almy.

"We had to have you here to make it complete!" cried Julia, rushing toward me with such a smile on her face as had never been seen there before. "A miracle has happened!"

I sank into a chair.

"It must have," I gasped; "Ernesto's got religion?"

"Good old Ernesto!" cried Peter. "Why aren't you joyful, too, Constance?"

Embarrassed, I glowered severely at Mr. Almy, who, the cause of my mistaken anguish, and the only calm person present—Professor Harrington was in such a state of ecstasy he couldn't speak at all—came to my rescue.

"We just wanted to return some of your correspondence," he said; and from his pocket he produced my yellow note!

The professor now found his voice: "Miss Fuller kindly let me use that bit of paper temporarily," he said in his gentle, precise manner; "it was to rescue me from great difficulties. And it finally brought me to my dear brother's child, whom I had never expected to see in this world."

We were silent a moment, before the picture of that fine old-fashioned gentleman and that beautiful and gifted girl. At last freed, one from the sorrow, the other from the persecution, which had filled their lives, there could be no doubt that their happy, unexpected reunion foreshadowed long years of sweet relationship. They were absorbed in each other; Mr. Almy beckoned Peter and me into the little reception-room and shut the door.

"Am I never to know what has happened?" I demanded.

"You mean since you slammed Darrow's door?" inquired Mr. Almy. "We heard you! Well, I didn't blame you, then. But this is what happened:

"Burton, taking Professor Harrington's place, started to reach for the spring-lancet as directed, when suddenly he straightened up and asked Tucker how far the professor had stooped to see into the law-book alcove from the rear."

"You see," interrupted Peter, "being just Harrington's height, I would of course see just what Harrington saw. And I had noticed that when Farrell, who took Grosvenor's place, said he saw me through the cap, as he stooped, I didn't see him at all! Now, that spring-lancet was right on the edge of the shelf, close beside Farrell; and while I could see it—I said I could, you know—it was only by stooping over that I did so. So it occurred to me to ask Tucker how much the professor had stooped."

"And he said," continued Mr. Almy,

taking up his story, "that Harrington hadn't stooped at all, but had stood upright all the time! Therefore we told Burton to look into the gap and see where the lancet was, assuming that Harrington might have seen it and then reached for it without bending. And then—"

"I couldn't come within eight inches of it, without stooping over!" cried Peter, triumphantly.

"But you said the professor admitted he made those streaks that were found in the dust between the rows of books," I suggested. "Didn't he reach in there?"

"Yes, but just to feel, according to his story, whether or not there was any third row of books concealed behind the front row, as is often the case on crowded shelves," explained Mr. Almy. "This explanation was borne out to some extent by the fact that the marks in the dust were, indeed, far back from the edge of the shelf where the spring-lancet was placed, and it is partly corroborated by Tucker's statement that the professor never stooped over. Furthermore, it furnished a clue as to why Mr. Grosvenor should have been stooping to look through the gap. He was making a thorough search for that law book. So then Burton had another idea."

"Oh, we all had it," demurred Peter; "but perhaps it occurred to me first, seeing that I had Harrington's part. He seemed to be let out; it looked as if his story were true. Yet there Mr. Grosvenor was, killed by that instrument—how? Well, I said: 'I can't see Farrell, but he can see me, when he's stooping over as Grosvenor was. Now, that old man had a weak heart and a bad conscience. He must have got a dreadful shock when he saw Harrington right in front of him. He must undoubtedly have thought Harrington had come to look for Clarithew's 'Notes,' his own property, the book Grosvenor had had stolen from him, even though the theft didn't quite come off as hoped. If a man in such circumstances, standing in such a position, had such a shock, what would he do?"

"So we worked it all out, with Tucker's help," finished Mr. Almy, "and following Burton's lead, were able to reconstruct what undoubtedly did happen to Mr. Grosvenor. Tucker said he jerked himself upright suddenly from that stooping position, when we asked him to remember just what happened after the old man looked into the gap, and that his right hand, which was stretching toward the lancet, you know, slid along the side of the bookshelf. Then, according to Tucker, 'the box clicked,' and the old man toppled over, slowly and heavily, but without much noise."

"We worked this description out in detail; it was soon evident that the sliding of the hand along the bookshelf was Mr. Grosvenor's attempt to steady himself, as he had jerked himself off his balance when rebounding from the shock of seeing the professor so unexpectedly. But instead of recovering his balance, he lost it entirely. His frail wrist hit violently against the base of the spring-lancet, which was lying set on the edge of the shelf—set, as we know from the wound inflicted, at its greatest depth, doubtless to give full scope for comparison between its incisions and the scratches on Clarithew's 'Notes.' He shot the lancet along the shelf forcibly until it struck the upright division between the book-shelves, and set it off, on his own wrist, thus forced against the base of the lancet, by accidentally pressing the trigger on the edge of the shelf over which it was hanging."

"Just one thing more, please!" I begged. "Had Professor Harrington come to Darrow's for Clarithew's 'Notes'?"

