

# SECRET SERVICE

OLD AND YOUNG KING BRADY, DETECTIVES.

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No. 133.

NEW YORK, AUGUST 9, 1901.

Price 5 Cents.



PETER GREEN.

## THE BRADYS AT CONEY ISLAND, OR TRAPPING THE SEA-SIDE CROOKS. BY A NEW YORK DETECTIVE.



"Own up," roared Old King Brady grabbing him by the neck, "or, by thunder, I'll run you in; do you hear me!" "Ow!" gasped the coon in alarm. "Le' go, dar!" "I've tracked the gang here," proceeded the detective, "and we know that the parties who did this job came straight here."



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# THE BRADYS AT CONEY ISLAND

OR,

## Trapping the Seaside Crooks.

BY A NEW YORK DETECTIVE.

### CHAPTER I.

#### THE GUN AND HIS VICTIM.

"Coney Island is in full blast to-night, Harry."

"Yes, and everything is being run wide open this season, Old King Brady."

"The West End is full of New York crooks, too. Do you recognize them?"

"I've seen a great many with whom I'm acquainted."

"Well, I hope we shall find Peter Green, the grafter, among the bunch. The Chief wants him badly for a crooked deal he put up on a countryman, in New York, or he would not have sent us down here to find that villain."

The speakers were Old and Young King Brady, the Secret Service detectives.

It was ten o'clock on Saturday night, in the middle of July, and they were standing on the corner of Surf avenue and Tilyou's walk.

Old King Brady, the big, white-haired man, drew a paper of chewing tobacco from the tail pocket of his long blue frock coat, and, having taken a fresh quid, pushed up the wide brim of his white felt hat and glanced around.

Thousands of men, women and children were thronging the walks, music was emanating from the carrouseis and dancing pavilions, barkers at the door of concert-halls were yelling at the crowd, and rag-time songs were being pounded out of pianos in all the open joints.

Harry Brady was keenly watching everybody who went by, an eager expression on his handsome, boyish face, and his stylishly-clad body well drawn back in the shadow, to avoid observation.

"I've heard of Green before," he remarked, "and ever since you began teaching me to become a detective, I've seen him about the haunts of vice in the city. But he is such a slick article that he always covers his tracks when he does a crooked turn, and thus escapes arrest."

"We've got dead evidence against him this time," chuckled Old King Brady; "and if we get the ruffles on him you can stake your life he will do a stretch up the river which will put him out of business for a while."

"How did the Chief know that Green was at Coney Island?"

"Why, he sent out a general alarm to all the police stations, asking the captains to have the crook arrested on sight. Green is pretty well known by sight to all the ward men. This afternoon the captain of the Coney Island force telegraphed to headquarters that Green had been seen on the Bowery down here. As the races, prize fights and grafting games are in full swing, and Green is a gambler and a sport, as well as a thief, it was fair to presume that he came here to stay. For that reason we were sent to pick him up."

"Have you any idea where he is apt to hang out?"

"No. He has always been too clever to let anyone know who his pals are. I don't believe he plays a lone hand. Few grafters can successfully work their schemes without a con-

federate or two, you know, and he cannot be an exception to the rule. All his friends must be guns."

"Let us take a walk about. Perhaps we may stumble across him."

"Very well. Pass through this walk. It will bring us out near the steeplechase. We can thus take in the entire length of the Bowery on our way down."

Harry nodded, and they glided away along the board walk.

They had not gone more than twenty yards, when suddenly Old King Brady suddenly paused, seized his pupil's arm, and exclaimed:

"Thunder! There he is now!"

"Whereabouts?" eagerly asked the boy.

"In that saloon; and, by jingo, he has got a victim in tow!"

The old detective pointed through the open door of a dingy joint, kept by an old ex-prize-fighter, and Harry saw the crook.

He was sitting at a table, drinking with a fine-looking old gentleman.

Peter Green was a man of about thirty, with a medium-sized figure, clad in a blue suit, and wore a straw hat and tan-colored gloves.

A mass of dark, curly hair covered his head; he had a dark, narrow face, with piercing black eyes, a long, sharp nose, and a heavy black moustache. There was a sneaking, insinuating air about him, which gave a bad impression of his character, and a bland smile continually hovered over his face.

"The old gent is drunk!" exclaimed Harry, staring at Green's victim.

"No doubt he came down to see the sights," commented the old detective. "Men like him usually do drink too much, and then get in trouble."

"What a fool he is! See him opening that big leather wallet. Good gracious, what a wad of money it contains! See how Green is watching it! What a greedy look! The old man has taken out a bank note to pay for their drinks. He has got a big bundle of papers sticking up from his inside pocket, too."

"If we leave him at the mercy of that grafter, it won't be long before Green has the money, and the old man has a painful experience."

Harry smiled grimly and sized up the crook's victim.

Apparently sixty years of age, tall, portly, and clad in a dark suit, the old gentleman wore a silk hat on his gray hair; his fat, red face was adorned with gray side whiskers, and his upper lip was clean shaven. There was a big diamond stud glittering on his white shirt bosom, a pair of gold-rimmed glasses on his nose, and he carried a cane.

"Looks like a prosperous business man," Harry commented.

"Let's interrupt Green before he gets the old fellow's money," said the old detective, restlessly. "He is too easy a victim."

Just as they started for the saloon, Green suddenly

rose, walked to the rear of the room, opened a door and disappeared from view.

"Queer!" muttered the boy. "Could he have seen us coming?"

"No, indeed. You guard the door, and nab Green when he comes back, and I'll warn the old fellow of the danger he is in."

They strode into the saloon.

Harry planted himself beside the door where Green had vanished, and his partner strode over to the old gentleman, who now began to doze.

Seizing him by the shoulder, Old King Brady shook him.

"Hey!" he exclaimed. "Wake up!"

"Eh? What? Yes!" gasped the old man, starting and opening his eyes.

He blinked at the detective a moment, vacantly, and then growled:

"Bless me! What do you want?"

"A few minutes' conversation. You are drunk. I want to warn you against the man you just drank with. He's a thief. You showed him your money. If you are not more careful you'll get robbed."

These startling words partially sobered the man.

A look of alarm flashed over his face, and he arose, muttering:

"Thank you. I'll return to New York. I'm half full, for a fact. There are ten thousand dollars in that pocket-book. Just came from Boston to buy some goods. Should have been more careful. Good-night."

"Look out for yourself, now."

"You bet."

And out he went.

Just then Harry pulled open the rear door.

It showed him an alley leading to the next street.

Peter Green was not there, and Harry hastily called his partner.

"See how he gave us the slip!" said the boy, in disgust, as he pointed out the doorway. "We'll have to hunt for him now."

"What a pity! Never mind. Come on."

They hurried through the alley and began to question bystanders.

One of them declared that he had seen a person of Green's description go over to the Bowery and get lost in the enormous crowd.

Away dashed the detectives, and they passed down the narrow board walk, searching everywhere and watching everyone.

At the end of an hour they reached the end of the Bowery without finding any trace of their man.

They went over to Surf avenue and resumed their hunt.

Here they were more successful, for they finally caught view of Green emerging from a small restaurant.

The crook saw them at the same time.

He realized that they were looking for him the moment the Bradys made a rush in his direction.

Green dashed away.

He turned into one of the dirty little lanes and vanished.

from view, for it was a dark night and the lane was not lighted.

The Bradys rushed after him.

A long, exciting chase followed.

The crook ran back to the various streets, cut across lots, and, crossing the trolley car tracks, he finally headed for the swamps.

"He's working his way over toward the creek!" panted Harry.

"We can follow him. His figure is dim and shadowy, but I can still discern him," replied his partner, who was running fast.

They were soon plunging through the reeds and mud of the salt meadows, and saw the fugitive cross the steam road tracks.

On they ran furiously, determined to overtake him.

When they reached the roadbed they saw a locomotive and a train of cars coming toward them at a high rate of speed.

The glaring headlight was sending a broad gleam far ahead on the rails and sleepers, and Harry paused and gasped, as he pointed:

"See there! A man lying on the track!"

He referred to a figure lying midway between the locomotive and themselves. The headlight, gleaming on the prostrate body of the man, showed plainly that he was lying there unconscious of his danger.

"Save him!" shouted Old King Brady, excitedly.

All thought of Peter Green fled from their minds instantly.

They rushed up the track.

It was very evident that unless the helpless man were removed from where he lay across the rails, the incoming train would kill him!

The horrified detectives ran at the top of their speed.

It was merely a question of time whether they or the cars would reach the unfortunate man first.

And they were certainly making a gallant effort to beat the train.

## CHAPTER II.

### AT THE "GUT."

While the Bradys were rushing toward the prostrate man, to save his life, the engineer of the train caught sight of them.

He blew the whistle warning them to get off the tracks, and shut off steam, but he could not check the momentum of the train with the air brake.

For an instant the detectives feared the man would get run over.

The engineer now saw him, too.

His horror was intense.

With a desperate burst of speed, the detectives gained on the train, and just as the pilot arrived within a yard of the fallen man, Old King Brady seized his arm and jerked him aside.

Off the track sprang the detectives.

Whiz! went the roaring train past them.

But the man was saved!

Pale and panting, the detectives stood, trying to recover their breath, and when the train flashed by them Harry gasped:

"Well, we've won!"

"Do you see who we've saved?" asked his partner, in agitated tones. He was pointing at the stranger, and the boy drew out his dark lantern, flashed its rays in the man's face, and uttered a startled cry:

"Good gracious! It's the old merchant we saved from Peter Green!" he cried.

"Just so," assented Old King Brady, with a nod. "And he is a victim of foul play. See! His pockets are rifled and turned inside out."

"The man has been robbed. His stud is gone."

"Yes, and sandbagged. Here's the weapon that did the work."

Old King Brady picked up a club made of canvas filled with sand.

It had been lying on the embankment near the man's body.

After a moment's reflection Harry muttered:

"This can't be Peter Green's work."

"No. That's evident. But some other guns have seen the old gent's big roll of money and followed or lured him to this lonely spot. It's quite plain that they knocked him out and robbed him.

"The crooks made a big haul, then, for he had ten thousand dollars in his wallet, a gold watch and a diamond stud. They are now gone. So are the documents he carried in his inside pocket."

"We must get a clew to the parties who did this and run them down."

"They may have left no evidence behind."

"Oh, yes, they did. For instance, this sandbag."

"It doesn't tell us much."

"But it may. Then, besides, see how they tried to cover up their crooked work by leaving their victim on the rails to get run over by the cars. It shows what desperate men they were who assaulted him."

"Let's get the man where we can revive him. Then we can find out from his own lips how he happened to wander over here from the beach, and who tackled him."

They saw that the train had come to a pause a short distance away.

A conductor ran back, and seeing the senseless man, he asked, anxiously:

"Did we strike him?"

"No," replied Harry. "We pulled him off the track in good season."

"I am glad of that. I must report the circumstances."

The detectives gave him such particulars as they possessed. After that the conductor asked them:

"Want to carry him to the beach on my train, so you can have a doctor examine him, Mr. Brady?"

"No. We'll carry him over there to one of those negro

shanties in the 'Gut.' He doesn't seem to be badly injured, and with a little care he is bound to revive soon."

The conductor then left them.

Boarding his train, he sent it on toward the beach.

Left alone with the thug's victim, the detectives carried him over the swamp toward the collection of miserable shanties occupied by negroes, not far distant.

It was a dangerous locality, infested by the worst colored element on Coney Island, and the detectives had a crowd of tough black citizens gathered about them the moment they neared the houses.

Everyone was asking questions about the senseless man, but the detectives were in no humor to go into details about the case.

They carried the old gentleman into a dingy saloon, owned by a racetrack tout, and laid the man on the floor.

Exhibiting their badges to the gang of negroes who crowded into the room after them, they drove the crowd out again.

"We don't want you people in here!" exclaimed Old King Brady, in angry tones. "If you don't keep out of here we'll arrest you."

As the darkies were nearly all bad men, they discreetly retired, and peered through the front window panes.

The proprietor of the place knew the Bradys, and, joining them, he asked:

"Can I help you?"

"Fetch a towel and some water," said Harry, briefly.

The man complied, and they set to work restoring the old man's senses. It was a difficult task, for he had received such a terrific and stunning blow on the back of his skull that he was badly dazed. He finally recovered, however.

When he sat up his face was pale, his eyes bloodshot, his hair was disarranged, and his clothing very much disordered.

Old King Brady knelt beside him.

"Well, sir," said the detective, "how are you feeling now?"

The old gentleman made no reply. Indeed, he did not even glance at the detective, but kept moaning, in low, feeble tones.

Giving him a shake, the detective shouted:

"Say! Wake up! What's the matter with you, anyhow?"

Still no reply came from the man.

He acted as if he had not heard a word.

Puzzled by his seeming stupidity, the detectives eyed him a few moments in silence, and Harry finally said:

"Why, the man seems to have lost the power of speech, hearing, and reason. He acts like an imbecile. What ails him?"

Old King Brady examined the lump on the man's head very carefully, and as the real truth of the matter flashed across his mind, he said:

"I understand it now. That blow he got fell upon the nerves controlling his speech, hearing, and eyesight, and paralyzed them."

"Then those senses are suspended?" queried Young King Brady, curiously.

"Exactly. The man can neither hear, speak, nor see. His memory is gone. Until it returns we can learn nothing about him."

"How strange! Then we can't get a description of his assailants from him. We are baffled in our attempts to aid him!"

"Perhaps he may recover his faculties later. I'll have him sent to the Flatbush Hospital for treatment. You wait here until I go and telephone for an ambulance."

The old detective left the saloon.

He had to go as far as the beach for a telephone.

When the hospital authorities promised to send down a wagon, Old King Brady started to return to the Gut.

On the way, he reflected:

"Why not go up the track before I return, and try to find some clew to the perpetrators of that robbery? The man's mind is a blank. It may remain so a long time. If we wait too long, we may never find out who his assailants were."

He walked rapidly, and soon reached the place where they picked up the old merchant on the car tracks.

Old King Brady was provided with a dark lantern, and a few minutes later he was moving about, flashing its rays upon the ground, in search of some tangible evidence.

He soon found a spot where it was probable the old man had first been attacked.

Numerous footprints were marked in the soft soil of the embankment beside the rails, and he made a careful examination of them.

One was evidently made by the small shoes of the thieves' victim, and the larger ones had been left by the culprits.

The detective traced the small footprints first.

He soon found that they came zig-zagging from the direction of the beach, and the rolling, unsteady course they took showed him that the man had been reeling under the influence of liquor.

"It's manifest that he left the Island alone," Old King Brady cogitated, "and coming this way, he encountered the railroad tracks and followed them to this point. His assailants must have come skulking along through the swamp in pursuit of him. At this point they rushed from the reeds and attacked him. Where did they go after the assault? I'll follow their trail. It's distinct enough."

He counted four different kinds of footprints.

