

# Secret of the Plundered Safe

By EMILE GABORIAU

CHAPTER XV.—(Continued.)  
In a few minutes they had a ladder standing against the wall. But to their chagrin they found the ladder six feet too short. Six long feet of wall between the top of the ladder and the lighted window was a very discouraging sight to Prosper.

M. Verduret, quickly placing himself a yard off from the house, and seizing the ladder cautiously, raised it, and rested the bottom round on his shoulders, at the same time holding the two uprights firmly and steadily with his hands. The obstacle was overcome.

Prosper made a sudden spring, and seizing the lower rounds, quickly climbed up the ladder, which swayed and trembled beneath his weight. But he had scarcely looked in the lighted window when he uttered a cry which was drowned in the roaring tempest, and dropped like a log down on the wet grass.

With wonderful promptness and vigor M. Verduret laid the ladder on the ground, and ran toward Prosper, fearing he was dead or dangerously injured.

"What did you see? Are you hurt?" he whispered.

But Prosper had already risen. Although he had a violent fall, he was unhurt; he was in a state when mind governs matter, so absolutely that the body is insensible to pain.

"I saw," he answered, in a hoarse voice, "I saw Madeleine—do you understand, Madeleine—if that room."

M. Verduret was confounded. Was it possible that he, the infallible expert, had been mistaken in his deductions? He well knew that M. de Lagors' visitor was a woman, but his own conjectures and the note which Mme. Gypsy had sent to him at the tavern, had fully assured him that this woman was Mme. Fauvel.

"You must be mistaken," he said to Prosper. "But even so, how do you know that Madeleine is here on her own account? Did we not come to the conclusion that she was sacrificing herself for the benefit of some one else? That superior will which compelled her to banish you may have constrained this step to-night."

"That might be the case," Prosper murmured, "who knows?"

"I would soon know," said M. Verduret, "if I could see them together in that room."

With a strength of which a few minutes before he would not have believed himself possessed, Prosper raised the ladder, and placed the last round on his shoulder. M. Verduret rapidly ascended the ladder without even shaking, and had his head on a level with the window.

There was Madeleine. M. Verduret observed that she still wore her shawl and bonnet. She was standing in the middle of the room, talking with great animation. Her look and gestures betrayed indignation. There was an expression of undisguised loathing upon her beautiful face.

Madeleine continued talking, and it was by closely watching the face of Lagors, clearly revealed by the lamp on the mantel, that M. Verduret hoped to discover the meaning of the scene before him. At one moment Lagors would start and tremble in spite of his apparent indifference; the next, he would strike at the fire with the tongs, as if giving vent to his rage at some reproach uttered by Madeleine.

Finally Madeleine changed her threats into entreaties, and, clasping her hands, almost fell at his knees. He turned away his head, and refused to answer save in monosyllables. Several times she turned to leave the room, but each time returned as if asking a favor, and unable to make up her mind to leave the house till she had obtained it. At last she seemed to have uttered something decisive, for Raoul quickly rose and opened a desk near the fireplace, from which he took a bundle of papers and handed them to her.

Madeleine took the papers, but was apparently dissatisfied. She again entreated him to give her something else. Raoul refused, and then she threw the papers on the table. The papers seemed to puzzle M. Verduret very much, as he gazed at them through the window.

"I am not blind," he said, "and certainly am not mistaken: those papers, red, green and yellow, are pawn ticket duplicates."

Madeleine turned over the papers, as if looking for some particular ones. She selected three, which she put in her pocket, disdainfully pushing the others aside. She was evidently preparing to take her departure, for she said a few words to Raoul, who took up the lamp as if to escort her downstairs. There was nothing more for M. Verduret to see. He carefully descended the ladder, muttering to himself:

"Pawn tickets! What infamous mystery lies at the bottom of all this?"

M. Verduret and Prosper hastily laid the ladder on the ground, regardless of the shrubs and vines they destroyed in doing so, and then concealed themselves among the trees, whence they could watch at once the front door and the outer gate.

Madeleine and Raoul appeared in the doorway. Raoul set the lamp on the bottom step, and offered his hand to the girl; but she refused it with haughty contempt, which somewhat soothed Prosper's lacerated heart. He followed her to the gate, which he opened and closed after her; then he hurried back to the house, while Madeleine's carriage drove rapidly away.

"Now, monsieur," said Prosper, "you must tell me what you saw. You promised me the truth no matter how bitter it might be. Speak; I can bear it, be it what it may."