Mr. Almy laughed.

"He was the one person who had not! He hadn't even noticed the advertisements, either of the auction or the purchase. He had, in fact, quite given up his old law book, which he was chiefly sorry to lose for sentimental reasons. You see, Mr. Grosvenor—and with this final wrong, we might dismiss that unhappy old man, since the one he injured bears him no grudge because she is incapable of doing so—Mr. Grosvenor had written to Professor Harrington, while the latter was still in England, that the niece he knew had been born had died soon after her mother. That was why the professor never made any attempt to find his niece. Well! That was a reunion when we broke the good tidings to them!"

"What a lot you're responsible for, Peter!" said I.

"Promising young fellow, he is," smiled Mr. Almy. "I engaged him again this morning. And first thing he does is fell out with his sister! I merely said she'd be a good one to help with the job."

"Stuff!" said Peter, huffily. "All I did was tell her she was young; she goes straight up in the air and stays there."

"What a dreadful thing to tell one who is young!" I remonstrated. "Do you really want Nancy, Mr. Almy?"

"Yes, if you could persuade her to come. I want a keyhole to be found for that lonesome key. Surely there's one here or hereabouts. I must leave the job in good hands; I'm going home for some sleep, so's the professor."

I ascended to the third floor, there to find Nancy determinedly reading the Sunday fashion supplement.

"Why don't you come down and celebrate, as invited?" I inquired.

"Peter's scandalized at me! After the way he acted, himself, and after all I've done for him! Why? Because I told him how I thought once that

Mr. Case was trying to steal Clarithew's 'Notes'!"

"Was he scandalized because you stole it yourself?"

"No, he said that was first-rate; but no one old enough to be a judge of character could think Mr. Case capable of such a thing. He never thought anything of Mr. Case, himself, until after what Julia told him and Mr. Almy!"

"What was that?"

"Long ago, he knew Julia's mother—oh, very well; he wanted to marry her, but she didn't care for him. He said she was a very romantic girl, he thought specially because her father was so stern; and he—Mr. Case—well, he never was very exciting, I guess. But yesterday, when Julia was most under suspicion, he came here and offered, for her mother's sake, to help her in any possible way. You know last Thursday, when you and he and Mr. Roberts and Captain Ashland were talking about the bookplate? Well, of course he knew something about it; you've heard how Julia's mother threw the book to him from this balcony, where those very granite pillars stand that form the bookplate frame?"

"So they do! so they do!"

"Maybe Mr. Case was trying to find that book, when I saw him Thursday evening, really to see if he could help Julia with it," pursued Nancy, not without shrewdness. "You see, he did know Mr. Grosvenor, and then he found out who Julia was, when she fainted in the shop; he must have guessed what they both wanted."

Yes, all Mr. Case's queer furtive actions now appeared in a new, rosy light. What he knew of Mary Grosvenor's secret had apparently not been enough to determine him on what he thought the best course of action to help her daughter, then under a cloud. He had therefore come personally to Julia's aid to try to discover the best course.

"And you're not going to try to find out why Mary Grosvenor hid that key under that bookplate!" I ejaculated earnestly.

Nancy flung down the fashion supplement.

"But whatever I do," she protested, "Peter will think he did it himself, and if it should by any chance be wrong, he'll say I'm young."

"He will, my dear," I agreed, "for he is a man and a brother. But that won't stop you doing things, I suppose?"

She was already half way downstairs. Professor Harrington and Mr. Almy were just departing. We all shook hands warmly. Mr. Almy breathed kind thanks for my humble assistance, and hopes, which I shared, that we might meet again, either officially or unofficially. They were gone; and Nancy forthwith developed a burning enthusiasm for the key quest.

Julia mentioned some old mahogany boxes in her room which had always stuck fast and refused to open; Nancy said she didn't believe the key would fit any of them, though she had never seen them, but she would try it. She fitted away; then Julia turned to Peter and me. There was a new, sweet, serious determination on her face.

"I'm going to tell you both something; something I've known ever since last Monday morning; something—" she addressed Peter—"that you did for me, that you never told about and never would tell about, I know well—"

He fairly sprang from his chair.

"Stop!" he interrupted, in frantic agitation. "I beg you not to speak; everything's over now; it's of no consequence!"

"It is of the utmost consequence," said Julia, firmly, "that I acknowledge what I owe to you. For last Monday morning, when I dashed up the aisle in Darrow's, and you, Mr. Burton, came rushing toward me, you saw this in my hand."

Dipping behind some books on the table, she held up the spring-lancet, to Peter's increased agitation. She went on calmly:

"You saw more; although I instantly concealed the weapon under my cape, you saw its blades protruding slightly, as the kick of the mechanism always causes them to do. I resist the hammer at once, to throw off suspicion that my cousin had used the weapon, and sliding it to the floor under my cape, I kicked it as violently as I could, so it would land under that desk at the door. That kick was what bruised my foot; I stabbed my toe hard, and my feet were not protected by shoes."

"What?" asked Peter, surprised.

Julia smiled at me.