It was therefore plain enough to him that there were four big men who assaulted the old gentleman.

He quickly found their trail and followed it.

After the robbery the villains struck off into the swamp, and as Old King Brady pursued the tracks, he found them leading him straight back to the 'Gut' again.

"He must have been attacked by negroes!" the detective muttered.

This was a fair inference, as that section was wholly inhabited by black people of depraved character.

To Old King Brady's astonishment, he traced the footprints straight to the door of the saloon where Harry awaited him.

"They must have come right to this place after assault-

ing the old man," muttered the detective. "I'll soon find out."

He pushed open the door and entered the saloon.

Young King Brady was standing beside the old gentleman, who still remained sitting on the floor.

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE CONEY ISLAND GRAFTERS.

"Well," said Harry, as the old detective entered. "Have you summoned the ambulance? This man needs attention at once. His mind seems to be a hopeless blank. I fear he may die from his injury."

"It will be here in an hour," answered Old King Brady.

"That's a long time to wait."

"Can't be helped. Where's the owner of this den?"

"Kentucky Sam? In the back room."

"Call him in here. I want to question him."

"What about?" asked Harry, curiously.

"I've traced this man's assailants to his door," whispered Old King Brady.

"You don't say! Wait a moment."

Harry strode to the rear and flung upon a door

A gloomy little parlor was revealed.

It was occupied by Kentucky Sam and a number of men, all of whom Harry recognized at a glance as Gotham grafters.

They knew the boy, and looked uneasy when he entered and stood with folded arms intently regarding them.

"It's Young King Brady, begorry!" growled a burly ruffian, known as Big Mike Duffy, who was known to be a professional thief.

"At your service, gentlemen," sarcastically answered the boy.

"Vot yoi vant mit us?" demanded a powerful fellow who was called Nick Finsky, the Terrible Swede, as a scowl gathered on his brow.

"Nothing—at present," coolly replied Harry.

"My dear chap," said a bunco steerer in fine clothing, English Charley, "I'm sure as 'ow we've done nothink wrong, 'ave we?"

"That remains to be seen," replied the young detective, curtly. "I'd lie to know what you collection of beaunts are doing here, anyway?"

"Wull," said Sandy McNutt, the red-headed confidence sharp, "we met be accident, an' jist was talkin' over ould times."

"Very likely," the boy answered, skeptically. "You must expect to reap some benefit from banding together this way, when you are all used to playing lone hands. There's Ivan Obansk, the Russian; there's Orlando Guspini, the Italian, and there's Jean Rynard, the Frenchman. Everyone of you have a shady record in the Central Office. You ain't here in a bunch at Coney Island for nothing, I'm sure."

"But, Mr. Brady——" began the French crook.

"No excuses," interposed Harry. "We only want Kentucky Sam."

"What' fo'?" demanded the dive-keeper, uneasily.

"Never you mind our reason. Come on out of there, old man."

The darky's face bore an ugly, resentful expression. But he had to obey, and went slouching out of the room after the boy detective. When he reached Old King Brady he paused and asked, gruffly:

"Yo' want me, boss?"

"I do," replied the old detective.

"But I ain't done nuffin, sah."

"Where are the men who laid this man out?"

"Dunno nuffin 'bout him, boss."

"Trying to lie out of it, eh?"

"Deed I isn't."

"Then own up," roared Old King Brady, grabbing him by the neck, "or, by thunder, I'll run you in; do you hear me?"

"Ow!" gasped the coon, in alarm. "Le' go, dar!"

"I've tracked the gang here," proceeded the detective, grimly, "and we know that the parties who did this job came right straight here, after they knocked the old man out. Now, who are they?"

Kentucky Sam lost his nerve.

He became panic-stricken.

Glaring around wildly a moment, he groaned:

"Doan' you' pinch me, Mr. Brady."

"Will you own up, then?"

"Yassah!"

A cold, cynical smile crossed Old King Brady's face.

He released the negro, and said in dry tones:

"I'm glad you've come to your senses. Who were they?"

Kentucky Sam cast a furtive glance around, pointed at the back room, and bending close to the detective, whispered:

"De hull gang am in dat room."

"I know them, too," said Harry.

"They robbed the man, didn't they?" demanded Old King Brady.

"Done swipe all ob his money, sah," declared the negro.

"Was it a put-up job?"

"Golly, yes. Been buncoin' him all night long on de Bowery."

"Who planned the job?"

"De leader ob de gang, Peter Green."

"Ah! So that grafter owns this crowd, eh?"

"Fo' shuah."

"How did they get the man over the railroad track?"

"I heah Jean Reynard say dat when he ole guy hab a jag on he ask whar he kin fine a hotel ter sleep in. Jean start him off along de track, an' tole him fo' ter walk right ahead till he come to a house. De res' ob de gang was waiting in a lonely place fo' him, an' knocked him out wif a san'bag. Den dey came totin' ober heah."

"And they're in the back room now, eh?"

"Dey am. Massa Harry done pike dem off"

"We'll go in and interview the crowd."

"Fo' de lan' sakes, doan' gib me away."

"Don't worry. We'll protect you, Sam."

The coon looked relieved at this assurance, and growled:

"If dey had gib me some ob de swag I mighter kep' ma mouf shet. But dey hog de hull ting, so why should I perfect 'em?"

"Why, indeed?" echoed Old King Brady.

He made a motion to Harry, and they glided back to the parlor, pushed open the door and darted in.

The room was unoccupied.

All the crooks had escaped.

An open rear window plainly showed how they managed to get away, and the disappointed detectives paused.

"The birds have flown!" exclaimed Old King Brady, in disgust.

"Must have suspected trouble," Harry answered, as he peered out the window. "There's an open stretch of white sea sand. They've gone over it and made their way back to the beach, I suppose."

"See any sign of them?"

"No."

"Who were they?"

Young King Brady explained.

When he finished the old detective nodded and said:

"No trouble to find that crowd."

"The quicker we break up the gang the better," said the boy. "They may do a great deal of mischief unless we stop them."

"Come back to the barroom. We have no time to go after them now. Coney Island is small, and they are sure to remain here. It will, therefore, be an easy task to pick them up."

Joining Kentucky Sam, they told him about the disappearance of the grafters, and Harry asked him:

"Do you know where that crowd hangs out?"

"Not heah," replied the darky. "Sometimes they come in, but mos' ob de time dey am down aroun' de Bowery, sah."

The detective waited for the ambulance.

It finally pulled up at the door, and a surgeon, in a cap, blue coat and white duck pants alighted and entered with a satchel.

Seeing the old man on the floor, he asked:

"This the patient?"

"He is," replied Old King Brady.

"What happened?"

"He was sandbagged by thugs."

"Ah! I'll examine him."

He bent over the old man and felt of his skull.

Finally an exclamation of satisfaction escaped him, and he said:

"Here it is."

"What?" asked Harry.

"A lump on the skull."

"Dangerous?"

"Perhaps. The shock jarred his brain, producing total loss of memory, taste and smell. The man is in a bad way

and may have to be operated on. What's his name and address?"

"Don't know anything about him."

"Isn't there any clew to his identity about his clothes?"

"Not a thing. He's a mystery."

"That's bad. He may have a wife and family anxiously awaiting his return home. Whether they'll ever learn his fate or not is a problem."

The doctor thereupon had the man conveyed to the ambulance, he was driven rapidly away up the boulevard, and the detectives went home to map out a campaign against the grafters for the next day. They were putting up at an hotel near Eighth street.

On the following morning, after breakfast, they were surprised by receiving a call from their Chief.

As he strode into their room and warmly greeted them he said:

"I've got some very important news for you regarding the case you've been working up, and came here to speak to you about it."

"Ah! Indeed!" replied Old King Brady.

"You will be very much amazed at what I am going to tell you, too," the Chief went on, as he lit a cigar.

The curiosity of the Bradys was aroused.

## CHAPTER IV.

### A TALK WITH THE CHIEF.

It was quite evident to the Bradys that their Chief had a matter of vital importance to tell them, else he would not have come all the way from New York to see them that morning.

They gazed at him inquiringly, and Harry finally asked:

"What is it you have to impart to us, sir?"

"Before I explain, let me ask you a few questions."

"Go ahead, sir. I'll answer, if I can."

"In the first place, have you captured Peter Green yet?"

"No. We were after him last night, and he gave us the slip."

"He's a very clever rogue. Have you got him located?"

"After a fashion. He is grafting along the Bowery."

"I expected as much. You must catch him at once."

"We are trying to."

"It is absolutely necessary that we put that man in jail as soon as possible. He is engaged in a deep game to gain a fortune."

"How is that?"

"To properly explain the matter, I must tell you a story. A wealthy man named Robert Green resided in New York with his two orphaned nephews. One was Peter Green, his brother's child, and the other was Ralph Seymour, his sister's child. Peter was a bad fellow and Ralph was a good boy. Therefore the old millionaire disinherited Peter, and made Ralph his heir. He made a will, bequeathing his for-



tune to his favorite nephew, and named his old friend, John Langdon, executor of the will. Langdon lived in Boston, and the will was given to him for safe-keeping."

"Who told you all this, sir?" queried Old King Brady.

"Mr. Langdon himself, yesterday morning, when he called at my office to lodge a complaint against Peter Green. It seems that Peter learned how he had been cut off, and was furious. He wrote Mr. Langdon a threatening letter, in which he swore that he would have the executor's life if he presented such a will to the surrogate for probate. This threat worried Langdon, for old Robert Green died, and Langdon had to come to New York with the will to file it for Ralph."

"I see," said Old King Brady, nodding.

"Langdon, having given me the foregoing facts, told me that Ralph was a poor clerk employed by a Fulton street jeweler. Peter, having been kicked out of his uncle's house, was an associate of crooks, and had made himself infamous as an expert grafter. Old Mr. Langdon had not seen either of the nephews since they were children."

"Then this Peter Green is the one we are after?"

"Exactly. He is a bad man. Langdon arrived in New York yesterday morning very early. He met Ralph at old Mr. Green's house. By mail, Peter renewed his threat. He was determined that his cousin Ralph should not get all of their uncle's fortune, and said so. Ralph had nothing to say. He's a fine fellow, and is in love with a girl named Ida Hart."

"Well?" queried Harry, as the Chief paused.

"In the afternoon Mr. Langdon started for the Surrogate's office with the will and a large sum of money. He never got there. He was seen by a ward man to be accosted in the street by Peter Green, whom he evidently did not know. They entered a saloon together, and were seen to drink a great many cocktails. After that the wardman heard Peter offer to take the old gentleman down to Coney Island and give him a good time."

The Bradys exchanged significant glances.

At last the truth of the matter was dawning on their minds.

Finally Old King Brady asked:

"Well, Chief, what happened next?"

"The ward man interfered. Told old Mr. Langdon that he was in the hands of a sharper. Half intoxicated, the old man indignantly resented the well-meaning detective's advances to aid him, and the officer gave up his missionary work in disgust. He then saw Peter steering the old man for Coney Island. That was the last he saw of them. He then notified me of the facts."

A faint smile crossed Old King Brady's face, and he finally said:

"I can finish your story from where you left off, Chief."

"You can?" asked the other, in some surprise.

"Oh, yes. Here's what happened. Green got his victim down here, and he and his gang kept pouring drinks into him until he got full. Green had his gang ready to aid him. When his victim was full, Green started him off along

the railroad toward the creek. Here his pals attacked the old man and knocked him senseless. They stole his money and the will which Green did not want filed. Laying their victim over the rails, so he might get run over and injured beyond recognition, they fled. Harry and I appeared and saved his life. A train was bearing down on him. We scattered the thieves and found that they had Langdon's money, jewelry and private papers. We also found that a blow on the head with a sandbag had been dealt the old man. It seemed to have injured his skull and it temporarily paralyzed his faculties. We sent him off to the hospital. Since then we've been looking for his assailants. Up to the present we have not got them."

"Ah! Then Green got his money and papers?"

"The gang must have them now, sir."

"And the old man?"

"Is in the hospital yet."

"Badly injured, do you think?"

"I called up the doctor on the telephone this morning. He told me that Langdon had recovered from the blow, and would be able to leave the hospital this afternoon, none the worse for his adventure, excepting for the loss of his money and the will. It transpired that his skull was not fractured after all."

"You must see that old man, Old King Brady."

"I've already arranged for an interview with him down here," replied the old detective, quietly.

"And he will be here to see you?"

"Yes. At five o'clock."

"Anxious to recover his money and the stolen documents, of course."

"Yes. He will give me a full account of them, as he expects us to make an effort to recover them for him."

"Do you believe you can?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"Because we know Green and his gang."

"There's a good deal in that. You've got a positive knowledge into whose hands the stolen articles went."

"Exactly."

"Although Green put up the job on the old merchant," said the Chief, "he did not have a hand in the robbery. That you are sure of, for you were chasing him when the deed was committed."

"I'm sure the will, sooner or later, will reach his hands. The gang may divide the money among themselves as their share."

The Bradys talked over the matter at some length further with the Chief, and he finally left them and returned to the city.

Toward nightfall John Langdon called on them.

The old gentleman was nervous and excited.

He had a lump on his head where the sandbag struck him, but was otherwise uninjured, and he seemed grateful to the officers for offering to interest themselves in his behalf.

Seated in the Bradys' room, he told them about the same

thing the chief had explained, and finally said, in conclusion:

"The money they stole from me was some cash with which I intended to make some purchases in New York for my business in Boston. Of course, I am extremely anxious to recover it. But I would gladly let it go if you could recover the will which was stolen from me. If it isn't found young Green can demand an equal share of his uncle's estate, to which he is not entitled. As I am an executor, I'd hate to see my old dead friend's wishes balked on account of the way I lost that document."

"We will make every effort to recover both the money and the will," replied Old King Brady, warmly. "You can intrust the entire matter to our hands, Mr. Langdon. We shall try to run down the culprits."

"I'll give you a most careful description of the missing money and papers, and then I'll go back to Boston. Should you recover the things, notify me by telegraph and I'll come on at once."

"Very well; but before you go, we want you to swear out warrants for the men we designate, so we can have no hitch when we nab them. After that you can depart for home."

"All right, sir. I was badly duped by that rascal, Green, and I should have known better than to have gone on a spree with a total stranger in such a place as Coney Island. Regrets are useless now, however. The mischief is done."

They went before a magistrate, and when the necessary legal papers were secured the old gentleman departed for the city.

The Bradys were now prepared to go after their prey.

As they were known to the villains, they disguised themselves as a couple of gawky countrymen that night, and sallied out in the street on the lookout for the crooks.

They well knew that the guns were constantly on the watch for just such rustics, to play their swindling games and fleece them, and the detectives expected they would soon pounce on them.

Nor were they mistaken in their calculations.

As they passed up Schweiger's walk, a stylishly clad man stepped up to the pair, tapped Harry's arm, and cried:

"Well, well, well! If it isn't my old friend Ely Jones from Sandusky. How are you, old pal? How are you?"