"You will only have joy to hear, my friend. Within a month you will bitterly regret your suspicions of to-night. You will blush to think that you ever imagined Madeleine's Madeleine to care for a man like Lagors. It is precisely against appearances that we must be on our guard. Always distrust them. A suspicion, false or just, is always based on something. But we must not stay here forever; and as Raoul has fastened the gate we shall have to climb back again."

They scaled the wall, and had not walked fifty steps when they heard the noise of a gate being unlocked. They stood aside and waited; a man soon passed

ed by on his way to the station. "That is Raoul," said M. Verduret, "and Joseph will report to us that he has gone to tell Clameran what has just taken place."

When they got into their hack again and were driven back to the Archangel, M. Verduret said:

"You will not see me to-morrow, but I will be here about this time to-morrow night. Perhaps I shall discover what I am seeking at the Jandillers' ball."

Prosper was dumb with amazement. What! would M. Verduret think of appearing at a ball given by the wealthiest and most fashionable bankers of Paris? This accounted for his sending to the costumer.

"Then you are invited to this ball?" The expressive eyes of M. Verduret danced with amusement.

"Not yet," he said, "but I shall be."

CHAPTER XVI.

The Rue St. Lazare was adorned by the palatial residences of the Jandillers brothers, two celebrated financiers. These two mansions, marvels at the time they were built, were entirely distinct from each other, but so planned that they could be turned into one immense house when so desired. When the Jandillers gave parties they always had the movable partitions taken away, and thus obtained the most superb salon in Paris.

On Saturday the Rue St. Lazare was blocked up by a file of carriages, whose fair occupants were impatiently awaiting their turn to drive up to the door, through which they could catch the tantalizing strains of a waltz.

It was a fancy ball, and nearly all the costumes were superb, though some were more original than elegant. Among the latter was a jester. Everything was in perfect keeping; the insolent eye, coarse lips, high cheek bones, and a chin beard so red that it seems to emit flames in the reflection of the dazzling lights.

He carried in his left hand a canvas banner, upon which were painted six or eight pictures, coarsely designed, like those found in strolling fairs. In his right he waved a little switch, with which he would every now and then strike his banner, like a quack retailing his wares. Quite a crowd surrounded this clown, hoping to hear jokes, songs or stump speeches, but he kept near the door and remained silent. About half-past ten he quitted his post.

M. and Mme. Fauvel, followed by their niece Madeleine, had just entered. Belonging to the battalion of grave, elderly men, M. Fauvel had not assumed a fancy costume, but merely threw over his shoulders a sort of silk domino.

On his arm leaned Mme. Fauvel, nee Valentine de La Verberie, bowing and gracefully greeting her numerous friends. Belonging to the battalion of grave, elderly men, M. Fauvel had not assumed a fancy costume, but merely threw over his shoulders a sort of silk domino.

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ear, and with great buffoonery and volubility, made the following remarks:

"Ladies and gentlemen, this very morning I obtained a license from the authorities of this town for the purpose of exhibiting to you a spectacle which has already won the admiration of the four quarters of the globe, and several universities besides. Inside this booth, ladies, is about to commence the representation of a most remarkable drama, acted for the first time in Pekin, and translated into several languages by our most celebrated authors. Gentlemen, you can take your seats; the lamps are lighted, and the actors are changing their dress."

Here he stopped speaking and imitated to perfection the fantasias which mountebanks play upon horns and kettledrums.

"Now, ladies and gentlemen," he resumed, "you wish to know what I am going to do outside, if the piece is to be performed under a tent. The fact is, gentlemen, that I wish to give you a foretaste of the agitations, sensations, emotions, palpitations and other entertainments which you may enjoy by paying the small sum of ten sous. You see this superb picture? It represents eight of the most thrilling scenes in the drama."

CHAPTER XVII.  
The showman's shrill voice brought the banker's wife back to a sense of reality; she started, and looked quickly about her, as if suddenly awakened from a troubled dream.

"Now, ladies, we are in China. The first picture on my canvas, here in the left corner," here he touched the top dais, "represents the celebrated Mandarin Li-Fo, in the bosom of his family. This pretty woman leaning over him is his wife; and these children playing on the carpet are the bonds of love between this happy pair."

Mme. Fauvel had left her seat, and approached nearer to the clown.

"Picture No. 2," this old lady, seated before a mirror, tearing out her hair, do you recognize her? No, you do not. She is the fair mandarin of the first picture. I see the tears in your eyes, ladies and gentlemen. Ah! you have cause to weep for her happiness has departed. Alas, it is a sad tale! One fatal day she met on the streets of Pekin a young ruffian, scoundrel, but beautiful as an angel."

