

Between Two Fires

By ANTHONY HOPE

"A wise man will make more opportunities than he finds." —Francis Bacon.

CHAPTER XI.

I had brought the \$10,000 with me. I produced them and put them on the table, keeping a loving hand on them.

"You fully understand my position, Colonel?" I said. "This thing is no use to me unless I receive at least \$320,000 to pay back principal, to meet interest, and to replace another small debt to the bank. If I do that, I shall be left with a net profit of \$5,000, not an extravagant reward. If I don't get that sum I shall be a defaulter, revolution or no revolution."

"I can't make money if it's not there," he said, but without his usual brusqueness of tone. "But to this we agree. You are to have first turn at anything we find, up to the sum you name. The Signorina and I take the leavings. You don't claim to share them, too, do you?"

"No," I said. "I'm content to be a preference shareholder. If the money's found at the Golden House, it's mine. If not, the new government, whatever it may do as to the rest of the debt, will pay me that sum."

With that I pushed my money over to the Colonel.

"I expect the new government to be very considerate to the bondholders all round," said the Colonel, as he pocketed it with a chuckle. "Anyhow, your terms are agreed, eh, Signorina?"

"Agreed!" said she. "And I'm to have the country seat?"

"Agreed!" said I. "And the Colonel's to be President and to have the Golden House and all that therein is."

"Agreed! agreed! agreed!" chanted the Signorina; "and that's quite enough business. Success to the Revolution!"

I had risen to go, when a sudden thought struck me.

"Where's Johnny Carr? I say, Colonel, how indiscreet was he last night? Do you think he remembers telling you about it?"

"Yes," said the Colonel. "I expect he does by now. He didn't when I left him this morning."

"Will he confess to the President? If he does, it might make the old man keep an unpleasantly sharp eye on you. He knows you don't love him."

"Well, Carr hasn't seen the President yet. He was to stay at my house over to-day. He was uncommon seedy this morning, and I persuaded the doctor to give him a composing draught. Fact is, I wanted him quiet till I'd had time to think. You know I don't believe he would own up—the President would drop on him so; but he might, and it's better they shouldn't meet."

"There's somebody else he oughtn't to meet," said the Signorina.

"Who's that?" I asked.

"Donna Antonia," she replied. "He's getting very fond of her, and depend upon it, if he's in trouble he'll go and tell her the first thing. Mr. Carr is very confidential to his friends."

We recognized the value of this suggestion. If Donna Antonia knew, the President would soon know.

"Quite right," said the Colonel. "It won't do to have him rushing about letting out that we know all about it. He's all right up to now."

"Yes, but if he gets restive to-morrow morning?" said I. "And then you don't want him at the Golden House on Friday evening, and I don't want him at the barracks."

"No, he'd show fight, Carr would," said the Colonel. "Look here, we're in for this thing, and I'm going through with it. I shall keep Carr at my house till it's all over, even if I have to use force. Master Johnny is better quiet."

"Suppose he turns ugly?" I suggested again.

"He may turn as ugly as he likes," said the Colonel. "He don't leave my house unless he puts a bullet into me first. That's settled. Leave it to me. If he behaves nicely, he'll be all right. If not—"

"What shall you do to him?" asked the Signorina.

"Oh, leave it to the Colonel; he'll manage all right," I suggested.

"Now I'm off," said the latter, "back to my friend Johnny. Good-night, Signorina. Write to the President to-morrow. Good-night, Martin. Make that speech of yours pretty long. Au revoir till next Friday."

I prepared to go, for the Colonel lingered till I came with him. Even then we so distrusted one another that neither would leave the other alone with the Signorina.

We parted at the door, he going off up the road to get his horse to ride to his "ranch," I turning down toward the Piazza.

We left the Signorina at the door, looking pale and weary, and for once bereft of her high spirits. Poor girl! She found conspiracy rather trying work.

I was little troubled myself. I began to see more clearly that it doesn't do for a man of scruples to dabble in politics. I had a great regard for poor Johnny, and I felt no confidence in the Colonel treating him with any consideration. In fact, I would not have insured Johnny's life for the next week at any conceivable premium. Again I thought it unlikely that, if we succeeded, the President would survive his downfall. I had to repeat to myself all the story of his treachery to me, lashing myself into a fury against him, before I could bring myself to think

with resignation of the imminent extinction of that shining light.