## CHAPTER V.

### THE KNOCKOUT DROPS.

The Bradys paused, stared at the Coney Island crook, and saw that he was Jean Reynard, whom Harry had seen in Kentucky Sam's place. Assuming an air of injured innocence, the boy exclaimed, bluntly:

"I daont know yeou, Mister."

"You don't?" cried Jean, in a burst of well-feigned astonishment. "Why, how can you say that? Wasn't I boarding at your house last summer, up in Sandusky?"

Come, come, old chap; don't put on airs now and pretend you don't know me, when——"

"My name ben't Ely Jones, nuther!" declared Harry.

"It ain't?" cried Jean, seemingly more astonished than ever.

"B'gosh, I guess yeou're mistook this air time, stranger."

"Yes, but you look just like my old friend Ely."

"He must be a mighty good-lookin' feller, then," chuckled Harry.

"Well," said Jean, assuming a crestfallen air, "I hope you gents will pardon my error. I'm sorry to have troubled you so much, I'm sure."

"Oh, you be very welcome," said Harry, as if trying to be polite.

"See here," proceeded Jean, warmly, "you two gentlemen must excuse my blunder. I feel as if I ought to make some amends for my rudeness. Come in this place and have a drink, won't you? I'll treat. Really, I must. I won't feel satisfied unless you let me blow you off."

"Much obleeged, stranger, but it's all right."

"Won't you come and have a drink?"

"Haow about it, Ezekiah?" Harry asked his partner.

"Waal, Obadiah," drawled Old King Brady, as he took a chew of plug tobacco, "I daont maind. He be a reg'ler gentleman, anyway, an' gol durn my socks if I wouldn't like a glass of good hard cider."

"Good enough," chuckled Jean, seeing he was getting them in tow. "I thought you'd let me wipe out my silly blunder by putting up the drinks. Follow me, boys."

And he led the way into a crooked resort.

The Bradys did not arrest the man on the spot, as they felt inclined to do, as they had a deeper motive. It was their design to let him lead them to his confederates. Thus they could each seize a man.

He led them through a dingy bar, into a private room in the rear.

It contained a few tables and chairs.

The place was vacant.

Sitting down at a table with the two alleged countrymen, Jean summoned a waiter and ordered drinks for the trio.

"As long as my friends are drinking cider," said the Frenchman, with a sly wink at the bullet-headed waiter, "I'll have the same. But we want good, strong stuff, mind you."

"I'm on," grinned the man, as he went out.

"Haow on airth did you mistake me for somebody else?" asked Harry, as the waiter returned and set down the glasses.

Jean quietly drew a tiny vial of chloral from his vest pocket.

With his disengaged hand, he pointed out into the street through the open door, and said in quick, excited tone, designed to make the supposed rustics instantly obey:

"Do you see that barrel?"

Harry and Old King Brady peered out the door.

But the alert old detective shot a side glance at a mirror on the wall which reflected their figures.

As he did so he observed the grafter deftly pour several

drops of the drug into their glasses when he thought they were not watching.

"Knock-out drops!" thought the old detective.

At the same moment he gave Harry's foot a kick under the table, in such a manner that the boy instantly knew what was done.

The Bradys had a secret code of signals whereby they could communicate with each other with a glance, a touch, or a certain movement.

Without paying any attention to the old detective, Harry said:

"Yes. What about that bar'l, sir?"

"Well," said Jean, "when I stood beside it, and saw you coming along, I thought I knew you. But I soon learned my error."

"I'll be gosh blamed if I ben't glad it happened," said Harry, banging the table with his old green umbrella.

"Why?" asked the grafter, smiling.

"Becoz it made us acquainted with a good lad, sir. Yeou air all right. Yeou see, we air takin' in the saights. When we git tew hum, haow the folks will stare when we tell 'em all we've seen."

"Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!" roared Jean, winking knowingly at him. "They'll think you were a gay pair of old roosters, won't they?"

"You bet!" chuckled Old King Brady, as he gave Harry a significant cough. "We be rail old sports now for a fact."

"Well, drink it off, and we'll have another one."

"Wait!" interposed Harry, suddenly.

"Eh? What now?" queried Jean, glancing at him.

"See that waiter?" the boy asked, pointing at the bullet-headed man.

"What about him?" queried Jean, turning around in his chair and glancing over his shoulder at the man.

The moment his attention was turned from the table Old King Brady exchanged glasses with him.

The grafter now had the drugged cider.

Harry still had a similar glass.

A sneeze from his partner warned him of this fact.

"What about that waiter!" the boy exclaimed. "Daount you see he be tipsey. By gol, he can't hardly stand up."

"Oh, that's nothing," said Jean, turning around again and seizing his glass of drugged cider. "Here's my regards, gents."

"Drink hearty," answered Harry, nodding, and seizing his glass.

The crook placed the glass to his lips. Meantime he was keenly watching the two detectives.

Old King Brady drank his cider with great gusto, and Harry took a mouthful and squirted it into a cuspidor.

"What a funny taste!" he growled, making a face.

"Nonsense!" laughed Jean. "Pure imagination."

"You taste yourn."

"Why," said Jean, swallowing the drugged cider, "mine is all right.

"I'm blest if mine be. Jist try it," said Harry, holding out his glass.

"No, no! I've got enough," declared Jean, pushing it away.

"But I insist!" said Harry.

"I don't want it, I tell you!"

"Mebbe it's this cud o' terbacker I've got in my mouth."

"Why, of course!" said Jean, readily. "That's what gives you that bad taste. Remove it, and drink your cider."

Harry walked across the room to a cuspidor, carrying his glass in his hand, and while pretending to get rid of a quid of tobacco he dexterously emptied his cider in the receptacle.

Jean failed to see him do it.

But when the boy returned with an empty glass, the crook asked:

"Where's your cider?"

"I drunk it, o' course," replied the boy.

"Did it taste bad, now?"

"Can't say it dew," Harry replied.

"Have another?"

"Not jest yet."

"Say," exclaimed Old King Brady, as he pulled out a well-filled, old-fashioned wallet; "I'm agoin' tew pay for the next raound. We air dead game sports, we air. The deuce with money. Let's have a good taim. We daon't care for money, do we, Obadiah?"

"No, indeed, Ezekiah. Yeou pay this time."

Old King Brady drew five cents from his wallet, slapped it down on the table with a grand air, and said, recklessly:

"Thar! I'm agoin' tew blow all that in?"

Jean eyed the nickel with a disgusted look.

"Say," he remarked, "do you imagine that huge sum of money is going to pay for a round of drinks here?"

"Of course. Tew hum we get two quarts o' cider for that amount an' thar ain't even a pint in what we air drinkin'."

"No wonder you fellows get rich," growled the grafter. "Pick it up and put it back in your pocket, Pop, or you might go broek. Those drinks cost a quarter apiece here."

"What? Jewittaker!" roared Old King Brady. "Dew they take us for millionaires? Begosh, I be goin' huntin' for the taown pump when we get aout of this swell place. Got any friends?"

"A few," replied Jean.

"Whar be they?"

"I expect them here in a few——"

But that was as far as he got.

The chloral suddenly overpowered him.

His brain began to swim, his senses began to fly, and with a smothered cry he clutched at his forehead, staggered to his feet, and reeled back, upsetting his chair.

"Air!" he gasped, hoarsely.

The detectives silently eyed him with sarcastic smiles.

Wondering what ailed him, the grafter tried to pull his wits together, but failed of his purpose.

The next moment he was gone.

With a suppressed groan he fell heavily to the floor, rolled over on his back and lapsed into unconsciousness.

The Bradys bounded to their feet, and eagerly scanned the prostrate villain.

## CHAPTER VI.

## AT THE BATH-HOUSE.

"He is knocked out, Harry."

"Fell in his own trap."

"We must get him out of sight."

"What's your hurry?"

"Some of his pals may come in."

"There's a closet. Put him in it."

Lifting the Frenchman, they carried him across the room, opened a door in the wall, and put him in a small closet.

While Harry kept guard, Old King Brady searched the man's pockets. They contained nothing but a wad of money bound with a paper strap. As Old King Brady produced it and glanced at the strap, he saw that the impress of a red stamp and some blue pencil writing were upon it. The rubber stamping said: "Bank of Boston, 6th One Thousand," and the figures were written below it, "Series of 1900, No. 16,693,297 to 397."

A faint smile swept over the detective's face.

"Harry! Come here!" he exclaimed.

"What's the matter?" queried the boy, obeying.

"See this money?"

"Plainly."

"It's one thousand dollars of Mr. Langdon's bank notes."

"Indeed!"

"See the strap? That is proof enough."

"Sure enough."

"The crooks have divided their booty."

"Evidently."

"This must be Jean Reynard's share."

"Handcuff him."

Old King Brady complied.

Scarcely had he done so when Harry whispered:

"Look out. Some one is coming."

Out of the closet sprang Old King Brady, closing the door behind him just as two men sauntered in from the bar-room.

One was Nick Finskoy, the Terrible Swede, and the other was Ivan Obansk, the Russian pickpocket.

The bartender had notified them that Jean Reynard had a couple of "come-ons" in tow, and they came in to aid him to rob them.

Glancing around, they observed the two supposed countrymen, but failed to see anything of their friend.

"Hello!" exclaimed Ivan, gruffly, as he nodded at the Bradys. "Have you seen a lean, hungry-looking Frenchman around here, named Jean?"

"Daont knaow the party," replied Harry.

"I mean the one who was drinking with you."

"Oh! Him! He's gone."

"Where to?"

"Blest if I knaow."

The two crooks looked puzzled.

Neither of them thought Jean would abandon his prey unless he had their money, and Ivan finally demanded:

"Why did he leave you?"

"Said he had an engagement and would return soon."

"Oh, I see. Had your money when he left, I suppose?"

"Waal," drawled Harry, "he's got my wallet containin' a hundred, but I be holding his containin' a thousand dollars as security."

The two crooks burst out laughing.

Finally subduing their mirth, Ivan asked:

"Will you let me see his money?"

"Here it be," replied the old detective.

And he showed them the money, stripped of its band which he had taken from Reynard's pocket.

The two crooks laughed heartily again.

"Counterfeits!" chuckled Ivan.

"What!" yelled Old King Brady, in startled tones.

Ivan gave him a pitying glance.

"Bogus money," announced he. "You've been swindled. That's an old dodge, practiced by bunco steerers. He got away with all your good money, and left a lot of worthless counterfeits behind as security."

"Thunderation!"

"But, say; we know the man."

"Yeou dew, hey?"

"Yes, and for a consideration we'd undertake to recover your money."

"Can you git it for us?"

"Easily, if you'll pay for the work."

"Haow much?"

"Fifty dollars."

"By gum, I'll go yeou."

"Have you got the coin?"

"Have I? See here!"

And he displayed the money in his wallet.

The eyes of the two grafters sparkled, for they thought Jean had merely duped them out of a small part of the amount they had. Flashing a meaning glance at each other, the two villains made up their minds to get the balance of Old King Brady's money. Ivan was careful not to betray any undue excitement, though.

"You've got plenty, I see," he remarked.

"Tew be sure I have," replied the old detective.

"Now, come with us, and we will show you where the fellow is who got away with your bills. We know where he was going from here."

"Dew you want me alone?"

"Yes. Your friend can await your return here."

"All right. Will yew stay, Obadiah?"

"Tew be sure I will, Ezekiah."

This arrangement pleased the crooks immensely, for they thought they would have an easy task to overcome but one man.

Leading Old King Brady out into the street, they got him between them and strode away toward the Bowery.

As soon as they were gone Harry went out for a policeman, and, to the amazement of the saloon-keeper, they ca

ried the limp figure of Jean out and took him to the police station.

Here a physician was summoned to revive him.

In the meantime Old King Brady was being led away by the two burly crooks, who designed to rob him of his money.

The detective acted his part as a countryman very well.

Neither of the grafters suspected his identity.

"I'll trap the pair," thought the keen old detective. "If I don't, it will be very queer. They may give me a run for my work, but I'll succeed in the end. It's a big and crafty gang. If we can't pull them all in at once, we'll get them one by one until the whole gang is under lock and key."

As they strode along with the immense throng he asked Ivan:

"Whar be that skunk what's robbin' us?"

"Down the line near the Glass Pavilion."

"Yais. But what place be he in?"

"The swimming tank."

"How am I tew get him?"

"He's in swimming. You must go in swimming, too. We'll go along with you. When we get in the tank, we will all grab that crook and have him arrested."

"What? Have we got tew go in in bathing suits?"

"Oh, yes. If you have any valuables, you must give them to the keeper of the tank. He will put them in his safe and give you a check for them."

"I see."

"When we have captured the crook we can get dressed and you can get your valuables from the clerk and pay us the fifty dollars."

"Can't we save all that air trouble by waitin' for him tew come out?"

"No. It's too risky. He might give us the slip. Now that we've got him located, it wouldn't do to risk losing him."

"That's so!" innocently assented Old King Brady, nodding.

Turning down a walk leading to the beach, they reached the bathing tank, and Ivan peered through the fence at a number of swimmers who were enjoying themselves by electric light.

"There he is now!" he exclaimed.

"Whar?" eagerly asked Old King Brady, peering through.

"Just dove under water. Hurry up. I thought he'd be here. Don't waste any time. We will have an easy time of it catching him while he's in the water."

And they dragged the detective to the office.

Here they put their valuables in envelopes, and the detective noticed that each of the crooks had large sums of money.

"Some of the swag stolen from Langdon!" he thought.

"I'll get those bills, too. They are planning to get my money, but I'll surprise them by getting theirs instead."

He had a plan of action mapped out.

Each one received a bathhouse key, a bathing suit, and a rough towel, and left the office.

The detective saw the two crooks enter Ivan's bathing room.

Suspicious, he crept over to the closed door and listened, for he felt confident they were going to plan his downfall. Nor was he mistaken.

He plainly heard them speaking.

Although the two villains conversed in tones not much higher than a whisper, he distinguished every word they uttered.

## CHAPTER VII.

### CAUGHT IN A TRAP.

"Nick," the detective heard Ivan say, "He is an easy mark."

"Ve git efery tollar he hoiv," replied the Swede. "How you vork it?"

"Easy as rolling off a log. When we get him in the water we can steal his check, and while you hold him in the water I'll go out, claim his valuables and get away with them before you leave the tank."

"You gan git mine dings, too."

"Certainly."

"Where we meet?"

"In Vacca's place."

"Goot."

"If possible, lock the jay in his bathroom."

"I dry to."

They now began speaking of other things, and Old King Brady smiled and glided noiselessly back to his own room.

He did not take off his clothes, but spent his time watching for the two crooks to make their appearance.

They did not make him wait long.

He presently saw them emerge, clad in bathing suits, and proceed toward the tank.

The moment they were gone he went to their rooms with his key, and took their clothing from the nails.

Each of the crooks carried a revolver.

Old King Brady took possession of the weapons.