The last words were uttered in the most tragic tone. During this tirade he had whirled around, so that he found himself facing the banker's wife. But nothing he had said seemed to affect her. She leaned back in her armchair perfectly calm, and occasionally smiled at the tragic manner of the showman.

"Good heavens!" muttered the clown, uneasily, "can I be on the wrong track?"

He saw that his circle of listeners was increased by the presence of the doge, M. de Clameran.

"The third picture," he said, after a roll of drums, "depicts the old mandarin after she has dismissed that most annoying of guests—remorse—from her bosom. She promises herself that interest shall chain the youth to her side. It is with this object that she invests him with false honors and dignity, and introduces him to the chief mandarins of the capital of the Celestial Empire; then, since so handsome a youth must cut a fine figure in society, and as the fine figure cannot be cut without money, the lady must needs to sacrifice all of her possessions for his sake. Necklaces, rings, bracelets, diamonds and pearls, all are surrendered. The monster carries all these jewels to the pawnbrokers, and then has the cruelty to refuse her the tickets."

(To be continued.)

English Are Out of Date.  
The skipper of the tramp steamer Bumping Billy was engaging a new crew. "What's your name?" he said to the foremost applicant.

"Giuseppe Grinoller," replied the man.

"Eytalian?"

"Yees, sair."

"Very good; step to one side. And yours?" he went on the next A. B.

"Ivan Ikanoff."

"Ruslan?"

"Bolsh, sair."

"Right; step alongside o' Yewseppy. Next man?"

"Wilhelm Zwillangul."

"German?"

"Ja."

"Very good; over you go. Next?"

AN AUTUMN REVERIE.

'Tis autumn—and off together,  
Over the hills and away,  
We go in golden weather,  
My lady and I, to-day.

And sit on the hillside sunny  
Where the purple grapes hang low  
And watch the clouds a-floating by  
And their shadows come and go.

We hear the clear pipe of autumn—  
The call of the hiding quail—  
And see the flash of gold as he flies  
Over the old fence rail.

My lady's face is dreamy,  
And her thoughts seem far away,  
As she twines the leaves for a garland,  
To trim her hat to-day.

"Of what are you thinking?" I ask her,  
And she lifts her eyes so brown;  
"I was wondering," she said—the mischief!  
"Will the new hatbrims turn up or down?"  
—Millinery Trade Review.

PALMISTRY.

ALONE James did it. I have told him since that I owe him a debt of gratitude which I never, never can repay. His reply, that he would rather I owed him something which I could repay, touched me deeply, but had no other immediate result.

I must give you his name in full: James Arthur Brocklebank. Perhaps some day will find me teaching my children to lip that dear name at their mother's knee. This is what they do in novels, though I should not think "Brocklebank" allows of much scope for liping. Still, there it is.

It was at a fancy bazaar. Most of us at the hall were hoping in some way. Our dear hostess was selling—what are those things that ladies buy?—while her daughters had sweet and scent and tobacco stalls, and so forth. I thought at first that I was the only unemployed one until James strolled up.

"Hello," he said, "you're doing nothing."

"I wanted to help," I exclaimed. "My idea was to keep a tobaccoist's stall, and then one could smoke cigarettes all the time. The assistants in shops always do that to advertise their goods."

"Oh! And I suppose assistants in sweet shops eat sweets all the time?"

"Of course."

"Have you ever thought," said James, reflectively, "what a tired time the right-hand man of a butcher must have?"

"Look here," I said, "did you come to talk not like that to me?"

"No; I want you to have your fortune told. There's a palmist here."

"But I haven't a fortune."

"You don't want one. Half a crown's enough."

I went with him under protest. It was a very dark tent into which we plunged, and I could see no fortune teller.

"Where is she?" I asked impatiently.

"The other side of the curtain," said James; "but you mustn't go in. You put your hand through there, and she is on the other side. Of course, if she saw you, it would spoil everything."

"Who is it?"

"Never mind."

I put my hand through. Some one took it, and it seemed as though she were going over the lines of my palm with a pencil.

"You are quick-tempered, slow-minded, thin-skinned—"

"Fat-headed, go on!" I said bitterly. "Just you wait till I see you."

GEORGE FRISBIE HOAR, STATESMAN.



GEORGE F. HOAR

In the death of George Frisbie Hoar, of Massachusetts, the United States Senate loses one of its most honored and influential members and the country a statesman of a type which is growing rare. It has been said that the chiefest of a nation's liars is he who writes the epitaphs of a nation's dead; yet the work of the man who chiseled "Statesman" on the monument of George Frisbie Hoar is as ruggedly honest as is the enduring stone.