What a loss he would be to the world! So many delightful stories, so great a gift of manner, so immense a personal charm—all to disappear into the pit! And for what? To put into his place a ruffian without redeeming qualities. Was it worth while to put down Lucifer only to enthroned Beelzebub? I could only check this doleful strain of reflection by sternly recalling myself to the real question—the state of the fortunes of me, John Martin. And to me the Revolution was necessary. I might get the money; at least I should gain time. I was animated by the honorable motive of saving my employers from loss and by the overwhelming motive of my own love. If the continued existence of Johnny and the President was incompatible with these legitimate objects, so much the worse for Johnny and the President.

CHAPTER XII.

The next three days were on the whole the most uncomfortable I have ever spent in my life. I got little sleep and no rest; I went about with a revolver handy all day, and jumped every time I heard a sound. I expended much change in buying every edition of all the papers; I listened with dread to the distant cries of newsmen, fearing, as the words gradually became distinguishable, to hear that our secret was a secret no longer. I was bound to show myself, and yet shrank from all gatherings of men. I transacted my business with an absent mind and a face of such superhuman innocence that had anyone been watching me, he must at once have suspected something wrong. I was incapable of adding up a row of figures, and Jones became most solicitous about the state of my brain.

In a word, my nerves were quite shattered, and I registered a vow never to upset a government again as long as I lived. In future the established constitution would have to be good enough for me. I verily believe that only the thought of the Signorina prevented me making a moonlight flitting across the frontier with a whole skin at least, if with an empty pocket, and leaving the rival patriots of Aurentaland to fight it out among themselves.

Happily, however, nothing occurred to justify my fears. The other side seemed to be sunk in dull security. The President went often to the ministry of finance, and was closeted for hours with Don Antonio; I suppose they were perfecting their nefarious scheme. There were no signs of excitement or activity at the barracks; the afternoon gatherings on the Piazza were occupied with nothing more serious than the prospects of lawn tennis and the grievous dearth of dances. The official announcements relative to the debt had had a quieting effect, and all classes seemed inclined to wait and see what the President's new plan was.

So passed Wednesday and Thursday. On neither day had I heard anything from my fellow-conspirators; our arrangements for writing had so far proved unnecessary—or unsuccessful. The latter possibility sent shiver down my back, and my lively fancy pictured his excellency's smile as he perused the treasonable documents. If I heard nothing on the morning of Friday, I was determined at all risks to see the Colonel. With the dawn of that eventful day, however, I was relieved of this necessity. I was lying in bed about half-past nine when my servant brought in three letters.

"Sent on from the bank, sir," he said, "with Mr. Jones' compliments, and are you going there this morning?"

"My compliments to Mr. Jones, and he may expect me in five minutes," I replied.

The letters were all marked "Immediate"—one from the Signorina, one from the Colonel, one from the barracks. I opened the last first and read as follows:

"The officers of the Aurentaland Army have the honor to remind Mr. John Martin that they hope to have the pleasure of his company at supper this evening at 10 p. m. precisely. In the unavoidable absence of his excellency the President, owing to pressing cares of state, and the Hon. Colonel McGregor from indisposition, the toast of the Army of Aurentaland will be proposed by Major Alphonse DeChair.

"P. S.—Friend Martin, speak long this night. The two great men do not come, and the evening wants to be filled out."

"ALPHONSE DE CHAIR."

"It shall be long, my dear boy, and we will fill out your evening for you," said I to myself, well pleased so far.

Then I opened the Signorina's epistle.

"Dear Mr. Martin," it began—"Will you be so kind as to send me in the course of the day twenty dollars in small change? I want to give the school children a scramble. I enclose check. I am so sorry you could not dine with me to-night, but after all I am glad, because I should have had to put you off, for I am commanded rather suddenly to dine at the Golden House. With kind regards, believe me, yours sincerely,

"CHRISTINA NUGENT."

"Very good," said I. "I reckon the scramble will keep. And now for the Colonel."