Next, he made a bundle of their clothing and carried it out to the office, where he met the proprietor.

"Without their clothes and weapons I've got them trapped," chuckled the old detective.

The owner of the place eyed his bundle suspiciously.

"What have you got there?" he demanded, pointing at the big bundle.

Old King Brady laughed quietly, and replied:

"I'm a Secret Service man. Here's my badge and here are my warrants for the capture of a gang of crooks working the Island."

"Oh, I see!"

"I came in with two of them, and I've got them at my mercy without clothing. I want you to hold these things until I get the nippers on the pair. I also want their envelopes, as they contain the money they stole from a man up the railroad track."

The proprietor was inclined to object.

After a few minutes' talk, however, Old King Brady convinced him that he would only get himself in trouble if he persisted, and the man finally consented to aid him.

The three envelopes of valuables were handed over.

Old King Brady pocketed them.

This had scarcely been done when loud, angry voices were heard out in the corridor, which brought a smile to the detective's face.

"Somebody has hooked my clothes," roared the voice of Ivan.

"Und mine, too!" added Nick, savagely.

"By thunder, the country guy is not in his room."

"Mebbe he vhas tooken our gloding."

"Come and see the manager."

Furious and swearing, the two crooks came tearing along the corridor and rushed into the office.

The first person they saw was Old King Brady.

"There he is now!" roared Ivan, pointing to the detective.

"Und dere vas our glodings!" shouted Nick, pointing at the bundle, excitedly. "He vas der tief vot tooken dem, sure."

"Grab him!" the Russian cried, in angry tones.

The Swede made a rush for the bundle, but Old King Brady stopped him with the stern order:

"Stop where you are!"

Out flashed a pair of pistols, and the warning 'click-click' of the weapons as the detective cocked them brought the crooks to a pause.

A startled look flashed over their faces when they observed the weapons covering them, and Ivan turned pale and gasped:

"What are you doing that for?"

"You are my prisoners," quietly answered the officer.

"What?"

"I've got the warrants for you."

"You're a fly cop, then?"

"I am Old King Brady."

As he said this, the detective pulled off his false beard and wig.

A yell of alarm escaped from the frightened crooks.

They glared at him, pale and wild-eyed.

Each of them recognized him at once.

"We've fallen in a trap!" groaned Ivan.

"Just so," assented the detective, coolly.

"Ach! Vot fools ve vas!" gasped the Swede.

"Up with your hands!"

They obeyed quickly, for those deadly revolvers told them as plainly as words that he would brook no nonsense from them.

"What's the charge, Brady?" demanded Ivan. "Grafting?"

"Robbery of the old man up the railroad track," replied the detective. "We've got the whole gang spotted, and Reynard is already behind the bars."

"We were not in that deal."

"You lie! I've got your envelopes of valuables, and I

found fifteen hundred of those stolen dollars in yours and five hundred in Nick's. We know the numbers of the bills, so there can't be any mistake about the matter. Ivan, we've got you coid!"

The pickpocket burst into a cold sweat, for he realized that what the detective said was going to make trouble for him. Finally he said:

"Let us put on our clothes."

"Not much. I'm going to take you as you are. It will keep you entirely at our mercy. You can't run away in a bathing suit very well. You'll get your clothes in the jail."

"Bud ve can'd go troo der shdreed dis vay!" protested the Swede.

"You'll have to. Now march! I haven't a pair of bracelets with me. They're on Reynard, so I can't fasten you together as I'd like to. But I'll tell you this much. If either of you make any attempt to run away, you can depend I'll put a bullet in your skin at the first signs of treachery."

A hopeless look of despair crossed their faces.

"I'll send for their clothes later on," said the old detective to the bath keeper, as he marched his prisoners out.

When the two crooks, with their hands raised above their heads, made their appearance in the street, followed by the detective, armed with a brace of pistols, great excitement prevailed. A huge crowd surrounded them, and questions were asked, to which the old detective made no reply.

On they went toward the station-house.

Attracted by the crowd, several policemen now appeared and demanded of the detective to know what was transpiring. He told them, and they lent him their aid.

Charging on the enormous crowd which was gathering and choking up the street, making progress difficult, the officers opened a lane so they could pass along.

The crowd served one good purpose.

It was so dense that there was not much chance for the prisoners to escape, even had they had the courage to try.

Upon their arrival at the station-house, Old King Brady found Harry there awaiting his return.

The two prisoners were committed for trial, and a messenger was sent to bring them their clothing.

Harry was delighted over the capture, and he said to his partner:

"The news of these three arrests has spread all over the Island. Every crook down here must know it by this time. It's going to put them on their guard. They will know we are after Green's gang, and the remaining members will keep shady awhile."

"There are four more at large yet," said Old King Brady. "I refer to Big Mike, English Charley, Sand McNutt and Guspini, to say nothing of Peter Green, the ringleader."

"Are you sure the two thousand dollars you got from the Russian and the Swede is some of John Langdon's stolen money?"

"Oh, yes. I've examined the bills."

"Then we've recovered three thousand dollars so far."

"Exactly so, and before I'm through, I hope to have a lot of it."

"We'll have to abandon these disguises now, as we are known by them."

"Others equally effective can be had."

They thereupon left the police station, and went home.

New disguises were procured, and for a week they carefully scoured every nook and corner of the West End in which they were likely to find the men they were searching for.

But Green's gang had taken fright and kept under cover. Indeed they might not have been discovered at all had it not been for an accident which gave the Bradys a clew to their whereabouts.

On the following night there was a tremendous crowd of people at the Island and clad in bicycle costumes the Bradys went out on Surf avenue to resume their quest for the men they were after.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### DOWN ON THE SEA SHORE.

As the Bradys, mounted on bicycles, pedaled down Surf avenue, they found the street thronged with riders of both sexes.

Particularly noticeable among them was a young man of slender build, with a light mustache, and a handsome, dark-complexioned girl.

Both were clad in neat blue costumes, and if one were to judge by their devotion to each other, they certainly were lovers.

As they passed the detectives, the young man was heard to say:

"Yes, Ida, my full name is Ralph Seymour. I have no middle name. Peter Green is my cousin. I haven't seen him in a long time, as I've heard he has gone to the dogs. The letter I got from John Langdon said he had gone back to Boston. I suppose he has filed Uncle Robert's will for probate. As I'm the only heir, when the case is settled I'll be a rich man. Then we can get married, and live in luxury."

Old King Brady winked at Harry and muttered:

"That's Ida Hart, and the young man Green is so anxious to cheat out of his inheritance."

"Nice-looking couple," replied the boy.

"Let's follow them. It's evident they don't know the will was stolen. They may have a good deal of trouble to see their bright dreams of the future fulfilled as they expect."

Ralph and his sweetheart paused at a roadhouse, where they checked their wheels, and the detectives did the same.

They then mingled with the throng, and arm in arm, walked along Surf avenue, chatting and glancing in the different resorts.

As the detectives pursued them, they saw two men in a gloomy doorway point excitedly at the pair and begin to talk.

There was something so familiar in the appearance of one of them that Old King Brady muttered:

"Who is that man? I've seen him somewhere before."

"If he didn't have a red head and red whiskers," replied Harry, "I should say he resembled Peter Green."

Old King Brady was somewhat startled by this suggestion, for the boy's keen discernment had penetrated what may have been a deep disguise.

He flashed a sharper look upon the man.

A moment of intense study convinced him that the boy was right, and he paused, grasped Harry's arm, and said:

"Wait! See—they are about to follow Seymour and the young girl."

"By Jove! they would not do that for nothing."

"Very true. There go the bicycle riders down to the seashore."

Seymour and his girl were crossing the sand lots, and were heading for the shore, upon which the surf was breaking with a dull rumble.

The full moon in the starry sky hung over the sea, and cast a sheen upon the rolling waves beautiful to see.

The water was very dark.

In the distance the twin lights on the Sandy Hook light-ship rose between them and the dim Jersey highlands.

Midway on the broad stretch of water drifted a big ghostly ship, the faint breeze scarcely filling her sails as she headed for the harbor.

There was a searchlight beyond.

It was a revolving light, its keen glow disappearing every moment and then flashing around, sending a long, dazzling shaft over the heaving waters in all directions.

The Bradys took this in at a glance.

Few people were down at the shore that night.

The detectives saw the lovers pause just beyond reach of the point up to which the water rushed when the rollers burst.

Here they sat down in the sand, side by side.

The two men who had been watching them strolled over near where the pair sat, seemingly paying no heed to them.

But, as a matter of fact, they were watching the young man and his girl with the greatest of interest.

The Bradys paused.

"There can't be any mistake about the fact that they are watching that couple," said Harry, at length. "And as they are not a very respectable-looking pair, I don't believe they have any good intentions toward the young couple."

"We'd better pipe them off for awhile," said the old detective. "Their actions are very suspicious. We must learn something more about that fellow with red whiskers."

Just then the two men strode over to Seymour and the girl.

As the young man glanced around at them, the individual with red whiskers suddenly demanded:

"Say! Ain't your name Ralph Seymour?"

"It is," promptly replied the cyclist. "But I don't know you."

"Of course you don't," replied the other. "But I not

only know you, but I've been following you. In fact, I've been watching for you."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Ralph in tones of great surprise.

"We got wind of the fact that you were coming down here on a wheel, and we posted ourselves where we could see you if you struck the Island."

"That's rather strange——"

"Not in the least."

"Then why did you do it?" asked Ralph, arising.

"Because we are here to arrest you."

"Arrest me?" gasped the young man in startled tones.

"That's what I said."

"You are officers, then?"

"We are."

"But why should you arrest me?"

"Your boss has sworn out the warrant, charging you with the theft of jewelry from the store where you are employed."

"Good gracious! It can't be possible."

"But it is."

"I am not a thief."

"You'll have to prove that in court."

"Am I under arrest?"

"You are."

A stifled cry of dismay escaped the girl.

She had risen, and clasped Ralph's arm.

"Mercy!" she gasped. "There is some dreadful mistake here."

"None at all, young woman," gruffly answered the red-bearded man, glaring at her in an ugly fashion. "This young fellow is charged with a crime, and we are going to pull him in."

"No! No! Don't do that!" began Ida, frantically.

"We want no interference from you, either."

"But, sir——"

"Shut up, and get out of here!"

"I won't leave him."

"Do you want us to pinch you, too?"

"I don't care what you do."

"All right! Tom, just take charge of her."

The other man seized Ida's arm roughly, and growled:

"Now you behave, or I'll hurt you!"

Ralph saw that the terrified girl might get herself in trouble with these men, and he said to her, pleadingly:

"Don't interfere, Ida. It can do no earthly good."

"But, Ralph, I can't see them lock you up when I know you are innocent of the dreadful charge they have made."

"It can't be helped, sweetheart. Of course, I am innocent of the charge. But these men can't listen to me. I'll have to prove my innocence in court. There's no use resisting. I've got to submit. The easiest way is the best way. And once I face a judge I'll be discharged at once."

"What in the world shall I do, Ralph?"

"Go and get your wheel, and return home."

"And leave you here alone——"

"It must be done."

The girl was very nervous and began to cry.

Ralph comforted her as well as he could, and, then, turning to the red-bearded man, he exclaimed:

"Take me in. I'm ready to go!"

"Very well," began the stranger.

But just then the Bradys rushed over to them, and the two men began to swear at the interruption.

"Hold on there!" cried Old King Brady.

"What in thunder do you want here?" growled the man who had hold of Ralph Seymour, glaring at him.

"I'll tell you," replied the veteran, quietly. "We are a couple of detectives ourselves, but we don't know you. Until you satisfy us of your authority, we don't intend to let you take this man."

The two men recoiled.

Evidently they were startled.

The red-bearded one recovered his wits, however, and exclaimed:

"We won't take any interference from you in the discharge of our duty. If you don't clear out, we'll shoot you!"

And he drew a revolver.

Old King Brady laughed at him.

"Two can play at that game!" he exclaimed.

And, like a flash, he had his own weapon out, and was aiming it square in the other's face.

For a moment there was a deep silence.

When the other man glanced around, he was astonished to see Harry covering him, too, with a pistol.

## CHAPTER IX.

### IN THE IRON TOWER.

The Bradys were convinced that the two men were impostors, and were positive that they were not genuine detectives.

For a few moments there was a painful silence.

The Bradys were cool and calm, but the two strangers were evidently laboring under great mental excitement.

Ida had rushed to Ralph.

The young man flung his arm around her waist.

"Don't fear!" he whispered, reassuringly. "There's no danger."

"But—those pistols!" she faltered, with a shudder.

"They won't be fired at us. Don't tremble so, sweetheart."

Old King Brady now demanded:

"Well, what are you going to do about it, sir?"

"I want you to mind your own business and clear out of here," replied the red-whiskered man, in ugly tones.

"Well, we won't!"

"Do you want bloodshed?"

"Not particularly. But I'm going to have you!"

"Me?"

"Yes."

"What for?"

"As a prisoner."



"Nonsense!"

"You'll see, sir."

"It's absurd to arrest me."

"That we'll find out at the police station."

"You'll deeply regret this interference."

"Oh, humbug! We won't regret anything. Just drop that gun now, or, by jingo, I'm going to begin firing!"

The so-called detective pondered a moment, and then said:

"Just to avoid a tragedy, I'll obey you."

And he put the revolver back in his pocket.

Old King Brady gave a quiet chuckle, and nodded:

"That is right," said he. "You know when you are best off, my good fellow. Now I'm going to hook you up."

"I won't stand for that."

"Then there will be a fight."

"You can bet there will."

"Harry, annex his pal."

"All right, Old King Brady."

The mention of these names made the red-whiskered man give a violent start and stare harder at the pair.

"The Bradys!" he muttered.

"Exactly," replied the boy. "And who are you?"

"Two Coney Island ward men."

"Quit your lying. We believe you are both disguised, and we intend to unmask you; do you understand?"

"Yes, but we don't heed you."

"Grab them," said Old King Brady, abruptly.

As he spoke he and Harry rushed at their men, grappled them, and a short, sharp and furious fight ensued.

Unluckily, while Old King Brady was struggling to overpower his opponent, he stumbled and fell.

Down he went, and striking Harry, knocked him over. The two strangers fled.

Off they rushed, and by the time the Bradys got upon their feet, the fugitives had reached a small building standing on piles.

Under it they plunged into the gloom, and disappeared.

"After them, Harry," gasped the chagrined old detective, and away they sped in hot pursuit of the strangers.

When they reached the house, and went under to look for the fugitives, the pair were gone.

The detectives searched all over under the house, but failed to find any trace of them.

Finally they ran up to the avenue.

Many people were passing to and fro, and, although they scanned them closely, nothing was seen of the fugitives.

"Gone now!" remarked the boy.

"How did they get out of sight so soon?"

"Probably they jumped into a passing beach comber."

"That would account for their sudden disappearance."

"Yes. Let's go back. It's useless to remain here."