Senator Hoar was one of the few surviving representatives of the "old school" which dominated in public affairs before the era of so-called commercialism set its seal upon American politics. Like Webster and Clay and Sumner, of ante-bellum days, and like Trumbull and Morrill and Vest of the later period, Senator Hoar revered the Constitution and measured his Americanism by the Declaration of Rights. With him, as with them, politics was a sentiment in which "business" had no place.

Senator Hoar was splendidly equipped for his position as a leader among American statesmen. He was of scholarly tastes and inclinations. His general learning was vast and his familiarity with the details of national administrative work was extraordinary. While not an orator as the word is usually accepted, he had the eloquence that comes of sincere conviction and the capacity for intense feeling. He will be remembered not so much for these gifts, however, as for his determined devotion to principle, his high ideals and his absolute freedom from any sort of participation in the game of politics as played by the average politician. In this he has set a standard of disinterested patriotism which is altogether too rare.

"Are you still there?" I asked. "Are you there, are you there, are you there, are you—"

"I've finished, thank you," came the voice.

"But are you quite sure about being engaged by the end of the week?"

"Quite, quite sure," said the voice a little shakily.

James and I went out.

"Who is she?" I asked. "I didn't recognize the voice."

"Oh, she'd take good care about that."

"Well, anyhow, it's impossible."

We entered the refreshment tent and drank things. Jim tried to be facetious about my rapidly approaching engagement. He even misquoted poetry to me. Things about love and so on.

"Did you make that up yourself?" I said wearily. "It's very bad."

"Why, it's Shakespeare, man," he said indignantly.

"O, I thought it was you."

"I don't mind having it," he said. "Kindly observe the new Swan of Avon."

"Are swans such great drinkers, then? I didn't know."

"You're in a nasty horrid temper, and I shall leave you," said Brocklebank.

I watched him go through the door of the tent. Some one was coming up. He went on and spoke to her. It was a lady. He came back with her and brought her up to me. Good Lord! It was Kate!

"He'll give you tea," said James. "I must go. Good-by."

She looked up at me with a smile. Then I began to understand. "Kate!" I cried. "Isn't it a beautiful day?" said Kate.—Black and White.

SOME LIVELY BALLOONING  
Aeronautes Caught in Menacing Thunder Pack with Active Lightning.  
For the first time while slowly rising, the balloon sagged between the lower currents, until at approximately 3,000 feet it encountered a main sweep of air, which at that height was following the course of the valley below. The horizon had been clear at starting and the impression was as we sailed along in the current that we should have a fair passage, unless some cloud, not yet apparent, in our wake could ride after us and overtake us at a higher level, where wind velocity is generally greater. Perhaps, therefore, we paid insufficient heed to a murky veil ahead of us, which began gathering and deepening and blotted out the view. We were soon enveloped in this gray curtain and thus its true appearance was lost to us; but at Newbury, our starting ground, a large crowd was watching us entering a vast and most menacing thunder pack, and was wondering why we did not come down.

The first real warning which we had of our predicament was a flash of lightning close on our quarter, answered by another on our other side, and almost before we could realize it we found we were in the very focus of a furious storm which was being borne on an upper wind, and a wild conflict was already raging around us. There was our own fast current carrying us westward; there was the storm cloud slightly above us hurrying to the east, and added to these there now descended a pitiless down draught of ice cold air and hail. We were doubtless in a cloud which was discharging lightning over a wide area, each flash, however, issuing from the immediate vicinity of the balloon, and the idea formed on the writer's mind was that many flashes were level—that is, as if from one part of the cloud to another. Any that reached the ground must from our known position have been at least a mile long.

There was another idea forced upon the party, which was that they would be more comfortable and far safer elsewhere, and when suitable opportunity occurred a descent was made to earth.—Longman's Magazine.

Main Allegation True.  
Mrs. Gadabout—People are saying you called on Mrs. Verdigris the other day and got a setback.

Mrs. Upjohn—What a willful perversion of truth! I called on her and got a set of Dickens back that I'd lent her two years before.—Chicago Tribune.

Don't Brag.  
"Don't brag because you happens to be a little lucky," said Uncle Eben. "If de hen wouldn't cackle so loud about de egg she done laid de white folks wouldn't be so 'lible to rob de nest."—Washington Star.

When it comes to calling people from their beds the fire bell double discounts the church bell.