"Miss Fuller could have told you that I had on black satin bedroom slippers," she assured him; "only she didn't tell anybody!"

"Good for you, Constance," said Peter; "I don't quite get all this, but slippers might have looked queer, eh?"

"Very. I'll tell you now how I came to wear them. As you know, my grandfather and I had a disagreement on Sunday. I made up my mind that he must tell me about my parents; so I told him I had been to the Richmond auction to see that book. He refused me all information, not too kindly. Next morning at breakfast he appeared all ready to go out; I felt sure he was bound for Darrow's. I don't go to my studio until ten o'clock. I had on a breakfast jacket and slippers, therefore, and had just time, after he had left the house to slip on a frock and hurry after him so I could keep him in sight. My slippers were black, so unsuspecting that I could take a

chance that they would not be noticed. Yet they might have watched against me, as showing that I had left the house in haste, possibly angry pursuit of my grandfather. Miss Fuller gave me the benefit of the doubt."

"And you, Mr. Burton, saw me in distress at Richmond, you suspected I had trailed that book to your shop, you heard me cry: 'He's dead!' and saw this weapon in my hand; yet you gave me, a stranger, the protection of your silence at the price of suffering to yourself. And finally, you cleared my uncle of all suspicion, forever. You don't think I'm going to let that all pass without a word, though I can never repay you?"

"Don't talk to me about repayment!" said Peter, sharply. "It's enough for me to have always believed in you."

"Well," smiled Julia, "you'll have to take credit, at least. When Mr. Almy brought my uncle here, I told both of them everything!"

Peter looked at her determinedly. "I don't want credit," he said.

So, as it was the day of rest and had plenty of time, I gave him a chance to tell her what he did want.

CHAPTER XIV

They Have Their Reward.

Monday morning I awoke very early, and viewed the fading stars with regret that the lists of adventure should seem to have closed, however happily. A very few bits of the Colfax bookplate picture-puzzle remained to be fitted in; and then what? Well, at least work, and work was always an adventure to me. So, as I still had plenty of it to do after the previous interrupted week, I took an early train into town. A quarter-past eight saw me walking down Fourth avenue through the pale fall sunbeams slanting over the low buildings. But where I reached Darrow's, to and behold there were Peter and Nancy before me!

"Good morning, Constance. I want to talk to you," announced Nancy, adding as an afterthought, "so does Peter."

"I came early to get ready my report for Mr. Darrow on the Haynes Foreside sale," explained Peter. "It's going to be a wonder, but I suppose he'll pick me to pieces on principle anyhow."

"He shan't," promised Nancy.

"What I wanted to tell you, Constance," continued Peter, "is of special interest to you; it's about your boy friend Charles MacIvor."

"He has repented, I don't believe, I observed.

"At least he has been forgiven; don't know just how you would word that, but anyway, it has been done. He came last night to say good-by to his cousin."

"Good-by? Where's he going?"

"To Buenos Aires, very soon. I guess they're going to let him off pretty easily, as the case against him isn't of the greatest importance. He did sell those bonds; but it seems the formed part of the estate he will inherit, and he has confessed and will make any reparation decided on. Besides, he gave the authorities much information that was useful in helping solve the Grosvenor mystery, including the fact that he was the peevish boob who tried to pinch that book in Richmond—from me! So the demands of justice won't be too hard to satisfy, and he's due to clear out. Well, good riddance!"

"And Julia won't be alone, either now," said I brilliantly. "She has her uncle—"

"She wouldn't be alone long, anyhow," observed Nancy demurely.

A faint flush mounted to Peter's serene brow, but he offered no rebuff. So we all smiled with highly spontaneous cheerfulness, and he observed modestly:

"Well, I'm not likely to start anything I can't finish!"

Nancy snorted.

But here came a fortunate interruption. Outside, a motor rolled to the curb, and in walked Mr. Darrow, wearing a portentous expression, something important was impending to bring him to the shop at this hour. Being one of the employees he spoke to, I said, careful, however, not to be too forward or unconventional:

"Good morning."

He admitted my existence, but Peter's nor Nancy's.

"Good morning, Mr. Darrow," said Nancy, sweetly. "Isn't it lovely so early!"

"Delightful, indeed," murmured Darrow, with slightly uncertain cordiality.

"You don't know me," said Nancy kindly giving me special training, to become Miss Fuller's private secretary. This is my brother."

"Ah-h-h!" observed Darrow. "But are you, Burton?"

"Yes, sir, assured Peter. The emboldened by our having survived Nancy's coup, he added: "I got a set of the broadsides, Mr. Darrow; a bargain."

"Ah!" observed Mr. Darrow. "You might come and tell me about it."

"He's a perfect dear, but he needs a lot of help!" signed Nancy, viewing the retreating forms of the two striptemen.

"Mr. Darrow needs help?"

"All men do, but I was referring to Peter. He's going to marry Julia."

"Is he?"

"Well, can't you see that? It's a ways necessary to say over and over again? And it's not—"

(To be continued)