They returned to Ralph and his girl.

"Well?" eagerly queried the young man.

"They've given us the slips," said Harry, in disgust.

"Were they fakirs?"

"I'm sure they were not detectives."

"Who were they, then?"

"Enemies of yours, no doubt, bent upon injuring you."

"But I have no enemies."

"Don't you be too sure about that, young man."

"Who in the world would want to injure me?"

"Peter Green."

"Oh! You know my cousin?"

"Of course. Been trying to arrest him."

"But why should he be my enemy?"

"He is furious because your uncle left you all his money and cut him out of the will entirely. Do you know that when Mr. Langdon was here, Green stole the will from him before the old gentleman had a chance to file the will with the surrogate for probate?"

Ralph looked startled and alarmed.

He glanced blankly at Ida a moment, and finally exclaimed:

"That's pretty bad news."

"It may lead to a lot of trouble."

"No doubt of it, unless——"

"Unless what?"

"The will can be recovered."

"More than likely he will destroy it. If he does, there will be a very bitter litigation in the courts, as he is bound to get his share, if not all, of your uncle's fortune."

A serious expression stole over Ralph's face.

He felt very gloomy.

Counting upon inheritance with no trouble, he and his girl had been building rosy castles in the air.

All these fond hopes were now rudely shattered.

He thought the matter over for a while, and then said:

"Well, I'll have to leave the settlement of the case to Mr. Langdon. He will try to protect my interests, no doubt."

After some further conversation he said to Ida:

"Come. We'll go over to the avenue. I promised to take you up in the observatory. If we leave it too long the elevators may stop running, and you'll be disappointed."

And warmly thanking the Bradys for the interest they had taken in his affairs, he bowed and left them.

The young man led his girl over to the street.

"Don't feel despondent," Ida said to him, consolingly.

"It will all turn out all right in the end, Ralph."

"I am worrying for your sake mostly," he replied.

"But it doesn't do any good."

"I suppose not. Oh, there's the observatory now. The cars are still going up. We'll ascend, and view the surroundings by moonlight. The sight must be very interesting."

Having paid the admission fee, they entered one of the elevators and were carried high up in the air at a slow rate of speed.

It was an enormously high structure.

When they reached the top and got out, they found that the upper platform was entirely deserted.

"Got the place all to ourselves," laughed Ralph.

"So much the better," Ida replied, archly.

They proceeded to the openings of the observatory, and were soon interested in the vast panorama stretched away for miles all around them, and another car came up.

So absorbed were they that they did not notice that two men stepped from the elevator behind them.

They were the same men the Bradys had been pursuing and a grim smile of satisfaction crossed their faces when they saw that nobody but Ralph and Ida was there.

Having accidentally seen the pair go up in the iron tower, they lost no time in following them.

As the car ascended the red-whiskered man muttered:

"You grab the girl. I'll attend to Seymour."

"I understand," replied the other in a whisper.

Like two shadows they crept up behind their victims, and in a moment more leaped at them like tigers.

The girl gave a shriek of alarm, as the man seized her, but so high in the air no one heard her voice.

Ralph felt a pair of powerful hands close on his throat with a fearful grip and then saw who his assailant was.

"I've got you where I want you now," hissed the man, "and you'd better say your prayers. I'm going to throw you out of here!"

He was forcing Ralph backward out of one of the windows, and a feeling of despair overwhelmed the choked and helpless young man, for he was no match for this powerful man.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE MISSING WILL.

"Help! Help! Help!" shouted Ralph, in strangling tones.

"Yell!" hissed his opponent, grimly. "No one will hear you."

"Let go," panted the young man. "You are choking me——"

"Not till I hurl you from this window!"

Ralph struggled fiercely to get away, and in the midst of his misery he saw Ida fighting the man who was trying to subdue her.

But the red-bearded man was powerful.

Slowly but surely he kept pushing his victim backward with the fiendish purpose of throwing him to the ground far below.

Ralph struck at him madly.

But the villain merely laughed.

He was willing to take the blows, to gain his point.

By this time Ida was shrieking.

She was plucky enough, but her nerves were giving away under the fearful strain and her brain swam.

"Coward!" she panted. "Release me!"

"You keep still!" growled her captor, threateningly. "If you don't I'll knock your head off."

"Oh, I ain't afraid of you!" she cried.

Then she fought him again.

He flung her against the wall with a fearful shock, and uttering a deep groan, she fainted.

The man let her lie on the floor.

"She won't bother us any more!" he gasped, wiping the perspiration from his brow and glancing at his friend.

By this time Ralph was bent far out the window.

One more push would send his body flying down through the air to almost certain death.

His blood was chilled.

A feeling of horror overpowered him.

He realized that he could not do anything to save himself, and he gave up struggling, and resigned himself to his fate.

It was horrible.

Those cruel fingers on his throat had tightened until his face turned blue, his eyes bulged, and his swollen tongue hung out.

He could not breathe.

Death would have been a relief.

But at this critical juncture an elevator reached the top.

Open went the door with a bang, and out sprang the Bradys.

They had seen the two men go up in the tower and ascended in the next elevator, convinced that they had the pair trapped.

The scene that met their view horrified them.

Seeing that only prompt action could save Ralph's life, the old detective sprang forward and seized the young man.

"Let him go!" he yelled.

At the same moment he struck the red-whiskered man in the face with his fist, sending him back, cursing roundly.

The boy had leaped at the other man and grappled him.

Into the car sprang the defeated villain.

As he slammed the iron door shut, he hissed to the conductor:

"Go down quick, if you value your life!"

"Yes, sir!" gasped the boy, who was afraid of him.

And down glided the car.

Meantime Old King Brady had been busy pulling Ralph in, and when the young man was safely landed on the floor, he saw Ida lying senseless close by.

Harry was having a desperate struggle with the man whom he had grappled.

The wig and gray beard were knocked from the fellow's head, and Young King Brady recognized him.

"English Charley!" he panted.

"I'm done for!" groaned the crook, as he saw Old King Brady draw a pistol, and aim it at his head.

"Then surrender. You are in a trap which you can't escape from."

Up went the villain's trembling hands.

In a moment more he was handcuffed to the boy.

"Who was your pal?" Harry asked him.

"Peter Green; he was disguised."

"We suspected as much. Why did he tackle Seymour?"

"To put 'im out of the way."

"Murder, eh?"

"That's it, sir."

"For money or revenge?"

"So Seymour could not get the money their uncle left."

"I see. Then you are an accessory."

"No use to deny it."

"Is that girl injured?"

"Merely fainted from fright."

By this time Ralph recovered his voice and strength, got upon his feet, and observed who was in the tower.

"You must have saved me," he remarked.

"We did, and just in the nick of time," Old King Brady answered.

"I'm grateful. Thought I was doomed."

"Are you badly hurt?"

"Not at all, except where he scratched my throat with his nails."

"I suppose you know who did it?"

"Yes, but I can't fathom his object."

"We've got his pal. He acknowledged that it was Peter Green. He wants to put you out of the way so he will be the only heir to inherit that fortune."

"Good heavens! He's getting desperate."

"Very. Look out for him."

"Where is he?"

"Escaped."

"What a pity."

"Don't worry; we'll catch him yet."

"I hope so. I'll be uneasy until you do."

"Well, we've got one more of his gang in custody."

Just then Ralph saw Ida lying prostrate and gave a cry of alarm.

Rushing to her side, he raised her head and peered in her face.

"Ida!" he fairly shrieked. "Have they killed you?"

"She has only fainted," said the old detective! "Don't worry."

"Oh," replied Ralph, in relieved tones. "I thought she was dead."

He made an effort to revive her.

She finally recovered, and although pale and trembling, she got up, saw that she was safe, and burst into tears.

"We'd better get down to the ground again," said Harry.

"Yes, and here comes a car," replied his partner.

A few moments afterward they all descended to the street.

Here the party separated, Ralph and Ida to get their wheels and return to the city, and the Bradys going off to the station house with their prisoner.

English Charley was put in jail.

The Bradys were highly elated.

"If we keep on at this rate, Harry," said the old detective as they headed for their lodging house, "it won't be long ere we trap all the seaside crooks and break up the dangerous gang. We are playing in great luck."

"The villains are disguising themselves," the boy answered, thoughtfully. "They know we are after them in earnest now. As they have changed their appearance with disguises, it shows that they are afraid of us."

"No question about that."

They returned home.

On the following morning the letter carrier brought Old King Brady a large, bulky envelope, postmarked "New York."

He opened it.

The enclosure was a letter and a large document.

The detective opened the latter paper, and to his astonishment, he observed that it was the last will and testament of Robert Green!

"Great Scott!" he cried.

"What is it?" Harry demanded.

"Green's will."

"The one stolen from Langdon?"

"Yes. It must be, as there was no other."

"Who sent it to you?"

"I don't know yet. I'll see."

He opened the letter.

Glancing at the signature, he said:

"Peter Green sent it."

"How mysterious!"

"I can't understand it."

"Perhaps the letter explains the mystery."

"I'll read it."

"And I'll look over the will."

Old King Brady carefully read the letter.

It was quite brief.

When he finished, he said:

"This is mighty queer."

"What does it say?"

"Listen. I'll read it to you."

Harry nodded and sat down, and Old King Brady read the following lines to his young partner:

## CHAPTER XI.

### READING THE WILL.

Harry was an interested listener as his partner read this letter:

"New York, August 2.

"Old King Brady;—As you are aware, John Langdon was attacked by some men at Coney Island, last month. Among other things, they robbed him of the last will and testament of my deceased uncle, Robert Green. You are also aware that I had nothing to do with that robbery. I accidentally discovered that the guns stole my uncle's will from him and I at once set about recovering it from the guilty parties. After a great deal of trouble and expense I succeeded in getting possession of the document. It is no more than just to my uncle's beneficiary that the will be

filed for probate with the surrogate, so the estate can be settled up without litigation. As I've heard that you were interested in recovering the will for Mr. Langdon, I send it to you enclosed with this note, so you can give it back to the man from whom it was stolen. As you can see, the will is sealed. The seal has not been broken since the will was stolen. As it bears my deceased uncle's private seal, it was doubtless sealed by him before his death, so nobody would know what the provisions of the will are until the surrogate opens it. I know you think I had something to do with stealing it. But the fact that I herewith return it to you intact is pretty good evidence that I didn't plan the robbery or help in its execution. Had I been guilty, I certainly would not send the document back to you to clear myself of that charge. I don't want to be blamed for what I did not do. Hoping you will appreciate the good motive prompting me in this matter, and trusting that you will see that justice is done to all parties concerned, I am, Yours respectfully,

"PETER GREEN."

At the conclusion of the letter there was a deep silence for a few moments, after which Old King Brady said:

"Let me look at the will."

Harry handed it to him.

It was a long printed form, folded carefully, the edges were sealed with red sealing wax, bearing the monogram "R. G." in a circle, and upon the back it was endorsed as follows:

Will and testament of  
Robert Green, Esq.,  
N. Y., July 3d, 1899.  
Alexander P. Quincy, Atty.,  
No. 132 Nassau st., N. Y.

Old King Brady critically examined the document, without breaking the seal, and at the conclusion, he exclaimed:

"This must be the stolen will, Harry."

"How do you account for Peter's honesty?"

"It's marvelous in the face of what Mr. Langdon said about the document cutting Peter out, and making Ralph his sole heir."

"Perhaps there's some deep design behind it."

"Maybe. Peter is very foxy. It seems a bit absurd to believe that a man of his well-known unscrupulous character would deliberately throw away a fortune, when it lay in his power to claim it simply by destroying this document."

"We had better notify Mr. Langdon at once. He ought to know if there is any roguery attached to our receipt of this paper. He said distinctly that the will is in Ralph's favor, you recollect."

"If the will is sealed, how did he know that?"

"Very likely he read the will at the time he witnessed it."

"Sure enough. I was once acquainted with the lawyer who drew up this will for Mr. Green, but he is dead now."

Just then a knock came at the door.

"Come in!" cried Old King Brady.

The door opened, and to their surprise, Mr. Langdon entered.

He smiled and bowed, and said in pleasant tones:

"How are you, gentlemen? Took you by surprise, didn't I? Well, the fact of the matter is, I went to Boston, explained the robbery to my business partner, drew more money and came back to make the purchase I set out for. As I was so near the Island again, I thought I'd run down to see what progress you've made at recovering the will those thugs stole from me that remarkable night."

"We've got good news for you, sir," said Harry.

"I'm glad to hear it."

"We've recovered the will."

"What!" shouted Mr. Langdon.

He was fairly electrified.

The Bradys laughed, and Harry held up the document.

"Here it is!" he exclaimed.

"Jerusalem!" gasped the old merchant.

He eagerly grasped the paper, and glancing at it intently a few moments with a joyous look on his face, he cried excitedly:

"Yes, by Jove! this is the paper."

"Are you sure of that?" queried the boy.

"I could swear to it. I recognize the writing."

"Well, then, your worst anxiety is over."

"Yes, indeed."

Old King Brady handed him a small package.

"Here are three thousand dollars of your money which we recovered from some of the crooks whom we have already arrested!" he exclaimed, "and later on we expect to get the balance."

Mr. Langdon was overjoyed.

"Where did you get the will from?" he asked.

"It was recovered from the thieves by Peter Green, and he mailed it to me. Here's his letter; you may read it."

He handed it over to the old gentleman.

When Mr. Langdon finished perusing the note, he said:

"How queer that Peter Green should not only recover the document, but safely return it, when he knows very well that this paper is going to cut him out of his share of his uncle's money."

"There's nothing queer about him having the will," replied Old King Brady. "It was stolen by his gang. And I have no doubt that they stole it at his order. But we are puzzled intensely because he sent it back when it could work him so much mischief."

"Probably he was conscience stricken."

"I doubt that. Such hardened criminals as he is don't generally get in that mood. Have you read that will?"

"No."

"You haven't?"

"Robert Green had the will made out by a notary public, who died a short time ago. I don't know who the witnesses were. All I know is that I was named as executor of the estate, and that the will was placed in my care for safe keeping. Mr. Green once told me that all of his

fortune was going to his nephew, Ralph Seymour, and that he had cut Peter Green, the profligate, entirely out of the will."

"Don't you think it would be proper for you to read the will to Ralph before you give it to the surrogate?"

"Is it customary to do so?"

"Always."

"Then summon Ralph here by telegraph, and we will break the seals, and see what the will says, after which I shall have it filed for probate."

"That's the best course to pursue."

"I'll go and summon him," said Harry. "Give me his address."

Mr. Langdon told the boy where the young man lived, and Young King Brady left the hotel, to send the message.

He had not been gone five minutes when there came a knock at the door, and a fussy little man with spectacles and long hair entered:

"I am Benjamin Snooks," announced he with a bow. "I represent Mr. Peter Green. He said he mailed you a will of his uncle. I've come to read it in order to protect my client's interest in event of a contest."