"Dear Martin—I enclose check for \$500. My man will call for the cash to-morrow morning. I give you notice because I want it all in silver for wages. Carr and I are here together, both seedy. Poor Carr is on his back, and likely to

remain there for a day or two. I'm better, and though I've cut the affair at the barracks to-night, I fully expect to be up and about this afternoon. Ever yours, "GEO. M'GREGOR."

"Oh, so Carr is on his back and likely to remain there, is he? Very likely, I expect; but I wonder what it means. I hope the Colonel hasn't been very drastic. However, everything seems right; in fact, better than I hoped."

In this more cheerful frame of mind I arose, breakfasted at leisure, and set out for the bank about eleven.

Of course the first person I met on the street was one of the last I wanted to meet, namely, Donna Antonia. She was on horseback, and her horse looked as if he'd done some work. At the sight of me she reined up, and I could not avoid stopping as I lifted my hat.

"Whence so early?" I asked.

"Early?" she said. "I don't call this early. I've been for a long ride; in fact, I've ridden over to Mr. Carr's place, with a message from papa; but he's not there. Do you know where he is, Mr. Martin?"

"Haven't an idea," said I.

"He hasn't been home for four nights," she continued, "and he hasn't been to the ministry, either. It's very odd that he should disappear like this, just when all the business is going on, too."

"What business, Donna Antonia?" I asked blandly.

She colored, recollecting, no doubt, that the business was still a secret.

"Oh, well, you know they're always busy at the ministry of finance at this time. It's the time they pay everybody, isn't it?"

"It's the time they ought to pay everybody," I said.

"Well," she went on, without noticing my correction, "at any rate papa and the President are both very much vexed with him; so I offered to make my ride in his direction."

"Where can he be?" I asked again.

"Well," she replied, "I believe he's at Colonel McGregor's, and after lunch I shall go over there. I know he dined there on Monday, and I daresay he stayed on."

"No," thought I, "you mustn't do that, it might be inconvenient." So I said: "The Colonel says Carr told him he was going off for a couple of days' sail in his yacht."

"It's very bad of him to go," she said, "but no doubt that's it. Papa will be angry, but he'll be glad to know no harm has come to him."

"Happy to have relieved your mind," said I, and bade her farewell, wondering whether Don Antonio would find no harm had come to poor Johnny. I had my doubts.

CHAPTER XIII.

When I arrived at the bank I dispatched brief answers to my budget of letters; each of the answers was to the same purport, namely, that I should be at the barracks at the appointed time. I need not trouble the reader with the various wrappings in which this essential piece of intelligence was involved. I then had a desperate encounter with Jones; business was slack, and Jones was fired with the unholy desire of seizing the opportunity thus offered to make an exhaustive inquiry into the state of our reserve. He could not understand my sudden punctiliousness as to times and seasons, and I was afraid I should have to tell him plainly that only over my lifeless body should he succeed in investigating the contents of the safe. At last I effected a diversion by persuading him to give Mrs. Jones a jaunt into the country, and thus left in peace, I spent my afternoon in making final preparations. I burned many letters; I wrote a touching farewell to my father, in which I took occasion to point out to him how greatly his imprudent conduct had contributed to increase the difficulties of his dutiful son. I was only restrained from making a will by the obvious imprudence of getting it witnessed. I spent a feverish hour in firing imaginary shots from my revolver, to ascertain whether the instrument was in working order. Finally I shut up the bank at five, went to the Piazza, partook of a light repast, and never was I more rejoiced than when the moment for action at last came. As I was dressing, lingering over each garment with a feeling that I might never put on, or, for that matter, take it off again, I received a second note from the Colonel. It was brought by a messenger, on a sweating horse, who galloped up to my door. I knew the messenger well by sight; he was the Colonel's valet. My heart was in my mouth as I took the envelope from his hands. The fellow was evidently in our secret, for he grinned nervously at me as he handed it over, and said:

"I was to ride fast, and destroy the letter if anyone came near."

I nodded, and opened it. It said:

"C. escaped about six this evening. Believed to have gone to his house. He suspects. If you see him, shoot on sight."

"Had Mr. Carr a horse?" I asked of the man.

"No, sir; left on foot. Couldn't come along the road to Whittingham, sir, it's patrolled."

There was still a chance. It was ten miles across country from the Colonel's to Johnny's, and six miles from Johnny's to Whittingham. The man divined my thoughts.