Every one was amazed, and Old King Brady said:

"You arrived just in time. We have sent for Ralph Seymour, whom we believe to be the only heir. This is Mr. Langdon, the executor. When Ralph arrives we are going to have the will read."

"Good! Good! I am indeed fortunate."

Harry soon returned, and a general conversation ensued.

At the end of two hours Ralph and Ida walked in and were informed of how the stolen will had been recovered.

When everybody was ready Mr. Langdon broke the seal, and opened the will. It was in the usual form.

As Mr. Langdon read the document, the following words ensued:

"I hereby will, give and bequeath to my beloved nephew, Peter Green, all my personal effects, stocks, bonds, mortgages, money and real estate. To my nephew, Ralph Seymour, I give the sum of one dollar."

Every one was shocked and amazed.

Ralph turned pale, and Green's lawyer chuckled.

"This is astonishing!" gasped Mr. Langdon, utterly aghast.

"Gentlemen," laughed Benjamin Snooks, delightedly, "it looks as if my client were the only heir while Mr. Seymour gets only one dollar. And if the terms of that will are not carried out to the letter, you have my word for it that I'll fight you to the bitter end."

Old King Brady arose angry and excited.

"That will is a forgery!" he cried.

## CHAPTER XII.

### WATCHING THE LAWYER.

A scene of the most intense excitement now ensued in the Bradys' room.

The lawyer glared at the old detective, and demanded, excitedly:

"On what ground do you dare to claim this will is a forgery?"

"Simply on the ground that it contradicts Mr. Green's avowal while alive that he would leave nothing to Peter and that Ralph would get all."

"That's a lame pretense, sir, a very lame pretense."

"We shall find out more about this," quietly said the old detective as he turned to Mr. Langdon and added:

"You saw the seal you broke?"

"I did," admitted the old merchant.

"Was it Mr. Green's?"

"Yes. I saw him stamp it myself."

"There!" triumphantly cried Snook. "That shows that the will was not opened since the day Mr. Green sealed it, don't it?"

"Not necessarily. A false will might be made by an expert," coolly answered the old detective. "We ain't convinced yet."

"What better proof would you want than that?"

"You'll find out in due time, Mr. Snook."

"I'll be hard to convince," said the lawyer.

"Mr. Langdon, are you familiar with Mr. Green's signature?"

"I am."

"And you, Ralph?"

"Oh, yes. I've often seen it."

"Then both of you look at the signature to this will and tell me if it is genuine," said the detective, handing over the paper.

They examined it keenly and carefully.

Realizing the importance of their verdict, they were a long time in coming to a final conclusion. Then Ralph said:

"That's his signature."

"Not the slightest doubt of it," added Mr. Langdon.

"You are sure?"

"I've got a letter from my uncle, in my pocket, and you can compare the writing yourself," said Ralph.

He produced it, and handed it to Old King Brady.

The detective compared the two and Harry aided him.

Both saw that the two signatures were exactly alike, and they began to fear that after all they had made an error.

There was a look of triumph on Snooks' face.

"Well?" he demanded, sneeringly.

"We can't see any difference in them," reluctantly admitted the old detective, who was angry at being beaten.

"Just as I thought!" said the lawyer.

"Now," said Old King Brady, "does any one here know anything about the two witnesses, Ann Daly and Philip Farley, and the lawyer, Alexander Quincy, who drew up the will?"

No one answered, for no one there knew what to say.

Observing this, Old King Brady then said:

"This will was made out on July 3, 1899. Harry, make notes of these facts. They may be useful to us later on."

The boy nodded, and producing his pencil and note book, he made memoranda of the facts mentioned.

When this was done Old King Brady handed the will over to Mr. Langdon, and said to him:

"You'll have to give this will to the surrogate."

"Of course you will," asserted Snooks.

"I don't like to," sighed the old gentleman, "but as long as it is my duty to do so, I shall comply with it."

"And I," emphatically said the lawyer, "shall see that my client gets his rights under the terms of that document."

"Perhaps," dryly said Old King Brady.

"Then I'm disinherited, eh?" remarked Ralph.

"Looks that way," chuckled the lawyer.

"I may contest it."

"Oh, I expect you will. But we'll defeat you."

"That's an open question, Mr. Snooks."

There were tears in Ida's eyes, and she whispered sympathetically:

"Oh, Ralph, I am so sorry for you."

"Never mind, dearest, money doesn't make our happiness."

"True, but you should, in justice, get what belongs to you."

"Perhaps I shall before I'm through with this case."

"Mr. Langdon," remarked the lawyer, putting on his hat, "I hope you, as executor of this will, will do your duty in the case."

"I most assuredly shall, sir."

"Then I'll leave you, gentlemen."

"To notify Green of his good luck?" sweetly asked Harry.

"Yes," assented Snooks.

"Then," thought the boy, "you can bet I'll be on hand to find out where that treacherous dog is."

Old King Brady then said to Mr. Langdon:

"My opinion remains unchanged regarding that will. It is not at all probable that Robert Green would tell you that he had made Ralph his heir and deliberately do the opposite thing. He knew Peter was a scoundrel. Then why would he favor him and leave his favorite nephew penniless? There is something queer about that will. It isn't natural. It's a fake, pure and simple——"

"Yes," said Langdon, "but we can't deny the signature, and we know that the seal was not tampered with——"

"Despite these facts, I doubt that paper. Are you sure it is not an old will antedating the one stolen from you?"

"No," replied the old merchant, shaking his head. "I recollect the date on which Robert made his will and it tallies with the date of this document."

Old King Brady looked worried.

"I wish I could get my hands on Peter Green," he muttered. "I'd soon find out if this will is a swindle or not, Mr. Langdon, that will need not go to the surrogate yet. I am not satisfied of it being genuine. And, until I am, I advise you to hold it."

"Won't Snooks compel me to file it?"

"He may by proceeding legally. That will take time.

During the interim, we may gain the evidence I am looking for."

"I'll follow your advice, Mr. Brady."

"Very well, sir."

Mr. Langdon, Ralph and Ida soon afterward departed for New York. In an hour Harry returned and Old King Brady asked him:

"Find any trace of Green?"

"Not yet," replied the boy.

"What became of Snooks?"

"Put up at a hotel. I left a spotter watching it."

"We must not lose track of him now."

They talked over the matter for some time.

On the following day they went down to relieve the spotter and he reported that nothing eventful had happened.

The lawyer was still at the hotel, keeping very quiet.

As the detectives had taken the precaution to disguise themselves in the rough garb of sailors, they had no fear of being recognized by Snooks, if he chanced to meet them.

They watched him all day.

Late in the afternoon, they saw him send off a messenger with a note and the boy escaped Harry on a city bound train.

Toward nightfall Coney Island awakened from its daylight torpor, and the usual scenes of gaiety began.

The evening cars brought down large crowds from the city, who came to escape the intense heat.

About nine o'clock the waiting detectives saw Snooks emerge from his hotel, and proceed rapidly toward the Bowery.

He glanced back several times, as if looking to see if he were being followed, and finally turned into one of the concert halls.

The place was crowded with people, a band was playing, and a burlesque company was giving its performance on the stage.

Snooks paused, scanned the private boxes a moment, and his glance fell upon one occupied by two fashionably dressed men.

They wore dark beards and were talking to a couple of the actresses.

Straight to their box proceeded Snooks.

The Bradys were shadowing him, and observed his actions.

"Harry," muttered the veteran, quickly, "he's after the two dudes in the box yonder. As there's a vacant box adjoining, we had better occupy it as quickly as possible."

The boy nodded and they ascended the stairs.

A few moments later they were in the box.

It was merely partitioned by a red plush curtain and the officers plainly heard what the occupants of the next box were saying.

"You girls can get out now," they heard Snooks say, gruffly. "I want to hold a private conversation with these gentlemen."

The performers laughed and departed for the stage.

Just then, a voice strangely like Green's said in low tones:

"Well, Snooks, we got your message and came down from the city to this rendezvous. What news have you?"

"They have the will you sent, and read it."

Old King Brady nudged Harry and whispered:

"There! You heard that? Well, one of the dudes is Greer!"

"I hope so," grimly answered the boy.

They heard the three men in the box laugh heartily.

Then the lawyer exclaimed:

"You'll have your fortune soon now, my friend!"

### CHAPTER XIII.

#### THE GRAFTER'S COAT.

"Harry," whispered Old King Brady, "when we first came down to Coney Island, it was for the purpose of arresting Peter Green for putting up a crooked deal on a countryman in New York. I'm going to arrest him now."

"Just wait a few minutes," advised the boy, cautiously. "Those fellows in the next box may say something to compromise themselves."

"Very well," replied Old King Brady. "But don't let your anxiety to learn their private business interfere with our work of arresting them."

"Hark! They are speaking again."

It was Benjamin Snooks who was talking.

"You are bound to get the whole fortune now, Mr. Green," he said.

"Hush! Don't mention that name!" warned the other. "You can't tell who may be listening. Those Bradys are laying all sorts of traps for us, and one can't tell at what unexpected moment they may suddenly turn up to confront us."

"Pardon me. I didn't think of that."

"What are they going to do about that will?"

"All hands are satisfied that it is genuine. At first the Bradys doubted it. But the evidence of its being genuine is so strong I don't see how they can very well think otherwise."

"It is genuine."

"So I presumed."

"I got it just as it was, from one of the grafters who stole it from old John Langdon, and mailed it to Brady myself."

"Every one felt sore over the matter, of course," the lawyer went on, "but that was all the good their feelings did them."

"You are going to see the matter through to a finish for me?"

"Of course. Do you intend to go back to New York?"

"No. Nothing doing there. A man in my profession would starve to death in the city during the summer.

Coney Island is good enough for me in spite of the danger. I can keep disguised and thus have no trouble."

A little more conversation followed, after which the lawyer started for the door to go back to New York.

Just then the Bradys appeared.

Harry pounced on one grafter and his partner on the other.

"Hello!" gasped Green, glaring at Old King Brady, who held him. "What the deuce does this mean, anyway?"

"You are under arrest."

"What!"

"Yes."

"Who are you?"

"Brady."

"Good Lord!"

And the villain sprang to his feet.

Snooks dashed out the door, and disappeared much alarmed.

Harry's man began to struggle furiously to escape.

Old King Brady had a grip on the collar of Green's coat, but the villain suddenly slipped out of the garment.

Before the old detective could defend himself, the crook hit him on the head with a bottle, knocked him over stunned, and rushed from the private box.

The detective retained Green's coat in his hand.

Pressing a pistol at the head of the man he was fighting, Young King Brady cried in angry tones:

"If you don't stop struggling, I'll shoot you!"

"Don't do that, me bye," growled the huge fellow. "Begorry, I'll trow up me hands afore I'll dhrop wid a leaden pill."

"Ha! I recognize that voice. You are Big Mike Duffy."

"I am, bad luck to me."

"Just lie still till I handcuff you."

"Sure, an' I'm not a-kickin'."

Harry snapped a pair of steel fetters upon his wrists, and exclaimed:

"Mike, if you budge an inch, I'm going to shoot you."

"Divil a boodge will Oi do."

The boy darted over to his partner and lifted him up.

Old King Brady was fast recovering and the boy observed it.

When he finally rallied and realized what was going on several waiters and some men from the audience were crowding in the doorway attracted by the noise of the scuffle.

Numerous questions were asked, and Harry said quietly:

"We are officers making an arrest."

Just then the "bouncer" came along and drove the crowd out.

Old King Brady glanced around, rubbed his head, and exclaimed:

"Did Green get away?"

"Yes," assented Harry.

"Who have you got there?"

"Big Mike Duffy."

"Go and put him in the cooler."

"Very well. How do you feel now?"

"Merely got a headache from that thump."

"Search the prisoner. He may have some of the stolen money."

Mike scowled and growled.

"Faith, I haven't a cint ov it."

"Let me see!" said Old King Brady.

He carefully searched the villain and brought to light about five hundred dollars, a diamond stud and a gold watch.

The numbers of the bills plainly told the detectives that they were some of the missing money, the stud tallied with the one stolen from Langdon and the case of the watch was engraved with the name of the old merchant.

Old King Brady held up the things.

"Swag—all swag, Mike," said he.

"Arrah, but it's all me own."

"Lying is useless. We've seen this stud on Langdon, the watch bears his name, and the bills are numbered according to those stolen. We don't want any better proof. The swag has given you dead away as one of the gang who did that job."

"Big Mike was silent and grim.

He knew he was trapped.

"I'll keep these things. You take him away," said Old King Brady.

Harry's glance fell on the coat the old detective held.

"Whose is that?" he asked.

"Green's. He slipped out of it."

"Are you going to remain here till I return?"

"Yes. Hurry back."

The boy nodded and marched his prisoner out of the concert hall and Old King Brady sat down and examined the coat.

It was a fashionable garment with two breast pockets.

In one of them was a long envelope.

He drew it out and glanced at the inscription.

It bore the name of "Peter Green, Fifth Avenue Hotel, N. Y.," and was sealed up, and tied with a string.

"Wonder what's in the envelope?" thought Old King Brady, as he held it up. "Quite bulky."

For an instant he was tempted to break the seal, but upon second thought he concluded that there could be nothing of interest to him, bearing on this case, in the envelope, and he put it in his own pocket.

He then continued to search the coat.

There was nothing else in the pockets, and he finally gave up his task and scanned the audience below.

He thought some of the crooks might be among them but failed to spot any of them.

Harry returned after awhile, and Old King Brady asked him:

"Did you lock him up?"

"Yes. The size of the gang is rapidly diminishing."

"And we are gradually recovering Mr. Langdon's valuables, Harry."

"How can you get them to him?"

"By mail. Come on and I'll send him a registered package."

They went to the postoffice and sent the money and jewels to the old merchant, and sent Green's coat to the police station.

"Which way now?" queried the boy.

"To trace Green is not possible. We might stumble across some of his pals, however, by taking a look at some of the gambling joints. There's a crap game going on over in the little saloon near that merry-go-round. Guspini, the Italian, is a fiend for the game. We might find him in there."

"It's worth while looking, anyway. We shall have to rake in those crooks swiftly if we wish to get them with any of Mr. Langdon's money left, or they'll gamble it all away."

"The fact that we have thus far found them all to be very flush with the merchant's coin tends to show that a division of the swag has taken place."

They passed into the hallway and ascended a flight of stairs.

Opening the door of a room at the top, they passed into one of the most notorious crap establishments on the Island.

The big room was dim with smoke, poorly lighted, and crowded with men, youths and boys, most of whom were shooting craps.

The Bradys were not interested in the game, but they passed leisurely through the room scrutinizing the players keenly, without attracting any attention to themselves.

At a table in the rear of the room they suddenly paused for they recognized among the players the very man they were hunting for.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### A RAID ON THE CRAP JOINT.

"Isn't that Guspini?" whispered Old King Brady, as he pointed at a swarthy-featured man, with a dark Vandyke beard.

"Yes, and he isn't even disguised."

"Oh! What an easy snap to take him."

"Regular cinch!" chuckled Harry.

"Perhaps he, too, has got some of Langdon's money."

"Then we'll have it, in a jiffy."

Smiling and confident, Old King Brady strode over to the Italian crook, tapped him on the shoulder, and said affably:

"Hello, Guspini!"

The dark Italian glanced up at him.

Neither of the detectives now had on their face make-up.

As a result Guspini recognized them at the first, quick glance.

He looked startled for a moment; then a blank smile crossed his dark face, and he arose, seized the detective's outstretched hand, and cried:



"Why—carissima! it's Old King Brady!"

"Yes," chuckled the veteran. "Glad to see me, ain't you?"

"Nevair more delight, signor," replied the crook, heartily shaking the detective's hand. "Whada you wan' roun' here?"

"We want you, of course."

"You maka de arresta me?"

"Assuredly."

"Well, well! Cospetto! Dat ees de gooda joke."

"Quite funny, ain't it. But I don't see you laughing."

"No; me no laugh—not a yet."

"Are you ready to come with us?"

"No, signor. But me wanta you with us."

"Indeed. And who is 'us,' pray?"

"Desea gentleman. Youa takit me, youa takit dem, too. You no takit us, we going to giva you wan in de neck! Hey, boys, youa givit dese fly cop wan gran' razzle, or, per Baccho! dey pincha you!"

As Guspini said this, he grabbed Old King Brady's other hand, and clung to him, rendering the detective helpless for a few moments.

There were a dozen ruffians around them.

Taking their cue from the Italian, half of them rushed at Old King Brady, and the rest dashed at his boy partner.

Harry's arms were pinioned behind his back.

The detectives were astonished.

Imagining they were going to have a remarkably easy job to put the Italian under arrest, they were greatly taken back to meet this sudden, unexpected resistance and assault.

While they were frantically struggling to tear their arms free from the grip their enemies had upon them, they were punched, kicked and slammed around unmercifully.

In a moment more, it seemed as if the hand of every gambler in the room was turned against them.

The crooks bitterly hated the detectives.

Seeing a chance to vent their spite upon the pair, they did not lose an opportunity of striking them, from every side.

The Bradys were being roughly handled and badly thumped.

It was a complete surprise to them.

They began to realize that their phenomenal luck had deserted them and that they were going to receive severe punishment unless they could manage to defend themselves.

By a mighty effort of his powerful muscles the old detective tore his hands free from Guspini's treacherous grip, and doubling up his fists, he struck out right and left.

"Fight them, Harry, or they'll do us up!" he yelled.

"I'm almost down and out, now," replied the boy, gaspingly.

But he made a last desperate effort, wrenched himself free of the man who pinioned him, and sprang to his partner's side.

They darted a glance around.

Surrounded by a circle of angry faces and baleful glances the nerry detectives observed the extent of their peril at once.

"Twenty to one!" muttered Harry.

"I don't care if there's a thousand to one, my boy."

"Pull your gun."

"Can't. They've taken it from my pocket."

"Mine is gone, too."

"Then rely on your fists."

Bang! bang! bang! went a shower of swings, jabs and upper-cuts from the gallant detectives, and every time their hard fists struck a man he went down and out at once.

Blow after blow came back.

They ached all over.

All hope of making an arrest was now gone, and they bent all their energies toward fighting their way out into the street.

Each one considered he would be lucky if he escaped with his life.

Side by side, pitted against overwhelming odds, they gamely fought and struggled on, making every blow count.

A furious fight was going on.

Chairs and tables were upset, glasses broken, yells and curses rang out, and the heavy thud of falling blows rent the air.

Old King Brady was wild with rage.

He went at the gamblers like a cyclone.

Beset by ruffians on all sides, he received many a hard whack that left a bruise or a cut on his body.

But he paid no heed to these injuries.

His whole thought was centered upon defeating as many of his enemies as possible ere they whipped him.

And Harry fought with equal vigor.

The boy was a fine boxer, and the damage his flying fists did to the faces of the crap shooters was immense.

In the midst of the noise and wild excitement there came a furious banging on the outer door, and some one yelled:

"Douse ther glim! Here come the coppers!"

A shower of missiles suddenly hurled at the lamps smashed them to pieces, leaving the place wrapped in gloom.

"Harry! Grab a man!" roared Old King Brady.

His own hands shot out and landed on the heads of two of the toughest citizens on Coney Island.

In a moment his fingers were buried in their hair, and with a firm grip, which resisted their efforts to get away, he suddenly banged their skulls together with a resounding whack.

The unlucky villains yelled with pain.

Again he slammed one head against the other.

Curses were now mingled with their howls of anguish as they saw myriads of stars and imagined their skulls were cracked.

"Le' me go!" shouted one of them.

"Blast it!" added another, "what are you doin'!"

"I'll show you!" cried the old detective.

And he slammed one of them down on the floor, stood on

him, drew out his handcuffs, and linked the two men together.

The hall door soon was smashed open by the raiders.

A wild scramble of flying footsteps was heard as the gang made a rush for the fire escape, the windows and the roof, to escape the incoming police.

Lights from bull's-eye lanterns flashed in the doorway and half a dozen policemen dashed in with drawn clubs, the captain in command yelling:

"Surrender! Surrender! or we'll club you."

Some of the weaker-spirited gamblers obeyed, the frightened ones fled, and the determined ones escaped.

The officers made a rush for the gang, and in a minute more many of them were seized.

Harry had captured the Italian.

The policeman recognized the Bradys and the captain asked Harry:

"Did you start this fight?"

"We did," replied the boy, promptly.

"I see you've got your men."

"Yes. But how did you land here?"

"We had this raid planned a week ago."

"You arrived in good season, captain."

"Quite by accident, I assure you."

"Let's get these men out of here."

This plan was carried out, and a few minutes later a dozen crestfallen crap shooters were marched away to the police station and the Italian was among them.

When they arrived at the station, and all but Guspini were locked in the cells, they searched the crook, but failed to find much money on his person.

He had lost a thousand dollars that night at gambling.

Before the Italian was incarcerated Harry asked him:

"Do you know where Green can be found?"

"Si, signor," quickly replied the Italian, "he leava de gang an' he cheata me outa my mon, an' I hate him now."

"Do you want to get square with him?"

"Yais," eagerly answered the rascal.

"Then tell us where to find him and we'll arrest him.

Misery likes company and you may as well have satisfaction."

"Sura ting. Youa knowit de Dewey Hotel?"

"Yes."

"He is dere."

The Bradys smiled with satisfaction.

## CHAPTER XV.

### OUT OF THE WINDOW.

On the following afternoon, shorn of their disguises, the Bradys proceeded to the Dewey Hotel on Buschmann's Walk, and meeting the proprietor, the old detective said to him:

"Say, Billy, you know us, don't you?"

"O' course I does, Mr. Brady," replied the man, respectfully.

"And you know why we are down here, don't you?"

"I've heerd as yer was stackin' up agin de guns."

"That's right. We are going to break them up."

"I ain't got nuthin' ter do wit 'em."

"You've got one housed here now."

"Ah, g'wan! D'ye tink I'm ringin' in wit dem jays?"

"No, but you are harboring one, just the same."

"I guess youse has got anudder tink a-comin', Mr. Brady."

"No, we haven't. You've got a man planted here and we want him!"

"Well, I don't know de bloke."

"Don't you know Peter Green?"

"Sure, I do."

"Well, he's the man."

"Git out! He ain't in my place."

"Oh, yes, he is. He's disguised."

"In dat case I wouldn't know de guy. I can't keep cases on all de wearies wot bunks in here, kin I?"

"No. We don't expect you can."

"Jist describe him, will yer?"

"Certainly."

And Old King Brady complied.

A startled look flashed over the man's face, and after a moment's reflection he suddenly said:

"Yes, I've got dat guy here."

"Where is he?"

"Up in No. 10."

"Is he in now?"

"Dunno, but yer kin go up an' see."

"Anybody with him?"

"Nix. But dey's a guy comes here ter see him."

"Who is he?"

"Sandy McNutt, de confidence sharp."

"He and Green are the last of the gang at liberty."

"Wot d'yer mean be dat?"

"We've pinched all the rest of the gang."

"Oh, I see."

The Bradys went up to room No. 10 and knocked for admission.

After a short interval of silence, a voice within shouted:

"Who's there?"

"A messenger," replied Harry, disguising his voice.

"What do you want?"

"Got a message for you, sir."

"Shove it under the door."

"But it's on private business and I want to talk to you, too."

"Who sent you here?"

"Big Mike Duffy."

There was another brief silence, during which the Bradys exchanged significant glances, for they recognized the speaker as Peter Green.

Finally the grafter exclaimed:

"I'm undressed. Just wait until I get into my clothes, and I'll let you in. I won't keep you waiting long."

"All right, sir," replied Harry. "I'm in a hurry, though."

They waited patiently.

Both were ready to rush in and seize him the moment the crook opened the door to admit them.

Five minutes passed by, but they heard nothing further from the man, and Harry knocked at the door again.

"Hello, in there!" he shouted.

No reply was vouchsafed, and the boy began to look anxious.

He thumped at the door a moment, then he shouted:

"How much longer have I got to wait?"

Still no reply came forth.

The detectives gazed at each other blankly, then Harry muttered:

"I don't like that silence."

"Nor I," growled Old King Brady.

"It looks suspicious."

"Very."

"I won't wait any longer."

"Going to break in?"

"We must. He may be fooling us."

"Rush at the door together, then."

"Come on."

And they sprang forward.

Crash! went their shoulders against the panels.

The lock was broken, the door flew open, and in they plunged.

At one glance they saw that the room was empty, and the open window showed them how the villain made his escape to the roof of a veranda, down a post of which he could have slid.

"He's gone!" gasped Harry.

"Must have suspected us," Old King Brady commented.

"There's the way he got out."

"Yes. And see the note he left on his bureau mirror."

Harry strode over and read the words hastily scribbled on a sheet of paper with pencil, which said:

"My dear Bradys: You ain't swift enough for me. I saw you through the keyhole. By-by. GREEN."

It made the detectives wild with vexation.

"How careless of us to let him see us," growled Harry.

"Well, he's a pretty slick article, my boy."

"Now we'll have trouble to find him again."

"Perhaps. He is bound to change his quarters."

They examined his avenue of escape.

When this was done, Old King Brady remarked:

"I'm going to try to trace him. You remain here, and if McNutt comes in to see him, put the nippers on him."

"Go ahead!" replied the boy.

Old King Brady hurried downstairs.

A couple of men sat tilted back in chairs on the veranda, and he accosted one of them with:

"Did you see a man slide down one of these posts a few minutes ago?"

"Yes," replied one of them. "He was a fellow with a dark beard."

"How was he dressed?"

"Blue sack suit and derby hat."

"Which way did he go?"

"Toward the seashore, on a run."

"Thank you."

And away darted the old detective.

He made frequent inquiries of the different people he met and thus trailed his man along the shore toward Norton's Point.

Meantime Harry had gone down into the barroom of the hotel and sat down to wait for McNutt to appear.

While he was wondering if it would be his fortune to meet the villain, a couple of young men in stylish clothing came staggering in very much under the influence of liquor.

Walking up to the bar, one of them exclaimed:

"Hello, barkeep; givesh a—hic—drink."

"What'll yer have, gents?"

"Whisky," said the other, thickly.

The bartender set a bottle and glasses before them, and they filled their glasses to the brim, drank the liquor, and one of them pulled out a big wad of bills and stripped off a ten-dollar note to pay for it.

Just then Sandy McNutt came in.

He saw the money, and glided over to the pair, intent upon robbery.

Harry saw him and kept his face concealed behind a newspaper.

Slapping the young man on the back who had the money, the confidence sharp exclaimed in bluff, hearty tones:

"Well, well! Ain't I in on this round, laddie?"

The young man eyed him gravely, and asked:

"Busted?"

"Dead broke," said Sandy.

"Order what you want."

"Scotch whisky," said the crook.

He saw the young man put the roll of bills in his pocket, and the villain planted himself close to that pocket, intending to slip in his fingers and steal the money at the first favorable chance.

Unluckily for his plan, a city detective just then came in, grasped the young swell by the collar, and exclaimed:

"I want you, young man!"

"Eh?" gasped the startled youth, wheeling around.

"You've been robbing your employer, and we've got dead evidence. Don't kick. Come along quietly. You've been cutting quite a dash down here with other people's coin. But you've reached the end of your rope."

The young man turned pale and groaned, and his bosom friend took flight and dashed out of the saloon in fear of arrest.

As the officer marched his prisoner away Sandy breathed a curse at him for baffling his design to get the gay young rounder's money, and roared at the bartender.

"I got the razzle that trip. A laddie dinna ken when

Dame Fortune is smilin' at him. Gimme me Scotch an' I'll go up ter see me friend."

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE LAST MAN.

Young King Brady was keenly watching and listening to the Scotchman and was deliberating on the best means of arresting him.

The boy did not wish to run any chance of losing him, for with the capture of this man Green's entire gang would be disposed of.

In point of strength, McNutt was Harry's superior.

He would, the boy knew, shoot to kill on the slightest provocation.

It therefore became a serious matter to handle such a reckless man.

At first the boy was inclined to draw his pistol, march straight up to the fellow, and place him under arrest, with chances of meeting resistance.

Fearing that the crook might defeat his object, the boy began to scheme a method of running the rascal into a trap from which there could be no escape, and a plan soon framed itself in his mind.

"He is bound to ascend to Green's room," reflected the boy, "and if I wait up there for him, he will walk right into my hands. There will be less chance up there for him to get away from me than there would be down here on the ground floor. Here he might call any nearby crooks to his aid; up there, he couldn't."

Feeling this way about the matter, Harry arose and went upstairs.

It dawned upon his mind that during his absence McNutt might take the notion to change his mind and depart unseen.

But that, thought Harry, was one of the risks to be run.

The boy entered Green's room and fixed the broken door so McNutt would not notice what had happened.

He then closed the window, pulled down the shade enshrouding the room in darkness, and sat down to await developments.

Pretty soon he heard footsteps pause in the hall, and there came a knock.

"Come in!" exclaimed the boy in muffled tones. "Who's there?"

"Sandy," replied the crook, pushing open the door.

He could not see well in the gloom, as he had just come in from the glaring daylight, and he demanded gruffly:

"Peter, where are you, lad?"

Harry made no reply.

Sitting on the edge of the bed, he remained motionless.

"I say, Peter!" roared Sandy, impatiently.

The silent boy raised his pistol and covered the man.

Receiving no response, the grafter lit a match and ignited the gas.

As he slowly turned around and faced the boy he gave a mighty start, turned as pale as death, flung up his arm, and cried:

"Young King Brady."

"That's me," grimly answered the boy.

"Don't shoot! Don't shoot, lad."

"I will, if you don't instantly obey me."

"What do you want?"

"Raise your hands over your head."