"He can't go fast, sir, he's wounded in the leg. If he goes home first, as he will, because he doesn't know his horses are gone, he can't get here before eleven at the earliest."

(To be continued.)

Drawing It Fine.

"She is daft on the subject of germs and sterilizes or filters everything in the house."

"How does she get along with her family?"

"Oh, even her relations are strained."

—Harper's Weekly.



An Ingenious Housewife.

A young wife who finds catering for two without a waste of provisions perplexing makes a part of her own cooking butter.

A bottle of cream, unless it happens to be needed for a dessert, is never used up, so she turns what is left into a bowl, day by day, until she accumulates enough to pay for churning. Then she beats it into butter, drains off the buttermilk, salts it and works out the moisture. Left-over peas go into puree of pea soup the next day. Cold corn is used up in fritters or succotash. Cold mashed potatoes reappear in potato cakes or potato pancakes, says the New York Evening Sun. The ways of meat fragments are many, the housewife's repertoire of "cutlets," souffles, croquettes, ragouts and the like being a long one. "The ragout," she whispered in a friend's ear, "is nothing but mother's 'stew,' with less gravy, only, some way, not half so good."

Artificial Milk.

Artificial milk is one of the latest attempts of science to duplicate by synthetic processes the products of nature. In Germany, where chemistry has reached its highest state of development, they are offering a so-called artificial milk, which is recommended for use in bakeries as a substitute for the natural product. According to one of the reputable German chemical journals, this latest product of the laboratory consists of a mixture of syrup and sesame oil, emulsified with some preservative substance. This is of sufficient strength to be diluted by the consumer with nine parts of water. It is stated that in some of the southern states, remote from milk supplies, an artificial substitute is made from cotton-seed oil in much the same manner.

Testing Flour.

There are several methods of testing flour, one of which at least should be known to every purchaser of household provisions. If flour is white with a yellowish straw-color it is good, while if it has a bluish cast, or black specks in it, it is the opposite. Flour can also be tested by its adhesiveness—wet and knead a little of it between the fingers; if it works soft and sticky it is poor. If a little flour is thrown against a dry, smooth surface and it falls like powder, you may know that it is not of the best quality. If flour squeezed in the hand retains the shape given it, when the hand is relaxed, it is a good sign.

Spiced Grapes.

Pulp the grapes, cut the pulp in a saucepan, and stew gently until soft enough to be rubbed through a strainer to remove the seeds. Weigh the pulp, and to five pounds of it add a pint of vinegar, four pounds of brown sugar, three tablespoonfuls of ground cloves and two of ground cinnamon. Stew all together until very thick, then pour into jelly glasses and seal.

Strawberry Float.

Squeeze every bit of juice from a quart of strawberries. Beat three egg-whites stiff with sugar to taste, and whip into this meringue the squeezed berries. Sweeten a pint of rich cream, and pour into it the juice of the berries. Line a glass bowl with macaroons, pour the strawberry cream upon these, then heap the meringue on top of all. Serve soon.

Gooseberry Fool.

Put into a jar one quart of green gooseberries, with two tablespoonfuls of water and two cupfuls of sugar; set the jar in a saucepan of boiling water and boil until the fruit will mash; beat to a pulp and put through a coarse sieve. To one pint of pulp add one-half pint of cream and one cupful of milk; add the milk, first gradually, beating well. Serve cold.

Devil's Food Cakes.

Cream one-half cup of butter with one and one-half cups of sugar, add three beaten eggs, one-half cup of grated chocolate dissolved in one-half cup of hot water, a teaspoonful of vanilla, and one and a half cups of flour that has been twice sifted with a heaping teaspoonful of baking powder. Bake in layer tins and put together with boiled icing.

Rich Vanilla Ice Cream.

Make a custard of a quart of milk, seven eggs and two cups of sugar, or more if you wish the ice cream to be quite sweet. Boil in the custard several vanilla beans. When the custard just coats the spoon remove from the fire and set aside to cool. When cold strain out the vanilla beans, add a quart of rich cream and freeze.