"There!" said Sandy, obeying.

"Now drop down on your knees."

"Down I go," responded the crook, complying.

"Have you got a gun?"

"Ay."

"Where is it?"

"In me hip pocket."

"I'll relieve you of it, sir."

And Harry secured the weapon.

When this was done, he drew a pair of handcuffs from his pocket, locked the kneeling man's wrists together, and said:

"There! Now you are safe."

"Where in thunder is Green?"

"Old King Brady is chasing him at this moment. We just discovered that he was located here, and having learned that you were coming to see him, I waited for you with this result. You are the last of the gang at large."

"Where are the rest?"

"All in prison."

"By gosh! You surprise me."

"It's a fact, as you'll find out when you join them."

McNutt said no more.

He suddenly began to maintain the gloomy silence captured criminals assume, in order to avoid committing themselves to the police.

Observing this, Harry said:

"Got any of old Mr. Langdon's money about you?"

"I've got a bunch belonging to Green."

"How came you to have it?"

"That's my affair."

"I'll have a look at it."

Harry searched the man's pockets, and finally drew out a big package of greenbacks, the numbers of which he examined.

The boy began to smile with satisfaction.

There were two thousand dollars in the parcel, and he saw by the numbers that it was more of the Langdon money.

He bent a keen, searching look upon the man, and finally said:

"This is Langdon's money. I can tell by the numbers."

"I don't know who owned it," replied the crook, sulkily.

But Harry was not to be so easily deceived.

He saw by the expression on the man's face that he was lying, and he put the money in his pocket, and said:

"We won't dispute that point. It don't make any difference to me who had the money as long as I've recovered it. Get up now, and we'll go over to see the captain."

The man arose to his feet.

When they got downstairs they met Old King Brady who glanced smilingly at the boy, and said:

"I see you are in good luck."

"Yes," assented the boy. "He walked right into my hands."

"I've lost Green again."

"How?"

"I really don't know. I traced him toward Norton's Point, and finally lost the trail altogether."

"He won't return here, as he has no baggage that I can see."

"I don't expect him to."

"Well, let's run this fellow in."

They took the prisoner over to the police station, and when he was committed they mailed the money to Langdon and they returned home and changed their costumes.

Going out again after supper, they began a systematic hunt for Peter Green among the various resorts.

Midnight came without their finding any trace of him, and they finally gave it up and got ready to go home.

"He has probably hidden himself somewhere," growled Old King Brady. "I fear we shall have a hard task to find him now."

"See here, who is coming up the board walk?"

"Why, it's Ralph and his sweetheart in bicycle costumes."

"They see us and are coming this way."

When the young couple reached them Ralph exclaimed:

"We've been hunting for you all the night and had just given up and were about to go home."

"Hunting for us?"

"Yes. Green's lawyer has resorted to legal measures to force Mr. Langdon to produce Uncle Robert's will."

"Bound to have an accounting, eh?"

"He is, and we are going to the surrogate's office to-morrow, and want you to be on hand, too."

"Was that all you wanted?"

"Yes."

"We'll be there."

"We've either got to produce our evidence that the will is not genuine, or leave it for probate, and fight it legally."

"Have you decided upon your course of action?"

"Yes. We intend to contest its validity."

"Upon what ground?"

"Simply the fact that it don't agree with the facts in the case."

"Have you discovered that there are any flaws in it?"

"No. If it's not genuine, it's one of the most perfect forgeries ever offered to a credulous person."

"Well," said Old King Brady, "to-morrow will tell the tale when we produce the will in the surrogate's court."

"Then you will be on hand?"

"Most decidedly."

"Very well. Two o'clock is the hour."

They chatted a short time, and when Ralph and the girl took their leave the Bradys went home.

Before they went to bed Old King Brady said:

"I can't get rid of the impression that the will is a forgery, despite the fact that it bears a wonderfully genuine appearance."

"For writing two years old," replied Harry, "the ink had a remarkably fresh appearance. It was written with blue-black ink of the kind which looks blue when first written, but which afterward turns jet black. When we saw the writing it had the bluish tint. That was an indication that it was recently done."

"We'll have to look into that further," said Old King Brady. "I'm going to examine the will closer to-morrow."

"You'll see what I mean plainly enough, if you do," the boy replied. "Just note that point."

They little suspected what his suspicion was going to show them on the following day.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### BETRAYED BY A WATER MARK.

At precisely two o'clock on the following afternoon, the Bradys walked into the New York surrogate's office.

Ralph and Ida, and Mr. Langdon and Benjamin Snooks were there ahead of them, and were discussing the case in question.

While so engaged, the surrogate came in and joined them.

He was acquainted with the Bradys, and greeted them warmly, after which the old detective gave him an account of the case.

"Are any of the people concerned in the drawing up of that will to be found?" queried the surrogate of Old King Brady.

"Not one. The lawyer, Quincy, is dead; Ann Daly and Philip Farley, the witnesses, cannot be found, and we now have only the plain unsupported evidence of the document to rely on."

"That is rather bad if its genuineness is in doubt."

"Several points indicate it is not a false document."

"And they are——?"

"First, that Robert Green sealed it, and it could not have been opened and tampered with, without showing it."

"A strong point, indeed."

"Next, the signature of Green seems to be bona fide."

"Another strong point, if it can be proven."

"The worst feature about the matter is this. Peter Green was a bad man, and Ralph Seymour was a good man. Robert Green knew all about their characters. He told several people that he was going to disinherit Peter, and make Ralph his sole heir. Yet, when we opened the

will, we found the matter reversed. Peter was named as the beneficiary and Ralph was disinherited."

"In view of the fact that you are suspicious of the will, can you tell me upon what you base your suspicions?"

"Easily. It's my impression that the will may be genuine enough. But I imagine that the name of Ralph was erased and the name of Peter was substituted on the document."

"Owing to the peculiar texture of the paper, wouldn't such an erasure show, if it were made with knife or acid?"

"Perhaps," hesitatingly answered the old detective.

"Here is a large magnifying glass. Examine the writing."

While Old King Brady was doing as he was invited, Snooks cried:

"This is all nonsense, gentlemen. As if such a thing could be done! The very fact of the will being sealed would prohibit such a foul deed. You are casting needless suspicions upon the fair name of my client, and——"

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Harry, interrupting him. "Fair name, indeed! Why, sir, Peter Green is one of the most notorious blackguards whose picture hangs in the Rogues' Gallery. He is capable of committing any atrocity."

"I object to your defamation of his character!" hotly shouted the lawyer, bounding to his feet, excitedly.

"Objection overruled," laughed the boy.

Just then Old King Brady said:

"I can't see that the name was erased and Green's substituted."

"Let me look at the will again," said Harry.

"The ink has turned black," said Old King Brady, unerringly.

Harry held the will up to the light to study the color of the ink better, and his glance fell upon a water mark in the paper.

It said: "Q. Z. Taunton Mill, 1901."

The boy gave a violent start, banged the document down on the table, sprang to his feet, and cried:

"The will is a forgery, and I can prove it!"

His words startled everyone.

They glanced at him inquiringly, and the surrogate asked:

"How do you know it's a forgery?"

Young King Brady held up the paper and replied by asking:

"When was the will dated?"

"July 3d, 1899," replied Snooks.

"Well," said the boy, "how could the will have been written upon paper which was not made until two years afterward?"

"I don't know what you mean?"

Harry held up the transparent paper to the light. Pointing at the water mark, he cried, thrillingly:

"Here is the evidence! No man can deny this."

Every one saw the mark and exchanged glances.

For a few moments there was a deep silence.

Then the keen-sighted boy continued:

"Here is positive evidence that the will is a rank forgery. As you all can see, it is dated July 3d, 1899. And as you all can see, it is written on paper which was not manufactured until two years after the date of the will."

Lawyer Snooks gave a groan.

The boy detective continued:

"Everything is plain enough. Peter Green's men stole the original will from Mr. Langdon. The forged will was copied from the genuine will. The original was kept by Green, and he mailed the forged one to us. Only for my accidental discovery of that water mark, that villain might have got what rightly belonged to Ralph Seymour."

Snooks was desperate.

He feared losing the bonus he was to get if Green's will was filed, and he cried in bitter, acrimonious tones:

"If that will is a forgery you can depend that my client will sue for an equal share of the dead man's money."

"He won't dare!" cried Harry, sternly.

"Why won't he?" defiantly asked the lawyer.

"Because he will have to appear on the scene in person and the moment he does we are going to arrest him!"

"But he won't appear. I'll represent him, and——"

"You'll do nothing of the kind!" sharply interposed the surrogate. "After all I have just learned, unless Peter Green appears in person before me, I shall not recognize such a suit."

Baffled and furious, the lawyer seized his hat, and roared:

"Brady, you're a demon."

"Thanks for the compliment."

"You haven't seen the last of me yet."

"Sorry to hear it."

"We'll fight you to a finish."

"Your finish will come quick, then."

"Bah! You make me sick——"

"Then send for an ambulance."

The disgruntled lawyer snorted viciously and rushed out.

When he was gone, Old King Brady laughed, and cried:

"By Jove, Harry, you're a keen young fox."

"Didn't you notice the water mark?"

"No. Nor did any one else. And you may depend that the forgers hadn't the faintest idea it was there, else they would not have betrayed their crooked game by using that paper."

A faint smile crossed the surrogate's face.

"I can't see that there is yet any work for me to do in this matter," he remarked. "I would never accept that will. It is too plainly a clever forgery if the writing deceived even those who are familiar with the signature of the late Mr. Green."

"When you hear from Ralph Seymour again," laughed Old King Brady in a grim sort of way, "we hope it will be to review the original will."

"Do you think it is still in existence?"

"Yes. But we must find it."

"I wish you luck."

They finally departed and went to the central office.

where they met their chief, to whom they gave an account of all that transpired.

Upon concluding their story, he said to them:

"To-day I received a telephone message from the police captain at Coney Island precinct, asking for you."

"What did he want?"

"He did not say. But he wants you to ring him up."

"Very well. I'll do so now."

Old King Brady went to the telephone.

A few moments later he had the Coney Island police captain on the wire, and asked him what he wanted.

"Do you recollect leaving a gentleman's dark frock coat here?"

"Yes," Old King Brady answered. "It came from Peter Green's body when he slipped out of it and escaped from me."

"Well, he sent for it. A messenger boy came for it?"

"Did you give it up to him?"

"No. I told him I couldn't find it, and asked him to call around again to-night about nine o'clock for it."

"Good for you! We'll come right down and shadow the boy when he returns for the coat. He may lead us to the hiding place of Green, and we may thus capture him."

"The boy, upon finding he could not get the coat, begged for the big envelope in the breast pocket. I told him I did not know it was there, and refused to hunt for it."

"I've got that envelope, captain."

"What was in it?"

"Don't know. We haven't opened it yet."

"The contents must be valuable, else the owner of the coat would not betray such anxiety to get it."

"I'll tell you better when I open the envelope."

And a few moments later Old King Brady hung up the receiver.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### CONCLUSION.

When the Bradys reached the Coney Island police station, and met the captain, it was half past eight.

"Did the messenger come back for the coat yet?" asked Harry.

"No; not yet," the captain answered. "He'll be here at nine."

"Who was the messenger?"

"Some street gamin."

"When he returns, give him the coat."

"Very well."

"The party who sent him for the garment will suspect that the boy will be followed. Should we shadow him in the usual way, we will be detected, and Green will not show himself."

"How are you going to work it, then?"

"Did you notice which direction the boy came from?"

"No, but I saw him go back toward the beach."

"Then one of us must go down that way to wait for him. It will be easy enough to know him by the coat he carries."

"I'll attend to that," said Old King Brady, "and you can follow leisurely and wait for me at Henderson's."

With this understanding they disguised themselves with beards, wigs, and by turning their clothing inside out.

Old King Brady then departed.

At nine o'clock the messenger entered.

The captain gave him Green's coat and he departed.

The boy had evidently been warned to see that nobody followed him and to shake off any possible pursuers. He entered a saloon by the front door and emerged at the back.

But Old King Brady was on his trail and none of the petty devices he tried were of any avail.

The detective clung to his trail persistently and finally saw him dodge into a "Beauty Show" which he knew to be a cloak for a gambling den on Henderson's Walk.

Old King Brady glided in after him, and reaching a room in the rear, thronged with card sharps, saw the boy hand the coat to a man with a gray beard, who wore the shabby costume of a farmer.

At one keen glance the detective recognized the man as Green, and the villain was handing the boy a quarter when the detective seized him.

Shoving his pistol in the man's face, he exclaimed:

"Peter Green, I've got you!"

The man ripped out an oath and his hand flew to his hip pocket.

"Not yet——" he began.

Click! went Old King Brady's pistol.

Up flew the man's hands in token of submission.

The next moment the handcuffs were on him, and the gang of gamblers surrounding them became panic stricken and fled.

In a minute the place was vacated.

Old King Brady smiled and led his prisoner out.

Harry was at the rendezvous, and seeing his partner, he joined him.

"Got him at last, eh?" he asked.

"Make sure by pulling the disguise from his face," replied the old detective.

When this was done, Green's well-known face was revealed.

He soon found out who had him, and they marched him to the police station, where a charge was made against him.

"I hope you are satisfied now," he growled, angrily.

"Yes," replied Old King Brady. "Your lawyer told you how we discovered the forgery, I presume?"

"He did. And now you've beaten me I'll go to jail."

"Exactly. But first let us see what was in the big envelope I found in the pocket of your coat."

Greene's face turned pale as the detective drew out the envelope and tore it open.

It contained a legal document.

Old King Brady examined it.

An exclamation of surprise escaped him, and he cried, as he held it up:

"It's Robert Green's original will, leaving all his possessions to Ralph."

And so it was.

They said no more to Peter and he was locked up.

Ralph and Mr. Langdon were sent for and the will was placed in their hands.

The trial and conviction of Peter Green and his gang of seaside crooks followed, and they were put away for long terms.

After that the real will of Robert Green was admitted for probate, and in due course of time the estate was settled up.

Ralph inherited the entire fortune.

It is safe to say that he and Ida were soon afterward married and lived to enjoy their good fortune.

Coney Island was relieved of a dangerous gang of crooks and the public upon whom they preyed had cause to feel grateful to the Bradys for capturing them.

The great detectives went back to the city.

Their work at the seashore was finished.

Newer and more startling events were transpiring in New York, which now demanded their attention, however.

Indeed, they were soon employed upon one of the most exciting cases it was ever their lot to work up.

As our next story will contain the details of their exploits we shall reserve the account for those of our readers who wish to follow the fortunes of the gallant pair.

THE END.

Read "THE BRADYS AND THE ROAD AGENTS; OR, THE GREAT DEADWOOD CASE," which will be the next number (134) of "Secret Service."

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- . . . . " " TEN CENT HAND BOOKS " . . . . .

Name . . . . . Street and No. . . . . Town . . . . . State . . . . .