We Trust Doctors

If you are suffering from impure blood, thin blood, debility, nervousness, exhaustion, you should begin at once with Ayer's Sarsaparilla, the Sarsaparilla you have known all your life. Your doctor knows it, too. Ask him about it.

You must look well after the condition of your liver and bowels. Unless there is daily action of the bowels, poisonous products are absorbed, causing headache, biliousness, nausea, dyspepsia, and thus poisoning the Sarsaparilla from doing its best work. Ayer's Pills are liver pills. Act gently, all vegetable. The dose is only one pill at bedtime.

Made by J. C. Ayer & Co., Lowell, Mass. Also manufacturers of
Ayer's HAIR VIGOR, RHEUMATISM, AGUE CURE, CHERRY PECTORAL.

Rough on Reggy.

Tommy—What is the "height of folly," pa?

Pa—Your sister's beau, my son. He is six feet two.

Probably Went All Right.

"J. Smith, Famished Geological Structure, Ill."

This was the address on the letter postmarked "Boston, Aug. 27, 1906."

"Try Starved Rock," wrote the educated railway postal clerk just below the address.—Chicago Tribune.

\$100 Reward, \$100.

The readers of this paper will be pleased to learn that there is at least one dreaded disease that science has been able to cure in all its stages, and that is Catarrh. Hall's Catarrh Cure is the only positive cure known to the medical fraternity. Catarrh being a constitutional disease, requires a constitutional treatment. Hall's Catarrh Cure is taken internally, acting directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces of the system, thereby destroying the foundation of the disease, and giving the patient strength by building up the constitution and assisting nature in doing its work. The proprietors have so much faith in its curative powers that they offer One Hundred Dollars for any case that it fails to cure. Send for list of testimonials.

Address: F. J. CHENEY & CO., Toledo, O. Sold by druggists, 75c.

Hall's Family Pills are the best.

Next Summer.

A million or two of people who have spent this summer at the seashore are strongly disposed to spend next summer in the back country or the mountains. If they persevere in this determination their places will be filled by persons who have spent this summer in the mountains and the back country and don't want to go back. It has been a very trying summer, muggy, foggy, skeetry, damp, moist, hot and miscellaneous plaintive, but it has been about as bad in one place as in another.—Harper's Weekly.

FITS St. Vitus' Dance and all Nervous Diseases permanently cured by Dr. Kline's Great Nerve Restorer. Send for FREE 24-page booklet and treatise. Dr. R. H. Kline, 124 1/2 Arch St., Phila., Pa.

Would Suit Him Better.

The Judge—Mr. Twiggles, do you wish to poll the jury?

The lawyer (who had lost his case)—No, your honor; but it would afford me infinite satisfaction if I could club the jury.

Mothers will find Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup the best remedy to use for their children during the teething period.

One of His Gloomy Moods.

"Honesty is the best policy, to be sure," moralized the professor, "but in the case of too many men it is a policy that has a surrender value."

To Break in New Shoes.

Always shake in Allen's Foot-Ease, a powder. It cures hot, sweating, aching, swollen feet. Cures corns, ingrowing nails and bunions. At all druggists and shoe stores, 25c. Don't accept any substitute. Sample mailed FREE. Address Allen S. Olmsted, Le Roy, N. Y.

Uncle Allen.

"Many a man," said Uncle Allen Sparks, "dates all his other reverses from the evening when his best girl turned him down."

A TERRIBLE EXPERIENCE.

How a Veteran Was Saved the Amputation of a Limb.

B. Frank Doremus, veteran, of Roosevelt Ave., Indianapolis, Ind., says: "I had been showing symptoms of kidney trouble from the time I was mustered out of the army, but in all my life I never suffered as in 1897. Headaches, dizziness and sleeplessness first, and then dropsy. I was weak and helpless, having run down from 180 to 125 pounds. I was having terrible pain in the kidneys and the secretions passed almost involuntarily. My left leg swelled until it was 34 inches around, and the doctor tapped it night and morning until I could no longer stand it, and then he advised amputation. I refused, and began using Doan's Kidney Pills. The swelling subsided gradually, the urine became natural and all my pains and aches disappeared. I have been well now for nine years since using Doan's Kidney Pills."

For sale by all dealers. 50 cents a box. Foster-Milburn Co., Buffalo, N. Y.



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